

NOTES

BRADWELL ABBEY. *Paintings in the Chapel*. Since the Note published in the *Records* Vol. XVI, part 5, 1960. pp. 365-6, repairs to the roof have been effected, some pointing done, perspex fitted to the West window, and a door with lock placed in the west door, all by the farmer owner Mr. Field. The building is now watertight and secure. Some work was done in 1967 on investigating the traces of medieval wall paintings then recorded, by a small joint grant from the Ministry and the Bucks County Council, which is gratefully acknowledged.

Since it will clearly be some time before a full account can be published, it is thought well to give a brief summary of what was found purely for purposes of record.

Painting was traced in every part of the building, though the remains on the East and West walls are very fragmentary. The whole scheme was clearly in honour of the Blessed Virgin to whom the Chapel and Abbey were dedicated, and there was a miraculous image of the Virgin, obviously placed in the elaborate niche in the East wall to which there was resort of pilgrims. In the upper part of the North wall were scenes in the Life of the Virgin—the meeting of Joachim and Anna at the Golden Gate and others being recognisable. The unblocking of the window here revealed two subjects in almost perfect condition—St. Anne and the Virgin, and the Annunciation, on West and East splays respectively, with exquisite detail. East of this was the Visitation, with another unidentified subject containing a large figure.

The South wall has a most unusual scene—apparently a procession of laymen pilgrims, kneeling, their staves on the ground beside them, and each carrying a small votive object. East of this is a Weighing of Souls, with the Virgin interceding. The South window splays have also had figure subjects, but too fragmentary for identification. It is hoped that a further grant may be forthcoming for cleaning and consolidation of the paintings, as the work so far has been purely exploratory, only the dangerous areas of plaster being secured. Walls are diapered with M's.

Since the site comes in the middle of the new town of Milton Keynes, and has never been dug, it is hoped the area may be set aside so that the plan may be recovered. The survey of 1531 quoted in Lipscomb in fact gives the dimensions of most of the monastic buildings then standing. I believe this small external chapel adjoined the West end of the conventual church (the East wall is blank and has a pilaster with springing of an arch on that exterior). This area yields quantities of building material and numerous ornamental floor tile fragments of which it is hoped to publish an account by Mr. J. D. Broadbent at some future time. The National Monuments Record have taken a full series of photographs. E.C.R.

BUCKINGHAM. No. 1 *Market Hill*. The demolition of this important property, whose commencement was recorded in *Records* XVIII, Part 1, 1966, p. 96, is now complete. Once again, full publication of the discoveries must wait for some time, as documentary evidence, structural details and wall paintings have all to be analysed and correlated. Structurally the house was of high quality, with mouldings and carv-

ings of late 15th or early 16th century date. Paintings were found in three or four rooms, the scheme in the main room downstairs, first recorded by Mr. F. W. Reader in *Arch. Journ.*, Vol. XCIII, 1937 p. 242, being fully revealed by the removal of a later ceiling and panelling. The accuracy of Mr. Reader's sketch of a part of the frieze, which was all that was visible in 1937 and had to be drawn by poking our heads through a small hole in the floorboards, was astonishingly proved. There was a large Tudor Royal Arms on a lozenge; and beneath this an earlier scheme with over-all floral background and blackletter texts on diagonal bands. Upstairs was some good black and white Italianate Renaissance work. The roof timbers had received painted scrollwork: and although the truss of one bay was promised to the Museum, the whole was burnt. A very complete record was made by the National Monuments Record. E.C.R.

CHALFONT ST. GILES. *Wall Paintings*. Work on the cleaning and consolidation of the medieval wall paintings in the South aisle has been completed and some extension of the original subjects achieved, as briefly reported in *Records*, Vol. XVII Part 5, 1965 p. 416. A few additional figures in the Jesse Tree have been found, and two small subjects over the South door, not yet explained. No report on these finds has so far been received from Mrs. Baker.

GERRARDS CROSS. *Bulstrode Camp*. The Eton Rural District Council have announced their intention to lay a main sewer in connexion with an extended drainage scheme which will involve cutting through the main defences of the Iron Age Camp. The Ministry have been informed, and raised no objection, provided experienced archaeological supervision is available. It is hoped the Ministry themselves will provide such observers to take photographs, make measured sections, etc. In fact, this little-explored area may be excavated for us free of charge!

LITTLE HAMPDEN. *Wall Paintings*. Mrs. Baker has given no account of her work or findings at Little Hampden, briefly referred to in *Records*, Vol. XVIII Part I, 1966, p. 96.

NETHER WINCHENDON. *Restoration of ancient clock*. Mr. W. H. Jennings, a member of the Antiquarian Horological Society, kindly sends the following Note, abbreviated, by his permission, from a longer account.

One afternoon in the summer of 1966, Mr. W. H. Jennings, was looking round the church when he saw above the organ gallery a notice which read:-

"This CLOCK was given by the WILL of Jane Beresford, Widow Lady of this Manor; that it may Remind all who hear it to spend their Time in an honest Discharge of their Calling, and in the Worship of GOD; that Repentance may not come too Late. MDCCLXXII."

Investigation revealed a single handed dial on the tower, looking rusty and neglected: the clock works were inaccessible, the tower door being locked, but the bob and some 5 ft. of the pendulum shaft, dusty and motionless, could be seen hanging below an opening high up in the vestry ceiling. It seemed clear that the clock had been inactive for a long time, and the visitor departed feeling rather sad that such an interesting legacy to the village should have been allowed to fall into disuse.

Later he revisited the church accompanied by his friend, Mr. J. F. Pearce, the clock expert from Messrs. Biggs of Maidenhead. Mr. Pearce recognised the clock as being of an early (circa 1720) and rare type, having a pendulum some 14ft. long, giving a two seconds beat, of which there remain very few working examples in the

country. Permission was obtained for a closer inspection and this revealed that the clock, though in a very neglected state, was not beyond repair.

There followed a meeting with the Lord of the Manor, J. G. C. Spencer-Bernard, Esq., whose ancestor had bequeathed the clock. He explained that all concerned regretted that the clock had been out of action for some years, but money was not available to pay for its overhaul because of a greater need to repair the church fabric. Messrs. Pearce and Jennings offered to overhaul the clock at their own expense, an offer which was gratefully accepted.

Dismantling the clock looked an easy matter except for the pendulum. Obviously it would require careful planning and handling to ensure that this unwieldy object, of unknown weight, was safely detached and lowered to the vestry floor, some 15 ft. below the bob.

Some days later, a party of volunteers assembled at the church. The clock loft having been cleared of several bucket loads of accumulated dirt, bird droppings and nesting materials, the delicate job of unpinning and lowering the pendulum commenced. Two strong helpers, perched on ladders, supported the bob while the pendulum was released and slowly lowered on one of the winding lines. As a winch, the winding gear was used in reverse; and each time the wire tautened against the winding click, the bob was raised while the click was released to allow another turn off the drum, the pendulum shaft being steadied by ropes held from the clock loft. The remainder of the clock was easily dismantled and removed to Mr. D. O. White's workshop in Maidenhead.

During the ensuing weeks the parts were carefully cleaned and inspected. Removal of the old paint proved very difficult due, it was thought, to the high lead content. No maker's name could be found, but probably he was a blacksmith since the iron members had been roughly forged and bore many original tool marks. Made 250 years ago with the simple hand tools of the day the clock showed ample evidence of excellent craftsmanship: it was clear, however, that much repair work would be necessary.

A further visit to the church, with special equipment and special helpers was organised to deal with the ticklish job of detaching the dial and lowering it down the tower face.

A brief examination of the dial board showed that, rotten and worm eaten, it would have to be replaced. Several pieces of the chapter ring were missing, and some were found at the foot of the tower where they had fallen over the years.

The marking of the half hour divisions by diamond shaped studs instead of the usual fleurs de lys supported the belief that the clock was pre 1725 in date.

The technically minded will be interested in details of the clock's construction. The going train with four arbors and the striking train with three, are mounted side by side in a wrought iron frame (2 ft. 3 in. × 2 ft. 3 in. × 1 ft. 1½ in.) the members of which are secured together by mortises and burred over tenons. The plates carrying the arbors are secured by fixed bolts and square headed nuts. The escapement is of the Graham dead beat pattern. The striking train has an iron count wheel; and control is by hoop wheel, levers, and a pin on the flywheel arbor. All wheels are of brass.

The pendulum measures 13 ft. 6 in. from suspension spring to bob centre. The iron bob weighs 60 lbs. The exact beat of the pendulum, ascertained by the clock-maker's "140904" formula, is 1.89 seconds. Winding is required daily; the clock strikes on a bell engraved "LOVE GOD 1631".

The view of the repair team was that the clock, because of its horological value and interesting history, deserved complete restoration. Mr. Pearce directed the repair

work and every defect was meticulously corrected.

The pendulum shaft, made of pine, was in perfect condition apart from a trace of woodworm which was duly treated.

When all repairs were finished, the iron parts were given an undercoat of galvaroid anti-rust primer followed by two coats of green metallic paint; the brass parts and all bearing surfaces were highly polished.

A new square dial, using the old chapter ring and hand, was made by Mr. S. Heath, from 1 inch plywood. It was treated against woodworm and rot, given two coats of primer followed by two of paint, the dial circle being finished blue, and the remainder black. The skeleton dial parts and hand were treated with anti-rust primer, and finished with four coats of old gold metallic paint.

Search of the Church records revealed that two clocks were used to implement Jane Beresford's bequest. The first, of which no trace remains and no description can be found, served from 1772 until 1857. The Churchwarden's Accounts for 1857 contain an item "January 26 Tomlinson for a new clock £14. 10s." There can be no doubt that this entry refers to the present clock, though the clock's early design belies any suggestion that it was newly made in 1857. Where, however it spent its earlier years remains a mystery. Tomlinson was a clock repairer in Thame, who repaired other church clocks in that area: it is possible, therefore, that the Nether Winchendon clock had previously served in another church in the district. Alternatively, there is evidence that the cupola over the Manor House once housed a turret clock, and it is possible, indeed likely, that the same clock was installed in the church in 1857.

The Churchwarden's Accounts for the years 1773-1915 show regular entries of 10/0d. per year for winding the clock, and occasional entries for oil, new lines, and repairs. In 1779 is an item of three shillings "For a dinner and beer for Mr. Tomlin when he cleaned the clock". This was a considerable sum in those days, and one wonders whether Mr. Tomlin felt like doing any more work after his repast!

At 4 p.m. on the 28th August 1967, after many years of silence, the clock resumed its task of reminding its hearers "to spend their Time in an honest Discharge of their Calling and in the Worship of GOD that Repentance may not come too Late".

A life size painting of Jane Beresford, the donor of the clock, hangs in the dining room of the Manor House. It shows a rather plain, sad faced, young woman in her thirties. What kind of mistress she was the house records do not disclose. She is remembered for her manuscript book of food recipes, commenced in 1722, some of which are used in the house today.

W. H. JENNINGS

THORNTON. *Restoration of Church.* After the strictures passed on this church in an account of the condition of a number of North Buckinghamshire Churches printed in *Records*, Vol. XVII, Part 4, 1964, p. 311, it is pleasant to be able to record the complete restoration of this charming small and remote building. The structure has been dealt with, the windows repaired, gutters and down pipes cleared and painted, plaster mended, and the interior walls cleaned and limewashed and monuments cleaned. All this has been done without destroying the atmosphere and texture of the church.

WOLVERTON: *Some further notes.* In a recent paper I showed how Wolverton grew from a very small settlement to a flourishing railway town.¹ Since then, however, further facts have come to light and although the main thesis of that paper remains correct, it seems worthwhile to publish these notes.

My previous paper mentioned the objections of landowners in Northampton to the building of the London and Birmingham Railway; in 1839 the Directors agreed

to a request from the Mayor and Corporation of Northampton to rename Blisworth Station (now closed) "Northampton and Blisworth" so the townspeople were in favour of the railway if the landowners were not.²

Many of the great names associated with the early days of the railway have been commemorated in the names of streets near Wolverton Station. Some of the houses in these streets must be over one hundred years old: Glyn, Ledsham, Creed and Young Streets are now in process of being demolished under the East Wolverton Development scheme. A photograph shows, that these houses, now in process of demolition, are small, terraced and without front gardens; a new housing estate at Warren Farm will provide the necessary accommodation while these streets are being rebuilt.³ In 1841 houses were let, mainly to railway workers, at rents ranging from 1/6d. to 7/- per week. The early houses were built of timber and measures had to be taken to provide homes in order to get people to live there, temporarily men employed on the railway were given travel passes to go home at week ends until such time as homes were available for them at Wolverton.⁴ Other measures were taken to attract people to work in the railway workshops⁵ and apparently the schoolmasters and clergymen of Wolverton had many problems on their hands.⁶ Although the railway workshops employ large numbers of people the town does not appear to benefit totally from the presence of the railway works:

(i) Many railway workers live outside the town. Thus many people are engaged in supplying mid-day meals to these people; the catering industry is quite a flourishing one.⁷

(ii) In the 1930's many of the apprentices became unemployed at the age of 21 (having become journeymen) and emigrated to find work elsewhere. This is reflected in the 1931 Census when the proportion of people under forty in Wolverton was much less than the national average.

This is the problem likely to be faced by a town whose fortunes and prosperity depend on one industry. The Authority's efforts to get a more diversified industry have met with little success, although a firm of heating and ventilating engineers have opened a factory there. The government, however, are proposing to make Wolverton the centre of a large, new overspill town, Milton Keynes, but that is another story.⁸

Acknowledgements to R. J. Ayers Esq., of 13, Vicarage Walk, Stony Stratford, for drawing my attention to many of the points elaborated here: to D. S. Gilbertson Esq., Tutor-librarian, Wallasey College of Further Education for help in compiling this paper.

¹ Peter S. Richards: "Wolverton: the growth of a railway town", *Records of Bucks*, vol. xvii, part 2, 1962.

² Joan Wake: *Northampton Vindicated or Why the Main Line missed the town*, Northampton, 1935. V. A. Harley: "Northampton re-vindicated: more light on why the main line missed the town", *Northamptonshire Past and Present*, vol. 2, No. 6, 1959, pp. 305-9.

³ G. A. Jellicoe and Arthur Baker: "A design for Wolverton Urban District, Comprising the towns of Wolverton, New Bradwell and Stony Stratford, in the County of Buckingham", *Architect's Journal*, 18th October, 1945, p. 4.

⁴ Letter from Edward Bury to the Locomotive Power Committee (from Liverpool) December 30th, 1839 and a further letter from Bury to Richard Creed (Secretary of the London and Birmingham Railway) from Wolverton on April 28th, 1843.

⁵ P. S. Richards: "A note on Wesleyan Methodism in Wolverton, Bucks, with special reference to the part played by the London and Birmingham Railway Company in its growth". (In the press).

⁶ Schools and Church Report by the Revd. Geo. Weight of "Wolverton Station" to Geo. Carr Glyn, Chairman of the London and Birmingham Railway, dated 1st July, 1846.

⁷ Jellicoe and Baker, *op. cit.* p. 5 c.f. Peter S. Richards, *op. cit.* (1962).

⁸ Peter S. Richards (in the press).

PETER S. RICHARDS

Excavations at Latimer—FOURTH INTERIM REPORT

A total of 1,400 sq. ft. were excavated at Latimer in 1967, with several specific objectives. Attempts to trace a continuation of the north wing revealed complete modern disturbance, but also found the line of the pre-1834 roadway. A small trench which we were able to put down in the centre of the villa courtyard revealed only two small post-holes of uncertain date. Along the line of the boundary wall, however, we were able to recover part of the gateway structure, and find additional evidence that the cruck-building found in 1966 was erected after the boundary wall and gateway had gone out of use. In the main wing of the villa two areas were excavated. The north-west corner of the bath suite had never been properly excavated by either of the previous excavations (1864; 1910-12) and indeed we found that the plan of this area published in 1866 was incorrect. From the small portion excavated it is clear that the large bath suite was the third phase in the history of the baths. It seems certain that the villa had a small bath suite from the time of its erection. Beneath the villa the pre-villa timber building was completely exposed and proved to be rectangular in plan (14 ft. × 25 ft.). The other discovery of importance in the main wing was of a new phase of occupation, between periods III and IV. In room 9 a broken-up mosaic floor in six colours was found, probably dating to the mid 3rd century A.D. This sub-phase (period IIIa) may have been followed by a short abandonment at the end of the 3rd century, but the evidence is not as clear as one might wish. In the corridor a further flint and rubble blocking wall was found overlying the last floor, and presumably implies a reduction in the number of rooms occupied in the mid-late 4th century A.D.

KEITH BRANIGAN