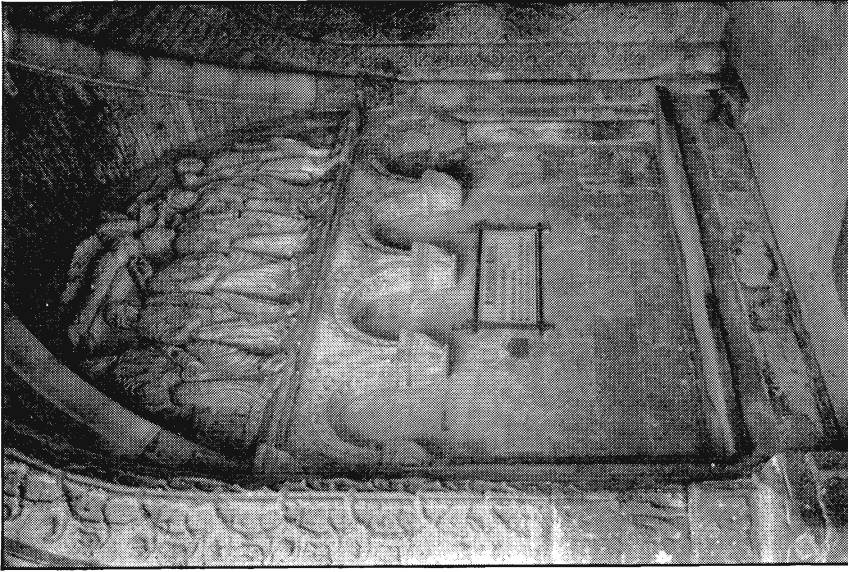


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**The Porch, Malmesbury Abbey Church.**

Photos by Mr. S. Russell.

THE ANNUAL EXCURSION, 1914.

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The Annual Excursion took place on June 3rd, 4th and 5th. The attendance was larger than usual, and amply justified the action of those members of the Society who had been agitating for years past in favour of an outing which should extend over two nights. The objective was again the West of England, with the same headquarters as in the previous year.

Two excellent guides had been secured, namely, A. Hamilton Thompson, Esq., F.S.A., who accompanied the party throughout, and Harold Brakspear, Esq., F.S.A., who met us at two or three places.

We left Leicester by the Great Central Railway at 10-58 on the Wednesday morning, and after lunching in the train disembarked at Chippenham. The journey was then continued in motors to Malmesbury, where the fine Abbey Church was the chief attraction.

The twelfth-century nave is standing, with later clerestory and vaulting. The Norman south doorway and porch are elaborately sculptured. There are remains of the crossing and transepts. The west tower has fallen, leaving the west part of the Church partially in ruin : the south aisle has been restored. The site of the cloister, with indications of buildings, can be traced on the north side of the Church ; and the Abbey House, to the N.E. of the Church, is built upon vaults which are probably those of the Infirmary.

After tea, a short run brought us to Sherston Magna. The Church is an interesting building with late twelfth-century nave, thirteenth-century crossing and chancel, fifteenth-century south porch and chapel, and a lofty tower above the crossing, rebuilt early in the eighteenth century in a mixture of classical and debased Gothic. There are sculptured corbels in the crossing-arches ; and a large stone figure, probably part of a Norman piece of sculpture, is in the angle of the south porch and the south aisle.

The motor journey was then resumed, and we arrived at our headquarters, the Pulteney Hotel, Bath, in time for dinner.

In the late evening most of the members made a pleasant walk about the city under Mr. Hamilton Thompson's guidance.

On the Thursday morning, after an early breakfast, we started in the motors for Shepton Mallet. The Church is a thirteenth-century building, originally cruciform, with important fifteenth-century additions. There is a magnificent wooden cradle-roof with carved panels, a stone pulpit, and a lofty west tower with the base of a spire above. The market cross was also inspected.

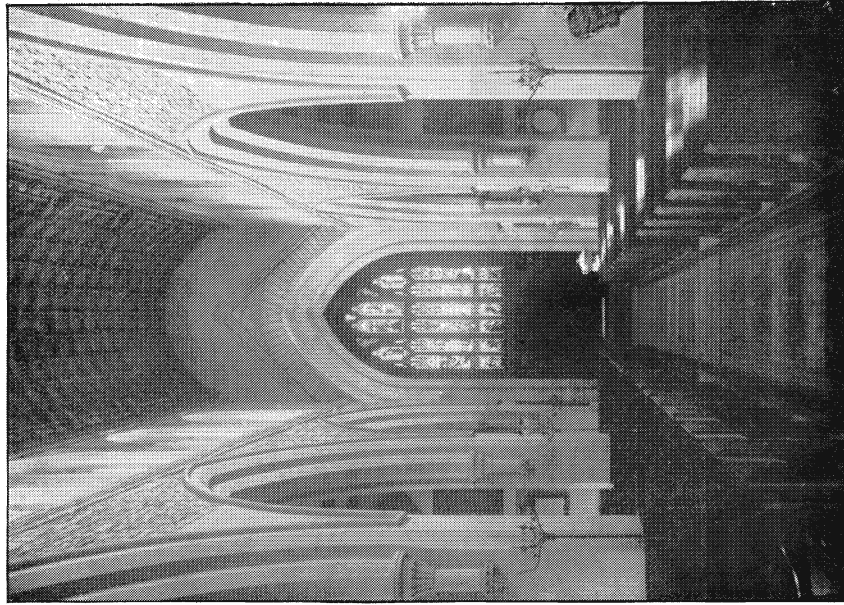
We next proceeded to Crocombe. The Church is chiefly of the fifteenth century, with west tower and spire, and good battlemented parapets. The chief interest of the building is the very complete and elaborate furniture of the early part of the seventeenth century, *circa* 1616, including chancel-screen, pulpit, and benches—paralleled only in St. John's Church at Leeds. The candelabra are of later date.

From Crocombe we moved on to Wells for lunch. The Cathedral had been carefully examined in 1913, and therefore formed no part of the programme on this occasion; but most of the party contrived to pay it a hasty visit before leaving for Glastonbury Abbey. This glorious pile of ruins is so well known that little need be said about it. It has been described as "the English Jerusalem," "the second Rome," "the oldest ecclesiastical foundation in the island." It was founded by King Ine and St. Adhelm on a site already surrounded with a halo of antiquity. In addition to the Abbey, the Abbot's kitchen, the Abbey barn, and the Museum with its wonderful finds from the lake villages, were all of the greatest interest.

Nearly three hours were spent altogether at Glastonbury, and after tea the motors took us straight back to Bath.

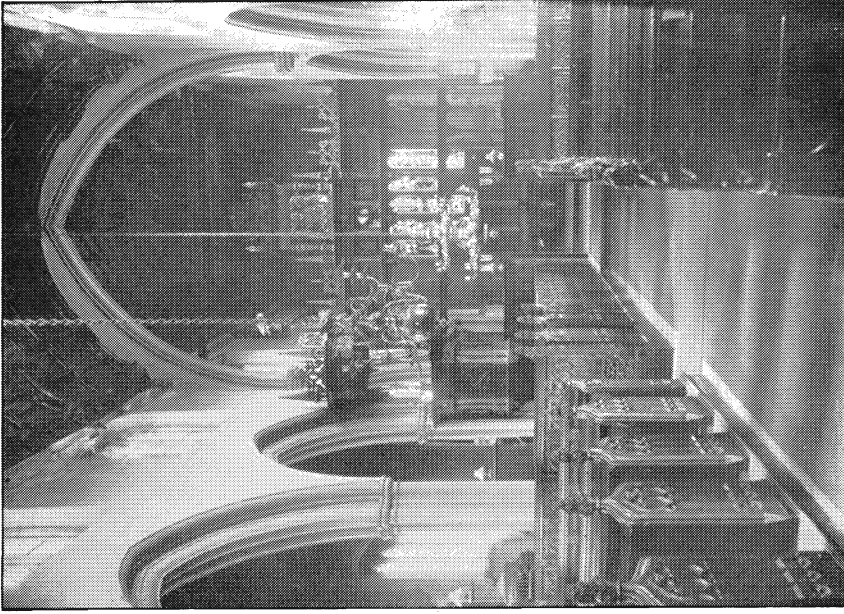
On the Friday morning we again left by motor, and made our first stop at South Wraxall Manor House, the residence of E. Richardson Cox, Esq. It is an extremely interesting house of the fifteenth century, built round three sides of a quadrangle, and much enriched and altered in the reign of Elizabeth, to which date the plaster ceilings and chimney-pieces belong.

Lacock was reached in time for lunch, and afterwards we were kindly permitted by C. H. Talbot, Esq. to inspect the famous Lacock Abbey, though not to photograph it. It was founded for nuns following the rule of St. Augustine in 1232. The cloister



**Shepton Mallet Church.**

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**Croscombe Church.**

*Photos by Mr. S. RUSSELL.*

still remains, with three of its walks rebuilt in the fifteenth century. The thirteenth-century chapter-house, and other cloister buildings, have been incorporated into the present house. The Church has disappeared with the exception of its north wall, which forms part of an early Renaissance wing built by Sir William Sharington, with an octagonal tower at its S.E. angle, and a gallery over the south walk of the cloister.

The village of Lacock is rich in picturesque houses.

We once more mounted the cars, and reached Chippenham Station in time to catch our train homewards. We arrived safely at Leicester some three hours later.

So ended a most successful excursion, a pleasant feature of which was the absence of hurry, in striking contrast to the shorter excursions of previous years.

The greatest credit is due to our Excursion Secretary, the Rev. S. T. Winckley, for the admirable arrangements he had made, which must have involved the expenditure of considerable time and trouble beforehand.

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