



Proceedings of Societies.

BERKS ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—On July 28th the members of this society visited the interesting portion of the County of Berks that lies between Wallingford and Didcot. It is a paradise for antiquaries and many valuable discoveries have been made in that district. The party left Reading by train to Cholsey, where carriages awaited them, and a short drive conveyed them to Cholsey Church, which was described by the President, Mr. Keyser, his architectural knowledge being always of great service to the Society, and his pleasant and graphic descriptions of the ecclesiastical edifices much appreciated. The next place visited was the interesting church of North Moreton. The village of Brightwell was the next stopping place, and then the heights of Sinodon Hill were climbed, and Mr. Ditchfield read a copy of the rhymes carved upon a tree there, but now quite unreadable, and described the ancient earthworks and fortifications of the neighbourhood. Little Wittenham was next visited. Mr. Keyser described the church, and Mr. Walter Money read an interesting paper on the history of the Dunch family which is published in this number of this journal. A short visit was paid to the Rectory barn, wherein are stored the remains of beautifully-carved tombs and monuments of the Dunch family, which had been removed from the church in 1865. At Long Wittenham the Vicar, the Rev. T. D. Hopkyns, and the Churchwardens, Admiral Clutterbuck and Mr. H. J. Hewett, entertained the members of the party to tea in the vicarage garden, a kindness which was much appreciated. The President expressed the thanks of the Society to Mr. and Mrs. Hopkyns, Admiral and Lady Clutterbuck, and Mr. and Mrs. Hewett for their kind hospitality. After tea the church was visited and the gardens and fishponds of the manor house, and then the party was conveyed to Didcot, and returned to Reading about 8 p.m., after a most enjoyable day. On October 6th, the Society visited Guildford, Compton and Loseley Park.

NEWBURY AND DISTRICT FIELD CLUB.—On September 28th, the members visited the interesting and old-world villages of Steventon, Drayton, Sutton Courtenay, and Milton. The district afforded fruitful ground for antiquarian research, and the excursion proved most instructive and agreeable. The day's proceedings showed that it is not necessary to go out of the county in order to discover interesting districts which have not hitherto been carefully examined, and we hope to publish at length some of the descriptions by Mr. Money and others of historical buildings which were visited on this occasion. The thanks of the members are due to Mr. Watts for his excellent arrangements. The churches were described by Mr. Keyser. Of Steventon we were told that the structure took its present form during the two centuries 1180—1380. There are examples of the Transitional from the Norman to the Decorated in the chancel, nave and south aisle, terminating with the tower. On the south side of the nave are two arches of unequal span, one belonging to the Transitional and the other Decorated. Both piscina and font are 15th century work, to which period

the roof would also belong. The benches are good examples of the pre-Reformation period, and the pulpit is Jacobean, of which it is a fine specimen. A table tomb in the church had been destroyed and the remaining inscription had curiously been turned round. The earliest register, 1553—1559, is in the British Museum. The stone cross in the churchyard was restored in 1836. Drayton Church, a Gothic structure dedicated to St. Peter, contains in the Lady Chapel an old aumbrey, and in the south wall a credence and piscina, there being two other piscinæ in the church; a plain round Norman font. In the Lady Chapel may be seen some curious and elaborate carvings in alabaster representing the Betrayal, the Scourging, the Crucifixion, and the Entombment of our Saviour, the Adoration and Annunciation, which were discovered in 1814, when digging a vault in the church. The chancel and porch are of modern date. The church at Sutton Courtenay is Gothic, with brick south porch, and priest's room over, altar tombs, Norman font, traces of frescoes, a beautiful Jacobean pulpit, and a mural brass to the memory of the late Lord Wantage. Some rare volumes, the remainder of what was formerly a considerable library, kept in the church, were laid out for inspection. These included, among others, a 1611 Bible, Stackhouse Bible, Bishop Jewell's *Apology* (1570), Dr. Helvyn's *Life of Archbishop Laud*, and Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* (1631). In one instance a chain was attached, showing that the book was formerly chained to a desk in the church. This was inspected with interest, and one gentleman remarked that perhaps the way to cause people to prize their Bibles would be to again keep them chained. Near the door a curious painting was pointed out, giving the representation of seven widows who were entitled to a certain charity, and direction was also given that the Vicar should preach a sermon on Corpus Christi day. The date of the bequest was 1641.

