

NOTES

STONY STRATFORD: *Abbey Barn, Bradwell*. A Romano-British hill-top site, revealed by a scatter of sherds, was uncovered by the Wolverton Archæological Society directed by Mr. Charles Green, by kind permission of the landowner, Mr. G. C. Field.

It consisted of a stone floor thickly covered with black ash but no walls were seen, the chief feature being a large limestone block torn from its casing by the plough. The excavation was limited by time prior to cropping and the exceptionally bad weather.

In the black ash was a concentration of small objects, many bone and copper pins, two spearheads, two finger rings, belt-fastening, an earpick, part of a sickle, hammer, a plumb-bob, coins of Hadrian and Gallienus and others badly burned and undecipherable. The site will be re-opened and a detailed report issued in due course.

ELLESBOROUGH. Lady Dodd's Cottages or Almshouses, just to the south of the church, have recently been restored by the Trustees. The charity was founded by the widow of Sir Samuel Dodd. The building, erected in 1746, is still, as Lipscomb put it, "of brick, and extremely neat". It houses two men and two women; the renovation has given them each a pleasant bed-sitting room, small bathroom and kitchen without disturbing the original layout or the central, tiled hall. The work was carried out by Mr. C. Birdwood Willcocks, F.R.I.B.A., of Reading, and has cost £1,400; of this, over £1,000 has been raised locally by the Trustees, one of whom is our member, the Rev. C. N. White, the Rector. Any donation towards the remaining debt would be gratefully received by him. (Plate XVI.)

FULMER. The early seventeenth-century wooden font pedestal, with its stone and marble basin, described in *Records of Bucks.*, Vol. XV, Part 5, p. 308, which was found mutilated and derelict in the belfry, has been repaired as a memorial gift. Missing parts have been restored, a new base designed and fitted, and the whole cleaned and some mouldings gilded. It now stands at the west end of the north aisle.

GERRARDS CROSS. The Church of St. James, on the Common, designed by Sir William Tite in the Italian Byzantine style, celebrated its centenary in 1959. Whether a life of a mere hundred years qualifies a building for notice in the journal of an archæological society may be open to question in some quarters. But the title of our Society is, after all, the Architectural and Archæological Society for the County of Buckingham: and St. James's Church is architecturally a building of considerable interest, and the circumstances of its foundation should be material for the local historian of the future. The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, which stopped at an arbitrary date of 1700 when Buckinghamshire was listed in 1912 and 1913, now includes (selectively) important material even of Victorian date; so there is no reason why this particular building should not have a notice.

Amongst the other activities undertaken to celebrate the event is the complete re-decoration of the interior. This, though long overdue, and good in some respects, unfortunately ignores to a large extent the basic components of the original design and the clear intention of Tite's composition: and only strenuous efforts prevented the painting out in dead white of the central feature of the Church—the four fine



PLATE XV. Font at Fulmer.



PLATE XVI. Lady Dodd's Cottages, Ellesborough.



PLATE XVII. Lead Token, Bledlow.

and massive scagliola piers supporting the dome. As it is, stonework, plaster and perfectly good oak have all been indiscriminately painted out in an effort to "modernise and brighten" the building, with shattering effect.

BUCKS. HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST. The County Trust has recently published a report on its first three years' work. In addition to those churches mentioned as receiving aid in *Records*, XVI, part 4, 219, grants have subsequently been made to Adstock, Bierton, Bledlow, Buckland, Burnham, Chilton, Denham, Fenny Stratford, Monks Risborough, Oakley, Pitstone, Sherington, Stowe and Turville parish churches and the Roman Catholic church at Marlow.

A LEAD TOKEN FROM BLEDLOW. Mrs. Alison Young contributes the following note: A lead rondel, 1 in. in diameter, was found by Mrs. Wilks while digging her garden in Bledlow. The house is in West Lane, which leads from the Lower to the Upper Icknield Way.

Mr. Derek Allen, F.S.A., who kindly examined it, says that the closest comparison is to be found among hop tokens, mainly Kentish, and medieval in date. There was a hop garden in Bledlow within half a mile of West Lane.