

PROCEEDINGS.

THE usual spring meeting of the Council of the Cumberland and Westmorland Archaeological Society was held at Tullie House, Carlisle, on March 15th, 1939. At this meeting arrangements were made for the summer excursion of the Society to Wiltshire and Dorsetshire, and the following new members of the Society were duly proposed and declared elected:—

Mr. J. Abbot, Grasmere; Mr. R. W. B. Carter, Glenalmond; Mr. N. Gatey, Windermere; Mr. D. B. Johnstone, Windermere; Mr. Hugh Livingstone, Kendal; Mrs. M. Sharp, Ulverston.

SUMMER MEETING.

The summer meeting of the Society was held in Wiltshire, with Salisbury as a centre, during the four days, June 6th-9th, 1939. Arrangements for the meeting were in the hands of Mr. R. E. Porter, M.C., F.S.A., assisted by a joint committee of our own members and Wiltshire and Dorsetshire archaeologists who kindly gave us the advantage of their local knowledge. Their names were as follow:—Mr. O. G. S. Crawford, F.S.A.; Mr. B. Howard Cunningham, F.S.A.Scot.; Lieut.-Col. C. D. Drew, D.S.O., F.S.A.; Mr. Alex. Keiller, F.S.A., F.G.S.; Mr. Frank Stevens, O.B.E.; The Hon. Marjorie Cross; Dr. J. E. Spence, F.S.A.

Despite the long journey involved in attending the meeting and the fact that it was prolonged for four days, the attractiveness of the programme tempted a very large number of our members to join this excursion. Those who took part in it were amply rewarded for their enterprising spirit, as they were enabled to visit under the guidance of experts some of the most remarkable of our British historical monuments, and to enjoy amid perfect weather conditions a journey through a beautiful and interesting part of our country. Those responsible for the organisation of the excursion may congratulate themselves upon having provided for the Society one of its most memorable expeditions outside our own district.

TUESDAY, JUNE 6TH, 1939.

The party, having arrived at Salisbury on the preceding evening, assembled at 10 a.m. at the Salisbury and Blackmore Museum in St. Ann Street. Here they had the benefit of the guidance of Mr. Frank Stevens, O.B.E., F.S.A., to whose devoted labours this fine collection of objects of local archaeological interest owes so much. Under the charge of Mr. Stevens and members of his staff, they were enabled during an hour's visit to see the principal exhibits of the prehistoric section of the museum. Among these were the fine collection of flint implements from the "drift," pottery from local barrows, a most instructive series of bronze implements and objects found during the course of excavations in Salisbury and Old Sarum. Not the least interesting of the exhibits was a series of models and photographs of Stonehenge, Avebury and other prehistoric monuments. The inspection of these, coupled with the clear explanations given by Mr. Stevens, was an admirable preparation for the visits paid to prehistoric monuments during the days which followed. No less interesting were the rich exhibits of local neo-archaic objects and the collection of local costumes.

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL.

From the museum the members of the party walked to the north-east corner of the cathedral close, where they were met by Mr. H. Messenger, who described the great church, perhaps the best and purest example of a building in the first pointed or Early English style of architecture. Commenced by Bishop Poore in 1220, upon the abandonment of the old cathedral at Sarum, Salisbury Cathedral was completed under that bishop's immediate successors and consecrated in 1258 by Boniface of Savoy, Archbishop of Canterbury, in the presence of Henry III and his queen. The cathedral thus shows a remarkable uniformity of plan, and owing to the fact that it was built upon a site unoccupied by previous structures, it stands in the midst of a wide close free from encumbrances to detract from its appearance. This close was surrounded by an embattled wall in the reign of Edward III, who in 1331 granted a licence for the removal of stones from the church of Old Sarum for the purpose. Stones with Norman mouldings, evidently from this source, are to be noticed over the north gate of the close.

The upper part of the central tower and the beautiful spire which crowns it were not completed till the later half of the 14th century, but were evidently, from the evidence of the

remarkable abutments running through the clerestory of the nave choir and transepts, part of the original plan. The west front, which shows the ball-flower ornament in some of its mouldings, was evidently the last part of the church to be finished.

Salisbury Cathedral suffered at the Reformation when it was despoiled of most of its stained glass windows. Afterwards the building suffered a period of neglect until, under Bishop Barrington, it was restored, with not altogether happy results, by James Wyatt, who, among other acts of vandalism, destroyed the campanile of the 13th century, which formerly stood on the north side of the churchyard, removed screens, and desecrated and destroyed many of the tombs of warriors and prelates which formerly adorned the cathedral.

Mr. Messenger drew special attention to the beauty and regularity of the masonry, the stones of which are from the Portland beds of oolite, while the pillars and pilasters of the interior are of Purbeck Marble. The party then visited the interior of the cathedral, where Mr. Messenger pointed out some of the most interesting monuments, re-arranged by Wyatt in 1789 upon pediments along the nave. Among these are two slabs with figures in low relief, brought from Old Sarum and supposed to represent Bishop Joscelyn (d. 1184) and Bishop Roger (d. 1139). Other monuments are those of Bishop Beauchamp (d. 1482), the fine effigy of the great William Longespée (d. 1226), first earl of Salisbury and natural son of Henry II, Sir John Montacute (d. 1389), younger son of William Montacute, earl of Salisbury, a curious monument of a Boy Bishop and others.

The beautiful cloister of the cathedral was then visited. This dates from the period immediately succeeding the completion of the cathedral itself, and is of a somewhat less severe type of architecture than that of the rest of the church, its clustered angle-columns having enriched capitals. Coins of Edward I have been found during the restoration in parts of the foundations of the building. The Chapter House, which appears to date also from the early years of the reign of Edward I is a noble octagonal building, with an internal diameter of about fifty-eight feet. The vaulting ribs of its roof fall upon a central pillar, and each side is occupied by a large window of four lights with an arcade of seven bays below it. Special attention was drawn to the interesting sculptures which fill the voussoirs of the arch of the vestibule of this beautiful building.

Before leaving the cathedral, many of the party visited the library, where, among other treasures are a copy of the Gregorian

Litany with an Anglo-Saxon version, an early copy of Geoffrey of Monmouth and a copy of Magna Carta, supposed to be the transcript committed to William Longespée, earl of Salisbury, as one of the original witnesses.

After the President had conveyed the thanks of the Society to Mr. Messenger for his interesting description of this famous building, the party repaired to lunch, setting off again in the afternoon by motor coaches from the White Hart Hotel to visit Old Sarum and Stonehenge.

OLD SARUM.

At this, our first halting place, we listened to a most interesting description of this great hill fort by Mr. Duncan H. Montgomerie, F.S.A. Old Sarum, the Roman Sorbiodunum and Saxon Scarobyrig, occupies the summit of a huge conical knoll, now bare but formerly covered with buildings, religious, ecclesiastical and domestic. The whole summit of the hill is surrounded by an enormous earthen rampart and ditch enclosing an area of almost 28 acres. In the centre is a second circular earthwork within which stood the citadel surrounded by a strong wall some twelve feet in thickness, built of flint embedded in rubble and coated with square stones. The great outer earthwork has two entrances, one of which, the western, is guarded by a hornwork, while that on the east is a postern. There may possibly have been an original British stronghold here, but the first occupants to fortify the site on a large scale seem to have been the Romans who defended it with a single escarpment without a ditch. The present ditch and the central citadel appear in the first place to have been the work of the Saxons, when the site was acquired by King Cynric after his victory over the Britons in 552. In 1036 King Canute died at Scarobyrig.

The site of the cathedral, the foundations of which have now been uncovered by the excavations of H.M. Office of Works, were then inspected. The church originated in a nunnery founded in the reign of Edward the Confessor, and about 1072 two sees, Wiltshire and Sherborne, were re-united and transferred to Scarobyrig, now re-named Sarum. Bishop Osmund finished his new cathedral in 1091 and established the new ritual, the well-known "Sarum Use." Henry I's celebrated chancellor, Bishop Roger, did much to improve both the church and the fortifications. Old Sarum began to decline in Stephen's reign, owing to the congestion of the buildings, the difficulty of obtaining a satisfactory water supply and the inconvenience of the site. Finally

it was partially abandoned when Bishop Richard Poore obtained a grant of "Merrifield" in 1220, for the purpose of building his new cathedral. Leyland in the 16th century stated that there was not a single house left within or without Old Saresbyri."

After Mr. McIntire had thanked Mr. Montgomerie for his address, the party spent some time under the lecturer's guidance in examining the walls of the citadel, the site of its keep, the gateways and a massive tower upon the walls where some of the objects found during the course of the recent excavations were exhibited. They then resumed their journey to Salisbury Plain and Stonehenge, where they were fortunate in having for their guide Mr. W. F. Grimes, M.A., F.S.A., who has kindly promised to supply an article epitomising his interesting description of Stonehenge to the next volume of *Transactions*.

STONEHENGE.

In expressing, on behalf of the Society, their thanks to Mr. Grimes for his deeply interesting address, Mr. McIntire expressed the hope that it might be published in our *Transactions* more fully than it was usually possible to print such descriptions of sites in "Proceedings." He stressed the importance to members of our Section for Prehistoric Studies of the information it contained.

On the way back to Salisbury the route led past "Woodhenge" and members were enabled to obtain a view of the site of that remarkable wood circle, the cement pillars marking the post-holes being plainly visible from the road.

GENERAL MEETING.

A general meeting of the Society was held in the evening at the Museum, when the President (Mr. W. T. McIntire) presided over a very large attendance of members.

The Editor of *Transactions* (Mr. W. T. McIntire) reported that 100 pages of matter for *Transactions*, N.S. xxxix were now in type and that a further amount was in galley proof. For the Parish Register Section of the Society, Mr. C. S. Jackson reported that volume 1 of Penrith Registers was now complete and 90 pages of vol. 2 already in type. On behalf of the Committee for Prehistoric Studies, Dr. J. E. Spence reported that excavations had been carried out at Measand by Miss Hodgson and that a report would be issued later. He also announced that work was to be resumed at King Arthur's Round Table on July 16th.

The following new members were duly proposed and elected:—

Mrs. A. Bentley, Lancaster; Cleator Moor Parish Council; Mr. R. Daltry, M.A., Carlisle; Mrs. Gillott, Lakeside; Major Noble, Kent; Mrs. Swinglehurst, Kendal.

The Hon. Excursions Secretary (Mr. R. E. Porter, F.S.A.) stated that he had not yet been able to make any arrangements for the autumn meeting of the Society but that Carlisle would be its headquarters.

The following papers were read and the same directed to be published in an early volume of *Transactions*:—

“Early Owners of Ewanrigg, Cumberland,” by Mr. J. Skelton.

“Notes on Knaphill and Neighbourhood,” by the Rev. W. S. Sykes.

Among the exhibits at the meeting was a collection of coins, exhibited by Lieut-Col. O. H. North, on behalf of Mr. A. H. Greg.

LECTURE ON OLD SARUM.

After the general meeting members present were privileged to listen to a highly interesting lecture on Old Sarum, delivered by Mr. Frank Stevens, O.B.E., F.S.A. Employing a large number of lantern slides, Mr. Stevens, gave a description of the site and the buildings which at one time occupied it—both military and ecclesiastical. He gave an account of some of the principal bishops who held the see of Sarum—Herman, Osmund, the great chancellor Bishop Roger and Bishop Poore. He quoted Roger of Blois as evidence of the strained relations which existed in this over-crowded site between the military and ecclesiastical authorities, and gave an amusing account of the latter on one occasion after a day of solemn processions, finding themselves shut out from their own precincts and being compelled to pass the night outside the walls of the hill fortress. Such considerations as these induced Bishop Poore in the 13th century to remove the seat of the bishopric to Merrifield and to form the nucleus of what afterwards became the city of Salisbury.

In thanking Mr. Stevens for his lecture the President alluded to the debt the Society owed to the lecturer, not only for the admirable address to which they had listened that evening, but also for his help at the Museum in the morning and for all the assistance he had so generously supplied to the Committee responsible for the arrangements of the present excursion.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7TH, 1939.

On Wednesday the party left Salisbury for the Avebury district, travelling by Devizes. A brief halt was made at a point four

miles north-east of Devizes where the Wansdyke descends from the North downs to cross the Avebury-Devizes road. This dyke which runs for sixty miles from the Bristol Channel to beyond Savernake Forest, was probably a tribal boundary and is not earlier than the Roman occupation of the country.

Another short halt was made at Silbury Hill, and the party was met at Overton Hill by Mr. Alex. Keiller, F.S.A. and members of his staff.

Mr. W. C. V. Young of the Morven Institute of Archaeological Research then described the Sanctuary, at the excavation of which he had assisted Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Cunnington. The site was known in the eighteenth century as two concentric circles of stones at the end of the West Kennet Avenue, but the stones had been removed and the site lost until it was re-discovered and excavated by Mr. and Mrs. Cunnington.

The monument was found to have consisted of two concentric circles of stones, with the commencement of a stone avenue heading in the direction of Silbury Hill, and also two stones in a line directed towards the south entrance of Avebury. On the east side there were also two outlying stones. There was no encircling ditch. The outer ring was 130 feet in diameter and had consisted of 42 stones. Within this was a fence-ring of 34 small posts 65 feet in diameter. Next came a ring of 16 stone holes alternating with 16 post holes, and then a ring of twelve holes, each of which had held two uprights. In the centre were three smaller rings of holes with a single post hole within all. Against the inner side of a stone in the third ring was found the crouched burial of a youth together with a beaker. During the excavations a large amount of pottery of Peterborough and Beaker types was found. It was concluded that the structure was not roofed and that the stone circles were subsequent to the timber structure, the monument being dated in the Early Bronze Age.

A short distance north of the Sanctuary, the Roman Road with its flanking ditches crosses the Ridge way, and before proceeding to Avebury by the West Kennet Avenue, the members had an opportunity of inspecting this portion of the road.

Mr. Alex. Keiller, F.S.A., then described the West Kennet Avenue which had been excavated and restored by the Morven Institute of Archaeological Research. The avenue consisted of a double line of standing stones, placed in pairs about 50 feet apart, at an average distance of 80 feet, and extended for over a mile from the Sanctuary on Overton Hill to the south entrance of

Avebury. The stones were of a local stone known as "Sarsen." The primary purpose of the excavations which had been carried out was to establish its exact course and if possible to establish the culture to which it belonged and its date. Opportunity was taken to re-erect the fallen stones on their original beds and mark the sites of the missing stones by concrete pylons.

The line of the avenue was tortuous, consisting of relatively straight sections, not in alignment, and as the avenue approached Avebury, it became less regular, the distance between the pairs of stones being reduced. Careful excavation had enabled the Institute to determine the methods adopted in the erection of the monoliths and, by copying these methods, to re-erect some of the stones by using similar primitive tackle.

A clue to the date of the monument was furnished by the discovery of a habitation-site, scattered over which were sherds of Neolithic B pottery and traces of a flint industry characterised by the presence of "petit tranchet" derivatives and two fragments of lava from the Andernach region of the lower Rhine similar to that found at Avebury. Burials were also found at the foot of some stones which were contemporaneous with their erection, and with two of them were found B type beakers. The evidence revealed by excavation indicates that the avenue is of the same date as the circle itself.

The party then proceeded to Avebury, inspecting the Avenue en route, and during the luncheon interval were able to inspect the museum, the gardens surrounding Avebury Manor House and the Parish Church, in which survives a portion of the Saxon nave showing two original window openings, one of them circular.

In the afternoon Mr. Keiller conducted the members round the Avebury monument, commencing at the northern entrance. Mr. Keiller stated that work had been commenced in the north-west sector first, as it was in an undescrivable condition of neglect and was over-grown by a jungle of trees and undergrowth whose roots had already damaged many features below ground. In the north-west sector, four stones were standing, while portions of four more could be distinguished in the field wall boundary. The fallen stones were replaced and the broken stones re-constructed as far as possible. Twelve stones were now standing in this sector and the sites of five more had been located and suitably marked.

The main road from Avebury to Swindon leaves by the northern opening in the vallum and the original entrance was proved to

exist here, but its width could not be ascertained, as its eastern edge lies under the modern roadway. It was at the west side of this entrance that an unexpected post hole was found which did not correspond with the sequence of stones and sockets of the main circle. While uncovering the causeway, a second post hole was discovered and later a third was found, the three sites forming the arc of a circle, which was designated the "north setting," in alignment with the central and south settings near the centre of the monument. The north-east limit of the ditch had cut through the socket hole of the second stone of this circle, evidence that this circle of stones antedated the large circle with its vallum and ditch. The Avebury monument therefore represented two structural periods, the first consisting of three circles unaccompanied by banks and ditches; the second of the great ditch and bank with its attendant circle of megaliths on the inner side and its four entrances. The evidence yielded by excavation indicated that the first phase of Avebury should be allocated to the earliest period of the Early Bronze Age in Wiltshire, while the reconstruction might be referred to a date contemporary with the later occupation of Windmill Hill by A.-beaker folk.

The party were then taken round the north-west sector and afterwards crossed to the south-west sector. In this sector there were visible formerly one standing stone and one fallen stone, while two more which had been buried in shallow pits just showed through the turf.

The remains of the first stone in this sector were found in the bed of an old filled-in pond and the foundations of a forge, while other fragments were identified in an adjacent wall, and were rejoined to the re-erected parent block. The sites of eleven megaliths which had been destroyed, were recovered and suitably indicated by concrete pylons and, in addition to the first stone, ten more were recovered and re-erected.

During the excavation of stone 16 a complete skeleton was found in a narrow space between the stone and the side of the burial pit. The remains were those of an individual who had been accidentally killed, while completing the pit for the burial of the stone which had fallen on him fracturing his pelvis and neck. It has been impossible to remove the body which was pinned down by the megalith and he had been buried with the stone. The discovery of three coins with the skeleton, two silver pennies of Edward I, minted in 1307, and a sterling of the City of Tours, fixed the date of the burial of the stone within a few years.

Another interesting find associated with the skeleton was a pair of pointed scissors, probably those of a barber.

The south entrance was then crossed and the excavation in progress in the south-east sector were explained by Mr. Keiller. At this point a vendor with a bicycle selling a well-known brand of ice cream appeared and was welcomed by a thirsty party who cleared out his entire stock.

The inspection of the monument terminated with a visit to the central setting, and the members were afterwards conducted round the museum where objects from the excavations of West Kennet Avenue, Avebury and Windmill Hill are displayed under ideal conditions.

An extremely interesting day was terminated by the President expressing on behalf of the members their deep appreciation of the work which is being carried out at Avebury by Mr. Keiller and the members of the Morven Institute of Archaeological Research and their sincere thanks for the excellent arrangements Mr. Keiller had made for the inspection of the Monument and his description of the work which had been carried out. The President also expressed the thanks of the meeting to Mr. Young who had addressed the members at the Sanctuary and the other members of the Institute who had assisted in conducting the members round the museum and monument and had most willingly supplied much interesting information in response to endless inquiries.

The return journey to Salisbury was made by West Kennet, Alton Barnes, and Upavon in order to enable the members to see the West Kennet Barrow, the Wansdyke, Knap Hill camp and other earthworks on the downs which lie adjacent to the road.

THURSDAY, JUNE 8TH, 1939.

The third day's excursion included visits to Bradford-on-Avon, Lacock Abbey and Devizes. Leaving Salisbury at 9 a.m., the party travelled by way of Warminster and Trowbridge, and upon its arrival at Bradford-on-Avon had a short interval to gain an impression of that picturesquely situated town and its fine old houses with memories of the days, when under the leadership of such families as the Halls, Hortons, Lucases and Methuens, Bradford was a great centre of the cloth trade.

At 11 a.m. we were met by Mr. Oswald Brakespear, A.R.I.B.A., who most kindly acted as our guide throughout the rest of the day. The first visit was paid to the well-known church of St.

Lawrence, one of the most widely discussed of our pre-Norman buildings. The date of its fabric is sometimes disputed, but it seems probable that the building dates from early in the 8th century when Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, founded a monastery in the town. Our most ancient surviving churches may be divided into three types—the basilican plan, the plan of aisleless nave with apsidal chancel and the plan of an aisleless nave with rectangular chancel. It is to the last of these types that Bradford-on-Avon belongs. It resembles Escomb church, recently visited by our Society, in that it consists of two cells—a larger rectangular cell which served as nave and a smaller rectangular cell at the eastern end of the nave and entered from it by a narrow chancel arch to form the chancel. Bradford, however, differed from Escomb in its possession of large north and south porches, of which that on the south still survives. The ample proportions of this porch and the fact that the narrow doorways which respectively give admission from the exterior of the building and into the church itself are set to the west of the central axis would suggest that the porch served as a chapel with altar or altars upon its eastern side. Mr. Brakespear drew attention to the height of the building which, like the churches at Escomb, Jarrow and Monk Wearmouth is lofty in comparison with its other dimensions. The windows are small and double-splayed. The masonry partakes of the nature of that seen in Roman buildings, the stones of which it is composed being large, squared and well jointed. The walls of the church are adorned outside with an arcade of narrow round-headed arches supported upon pilasters with cushion capitals. At the corners of the building are to be seen examples of long-and-short work. This important historical monument, after suffering from years of neglect and having been used at one time as a school, has now been restored and cleared of encumbrances.

THE TITHE BARN.

From the church the party proceeded across the Avon, to visit Barton farm, where, under Mr. Brakespear's guidance, they inspected the remarkable tithe barn, now thanks to the energy of the local Archaeological Society, kept in a proper state of preservation. This building, which was formerly the tithe barn of the monastic house founded by Bishop Aldhelm in 705, dates from the 14th century. It is of enormous size and has two arched entrances like transepts. Its roof is so framed as to be independent of the

walls. Within its walls has been assembled a most interesting collection of bygone local agricultural implements. Part of the farm-house adjoining and a small bridge belong to the same period.

LACOCK ABBEY.

After an interval for lunch, the party resumed its journey, the first halting-place being Lacock Abbey, picturesquely situated on the Avon beneath the heights of Bowden Park. Here, again Mr. Brakespear was the speaker. Lacock was founded as an Augustinian nunnery in 1232 by Ela, Countess of Salisbury, in memory of her deceased husband, the famous William Longespée. In 1539, after a three years reprieve, as one of the larger religious houses, Lacock was confiscated by King Henry VIII and bestowed upon Sir William Sherington, who changed the nunnery into a residence for himself. He died without issue, and his brother Henry's daughter carried the estate to the Talbots. During the Civil War Lacock was fortified and garrisoned for Charles I, but was surrendered in 1645 when besieged by a detachment of Fairfax's army. The present house, which is chiefly Elizabethan contains considerable remains of the conventual buildings. Among these, Mr. Brakespear pointed out the Cloister, a beautiful work of the 15th century, with a richly vaulted roof. Among the monuments preserved in the cloister is that of the foundress, Ela, who became abbess of the institution. This monument was removed from the church, of which the north wall is still to be seen on the south side of the cloister. On the east side are the remains of the vestry and chapter house with a vaulted roof and central pillar, and a kitchen of the 13th century. On the west side of the cloister is a building, with a vaulted substructure, probably the dormitory. The site of the refectory is on the north side. An octagon tower, now used as a muniment room, stands at the S.E. angle. From the cloister a door opens to the terrace walk, the site of the conventual church. Among the interesting objects shown is the "Nuns' Caldron," a huge metal pot cast in Mechlin by Peter Waghuens in 1500. It has a capacity of 67 gallons.

Aubrey relates a curious story to account for the acquisition of Lacock by the Talbots. He tells us that Olive, the co-heiress of Henry Sherington, being in love with John Talbot of Salwarfe, Worcestershire, "discoursing with him one night from the battlements of the church, said she, 'I will leape downe to you.' Her

sweetheart replied he would catch her then: but he did not believe she would have done it. She leapt down, and the wind which was then high, came under her coates, and did something to break the fall. Mr. Talbot, caught her in his armes, but she struck him dead; she cried for help, and he was with great difficulty brought to life again. Her father (who had before opposed the marriage) thereon told her that since she had made such a leap she should e'en marrie him."

In thanking Mr. Brakespear for his interesting descriptions of Bradford-on-Avon and Lacock, Mr. McIntire referred to the work of his father, the eminent architect and writer, and said that it was pleasant to note that his mantle had fallen upon his son.

DEVIZES.

After a short time had been spent in the delightful neighbourhood of Lacock and the adjacent village, the party moved on to Devizes where the remarkable collection of prehistoric relics, gathered together by the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society was explained by Mr. Howard B. Cunnington, F.S.A.Scot. The exhibits include the collections of the antiquary, John Britton, consisting of original drawings of Salisbury Cathedral and of other Wiltshire churches, and a fine collection of fossils formed by Mr. William Cunnington, the associate of Sir R. C. Hoare in his Wiltshire investigations. The visitors were received at the Museum by the Mayor of Devizes, whose name the President coupled with that of Mr. Cunnington in proposing a vote of thanks on behalf of the Society.

THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN.

After an interval for tea and for examining some of the principal monuments of the ancient town of Devizes, a visit was paid to the church of St. John, one of the finest religious buildings in Wiltshire. Mr. Brakespear kindly gave a description of this remarkable Norman church. It was originally a cruciform 12th century church with central tower, erected probably by Bishop Roger of Salisbury. Aisles were added to the nave about the middle of the 15th century, and N. and S. chapels to the chancel somewhat later. One of the original Norman windows is still to be seen in the north wall of the chancel, and traces of others are discernible in the transepts. The massive tower rests on four arches of which the eastern and western are round, while the northern and

southern, owing to the fact that the transepts are narrower than the nave are pointed. The chancel, of two bays, retains its Norman vaulting, and the transverse arch which divides these bays has richly carved capitals. The walls of the chancel are adorned by an intersecting arcade. Both the chapels are ceiled in oak. That on the south is ascribed to Richard Beauchamp of Bromham and dates from the beginning of the 16th century. The chancel itself was the sanctuary of Hubert de Burgh. Among the monuments are those of the Suttons and Heathcotes, to which latter family belonged Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Lord Mayor of London, who died in 1768.

FRIDAY, JUNE 9TH, 1939.

The last day of the excursion was spent in visiting Dorchester and its neighbourhood. Leaving Salisbury at 9-15 a.m., the party travelled by way of Blandford Forum to Dorchester, the first halting place being

MAUMBURY RINGS.

Here they were met by Lieut.-Col. C. D. Drew, D.S.O., F.S.A., who kindly placed his inexhaustible fund of local antiquarian knowledge at the disposal of the Society and acted as guide throughout the day.

Maumbury Rings, be explained, to which public attention was first drawn by Sir Christopher Wren, when Member of Parliament for Dorchester, is an elliptical earthwork, formed by excavating the chalk and piling the material thus removed to the height of thirty feet around it. The area thus enclosed is 218 feet in length and 163 feet in width. There is an opening or entrance at the northern end, and a slight depression with a ramp leading up to it at the southern. On the inner side of the great earthen rampart its grassy slope is interrupted by a ledge, which starting from below the level of the entrance, gradually rises towards the middle part of the periphery of the enclosure.

It has been estimated that this amphitheatre would accommodate 13,000 spectators, and indeed in 1705 upon the occasion of the burning of the body of Mary Channing, who had been executed for poisoning her husband, it is said to have been thronged by a crowd of upwards of 10,000 people. The amphitheatre was used at the above mentioned date as the place of execution for criminals, and continued so to be employed till 1767.

As to its origin nothing positive is known, and rival partisans in the past have attributed Maumbury Rings to the Romans and Britons respectively. It is to be noticed that one of the explanations suggested for the origin of the British name for Dorchester is a derivation from *durn*, "fist," and *gwarae*, "play," and it has further been maintained that this name "place of fist-play" referred to this amphitheatre. It is situate a short distance outside the walls of the Roman station of *Durnovaria* and close to the two present railway stations. The line of the South Western railway was originally planned to pass through the amphitheatre, and this interesting monument was only saved through the exertions of Mr. C. Warne, F.S.A.

MAIDEN CASTLE.

From Maumbury Rings the party proceeded to Maiden Castle where Col. Drew pointed out the chief points of interest in connection with that remarkable hill-fortress and explained the various stages of its growth.

In its present state this enormous fortified site occupies the whole of the flat summit of a chalk hill, measuring about 1000 yards from east to west and 500 from north to south. The space enclosed by the inner rampart is about forty-five acres, and the total area covered by works cannot be less than 115 acres. The whole fortress is surrounded with two, or in some places, three lines of ramparts, rising sometimes to a height of 60 feet, and with sides of remarkable steepness. There have been four gates in this system of ramparts, these entrances being defended by the overlapping ends of the earthworks and an elaborate system of outworks.

Colonel Drew next pointed out the site of the original fortress of the Early Iron Age, which in the course of time developed by different stages into the later great ramparted enclosure. It occupied the eastern of two small knolls now included within the defences, and was surrounded by a single bank and ditch. When this site was excavated in 1934 by Dr. A. E. M. Wheeler, Mrs. Wheeler and Col. Drew himself, four pits of the Neolithic period containing characteristic Neolithic remains were discovered. Though in the western part of the site of Maiden Castle there is a flattened tumulus which may have been of the Bronze Age, there is no evidence that the site was occupied by men of that period after the Neolithic settlement came to an end.

The first Early Iron Age settlements in Wessex may date from about 600 to 400 B.C. the settlers deriving their culture perhaps

from north-eastern France. A second period of occupation seems to have followed this early stage, its remains showing a certain degradation in artistic quality. It may have lasted from about 400 B.C. to 100 B.C., and was succeeded by another period of Iron Age culture during which influences from the south-west modified the civilisation of the preceding period. This period coincided roughly with the first century B.C. Finally, in the first half of the first century A.D., Belgic influence reached these Wessex hill forts.

It would appear that the original Maiden Castle upon the eastern knoll, with its single bank and ditch and single entrance, flanked by timber palisades, may date from the second period named above and thus be ascribed approximately to the fourth century B.C.

Though the settlement seems to have grown to its full internal capacity by the end of the period of the Early Iron Age culture, it was perhaps not before 100 B.C. that the present elaborate system of defences was devised, and the fort surrounded with its great ramparts with their revetment of chalk-blocks afterwards replaced by more durable limestone. It would appear that some group of western invaders gained about this time possession of Maiden Castle, and found it necessary to construct these fortifications in order to maintain their hold upon the site.

After the Roman conquest of Britain, this hill fort seems to have been abandoned by its British inhabitants who perhaps migrated to the neighbourhood of the new Roman town of Durnovaria, two miles away, upon the site of the Dorchester of to-day.

The site, however, appears not altogether to have been neglected by the Roman conquerors, who in the closing years of the fourth century A.D. built within the eastern part of the castle, a temple, the remains of which still survive. The excavation of the eastern entrance to Maiden Castle in 1935 brought to light traces of a Roman road and gateway built within the original opening. Coins found in the vicinity of this gateway indicated a late fourth century date for this alteration. It would thus appear that Maiden Castle continued to be used as the precinct of the temple of some Romano-British deity.

After an interval for lunch, the party under Col. Drew's guidance made the round of the ramparts of the fort and inspected the sites of the original settlement and its dew-pond. They afterwards visited the site of the Romano-British temple.

DORCHESTER MUSEUM.

Returning from Maiden Castle to Dorchester, the party visited

the rich and beautifully exhibited collection of prehistoric and Roman antiquities housed in the Dorchester Museum. Here Colonel Drew again acted as guide and explained the chief items of interest among the exhibits which include urns and other relics from Dorset tumuli, Roman mosaic pavements, coins and other objects of early art from Poundbury and a rich collection of local Roman and prehistoric pottery.

COLLITON PARK.

The last place visited was the Roman house, recently excavated in Colliton Park. Colonel Drew explained the plan of this house, the foundations of which have now been completely uncovered, and suggested the uses to which its rooms had been put. In thanking Lieut.-Colonel Drew for the time he had devoted to helping our Society and for the admirably clear descriptions he had given of the many objects of interest they had been privileged to see during the day, Mr. McIntire referred to the many valuable services he had rendered to the cause of archaeological research. He said that this day had formed a very fitting conclusion to one of the most successful meetings the Society had organised in recent years and that he felt sure all members present would be sorry that it had come to an end.

Before the party separated Mr. J. Smith Hill proposed and Lt.-Colonel O. H. North seconded a vote of thanks to Mr. R. E. Porter for the admirable arrangements he and all concerned in the organisation of this meeting, had made for the comfort and convenience of the members who took part in it. This vote of thanks having been carried by acclamation, members of the party dispersed for tea, having time at their disposal to see something of some of the more interesting ancient buildings in Dorchester before leaving for Salisbury. The return journey was made by way of Cerne Abbas, where an opportunity was afforded of seeing the famous "giant" cut in the turf of the hill-side, and Sherborne, Salisbury being reached about 7-15 p.m.

AUTUMN MEETING.

In consequence of the outbreak of the war, it proved impossible to hold a meeting of the Society which had been arranged for September with Carlisle as a centre and visits to places of interest in the neighbouring Border country. It is hoped that the programme of this excursion may be carried out when happier circumstances permit.