

---

The Stones found in the Abbey Orchard Field.

BY S. FLINT CLARKSON, F.R.I.B.A.

Some of the stones dug up in the course of the excavations, have been given by Mr. Toulmin to our Society, and are now placed, by permission of the Archdeacon, in the chapel of St. John the Evangelist on the east side of the south transept of the Cathedral. Other worked stones were found, but our Honorary Secretary, Mr. Fowler, selected, as examples, only those which seemed to be of some interest, and were in reasonably fair condition. He has carefully labelled them, so that there is no difficulty in seeing which stones came from the Abbey Orchard Field. Several of

the pieces are incomplete, and some supply insufficient evidence as to their purpose and date; but it has been thought that something in print about them may prove useful in the future, and so I have made out the following:

LIST OF STONES, CLASSED BY STRUCTURAL USE.

- 1 to 5—Stones chamfered on two edges, being four voussoirs and one key block; all parts of the same vault.
- 6—Part of a respond (?), chamfered on two edges.
- 7, 8—Moulded stones from jambs.
- 9, 10—Moulded stones from arches.
- 11, 12—A piece of panelling and a piece of moulding, really one stone, but roughly broken in two.
- 13—A sculptured corbel; a man's head.
- 14—A corbel with carved foliage.

Arranged thus, in the order of their structural importance, we see at once that, in the fourteen stones, there are portions of at least seven separate architectural features of the destroyed buildings. All the stones are clunch. The injuries to them are from rough usage, not from decay. Some are discoloured as the result of their being buried. Most of them had been used internally; they show no signs of decay from weather.

DATES.

Taking the stones in order of date:

14—The corbel with carved foliage may be put first. It is of a date—about 1200—not strongly represented in the Cathedral, belonging to that stage in the development of floriation when the leaves hung close to the form of the corbel or cap, not being strongly relieved, and bending over and downwards, as in the later Lancet of Trumpington.

1 to 5—The four voussoirs seem to have been parts of the diagonal ribs of a vault—probably of the 13th century. They range from 9 inches by 9 inches by  $10\frac{3}{4}$  inches to 9 inches by 9 inches by  $12\frac{3}{4}$  inches. The key block is about two feet each way, worked with the same chamfer ( $3\frac{7}{8}$  inches on the face) as those on the other four stones. At the top of the key block, rebates, about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide and 2 inches deep, are cut in the stone to receive the filling-in of the vault.

6—The arch stones—1 to 4—gain about a half inch on the extrados beyond the soffit, but this stone (6) is

8½ inches thick all through. The chamfers are about an inch wider than those on the vault stones. Considering its size on the bed, it may have been part of a wall pier or of a respond, in the structure of which the arch formed a part. The tooling of the surface is generally similar.

9, 10—These appear to be arch stones, so injured that it would be unwise to date them.

7, 8—Parts of jambs, both badly broken; Perpendicular work.

11, 12—A cinque-foiled head of a panel, spandrel, and parts of the mouldings at the side and above the panel; Perpendicular work.

13—This sculptured head has been ill-treated since it was placed in the shed, the lower part of the face having been broken off. Mr. Fowler, who watched the excavations zealously, made a sketch of the head before the Vandal defaced it. At the eastern portion of the south wall of the slype there is now a sculptured head of similar size and character—the form of the features, the arrangement of hair, cap, &c., being nearly identical.

#### KEEPING SUCH STONES ON THE SPOT.

It is thus clear that the stones are well worthy of preservation, and that we are much indebted to Mr. Toulmin for presenting them to the Society. If the field could be thoroughly turned over, so as to lay bare all foundations not exposed as yet, and so as to reach the old floor and yard levels, there is little doubt that the search would be well rewarded. It is to be hoped that the excavations may be resumed. Each stone should have a number chiselled upon it, directly after being found; and record should be kept of the place in which each stone was come upon, as that might assist in tracing the position which it occupied in the building, before being torn out and cast about by careless hands, bent on sweeping away the material records of part of our national history. There are, in various parts of the town, moulded and carved stones, lying in gardens, and built into walls and foundations; and it would, no doubt, give pleasure to their owners to place them beside the stones with which they kept company centuries ago. The whole of such remains of the destroyed buildings might be arranged along the boun-

dary of the field, and a narrow pent roof against the enclosing wall would protect the stones from the rain, and an open pale fence in front would allow inspection and avert injuries. The stones could be put in tiers, so as not to hide one another.

#### SUGGESTIONS ON OTHER SUBJECTS.

I have the sanction of our Honorary Secretary for making some further suggestions, in no way leading out from the previous part of my paper, but having reference to the work of the Society; now that the St. Albans Architectural and Archæological Society aims at being in reality a Society for Hertfordshire. Mr. Fowler has several times urged the setting apart of a room for and beginning to form a museum of local antiquities, less bulky than building stones; and others have expressed satisfaction at the idea of somebody undertaking the necessary tasks; perhaps the time has come for not delaying longer.

A complete list of the publications of the Society, with a very full index to the whole, might be issued next year, if a few careful people could help one another in the undertaking; and it would be a good thing if a provisional list of earthworks, ruins, buildings, and other objects of archæological interest (dating before 1700) in Hertfordshire could be issued at the same time. References to recent descriptions might be put in the margin, The topographical pages in "A. A. Notes" might suggest the form for the list, though the great merit of those pages, the mark of observation at first hand, would necessarily be frequently wanting, in such a provisional list as is suggested, merely compiled from the materials already at hand. At the present rate of progress the whole of Hertfordshire may possibly be visited and described in about 30 years; but, when catalogues show clearly what has been done, and what remains to be done, it may be possible to quicken the pace.

Few counties have been so well treated as Herts in respect of County Histories; the series from Norden to Cussans is unusually large, and the quality of the writers is remarkable. Their great works will never be superseded; but many of the remains and buildings

have yet to receive critical notice from modern stand-points. The Murray's Herts, which has long—too long—been promised, will, for this and other reasons, be heartily welcomed, if up to the usual standard. The scale of a "Murray" will not, however, afford room for a full treatment. The scale of Cox's Derbyshire is about what one would wish for, or of the admirable "Lincolnshire Excursion" of the late Mr. Edmund Sharpe; but to name that book is to raise wishes for the impossible.

In special subjects there is much to be done in bringing together facts and setting them all in their proper places. What Mr. Gardiner has done for the Church plate of the Deaneries of Baldock and Hitchin, is still to be done for the other ten Deaneries in the Archdeaconry of St. Albans. "The Church Bells of Herts," by Mr. North, seems to leave little to be desired in that direction; and Mr. W. F. Andrews has given us a most useful account of the Herts brasses. Stained glass, painted decorations, tiled floors, memorials of the dead; also roads, camps, and other defences, would be some items in a list which (if a complete list was aimed at) might comprise also many other objects in and about, and others well away from, old buildings.

Throwing out feelers in this way from time to time may be useful, as we may learn in the Society what work is in hand, and waste by overlapping may be avoided. When a complete bibliography, and a list of all extant illustrations of places, buildings, and persons, appertaining to the county, and the re-publication in a single volume of the old minor notices—Norden, Weever, Fuller, Stukeley, and so on, have been named, it may, however, be as well to stop, and not ask for more at present.