

Proceedings of Societies.

BERKS ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—EXCURSION TO WELLS, GLASTONBURY AND CHEDDAR.—On Wednesday and Thursday, July 26th and 27th, the Berks Archæological Society visited Somerset, and spent two very pleasant days in the Cathedral City of Wells, proceeding also to the famous Abbey of Glastonbury and the Cliffs and Caves of Cheddar. A two days' excursion had not previously been attempted by the Society, and the authorities were so gratified by the success of this experiment that it may possibly become an established feature of their programme. Leaving Reading at 10.25 a.m., the party travelled through Newbury and Westbury to Wells, where comfortable accommodation had been engaged at the Swan Hotel, a charming old-fashioned hostel, where the proprietor, Mr. George, had made excellent arrangements for the comfort and convenience of his guests. It faces the Cathedral, and affords a magnificent view of the glorious West Front of that noble church. The "Swan" has a history extending over five hundred years and frequent references are made to it in the City records. When John de Villula of Tours was appointed Bishop of Wells in 1090, he built a hostel for pilgrims, and as his badge was a swan it is not difficult to believe that the original "Swan" was the hostelry he built. It was in the Middle Ages the inn where the Judges of Assize lodged, and is mentioned in the 14th century when it passed from the hands of the Chapter to the Corporation of the City. In 1422 the Corporation granted a lease of that *magnum hospicium vocatum le Swan* to John Pury and Isabel his wife. In 1501 it was let to William Chamberlayne; in 1692 to Joseph Pearce. Amongst the visitors at the house have been the Duke of Monmouth and Lord Grey, the infamous Judge Jefferies and Kirke and his lambs. The inn played a prominent part in the coaching age, and no more suitable place could be found for the sojourn of antiquaries. Luncheon was served on arrival, and directly afterwards the pilgrimage began with a visit to the Bishop's Palace, a fine specimen of a prelate's residence. It was commenced in 1205 by Bishop Joselyne. The crypt, now the entrance hall, is his work. The Chapel was built by Bishop Burnell, 1274 to 1292, and also the fine banqueting hall which was destroyed in the reign of Edward VI., and the ruins of which testify to its former magnificence. The wall of the palace gatehouse and the moat are the work of Bishop Ralph (1329 to 1363). The party were taken through the beautiful grounds, and admired the curious trees, the wells whence the city takes its name, and the chapel and crypt. The hour fixed for the inspection of the cathedral approached, and the visitors went through the cloisters to the church, where the Dean and Canon Church were waiting to receive them. Canon Church had kindly undertaken to describe the building, and though he is ninety years of age he delivered an excellent lecture on the history and architecture of the Cathedral, on which he is the chief authority. Dean Robinson relieved the venerable Canon and conducted the visitors to the Chapter House, and then they wandered through the choir, presbytery and Lady Chapel, noting the various features of interest, amongst others the striking of the curious clock, quaint figures striking the hour, and little men on horseback chasing each other round in a mimic tournament. The striking of the clock also pleasantly sounded the time of tea, and after that

welcome interlude the party visited St. Cuthbert's Church, and were welcomed by Prebendary Beresford, who gave a learned lecture on the history of the fabric, one of the best examples of Perpendicular architecture in England, and afterwards conducted the antiquaries to the adjoining Budwith Almshouses, founded in 1436 and preserving their original features which are very similar to those at Chichester. The President and others who were not quite exhausted by the round of sight-seeing visited the famous Vicar's Close—described by Freeman as "matchless"—joined to the Cathedral by the wonderful Chain gate, once occupied by the vicars choral, formerly fifty in number, who did duty in the Cathedral. Dinner was served at 7.30. Mr. Ditchfield announced that the Mayor and Mayoress of Wells had kindly invited the Society to a reception at the Town Hall after dinner, an invitation which was much appreciated. The Mayor and Mayoress, the Town Clerk and Mrs. Foster, the Dean and others received the Berkshire antiquaries, and an interesting collection of the treasures of the Corporation was exhibited. There was a charter by King John granted to Wells which some of the party amused themselves by deciphering, and other charters, a Corporation diary dating back to the 14th century, and Bishop Bickington's grant of water to the city. Amongst the insignia of the Corporation there were two maces of silver-gilt dating from the time of Charles II., loving cups, High Constable's staves bearing the date 1686, ancient seals, and some good pictures, two of them by Sir Peter Lely. The Town Clerk explained the treasures. The President heartily thanked the Mayor for his kindness in welcoming them, and the Mayor replied. After refreshments the party returned to the "Swan." Breakfasting early on Thursday, July 27th, the company were soon on their way to Glastonbury, where the Bishop of Bath and Wells, who was away from home, had kindly directed his Chaplain to receive them at the station and to conduct them to the Abbey. It would require much space to record all the beauties of that wondrous pile of ruins, which have been purchased by the Church of England, the money being raised by the Bishop, and the property placed in the charge of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. Especial interest was added to the visit by the presence of Mr. Francis Bond, who has for some years been superintending the excavations at the Abbey, conducted by the Somerset Archæological Society. This work has revealed many objects of interest, the existence of the north porch, the apse and part of the choir, the cloisters, chapter house and other monastic buildings, and St. Dunstan's Chapel at the extreme west. The Chapel of St. Joseph, one of the best specimens surviving of the Transition style from Norman to Early English, was especially admired. It was noticed that while at Wells in that portion which was built at the same time the pointed arch was used, at Glastonbury the builders still clung to the Norman round arch. Mr. Bond's explanations were clear and informing, and the President heartily thanked him for devoting so much of his time to the service of the Berkshire visitors. The Abbot's kitchen was then visited, a curious specimen of domestic architecture with its four huge fireplaces, arched octagonal pyramidal roof with a double lantern, one within the other. The George Hotel, formerly a pilgrims' hostel, the Tribunal and St. John's Church were visited, and then the hour arrived for the return journey to Wells. Owing to the lateness of the train luncheon at the "Swan" was a somewhat hurried meal, and then the party departed from the Cathedral City by train at 2.5 p.m. for Cheddar, to see the famous cliffs and caves. The grand beauty of

the scenery, the winding passage through the chasms, the cliffs rising on each side in the most picturesque and fantastic forms, were viewed with much interest, and the party explored the recesses of one of the caves where beautiful stalactites, spars and crystallisations present interesting phenomena. After partaking of tea in a lovely garden the return journey was begun. At Wells the baggage of the party was regained, and the proprietor of the "Swan" came to bid farewell to his guests whom he had so well catered for during their sojourn at the Cathedral City. On the platform of the station Mr. Newman proposed on behalf of the members present a cordial vote of thanks to Mr. Keyser and Mr. Ditchfield for the excellent arrangements they had made for the comfort and convenience of the company, and for conducting them to such a charming locality as Wells and its neighbourhood, where they had all enjoyed themselves so much. Their programme had been admirably arranged and thoroughly well carried out. Mr. Ditchfield expressed his thanks on behalf of the President and himself for their kind appreciation. A fast train conveyed the Archæologists homeward, Reading being reached at 7.30. The members of the Berks Society will long retain pleasant recollections of their visit.

On October 2nd the Society visited Winkfield, Warfield and Binfield, where the members were the guests of the Rector and Lady Mary Bevan. On arrival at Winkfield Church the President drew the members' attention to the beautiful epitaph to the memory of Charles Theophilus, the first and last Lord Metcalfe. The words were written by Lord Macaulay, and were a fine testimony to one who had held extremely difficult positions in India, Jamaica and Canada. Winkfield was a very large parish and comprised a great deal of the Forest of Windsor. Next to Lambourn it was the most extensive parish in Berkshire, consisting of 10,000 acres. The church had been very drastically restored. The great change took place at the time of Queen Elizabeth, and the curious wooden arcade was built in Elizabeth's time. It was a Royal arcade, because the central column was re-built at the time of Queen Victoria, and her name appeared on it. About the middle of last century, or a little later, the western half-column was taken away to make room for heating apparatus. That column had been restored, and bore the name of their late lamented King, Edward VII. There was a good deal of earlier work. No doubt the church was there in the 14th century. Mr. C. A. Ferard, Lord of the Manor, said the reason so little was known about that church and parish was because the parish was in the Forest of Windsor. The Forest and game laws were so strict that people did not like to live there, and so there was hardly any population, and everything practically died out. The pillars of the church were a great feature. There were only about two other churches in England where the pillars were in the centre of the church. The Vicar, the Rev. H. M. Maynard, gave a list of the vicars of the parish, dating back to 1298. The church tower used to be of wood, but was re-built into brick in 1629. There was an old clock, made by the Druce family. It was still in the parish, and was keeping time very well. The timepiece was made by Henry Druce in 1707, and was given to the church on condition that he was allowed 40s. a year to wind it up and keep it in repair. He had to wind it every day and come some distance to do the work, so that the remuneration was not great. The Rev. P. H. Ditchfield expressed the thanks of the members to Mr. Ferard and the Vicar for their interesting observations. The party next visited the beautiful church at Warfield.

Mr. Keyser described it as one of the most beautiful churches in the county. A visit was paid to it in 1880 and a very able account of the church was then read from the notes made by Mr. Street, the architect who restored it. They would all admire the beautiful east window. The roofs were of particularly fine timber of the 15th century. The history of Warfield was much the same as that of Winkfield and Binfield. Warfield was connected with Wargrave and was in the Hundred of that parish. At Warfield Church they had the finest example of decorated work, with the exception of Shottesbrook. A note of sadness was struck on entering this fine building owing to the absence of the Rev. B. C. Littlewood. The Rev. P. H. Ditchfield said they were very grieved that they could not be welcomed by Mr. Littlewood, who had been a great friend of their Society and took the keenest interest in all their doings. It would have given him the greatest pleasure to have welcomed them to Warfield. They knew he died quite recently and no new vicar had yet been appointed. He had received a letter from Mrs. Littlewood saying she was very sorry she could not be present. He would reply telling Mrs. Littlewood how much they missed the genial presence of the late Vicar. The third church visited was that of Binfield, and Mr. Keyser pointed out the fine porch of 15th century work. The church dated from about 1360, and the old Norman font was of still earlier date. It was tub shaped with modern base. One of the most interesting features was the hour glass by the beautiful pulpit. The iron ornamentation work was extremely fine. Attention was also drawn to the palimpsest brass. The Rector (the Rev. R. A. C. Bevan) also gave the visitors much information, and afterwards he and Lady Mary Bevan entertained the company at tea in the Rectory.

NEWBURY DISTRICT FIELD CLUB.—EXCURSION TO FYFIELD, APPLETON, AND BESSILSLEIGH.—The excursion organised by the Newbury and District Field Club for Friday, June 30th, was one confined to Berkshire. Though in the past the objects of interest in the ancient borough of Abingdon have been explored, places in the neighbourhood famous for their connection with the history of the past have never been visited. Hence this excursion filled up a hiatus in the Berkshire records of the Society. The party proceeded by train to Abingdon and thence down to Fyfield, where Mr. Keyser met them at the church, and described its features. His remarks were illustrated with plans and books. He agreed in the main with notes which had already been previously prepared by Mr. Walter Money, and had been printed for the assistance of the visitors. With the exception of the exterior walls mostly of the thirteenth century, and of the two principal monuments, viz., that of Sir Thomas Golafre, ob. 1442, with his recumbent effigy of a mailed knight above, and a cadaver or shrouded skeleton below; and of the tabernacled tomb of Lady Catherine Gordon, the White Rose of Scotland, daughter of Alexander, 3rd Earl of Huntley, widow of Perkin Warbeck, and at her death (1527) wife of Christopher Ashfield, of Fyfield; also of the heraldic memorial slabs of the Whites; the ornate Gothic Piscina, and the triple Sedilia, all—including the Perpendicular Parclose Chapel of St. John Baptist, with its quaintly carved Miserere stalls, and the rood-screen of decorated style, was utterly destroyed by fire October 27, 1893.—All that a careful and generous restoration can do has been done. The chancel is of the Dec. Period throughout, and was built (c. 1350) by Sir John Golafre, grandfather of that John Golafre who died in 1442, and built the N.

aisle (Perp.). The two E. bays of this aisle are screened off, and form the Golafre chantry, in which is the founder's monument. He also founded a Hospital here, dedicated to St. John Baptist. In the dripstone-corbels of the S.W. window of the chancel, are supposed to be represented John Golafre (the elder) and his wife, and in those of the S.E. window, Edward II. and his Queen. The W. and N. doors are good rounded-headed E.E. On the N.W. over the churchyard wall, is the tall gabled manor-house, now Elizabethan in appearance, which was restored by Mr. James Parker, of Oxford, who lived here for many years. It was the property and seat of the family of Golafre. John Golafre was knight of the shire in 1337. Sir John Golafre was employed in an embassy to France in 1389. His son, Sir John Golafre, died seized of the manor in 1442. The manor and advowson of Fyfield was purchased of the representatives of Lady Gordon, by Sir Thomas White, who gave them to the President and scholars of St. John's College, Oxford, founded by him in 1555. Sir Thomas White, Lord Mayor of London 1554, and founder of St. John's, was the son of William White, of Reading, gent. The pedigree is given in the Visitations of 1623 and 1665-6. Through the kindness of Mrs. Crum the visitors were permitted to inspect the rooms of this interesting old mansion, which has been genuinely restored to make a comfortable twentieth century residence. Prior to the occupancy of Mr. James Parker it had fallen into dilapidation and was used as tenements for village labourers and their families, whilst in the hall a dame's school was carried on. After an acknowledgment by the President of the day (Mr. Keyser) of Mrs. Crum's kindness, seats in the carriages were re-taken, and twenty minutes' drive brought the expeditionists to Appleton, another old world village of some four hundred inhabitants. Here lunch was taken at the Plough Inn. The Church of St. Lawrence, mostly Trans. and E.E., is a plain structure, with chancel, nave, and square embattled tower, and a fine peal of 10 bells, six of which were given by Robert Southby in 1817. The church contains a shroud brass to John Goodryngton, 1518, and his wife Dorothy; who after his death "toke relygon in ye monastery of Syon." There is also a fine Elizabethan tomb to Sir John Fettiplace, 1593. The Rector (the Rev. William Moore) kindly met the party and showed them over the church, and in conjunction with Mr. Keyser explained its many features of interest. The principal manor was successively in the hands of the families of Fitz Warine, Castine, Petyt, and Fettiplaces. The latter acquired it by marriage from the Besils, but sold it c. 1600 to the Hanleys, of whom before the middle of the 17th century, it was purchased by the Southbys. The manor house, formerly surrounded by a moat, part of which has been filled in, has very considerable and surprising remains of Norman and E.E. work, and is as early as the time of Henry II. The fine doorway with E.E. mouldings, has been engraved in Lysons and in Parker's *Domestic Architecture*. Robert Southby, of Appleton, aged 60, in 1664, was the son of Richard Southby, of Carswell, in the parish of Buckland. The family of Southby is divided into a senior and junior branch, the Southbys formerly of Carswell, and the latter formerly of Hodcott, in West Ilsley, who trace their descent from Richard, son of John Southby, who purchased the manor of Carswell of Sir John Fettiplace in 1557. The manor of Appleton is no longer in possession of the Southbys. Though at present unoccupied through recent deaths, permission had been granted for an inspection of this ancient mansion, which possesses so many features of interest. There were two other manor houses in this parish, the moats of which still exist. The manor of Tinteynes passed by a female heir to the family of Besils, of the adjoining parish of Bessilsleigh, to the Fettiplaces, and there appears to have been formerly a considerable mansion at Tinteynes, within the moated site. It was here that Oliver

Cromwell is reported to have slept, and the room was pointed out. The old mansion is now let out in tenements. This manor was purchased of the Fettiplaces by a Mr. Cook, who sold it to Mr. Robert Southby at the latter end of the 18th century. The other manor was called Eaton, from Eaton, a township one mile north, which anciently belonged to the family of St. Hilary, and passed by a female heir, to Aylmer, Lord St. Amand. It was afterwards the property of Sir John Golafre; and at a later period to Sir Thomas White, who gave it to St. John's College, Oxford. A free school for 8 boys was founded here by Sir Richard Fettiplace in 1603. At the Heralds' Visitation in 1665-6, Walter Wightwick, of Appleton, disclaimed bearing arms, also John Lane, gent., Peter Stevens, Richard Dodwell, and Richard Sellwood—Robert Southby, was introduced. The pedigree of the Dentons of Witham, in the Visitation of 1574-5, commences with Thomas Denton, Esq., of Appleton, who was succeeded in his estate there by his son John, and grandson Thomas. They afterwards removed to Fyfield. The White family, of Appleton, have for generations been famous bell-ringers, and experts in everything relating to Campanology. Many famous peals have been rung on the ten sweet-toned bells in the church tower by the Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers. Mr. Theodore White, one of the visitors, claims to be descended by a collateral branch of the family from the Appleton Whites. There is what is termed a Holy Well at Appleton. These ancient wells, which were regarded as possessing medicinal virtues, were determined as holy by the diocesan, by canons passed in 960 and 1102, and abuses were condemned by the Synod of Winchester in 1308. The next place to be visited was Bessilsleigh. Bessilsleigh derives its name from the ancient family of Besils, who obtained the estate by marriage in 1350. From the Besils the estate passed to the Fettiplaces, by whom it was sold in 1634 to William Lenthall, Speaker of the House of Commons, when Charles I. made his visit to arrest the five members, and also of the Long Parliament, who occasionally resided here. It is an interesting historical fact, though not generally known, that shortly before his execution, King Charles I. sent for Lenthall, and freely forgave him for the part he had taken in the proceedings which ultimately led to judgement of death being pronounced against him. The Speaker died at Burford, 3 Sept., 1662, and was buried two days later in Pynock's Aisle of Burford Church. Sir John Lenthall, son of the Speaker, M.P. for Abingdon, and Governor of Windsor Castle during the Commonwealth, was created a baronet by Oliver Cromwell. His son, Sir William, M.P. for Wallingford, was gentleman of the privy chamber to Charles II. Leaving no issue, the elder branch of the Lenthalls became extinct at his decease. The late Edmund Kyffin Lenthall, William Kyffin Lenthall, and Frank Kyffin Lenthall, were descended from William John Lenthall, high sheriff of Carnarvon and Merioneth, who married into the Kyffin family, of Magnan, Co. Carnarvon, in 1789. The late Mr. Frank Lenthall, F.S.A., a Barrister of the Inner Temple, and Recorder of Woodstock, a position he told the writer he had a great desire to fill, as his ancestor, the Speaker, represented that borough in Parliament, was a most genial man, with great charm of manner, and one whom it was impossible not to admire and respect. His brother, Edmund, was a well-known figure with the Old Berks, and on the Abingdon Bench. The stately old manor house, which Leland describes as built of stone, stood near to the west end of the church, is destroyed, except a picturesque fragment of the offices, now used as a farmhouse, and the massive stone pillars of the gateway, which stand isolated among the trees in the field, just over the west wall of the churchyard. It is probable that this gateway was built by Inigo Jones. In the old house at Bessilsleigh was preserved the large picture of the family of Sir Thomas More, now at Cokethorpe, Oxfordshire. Bessilsleigh manor is a modern mansion in the Tudor style. The church is small and aisleless; originally E.E., but now mostly poor Perp. The E. and W. windows are Trans E.E. Dec., and the former is cinquefoiled inside. There is a Dec. Piscina, W.L. bellcote of two niches, and a projection carrying the rood-stair on the N. Inside are some plain monuments to the Lenthalls. Here Miss Lenthall met the party and explained the principal features of the church, with which she was most thoroughly conversant. The return journey was made to Abingdon, and thence to Newbury. Mr. Watts was heartily thanked for his arrangements.