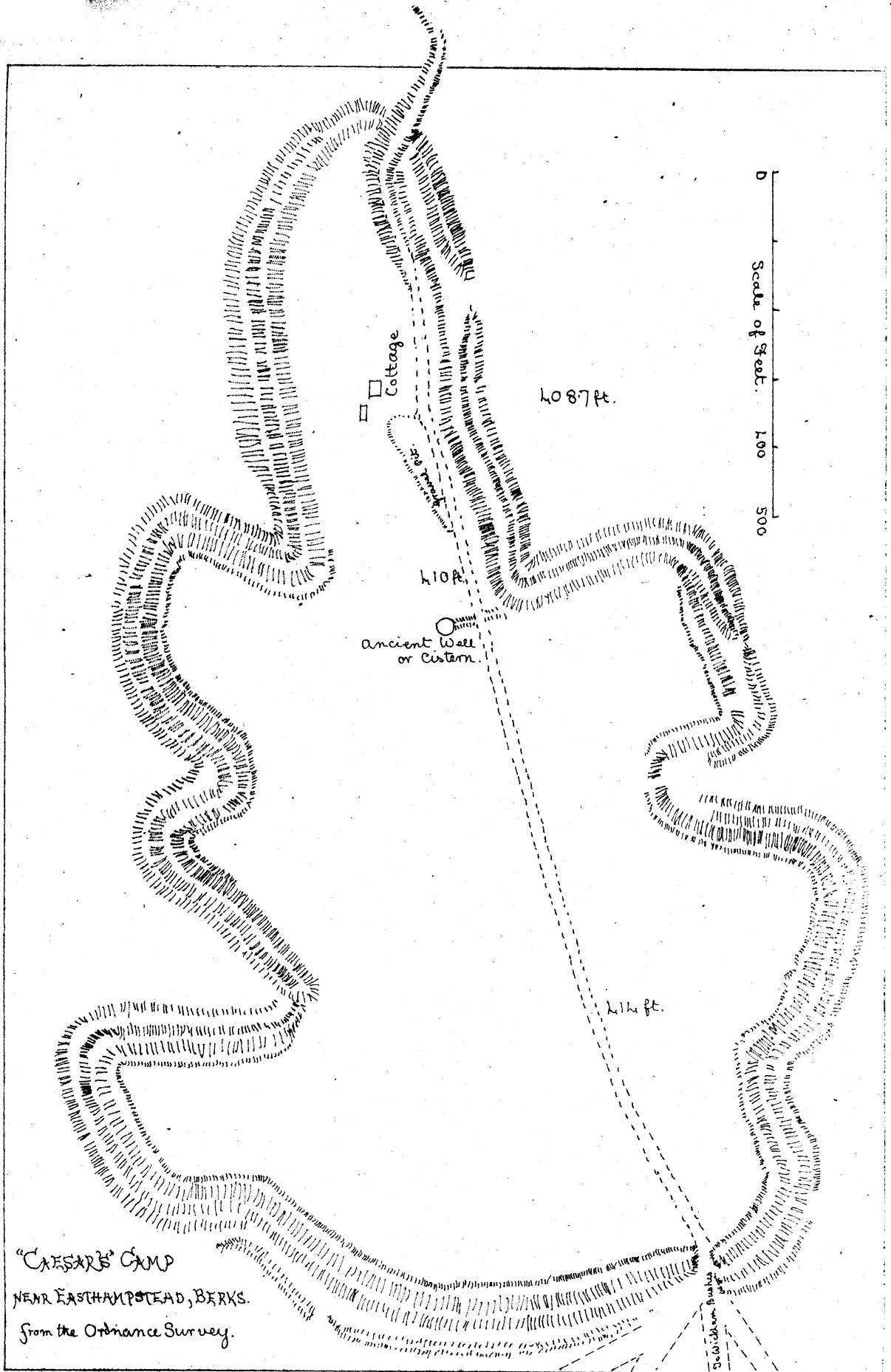


VISIT TO CÆSAR'S CAMP AND WARFIELD AND BINFIELD CHURCHES.

ON July 16th, 1880, the members of the Society made an afternoon excursion to Cæsar's Camp, Warfield, and Binfield.

At Cæsar's Camp they were met by Mr. Goodchild, of Wellington College, who led the way to the northern entrance of the camp, where the road conducted the party upwards by a zig-zag course through a deep cutting. Here a halt was made, while Mr. Goodchild drew attention to the nature of the work at this point, and explained how precisely similar this approach to the camp was to those figured in Viollet Le Duc's book as entrances to early Gaulish camps in France. He observed, that, when the supply of water was as scanty as must always have been the case at Cæsar's camp, it must have been necessary to drive the cattle down to water in a neighbouring valley, except when an enemy was actually engaged in besieging the fortress; the safety of this operation would be greatly increased by the provision of a well-protected zig-zag approach such as the party were then engaged in examining. It was true that some antiquaries supposed the cutting at this point to be, in great measure at least, modern, but it was difficult to imagine what purpose would have been served in modern times by undertaking such a tedious and expensive work, merely to improve the little-used forest track that now passes through the cutting. The next halt was made a short distance within the camp, at the point where a depression in the ground marks the site of an ancient well or cistern, said by Mr. Handasyd, in his letter to the Society of Antiquaries in 1783, to have been lined with a coarse cement at that time. It was explained that water was probably collected from the roofs of the huts and other buildings and carried in wooden pipes to this cavity, where a thin layer of clay, interrupting the sand, made the soil more capable of containing water than in other places. A point upon the vallum of the camp was now visited, where the deep ditch and double mound were very clearly seen. Two theories to account for the existence of a double rampart here, as in so many British camps, were suggested;—first, that the fortifications were of two dates, and that the later occupants of the fort, having to deepen the ditch, found it necessary to dispose of the excavated soil by forming a new mound, since the stockade upon the summit of the old one could not well be destroyed so as to allow the earth to be carried inside the camp; secondly, the theory advocated by Captain Cooper King, in an address to the Geologists' Association delivered



at the camp in April of this year, that the outer mound, by deepening the ditch and by its own steepness, served to weary an attacking party, and at the same time exposed them to the missiles of the defenders at very short range. After some remarks had been made about the general character of the camp, one of the largest in England, rather a fortified village than a military station, and capable of containing two or three tribes at once with their cattle, the party passed through the southern opening in the rampart and walked towards Wickham Bushes. On arriving at the oak plantation, where the site of the Roman town is marked upon the Ordnance Maps, there was no difficulty in finding tiles in abundance, together with large stones, which have been used in forming the concrete foundations of the houses. Many of these stones are flints from the chalk, and must have been brought a considerable distance. A sudden thunder-storm prevented any very close examination of this spot, but Mr. Goodchild exhibited drawings of various articles of Roman workmanship found on the spot, including three Roman coins (of Probus, C. Marius, and Delmatianus), and he further pointed out that the area in which Roman remains were to be found was not confined to the space marked out upon the Ordnance Map, but extends for a distance of at least a quarter of a mile along the side of the hill. No trace of solid masonry has been found, owing to the absence of stone and of good clay in the district. The houses seem to have been built of wood raised upon a few inches of coarse concrete foundation. Large numbers of iron nails may be discovered a short distance below the soil, which may have held the timbers together. Much of the metal appears to be half-fused, which seems to suggest that the Saxons who took Silchester, may have set fire to the little town that occupied the site of Wickham Bushes.

From Cæsar's Camp, a pleasant drive brought the party to Warfield Church, where they were met by the Rector, the Rev. F. T. Gill, who read the following letter which Mr. Street, the architect who recently restored this beautiful church, had written for the purpose of pointing out to the members of the Society the most noticeable architectural features of the building.

"211, CAVENDISH PLACE, W.,

"July 12th, 1880.

"DEAR MR. GILL,

"Unfortunately I have an engagement in Dorsetshire on Friday, and cannot therefore comply with your request to be at Warfield. It would have given me much pleasure to be there so as to be able to give, on the spot, some explanation of the more interesting features in your beautiful church. Your visitors will no doubt bring skilled eyes to the examination of it, and will see for themselves, without my aid, how singularly fine much of the work is. They will see the evidences of the 13th century church still remaining in the North

Some Objects found at Wickham Bushes.

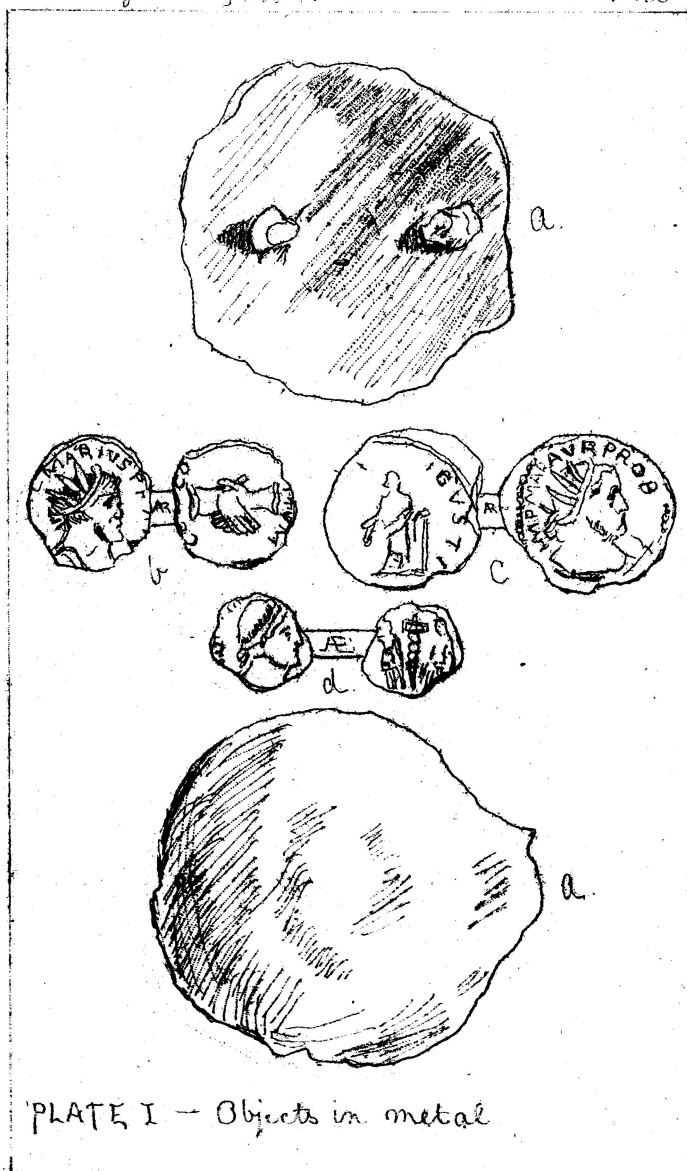
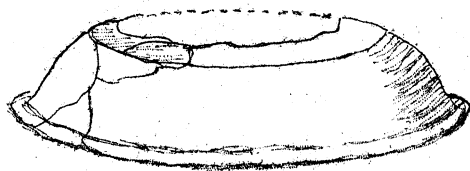
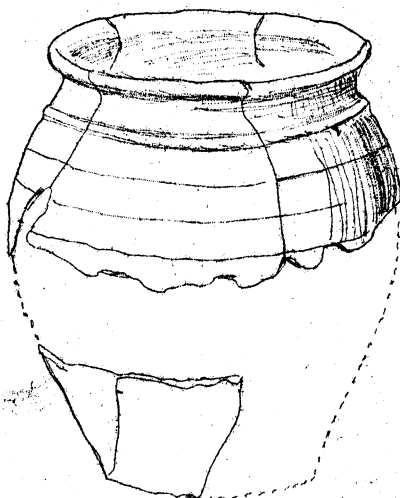


PLATE I - Objects in metal



a



b

PLATE II.—Ginerary urn and Cover.

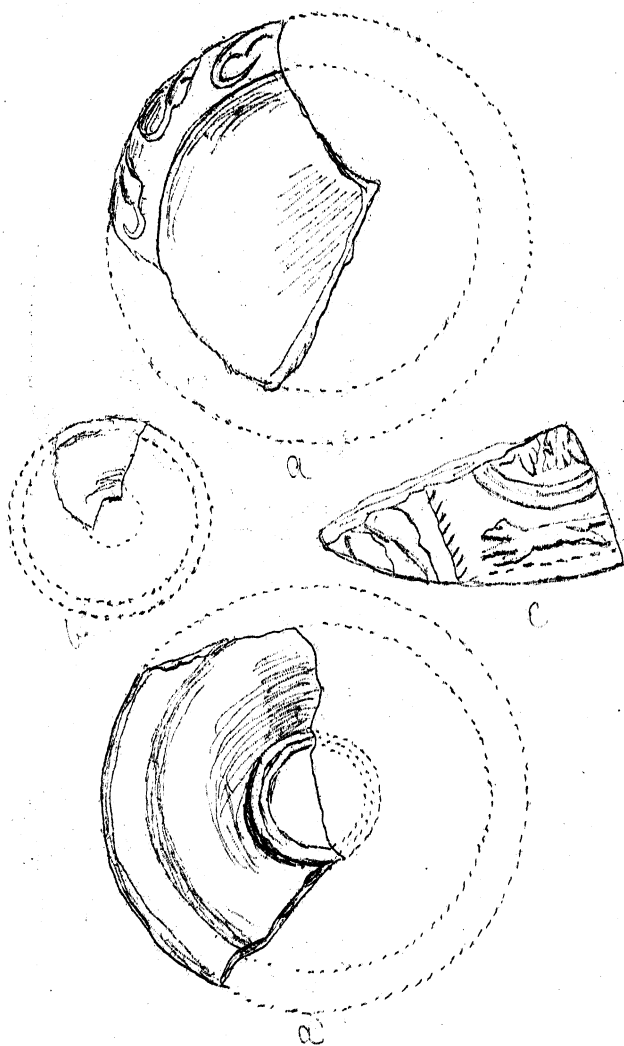


PLATE III — "Samian" Ware.

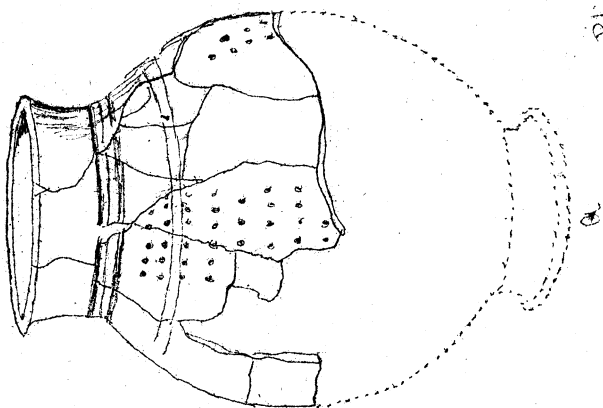
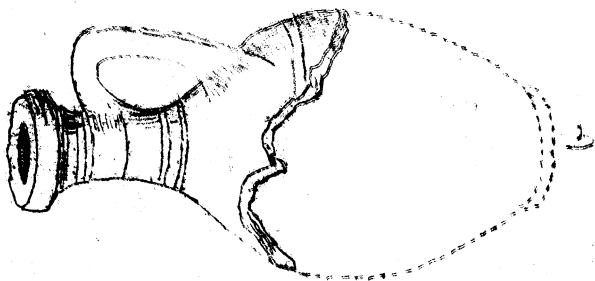


PLATE IV.

OBJECTS FOUND AT WICKHAM BUSHES,

1878-9.

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PLATE I. (a.) Front and back of a bronze plate, that has been fixed to something as an ornament.

(b.) Coin of the Emperor Aurelius Marius, who reigned for three days in 268 A.D. *Obv.* IMP. C. MARIVS P. F. AVG.; Bust to right, head rayed. *Rev.* CONCORDIA MILITVM; two hands clasped.

(c.) Coin of the Emperor Probus, 276—282 A.D. *Obv.* IMP. C. AVR. PROBVS. AVG.; Bust to right, head rayed. *Rev.* LAETITIA AVGVSTI; Figure of the goddess of joy standing, facing left, holding a wreath and an anchor.

(d.) Apparently Coin of the Emperor Delmatius, 335—337 A.D. *Obv.* FL. DELMATIVS NOB. C.; Bust to right, head wreathed with bay. *Rev.* GLORIA EXERCITVS; two helmeted soldiers standing, each holding a spear and resting on a shield, between them a military standard, on the top of which is a banner bearing the emblem of a wreath.

PLATE II. Urn (perhaps cinerary) and Saucer.

PATE III. Coarse red "Samian" Ware.

PLATE IV. (a.) White Ware, with black spots like a vessel in the British Museum found at Colchester.

(b.) Neck of bottle in reddish-white Ware.

wall, but will devote most of their attention to the later work of the 14th century Chancel and Chancel-aisle, which are, in my opinion, the most exquisite and original works of the century of which Berkshire can boast.

"Before the restoration of the church, the features which deserved notice were the windows, with their fine mouldings and beautiful cusping, and the splendid sedilia in the south wall. At the East end of these there remained the commencement of the screen across the Chancel, which you have allowed me to restore. This fragment showed that in the screen there was a doorway leading into the space East of it, and that above it was finished with a cornice corresponding with that over the sedilia. It was clear from the existence of this fragment, that originally the altar did not stand against the East wall, but that there was a narrow chamber behind the screen, out of which in the S.E. angle, a door opened into a newel staircase leading to the roof. This arrangement may be compared with (among others) that of the Chancel of Arundel Church, where a similar chamber exists. Probably at Warfield this chamber was intended to serve as the Sacristy, as there is no other provision for one. It may be observed here that our church restorers are very often quite wrong in assuming, as they usually do, that an altar should always stand against the East wall of the Chancel, and much harm has been done in this way. Even where there was no return screen across the Chancel the old altars undoubtedly often stood away from the wall, and gained much in dignity thereby. The beautiful Chancel of Stone Church, Kent, which has the lower part of its walls finely arcaded, has this arcade carried all across the East end, and so evidently had its altar detached from the wall, and many other examples might be quoted of the same arrangements. When we began the work of restoration in Warfield Church, the gable of the Chancel, which was modern, had to be taken down. It was found to be built to a large extent with fragments of old moulded and carved work of the most interesting kind, and among them we found various portions of the old altar screen; some fragments of this were so perfect that I was able, in reconstructing the screen, to put them back into their old places, and I was glad to find them, because they proved that it was not only the fact that such a screen had been intended when the sedilia were built, but that it had absolutely been erected, and then, at a later date, ruthlessly destroyed. The exquisite character of the sculpture on this work ought to be carefully restored, for it is seldom indeed that one sees anything so good. The fragments of old stone work contained, in addition to portions of the reredos, some of extreme value belonging to the screens at the north and west of the Chancel. These were all of stone, and of an almost unique character. It will be observed that the old arrangement of the screens and stone seats is such as to make it almost certain that no wooden seats or stalls were intended to be placed in this Chancel. The only seats were the stone seats in front of the screens. The levels of the floor also, which I made out with much care, are very peculiar, the first step

inside the screen being nearer to the west end than is usual, and the doorway from the Chancel to the north Chantry being in the western bay of the arcade between them, just where in modern arrangements we place our Choirs. The feature which next struck me in the screens was the very small height of the Western screen. This was built up on the Eastern side of the Chancel arch, and was continued across the Eastern face of its piers, so that, although the old screen appeared to have been destroyed, we had the clearest evidence remaining as to what its tracing and general design were. In re-building it I felt myself obliged to raise the doorway, for if this had not been done, it would have been impossible to pass through it! and I think that some such design as I made must have been from the first adopted. The new screen between the Chancel and north aisles, or Chantry, are also exactly copied from old fragments and from remains which were still visible against the columns. Altogether the effects of the Chancel, with its restored screens, seems to me to be remarkably beautiful, and pleases me excessively, owing to the unusual, as well as good, arrangement and design of the screens and reredos, all of them the work evidently of the same men who built the Chancel. One of the features of the Chancel of which I most regret the non-revival or restoration, is that of the small niches of which traces remain in the north wall over the columns opening into the Chantry. The detail of these, as of everything in the Chancel, was refined and beautiful, and fortunately we found among the old fragments in the gable, enough of one of the canopies to make it easy to reproduce exactly the old design. This old fragment will, I hope, be preserved with this view. No traces were, I believe, found of the figures which occupied these niches. The glass in the head of the East window was nearly perfect, and is very interesting for the group of small subjects introduced into the panels of the tracery, which can now be readily seen and understood. The only point worth mentioning in its design is the unusual fact that one or two of the designs (a censuring angel in particular) have been made to serve a double purpose, both being painted from the same cartoon, and one of them being reversed in the window, so that the angels now look towards each other. The rest of the divisions of the tracery are occupied by small scripture subjects, very charmingly executed. I do not know what documentary evidence there may be as to the age of this building, but the character of all the detail proves clearly enough that its erection must have been very little, if at all, after the year 1350. The mouldings are very pure and fine. The double Ressaunt is used but in its earliest form (to be distinguished from the liney appearance of the same moulding in the 15th century). But the tracery of the side windows in the Chancel and on the Chantry show that the architect had not lost his love for the earlier middle-pointed style, of which they are really perfect examples.

"Before leaving the chancel I should note the fine Aumbrye in the north wall, constructed, I believe, for the reservation of the sacrament, and the singular but fine carved section of the inside sills of the win-

dows. I should notice also the existence of a low side or leper's window in the south wall, this window having a transom and provision for shutters below it, and I ought also to call attention to the early appearance in the foliage of the sedilia and reredos, of the horn-shaped leaf—always an evidence of the approach to 15th century carving.

“The north Chancel-aisle was apparently a Chantry Chapel, with three monuments under cusped and crocheted ogee centres in its north wall, and is of precisely the same age as the Chancel. It is divided from the Chancel by three rather narrow but extremely well-proportioned centres with continuous mouldings, some of which form the jambs of the stone screens which separate the Chapel from the Chancel. There is a three-light window in the East wall and three two-light windows in the North wall. In the Chancel the windows are richly moulded, and in addition to primary, have also a rich system of secondary cusping, designed with a perfection seldom seen. In the aisle windows the general scheme is the same, but there is no secondary cusping and the mouldings are altogether simpler, though equally refined and admirable. At the West end of this aisle, dividing it from the North aisle of the Nave, is a 15th century oak screen of rare beauty and goodness of design and execution, which has also the singular interest of having preserved almost intact its old loft. The access to this is by a newel staircase in the North wall, and it seems at some time to have been continued all across the church, for about the time of its erection the Eastern aisle of the arcade between the nave and aisle was re-constructed so as to allow of a passage-way being made under it. This is a very curious feature, seeing that a 14th century stone Chancel screen already existed. The latter had no wood loft, and it is evident that the object of the addition was to provide this then necessary addition to the ritual arrangements of the church. The screen is of a common type, with open tracing in arched panels, but the groined carving on each side and the elaborate panelling above the groining make it the most beautiful and complete example of the best treatment of a Rood screen and loft of which the county can boast. The carving of foliage in this woodwork is so perfect as to be admired by everyone, but not less admirable is the drawing of the details of the mouldings and cusping, features which commend themselves more to the professed architect than to the ordinary visitor.”

“After the Chancel and Chancel-aisle the other features of the church may perhaps seem to be comparatively uninteresting, though they are indeed far from being so. The Nave arcade is well designed and well detailed 15th century work. The roofs are all old and good examples of simple honest carpentry. There are some good open seats, and the doors and their hinges are also good. Lastly, the Western steeple is a very good composition; it is of four stages in height with diagonal buttresses at the angles, battlemented, and finished with a low, but well-framed timber spire behind the embattled parapet. A peculiarity worthy of notice in the tower is the low height of the belfry stage, which is lighted by small two-light windows.

"The works of restoration which have recently been carried out, have been confined to the development and exhibition to the utmost advantage of all the ancient features. All the old screens, the reredos, the slabs of the floors have been brought back to their original condition with singularly happy effect. The modern ceilings have been removed from the nave and aisle roofs, and the church has been re-seated with seats copied from the old examples which still remained. The Chancel has a new open roof, and the only unrestored portion is the steeple, which urgently requires structural repairs, for which, however, funds were not forthcoming.

"Warfield Church in its present state shows as well as any church in the diocese how completely useful for the services of the Church of England an old church is when restored upon the absolutely conservative lines which I adopted here, as I always do. The truth is, that for our services, nothing is so fitting as the old arrangements of the Middle Ages restored in their integrity, whilst nothing can be more beautiful; and if any justification be needed for the restoration of ancient buildings, it is more than found in a case like this, when, if the restoration had not been undertaken in our own day, it would have been reserved for our successors to discover the precious old fragments built up on a modern wall, on which all the new work has been modelled, and with which it has in some parts been re-constructed.

"I regret that I am unable to give you a more complete and detailed account of this remarkable church. But the few notes here put together will, I hope, draw more general attention to it, and to the work which you have with so much energy succeeded in carrying on in it.

"Believe me to be, yours very faithfully,

"GEORGE EDMUND STREET.

"THE REV. FRANCIS T. GILL."

Leaving Warfield the drive was continued to Binfield, where the Society was met by the Rector, the Rev. E. Savory, who kindly drew attention to the various points of interest. He pointed out that All Saints' Church, Binfield, is a church of nave aisles and chancel aisles: partly Early English, partly Decorated and Perpendicular: with open cradled roof, with very heavy oak beams, restored in 1848, 1853, and 1859. There is a curious wrought-iron stand and an hour glass on the pulpit, which bears the date of 1628. There is a very good porch, decorated. A peculiarity of the church is that it slopes down from west to east, there being a step *down* into the chancel. The Registers begin from 1538, and are in good preservation. There are five bells, all dated 1698. Some mention is made of Binfield in the Court Rolls of the Manor of Cookham, which commence in the thirty-second year of Edward III.—1358. In the Bray Court Roll—twentieth Edward I., 1292—mention is made of a Baron de *Benetfelde*: and in

the Cookham Court Rolls—eighteenth Richard II., 1393 and 1395—John Hereward de *Benfeld* and Edmund Smewyn did homage for certain lands in *Benfelde*; and in eleventh Henry IV., 1410, Edward Smewyn and Joan de Foxle were fined for stopping water courses in *Denefeld*, and other misdemeanours. (Smewyn is probably *Swayne* of a later date.) There is a curious notice in the same roll in the year 1517—Henry VII., July 15th. The churchwardens—Richard Rediche and Richard Swayne—applied to Queen Catherine for a grant of a part of her waste land in Binfield (de vasto solo sue in Benfeld), to build thereon a house, to be called "*Le Chirchouse*," on the south side of the churchyard. Permission was granted on condition of a wax candle of four pounds weight being kept burning before the image of St. Catherine in the church during service hours, on all days except Sundays and Holy Days. Another grant from the Crown gave permission for the erection of outhouses to the said house, which was used as a poor house subsequently till 1766, when it was pulled down and a new poor house built elsewhere. A list of the Rectors of Binfield is given in one of the parish books, extracted from the Register Office at Sarum. The first being that of Thomas de Thorp, 1315. The next, Walter de Anneford, whose memorial brass is still in existence at the entrance of the chancel: thirty-four in all up to 1859, giving an average of sixteen years each. In the church there are monuments to Lord Alexander Viscount Canada and Earl of Sterline, 1739; Henry Howard, Lord of the Honour of Clun, grandson of the Earl of Suffolk, 1675; Baroness Sunderlin; General Hotham, 1806; and Admiral Sir W. Hotham, 1848; and Catharine Macaulay Graham.

Leaving Binfield Church, the visitors proceeded to Mrs. Caswall's, by her kind invitation, where they were most hospitably received at tea, and afterwards spent a pleasant half-hour in strolling round her gardens. This ended the day's proceedings, and the party returned to Reading.

