

NOTES

DUNDRIDGE IN ASTON CLINTON. *Iron Age Furnace*. Mr. H. R. Brackley writes to mention the hitherto unrecorded discovery at Dundry, in the autumn of 1946, of what was in all probability an Iron Age furnace pit for smelting iron. The site, which overlooks the valley called "Cindery Bottom", is that on which was found the pot illustrated in Fig. 22 and discussed by Mr. J. F. Head in *Early Man in South Bucks*, pp. 65-6. Quantities of slag are still to be found there and Mr. Brackley is having some samples analysed.

EYTHROPE HOUSE AND ITS DEMOLITION IN 1810-11. Mr. Duncan Mowat kindly sends the following note.

With Mr. H. M. Colvin's article on this subject in the Records Volume XVII, 219-227, there is illustrated a pair of drawings, dated 1751 and attributed to Isaac Ware, for a Gothic building at Eythrope. One of these is reproduced again (Plate X a).

Mr. Colvin being satisfied that these designs did not correspond to any part of Eythrope house itself, supposed that they might have been for one of the "turreted buildings on the neighbouring eminences" which Sir William Stanhope had erected in the Park.

The photograph now reproduced here (Plate X b) confirms this suggestion. It is of a structure (evidently a folly and no more than a "facade") which stood on the "eminence" to the west of Eythrope House from which, when erected about 1752, it might have been in full view about a mile away.

This photograph is of the building as it existed in 1904 when it was known locally as "Winchendon Castle" or "Lane End Castle". As will be seen from this photograph, the "facade" then screened some farm buildings and incorporated the farmhouse itself within the structure. It is clear that this was no part of the original building: details remain of the original Gothic windows in the North wing before their replacement on the building of the farmhouse. This was probably about 1810 and there are indications that some of the material from the demolition at Eythrope was used in its construction.

The structure as photographed in 1904 stood practically intact until 1916 when part of the South wing collapsed in a violent wind storm. The arch and the turrets of the North wing were then taken down for safety, and all that now survives of the old folly is the farmhouse portion—Eythrope Park Farm on Waddesdon Hill, a mile North of Upper Winchendon.

A detail, perhaps worthy of note, is that the folly, when built, did not accord with either of the Ware designs illustrated in Mr. Colvin's article—neither with the preliminary design, Plate 1(a), approved by Sir William Stanhope subject to its being "shortened to two windows at each end", nor the design so shortened, Plate 1(b), but was finally something between the two with a third window restored at each end and surmounted by a turret.

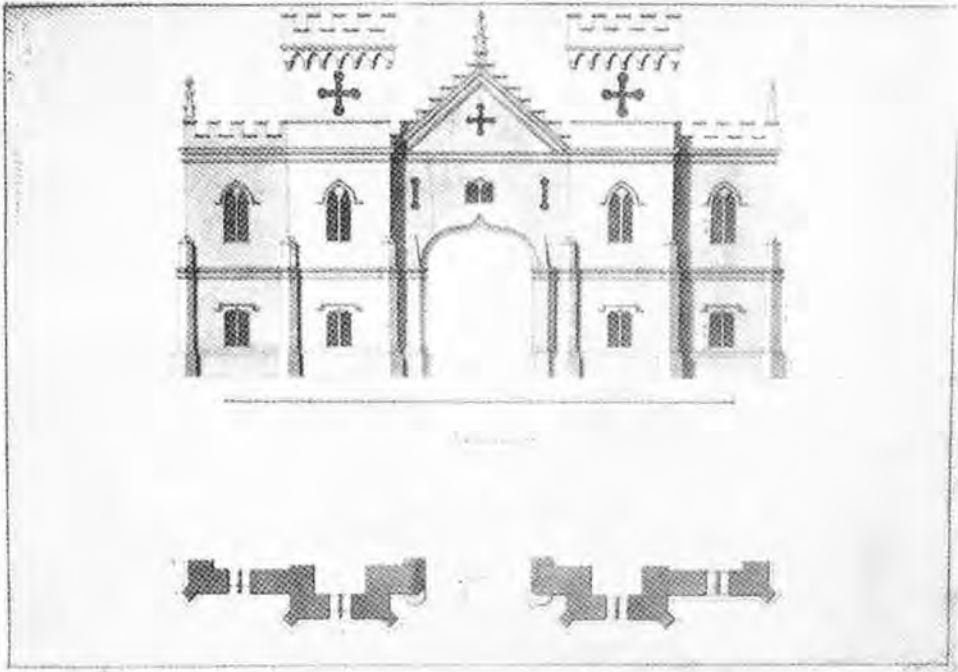


PLATE X (a). Final design for a Gothic building at Eythrope dated 3rd July, 1751, and attributed to Isaac Ware.



PLATE X (b). Winchendon Castle.

GERRARDS CROSS. *Bulstrode Camp*. In the early months of 1969 the Eton Rural District Council cut trenches through the banks and ditches of the Iron Age Camp in Bulstrode Park, and also stripped the surface and put another trench along a short stretch of the interior in the W.N.W. sector in connexion with a sewerage scheme. This had been approved by the Ancient Monuments Department of the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works, provided there was adequate supervision and observation throughout the operation.

Mr. S. A. Moorhouse of the Ministry staff was on the site for some weeks, and with assistance from members of the Gerrards Cross and Chalfont St. Peter Local History Society, was able to get records of good sections of the defences and the stratification of the banks and silting of the ditches. This was done with considerable difficulty owing to the entry of water, necessitating a pump continuously working. The excavators of 1924 (see Records of Bucks, Vol. XI, 283-88) experienced the same problem and were not in fact able to reach the bottom of the ditch. So that some further information has in fact been obtained. Apart from this, and the identification of two possible post-holes in the interior, and evidence of a previously unsuspected inner ditch, no object of any kind or any unusual feature came to light, thus strongly suggesting that Fox and Clarke's original interpretation of the camp as rather a camp of refuge for intermittent occupation and not a permanent settlement, seems to be the correct one. It is hoped to publish a full account with plans and sections at a later date.

LITTLE KIMBLE. *Wall Paintings in the Church*. There was some danger of this small and important building becoming redundant. But a vigorous appeal has been launched for structural and plaster repairs, and for the whole treatment of the extensive set of wall paintings in the Nave.

LITTLE WOOLSTONE. *Paving Tiles*. The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments lists a block of medieval printed paving tiles on the floor at the West End of Little Woolstone Church (R.C.H.M. Bucks, North, 180) where they are described as "slip" tiles and dated to the 14th century. The Vicar recently was kind enough to allow three to be taken away for examination, for they were so dirty that little detail could be observed before cleaning. Mr. J. D. Broadbent very kindly contributes the following note, which the editor has added a paragraph.


Two tiles of burnt clay with white slip printing approx. 110 mm. square by 25 mm. thick, top with clear yellow salt glaze.

A.




Catalogued by Christopher Hohler (Records of Bucks. Vol. XIV Parts 1 and 2, 1942) as L. B. 23., also occurring at Hanslope, Hillesden, Moulsoe, Stewkley and Westbury and at Totternhoe, Beds. Pattern made up by 4 tiles to form circular feature inscribed in diagonal square frame.

(A tile of this pattern was found in the rubble blocking of the North window of St. Mary's Chapel at Bradwell Abbey. It is hoped later on to publish an account of a wide variety of designs found on tile fragments obtained from the surface of the field East of the Chapel. It is interesting that at this late date when the Monastery was so impoverished, they were purchasing new tiles from Brickhill for re-flooring.)

- B.  L.B. 11. Not listed by Hohler as being at Little Woolstone. Illegible inscription but on more perfect examples this reads: IN DOMINO CONFIDO. Also occurring at Hillesden, Stewkley, Blackfriars Dunstable, Totternhoe and Blakesley.

B

These tiles were almost certainly made in kilns discovered at Little Brickhill. These supplied tiles to Hillesden in the 30 years following 1494 and to Wing in 1527 and 1530. It seems likely that they were supplied to Little Woolstone in the decade 1520–30 and, if the church had some access of wealth at about this time (probably a bequest) this might account for the re-flooring of the church.

- C.  Plain tile with black surface, no design, clearly used as a border or for a diaper.

C

RADNAGE. *Conservation of Wall Paintings in the Church.* During the summer of 1969 all the wall paintings in Radnage Church were overhauled, cleaned and freed from wax; and extensive vital plaster repairs were effected. The work was carried out by my assistant, Miss Ann Ballantyne. The paintings were fully described in Records of Bucks Vol. XIII, 144 and XV, 134 *et seq.* The original work had been carried out under the late Professor Tristram's direction, largely by one of his craftsmen; but the methods used then are now recognised as entirely unsuitable. In the interval of time (over 30 years), considerable deterioration had taken place, some losses had occurred and much plaster had disintegrated, and an added complication was the fact that some areas of painting had come in contact with an insecticide sprayed on the roof timbers since they had not been protected by a covering.

A thorough restoration of the whole building under the direction of Mr. C. B. Martindale, F.R.I.B.A., and a generous grant from the Pilgrim Trust gave the opportunity to tackle the whole of the wall surfaces. The removal of a poor modern screen from under the central tower, and the raising of the belfry floor to its original position, has given a splendid vista the length of the building.

Some minor additions to the remarkable series of post-Reformation texts in the Nave were made, and proof found that there had been at least four series of these. The poor and ugly and badly damaged Victorian panel of the Commandments, Creed and Lord's Prayer on the North wall was removed to reveal an 18th century Commandments beneath, that was itself part of a series exposed elsewhere. The two Consecration Crosses under the tower with their surrounding masonry pattern were extended and consolidated. The soffit of the Eastern arch was found to be completely painted with a single-line masonry pattern with border edging in red, marbled.

The important painting in the Eastern lancet splays responded particularly well to cleaning and some further details emerged. The figure in the most northerly splay appears to have small horns on the side of the head, and is therefore probably Moses. The figure in the opposite splay, wearing vestments and a mitre may by deduction

therefore be possibly intended for Aaron, sometimes represented in this way. The central splays have the Annunciation (the Virgin on the North, the Archangel on the South) with a Majesty and Censing Angels above. Only one figure survives in the South lancet. This is a Priest with tonsure, carrying an indistinct emblem, and may be St. Peter.

Improvements to reduce damp, and to improve heating and ventilation are in hand.
E.C.R.

TAPLOW. *Vault in the old Churchyard.* Mr. A. H. Packe kindly sends the following note.

I have seen the vault in the old churchyard at Taplow. There is barely 2 ft. between the roof and floor of the vault. It is fine brick vaulting only a few inches below the ground which indicates that it was within the walls of the church. Had it been in the churchyard and outside the church it would have been deeper or had an altar tomb or sarcophagus over it. The floor of the vault consists of the tops of other brick vaults, as they are slightly rounded as vaulting always is, and there are several of them each containing a coffin I suppose. Further in there is a brick ledge and beyond it a rectangular well brick lined and whitewashed—(still perfect). Round the walls of the well are niches, all but one filled in with small marble slabs flush with the wall surface and on one I could just discern the words “. . . Hampson filii” proving that it is the family vault of the Hampson family who were the 17th cent. family at Taplow preceding Lord Orkney's family. On the far side of the well is a narrow brick arch and a tunnel disappearing into the distance. The Rector was there (but above ground only) and he suggests putting a light down so that the vault and inscriptions can be photographed. The hole by which I got in is probably a ventilation shaft giving onto the open air and the proper entrance may be elsewhere, probably within the area once covered by the church. You will realise I am writing of the old church up on the hill where the Anglo-Saxon burial mound is. This church was demolished and a new one built in the present village about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the east of Taplow Court. This in turn was pulled down and the present church on the same site put up in 1912, about.

The vault in question is 10 paces south of the dining room windows of Taplow Court and a few feet east.

WILLEN. *Restoration of Church.* After the main structure and roof have been made sound, following serious deterioration resulting from years of neglect, it is hoped to tackle the interior decoration, particularly the magnificent barrel vaulted or coved plaster ceiling, dated 1680. The Pilgrim Trust have been approached for help with the ceiling as a separate work of art of high quality. And it is hoped to restore this to its original state, with, perhaps, the introduction of a little discreet gilding. Mr. C. B. Martindale is the Architect in charge.

WING. *Third London Airport at Cublington/Stewkley/Wing.* The Bucks Archaeological Society was represented at the Enquiry in Aylesbury during July 1969 to protest vigorously against the proposal to site the Third London Airport in this area. If allowed, the scheme would entail the virtual destruction of the whole of Cublington, Dorton, and much of Stewkley, including the Church; with serious detriment to about a dozen surrounding villages, and properties, including Whitchurch, Wing, Soulbury, Stoke Hammond, Creslow, Weedon, Oving, North Marston etc.

LATIMER: *Final Interim Report on the Excavations.* The fifth and final season of excavations at Latimer villa was completed in April 1968, and it is now possible to

offer a summary of the history of the site, as revealed by the excavations of 1864, 1910-12, and 1964-68. Human occupation of the site can be divided into four major periods—Pre-Roman, Roman, Sub-Roman, and early Modern.

The pre-Roman occupation is represented by two structures, one erected over the other. The earlier structure is of uncertain size, shape, and purpose being found only on the edge of the area available for excavation. Three parallel grooves cut into the soil and apparently flanked by pairs of stake-holes suggest a construction of wattle walls erected on posts. The date of this structure is unknown. Probably in the mid-first century, it was succeeded by a timber-frame dwelling measuring 24' × at least 23'. The building, erected on a framework of wooden posts, was subdivided into at least two, and very probably three rooms. A dozen sherds of coarse, gritty Iron Age "A" sherds from the old ground surface beneath the villa and a rim of similar fabric from the packing of one of the post-holes are probably to be associated with this building. A short-lived occupation of the site was indicated by the lack of evidence for replacement posts.

Following the abandonment of the timber building, the site was unoccupied until c. AD. 130-140 when the villa was erected. A kitchen area with associated occupation material, belonging to the actual period of construction was found and provided useful dating material. The first villa was built with flint walls which stood at least eighteen inches above the first floors and may have been of flint up to roof level. Initially the villa had a single, long corridor with at least five, and probably ten or more rooms opening off it. There was at least one small bath room from the first, and a second room was added to this later in the second century. The floors were of mortar and the walls decorated with plaster painted in rectangular panels in five colours.

A major rebuilding took place, probably at the start of the third century. The existing corridor was partially demolished to facilitate the erection of a comprehensive bath suite, and was replaced by a new front corridor. One of the existing rooms was given a hypocaust system, and at least one of the five or more rooms added to the southern end of the villa was heated from the same furnace. Another of these rooms had a patterned mosaic, whilst the new floors laid in the existing rooms were mainly of *opus signinum*. Wall plaster was more varied in colour and design than previously. The villa courtyard, almost two hundred feet square, was probably laid out at the same time and surrounded by a wall through which a roadway passed on the eastern side. The entrance to the courtyard was flanked by two small gatehouses. At the rear of the villa a boundary-cum-drainage ditch was dug, and apparently tied in to at least one field boundary. In the middle of the third century two of the largest rooms in the villa were given mosaic floors.

Prosperity was replaced by decline at the end of the third century, and there is now sufficient evidence to show that the villa, or at least that part of it excavated between 1964-68, was abandoned for a short time. During the abandonment, or perhaps during the clearing operations prior to re-occupation at the start of the fourth century there was some squatter occupation in rooms 19 and 9. The re-occupation of the building saw a complete reconstruction of the walls which were then covered with plaster carrying elaborate polychrome designs including figured panels. Plain red tessellated floors were laid in almost all of the rooms in the villa, although the front corridor had a patterned floor in red and white tesserae and room 8 possibly a central mosaic with white and red tessellated surround. By now the villa comprised at least fifteen rooms, three of which were heated by hypocaust, in addition to the sizeable bath suite at the rear, and a large building of uncertain purpose projecting along the north side of the court. The only structural feature discovered in the courtyard is a rubble spread thought to perhaps represent a haystack base.

About the middle of the fourth century the north end of the villa seems to have fallen into decay, presumably because it was no longer inhabited. A blocking structure was built across the corridor, and subsequently a second blocking was built across the southern end of the corridor, presumably shutting off the rooms at the extreme southern end of the building. The remaining rooms (20, 19, 11, 9) were still occupied, and sometime after other parts of the villa were falling into decay the bath suite was patched up—with lumps of tessellated floor torn up from elsewhere. The final abandonment of the villa building cannot be closely dated in the circumstances (no coins from the floors later than Constantine, and no details of what was found on the top floors in the 1910–12 excavations). Amongst the pottery discovered in 1910–12 however were some sherds of brown painted wares which should date within the last three decades of the fourth century AD.

Beyond the courtyard wall occupation of the site continued however. A cruck building fifty-five feet long and eleven feet wide may have been erected during the final stages of occupation in the villa, or shortly after. It cut into the remains of one gate-house, and an associated chalk roadway overlay both the gate-house and the boundary wall of the courtyard. To the south of this building was a rectangular timber-frame construction on the same alignment and almost certainly contemporary. Both of these structures were subsequently overlain by an area of trampled earth and small stones associated with a row of five post-holes, interpreted as the remains of an open-sided shed. Finally, this structure and its associated surface were overlain by a thick spread of rubble 28' × 10'. A second spread of rubble, 30' × 6'6", ran parallel to the first a short distance away. The latter had a distinct if somewhat primitive threshold. In the rubble spread was found a very badly worn copper coin of c. AD. 400. It is thought that the structures represented by the rubble spreads can hardly have gone out of use earlier than the mid fifth century AD.

There is no evidence for any occupation of the site between the end of this sub-Roman occupation and the building of the modern farm in the early Modern period. Two phases of early Modern construction prior to that represented by most of the surviving farm buildings have been discovered. The earlier phase which is probably seventeenth century, is known from a chalk floor and its associated drain which were situated in a building with flimsy flint footings—very probably a cowshed. A similar sort of construction but with narrow brick footings represents the second early Modern phase.

Preparation of the final report is in hand and it is hoped that it will appear in the *Records* in the near future.

KEITH BRANIGAN