

RECORDS OF  
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE



VOLUME XVII • PART 3 • 1963

# RECORDS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

BEING THE JOURNAL  
OF THE ARCHITECTURAL AND  
ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY FOR THE  
COUNTY OF BUCKINGHAM

*Edited by*

E. CLIVE ROUSE, F.S.A.  
ELLIOTT VINEY

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## ARCHÆOLOGICAL NOTES FROM THE COUNTY MUSEUM

It has been agreed that in future a list will be published each year in the *Records* of archaeological finds which have been brought to the attention of the County Museum in the preceding year.

This is a list of all finds recorded in 1963 and, unless otherwise stated, they were actually made in that year. Where a number is given in brackets at the end of an entry the material concerned has been given to the County Museum and has this accession number.

Grateful acknowledgments are due to finders and to the Secretaries and members of Societies in the County for supplying information.

### *Amersham, Station Road*

A sestertius of Commodus was found when digging a trench some years before the last war. Reported by Dr. K. P. Oakley.

Approx. NGR SU964972 (74.63)

### *Aylesbury, Elsinore House, 43 Buckingham Street*

Two jugs, three cooking pots and sherds of the thirteenth to fourteenth century were recovered from a well found when digging foundations for an office block.

NGR SP819140 (3.63)

### *Aylesbury, 3 Market Street*

A fifteenth-century jug was found when digging for foundations and reported by Mr. G. Edwards to be from a pit or ditch. (10.64)

Four chamber pots and a saltglazed stoneware bottle of the eighteenth century were found in a cess-pit, formerly a well, when digging for foundations.

NGR SP819138 (9.64)

### *Aylesbury, 1-6 Villiers Street*

Thirteenth-century sherds from a well were found by Mr. E. A. Welch-Bartram in 1937. (79.63)

### *Aylesbury, Whitehall Street*

A Civil War cannon ball was found by Mr. J. R. Lowings during road works.

NGR SP817140 (24.63)

Seventeenth-century clay pipes, mostly wasters, were found when digging a trench and reported by Mr. J. R. Lowings.

NGR SP817140 (25.63)

### *Bolter End, Marlins Sand Pit*

Cores, flakes and blades from a mesolithic working site were found by Mr. J. P. Plowman in the pit, mostly in spoil heaps. NGR SU797923 (8.64)

*Bow Brickhill, Caldecotte*

Belgic, Romano-British and thirteenth to fourteenth-century sherds were found on the surface by Nigel Benford. NGR SP890354

*Bradwell, The Churchyard*

Fourteenth-century sherds were found in spoil from graves by Mr. D. Mynard. NGR SP831394 (16.64)

*Buckingham, Bourton Grounds*

Mr. C. Green continued the excavation of a Romano-Celtic temple. NGR SP729329

*Buckingham, Castle Hill*

A Viking spearhead was found by Mr. Gregory when digging at the foot of Castle Hill near the site of the moat in about 1896. Approx. NGR SP695339 (23.63)

*Buckland Common*

Thirteenth- and sixteenth-century sherds were found by Mr. S. T. Brown when a new clay pit was dug in about 1938. NGR SP920069 (14.63)

*Burnham, Burnham Abbey*

Foundation trenches for new buildings led to the discovery of the exact line of the south wall of the nave of the church, recorded by Miss R. Levy, which was hitherto only conjectural. Fragments of fourteenth-century floor tile and a mediæval lead coffin containing a skeleton were also found. NGR SU930805

*Castlethorpe North Street*

Two thirteenth-century sherds and roofing tile fragments were collected from foundation trenches for a bungalow near the edge of the motte. NGR SP798445 (51.63)

*Chalfont St. Peter, 14 Criss Grove, Gold Hill Common*

A sestertius of Antoninus Pius and a sestertius of Commodus were found on the surface of his garden by Mr. B. Burgoyne. NGR SU994902 (37-38.63)

*Chalfont St. Peter, Cliftonville, Orchard Grove*

A sestertius of Marcus Aurelius was dug up in his garden by Mr. G. Allnutt in about 1960.

*Chearsley, Church Lane*

Thirteenth-century sherds were collected from spoil heaps from the footing trenches for a bungalow. NGR SP719104 (58.63)

*Chearsley, School Lane*

Thirteenth-fourteenth-century sherds were found by Master S. Kelly on the surface of a building site. NGR SP719106 (59.63)

*Chesham, Chartridge Lane*

An as of Septimius Severus was dug up by Mr. J. Hare. NGR SP946029

*Chesham, 75 Fullers Hill*

A sestertius of Lucius Verus was found by Miss I. Greeno in the garden.  
NGR SP957012

*Cholesbury, The Churchyard*

Thirteenth-fourteenth-century sherds were found in spoil from excavations in connection with the repair of church walls, by Mr. A. Edsger.  
NGR SP929072

*Colnbrook, Horton Road*

Romano-British sherds were found by Mr. C. Stanley on the surface of a field.  
NGR TQ020766

*Creslow, Manor Farm*

A Roman as of the first century A.D., probably Vespasian, and two thirteenth-century sherds were found when digging trenches for footings for cottages.  
NGR SP810219

*Ellesborough*

Iron Age and Romano-British sherds were collected from the surface of a ploughed field.  
NGR SP833061 (20.63)

*Fenny Stratford, Bathing Station, Watling Street*

A rubbish pit was excavated by the Bletchley Archæological and Historical Society and finds included a mortarium, Romano-British sherds and animal bones.  
NGR SP887338

*Filgrave*

Romano-British sherds, tile, brick and stonework, and a mediæval spearhead were found by Mr. D. Mynard in a trench dug for a gas main.  
NGR SP862481 (87.63)

*Fulmer, Low Farm*

A twelfth-century jug and sherds, some with notched, scratched and combed decoration, and some with finger tipping on rims, were found during excavations by the Chalfont St. Peter and Gerrards Cross Local History Society.  
NGR SU994863 (54.63)

*Great Kimble, Ragpit Hill*

Iron Age A sherds were collected from near the bank of the hill-fort.  
NGR SP828059 (19.63)

*Haversham, Wood Farm*

Three areas producing Romano-British sherds mainly of the second century, one of which also produced fragments of roofing tiles, were found by Mr. R. Harris.  
NGR SP831450-831452

*Hedgerley, The Gerrards Cross Sand & Gravel Pits Ltd. Pit*

A Romano-British kiln, located by a proton-magnetometer survey carried out by the Oxford University Archæological Research Laboratory, was excavated on behalf of the Ministry of Works by Mrs. M. U. Jones, and in the final stages by Miss R. Levy. Other structures and many sherds were found in the area. The finds have been given to the Museum.  
NGR SU972883

*Iver, Wood Lane*

Middle Bronze Age sherds were found by Mr. C. Stanley in a trench in the road.  
NGR TQ022825

*Ivinghoe*

Excavations were conducted on the Iron Age hill fort on Ivinghoe Beacon by Professor S. S. Frere and Mrs. Molly Cotton on behalf of the Buckinghamshire Archæological Society.  
NGR SP961169

*Lavendon, 1 Castle Hill*

A double denarius of Allectus was dug up in his garden by Mr. W. J. Britnell in about 1960.  
NGR SP916537

*Lavendon, Northampton Hills*

Mediæval sherds were found in a new roadside ditch by Mr. R. H. Britnell.  
NGR SP913538

*Pitstone, Tunnel Portland Cement Co. Ltd. Quarry*

A number of Early Iron Age pits were excavated by the Manshead Archæological Society of Dunstable. The finds have been given to the Museum.  
NGR SP949146

*Princes Risborough, Brook Cottage, Askett Lane, Askett*

A neolithic polished flint axe was found by Mr. John N. Coatman in spoil from excavations for a garage.  
NGR SP815049

*Princes Risborough, Longwick Road*

An Æ 3 of Constans was dug up in the garden at the new Police Station by Mr. F. Dean.  
NGR SP808038 (28.63)

*Princes Risborough, 28 Wellington Avenue*

A mediæval barbed and socketed arrowhead was dug up in his garden by Mr. Steinke in about 1962.  
NGR SP808039 (47.63)

*Ravenstone*

Iron Age sherds and Romano-British sherds of the first to fourth centuries, tile, building stone and an Æ 3 of Valens were found by Messrs. E. Bailey, C. Green and D. Mynard in a trench dug for a gas main.  
(17-19.64)

*Singleborough, Fir Tree Cottage*

A palæolithic flake, probably from trimming a hand axe, was dug up in the garden by Mr. A. Halestrap.  
NGR SP771324 (76.63)

*Slough, Dirton Park Road*

A mammoth tusk and bones of *Bos primigenius* were found by Mr. W. S. M. Whitehead when excavating for a lake.  
NGR TQ003778

*Stoke Goldington, Stoke Park Wood*

Romano-British sherds, tile and building stone were found during deforestation. Reported to and confirmed by Mr. C. Green.  
NGR SP828492

Romano-British sherds were found by Mr. C. Green.  
NGR SP821489

*Thorney, Richard Costain Ltd. Gravel Pit*

Four flint blades, probably mesolithic, were collected from a ditch of unknown prehistoric date. NGR TQ042796 (78.63)

Neolithic sherds and flint flakes were found by Mr. C. Stanley in a pit presumably of that date. NGR TQ041797

Iron Age A sherds were found by Mr. C. Stanley, some of them in a ditch presumably no later than this period. NGR TQ041796

*Wavendon*

Mr. R. W. Griffiths has excavated on the site of a motte and found sherds of thirteenth-century pottery. NGR SP919372

*West Wycombe, The Churchyard*

Iron Age A sherds were collected from spoil from graves dug in the churchyard near the bank of the hill-fort. NGR SU828950 (6.63)

*Weston Underwood, The Churchyard*

Romano-British and thirteenth-fourteenth-century sherds were found on the surface by Mr. E. Bailey. NGR SP864504 (82.63)

*Weston Underwood, White's Close*

Belgic sherds, a samian bowl and Romano-British sherds were found in the side of a newly cut ditch and spoil from it by Messrs. E. Bailey, C. Green and D. Mynard. NGR SP853519 (75, 80-81.63)

*Weston Underwood, Woolwich Barn Field*

Romano-British sherds were found on the surface by Mr. E. Bailey. NGR SP861495 (83.63)

*Winslow, 16 Missenden Road*

A dupondius of Vespasian was dug up in his garden by Mr. E. French. NGR SP766276 (23.64)

C.N.G.



## NOTES

CHALFONT ST. GILES. At Chalfont St. Giles, a report on the condition of the wall paintings, and estimates of the cost of cleaning and treatment have been prepared by Mrs. E. Baker.

CHALFONT ST. GILES. Mr. Rex Wailes sends the following note on the water mill.

I visited the Mill on 30th November, 1963. The Mill, known as Chalfont Mill, or the Old Mill, was put up for sale by auction on 6th November but was not sold. It is on an old site on the River Misbourne and consists of the Mill proper on the west, an old seventeenth-century barn on the east and the Mill House (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with later alterations) in the centre.

The Mill is of red brick with a tiled roof and is 54 ft. by 24 ft. It has been rebuilt at the back where two bricks are inscribed "J. & W. G. (Little (?G)Urney) 1879". The wheel, wheel shaft, fit wheel and sluice have disappeared, but there is a turbine housing on the north-west corner and it would seem that the remains of a turbine are still *in situ*.

Inside the Mill proper there is an old wooden upright shaft in place with no bridging box for the thrust bearing and a six compass-arm great spur wheel. It also has filled-in mortices for a four compass-arm crown wheel on the first floor. The wallower and one remaining stone nut are of cast-iron and the crown wheel is a mortice gear and all probably date from 1879, replacing earlier wooden gears. There are the remains of a wire machine and two French bed stones in place as well as the counter shaft that once drove the wire machine and sack hoist.

As a doorstep to the house there is a granite mill stone with recesses for a stiff rynd and it was probably replaced by the smaller of the two French stones, which is of the same unusual diameter, i.e. 3 ft. 9 in.

The Mill House is fully described in *R.C.H.M.*, Bucks., South Volume, p. 84. The painting on the ceiling still survives, but is now so black as to be almost indecipherable. Traces of painting, mentioned by *R.C.H.M.*, on the walls are visible where paper has been removed.

I have taken three interior photographs and will endeavour to get exterior photographs at the earliest opportunity.

DATCHET. There is, hanging over the inner porch of the south door in St. Mary's Church, Datchet, an extremely fine example of the Stuart Royal Arms carved in wood. The mediæval church was rebuilt in 1857-60, but a good many monuments and fittings from the old building were retained. These are enumerated in *R.C.H.M.*, Bucks. (*S. Vol.*), p. 114, but there is no mention of the Royal Arms among them. Nor is this example listed by the late Dr. Bradbrooke in his valuable paper on the Royal Arms in Buckinghamshire Churches (in *Records of Bucks.*, Vol. XI, 384-400).

I was not able to get up to the carving, but it is on a fairly large scale, probably some 3 ft. 6 in. or 4 ft. × 2 ft. 6 in. at least, and carved in high relief. The whole is now gilded; and there is no indication to which of the four Stuart sovereigns the arms

actually refer, though in character it is not unlike the much larger and finer arms in Langley Marish, which are dated 1625.

Since the above Note was written, I have been able to get up on a ladder and view the carving at close quarters. This has revealed the date in very elaborately worked figures spread across the base; it is 1683. As to the provenance of the carving, a water-colour drawing of the interior of the church by William Corden dated 1857, preserved in the Vestry, shows what is undoubtedly the present Royal Arms still gilded all over, hanging with the Commandments, etc., over the Chancel Arch, in the old building before its destruction and rebuilding in 1857/60. It would appear, therefore that this fine specimen was then put away somewhere and not re-discovered until the recent work of redecoration under Mr. Reginald Hyne, when it was cleaned and brought out again.

It may be mentioned here that the exceptionally large Georgian Royal Arms in SHABBINGTON church, the boards of which until recently were used to block up a disused door, have now been re-assembled, cleaned and placed on the church wall.

E.C.R.

FULMER. During the Whitsun weekend in 1963, some members of the Gerrards Cross and Chalfont St. Peter Local History Society carried out a limited exploratory excavation on the supposed site of the old church in the mere at Low Farm, by kind permission of Mrs. Shelley, the owner of the land.

The original purpose of the investigation, as stated in *Records*, Vol. XVII, Part 2, p. 127 (1962), was to cut a trench roughly north-east/south-west across the rather limited area of the site now available for excavation after the erection of a Dutch barn and pig-styes, with the hope of locating the east-west walls of the chancel or nave of the church, to follow these and recover the plan. Instead of this, the excavation almost immediately disclosed a flint-cobbled platform, yard or foundation, associated with which was a quantity of mediæval pottery subsequently ascertained to be of twelfth-century date. (See note by Mr. C. N. Gowing, under the National Grid Reference SU994863.)

Since the site is obviously a complex, difficult and important one, it was decided to proceed no further with the excavation until a proper dig could be organised under expert supervision. But meanwhile, although the actual *church* site is still unidentified, the results have suggested an answer to a puzzling feature—namely, why the mediæval church should have been built by itself in this completely isolated and apparently inconvenient site. The answer appears to be that the church was in fact *not* isolated, but that this may well have been the location of the original settlement or at least of the first manor house—often the explanation for the apparently isolated situation of a church away from the main village nucleus. The position, probably originally good from a defensive point of view on account of the surrounding marsh, soon became too restricted and inconvenient, and so the village nucleus shifted to better ground lower downstream of the Alderbourne. By 1600 the old church, we are told, was in a poor state and so far removed as to prevent good attendances, which was the reason for the building of the present church by Sir Marmaduke Dayrell in 1610.

The pottery was submitted, through Mr. Gowing, to mediæval ceramic experts. And as it seems to exhibit some unusual technical features, it will be the subject of a separate paper in due course. The finds have kindly been given to the Museum by Mrs. Shelley.

E.C.R.

IVER. Mr. E. Cecil Curwen submits the following note on a Romano-British quern from Iver. (Plate IX.)

For many years there has been in the Museum of the Sussex Archaeological Society at Barbican House, Lewes, a complete rotary quern, consisting of both upper and lower stones, which, when the writer first knew it, was accompanied by a card bearing the words "Iver, Bucks.". Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that the card and the quern belong to one another, though no rival object has been found to which the card might more probably have belonged. There is therefore a *prima facie* case for the quern having been discovered at Iver. Its acquisition long antedated the Museum Catalogue, and as it bears no mark or number its history is quite unknown.

Typologically this quern should belong to about the first century A.D. It belongs to the developmental series characteristic of South-east Britain, and is intermediate in form between the La Tène querns from the Trundle, Goodwood (c. 100 B.C.), and a Roman quern from Hassocks, Sussex (second century A.D.). The significant features are as follows: (1) both stones are moderately thick in proportion to their diameter; (2) the grinding surfaces slope downwards and outwards at a fairly steep angle; (3) the lower stone is not completely perforated; (4) the perforation through the upper stone is oval in plan; and (5) on the upper surface of the upper stone is a square-cut channel intended to contain the radially placed wooden handle.

I have discussed the typology in *Antiquity*, XI (1937), 133-57, where a section of this quern is shown (Fig. 17 on p. 143), and the restoration of its wooden parts is described and illustrated, with an account of its functional efficiency, in *Antiquity*, XV (1941), 22-31. This specimen now forms one of a developmental series of restored querns exhibited in the Museum at Lewes.

LITTLE HAMPDEN. The wall paintings. It is hoped that similar work to that at Little Missenden, mentioned below, will be done at Little Hampden, where the condition of the important series of paintings is far worse.

LITTLE MISSENDEN. Some work on the cleaning and consolidation of the wall paintings in Little Missenden Church has been done by Mrs. Eve Baker and some of her assistants. The St. Christopher, and two scenes in the St. Catherine series have been treated, with gratifying results. The plaster was found to be in a far worse state than was realised, and has necessitated heavy repairs. The removal of the dirty and decaying wax fixative has revealed many interesting features, among which is ample evidence of the method of setting out the paintings by an almost complete rough outline, quickly sketched in, and not always adhered to in the final painting.

The Pilgrim Trust made an initial grant towards this work: but a great deal more needs to be done. And one hopes the Parish realise the urgent necessity for this, and their obligations in the matter.

During the repair of the plaster, a large cavity was found in the wall, in which were a number of pieces of oak, used as wedges. Some of these were moulded, and almost all bore traces of colour—red and some black pigment. They had all the appearance of having been part of screen-work, probably sawn-up portions of the rood-screen uprights.

Group Captain E. M. Knocker kindly sends a note from *Proc. Suffolk Institute of Archeology*, Vol. XXIX, Part 2 (1962), describing two mediæval curry-combs very similar to one found by him at The Mount, Princes Risborough, which turned out to be the Black Prince's principal stud. The Risborough example was described and illustrated in *Records of Bucks.*, Vol. XVI, Part 3 (1957/58).

WING. Mr. A. V. Woodman reports the disappearance of two of the five brass shields inset at the top of the back of the tomb of Sir Robert Dormer, 1552, in the north aisle of Wing church. Beyond noting that they had gone by 14th April, he is unable to give any further information on this tragic occurrence. The tomb and the heraldry of the shields are fully described in *R.C.H.M., Bucks., North Volume*, pp. 334/5. The missing shields are the larger one at the top centre exhibiting the quartered arms of Dormer with helm, crest mantling and motto (ripped away); and the shield on the extreme right, with the arms of Dormer impaling Catesby (ripped away). It appeared that an attempt to remove the next shield (Dormer impaling Sidney) had been unsuccessfully made. Fortunately good records of the brasses exist (see W. J. Hemp in *Trans. Mon. Brass Soc.*, Vol. VI), but the loss of the originals is deplorable. (See Plate X.)

## THE MUSEUM

ARCHAEOLOGICAL field work took up a considerable amount of time in the first half of the year. An interesting group of thirteenth to fourteenth-century pottery was obtained from an unlined well in Buckingham Street, Aylesbury, in January. The Middle Thames Archaeological Society had drawn attention to the fact that gravel working at Hedgerley was to be extended into the area where Romano-British kilns had been excavated in 1934-35, and as a result two proton-magnetometer surveys were carried out by the Oxford University Archaeological Research Laboratory. The Ministry of Public Building and Works kindly arranged for the excavation of a Romano-British kiln which was found. The Middle Thames Society also drew attention to a ring-ditch visible in an aerial photograph of a gravel pit at Thorney. Several visits were made to observe this and other sites which appeared in photographs, and the ring-ditch has been scheduled by the Ministry. A series of visits were made in addition to Iron Age hill forts and to other sites in the county.

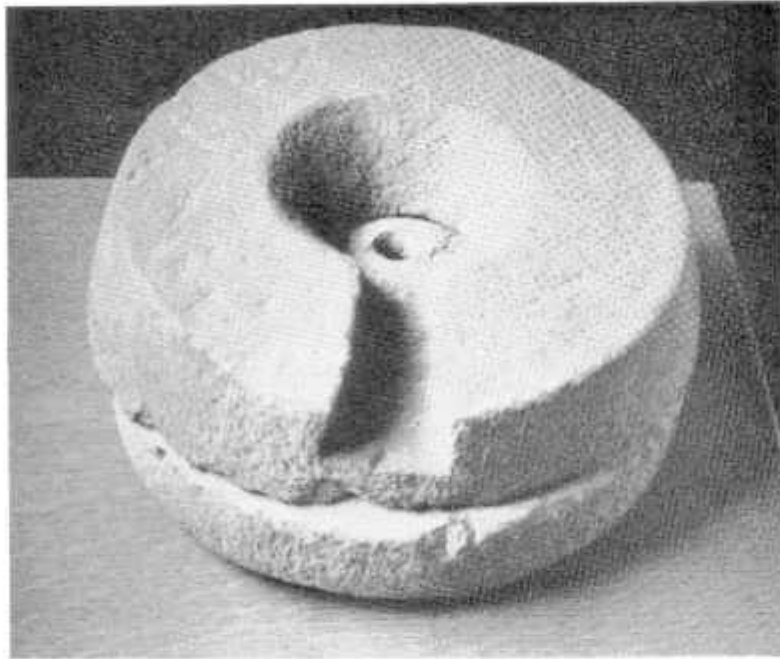
Work on the reorganisation of the Museum was delayed by a change in staff, as Miss H. Waugh left at the beginning of June on her appointment as Curator of the Royal Museum, Canterbury, and her successor, Miss L. Millard, did not arrive until October. It was, however, possible virtually to complete a map of Roman Buckinghamshire on a scale of  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. to 1 mile, which should prove of interest.

In September Miss J. Royston was appointed Schools Museum Assistant, with the intention that she should also be responsible for the natural history collections. Plans have been drawn up for a new natural history gallery in Church House and this will fill a major gap in the facilities provided by the Museum.

The Museum bought with the aid of a grant from the Victoria and Albert Museum a painting in pen and ink and watercolour of a landscape at Great Missenden by John Minton, dating from 1952. This is, as far as is known, the first work of art bought by the Museum and it is hoped in the future to improve the quality of the art collection.

The number of visitors was 19,929, compared with 19,909 in 1962.

The Museum organised two exhibitions, one in connection with National Nature Week of material relating to Charles Darwin, which was kindly lent by Lady Barlow, and the other of watercolour scale copies of mural paintings, which were mostly by Mr. E. Clive Rouse and kindly lent by him. Both of these aroused considerable interest. In addition to exhibitions borrowed as usual from the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Aylesbury Art Society and the Buckinghamshire Art Society held



*Lewis Museum*

PLATE IX (a). Complete quern (type, 1st cent. A.D.), said to be from Iver.  
Diameter,  $13\frac{1}{2}$  in.; height, 6 in.



*Lewis Museum*

PLATE IX (b). The same with working parts restored in working order.

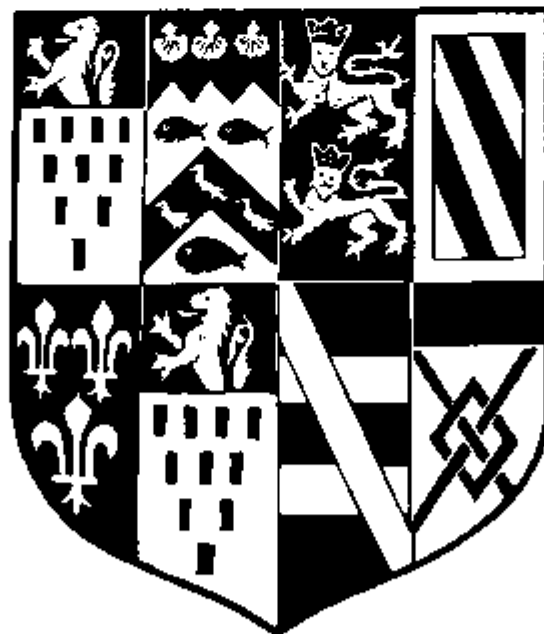


PLATE X. Brass shields from the Dormer tomb, Wing.

exhibitions, the County Art Organiser arranged a most stimulating exhibition of art from Buckinghamshire Primary Schools, and the Buckinghamshire Record Office held an exhibition to celebrate its Silver Jubilee.

C.N.G.

## REVIEW

A NEW guide to All Saints Church, Wing, by the Rev. G. W. Willis, was published in 1962. This is interestingly written and contains some good new photographs, mostly reproduced from the *B.A.A. Journal*. Any serious matter produced on this, the most important church in the county architecturally, archaeologically and historically, is worth considering.

In this case it is a pity that 16½ pages out of the 20 the pamphlet contains are concerned with discussion of the date and plan development of the Saxon church. This is a matter by no means finally settled: and the author here merely contents himself with the reiteration of the arguments put forward by Messrs. Fletcher and Jackson in the *B.A.A. Journal*, 1962, after a re-examination of the fabric. Many points undoubtedly deserve the most serious consideration, particularly in the light of the clear evidence of building of two Saxon periods in the crypt. But I cannot myself feel that a seventh-century date is established, especially when the opinions of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, the late Mr. A. W. Clapham, Mr. Raleigh Radford and Mr. A. V. Woodman are ignored. All these, and the literary evidence for the Lady Aelfgifu as foundress (not even mentioned), point to a tenth-century date. No authority is given for the statement that the two-light window (a determining factor in the dating of the Church) is "an unwise restoration of the nineteenth century". The Royal Commission had no doubts of its authenticity.

The later work in the church is very summarily treated; and in particular the superb series of monuments to the Dormer family are merely mentioned as "blocking up so much space in the apse". They are wrongly dated in any event. There is no adequate list or description of other monuments and brasses.

Mr. Woodman points out inaccuracies in the section on Plate—i.e. five not ten chalices; some was sold but not all in 1549 (not 1547); and much still remained in 1552.

E.C.R.

## THE SOCIETY

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting in 1963 was held on 30th March. There were no changes in Officers or Council, with the exception of the resignation of Mrs. J. M. Grimmitt, who had acted as Secretary of the Natural History Section since its inception. All members will be grateful to Mrs. Grimmitt for the immense amount of work she put in to help build up the Section to its present flourishing condition. Her work has been taken on by Miss Janet Easton.

### OUTINGS

The first outing, on the afternoon of 30th March, was to the north of the county, where the churches of Gayhurst and Clifton Reynes were visited, and Tyringham House. The latter, an important work of Sir John Soane, is at present owned by the

Australia & New Zealand Bank, who are maintaining the house and formal gardens.

On 4th May, sixty members were privileged to see Easton Neston house near Towcester, Northamptonshire, by invitation of Lady Hesketh.

On 6th July, which turned out to be the wettest day of a wet summer, a coach party went to Gloucestershire, visiting the Roman villa at Chedworth on the way to Berkeley Castle in the afternoon. On the return journey a stop was made at Fairford church to see the mediæval glass.

The last outing was on 28th September, when members first went to Rycote Chapel. This at present is under repair by the Ministry of Works, but was specially opened for the occasion; unfortunately, the work was by no means far advanced, but will be impressive when completed. Later, on the invitation of Mrs. R. B. Lancaster, the members spent some time viewing the fascinating interior of Haseley Court and the fine gardens which have been created there in the last seven years. Chiselmhampton church was also seen. This is a small eighteenth-century church, with all its contemporary fittings, which has been restored recently.

#### IVINGHOE

The most important event of the year was the dig sponsored by the Society at the iron-age fort on Ivinghoe Beacon. This was the first venture of this kind by the Society for very many years, and was made possible by the generous gift of Sir Alan Barlow. It was conducted by Professor S. S. Frere and Mrs. Molly Cotton during ten days in September; the weather was good throughout and an average of twelve volunteers helped each day. On the final Saturday Professor Frere spoke on the results to an audience of seventy members; these were encouraging enough for the Council to arrange for a renewal of the work on a more extended scale in 1964. The Society is most grateful to the National Trust for their co-operation and to Mr. W. H. Leach of Ivinghoe for much practical help.

#### OBITUARY

The following members died during 1963: Lord Burnham, Mrs. L. M. Gibb, Mr. Tristram Hart, the Rev. P. Henning, Mr. J. Lowdon, Dr. C. B. Nicholson and Miss E. Stevenson.

#### CORRECTION

There were three errors in the Natural History Section Notes in *Records*, XVII, Part 2:

Page 135—Para. 2, Line 3: for "Condy" read "Condry".

Page 136—Para. 6, Line 6: for "buried" read "berried".

Page 137—Para. 1, Line 1: for "corn" read "cone".

#### PARISH REGISTERS

The registers of the following parishes, beginning in the year indicated, have been deposited with the Society for safe custody:

Datchet, 1559

Oakley, 1726

Radnage, 1574

Swanbourne, 1565

A. V. W.

## NATURAL HISTORY SECTION

IN May and June weekend courses were held at Missenden Abbey Educational College. The subject of the first was "Bird Behaviour" and the resident lecturer Dr.



Peter Driver. For the second course we were fortunate to have among the speakers Sir Edward Salisbury. The theme was "Man: the changing Flora and Fauna". The weekend was made especially enjoyable by the unexpectedly warm weather.

During National Nature Week Mrs. Susan Cowdy, assisted by members of our Society, organised a Nature Trail on Coombe Hill. During the three days 2,000 people, including six school parties, visited the Trail.

One of the highlights of visits made to Tring Reservoirs in April last year and again last month was the confirmation that herons were still to be found nesting there. A visit was also made in November to the Tring and Weston Turville Reservoirs.

On a pleasantly warm afternoon in May a visit to Dancer's End for a census of Sedges and Grasses was led by Sir Edward Salisbury.

In June a most enjoyable trip was made by coach to Down House, the home of Charles Darwin. After looking at the Museum some of the members visited the Orchid Bank whilst others enjoyed the garden.

Of the remaining expeditions one was made to Weedonhill Woods for butterflies and flowers. Another was an interesting day spent looking at the Tumuli and Hill Forts of the Risborough Gap, led by Mr. Hugh Lewis. Twenty-eight members attended. A geological expedition was made to Westend Hill Pit at Cheddington and was followed later in the day by a visit to Garside's Sand Pit at Leighton Buzzard. Mr. Peter Carr was the leader. Twenty members attended and were able to take home with them many examples of fossils they had found in the two pits. In October a very successful fungus foray was held.

Our members were invited to a Rural Studies Autumn Conference held at the County Farm, Stoke Mandeville. Among the speakers were Miss Beatrix Havergal, Principal of the Waterperry Horticultural Training School, and Mr. E. H. Tong, Director of Whipsnade Zoo.

During the Winter months lectures were given on "Pond Life" by Mr. Philip Street, "Timber" by Dr. Roger Smith and "Local Geology" by Dr. R. Bristow.

Of the sixteen meetings arranged during the year, seven have been in conjunction with other Societies.

A very enjoyable social evening was held at the Farmhouse School in December. For entertainment Mr. Victor Scott gave an illustrated talk on "A Journey in Macedonia" and there were also some beautiful slides of flowers shown by Mr. Glover and by Mr. Buchanan. Drawings and paintings, by Mrs. Webb, of shrews and fungi made an interesting and attractive exhibition. We were most grateful to Mrs. Clare for undertaking the arrangements for supper. We are also greatly indebted to her for the loan of a room for the winter lectures.

The following observations have been given by Mrs. Susan Cowdy—several of our members have been taking part in the investigation of beechwood flora for the Chiltern Research Group, also the botanical research continues at Bledlow Cop. A survey has been made by the British Trust for Ornithology and the Middle Thames Natural History Society on the affects of the severe winter of early 1963 on the flora and fauna. Members of our Society have also helped with records for this.

It has been found that birds in Buckinghamshire have apparently died as the result of toxic chemicals used on farms and gardens. The bodies of five owls, a magpie and a nestful of young blackbirds were sent for analysis and were found to contain traces of poisonous chemicals.

J.E.

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(as at 31st December, 1963)

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