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PROCEEDINGS

AT THE AUTUMNAL MEETING,

AT CIRENCESTER,

Tuesday and Wednesday, September 2nd and 3rd, 1919.

THE Autumnal Meeting of the Society took place on Tuesday and Wednesday, September 2nd and 3rd, 1919, at Cirencester, the headquarters being at the King's Head Hotel. The President (Mr. J. E. Pritchard), the Chairman of Council (Sir F. A. Hyett), the Hon. Secretary (Mr. Roland Austin), the Earl and Countess Bathurst, Professor Haverfield, Professor Oman, and a large number of members. The Hon. Local Secretary was Mr. E. C. Sewell, whose admirable arrangements contributed much to the success of the meeting.

Tuesday morning was spent at the Cirencester Parish Church of St. John the Baptist and the adjoining site of the Abbey of St. Mary, Mr. St. Clair Baddeley being the leader. In the church the party was welcomed on behalf of the Vicar by the Rev. E. Evans, who showed the beautiful communion plate. Here Mr. Baddeley delivered the following address :—

A church showing both so rich a development through the ages as does this one, and, at the same time, so beautiful an *ensemble*, offers many special features of attraction to the student and admirer of Cotteswold masterpieces. It is, perhaps, only too easy to treat it as a bee, or a butterfly, treats a garden of beautiful flowers, and to wander quite usefully over its entire extent, and yet come away not any the wiser as to how it developed from a small Norman transeptal parish church of the early twelfth century into the magnificent expanded structure before

us to-day. In fact, it has proved to all of its historians more than difficult, to some of them entirely baffling.

As, however, that earlier church and its remains, and some few surviving features of its immediate successor, are of vital importance to the reading of its extremely interesting history, it is to these that I will venture to ask your attention at the opening of this meeting of our Society. I am the more constrained to do so because our time is far too limited to do any sort of justice to both the story of the church and the abbey.

Let us, therefore, take note (before going directly into the choir) of three features: first, the lines of the Early English roof-pitch against the western tower, of 1416, and those of the former north aisle beside it, showing that the width and length of those was formerly comparable to their present width, though their elevation was more modest, while their west wall became a portion of the fifteenth century tower.

Having glanced at that, let us now pass for a moment to the east end of the southern aisle and note the embedded Norman half-arch, representing an ancient entrance from a Norman south aisle into the former south transept of the twelfth-century church. Here things become more interesting, and, at the same time, more difficult. For the present late thirteenth-century door to the transept has been cut rather grandiosely through the Norman wall in conformity with a second Early English enlargement of the church. But the length of the transept remained the same. The outer earlier window of the latter can be seen above, filled in, and looking into the south aisle of the later church. Inside the transept may be seen how this window became transformed when the transept was heightened and wore a different aspect from that of its early years.

The Norman transept was lengthened after Norman days; for it is just double the length of the north transept (or 26 ft.), and the small walled-up and unmoulded arch of the door (already viewed) occupies a position and is of a size so small (5 ft. 6 in. wide) as to be out of due proportion to the later enlarged transept. Remains of colour-decoration, right on to the stone, in the Norman manner, add to the interest.

The north transept (St. Katharine Chapel) still retains two important elements, of which the first consists of a little original

c. 1180 doorway. It led out of doors to a former chancel, or ossuary; but, from c. 1230 into a rich Lady Chapel—" *Our Lady of the Charnel.*" This door, therefore, gives us the limit to north of the early transept, and shows it to have been very small. Probably there was no north aisle in Norman days. What is further interesting of this north transept is that it contained the stair to a central tower, which was probably over the Norman choir; and this stair, after also serving for the larger Early English tower that must have succeeded, when the c. 1180 chancel became shifted a few feet to the south, was saved and glorified with a fifteenth-century casing, to serve still for the beautiful rood-loft and beam of the fifteenth-century church.

Lastly, before entering the choir, let us look up at the great chancel-arch of the thirteenth century, and particularly let us notice on the north side of it (high up) the former doorway to the rood.

On the western face of this great arch there is nothing *a-symmetrical*, or unexpected, except its late but beautiful seven-light window and good decorations. The sixteenth-century wall-panelling measures itself out quite evenly on both its flanks to the enclosing walls. When, however, we step into the choir and turn our faces westward to survey it, we at once become aware that the arch from this side is about four feet nearer to the north wall of the choir than to that south of it, and therefore it does not at all correspond to the north-arcade line of the nave. It is, in fact, four or five feet to the south of that line. There also appears one other rood-loft door of later character than its fellow on the south face of the choir-wall near it.

Here, obviously, occurs another problem. Upon its proper solution depends not a little our understanding of the earlier evolution of the church. But the chancel arcades have been purposely shifted in the late twelfth century. First of all, then, we should notice that, whereas in the south choir we have two bays of thirteenth-century transitional (3-chamfer) arches rising from short sturdy (1180-90) round shafts, upon the north the two bays are quite different, both in position of their shafts, their design, and their early-decorated (2-chamfer) period. Both pillars and arches date from (c.) 1390.

The first conclusion to be drawn from this fact is that for

some special and decisive reason it became necessary entirely to rebuild this north wall and take away its predecessor. Next, some special need had already dictated that the choir should rise not on its old Norman lines, but four feet south of them, and should create a larger north choir-aisle by that shifting. The early towers which succeeded one another over the crossing may have caused serious trouble. The Lady Chapel, on the same north side of the choir, when but a century and a half old, had (we learn) to be entirely reconstructed. It was decided in (*c.*) 1401, or perhaps long before, to do away with the tower and build an entirely new one at the west end of the nave. When this was carried out, the architect rebuilt the north wall of the choir upon pillar and arches, and utilised the earlier tower-stair as a rood-stair. At that period the aggrandisement of the rood-screen, loft, and beam in these greater parish churches was in vogue; and the height of the door opening to the rood, on the west face of the chancel-arch, tells us to what an elevation (and consequent importance) the rood, its loft, and beam had then attained here. But evidences (documentary) tell us further that a Chantry of St. Christopher here provided both organist and a priest to help in the services and to minister when the vicars were indisposed; and the organ was, as usual, probably on the rood-left. The only traces of St. Christopher are said to occur in pictorial remains in the Chapel of SS. Katharine and Nicholas, from which the elaborated rood-stair rises.

This may help to explain certain of the peculiarities of the choir and the phenomenon of its shifted position. Insecurity of the ground upon the northern area at various times, caused (1) the Lady Chapel to be thrice more or less rebuilt (for the north wall of it fell again at the close of the eighteenth century). That caused (2) the roof of its neighbouring chapel, St. Katharine, to be heavily re-roofed entirely (probably, likewise, more than once); and, above all, caused (3) the great 1416 tower to be erected at the other end of the church, and thus probably ended the long-endured main trouble. But, even here (whether due to springs or to insecure and to unexplored Romano-British foundations, we cannot now tell) the 1416 builders were not fortunate; for, to their fine tower was to have been added a beautiful spire; but speedy signs of "settlement" manifested themselves, with the result with

which we are familiar, namely, the addition of those vast, ill-concealed buttress-spurs that effectually have sustained it till to-day.

Before quitting the choir, let us just glance again at the two bays of the south wall still *in situ* from the days of Henry II. (or 1180-90). The easternmost pier rises from the remains of a Romano-British double torus (base) utilised by the builders, and that has belonged to some local ruined structure. The perforated boldly undercut capital of the other shaft is characteristic of the Transitional style (early). Probably the original north arcade of the choir displayed a fellow to it. The arches, however, are not of the twelfth, but of the late thirteenth century. It may be mentioned that herring-bone work was found under the adjoining St. John's Chapel during Sir Gilbert Scott's restoration in 1865; but it was not necessarily Saxon work. When it is recalled how small a population the town had in *c.* 1100, and that it owned a second parish chapel in St. Cecilia, it will not be doubted that both were unambitious structures, and that all the magnificent developments of the present church have marked the increasing prosperity of the town.

The length of the Norman church, until 1180, probably did not extend beyond the fourth bay westward, or a line across the present church from south to north porch. The transept limit is shown by the little Norman door leading nowadays into the Lady Chapel. At the 1180 alterations the Norman north transept became a narrow choir-aisle, the extension of which into a chapel followed in later times. It is likely that the narrowing of the earlier choir may have led to its lengthening eastward a little; consequently the Norman presbytery was probably a few feet shorter than the present one, the date of which is indicated by the dog-tooth moulding on the external label to the east window, the latter, no doubt, originally of three lights only. Though this is advanced with the intention of explaining some of our problems here, of course it does not explain all. It is merely hoped that it will aid others in their solution.

After examining the church the party adjourned by kind permission of Major Gordon Dugdale, D.S.O., to the abbey grounds, where was inspected the magnificent Roman capital found many

years ago in the "Nursery" district of the town, and now standing in the abbey gardens. Both Mr. Baddeley and Professor Haverfield expressed the opinion that, although now in some measure protected by a leaden covering, it should be preserved under cover. Mr. Baddeley delivered the following address on "The Making of Mediæval Cirencester and the Abbey of St. Mary."

One of Shakespeare's greater contemporaries and a professed admirer of his—John Webster—expresses a thought finely which may well occur to many of us here, visiting this site of a once powerful monastery, of which, however (saving the Hospital Gate and the precinct wall), so little to-day survives. He says :

" I do love these ancient ruins.
 We never tread upon them but we set
 Our foot upon some reverend History !
 And, questionless, here . . . some men lie interred
 Who loved the Church so well, enriched it so,
 They thought it should have canopied their bones
 Till Doomsday ; but all things have their end ! "

I have said "so little survives." The noble monuments of many great benefactors of Cirencester, and of the former ancient Abbey, lie in the dust amid the ancient ground-plan-foundations here under our feet. Leland saw these monuments of the Lords of St. Amand,¹ and the Abbots of Cirencester, in their splendour but a few years before the great blow fell, at Harry's command ; and the majority of the abbeys of this country soon dissolved into thin air. This inquiring antiquary came and stayed here ; and he reports what the reigning Abbot told him in various conversations. He is therefore a valuable living voice for us out of the past. "The East of the Abbey Church sheweth it to be a very old building.² The West part from the Transept is but new work, to speke of—to the which Ruthall, Bishop of Durham (1509-23), born and brought up in Cirencester, promised much, but, prevented with death, gave nothing." However, he adds, "One Alice Avening, Aunt to Bishop Ruthall, gave an Hundred Marks to the building of the right goodly porch of the

¹ Amalric de St. Amand was High Sheriff, and Constable of St. Briavels. He held the manor of South Cerney of De Bohun, Earl of Hereford in 1284.

² (?) Norman.

Parish Church ; and Ruthall's mother contributed to the performance of it." So it is fairly obvious that the good Bishop's relatives fulfilled what they could of his known wishes. I think his arms were found upon stones once belonging to the abbey cloister many years ago.

But we may here leap back several centuries, even to the evil latter days of King John, and yet recognise the local atmosphere in words which I find were uttered by a very distinguished Abbot here, Alexander Neckam (1213-17). He says: "The pleasant bark of the hounds¹ is more delightful to the ears of our nobles than the sweet harmony of musical instruments." It is not unworthy of remark that the little sub-manor of "Archibalds," belonging to a family of that name, lay just over the abbey wall and between it and Dyer Street ; and this was held of the King by the ("petty serjeanty") tenure of keeping two or three greyhounds at the will of the King. It was thus quite independent of the Abbey.

Once again the faithful pilgrim, Leland, records: "In the body of the Abbey Church on a sepulchre-crosse of white marble is this inscription—Here lies Reinbald the priest, formerly Dean of the Church, and chancellor in Edward the Confessor's days."

This Reinbald was one of the most notable figures in our earlier Norman history, though himself, probably, but half a Norman. The name is Frankish, and he gave his son (presumably) the very English name of Edward, probably in honour of the Confessor himself.² The first point of interest about him is that he was Dean of the College of Prebends here on this abbey site ; and so valued were his abilities and his character, that the Norman Conqueror and his son William Rufus retained him as their Chancellor, and allowed him to hold his manors at Eisey and Latton, and various other lands in Herefordshire and Berkshire and Co. Somerset, with all which Henry I. afterwards enriched this later Abbey. One of the most remarkable and most precious of William the Conqueror's early charters (c. 1067) in the Cirencester Cartulary at Cheltenham is addressed to his Saxon Thanes and

¹ In the Norman Survey, Cirencester and Gloucester and the Manor of Cheltenham had to provide hounds for the King's hounds. This they commuted for a money payment of sixteen shillings.

² I find that a John Reinbald held some land at Baunton c. 1150, after which the name does not occur here.

Bishops in Wilts and Gloucestershire, notifying them that he had given "Regenbald, my priest" all his lands and manors and rights pertaining to these. To these he added (a particular mark of favour) the Sheriff's Hide in Cirencester for garden and mill. For the Norman Sheriffs held "Reeve-land" pertaining to their offices. And these estates became the corner-stone of the future Royal Abbey here; for when Henry I. placed his Canons Regular of the then fashionable Order of St. Augustine¹ here, his (1133) charter words it: "I have given and granted all the holding of Reinbald the priest in land and Churches." Dr. Horace Round has rightly called him the "first great Pluralist"; indeed, he possessed no less than sixteen churches in five various shires.

Now it may well be asked: How can we, in this history of Cirencester, account reasonably for the career of this important and successful minister of three kings—this Reinbald? To my mind, I will venture to say there seems to be only one way of accounting for it, namely, that Reinbald had worked hand and glove with the great Earl William FitzOsbern and his henchmen in developing for William the Conqueror and Rufus the ante-Welsh policy begun by Edward the Confessor and carried forward by his vigorous successors, the first Normans,—that policy by which the Earl created a great triangle of castles enclosing the Severn and Lower Wye-lands, from Hereford and Grosmont to the Lower Gwent, down to Striguil (*i.e.* Chepstow), and across Severn to Berkeley (Sharpness) with new castles at Gloucester and Cirencester. With the last royal manor and Berkeley FitzOsbern became enfeoffed, and these were held of his Earldom of Hereford. Unless we grasp this development as a whole we shall tend to find ourselves in no little perplexity. But there is no time to-day to go into many of the other rich facets of Cirencester story. I will merely mention that the royal castle there stood within its moat, or running ditch, almost opposite Earl Bathurst's great gates, where the modern London name of Park Lane has (unluckily, I think, however politely) been allowed to supplant the century-long former name Castle-Ditch or Law-Ditch; the latter, as at Bristol and at Gloucester, due to the

¹ Pope Pascal II., 1099-1118, decreed that all Canons Regular were henceforward to observe but one Rule: that of Augustine. St. Oswald's Priory at Gloucester retained Secular Canons until 1147; so that Cirencester was the earliest House of the Order in this county, and Llanthony, of Gloucester, the second, 1136, three years later.

felons and debtors in post-castle days having taken refuge in the dry moat, where the town wards could have no rights over them.

This Castle of Cirencester, with all the royal demesne land here belonging to it, became granted, as we said, to Earl William FitzOsbern, who thus, until 1070, became Lord of Cirencester, the Capital Manor of certain appendent hundreds;¹ and it was he who granted off two hides or (?) 240 acres, adjoining the Wiggold side of the town, to a favoured tenant² (probably in 1067-68), whose descendants retained this property when the Earl's son, Roger, in 1075, became outlawed for rebellion, deprived both of earldom and land, and the manor and castle and hundreds returned to the Crown.

But the matter germane to the Abbey is this, that some twenty years after Henry I. had piously reconstituted by charter and enriched by the donation of Reinbald's lands the old Saxon College of Prebends here, the Castle of Cirencester, in 1142, was burned out by King Stephen, in order to prevent the Empress Maud, his cousin, from re-occupying it. It was never rebuilt, but lay waste; and the Abbot of Cirencester, for the purpose of completing the Abbey buildings, obtained from Henry II. a lease thereof. This, as it turned out, proved but preliminary to a final grant (for money paid in 1191) of a charter by the impecunious Richard I., conveying the manor and town, together with Minety and the Seven Hundreds appendent to the royal manor, to the Abbot of Cirencester. It was this gradually-completed transaction which not merely enabled the Abbot of Cirencester to finish his long-delayed church and domestic buildings (for the Civil War had paralysed building here), but practically delivered over the town and all the King's tenants for a fee-farm rent of £30 per annum (and a gift of £100), with rights of life, service, and of death, to the local ecclesiastical feudal lord, who now ranked as a Baron. We find under King John (1203) the next Abbot

¹ The appendent "Seven Hundreds" here were used as one Hundred only before the sale in 1190-91, and seem to have represented a Saxon period when Cirencester was the head of a shire as once was "Winchelcumbe." Its Mercian importance in King Alfred's day is shown by the Danes under Guthrum (being Christian converts) being sent to reside, probably on Cecily Hill (Inchthorpe), here for a whole year.

² Who this tenant was is unknown; but he may have been ancestor to the William Thorel who held the same land in c. 1154-62, and Pencombe in Herefordshire.

(Richard, 1157-1213) paying as much as £100 and the promise besides of a palfrey, in order to preclude the King's Sheriff¹ from entering his liberties, excepting for Royal Pleas. The Sheriff was to deliver to the Abbot, that is to say, all exchequer summonses, and the Abbot would collect the dues and render his account.

Thus the Monastery here, as at Bury St. Edmunds, became absolute master of the town and its trade, and was entitled to nip in the bud every attempt to cultivate independence, or develop autonomy. The Abbots of Cirencester disposed of all local questions of tenure, debt, and distraint, and exercised full feudal rights of pillory, tumbrel, and gallows. The Abbot blessed you as Rector of the Parish Church, your grain had to be ground at his mills on the Churn, and if you were hanged, it was upon his gallows and by his orders. Thus it has been made clear how both William FitzOsbern and Reinbald the Chancellor, two of the greatest figures in early Norman England, came to the making of mediæval Cirencester, followed by the commercial and pious enrichment of a local monastery with their lands.

In the afternoon the members divided into two parties. One party, under the guidance of Mr. E. C. Sewell, visited various places of interest in the town of Cirencester, including the Bull Ring, St. John's Hospital, Barton Pavement, the Corinium Museum, and, by Mrs. Wilfred Cripps' kind invitation, her museum of Roman antiquities at Cripps Mead, where they were subsequently joined by members of the other party on their return from the afternoon's excursion. The latter party drove in motor-cars, under the guidance of Mr. St. Clair Baddeley, to Daglingworth, where they visited the Parish Church of the Holy Rood.

They were met by the Rector, the Rev. E. C. Wilson, and Major T. J. Longworth, the Lord of the Manor. Mr. Baddeley, addressing the party, gave a sketch of the history of Daglingworth, pointed out the remains of the cell of the nuns of Godstow, and described the parish church, which had suffered severely from the restoration in 1845. A twelfth century arch (date about 1180),

¹ Under Henry I. the allowance from the Canons' land to the Sheriff was £1 2s 6d. In 1156 it amounted to £29.

which had been rescued, probably from the nuns' cell, and carefully re-erected by Major Longworth in the Manor grounds, was inspected with interest.

Mr. Baddeley said: The name of the parish and village, like that of Daylesford in Worcestershire, is formed from an Anglo-Saxon personal name, Dægl, or Deghelm, whose sons or descendants owned a "worth" or farm here. These Dægeling had given their name long before 1240 to a portion of the old road at Coaley, then called "Dagelingstrete." The village is not known by name to the Norman Survey, though its owners were Normans. The one, William de Eu (or Ow), was a Baron of the royal house of Normandy, who owned more than a thousand acres thereabouts, and the other, William FitzBaderon, owned less than that, but he owned one of the four manors of Siddington, and that of Chesterton, and was the ancestor of the De Monmouth family of Cirencester. In the rebellion which followed in 1088 against William Rufus this kinsman (De Eu), with particular violence, ravaged the whole Severn-side above Berkeley, and, being taken prisoner, was sentenced by the King to a horrible mutilation, which he survived. His estate at Dagelingworth seems to have remained with Ralph Bloet, his tenant, a Norman from Briqueville-la-Blauette, near Coutances. Robert Bloet was Rufus's Chancellor in 1090, and Bishop of Lincoln 1094-1123. The Bloets, whose name is still alive in the county, figure conspicuously onwards, and we find one of them giving Rodley Manor, near Westbury-on-Severn, to Henry I.; and in 1156 a second Ralph Bloett, the owner of the land at Dagelingworth, gave to the nuns at Godstow (Co. Oxon.) this church, with all its belongings, for the good of his soul; and a final agreement over this donation was effected in 1225 between Felise, Abbess of Godstow, and William Bloet. The nuns built a little priory-cell, the remains of which (much muddled by recent owners) can be seen near the former site; and a transitional arch belonging to it has been carefully saved and erected on the adjoining property. The three crude and curious plaques of eleventh-century stone-work (of which presently) now in the church are sometimes said to have come from it; but though that was not so, they date from an anterior century, before ever those nuns came here. What is more interesting to us, the nuns built the present

western tower of the village church, to which they used to appoint the priest until the dissolution of their monastery in 1539.

Mr. Baddeley reminded the party that until 1845, whatever was its condition, this was one of the most ancient and most remarkable churches in the whole country. What the then Vicar didn't destroy, or scrape out of character, he coolly carted off to Barnsley Church, to gratify a colleague,—namely, one of its little round-headed Norman windows. These window openings are of a warm red tone, due to a fire. The curious early arch which still spanned the nave west of the door he pulled down altogether. Its position only is indicated by the oblong block of new masonry in the modern aisle arcade (base). It rested upon imposts, of oblong design, chamfered on their lower edges. The jambs were squared and without mouldings. Above the said sectional arch, to the left of the centre, may have stood the little Norman altar, now at the north-east angle of the chancel, supported by its two circular shafts.

The south wall indications, left of the door, point to the vanished tower of Norman days having occupied the original west end. The altar and its floor constituted a tiny chapel in this tower where the nuns' chaplain intoned his prayers for their patron, and his forebears.

The chancel and a south chapel were taken away, and the former was re-built on the old lines; the chancel arch being entirely re-set. The fine long and short work at the external angles was likewise re-set. The small lancet window in the vestry once lit the north side of the chancel; and the two-light window there bearing a Roman dedication to the Goddess-Mothers and a local genius, by one Junia, was over the east window.

Behind the pulpit is a fifteenth-century corbel bearing a lady's head. Oyster shells are said to have been found in the mortar during the various destructive alterations which have taken place here; and of course that is very probable, and points to a former villa, perhaps belonging to the Junia of the inscribed stone. The inscription reads:—

“ D D (= *deabus*)
Matribus et
Genio Loci
Junia.”

It refers to the well-known cult of "Goddess-Mothers," bas-relief representations of which are seen at Cirencester and elsewhere.

The three quadrate early "stone-pictures," representing (1) the Crucifixion, (2) the enthroned Christ in the act of Benediction, and also holding a cross-staff, wearing a cruciform nimbus, and a curious belt, and (3) St. Peter, clean-shaven, holding the book in one hand and his double key in the other, probably date from the eleventh century, and are very primitive. The story of their finding in 1845 seems to point to their having decorated a church at some previous period and having been used as mere building materials later. These, though of the same period as the Jevington sculptured Christ, are by an inferior hand. There is no trace of Celtic art in them. It is quite possible, as Sir Henry Barkley surmised, that Daglingworth formed one of the Prebends of the Saxon College of which Reinbald, the Chancellor of Edward the Confessor and William I., was Dean, whose own estates afterwards went to the making of the later Abbey of Cirencester.

The Hole-Dial with a style-hole for a wooden peg, with only six radiation lines cut within a raised circle of half-round moulding, is perhaps the best example of the hundred or more in Gloucestershire of these primitive indicators of Mass-hours. A small example for the same purpose will be found on the south-west buttress to the fifteenth-century tower. This may tend to show that the earlier dial had ceased to be of use, owing doubtless to the making of the porch.

After inspecting the church the party drove on to Duntisbourne Rous, where they were received at the Parish Church of St. Michael by the Rector, the Rev. A. O. Trotter. Here Mr. Baddeley said :—

The two hides (*c.* 240 acres) owned here by the great Norman Sheriff, Durand, came down through his son to their descendants—the De Bohuns, of Haresfield Castle, and through them, by marriage, to their neighbours, the Le Rous family, lords of Harescombe and Sudgrove and Alansmore, who, like so many great families in this neighbourhood, *e.g.* Heliun of Edgeworth and Le Bret of Pitchcombe, were Bretons rather than Normans. Hence the prevalence of the present surname in our villages, *Birt*, and of the place-names Weston-birt and *Birtsmorton*.

The curious little Parish Church of St. Michael must be dated back to days very soon after the Conquest, that is, to the youth of Durand the Sheriff. It is built upon the sharp slope of a field descending to the secluded green vale and bourne in such a way that like a spur it subtends the soil firmly to the east end, being carried eastward upon a distinct under-chapel (or crypt), having a south entrance to it (by steps) and an eastern splayed window. This crypt has also an aumbry (or cupboard) for the sacred vessels, and a stone stairway at the west, leading up to the head of the nave of the church above it. This feature alone will always give an unique attraction to this ancient building. For the rest, it consists of nave (without aisles), south porch, and a chancel with an early Norman arch, and having small round-headed windows north and south. A stopped square-headed north door has probably succeeded an earlier and smaller one in a wall plentifully displaying herring-bone work. The choir has traces of its former colour decorations on its north wall, while on the south side remain four "misereres" (fifteenth century). The font, of freestone and octagonal, of unequal sides, is of early thirteenth-century make, having on its facets conventional and primitively-drawn foliated designs; in itself it is quite remarkable among our fonts. Some of the windows on the south side are simple round-heads; others are cusped and of the thirteenth century while the south-west window (*c.* 1400) is of two lights. The saddle-back tower, entered from the nave, probably supplanted an earlier one. The pointed west door opens into it, and it carries two fourteenth-century bells bearing dedications to St. Mary and St. Catharine. This tower was restored, in its upper portion, by the churchwardens of 1587, John Heyden, John Freeman and Richard Heskings, who also inserted in its west face an earlier small light. The churchyard cross is of late fifteenth century, and has lost its decorative terminal.

The pedigree of the Le Rous (the Red) family and all its connections with the FitzHerbert Bohun pedigree is by no means clear or complete yet; but it may be of interest to give here one of its chief connections with these descendants of Durand. Roger le Rous, of Duntisbourne and Harescombe, married Eleanor de Avenbury, daughter of Henry de Avenbury (Co. Hereford), who died 1250. Roger was Sheriff of Gloucester 1278. His daughter

Eleanor was wedded at Haresfield Church and Castle to Herbert FitzHerbert. His other daughter, Maud, married Humphrey de Bohun, 5th Earl of Hereford, and had sons John and Edmund de Bohun. Her bones were brought back from Gascony to Lanthony, near Gloucester. For the ancestor, Alan de Rous, we know that he was of age before 1166 and gave his name to Alansmore, Co. Hereford, which estate Roger still possessed. Their arms were, "per pale, or and gules, three lions rampant counter-changed."

Leaving the church, the party was hospitably entertained at afternoon tea by the Rector and Miss Howard in the rectory grounds, from which the members subsequently returned to Cirencester.

In the evening the members assembled in the lecture room of the Bingham Library, kindly lent for the purpose by the Trustees. There Professor F. J. Haverfield, LL.D., delivered a profoundly interesting address, illustrated by lantern slides, on "Roman Cirencester," enlivened from time to time with racy humour.

The President, in introducing Dr. Haverfield, referred to the fact that the Society had conferred a tardy honour on that gentleman, and had likewise honoured itself by electing him an honorary member. He also alluded to the great services which Dr. Haverfield had rendered by his researches into the Roman occupation of Britain, and said the Society was under a great debt of gratitude to him for consenting to deliver that lecture and also to act as guide to the Chedworth Roman villa on the following day.

Professor Haverfield, after prefatory remarks on the need for special studies of special Roman town-sites, noted that Roman Cirencester, probably called Corinium, was after London the largest town in Roman Britain. For the appearance of so large a town in the corner of the Cotswolds—now a somewhat remote spot—he suggested two reasons, (1) the ease with which the Cotswold Hills could be crossed close by, as they are to-day by two railways a little north-west of the town, and also (2) the accessibility of the site from the English Midlands, Cirencester having been in Roman days a meeting-place of important high-ways, which converged there from the east, north-east, and south-east. Its Roman walls, he said, could be traced with fair certainty,

almost all round it, in a circuit of two miles. They enclosed an expanse of about 240 acres, nearly the same as that of a Roman town on the Rhine, which is now Cologne. Roman London (about 320 to 330 acres) was the only larger Romano-British town; and not very many Roman towns in Western Europe were much larger, though Treves was nearly treble the size.

The modern town lies almost wholly over the Roman site, and therefore little is known of the buildings, etc., of Corinium. However, in 1897-98 the late Mr. Wilfred Cripps, C.B., a keen student of the Roman remains (to whose widow, Mrs. Cripps, the lecturer expressed gratitude for much valuable help), was able to plan the outline of a large Roman Town Hall (Basilica), far larger than the better known Town Halls of Roman Silchester, Caerwent and Wroxeter. This Town Hall lay south of and partly under the line of the street called the Avenue, or Corin Street; and its west end adjoined the corner where Tower Street meets the Avenue. Of other Roman buildings in Corinium we know only private houses, attested by mosaics, of which forty or fifty fine examples can be quoted, rivalling some of the best mosaics of Roman Britain.

Of the streets little can be said; but a Roman way coming from Gloucester entered the north end of the town, and is represented now by Dollar Street. Apparently it passed straight across the town and out at the south end, near the Midland Railway Station, where was the south gate. Another way crossed the town from east to west, entering near the modern London road and following much the same line as Lewis Lane and Querns Lane. At the canal wharf, by the west end of Querns Lane, the Roman wall seems to have made a peculiar twist, which, said the lecturer, probably indicated a gateway. These two ways crossed at right-angles, and other bits of Roman streets found by Mr. Cripps and others seemed also to do the same. This suggested that Corinium, like many other Roman towns, was laid out on a plan like that of a chessboard, with square *insulae*, or house-blocks; each block probably contained several distinct houses, no doubt with roomy gardens, such as modern Cirencester can show.

Of important single finds the lecturer referred especially to the carved and sculptured stones found by the late Mr. Cripps

in Ashcroft in 1899. Among these are two reliefs of the "Mother-Goddesses," one of which seems to be copied from a relief on the great Ara Pacis at Rome, though how a Romano-British workman on Cotswold could have known much of sculpture in Rome, or have cared to copy it, the lecturer could not explain.

He then discussed the various inscriptions found in the town, and preserved, some in the Bathurst Museum near the Great Western Station, and some in the exceedingly interesting and well-cared for collection commenced by the late Mr. Cripps, and continued by his widow ever since his death in 1903. Reference was also made to the carved Composite Capital now in the Abbey grounds, a capital richly decorated with four heads, which was described as almost the most remarkable capital in the Roman world, and which Professor Haverfield was inclined to connect with a special cult of "Jupiter and the Giant," common in the Western Empire, but found in Britain only in this example. This showed, said the lecturer, that Roman Cirencester was well in touch with the great world of the Roman Empire, and was no mere remote out-of-the-way provincial town.

Lastly, the lecturer turned to the history of the town. It began apparently as a Roman site, soon after the invasion of Claudius in A.D. 43. After A.D. 70 it spread much like the neighbouring town of Roman Bath, where buildings began to be put up at the same time. At first a Roman cavalry regiment was posted in Corinium, perhaps even two regiments; but as the neighbourhood grew more fully conquered, and quieter, these were no longer needed, and were removed elsewhere. Cirencester then became a purely civilian town, having to send in case of trouble to the large military post near Newport-on-Usk, Caerleon. We have not, then, to think that Cirencester contained any military headquarters, any Prætorium, or Porta Prætoria. It was a flourishing country town, dependent on its weekly markets, and on the crops and beasts reared near it. Of industries, save perhaps tile-making, there is little trace in or near Corinium. The Cotswold wool trade may have existed in Roman times, but the evidence is very scanty.

The lecturer concluded with a reference to two eminent modern scholars of Oxford, who, thirty years ago, agreed with a

local wizard to raise the devil. The lecture was illustrated by lantern slides.

At the close Sir Francis Hyett conveyed the thanks of the Society to Dr. Haverfield for his valuable address.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3RD.

The members left the King's Head in motor-cars at half-past nine along the White Way for Chedworth. They were received at the Parish Church of St. Andrew by General Painter, in the absence of the Rev. G. E. Mackie, the Vicar. The tower of the church, at the western end of the church, probably dates from the Norman period, or possibly earlier. It is of crude masonry, gaunt, smooth and squat. It is extensively plastered, and there are indications of what were once belfry windows. The nave is in the main of the fifteenth century. It contains, however, an arcade dating from the twelve century. The south windows are of the fifteenth century, and are of excellent design and workmanship. The spandrels of the south door are pierced; and on the jamb of the door the date 1491 is deeply cut in Arabic numerals, the figure 4 here and elsewhere in the church in the dates 1461 and 1485 being cut in the early form, somewhat like the figure 8. Arabic numerals were not introduced into this country until the middle of the fifteenth century, and the example in the porch is remarkably clear and good. The Perpendicular work was a royal gift at the expense of Henry VII., who by way of compensation confiscated the manor at the same time. The newel or spiral stairway to the rood-loft is visible at the side of the pulpit, and projects externally in a turret which adds to the beauty of the façade. In the chancel is an Early English piscina, and also a wide-splayed lancet, only the head of which remains as a light, the remainder having been blocked by the building of a vestry in 1883. Finally, the font is a valuable relic, probably Norman, though some admirers have placed it even earlier. It will be found described by Dr. Fryer in the *Transactions*, vol. xxxvi., pp. 171, 175.

On the discovery of the Roman villa in 1866 were brought to light fragments bearing the Christian monogram—relics which link the spot with the Early British Church, and with the first age of the faith in Gloucestershire. And fourteen years before the

unearthing of the villa there had been an interesting discovery in another part of the parish. There had long been a local legend of the existence of an ancient church in a field about a quarter of a mile from the Parish Church, dedicated to St. John, the site of which was said to be marked by an ash tree called "St. John's Ash." In 1852 the then Vicar, the Rev. A. Gibson, caused excavations to be made, with the result that bits of Norman carving and moulding were dug up, which are now built into the wall of the field. These remains, however, were of the late Norman period; and it has been suggested that they form part, not of a church, but of a cell attached to the Templar Priory at Quenington, a few miles away.

After General Painter had briefly indicated the chief features of the church, Professor Oman referred to a visit he paid to the church in the seventies, when the instrumental music was supplied by a competent band of village musicians; and he asked what had become of them. General Painter replied that the musicians or their successors survived, although they had ceased to perform in the church; for Chedworth was still famous for its band.

In addition to inspecting the church, the members had the opportunity of viewing the Parish Registers (dating from 1653), the Churchwardens' Accounts (dating from 1645), a Will of Hugh Westwood relating to certain benefactions to the people of Chedworth, and a very fine copy (probably one of the best in existence) of the "Breeches" Bible, belonging to the church.

The party then moved forward to the Roman villa.

The Roman villa was accidentally discovered in 1866 in the course of ferreting for rabbits by one of Lord Eldon's keepers. The ferret scratched up some tesserae from a rabbit-burrow, and excavations in due course revealed the villa as now seen and preserved, at the cost of Lord Eldon, who likewise erected in it and maintains a museum. The position of the villa has been thought to indicate that the Roman settlers, having secured themselves against their enemies and constructed their great system of arterial roads, sought to make each province self-supporting and contribute to the central power at home; and to this end there was established here a woollen cloth manufactory. At the back of the villa is an outcrop of fuller's earth, over which

comes a good supply of water, clear and soft. This was a prime necessity for the manufacture of woollen cloth, for which the sheep fed on the adjacent hills provided abundant raw material in the shape of wool. The water was collected into a small reservoir, which still exists, and then passed into three vats, which also still exist, where the wool was scoured and rinsed; and a few yards away a large number of upright stones indicate that they were the supports of a floor where the wool was dried and pressed. Whether the further processes of cloth-making were continued here is a matter for conjecture.

The villa occupies three sides of a square, with corridors and central open space; and the principal buildings include the apartments of the chief of the villa and an almost perfect Roman bath. The chief chamber, about thirty feet by twenty, has a tessellated floor of two designs, one of them being a pictorial design emblematical of the seasons. The hypocaust of the bathing establishment is almost perfect. All the tesserae, in spite of their varied colourings, were obtained by the treatment of local stone and clay; and the walls, the remains of which are about two feet high, are built of a coarse-grained oolite of the neighbourhood. The roofs were of the Stonesfield slate still characteristic of old Cotswold buildings. These slates are used now to cover and preserve the existing walls. The relics scattered about the buildings and housed in the museum throw a good deal of light on the manners and customs of the residents of the villa. One of the brooches is an exact prototype of the modern safety-pin; and it is interesting to remember that it was a Roman fibula (or brooch) of this pattern which suggested to an enterprising manufacturer fifty or sixty years ago the idea of the safety-pin now so common—an "invention" from which he made a small fortune. Upon two pieces of stone were found chiselled the first two Greek letters of the name of Christ. They form, in fact, the Christian monogram. These, and another Christian symbol—a crude drawing of a human body bearing five small shallow incisions—have been thought to afford some evidence of the age of the villa.

The visit to the villa was made doubly interesting by a prefatory address by Professor Haverfield, who had very kindly provided for distribution among those present copies of admirably drawn plans in which the several rooms disclosed by the

excavations were numbered, and their probable uses were indicated by a key accompanying the plans.

An important feature of Dr. Haverfield's remarks was his dissent from the theory referred to above, suggesting that possibly some sort of woollen manufacture was carried on here. His surmise was that the plant and appointments that had been supposed to be devoted to this purpose really formed a "fullery" or laundry. He believed that these villas were occupied by territorial magnates whose establishments were more or less self-contained, and that this "fullery" was provided for washing, cleaning and drying the clothes of those residing in the house, the visitors and the servants. On the previous evening he had expressed the belief that the Whiteway road from Cirencester was originally constructed as a private road for the use of the "Lord Chedworth" of Roman times, when he desired to drive or send into Corinium. He pointed out that although the villa—the modern associations of that name, he remarked, give quite a wrong impression of the character of the place, which was really a big country house or mansion—was somewhat isolated, there was another smaller one at Withington, and others dotted all over that district. Indeed, he said, the Cotswolds might be regarded as "The Dukeries" of Roman Britain. Alluding to the sculptured fragments mentioned above, he said it was clear that there was some form of Christianity prevailing among the residents at the villa, and added that the reservoir at the north-west corner of the enclosure was thought by some to be a Christian baptistry. On this he expressed no opinion. He also confessed that he could offer no explanation of the presence of the big blocks of iron—so familiar to visitors to Chedworth—and invited suggestions as to their origin and use.

Several suggestions were made and discussed, the most popular being the existence of a smithy not yet discovered; but Dr. Haverfield said Sir Hugh Bell, a well-known ironmaster, whom he had consulted, had assured him that these blocks of iron were incapable of being worked.

From the Roman villa the party drove on to Northleach, where lunch was served at the Wheatsheaf Hotel. After luncheon the President here took the opportunity of emphasising a point, made by Dr. Haverfield, viz. the duty of the Society to undertake

original excavations and research work; and he also conveyed the thanks of the Society to all who had contributed to the pleasure and success of the meeting.

The party then made their way to the Parish Church of SS. Peter and Paul. They were received there by the Vicar, the Rev. W. H. Careless. Rev. Canon R. C. S. Jones (local Secretary for Fairford district) was also present, and gave a descriptive and historical address on the church, of which he was for so many years vicar. As on the previous occasion in 1907, when the Society last visited Northleach, his address was listened to with great interest. The visitors examined the church, and were much interested in the very fine brasses, especially that of John Fortey, the rebuilder of the nave in the fifteenth century. Another brass is to John Taylour and his wife and family; and Canon Jones mentioned the fact — as showing the continuity of church life in Northleach—that there are a Forty and a Tayler among the present church officers. Other interesting objects were the beautiful altar frontal made from fragments of fifteenth-century copes belonging to the church, and the Court Book (dating from 1538) and mace of the town of Northleach, lent by Mr. C. W. Cole, the present Bailiff or Mayor.

On leaving the church the party separated, the motors carrying them to Cirencester, Cheltenham or Gloucester, according as their homeward journey required. By this time the rain that had prevailed during the earlier part of the day had ceased, and the final drive was therefore taken in somewhat pleasanter atmospheric conditions. It was generally agreed that in spite of this day's rain the meeting, owing to the careful arrangements of the General Secretary and Mr. Sewell, the local Secretary for Cirencester, and to the admirable addresses of Mr. Baddeley and Professor Haverfield, was one of the pleasantest and most instructive that had ever been held.

An account of the old town of Northleach and the Parish Church will be found in the *Transactions*, vol. xxx., p. 4.

The Editor desires to express his grateful thanks to the Editors of the *Bristol Times and Mirror* and the *Wills and Gloucestershire Standard*, as well as other friends, for substantial help, in preparing the report of the meetings.