

NOTES

LANGLEY MARISH, *Sir John Kederminster's Library*. Suitable steps are being taken in 1973 to celebrate the 350th anniversary of the founding of the Library in 1623. These include a special service, and a postal issue; and it is hoped that Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother will make a visit. The 11th century Winchester Gospels (normally on indefinite loan at the British Museum) will be on view on the day of the service.

But the most important item is the cleaning, conservation and restoration of the painted panelling in the Library, a task never before undertaken by proper, up-to-date scientific methods. The work is being done by Miss Ann Ballantyne, who spent 18 months in the Conservation Department of the Victoria and Albert Museum, dealing with the Brougham reedos—an important piece of Flemish polychromed wood sculpture.

Already remarkably good results have been achieved, particularly with the portraits of the Founder and his wife, both of which had been seriously damaged by previous unskilled treatment and amateur 'botching'. The signature of a Slough workman and the date 1873 has been found; and the extent of previous treatment by varnish and linseed oil, and much insensitive re-painting have been revealed. The Bucks County Council, as Lord of the Manor and responsible for the upkeep of the Library and Kederminster Transept fabric, are sponsoring the work, a full account of which will be given in due course.

E. C. R.

Bucks Archaeological Society Representative,
and Chairman of the Library Trustees.

CHALFONT ST. PETER, *Hill Farm*. Following a third Public Enquiry in which the owners, Russell Developments, sought renewed permission for the demolition of the house and adjacent barns, the Minister for the Department of the Environment announced his decision in January 1973. (It will be recalled that Mr. C. F. Stell gave a definitive account of the house, with dated plans, photographs and details in the *Records*, Vol. XVIII, part 1, 1966, 73-77. This account has formed the basis of all subsequent arguments for the preservation of the house, on grounds of its architectural importance.)

The Minister overruled his Inspector's findings, saying that he considered the Inspector had given insufficient weight to the importance of preserving this architecturally interesting historic house and its two barns. This decision is welcome evidence of a growing tide of opinion against the alarming flood of demolitions. And it will encourage those who gave evidence for preservation at the various enquiries—representing this Society, the C.P.R.E., S.P.A.B., etc.

HIGH WYCOMBE, *The Old Chequers*, (Nos. 1-3 Church Street, and No. 2 White Hart Street), *Wall Painting*. The fate of these premises by contrast with the item discussed above, is still in the balance. And here again there is to be a further Public Enquiry in February 1973, on appeal for demolition by the owners or developers. (Reference was made to it in *Records* Vol. XIX, Part 1, 1971, 98). Mr. George Berry in his article in the *Records* Vol. XVIII, Part 2, 1967, illustrated the house and the token issued by John Juson, the Innkeeper of the Chequers in 1669.

Interest, and value, has been added to the house by the discovery of a wall painting in a room on the first floor. This is on the plaster-faced wattle and daub filling and is carried over the timber-framing in the usual way. It is painted representation of wooden panelling, with oak-graining and is unusually detailed, showing the chamfer mouldings, mitred joints and wooden pegs. Such schemes of decoration were very popular in the late 16th and early 17th century, and this would appear to be later rather than earlier.

A remarkable feature is that on the right of the painting a rectangular or almost square space has been left blank as if for a permanent fitting or fixture: and on the plaster here are rough drawings of objects which might well be associated with an Inn—a drinking cup, or chalice, an elaborate covered cup or perhaps a salt, and one or two other items not easily identifiable—perhaps the whole representing a set table. These are almost like workmen's or artist's "doodles", and were probably not intended to be seen. It is greatly to be hoped that the premises will be preserved; for apart from their own intrinsic value and architectural interest, they are in a Conservation area and at a focal point in the town which has already lost almost all its buildings, largely without proper record. (Plate XII).

LITTLE MISSENDEN, *Mill Cottages: Wall Painting*. Another wall painting, also representing painted panelling, has been found in the southernmost of the three tenements that were once one house. (See R.C.H.M., Bucks, South Vol., 235). The house is in process of modernisation and will remain as 3 dwellings. Removal of modern partitions elsewhere in the house has revealed the timber frame structure and suggests the house consisted originally of a central open hall with cross-wings of almost similar date.

The painting occurs on the inner wall of the ground-floor room containing the large open fireplace, and there appear to be 3 complete panels and remains of others in what is now the entrance lobby. The scheme consists of painted panels each containing a strap-work design with a central oval feature containing a 'feathered' motif in white. There is a fairly wide colour-range, and it is hoped to uncover and conserve all that remains. The new owners, Mr. and Mrs. Buston, plan their restoration with every care for ancient features. E.C.R.

AYLESBURY. Old businesses are becoming rapidly rarer even in the county towns so there is good reason to congratulate the firm of Ivatts on two hundred and fifty years of successful trading on the same site in Kingsbury, Aylesbury. Robert Ivatts started his shoemaking business in 1723; his descendants were Thomas who was born in 1726, James 1761, Charles 1789, William 1826, John Charles 1858 and Charles 1887. The latter had no son to succeed him and sold his business in 1949, to another firm—J. Buckingham and Sons of Norwich—who had a similar outlook and have continued to run the business in the same way. The Buckingham family have also been in this trade for over one hundred and sixty years and the Norwich firm celebrated its centenary in 1962. The present head of the Aylesbury business is Alderman Maurice Buckingham, Mayor of Aylesbury in 1972. E.V.

A NOTE ON THE FLETON BRICK COMPANY'S FORMER WORKS AT BLETCHLEY.

P. S. Richards writes:

From 1934 to 1969 the brick works of Messrs. Flettons Ltd. at Bletchley were a flourishing concern. The works, too, were a conspicuous line-side feature for rail travellers between London (Euston) and Bletchley, Bucks. These works were then considered in a paper in this journal (Vol. XVII pp. 234-7).

Despite the advantages enjoyed by these works they were closed down completely

in late 1969, demolished and the site sold. The post-war demand for bricks slackened off, when new methods of constructing buildings were adopted by the trade. Pre-cast sections allowed houses to be built more quickly. The decision to close these works by Flettons was simply due to the state of trade, the lack of demand for bricks and formed part of the policy of a planned run-down of the Company's activities.

The extensive lineside site and quarry were sold to the Milton Keynes Development Corporation. The four chimneys have been felled, the whole of the brickworks have been demolished and the site has been levelled. The quarry adjoining the former works presents some land-use problems; it may be filled in, but more likely will be used to form a surface water reserve reservoir in that area to avoid flooding further downstream.

THE GARDENS AT STOWE. In the house and park at Stowe the county possesses one of the most important series of buildings in England. Landscape gardening was born in Stowe in the early 18th century and despite many vicissitudes the grounds survive today as a unique example of the English "ideal" landscape.

But the upkeep, not only of the original landscape, but of the numerous statues, columns, temples, grottos, bridges and other buildings which make up this unique scene would be a difficult enough task in itself, let alone as an additional burden over and above the normal maintenance of a great public school. Nevertheless, with faith, courage and public spirit, the Governors of the school in 1965 prepared a comprehensive scheme of repairs and restoration of the monuments in their charge. Grants have been received from many bodies notably the Historic Buildings Council, the Pilgrim Trust, the Bucks County Council, the Landmark Trust, the Leche Trust and private donors. Under the supervision of Mr. Hugh Creighton, A.R.I.B.A., much has already been done and more is in progress. To date, work has been completed on the following:

Cobham Pillar	(Gibbs)
Queens Temple	(Gibbs)
Pebble Alcove	(Gibbs)
Gothic Temple	(Gibbs)
Temple of Friendship	(Kent)
Lake Pavilions	(Kent)
Shell Bridge	(Vanbrugh)
Fane of Pastoral Poetry	

at a total cost of about £67,000.

Work on the Palladian Bridge is now in progress and the repair of the Grenville Column is in prospect, but when these are done there will still remain another dozen monuments to be tackled, including the Temple of Ancient Virtue and the Temple of Concord, two of the largest and most important of the garden buildings. (Illustration Plate XIII.)

E.V.
BEE BOLES—The Bee Research Association is carrying out a survey of Bee Boles in the British Isles. Bee-boles are recesses in a wall built to house skeps (wicker or straw bee-hives) and protect them from the weather. The earliest recorded date from the 14th century; there are a number in Tudor and later walls. They are generally in groups of 3-10, their shapes varying from square to arched, and most have a southerly aspect. About 500 have been recorded and others await identification (falcon-mews, goose pens, and other types of recess look similar to bee-boles).

A preliminary survey has shown that bee-boles still exist at five places in the County—Beaconsfield Rectory, Hitcham Old Gardens, Remnantz at Marlow, Chilton House and Burnham Abbey. (Illustration Plate XII.)

E.V.

ROYAL ARMS IN BUCKS CHURCHES. Dr. A. E. M. Hartley of Henley-on-Thames has compiled this provisional list of Royal Arms. Any additions or amendments to it will be welcomed.

ASTWOOD William 4	HILLESDEN William 3
BIDDLESDEN 1723 George 1	ICKFORD 1913 George 5
BLEDLOW 1952 Elizabeth 2	LANGLEY MARSH 1625 Charles 1
BUCKINGHAM Hanoverian	LILLINGSTONE LOVELL George 3
CALVERTON Edward 7	LITTLE MISSENDEN
CHALFONT ST GILES 1812 George 3	LOUGHTON 1831 William 4
CHALFONT ST PETER 1966.	MILTON KEYNES Stuart
Elisabeth 2	NETHER WINCHENDON George 4
CHEARSLEY George 1	OLD BRADWELL Stuart
CHEARSLEY George 4	OLNEY George 3
CHENIES Victoria	PENN Anne
CHETWODE Stuart	PITSTONE Hanoverian
CHILTON Hanoverian	SAUNDERTON Stuart
CLIFTON REYNES 1806 George 3	SHABBINGTON George 3
CUBLINGTON 1743 George 2	SHENLEY 1772 George 3
DATCHET 1683 Charles 2	SIMPSON George 2
FINGEST Anne	STOKE GOLDINGTON William 4
FULMER James 1	SWANBOURNE George 5
GAYHURST George 2	WHADDON 1832 William 4
GREAT BRICKHILL Hanoverian	WHITCHURCH 1768 George 3
GREAT KIMBLE Shield missing	WOUGHTON ON THE GREEN William 4
HADDENHAM William 3	

THE MUSEUM

During the year a very useful addition to the floor area of the Museum has been made by the insertion of an additional floor at first-floor level in the largest gallery in the Museum, which has in fact been closed for the last fifteen years or so. The ground floor is being converted into an Education Room for teaching school parties, and a small extension to the Geological Gallery, whilst on the first floor it is hoped to provide a Rural Life Gallery. Mr. Robin Wade has been commissioned to design the displays in the latter. It is expected that the Education Room will be in operation early in 1973, but due to the financial situation the new gallery will not be completed until 1974.

A County Antiquities Survey has been organised by the Field Archaeologist and a number of local societies and individuals are co-operating in this work. Published works are being searched for all entries relating to archaeology, and the Museum's existing records are being used. In addition, there are a few individuals undertaking field work, which is resulting in the discovery of new archaeological sites. There is also a small archaeology group meeting in the Museum every Tuesday and working on some aspects of the archaeological collection.

The Museum carried out two excavations, both with grants from the Department of the Environment. One, in advance of gravel extraction, was on part of the original medieval village of Fulmer, directed by Mr. M. E. Farley, which also produced evidence of Mesolithic occupation, and the other, directed by Mr. A. E. Johnson, at Thornborough in advance of bridge building and road improvements in an area where Romano-British finds had been made, located Roman roads and seven Roman cremation burials.

Amongst the temporary exhibitions was one of recent natural history work in Bucks, which was made up of contributions from natural history societies and individuals in the county undertaking research work. It is intended that a smaller version of this exhibition should be circulated to libraries in the county. The Bucks

Federation of Women's Institutes and the Wendover Art Club held exhibitions in the Museum, as has become customary. Other exhibitions were borrowed from the Victoria & Albert Museum and the Arts Council.

The Museum was fortunate to be able to buy at less than its market value a Chinese porcelain bowl with portraits of John Wilkes and the Lord Chief Justice, with suitable inscriptions. Accessions are listed in the Annual Reports of the Museum.

C. N. Gowing

REVIEWS

'LATIMER.' Review by Professor Graham Webster

LATIMER, BELGIC, ROMAN DARK AGE AND EARLY MODERN FARM by Keith Branigan, 1971, published by the Chess Valley Archaeological and Historical Society, 201 pp; 48 Figs. 24 plates. Price £1.95.

This is an account of an excavation carried out between 1964 and 1970 and published with commendable promptitude. The site at Latimer Park Farm in the Chess Valley was not an easy one. It had been found and extensively excavated in the 19th C. and again in 1910-1912 and the work was further impeded by the presence of modern farm buildings and yards. It was thus only possible to excavate in detail part of the west wing of the Roman building and an area to the east on the site of a courtyard and a timber building. The absence of an overall plan of the excavation makes the report difficult to follow especially as the detailed plans have different orientations. The critical chapter is the one entitled 'Interpretation' (pp. 55-99) to which must be linked V on the Chronology (pp. 169-176). Sequences of post holes in alignment suggest a rectilinear building associated with pre-Roman pottery. What is defined as the first villa building (in stone) is on precisely the same alignment, but is dated by Antonine pottery. The incredible coincidence is accepted as the "best alignment obtainable on the site" and the gap of occupation is said to be proved by the presence of a tree thought to have been growing "inside" the timber building. But it could have been between buildings and there appears nothing against the idea that the tree was cut down for the timber phase. The crucial dating evidence for these phases is on Fig. 7, where Layer 8, which contained Antonine pottery overlies construction material for the walls. It is a build-up layer below the mortar floor and represents the domestic rubbish which was immediately available for this purpose. It cannot possibly date the stone phase occupation, but must have been derived from the pre-stone period i.e. the timber phases. The villa must, therefore, have started as a timber building at some time in the middle of the second century and the change to stone foundations at a later period, towards the close of the century. The Belgic pottery must belong to occupation which is in no way connected with the villa and which has left little structural trace.

The conclusion that there was a period of decline, squatter occupation and even abandonment is based partly on poor quality repairs but mainly on layers of black soil between floors. This has suggested that the doors and roof were no longer there to prevent growth of vegetation and appears to have been proved, for the open verandah, by soil analysis (pp. 105-6) but not conclusively for the internal areas. Where this black deposit was not present it is assumed that it was all removed in a clearing operation prior to rebuilding. Would it not be easier to assume that some rooms had earth floors and that occupation was continuous?

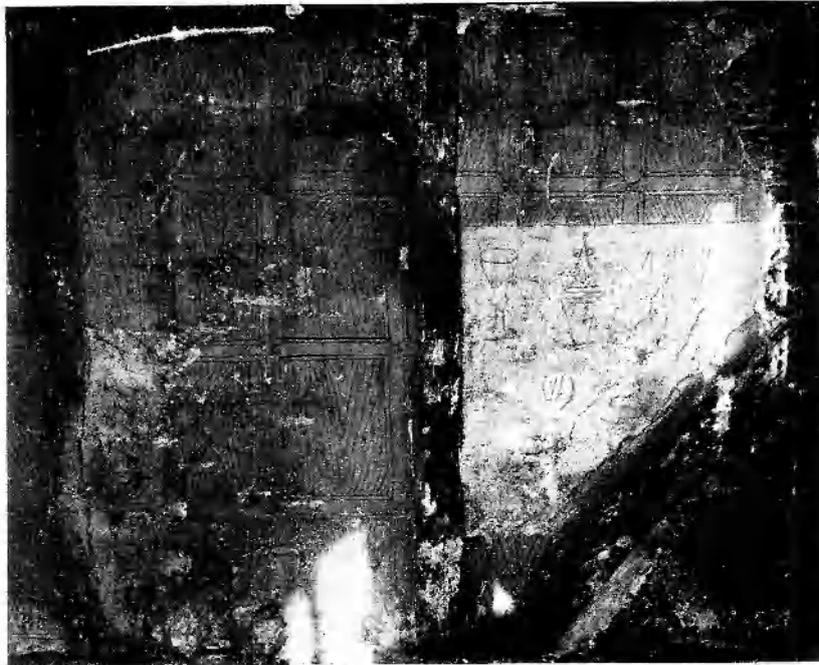


PLATE XII. HIGH WYCOMBE. The Old Chequers. First Floor 17th
Century Painting on Wattle and Daub Wall.

High Wycombe Society



PLATE XIIIa. STOWE. Pebble Alcove before restoration.



PLATE XIIIb. STOWE. Pebble Alcove after restoration.

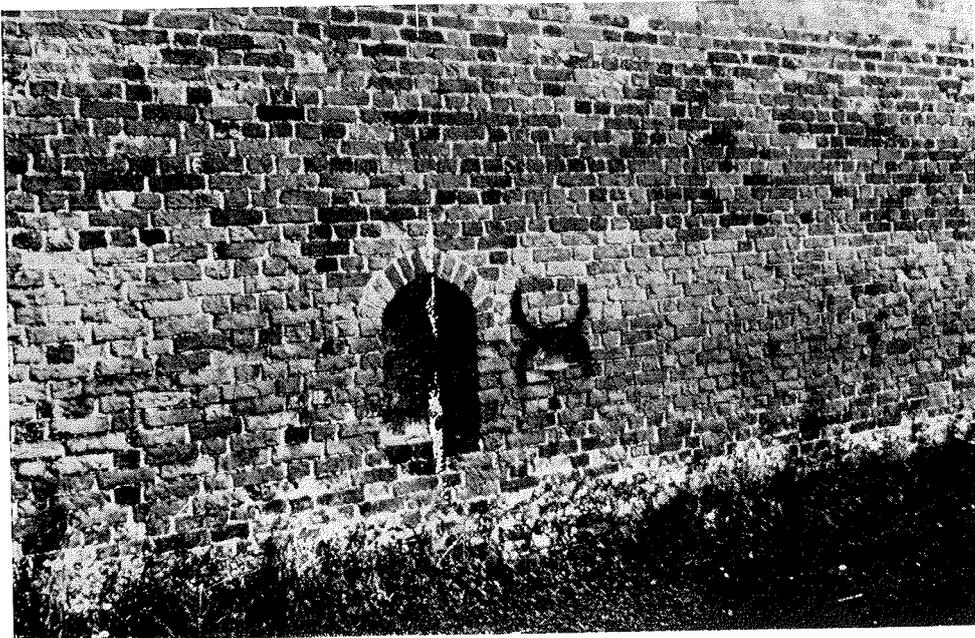


PLATE XIVa. Beebole at Chilton House.

E. Viney

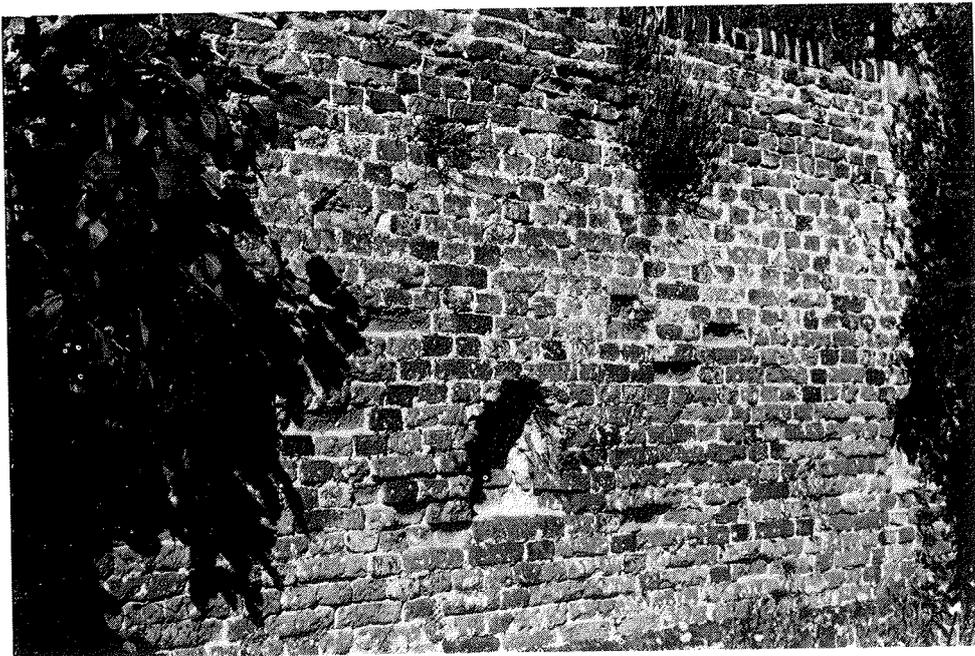


PLATE XIVb. Beebole at Burnham Abbey.

E. Viney

It is admitted that "the amount of rebuilding . . . seems to have been relatively small" (p. 79). Plan 3 belongs to the fourth century and the lavish scale of villa buildings elsewhere in Britain is reflected at Latimer by the number of tessellated pavements and elaborate painted plaster. At the end of the fourth century a decline had set in. The baths were given up and the stoke hole used as a rubbish dump, but the oyster shells in it show that the inhabitants were not yet dependent on their own produce.

One of the most interesting discoveries was in the post-villa period. A timber building consisted of two parallel trenches seven feet apart with post-pits along their inner edges. This strange building is interpreted as "cruck" construction. It bears no apparent relationship to the later type of cruck which is normally part of a framed building resting on the ground. The posts were placed in stone-lined post-pits and the problem is the relationship of these post-pits to the two trenches. In only one case a post-pit appears to cut into a trench showing that the former is later. In all the other eight cases the evidence, as drawn, seems to show that the trench cuts the post-pits and in two cases appears actually to have removed the stone packing. (This shows quite clearly in the photograph Pl. XIII). It seems rather more likely that this structure was of two different periods, the trenches replacing the posts and that they both were foundations of some kind of racking or platform, possibly for a granary, like Building 2 (Fig. 22).

It is assumed, on very slight and inconclusive evidence, that these structures represent a phase after the villa had been abandoned and an actual date is postulated—c. 380-400. No datable objects were found to support this, although a figure-of-eight cauldron chain is suggested as a possibility. This however, is a type of chain which is very common in the Roman period (cf. an example from the hoard of ironwork from Brampton, Cumberland dated to the early 2nd century *Trans. Cumb. and West. Antiq. and Arch. Soc.*, 66 (1966), No. 18, pp. 20-21). There is little doubt that like most other Roman sites occupation continued well into the fifth century with a decline in standards. Perhaps, as is suggested, the wealthy landowner and his family moved into the nearest town, but people continued to live and work here and there is little point in attempting to argue for gaps in the occupation. Chapter VI is important in placing Latimer in its historical context. It is unfortunate that such important conclusions are based on evidence which is often insubstantial and open to alternative interpretation. Only a very modest area of what was clearly a large establishment was examined and even here parts had been previously disturbed by earlier excavations.

This is a very large report and one questions the need for parts of it such as pages 30-37 containing the detailed descriptions of all the levels which really belong to the field note book. There are some useful sections but one would welcome more and better plans. The pottery report is based on the system of dividing all the fabrics into types, a method of dubious merit and very difficult for the student to follow as one has constantly to refer back. Even central Gaulish-samian appears as TF40. The identification of some of the fabrics as Nene Valley and Rhenish are much open to question, as is some of the dating. For example the group 107-262 dated to 290-310 may well be later and the radiates associated with it residual, like much of the pottery itself. The photographs placed at the end of the book are well selected and the drawings of the small finds adequate, but a list of illustrations would have been helpful. Pl. XXII shows three large iron nails which are holdfasts for attaching vertical tiles to the wall. The report is well worth having as a prompt and very detailed account of an excavation carried out with meticulous care. One wonders however, if at times the trees so attentively studied

disguise the appearance of the wood. Whatever may be its shortcomings it is a great advance in our knowledge of the archaeology of the Chilterns and will be of great help and interest to all local antiquarians and historians.

GRAHAM WEBSTER

POLITICAL CHANGE AND CONTINUITY, 1760-1885. A Buckinghamshire Study by Richard W. Davis. David and Charles. 1972. £4.95.

This is a very good book. It is not easy reading, being choc-a-block with facts, all of which matter. However it is written in excellent English, which greatly helps the pilgrim on his way. The focal point is the first Reform Bill of 1832 and the book concerns itself mainly with the forty years directly following that. The secondary title describes the book, with absolute truth, as a Buckinghamshire study. It is all about Bucks and the mind of the reader boggles wholeheartedly at the amount of study that has gone into it.

The author's mind, however, has boggled not at all. He has wholly mastered his extremely complex subject. He recalls the reader's attention to the "Whig historians" of the past, their outlook and methods, and makes a contrast between them and certain modern historians, about whom he has some hard things to say. The Whigs saw the Reform Bill as a portentous event, inaugurating change. The voters escaped from the pockets of the great landowners and began to vote as they pleased. The moderns on the other hand, tired of their grandfathers' notions, maintain that there was really no change to speak of and that aristocratic coercion continued to rule the roost at election time. Not so, says Dr. Davis. The Whigs were not quite right, but the moderns are utterly wrong. Change, great change there was but the Reform Bill did not inaugurate it. Rather it was a convulsive symptom of a change that had been going on even since the 18th century, a change due to the steady growth of political conscience and sturdy self-confidence in the electors, an increasing determination not to be put upon rather than a sudden escape from anybody's pocket. That, as I understand it, is the author's case and it seems to me that he has entirely proved it.

How jolly politics were in the days of a limited franchise and how different from the present when voters vote merely for parties and hon. members are whipped through the lobbies almost literally like hounds. For long after the first Reform Bill anyone putting up for Parliament had to get to know, and *could* get to know, everyone who might or might not vote for him. Every Bucks voter was a "character": a farmer, a Quaker, a blacksmith or merely a "gentleman". You could not *of course* offer him money so late in English history, but you had to consider his special fads and fancies, and indeed his deep-seated convictions on matters of real import. Nobody could tell, until the poll was declared, how any election would go. Hence the crowded, still Rowlandsonian scene through which Dr. Davis threads his way with such perfect certainty. What capital fellows the electors were, one comes to feel, and what a splendidly idiosyncratic set of Members they sent to the House of Commons! Those were the days.

So systematic a huntsman as Dr. Davis is certain to start hares; which of course he does not allow hounds to chase. But others may wish to chase them. One such is that colourful character the Marquis of Chandos, later second Duke of Buckingham and Chandos. I had known Chandos hitherto as a farouche and extravagant person who finally provided the Upper Ten with the *cause célèbre* of the century by a ducal bankruptcy in 1848, closely followed by a ducal divorce. But Chandos emerges from Dr. Davis' pages as a very interesting character, an astute politician, a clever fellow and a very likeable fellow, having something of

the Powell charisma. Now I know more I feel very sorry about the bankruptcy, and deplore the few, cold words Greville employs to describe it in his diary. Chandos emerges as he does, one may say, quite by chance, as a result of Dr. Davis' methodical hunting of the country. His brilliant marshalling and elucidation of the facts leads the reader to the irresistible conclusion that the truth is being found out. Or if he doubts this then let him glance, and marvel, at the long list of sources given at the end of the book, and then begin hunting himself. He will surely start foxes and hares and when he does Dr. Davis, I feel sure, will be the first to be pleased.

M. J. Gibbon.

CHILTERN CHURCHES, by Graham Martin, 9 in. × 9 in. 106 pp. and many illustrations, Suprbooks Ltd., 1972. £2.95p.

There has been a positive flood of books about the Chilterns in recent years, like those by Kevin Fitzgerald, and the *Hilltop Villages* by David and Joan Hay, all covering slightly different areas, and all having a different object or approach and of very varying quality.

The area is, indeed, an extremely difficult one to define and consequently unsatisfactory from the point of view that everyone will have their own pet places and ideas and it is so easy to say (in dozens of cases) why was A included, and why was B left out. It is an area really without a common denominator.

Mr. Martin is at pains to point out in his preface that the book is primarily a visual survey and that he claims to be no authority. One must, therefore, accept the work in that spirit, as the impressions of one who has enjoyed and been interested in what he has seen.

That said, one must therefore accept many of the author's statements or inferences with extreme caution. One has only to look at the selection of works he quotes in the Bibliography (some of the titles of which are wrong) to see the largely superficial nature of his approach. The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments is not even mentioned; and study of this factual work would have prevented many errors of architectural dating and fact.

The inclusion of a number of church plans is an excellent idea—had they been accurate and reliable. There is no justification for the suggested development of Little Missenden for example. Many early Saxon churches did develop in this way: but without excavation one cannot possibly say this was the case at Missenden. The dating of Radnage is completely wrong, the main structure being of circa 1200. There are also discrepancies at Bledlow; and the hatching has been wrongly drawn for High Wycombe. This makes the whole set suspect.

The illustrations of Norman work include The Lee and Radnage, both of which are 13th century. I would have said that Bradenham and Princes Risborough were the least typical of Perpendicular. The photographs of doorways hardly do justice to the finest examples in the area. His selection of fonts is good and reflects their varied nature. The selection of monuments again is a matter of taste and choice, and I would have expected the exquisite Doyly memorial at Hambleton to have been included or the superb Scheermakers in High Wycombe.

The section on hatchments, while it is excellent that these vulnerable objects should be noted, does not really tell one much about them or where examples can be found in the area, except for two or three instances.

The usual error has been repeated over the pulpit 'soundingboard' at Edlesborough. It was, of course, originally the font cover, like Ewelme.

Mr. Martin lists a few screens, but calls the very important one in Chinnor c. 1250, where no feature in the Church itself can be dated before about 1320.

THE SOCIETY

The Annual General Meeting was held at the County Museum on the 29th April 1972. There were no changes amongst the officers and Council of the Society.

OUTINGS IN 1972

- 29th April. Brill and Chilton.
27th May. Steeple Ashton and Edington churches and Stourhead House and grounds, Wiltshire.
8th July. Harefield Church, Middlesex, Savoy Manor, Denham Place, church and village.
22nd July. Bucks Churches. Willen, Sherington, Olney, Hanslope, Gayhurst and Great Linford.
5th Aug. Fishbourne Roman Palace, Chichester Cathedral and Goodwood House, Sussex.
2nd Sept. Chiltern Walk along the 'Black Hedge' at Princes Risborough and to various Natural History sites.

We were indebted to Mr. B. de Burgh Sidley who organised the Brill and Chilton afternoon, Mr. F. Cakebread who invited us to Savoy Manor, and Mr. A. J. H. Baines and Mrs. Susan Cowdy who led the Chiltern walk.

On 22nd July there was an additional attraction when those present attended the opening, by the Lord Lieutenant, of Cowper's Alcove at Weston Underwood which had been restored by the County Council. E.V.

MUNIMENT ROOM

The Hon. Archivist reports the following accessions, in addition to the Moleyns Inventory described on pp. 194 ff. of this number:—

Feoffment by Margery widow of William de Leye to Joan her daughter of all her land in Edgcott. 3 May 1277. Phillipps 36281.

Feoffment by Richard Edenet and others to John, son of Roger Lestrangle, of Knockin, Salop, and Matilda his wife of two watermills under one roof at Denham. 20 Feb 1394. Phillipps 35599.

Counterpart of notification by Thomas Englefield to the Abbot of Missenden relating to the presentation of a chaplain to the vacant living of Shiplake, Oxon. 6 May 1527. Abbey seal: Virgin and Child. Phillipps 31954.

These deeds were bought at Sothebys in June, 1936, and presented anonymously to the Society. E.M.E.

NATURAL HISTORY SECTION

In 1972 the survey on the Black Hedge, part of the ancient boundary of Monks Risborough, was completed. With the help of Mr. A. H. J. Baines, who provided the historical background, the Natural History Section was able to establish that this hedge existed in Anglo-Saxon times. An explanatory chart of the hedge, a map and photographs were included in an exhibition of "Recent Research in Natural History of Buckinghamshire" held at the County Museum in May. In the coming year it is intended to continue the survey, this time in the Waldridge area.

During the course of the year there were nine meetings and two weekend courses at Missenden Abbey—

15th January 1972. "History in Stone and Flowers", an illustrated talk on the architecture of churches by Mr. L. Blake, and "Flowers of the churchyards" by Mrs. R. Blake.

12th February. Mr. A. Faithful from Marsworth showed a film of the life cycle of the Emperor Moth and Mr. Aubrey Woodward gave a short talk on how the Emperor Moth was reintroduced into the county.

18th March. Mrs. P. Cunningham talked about the Island of Texel.

29th April. The visit to Velvet Lawn had to be abandoned because of bad weather.

14th May. A visit to Monkton Wood was led by Miss Phyllis Gardiner.

9th-11th June. An ornithological weekend entitled "Birds of Scotland" was held at Missenden Abbey.

16th July. A field outing to Shardeloes Lake followed by a walk to Mop End, was led by Miss Dorothy Eyre.

20th August. An outing to beech woods at Crowell was led by Mrs. Rosemary Blake.

29th September-1st October. A weekend course on mycology was held at Missenden Abbey.

4th November. Mr. Victor Scott gave an illustrated talk on aquatic flora.

9th December. "British botanists from the 17th century onwards", a talk given by Miss Molly Hyde.

The following notes on mammals have been received—

Mrs. Susan Cowdy reports that there has been an increase in the number of fallow deer (*Dama dama*) in woodlands in the Oakley area and along the borders of Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire.

Otters (*Lutra lutra*) have been reported from three areas only and there has been a decrease in the bat population.

From Miss Phyllis Gardiner comes the report that daylight sightings of muntjak (*Muntiacus muntjak*) in the Chilterns have been increasing considerably over the last two years.

Mr. Killingley, Organiser of the National Badger Survey, has provided information that in 1972 there was virtually no change in conditions of the badger (*Meles meles*) in this county—his article covering the previous ten years appears in this edition of "Records". It is sad to learn that gassing, which is illegal, still occurs on occasions also that "digging out" for badger pelts and cubs for sale is believed to go on, though in this county the badger does not suffer the persecution it does in many other counties.

From Mr. Brian Walbank has come a report on recent damage done by the grey squirrel (*Neosciurus carolinensis*). This followed its normal course when 10-20 year old beech trees and sycamore saplings were attacked—these trees are the most susceptible to damage. At the end of 1971 there were signs of an increase in the squirrel population in parts of the Chilterns and it was predicted that a climax would be reached in 1972. This in fact has happened and numbers are now declining.

The Public Health Department of Amersham Rural District Council states that the edible dormouse (*Glis glis*) has been found as widely distributed as Chesham, Chalfont St. Giles, Beaconsfield, Penn, Little Missenden, Prestwood and Hampden. In 1972 the Council had to destroy 32. In the past householders would suffer disturbance between the months of May and September or as late as October; now it seems that the edible dormouse does not hibernate in the true sense at all. Possibly this could be due to the introduction of central heating into so many houses.

The following report has come from the county bird recorder, Mr. R. E. Youngman. Among the interesting species of birds recorded in the county during the year were the following:

All three of the commoner species of British Divers, Blackthroated at Bletchley in March, Great Northern at Lindford and Red-throated at Wraysbury both in November.

Black-necked and Slavonian Grebes were noted at the usual autumn and spring passage times but a full plumaged adult Slavonian seen at Weston Turville Reservoir in May was unusual for its lateness.

The 1971 Marlow Ring-necked Duck stayed until March and spent the summer elsewhere presumably with the Tufted Ducks with which it associated. It returned once more in December. It is interesting that no female of this species has ever been observed in the British Isles.

Black Redstarts, although they have in the past bred in the County, are not often recorded but one was seen at Latimer Park near Chesham in February.

A Little Gull was seen at Horton in March and others were noted at Foxcote reservoir in the autumn. This species is becoming increasingly common in the county.

Firecrest numbers near Wendover increased from 2 known pairs in 1971 to in excess of 20 pairs probably breeding in 1972. The real increase is, one supposes, unknown as these figures presumably indicate the greater amount of observations made during the second year. Firecrests were recorded at other localities and in neighbouring counties.

From mid-June onwards Crossbills were noted mainly in the coniferous woodlands in the south of the county. Irruptions of this species from Europe occur periodically. This was the first for some years.

The most interesting vagrant of the year was a Pomarine Skua seen at Wraysbury in November. On one occasion it was seen to kill and eat a Black-headed Gull. This species is normally pelagic in winter and is very rare in Buckinghamshire.

Great Grey Shrike in January, Golden Oriole in May and Glaucous Gull in December added ornithological spice to a generally interesting year.

Plants of special interest—

In Druce's List of British Plants (1908) he gives the Military Orchid (*Orchis militaris*) as found in seven vice-counties in England but for many years now it has been known in two sites only, one of them in Buckinghamshire. In 1971 a second site was recorded in this county.

Goats Rue (*Galega officinalis*) was known some years ago in Princes Risborough; it has now been found in the Whiteleaf area.

Cut-leaved Elder (*Sambucus laciniata*) is an occasional garden escape and has been found on the edge of a wood in Great Kingshill.

Dotted Loosestrife (*Lysimachia punctata*) has been found growing in a small woodland marsh near Prestwood.

Some plants rare to this county have been recorded by Mr. Peter Knipe who is preparing a new Flora of Buckinghamshire—

Meadow Clary	<i>Salvia pratensis</i>
Marsh Helleborine	<i>Epipactis palustris</i>
Bog Pimpernel	<i>Anagallis tenella</i>
Marsh Valerian	<i>Valeriana dioica</i>
Blunt-flowered Rush	<i>Juncus subnodulosus</i>
Broad Blysmus	<i>Blysmus compressus</i>
Brown Sedge	<i>Carex disticha</i>
Carnation Grass	<i>C. panicea</i>
Marsh Arrow-grass	<i>Triglochin palustris</i>
Purple Moor-grass	<i>Molinia caerulea</i>

J.E.

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