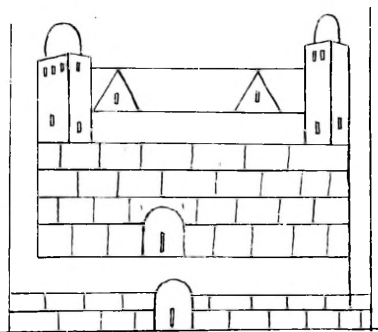
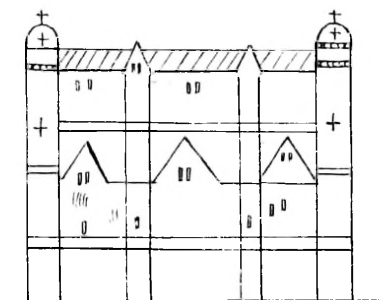


*Town House (A.D. 1615) of William Grove Esq. of Ferne
sometime M.P. for Shaftesbury.*



*Town House of Thomas first Lord Arundel of Wardour
A.D. 1615.*



*Town House of Thomas first Lord Arundel of Wardour
A.D. 1620.*

Highman. Lith.

CT 70

THE
Ancient History of Shaftesbury,

BEING

A PAPER READ AT THE EIGHTH GENERAL MEETING
OF THE WILTS ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY,
AT SHAFTESBURY, 1861.

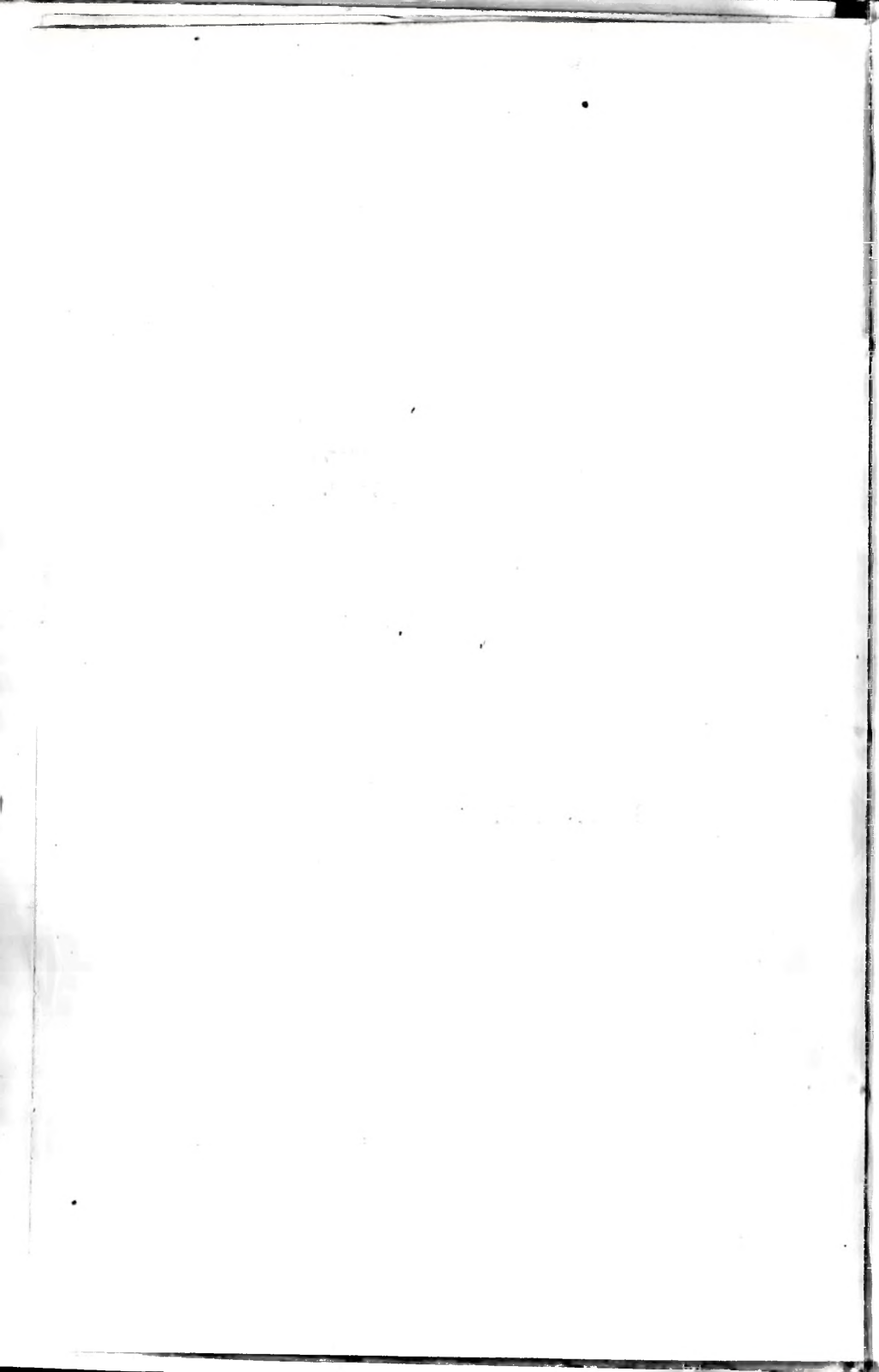
WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE EXCAVATIONS ON THE
SITE OF THE ANCIENT ABBEY CHURCH,
IN 1861—2.

BY THE

REV. J. J. REYNOLDS, B.A.,
RECTOR OF SHAFTESBURY.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

SHAFTESBURY:
JOHN BENNETT, BOOKSELLER, HIGH STREET.
—
1867.



TO
THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR,
AND OTHER INHABITANTS OF THE
BOROUGH OF SHAFTESBURY,

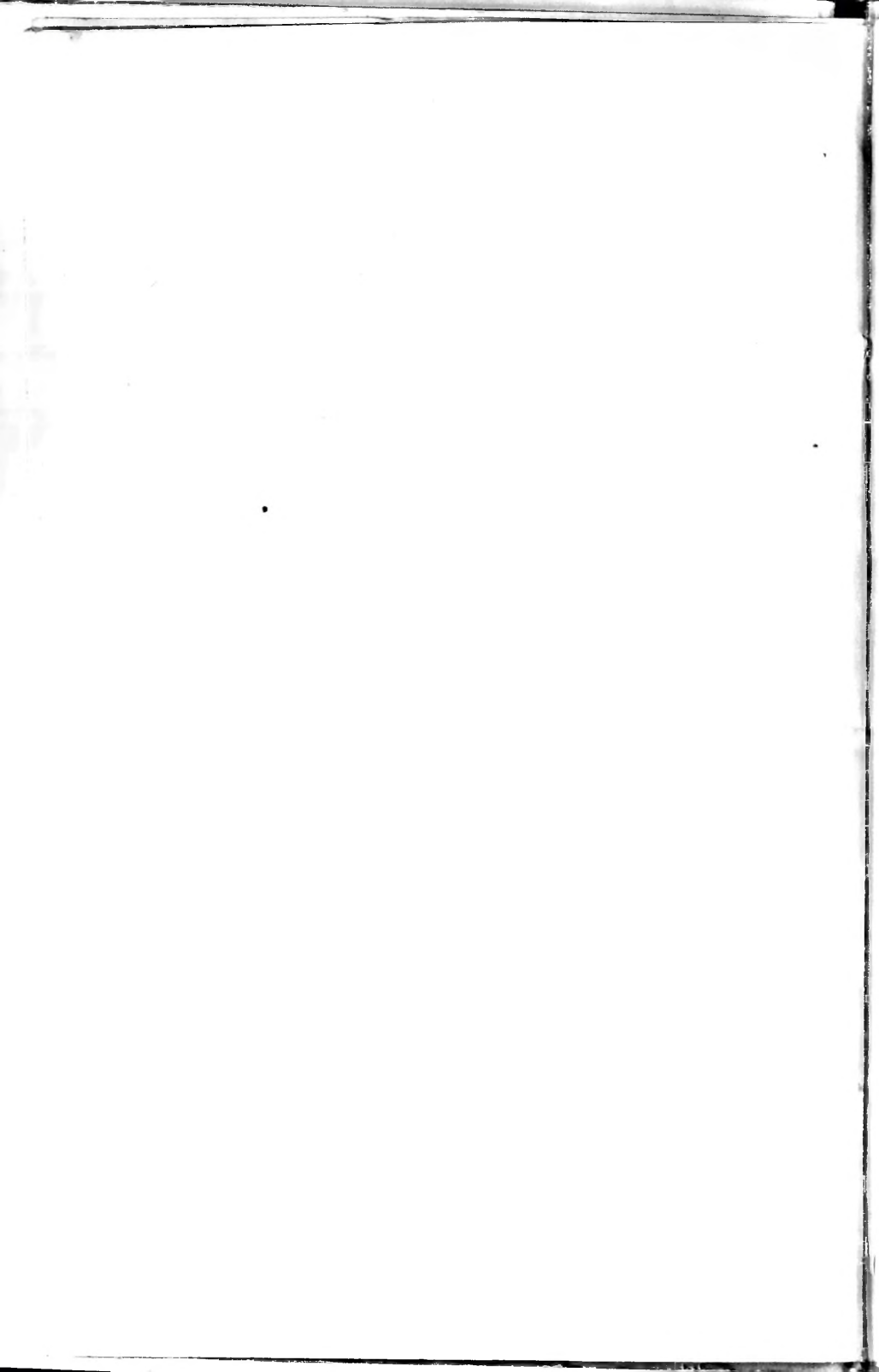
THE FOLLOWING PAPER ON THE EARLY HISTORY OF THEIR
ANCIENT TOWN

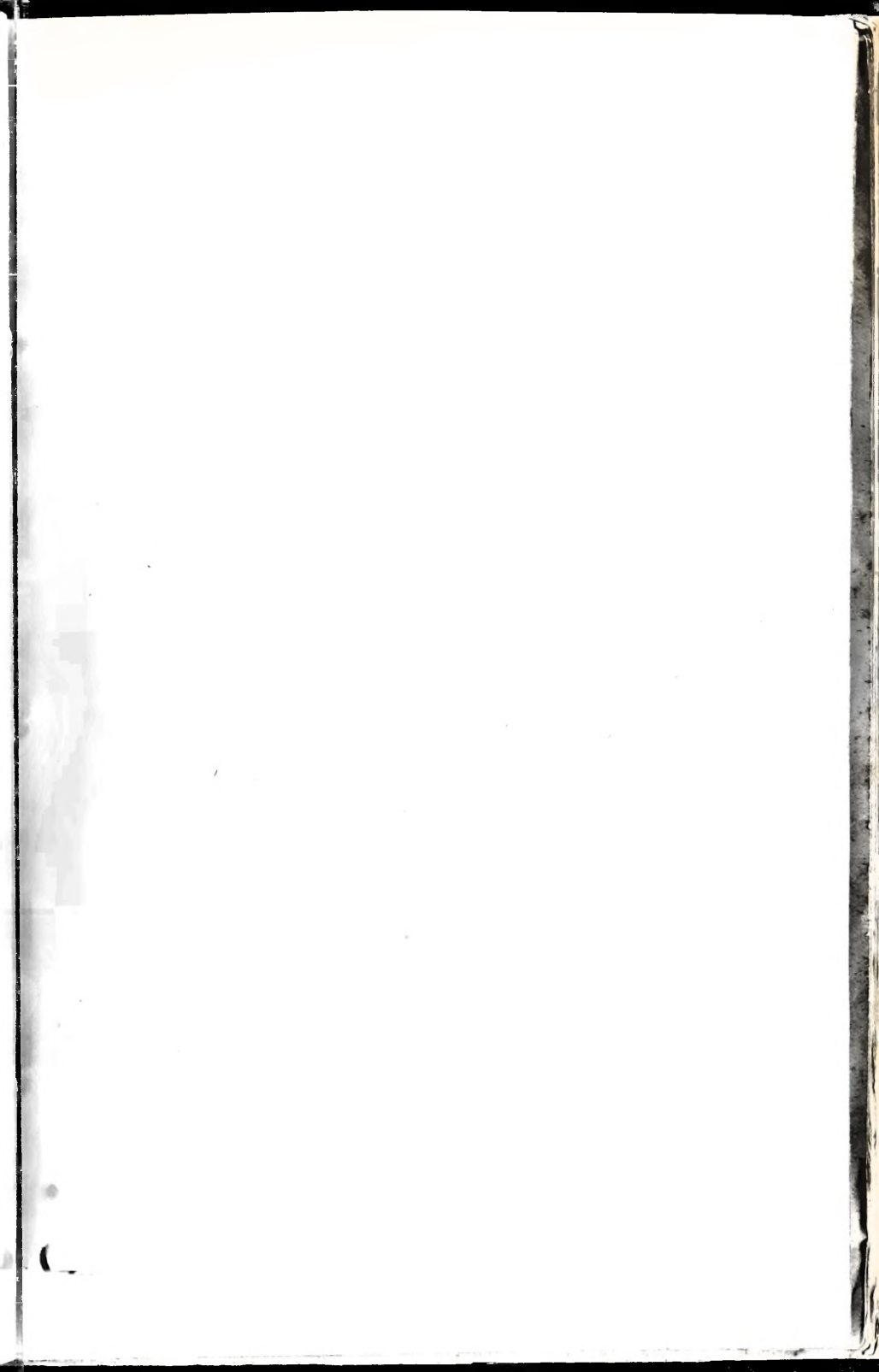
Is respectfully dedicated,

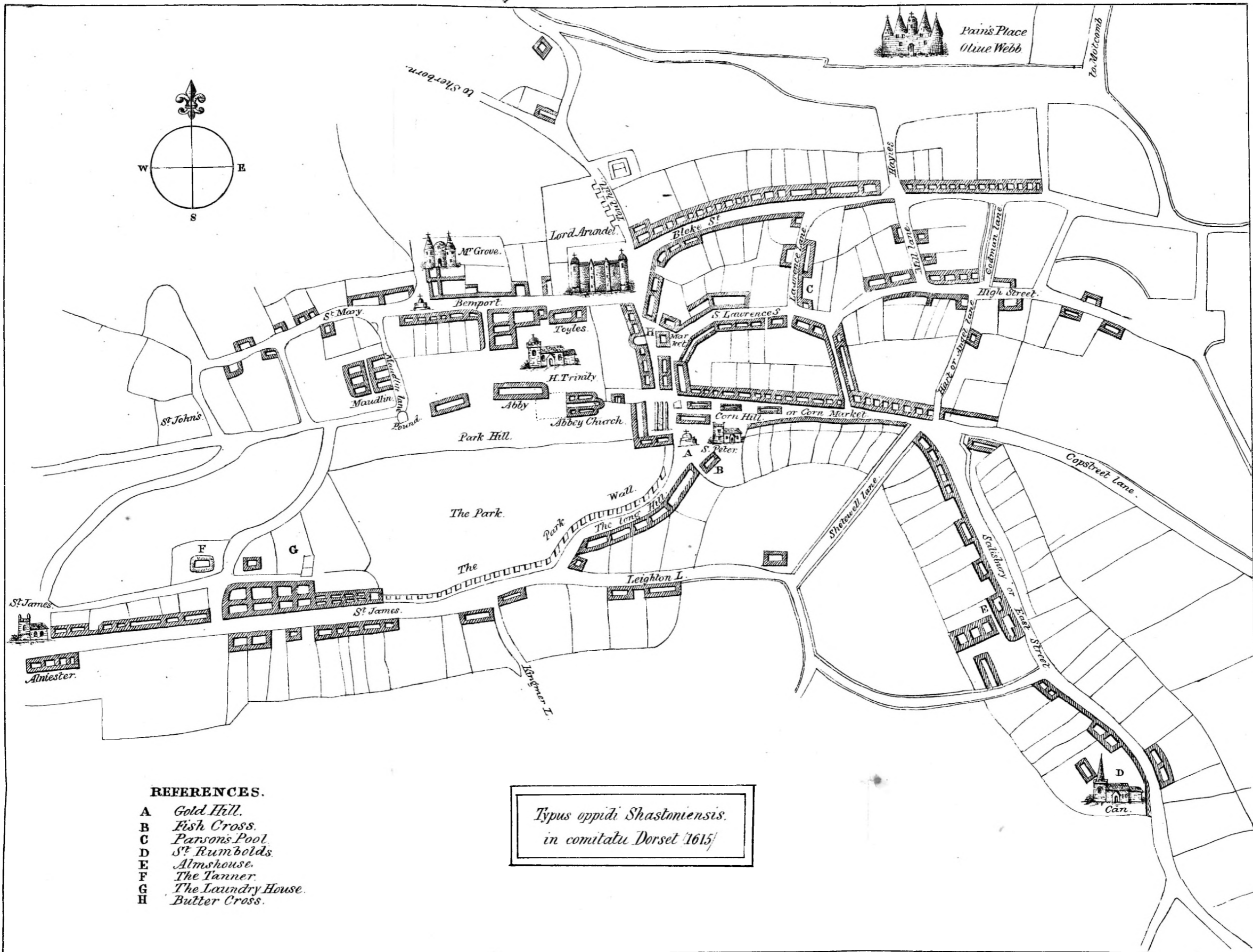
IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF MUCH KINDNESS DURING
FIFTEEN YEARS OF MINISTERIAL AND
FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE.

J. J. REYNOLDS.

1867.







REFERENCES.

- A Gold Hill.
- B Fish Cross.
- C Parson's Pool.
- D St. Rumbolds.
- E Almshouse.
- F The Tanner.
- G The Laundry House.
- H Butter Cross.

Typus oppidi Shastoniensis.
in comitatu Dorset 1615/

Ancient History of Shaftesbury,

By the Rev. J. J. REYNOLDS.

THE town of SHAFTESBURY claims a very high antiquity, and at certain periods it has been the scene of events of considerable interest.

If we may believe Geoffrey¹ of Monmouth, it was built by Hudibras, King of Britain 950 B. C. Hudibras was grandfather of Lear the hero of one of Shakspeare's plays. Geoffrey tells us that an eagle is said to have spoken while the wall of the town was being built, "and indeed," he adds, "I should have transmitted the speech to posterity had I thought it true, as the rest of the history." Others, say Camden and Hutchins, state that instead of an eagle it was a man named Aquila, who prophesied to the effect that the sovereignty of Britain after passing to Roman, Saxon, Dane, and Norman, should return to the ancient British race. As the mingled blood of all these races is said to flow in the veins of our present gracious Queen, we may consider the prophecy, if ever uttered, to have had its fulfilment. Drayton would make the prophet neither man nor eagle, but an angel. Other chronicles repeat the statement of the early foundation of the town. Holinshed ascribes it to Lud son of Liel, eighth king of the Britons from Brute the Trojan. John of Brompton however refers it to the brave Chief Cassibelan about 60 B. C. These statements perhaps simply prove, that in the earliest historical times, it was believed to have existed from a very remote period. Each of these Chiefs or petty Kings may have been its patron, as were greater monarchs after them, but its magnificent situation had probably led to its permanent occupation, at a period far anterior to either of these dates. Its ancient name "Caer Palladur," bespeaks a British origin. "Caer" means a city or town; "Palladur," the shaft of a spear, or the shaft of a pillar,² and hence a pillar or tower. Shaftsburgh or Shaftesbury seems to be simply a Saxon translation of the British name the shaft or tower-burgh. Other meanings of the name Palladur have been suggested, but the fact of the Saxons having substituted the word "Shaft" for "Palladur" is, to my mind, a strong presumption of the meaning to be attached to the word. The aborigines of this Island, it is known, were accustomed to erect round towers on lofty wooded eminences. The name therefore may have arisen from such a tower built here by the very earliest inhabitants, the situation being such as they were wont to select,—a high and commanding position in the neighbourhood of a wooded country, and so thickly wooded was it that there was a saying that a squirrel could travel from Shaftesbury to Gillingham without touching ground. In the ordnance map it is still marked as Gillingham Forest. From one of these ancient round towers erected on Castle Hill by those early settlers who journeyed hither perhaps

¹ Book ii., chap 9.

² Hutchins.

from the plains of Shinar,¹ this town may have received its earlier appellation "Caer Palladur," the city of the Pillar or tower, given to it pre-eminently from the Shaft-like appearance such a tower so situated would have when viewed from the country round. Traces of very ancient masonry have been found on Castle Hill, and tradition from the earliest times asserts that a castle or tower once existed there, yet we know that none has stood there within what may be termed historical times. The ruined British Tower was probably succeeded by a Roman "Castrum Exploratorium." On the very brow of Castle Hill to the West is a small mount surrounded by intrenchments, its area about an acre. These intrenchments though modernized by the club-men during the civil war in Charles 1st time, appear to have been of Roman construction.²

During the occupation of Britain by the Romans the town is said to have been one of their favorite stations. Here it is also reported was a temple to Pallas;³ and some would have it, that hence the name "Caer Palladur;" but the name I believe existed before any such temple, if indeed there ever was one. The Temple however is not only said to have existed but to have been very magnificent, served by its several courses of priests, called Flamens under an Arch-flamen;⁴ hence quaint old Fuller takes occasion to say, that he believes the whole story to be "flams and arch-flams, even notorious falsehoods."⁵ Be this as it may the Romans certainly resided much in this town and neighbourhood. This is evident from the number of Roman coins found, from the Roman Intrenchment; on Castle Hill, and from the causeway approaching the town from Sherborne, which may be conjectured to be of Roman origin. A few years since also in excavating for the foundation of the house in the High Street now occupied by Mr. White, Roman Architectural remains of the Doric order, as I am informed,⁶ and seemingly of a building of considerable magnitude and importance were discovered.⁷ Could this have been the Temple of Pallas? I ought perhaps before proceeding with the history of the town to give one or two other suggestions which have been made as to the origin of its name. It may, it is said, have arisen from the seeming shaft-like spur or promontory on which it is built; but viewed from the country round, the eminence on which the town stands rather seems to form the horn of a bow. It has also been suggested that the words "Palladur" may be read "Pal" or "Pel a dwr," i.e. "far from

¹ The aborigines, probably of the family of Shem, or at least some early Eastern colony, preserving much of their pristine civilization, were wont to erect peculiar round towers in lofty situations: King and Polwhele call attention to the striking similarity between the old castle at Launceston in Cornwall, and the citadel of Exbatana, as described by Herodotus. They consider that this similarity of style in building, taken with other circumstances, bespeaks an Eastern origin for the first inhabitants of this country, to whom they and others consider the old castle at Launceston may fairly be attributed.

² Hutchins. Hist. Dorset, Introduction, p. 12. ³ Hutchins.

⁴ Geoffrey of Monmouth. ⁵ Book i., Cent. II., 9.

⁶ By W. Batten, Esq., Agent to the Marquis of Westminster.

⁷ Roman remains have also been discovered, as I think, among the foundations of the abbey church now in course of excavation.

water." This however does not agree with the Saxon equivalent "Shaftesbury," and with respect to water. there are several wells in the town which are said never to have failed. That there was a good supply of water we may infer from the fact that the Saxons, a prudent and warlike people, selected it for a permanent fortified position, which they would not have done if destitute of this necessary of life.¹ The real history of Shaftesbury commences with its restoration, and the foundation of its Abbey by Alfred the Great A. D. 880. During the Danish invasion it had, probably in common with almost every other town of any importance, been destroyed,² since it is clear that it had been a place of note from a much earlier period.

The spring of the year 879 found King Alfred a fugitive, concealed from his enemies, with a few trusty followers in the Isle of Athelney in Somersetshire. Encouraged³ however by the defeat and death of the Danish Chief Hubba,⁴ who was at this time completely routed and slain with upwards of twelve hundred of his followers, by the Earl of Devon, before the fortress of Kenwith, near the mouth of the River Torridge in North Devon,⁵ he resolved to leave his retreat, and the Royal Standard was unfurled at Egberstone to the east of Selwood Forest. To trace the march of Alfred from Athelney to the victory of Ethandun, which restored him to his throne, is not an easy task. The late Sir Richard C. Hoare, finding a place called "King's Settle" in the parish of Stourton, Wilts, with a tradition that Alfred halted there on his first day's march, built a tower to preserve the memory of that event. As local names and traditions carry with them a presumption of truth, the surmise of Sir R. C. Hoare, with respect to the halts of Alfred at this spot, is highly probable. The chief difficulties however remain. Asser says "Alfred encamped *one* night at Egbertstone." Most writers have considered this to be Brixton Deverill, but the Rev. W. H. Jones suggests with great probability that Brixton instead of being a contraction of Egbertstone, had its name from Bricitone the great Saxon Landowner of those parts, and that *Kingston* Deverill is the ancient Egbertstone. These spots however are within two miles of each other. "With the dawn of the following day," continues Asser, Alfred "moved his camp and came to a place called Aeglia, where he encamped one night, and the following morning moving hence, came to a place called Ethandun and there fought." On first reading this account, we might perhaps think, that Alfred moved from Egberstone to Aeglia in one day's march. In this we should be wrong. Asser does not in reality say how long the march from Egbertstone to Aeglia took, only that Alfred encamped *one night* at each of these places, and removed on the following morning.

His object was to state where Alfred first raised the Royal Standard

¹ The ancient wells are of very great depth, and it is of course very expensive to sink them; great thanks are therefore due to the Marquess of Westminster for the abundant supply of water now afforded, by means of the water works recently erected; this supply however is not procured from a distance, but from a well sunk on the spot and within the borough.

² Leland.

³ Henry of Huntingdon.

⁴ Roger of Wendover.

⁵ Asser and others.

after leaving Athelney, and again where he passed the night before so eventful a battle as Ethandun. But Roger of Wendover distinctly states, that after encamping for the night at Egbertstone, Alfred "in the morning moved his camp and arrived after a march of *two days* at Ethandun." Simeon of Durham says, Alfred reached Ethandun "after the *third day*" "*post tertium diem,*" from the time of leaving Egbertstone, and Gaimar, that he did not come up with the enemy till noon.

Now if we consider Ethandun to have been Edington near Westbury, and Aeglia either Clay Hill near Warminster, or Leigh near Westbury, we have only a distance of eight or nine miles between Egbertstone, (whether Brixton or Kingston Deverill,) and Aeglia, and Alfred could not have occupied two days in marching at the furthest nine miles. If strong enough to have attacked the enemy, he would have done so at once, while they were shaken and disheartened by their recent defeat at Kenwith; if not strong enough, he would hardly have remained so near them for three days, neither would they have suffered him to do so unmolested, and by so doing, enable him to augment a weak force into a strong one for the very purpose of attacking them. It is moreover clear that Alfred left Egbertstone after camping there *one* night, and did not arrive at Ethandun till "*after the third day,*" "*two days*" of which were occupied in marching; where then did he go during this time? I have what appears to me a most probable suggestion to offer. On a high and commanding table land little more than a mile from this town, which has always borne the name of "King's Settle," tradition asserts that Alfred reviewed his army previous to the battle which restored him to his throne, and that from a remarkable elevation on this spot the heroic king addressed his troops. There is great historical probability in favor of this tradition. Alfred had been in retreat, and indeed concealment at Athelney with a very scanty following. The news of the unlooked for victory, gained by Oddune the Earl of Devon at Kenwith, encouraged him to emerge from his hiding place, and at once advance against the Danes with such a force as he might be able to gather around him on the march from Somerset, Wilts, Dorset and Hants. On reaching Egbertstone, he perhaps unexpectedly found himself within a few miles of the enemy, without as yet sufficient force for an immediate attack. What so likely as to make a retrograde movement to a strong position in the neighbourhood of the even then doubtless important town of Shaftesbury, where he might both hope, and conveniently wait further succours? The march from Egbertstone, Brixton, or Kingston Deverill, would be somewhere about eleven or twelve miles, that is, a short day's march. The next or second day would be spent in resting and recruiting his army, and probably in receiving the Hants contingents, instead of running the risk of their being cut off in detail by attempting to concentrate nearer the enemy. On the third day he finds himself strong enough at once to seek the foe, and marches either to Clay Hill near Warminster, which seems most probable, or to Leigh near Westbury; here he encamps "*one night,*" and at noon "*post tertium diem,*" that is, after "*two day's march,*" and one day's rest at King's Settle, falls in with the Danes at Ethandun, i.e. Edington near Westbury in Wiltshire.

The white horse on Bratton Hill is said to have been cut to commemo.

rate the victory there obtained. The suggestions which I have now offered contradict, I submit, no one historian, while they are consistent with the narratives of all. With Asser I give "*one night*" at Egbertstone and one night at Acglia. With Roger of Wendover I give "two day's march," one day's retrograde march from Egbertstone to King's Settle near Shaftesbury, and one day's forward march from King's Settle to Acglia, whether Clay Hill or Leigh. With Simeon of Durham I do not bring Alfred to Ethandun till "after the third day," affording a day's rest at King's Settle, so needful for various reasons; and having eight or nine miles to march from either Clay Hill or Leigh to Ethandun i.e. Edington, I do not with Gaimar bring him up with the enemy till noon. I believe these suggestions fairly tenable, and I claim for King's Settle near this our ancient town, the honour of having received, refreshed and augmented the army of Alfred before the victory which replaced him in the undisputed Sovereignty of England.

If these suggestions are not considered tenable, *then* the site of the battle of Ethandun must be removed from Edington near Westbury to some other spot far more distant from Egbertstone, and indeed from the county of Wilts altogether. Dr. Bleke and Mr. Lysons suggest Heddington in the parish of Hungerford in Berkshire. Others say,¹ Minchinhampton in Gloucestershire. Milner however would still keep the site in Wiltshire, placing it at Heddington near Devizes; while Whitaker suggests Yatton, near Chippenham. I consider my own suggestions most reasonable, most accordant with ancient history and with continuous local tradition and nomenclature: and that Edington near Westbury was the scene of the battle of Ethandun, and that Alfred retired from Egbertstone to this town for reinforcements before encountering and finally conquering the invaders. Need we wonder that one of the first acts of the grateful Monarch when reinstated in his kingdom, was to restore and rebuild this ancient and loyal city.

Shaftesbury was accordingly, we find, rebuilt by Alfred immediately A.D. 880. William of Malmesbury, writing in the twelfth century, says there was in his time, in the Chapter-house of the Nuns, a stone which had been brought thither from the ruins of a very ancient wall, with this inscription:—"In the year of the Incarnation of our Lord, Alfred the King built this city, 880; of his reign the 8th." Camden says that he is the more particular in giving this because it is wanting in some copies of William of Malmesbury, but that he (Camden) had himself seen it in the copy belonging to the Lord Treasurer Burghley. There is a MS. copy of Malmesbury in the Bodleian Library ("Bodley MSS." 956) in which this passage is extant. The words of the inscription however are not placed quite in the same order as Camden gives them, but as follows:—"In the year of our Lord's Incarnation 880 Alfred the King built this city, of his reign the 8th;" but doubtless through an error of the transcriber it is written "980." And instead of "Anno Dominicæ," as given by Camden, it runs "Anno enim Dominicæ," as if their had been something

¹ Brayley's Graphic Illustrator. Paper on Ethandun by J. M. M. (J. M. Moffatt?)

more belonging to the inscription. John of Brompton writing about two hundred and fifty years later, says "Alfred repaired Shaftesbury, as a great stone testifies, which is walled into the Chapter House of the monastery, even unto this day; (*usque hodie est insculptus.*") Leland, who presented his work to King Henry VIII. A.D. 1545, says "There was an inscription on the right hand entering of the Chapter House set up by King Alfred in knowledge that he repaired Shaftesbury destroyed by the Danes." By the little circumstance of his mentioning that it was "on the right hand," we may conclude that he had himself seen it. He adds; "The Inscription of the remains of the which William of Malmesbury speaketh, stood in the wall of St. Mary's Chapel at the Town's end. This Chapel is now pulled down." This must have been the Chapel of St. Mary Magdalene, which stood at the south-west corner of Bimport Street. Leland spent six years in travelling over the kingdom and visiting the religious houses to collect materials for his work. He might very likely have visited so important a Monastery as Shaftesbury twice, and on the first occasion have found the inscription still in the Chapter House as it was in Malmesbury's time, and afterwards removed to the Chapel of St. Mary Magdalene, which however very soon suffered the fate of the Abbey, and was destroyed. But what became of this interesting relic? There is some reason to think that it was removed to the Magdalene Hospital, which stood to the West of St. Mary Magdalene (Maudlin) Lane, and very near the old Chapel of St. Mary. Over the doorway, I am informed, there was up to the time of its being pulled down 1848, an ancient oblong stone with an illegible inscription, surmounted by another stone of a somewhat triangular shape bearing on an ornamented shield a coat of Arms, and a motto on a scroll. *Part* of this latter stone with the Arms and motto, of course of comparatively modern date, is still in existence, but the inscribed stone which stood beneath is not to be found, and has most probably been destroyed. Might not this have been the identical stone of Alfred, so long preserved, which can be traced by contemporary testimony from the days of Malmesbury to the time of Leland, in the reign of Henry VIII.? The inscription might have become illegible from age and exposure for the last three hundred years, or if written in the Saxon character and language, it might have appeared illegible to persons not at all or but partially acquainted therewith. William of Malmesbury indeed gives the inscription in Latin; but this does not prove that it was so on the stone. He was writing his history in Latin and would very likely give the inscription in the language which he was himself using. But Alfred was a great adherent to the vernacular tongue; and the Saxon inscription to a similar effect on what appears to be the jewelled head of a sceptre¹ found at Athelney, affords a presumption that he would have employed the same language in the other case. Camden also gives an outline of the stone, copied either from Leland or Malmesbury, as an oblong stone placed horizontally, which was the shape of the inscribed stone over the Magdalene doorway. Alfred not only rebuilt the town, but at

¹ Preserved in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

the same time, viz. A.D. 880, laid the foundation of its Abbey, which eventually became one of the richest and most distinguished in the kingdom. It was not completed till A.D. 888. No long period when we consider the probable magnitude of the work. From the first it was a fortified Abbey.¹ Its lofty towers are specially mentioned by early writers, some of whom would have the name of the town derived from them. We have no detailed account of the buildings of the Abbey as first erected. We know however from Eddius² a Saxon historian of the 8th century, that in his time his countrymen spared neither cost nor labour in their ecclesiastical buildings; and under so skilful and munificent a monarch as Alfred, a great encourager of architecture as indeed of all the Arts, great advance would doubtless be made. The learned Grimbald afterwards Abbot of Winchester, the greatest architect of the day, had arrived in England on Alfred's invitation, three years before the Abbey of Shaftesbury was completed, and no doubt gave this royal foundation a full share of his attention. In 888 the Abbey was duly consecrated to the service of Almighty God and the pious memory of St. Mary the Virgin. Shaftesbury was then in the Diocese of Sherborne, to which See the learned and pious Asser the friend and instructor of Alfred's riper years had been appointed three years before,³ who doubtless performed the Consecration Service. And since Alfred's own daughter the Lady Ethelgiva, was to be the first Abbess, and many noble maidens Nuns in her Convent, we may presume that the King himself and many a noble Earl and valiant Thane,

¹ Dugdale.

² Eddius, c. 22 thus describes the church of Hexham, built about two hundred years before the abbey. I use Whitaker's translation. "The deepness of which in the ground—all with the rooms founded of stones admirably polished, but having above ground one room of many parts, supported on various columns and on many underground chapels, yet possessing a wonderful length and height of walls and by various passages winding in lines, carried along spiral stairs sometimes up sometimes down." "Nor did I ever hear of any other house on this side of the Alpine mountains built equal with this." Richard the Prior of Hexham about 100 years after the Conquest gives an almost similar account of his church. He speaks of Wilfred having "founded (it) below" (I again use Whitaker's translation), "with great labour in crypts and oratories subterraneous with winding passages to them." The walls he erected of immense length and height, supported on columns of squared, varied, well-polished stones, and divided into three stories. The walls themselves with the capitals by which the walls were supported, as also the covered ceiling of the sanctuary he decorated with histories and curious figures projecting in sculpture from the stone, with a grateful variety of pictures and a wonderful beauty of colours. He also surrounded the very body of the church with chapels lateral and subterraneous on every side, which with wonderful and inexplicable artifice, he separated by walls and spiral stairs above and below." "But in the very stairs and upon them, he caused to be made of stone, ways of ascent, places of landing, and a variety of windings, some up and some down, yet so artificially, that an innumerable multitude of men might be there, and stand all about the very body of the church, but not be visible to any that were below in it."—Such is the account given by contemporary historians of the Saxon Church of Hexham. Might not our abbey have been equally splendid? The massive groining of a *very* early date of a "Chapel lateral and subterraneous" now in course of excavation seems to argue as much.

³ Dodsworth's Cathedral of Sarum.

would be present at the solemn ceremony. Asser, who certainly knew the town well, places the Abbey near the East gate. Roger of Wendover seems to follow Asser. Dr. Pauli however in his recent "Life of King Alfred," places the Abbey at the South gate. He apparently quotes from Dugdale. Hutchins says "in the time of Asser, Shaftesbury consisted of one street." I have not myself been able to find this statement in Asser. If correct, it must have been Bimport Street, which extended very probably from the Bimport or Gate, to St. Mary Magdalene Church, at the West end of the town. The Bimport or Gate, was no doubt the *chief* entrance. A little to the South of the Bimport, at the East end of what is now called Church Lane, there seems to have been another Gate, giving admission to the Abbey Church-yard and Grounds. This Gate having no special designation, might by one historian be called the Eastern Gate, as being to the East of the Abbey and Town; and by another, the South Gate, as being South of the chief entrance or Bimport.

The most important part of the Town-wall at this early period seems to have run round from the bottom of Tout Hill, to the bottom of Gold Hill. The town properly so called, that is to say, the stone houses, were chiefly within the walls to the West; and outside the walls to the East "the Commons," more or less covered with the huts and cots of the peasantry. As the fame of the Abbey increased, the town extended beyond the walls, more especially on the East side. This must have been the case at a very early period as St. Peter's parish and the parishes of St. Martin's and St. Andrew, to the East of St. Peter's, as well as the parish of St. Laurence with the chapelry of St. Michael to the East of St. Trinity, and St. Mary Magdalene to the West, all now united to St. Trinity; and the little parish of All Saints with the chapelry of St. Edward,¹ were included in the ancient borough and town of Shaftesbury. The parishes of Cann St. Rumbold on the East, St. John's on the West, and St. James on the South-west, are not, and never were included in the borough. I speak of the municipal town and borough, and not of the recently formed Parliamentary district, which embraces parishes for several miles round.

The Abbey stood in the gardens between what is now called "The Park" and the Holy Trinity Church-yard, anciently called the Abbey Church-yard. We find in old records mention made of the Church of St. Trinity in the Abbey Church-yard.

The Abbey itself and its offices lay to the West of the Abbey Church. In these gardens ancient foundations of very solid construction, arches, stairs, carved stones with distinct traces of gilding and colouring, and encaustic pavements, as well as frequent memorials of ancient interment, are still to be found. Some of these tokens of the past grandeur and beauty of the Abbey, are now deposited at the Literary Institution in this

¹ The little parish of All Saints, with St. Edward's, is now united to the parish of St. James, which is, as I have said, itself without the borough.

town.¹ In the South porch of the Church of St. Trinity, is the defaced monumental effigy of an ecclesiastic, which some years since was removed from these gardens and built into a wayside wall on Toothill. It was rescued and placed in the Church by the care of a former Rector.

It does not appear that Alfred at first made any permanent provision for the Abbey. It was probably maintained by his royal bounty out of the portion of his income laid by for pious and charitable uses. Before his death however, he settled on it a permanent endowment of 100 hides of land—about 12,000 acres. Of these lands 4,800 acres were in the Donheads and Compton, 1800 in Fontmell, 1800 in Iwerne, 1200 in Tarrant, and 2,400 in Handley and Gussage.

A copy, both in Anglo-Saxon and Latin, of Alfred's Deed, is extant in the Register of Shaftesbury Abbey in the British Museum, MS., Harl. 61. In it is the following passage, "I, King Alfred, to the honour of God, and the Holy Virgin, and all Saints, do give and grant, for the health of my soul, to the Church at Shaftesbury, 100 hides of land" (the deed then states where, as above) "with the men and appurtenances, as they now are, and my daughter Algiva with the same, she being at her own disposal and a nun in the same convent. Whosoever shall alienate these things, let him be" (equivalent perhaps to "he will be") "for ever accursed of God and the Virgin Mary and All Saints, Amen." The sisterhood, established at Shaftesbury, were of the Benedictine Order.

It was probably in this convent, that Edward the Elder A.D. 922 confined his niece Elfwina, daughter of his sister Elth-elfleda and the Earl of Mercia. This princess had secretly accepted the addresses of the Danish king of Northumbria. Edward disguising his knowledge of the event and his anger at it, proposed to pay his niece a friendly visit at her Mercian castle, but seizing on her person, conveyed her a prisoner into Wessex,² and confined her in a nunnery. The name is not given, having been probably concealed in order that the Danish chief might not know where to seek her, but as Shaftesbury was a Royal foundation, and Ælgiva her aunt still Abbess, and as moreover it was a fortified Abbey, in the centre of the home kingdom of Wessex, we may conclude that it would be chosen as the abode of the captive princess.

Ælgiva the first Abbess, and daughter of Alfred, was buried in the Abbey Church. She probably died about 947, as Ælfrith her successor is mentioned in the following year. If so, she presided over the establishment for the long period of fifty-nine years, which is not impossible, as she could not have been more than nineteen, if so much, when the Abbey was consecrated. Edmund Ironside and his pious queen Ælgiva, were great patrons of the Abbey, to which they gave much land in Tisbury. The Queen was buried in the Abbey Church A.D. 971. King Athelstan

¹ In anticipation of the visit of the Wilts Archæological Society, Wm. Batten, Esq., Agent for the Most Hon. the Marquess of Westminster to whom the ground now belongs, by his Lordship's permission, and indeed at his expense, made some investigations on the supposed site of the Abbey Church. A separate account of what has been discovered is given in an article following this paper.

² Saxon Chronicle. Henry of Huntingdon.

was also a liberal patron of the town and Abbey of Shaftesbury: to the town he granted two mints, and probably gave or confirmed its borough privileges: ¹ on the Abbey he bestowed many manors and estates, as did several of his successors.

The next event of importance connected with Shaftesbury, was the translation to the Abbey, of the bones of King Edward the Martyr. This amiable, but unfortunate youth, was treacherously murdered by his step-mother Elfrida at Corfe Castle, A.D. 978, to clear the way for her son Ethelred to the throne. His body having been cast into a well was discovered, and privately buried at Wareham. Three years afterwards Elfre, Earl of Mercia, ² who had been Edward's opponent, ³ and was supposed to have been accessory to the murder, moved with remorse, resolved to translate the body to the royal Abbey of Shaftesbury, and inter it with kingly honours. Dunstan the archbishop ⁴ was present with Alfwold, Bishop of Sherborne, Wulfrida, Abbess of Wilton with her nuns, and a large company of nobility and persons of all ranks. The body was brought in grand procession, and buried with great pomp, on the north side of the high altar of the Abbey Church. ⁵ Miraculous circumstances are said, by *later* writers, to have attended the finding and removal of the body, and cures of diseases to have been wrought at his tomb, "which brought" (says Roger of Wendover, writing about A.D. 1230, and therefore 250 years after the event) "multitudes ⁶ from all parts of the kingdom to the Martyr's tomb, for all who laboured under any infirmity were healed." I find however no mention made of these miracles in the Saxon chronicle, which is probably a contemporary record. Such tales seem the exaggerations, if not the inventions, of a later age. The cures, attributed to the virtue of King Edward's bones, might perhaps more truly be ascribed to the medical skill and good nursing of the pious and gentle sisters. William of Malmesbury writing in the reign of King Stephen, about A.D. 1140, thus speaks of them. "At Shaftesbury. . . . there is a numerous choir of women dedicated to God. . . . enlightening those parts with the blaze of their religion. There reside sacred virgins, there continent widows, ignorant of a second flame, in all whose manners, graceful modesty is so blended with chastened elegance, that nothing can exceed it. Indeed

¹ The municipal privileges of the ancient Saxon boroughs probably had their origin in Roman times; the early possession of such privileges is an argument that Shaftesbury was a town of some importance, as already intimated, under the Romans.

² Henry of Huntingdon.

³ Will. of Malmesbury.

⁴ Saxon Chronicle.

⁵ John of Brompton.

⁶ A curious confirmation of the number of pilgrims frequenting the Abbey Church, is afforded by the fact of the pavement of the chancel and nave, being actually laid with a slope towards the West, undoubtedly to enable the water to run off, when the Church was cleaned after the visits of the Pilgrims. The same kind of sloping pavement, and with a similar object, occurs in Chartres Cathedral and other places. See *Gent. Mag.*, May, 1862, p. 556. The stone steps and door-sills leading from the chancel to the North aisle (S. Edward's Chapel?) are also greatly worn, and the patterns on the tiles, except those close to the walls are worn away, evidently by the tread of many feet.

it is matter of doubt which to applaud most, their assiduity in the service of God, or their affability in the converse of men." On the translation of the body of Edward the Martyr to the Abbey Church, his name was added to that of the blessed Virgin, and henceforth the church was known, as the church of S. Mary the Virgin and S. Edward the Martyr; and the town was often called "Burgus Sancti Edwardi," and "Edwardstow." The Saxon chronicle records the death of Herelufu, Abbess of Shaftesbury, A.D. 932. King Ethelred,¹ by charter dated 1001, gave to the church of S. Edward, the monastery and vill of Bradford, to be always subject to the Abbey of Shaftesbury, "that the nuns of Bradford might have a safe refuge against the Danes, and on the restoring of peace return to their former place."

King Canute died at Shaftesbury, November 12th 1035; his body was however removed to Winchester for burial.

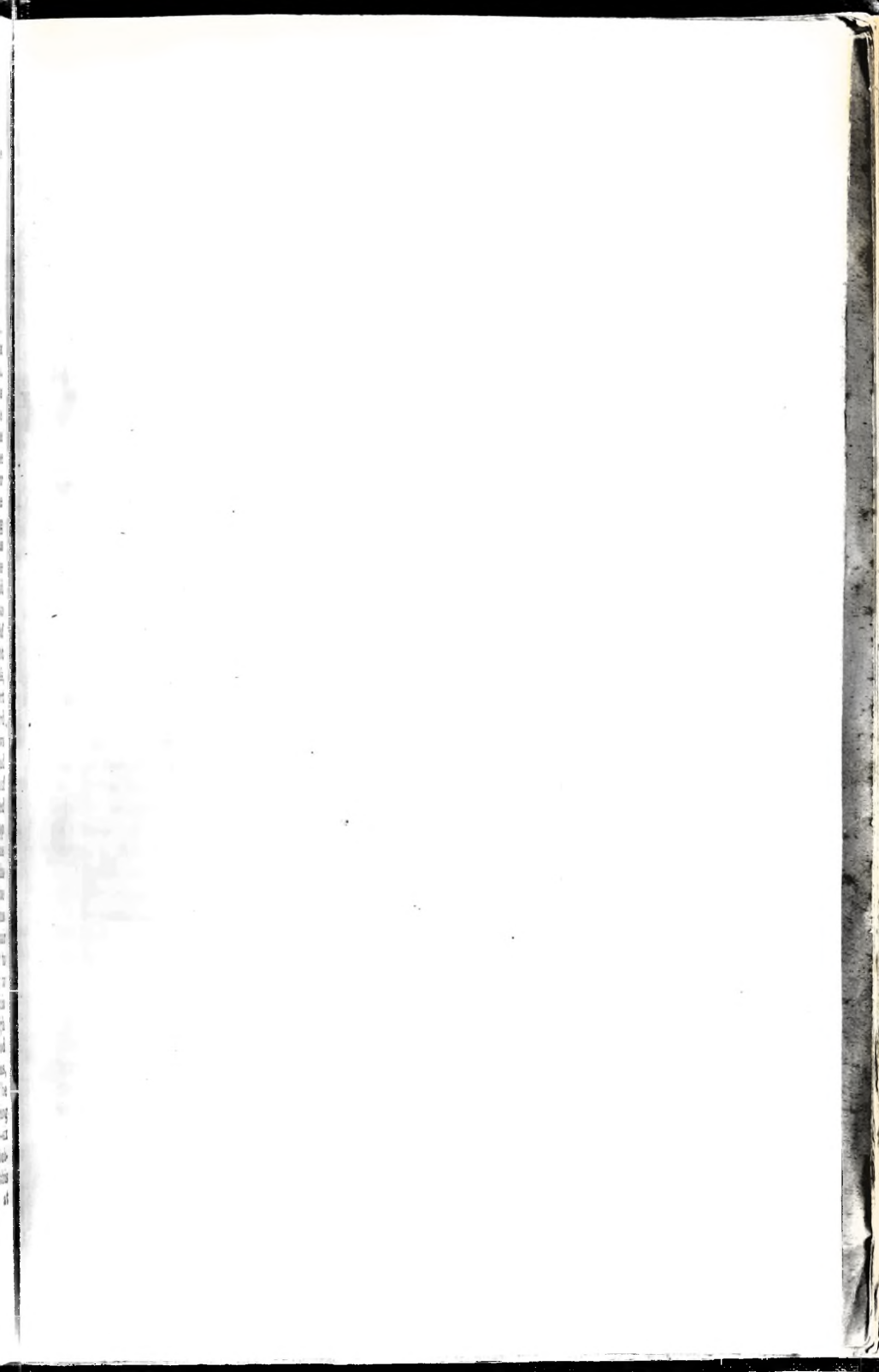
I know of no other important mention of Shaftesbury till the Domesday Survey, in which reference is made to its condition in the reigns of Edward the Confessor and of William I, both probably periods of depression. The royal favor in which it had basked during the reigns of Alfred and some of his successors, had declined. Harold had robbed the Abbey of several of its possessions, and no rumours of the miraculous virtue of the bones of St. Edward had probably yet been heard. In the Domesday Survey however, the borough was assessed at "2 marks of silver, for 20 hides of land." This I imagine proves it to have been a place of considerable importance. Salisbury, then a very important town, was assessed at 50 hides, but Dorchester only at 10, and Exeter and Bridport only at 5 each. Towns which had little or no arable land paid geld in proportion to a certain number of hides, assessed according to their value and wealth; we may therefore, I think, conclude that Shaftesbury was at this period twice as rich and important a place as Dorchester, and four times as rich and important as Exeter or Bridport.

Besides the Abbey and its offices, which, I infer, were reckoned separately, there were in Edward the Confessor's time, 262 houses within the borough. I take it the cottages of the peasantry were not enumerated, but only the houses of the burghers. In the 20th year of William, or rather in the year the survey was actually taken, 85 of these houses had been destroyed or ruined. As signs of former greatness three monies still remained paying "one mark of silver and twenty shillings to the King, on each new coinage."

The possessions of the Abbey were considerable. In confirming Kingston in Corfe to the Abbey, King William I. retained a hide of land, or rather 20 acres valued at one hide, on which stood the old Castle of Wareham, which he desired to hold and rebuild. He gave to the Abbey in exchange the Church and advowson of Gillingham, and also restored the lands which Harold had seized in Mapperton, Stoke-Wake, Cheselbourne, Stour, and Piddle. Successive kings and others continued to enrich the Abbey with grants of manors, lands, tithes, or advowsons. Henry I. granted Donhead Manor for providing the Nuns with vestments.

¹ Dugdale.

King John gave two hides of land in Ferne, one in Ashgrove and one mill in Donhead, and one in Ludwell. Edward I. granted the Abbess a free warren in her manor of Donhead. We at length find the Abbey with possessions in the borough of Shaftesbury, and with the advowsons of all the livings within the borough, also with the advowsons of Cann S. Rumbold, of S. John and S. James juxta Shaston: and the advowsons and in some cases the manors of Iwerne, Hinton S. Mary, Henley, Gussage, Fontmell, Compton Abbas, Melbury Abbas, Fifehead, Kingston, and others in Dorset. In Wiltshire the Abbey held advowsons, manors, or lands at Bradford, Fovant, Tisbury, the Donheads, Sedgell, Berwick S. Leonard's, Kynell (Keevil) ad Edington, Salisbury and other places. In Somersetshire, Combe Porter, and lands at Bristol; other possessions are also mentioned in Hampshire and Essex. Indeed this list might be greatly extended, but enough has been said to show the large and wide possessions of the house. Fuller records an old saying that, "If the Abbess of Shaftesbury might wed the Abbot of Glastonbury their heir would have more land than the king of England." The Abbess was one of the four, who held of the king by an entire barony, the others being those of Barking, Wilton, and Winchester. The manor of Shaston was from ancient times divided into two moieties, one held by the King, the other by the lady Abbess. In 1302 Edward I. granted "the pleas and perquisites of court yet belonging to the crown in this vill, value £12, to Queen Margaret, in part dower." In the year 1313, the Abbey of Shaftesbury again became the prison of a captive princess. By a warrant dated at Windsor October 13th, 1313, directed to the sheriffs and bailiffs, &c., they are commanded to aid in conducting Elizabeth, wife of Robert Bruce (king of Scotland) from Carrick to Shaston. Another record dated February 12th, 1314, states that the king (Edward II.) allows twenty shillings a week for the maintenance of Robert Bruce's wife and her family while at Shaftesbury. The Bishop of Salisbury was visitor of the Abbey, instituted the Abbess, appointed her confessors, and exercised episcopal control over the house and its inmates. In 1326, Bishop Mortival certified that there was an excessive multitude of Nuns in the Abbey; and two years later declared the revenues equal only to the maintenance of one hundred and twenty Nuns, and ordered no more to be admitted. Bishop Wyvil, May 12th, 1368, granted a dispensation to the Abbess "to go out of the monastery to one of her manors to take the air and divert herself." The king on coming to the throne had a right to nominate a Nun; and the Bishop on his consecration, a poor woman to the monastery, and in the latter case to appoint a Nun to instruct her in religion. The Abbey appears to have maintained to the last the high reputation it bore in the time of William of Malmesbury, but the good order of the house and the exemplary conduct and usefulness of the Nuns, were in this, as in other similar cases, of no avail for its preservation. The monastery was dissolved March 23rd, 1539, in the 30th year of King Henry VIII. Pensions were assigned out of the revenues to fifty-six Nuns, including the lady Abbess, Elizabeth Zouch, the Prioress and Sub-Prioress, amounting altogether to £431 per annum. The revenue at this time is rated by Dugdale at £1166 8s. 9d. per annum; and by Speed at





Arms on one of the Borough. Maces.



Borough Seals.



Arms of Humphrey Bishop ob 1709.

(From the Communion Plate of Trinity Church.)

Hughman Lith.

£1329 1s. 3d. per annum. On the dissolution the work of destruction seems immediately to have commenced. Leland, who visited Shaftesbury about a year after, says "The Abbey stood by ——— of the town," which implies that it had been already demolished. A confirmation of the early destruction of the Abbeys, chantries, hospitals and other religious houses of this and other towns, and the decline and decay of these towns consequent thereon, is found in an Act of Parliament passed just afterwards 32 Henry VIII., c. 18, 19, "Whereas there hath been in times past many beautiful houses within the walls and liberties of" (58 cities and towns are here named and among them) "Shaston, which houses are now fallen down decayed, and at this time remain un-re-edified, as desolate and vacant grounds; many of them nigh adjoining to the high streets, replenished with much uncleanness and filth, with pits, cellars and vaults, lying open and uncovered to the great peril of the king's subjects; and other houses are in danger of falling: now if the owners of the waste grounds on which houses have stood within twenty-five years back, and of the decaying houses, do not in three years, &c., then the lords of whom the ground is held, may re-enter and seize the same, &c."

By an Act passed 26 Henry VIII. this town was made the seat of a suffragan Bishop. John Bradley S. T. B., Abbot of Milton, and William Pelles were presented to the King for his nomination. He nominated Bradley, who was consecrated under a commission issued by Archbishop Cranmer dated Feb. 23rd, 1558. This Act, repealed in the reign of Mary, was re-enacted in that of Elizabeth, and is still in force. Now that an increase in the episcopate is undoubtedly needed, and the difficulties in the way of fresh legislation on this subject are so many, it would perhaps be wise for our rulers in church and state to act on the powers they already possess. Under this act 26 suffragan bishops could be at once appointed.

Shaftesbury, as already stated, is termed a borough in Domesday Book, and was so by prescription. Allusions are made to it as a borough 37 Henry III. and in Richard the II. Alan de Wyke was Mayor 7 Edward II. The first known charter of Incorporation however, was granted by Queen Elizabeth. James I. granted another, and Charles II. a third. This charter granted power within the borough limits to "hold pleas of all trespasses &c., and of all debts not exceeding £10,"—a court in fact for the recovery of small debts equivalent to our present county court. The borough possesses two maces, to be carried before the Mayor on all occasions of public solemnity. One of these, (see Plate), mentioned so early as 14 Edward 4th, has on the broad ends a shield of three compartments. In the first the arms of France and England. In the second those of the Abbey, Azure, in chief 2 roses, a cross flory between four martlets Or. In the third, one of the Town coats, a Lion pawing against a tree on which a large bird is seated, the colours are not marked. The more modern mace is dated 1604 and has the arms and initials of James I. The Town seal is of the date of Elizabeth's charter 1570. It is of silver having on one end the Town coat above-mentioned, with the letters B.S. at the sides: and on the other end, quarterly, Argent and Azure, a cross quarterly counterchanged, in the 1st and 4th a fleur-de-lis of the

2nd; in the 2nd and 3rd a lion's or leopard's head of the 1st. The former seal was anciently used for warrants for the court of requests and small debts before-mentioned. The latter is still the official seal of the corporation. The Church plate consists of a chalice inscribed "This chalice belongeth to the Holy Trinity of Shaston 1670." Another of older workmanship, chased with a plain Elizabethan pattern. A large paten with the inscription "Ex dono Thomæ Hockny 1714." A flagon and paten inscribed "The gift of Humphrey Bishop, Gent., to the Parish Church of the Holy Trinity Shaston," and a shield of arms, Or, on three lozenges Azure an eagle displayed of the first, two and one:—these are all of silver; and a large pewter flagon, inscribed, "Shaston St. Peter's 1770." Humphrey Bishop, named above, we find by his epitaph in St. Trinity Church, was a Barrister of an ancient loyal family. He died 1709, June 8th.

The Church registers go back to 1623. In the Church of St. Peter is a stone seemingly removed from the Abbey, in which a small Brass remains, with an inscription to Stephen Payne, Esq., Seneschal of this monastery, who died December 4th, 1598. There appear to have been two small shields of arms now gone. The South aisle of this Church is evidently an addition, and in fact an encroachment, built on columns over a court below; the intervals between the columns have since been walled in, and the space thus enclosed is now used as a cellar.

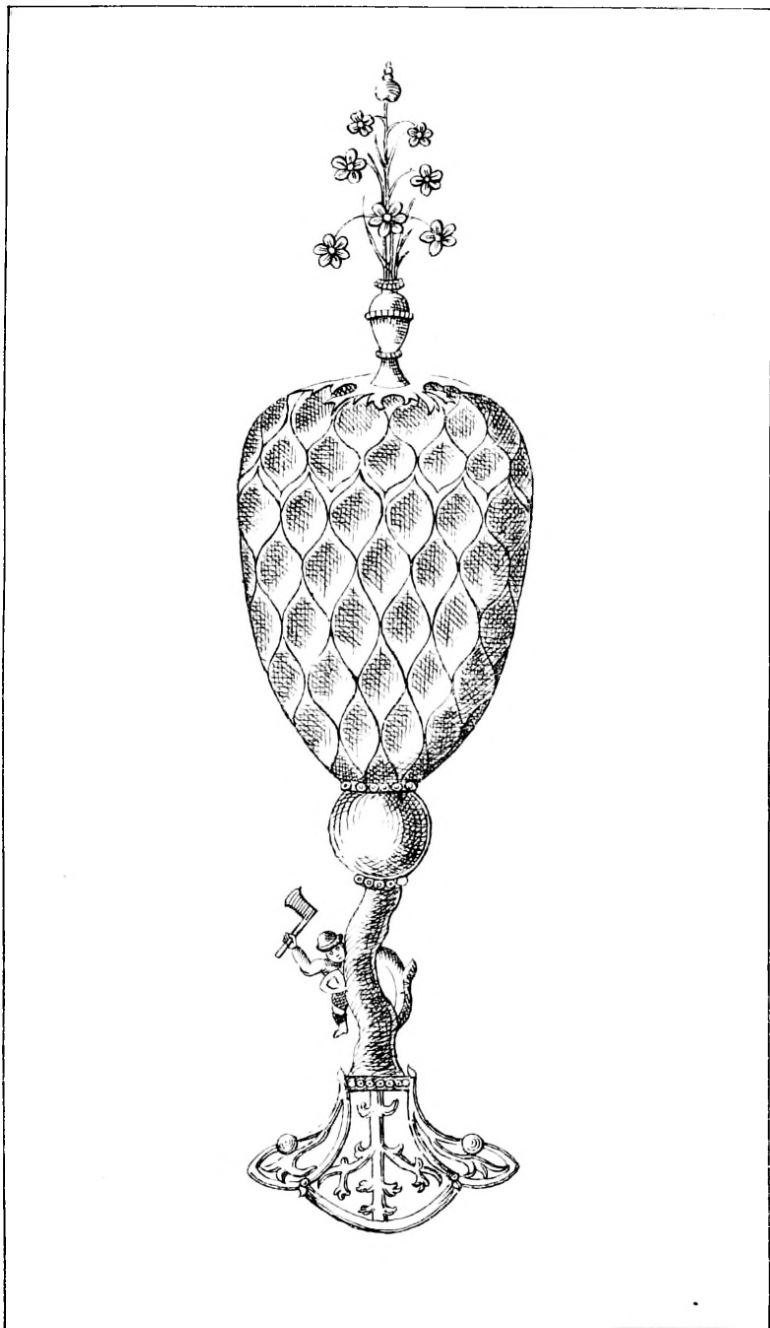
In 1611 Matthew Chubb founded an Almshouse for sixteen poor women.¹ In 1642, Sir Henry Spiller founded another for ten "of the most aged and impotent persons within the said borough of Shaftesbury." The motto over the door is, "Donum Dei et Deo."

It has been already observed, that there are few wells in the town, owing to the trouble and expense of sinking them to the great depth required. Water was generally obtained from certain wells about a quarter of a mile below the town, in the parish of Motcombe, belonging to the Manor of Gillingham. By agreement dated 1662, between the Lord of the Manor of Gillingham and the Mayor and Burgesses of Shaftesbury, the Mayor was to carry a Byzant, as it was called, a sort of besom, dressed like a May garland, to the wells and there present it, together with a calf's head, a gallon of ale, two penny loaves and a pair of gloves, to the Lord of the Manor, or his deputy. The Byzant was then restored to the Mayor and brought back to the town in procession with music, &c. It was sometimes, it is said, decked with jewelry, borrowed from the neighbouring families, to the value of £2000.²

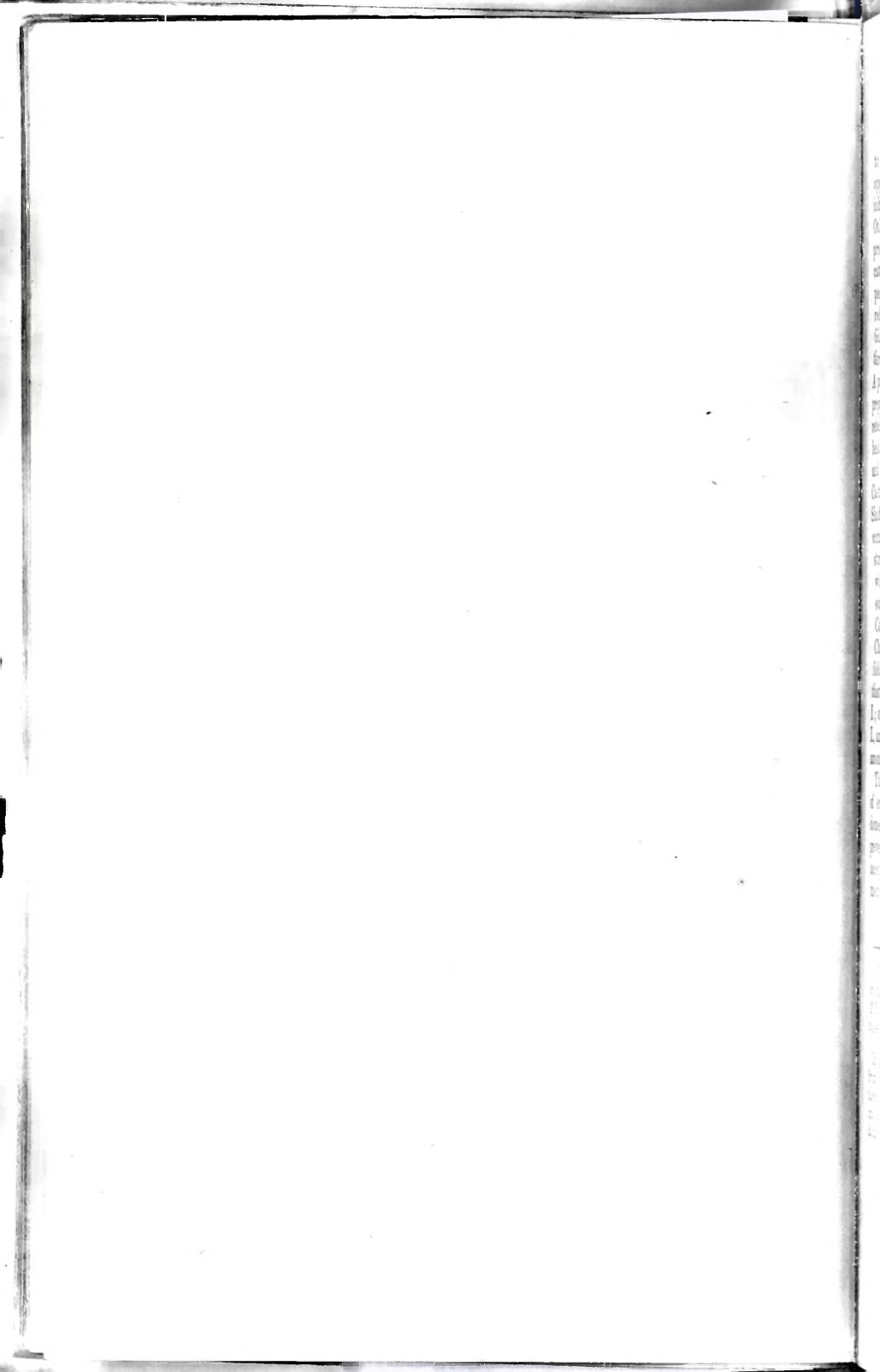
In the civil war of the 17th century, Shaftesbury was occasionally the scene of minor conflicts. In 1644, Waller being beaten by the Royal forces at Blandford, returned through Shaftesbury into Wilts. In the same year 600 mercenaries, Swedes, Germans, French and Walloons, hired

¹ The Marquis of Westminster has recently augmented the endowment of this almshouse, by the very liberal gift of £5000.

² This custom has been discontinued since 1830 by consent of the Marquis of Westminster now Lord of the Manor of Gillingham, also the chief proprietor within the borough, and Lord of the Manor of Shaftesbury, to save the borough the expense attending the presentation, about £30 on each occasion.



SILVER GILT VESSEL FOUND IN TRINITY CHURCHYARD, SHAFTESBURY.
Height of original 17 inches.



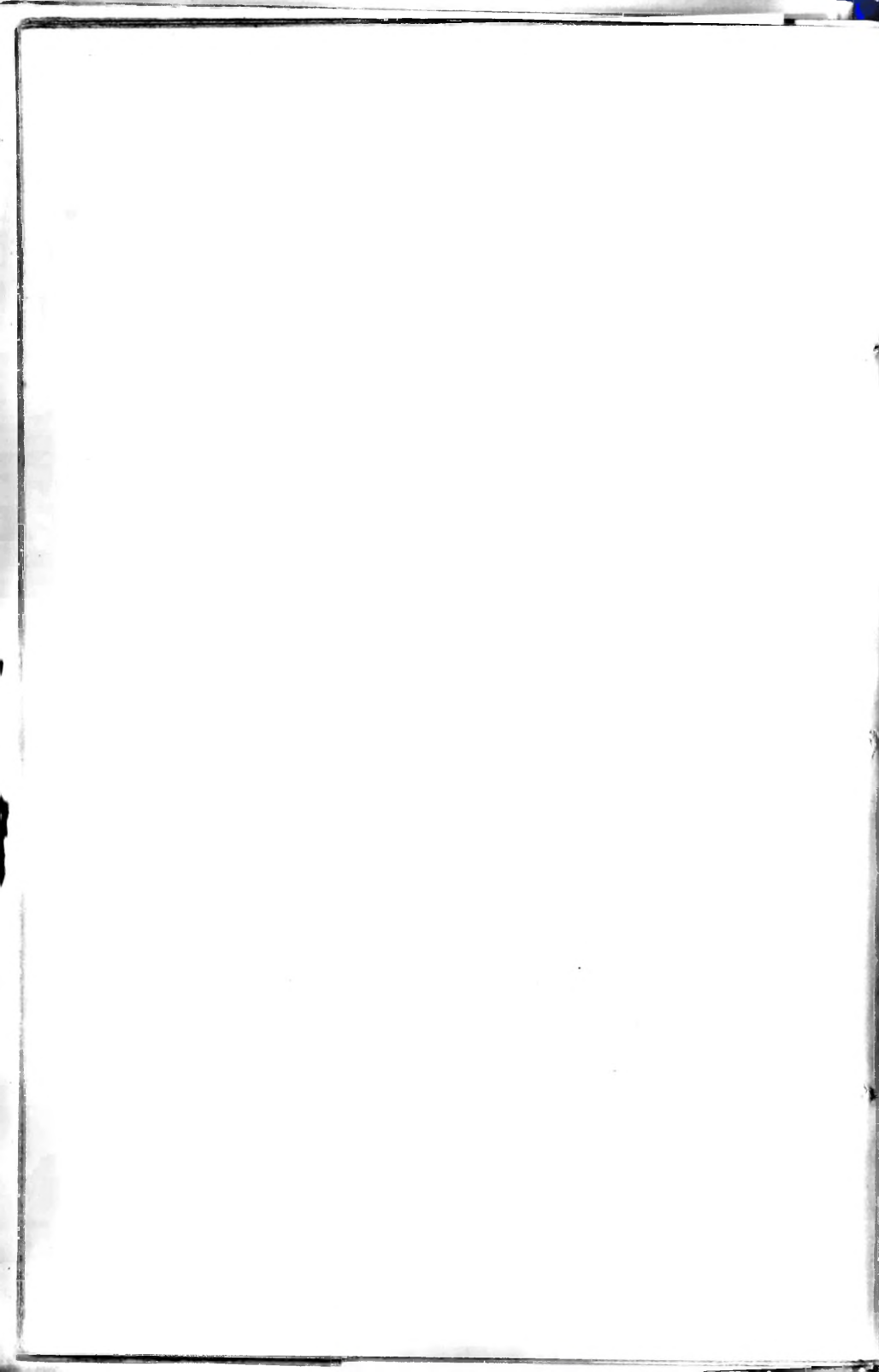
to aid rebellion, under the rebel leaders, Balfour and others, greatly oppressed the country in and about Shaftesbury, raising on the peaceful inhabitants 10s., 20s., and in some cases 60s. a day for their maintenance. Others were fined £300, and some £1000, and if the money was not presently paid they were plundered and made prisoners. All the fat cattle were taken from the neighbouring farms without payment, and the people injured and insulted in various ways. Such are the fruits of rebellion! In March 1645, Waller again quartered about this town and Gillingham, but "his quarters were beaten up by the loyal Lord Goring three times in less than a week and his numbers lessened near 1000 men." A party called Clubmen about this time declared themselves neutrals, and prepared to resist the passage of the troops of either the King or the rebels through this part of the country. A meeting of the leaders was held at Shaftesbury, but Fleetwood surrounded the town with 1000 men, and seizing fifty of them, carried them to Fairfax, then besieging Sherborne Castle. The Clubmen immediately assembled 10 000 men in arms at Shaftesbury, and posted themselves strongly, fortifying Castle Hill, to command the approach from Sherborne. Neutrals however in such a strife must needs be cowards, so when Cromwell marched against them with only 500 dragoons, followed by 500 more, they were easily persuaded to disperse. In 1672 Shaftesbury was chosen by Anthony Ashley Cooper as the title of the Earldom about to be bestowed upon him by Charles II., in whose family the title still continues. I must not however follow the history of Shaftesbury to more modern times. I will only add that the names of its Members of Parliament are extant, from 25 Edward I.; of its Mayors, from 7 Edward II., and of its Recorders, from 2 James I., and that in the roll may be found some worthy names not yet extinct among us.¹

The writer trusts that the shortness of the time, and the great pressure of engagements under which this paper has been prepared, and the domestic affliction which has befallen him during the time, and altogether prevented any due consideration or re-arrangement of materials, will be accepted as an apology for all inaccuracies and for any want of arrangement, perspicuity or completeness, with which it may be chargeable.

J. J. R.

¹ The Frontispiece to this paper, taken from an apparently pen and ink sketch in the Bodeian Library at Oxford, represents the Houses of William Grove, Esq., M.P., for Shaftesbury, 1556, and of Thomas, first Lord Arundell. The positions of these houses in the Town will be seen by reference to the Map of Shaftesbury, 1615.

In the first edition of Hutchins's *Dorset*, p. 13, l. xxxv., in the account given from John of Brompton, of one of the removals of the body of Edward the Martyr, there is an error in the date given, viz., 1101 for 1001. This error has been copied into Adams's *History of Shaftesbury*, and into the last edition of Hutchins. It will doubtless be rectified in the revised edition now in course of publication.



AN ACCOUNT OF THE EXCAVATIONS
ON THE SITE OF THE
ANCIENT ABBEY CHURCH, SHAFTESBURY.

By J. J. REYNOLDS, B.A.

In 1861, the Wilts Archæological Society having resolved to hold a meeting in this town, we were invited to point out anything worthy of notice.

I therefore at once applied to W. Batten, Esq., agent to the Marquess of Westminster, to permit and assist in making borings in the garden (Lot No. 7 in the Parish Tithe Map) on the South side of Holy Trinity Church-yard, in order to discover the ruins, or at least the foundations of the ancient Abbey Church; which, guided by old chronicles and local traditions, I felt sure of finding. We were not disappointed. The first rod sunk struck on what was evidently masonry, from the traces of lime brought up on the end of the iron. We had in fact struck on what proved to be the South wall of the Choir or Chancel of the Abbey Church, at the point marked H in the plan. Having ascertained by further borings that it was a wall running East and West, I at once concluded that it was, as it proved to be, the South wall of the Choir, and measured off to the North the probable width of the building. After a few borings we struck the North wall, which we traced for some distance East and West. Being now satisfied that we were on the foundations, Mr. Batten, by the kind permission and liberality of the Marquess of Westminster, the proprietor of the site, commenced the excavations. A considerable portion of the walls, foundations, and pavements of the Church were eventually uncovered, showing the position of the Choir and the Presbytery, which terminated to the east in a semicircular apse; also the north aisle which, like the Presbytery, terminated in a semicircular apse, at least internally. There were clear traces also of a south aisle from indications on the south face of the south wall of the Choir, and from the tile pavement found on its south side. The north aisle terminated to the east in a Chapel as proved by its Altar; and from its position at the back of the Tomb on the north side of the High Altar, and from other circumstances, I have little doubt it was the Chapel of King Edward the Martyr.¹ Outside the north aisle was a crypt which was reached by a winding stone staircase from the north Transept.

The space excavated was somewhere about eighty feet square, but separate excavations made at intervals, in the garden No. 6 in the tithe map, revealed the continuation of the encaustic pavement for upwards of two hundred feet to the west of the spot marked C on the plan. This pavement, no doubt that of the Nave, was about eighteen inches lower than the Choir pavement.

¹ See page 10.

If the reader will now refer to the plan I will endeavour to explain as clearly as I can what was discovered.

First, the Church terminated to the east in three semicircular apses, the earliest form of Christian Churches. The Presbytery was raised one step above the Choir, at the line B. The High Altar was raised many steps higher still, several layers of foundations of very wide steps or landing places being traceable, with the marks of the tiles with which they had been paved yet visible on the concrete in which they had been embedded. The floor of the Choir or Chancel was laid with encaustic tiles, still remaining, of ordinary ecclesiastical devices, and had a slight slope or fall from the step to the Presbytery or Sanctuary B towards the west end of the Choir C. This is an interesting circumstance, since it confirms the statements that the Abbey Church was a place to which, as possessed of wonder working relics, (so it was said),¹ pilgrimages were wont to be made! On the festivals of the Blessed Virgin, and more especially perhaps on those of King Edward, March 18th, and June 20th, multitudes of pilgrims from all parts no doubt visited the Martyr's shrine, and remained in the Church all night, and the object of the sloping floor was to allow the water to run off when the Church was cleansed in the morning. A similar provision occurs at Chartres Cathedral, and at other places of ancient pilgrimage. The Presbytery and Choir together seem to have measured about 75 feet from east to west by 28 feet in width, exclusive of the aisles, which were divided from the choir by walls seven feet in thickness. This would indicate a church of above 350 feet in length. Immediately within the Sanctuary on the north side of the High Altar, built in the depth of the wall (the wall being seven feet thick,) of large well squared stones, looking as fresh as when first laid, was a tomb, No. 1 in the plan, which I have little doubt, from its position, was the tomb of King Edward. It was once, we may suppose, adorned with an effigy of the King and richly canopied and ornamented, but of this there were no remains, even the body had been removed, and nothing worthy of note was here found.

The tombs No. 2 & 3 in the south wall of the Choir had also been previously rifled, but in No. 2 was found a gold wire ring set with an emerald unwrought, or having the appearance of being so from lying so long in the earth.

There were several graves under the floor of the Choir, some having two or three stages, bodies being only found however in the lowest stage at the bottom of the grave. The grave No. 4 was covered with slabs of green sandstone, and had evidently been previously opened, the covering stones being inverted, and one of them, on which was an incised Greek cross in outline, was broken in two. This grave was constructed of regular masonry plastered, but without floor, and was only 2 feet 4 inches deep. I was present when it was found, but not at the more minute investigation of its contents, which took place at the visit of the Wilts Archæological Society to this town; and therefore quote particulars from the account supplied by Mr. Edward Kite, to the Wilts Archæological Magazine.

¹ Ethelwerd, William of Malmesbury, Roger of Wendover.

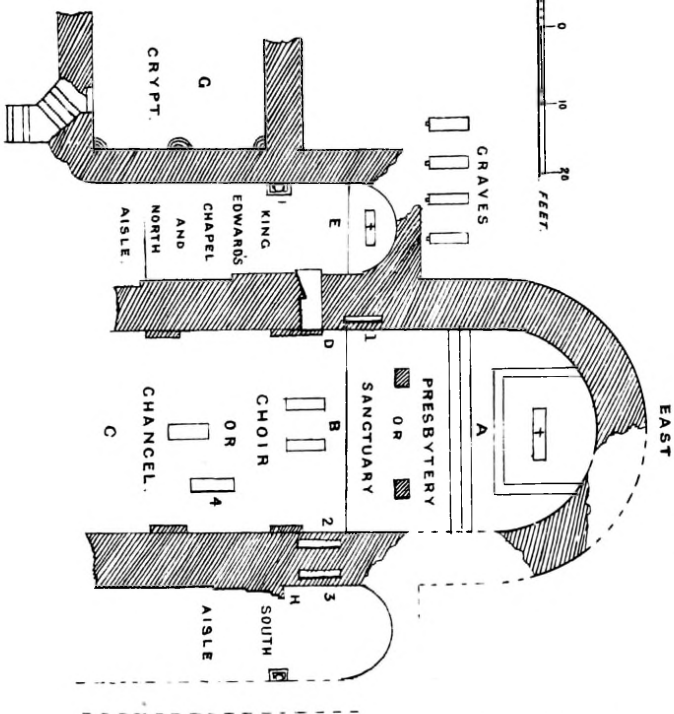
S TRINITY CHURCH YARD.

S TRINITY CHURCH YARD GATE WALL

LOT 7



WEST



LOT 8
GARDEN WALL

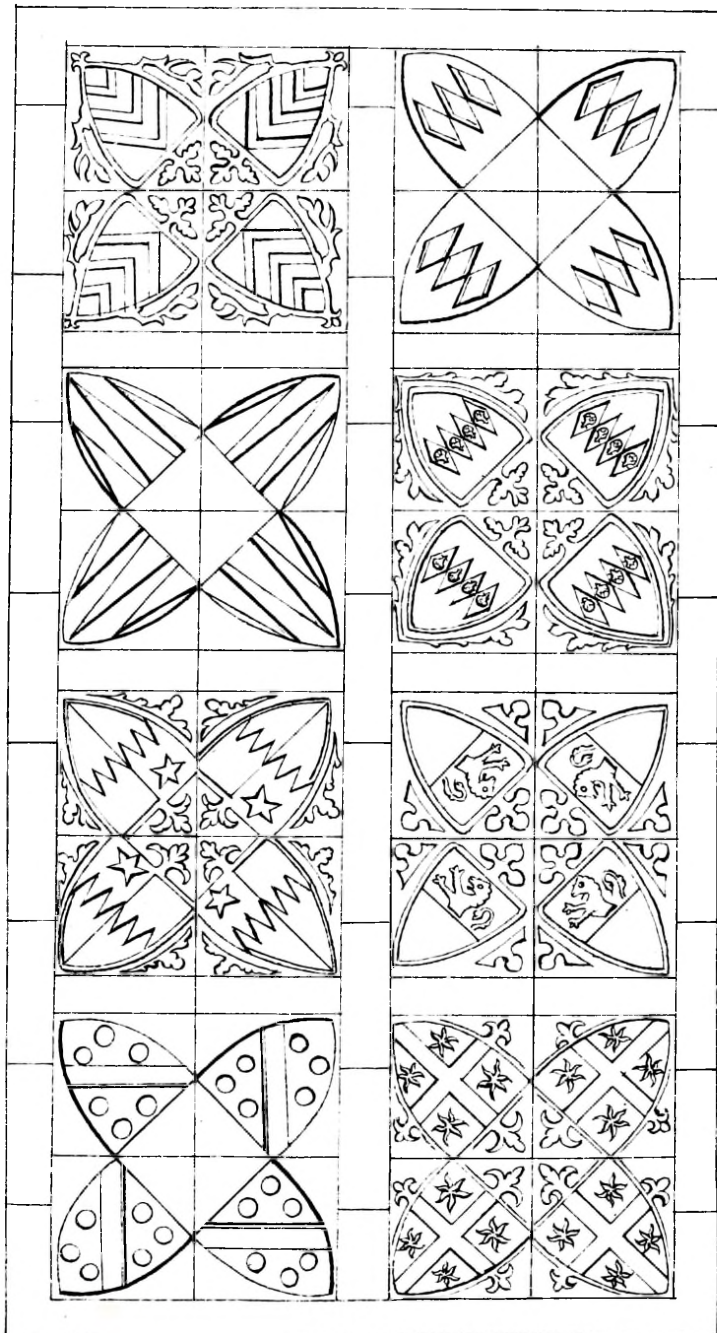
EAST

SOUTH

The shading shows the Walls actually found. The dotted outline shows portions of the Walls not found but clearly indicated.

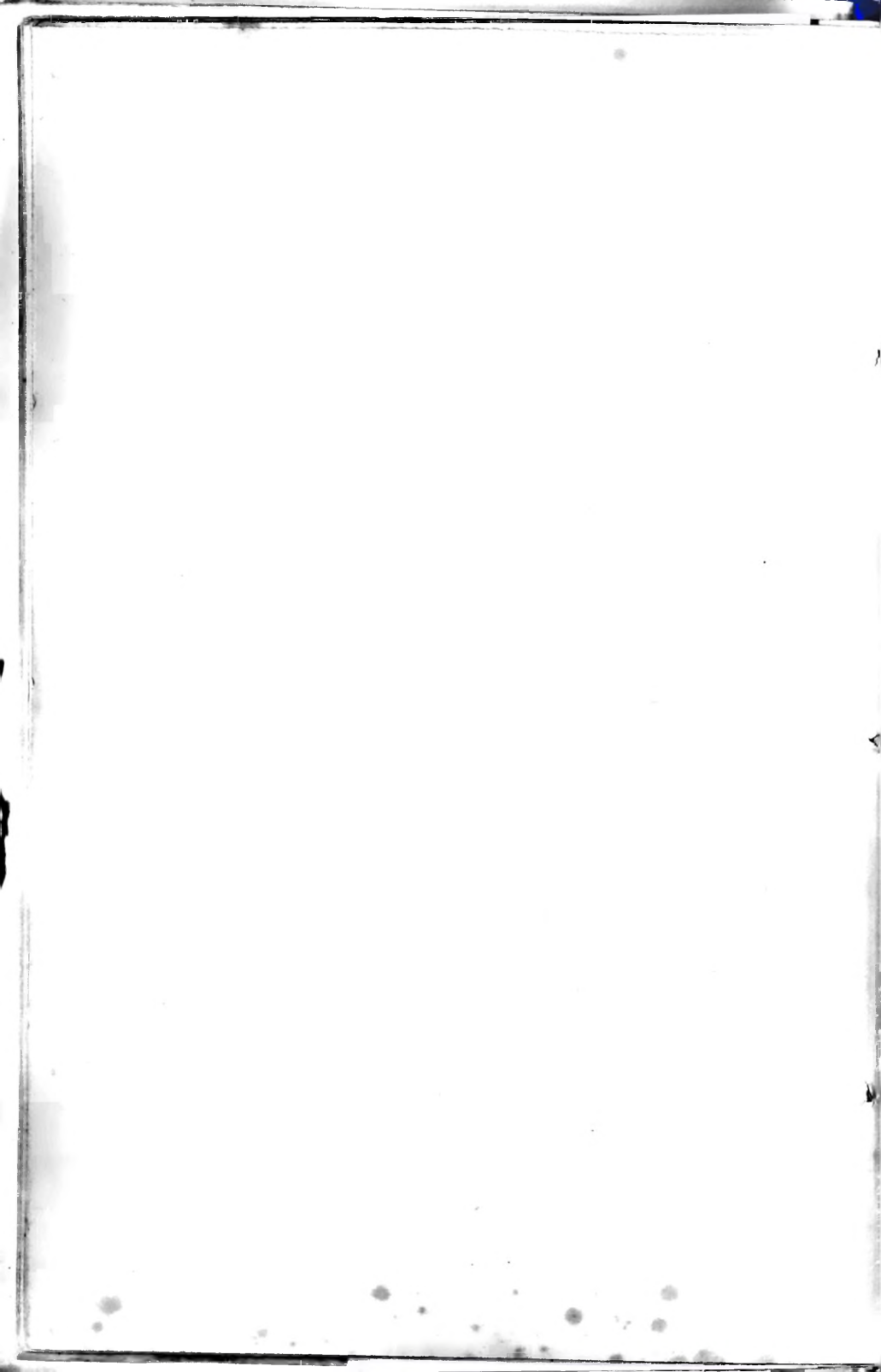
GROUND PLAN OF THE ABBEY CHURCH, EXCAVATED A.D. 1861. 2. IN THE GARDEN MARKED LOT 7. IN THE SHAFESBURY HOLY TRINITY TITHE MAP.





Eighteen Arts 2747.

ENCAUSTIC HERALDIC TILES AS FOUND IN KING EDWARDS.



“On removing the rubbish a perfect skeleton of a male was discovered, together with the nails and other traces of the wooden coffin in which it had been enclosed. The skull was in a very perfect state; the right arm was bent, and the closed hand lay over the abdomen, whilst the left was extended and placed close to the side. Over the right shoulder was found the stem of a pewter chalice (very much corroded) together with numerous small fragments of the bowl and foot. Two circular bronze buckles, each 2 inches in diameter, lay, one immediately below the pelvis, and the other underneath the left hand, the latter having attached to it a small fragment apparently of leather, but wholly decomposed. There were no traces of vestments, but the chalice proves the remains to have been those of an ecclesiastic, most likely, some priest connected with the service of the Abbey Church. The buckles may have been the fastenings of a leathern girdle worn round the waist above the albe or under vestment.”

In the Church of Holy Trinity is a monumental slab bearing the recumbent effigy of a Priest alluded to at page 9, and which came from these ruins, and may have covered this very tomb. A fragment of another effigy, either of an ecclesiastic or a female, as shown by the drapery, was found with indications on it of what may have been a pastoral staff. Was this the effigy of a Bishop or of a Lady Abbess? This fragment is still to be seen at the Literary Institution in this town.

Let us now pass from the Choir mounting one well-worn step through the passage D into the North Aisle, into what I shall call King Edward's Chapel. About two feet of the stone jambs of the doorway on the Chapel side of the wall still remained, and the sill, which originally formed a step leading down into the Chapel, but was almost entirely worn through by the multitudes, who we may suppose, after paying their devotions first at the High Altar, sought the Martyr's Shrine. In this Chapel about two feet of the base of the Altar of solid masonry still remained, and also the foot pace round it. The latter had apparently been paved with tiles, but none remained. The remains of this Altar being undermined in order to ascertain whether a crypt or tombs existed beneath, unfortunately fell in and was destroyed. At the point F in the north wall was the plinth and base of a three quarter circular pillar or column of very simple, and compared with the size of the Chapel, massive character, and of very early date, possibly Saxon. The floor was paved with tiles of a later period of heraldic design, in very good order, laid in squares, four similar shields of arms being placed together within a narrow border of dark green, as shown in the plate. These tiles are of considerable interest, the arms of the following noble families being found on them:—

1st, Three chevrons. These were the arms of the ancient Baronial family of Clare, Earls of Gloucester, from about 1220 to the middle of the following century. They were Lords of the Manor and Chase of Cranborne, and held other lands in Dorset. The Chase anciently extended to the very precincts of the town of Shaftesbury.

2nd, Three fusils. The Montacute's, great Barons from the Conquest, and Earls of Salisbury from 1339 to 1428, bore, argent three fusils gules.

3rd, Three piles. Guy de Brian, a powerful Baron who married Elizabeth daughter of William Montacute 1st Earl of Salisbury, and held much land in this county, bore, Azure three piles or.

4th, On four fusils in fess four escallops. The family of Cheyney, of Brook in Westbury, Wils, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, bore these arms, Gules, on four fusils in fess argent four escallops sable.

5th, Quarterly per fess indented in the first a mullet. In a roll temp Edward II, these arms *viz*: Quarterly per fess indented argent and gules in the first a mullet sable, are assigned to Sir Fowke Fitzwarin, among the Knights of Dorset and Devon. The manor of Poorstock in this County, seems to have been held by this family from about 1360 to 1414.

6th, On a chief a Demi Lion rampant. These are probably the arms of Denebaud, formerly of Hinton St. George, county of Somerset, of which manor John Denebaud died seized 1391, John his son and heir being 18 years of age. Their arms are given Azure on a chief argent a Demi Lion couped gules.

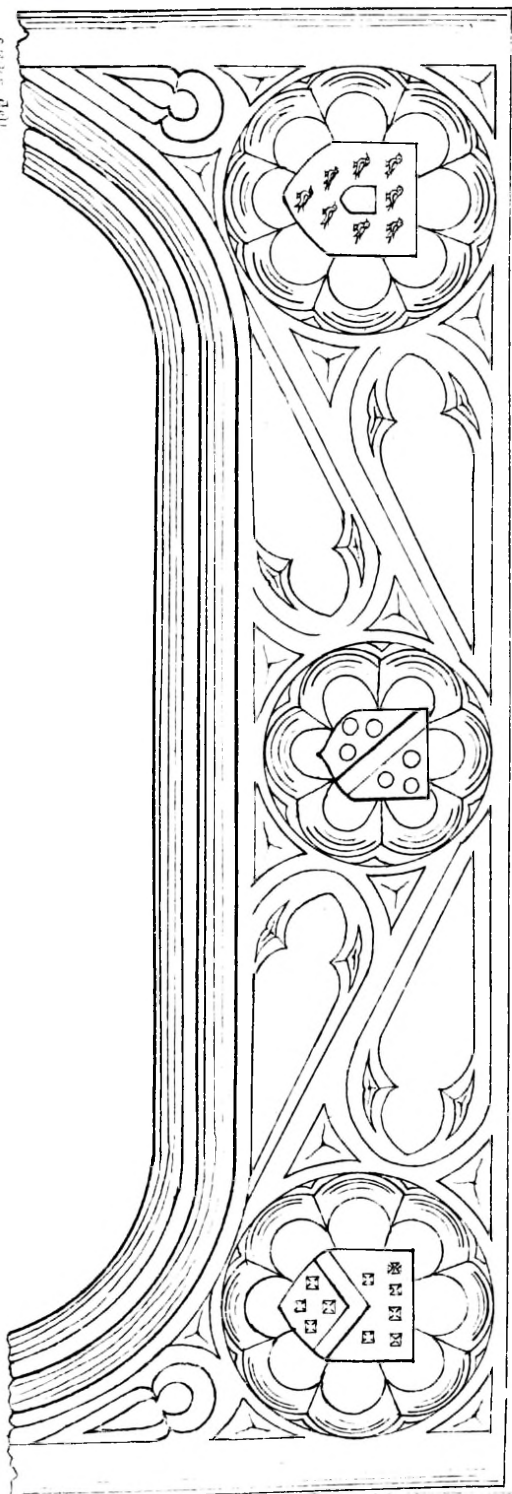
7th, A bend between six roundles. These are undoubtedly the arms of Stourton, Lords of Stourton. This family held the manor of Stourton, which lies about 10 miles from Shaftesbury, from Saxon times, down to the beginning of the last century, and a descendant still bears the title as 18th Baron. Leland says, "The ryver Stoure riseth there of six fountaines or springes, wherof three be on the northe side of the parke, harde wythin the pale; the other three be northe also, but withoute the park. The Lords Stourton gyveth these six fountaynes yn his armes." These arms, *viz*: Sab a bend or between six fountains ppr, do not it is said¹ occur in any of the ancient rolls. Sir R. C. Hoare however says, "I have obtained a drawing of an old chimney (of good Gothic taste) carved in stone and representing three escutcheons of arms, that in the central compartment bearing those of Stourton, on one side are those of Chidoock, wife of William, second Lord Stourton, who died A.D. 1477, and the other bears those of Berkeley, wife of John, third Baron, who died A.D. 1484."

This relic carved in Bath Stone, of which we give an engraving, is now in the possession of the Marquess of Westminster, having been recently removed from a house in the High Street of this town, where it was in use as a chimney-piece. I am very doubtful whether it was originally designed for such a use, if so it must have been brought from another house, the stones used as jambs being of Tisbury stone, with mouldings entirely out of character with and evidently originally forming no part of the handsome mantle which rested on them. I am myself inclined to think it part of a canopied tomb, taken from the Abbey Church, and used as a chimney-piece by some old citizen who had no dread of sacrilege before his eyes.

8th, A cross between four estoiles. It has been suggested that they may be the arms of the family of Clere, but it does not appear that they were any way connected with this neighbourhood.

¹ Herald and Genealogist, August 1863, to which periodical I am indebted for some of the particulars here stated.

CO. H. S. DELL



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CHIMNEY PIECE OR CANOPY OF TOMB USED AS A CHIMNEY PIECE.



All these families (omitting that of Clere as uncertain) were more or less connected with the Abbey or the neighbourhood. A Charter of King John confirms to the Abbey lands given with their daughters, by the families of Berkeley, Montacute, and Clere.

We find a Margaret Stourton abbess from 1423 to 1441, and an Anastatia Stourton among the nuns, from 1441 to 1460. As similar tiles have not, it is said, been elsewhere found, it is fair to presume that these were made purposely for the Abbey, either to commemorate members of these families who had been benefactors to the Abbey, or were interred in the Abbey Church, which Hutchins on good ground believes to have been the chief place of sepulture for the magnates of the County and neighbourhood.

The crypt G on the north side of King Edward's Chapel was 24 feet from east to west, and had the remains of a groined roof, of early and massive character. Three of the corbels from which the roof sprung remained, one in the centre and one at each end in the south wall, and were about 4 feet from the floor. The south side of the east end arch remained to the summit, and showed the height of the crypt to have been about 9 feet, the floor being 6 feet below the level of the floors of the Choir and Aisles, and these ten feet below the present level of the ground. Either before the destruction of the Abbey, or subsequently, most probably the latter, this Crypt had been used as a receptacle for human remains, taken it may be presumed from their original resting place, and cast in here with the bones of domestic animals and other refuse.

Some of these bones were of men of very large stature. Two skulls were found perforated through the upper part of the frontal bone with what appeared to be bullet wounds. As there were no corresponding fractures at the base of the skulls, the bullets must have passed through the brain into the foramen magnum. These are probably memorials of the civil strife of the 17th Century, (at which period these ruins might have been still uncovered) and the remains of some of those killed in the many skirmishes which at that period took place in and around this town. The direction of the passage of the bullets through the skulls proves that they were fired from above, probably by the defenders on those attempting to storm the place. At first it was thought that these might be arrow wounds owing to not finding a perforation for the exit of the bullets, but on the mode of exit through the foramen magnum if fired from above being suggested, Mr. H. Bennett, surgeon, at once decided that such was most probably the correct solution of the difficulty. At the east end of the north aisle or King Edward's Chapel, immediately outside the wall, were regular rows of graves side by side of very early date, formed of large stones, and contracted at the head as shown in the plan. Several were opened, but the bodies or rather skeletons were very little disturbed. They were pronounced to be those of females. It was observed that though the teeth in many cases were much worn, betokening that the deceased had died at an advanced age, yet in scarcely any instance was there a tooth wanting or decayed.

During the progress of the excavations portions of stained glass,

quantities of encaustic tiles, fragments of effigies, sepulchral slabs, &c., and a mass of architectural remains of all ages, from very early (possibly Saxon) times down to the period of the dissolution of the Abbey, were discovered. Among the architectural fragments were quantities of canopy or shrine work, crockets, finials, and other ornamental work, often with distinct traces of gilding and colouring; and numerous fragments of small statues of angels, some of them, as one of S. Michael, still sufficiently perfect to be recognised. A quantity of these fragments are to be seen at the Shaftesbury Literary Institution.

I cannot conclude this brief and imperfect account of these interesting excavations without adding that the thanks of Antiquarians and Ecclesiologists are especially due to the Most Hon. the Marquess of Westminster, by whose courtesy they were permitted, and at whose sole expense they were conducted.

It is also a pleasing duty to add that while thus aiding historical research, his Lordship exhibited a most proper anxiety that the earthly remains of the Christian dead should be treated with reverence and respect, and not be unnecessarily disturbed; and that mainly from this feeling his Lordship has had the excavations reclosed and covered in.

I will conclude by observing that these investigations have fully proved that the gardens in which they were made are holy ground, and should the Church-yard of Holy Trinity ever need enlargement, as it may, I trust it may be found possible to extend it in this direction, rather than take in ground on the west or north-west, which may never have been, as those gardens certainly were, consecrated ground.

J. J. R.