

## OBITUARIES

CLIVE ROUSE 1901-1997



Dr. Rouse was actually christened Edward Clive, which accounts for the initials ECR, by which he was known to a wide circle of friends and scholars and explains, though it does not excuse, the ignorance of the local newspaper which referred to him familiarly as 'Doctor Edward' *tout court*, causing many to miss the announcement of his death. He was still a small boy when his family moved to Gerrards Cross, where he had his home for the rest

of his life, and it was to Buckinghamshire that he gave his enthusiasm and abilities as writer, draughtsman and antiquary throughout his long active life.

He was sent to Gresham's School, Holt, which he detested, but of which he subsequently became a governor, and hence a liveryman of the Fishmongers' Company (Gresham's being a Fishmongers' school) and left school with a fixed intention, already formed, of making his career in wall paintings. Someone told him that he should get in touch with Professor E.R. Tristram, at that time the leading authority on the subject, and he duly presented himself at that prickly man's door. Evidently he made a good impression, for Tristram pressed him to take an art training, and he enrolled at the St Martins School of Art and did a full course there. Subsequently Tristram asked him to be his assistant on being commissioned to restore the recently discovered wall paintings in Little Missenden church.

He had already begun to earn money by his pen. His first essays in journalism were urbane little pieces on topography in the *Slough Gazette*. It is said that he one day took his copy in person to the offices of the paper; and the staff were amazed to find that the author was a nineteen-year old boy. His contributions to *Records* begin in Vol. XII (1927-1933), and it is evident from the titles of his eleven papers and notes in that volume that his interests and knowledge were already catholic and well established. They cover flints, church architecture, medieval archaeology, Roman-Britain, stained glass, and of course wall-paintings, both in churches and domestic. All, according to George Eland, were "infused with careful scholarship".

It was on the Little Missenden assignment that he learned the importance of meticulous recording of paintings, and it was here that he first practised the technique of measured water-colour drawings that

he was to make peculiarly his own. Ironically many of Tristram's favoured conservation techniques were eschewed by ECR, who would never use synthetic materials but resolutely declined, for example, to use anything but lime for backing loose plaster, or for restoring detail. He also repudiated Tristram's recommendation to 'protect' the surface of paintings with wax. He discovered that this had the disastrous effect of destroying their porosity, and preventing the moisture which built up behind them from evaporating.

The complete portfolio of his paintings was presented to the Society of Antiquaries, of which he was elected a fellow in 1937. For a few years after the war, he was one of England's first listers of historic buildings.

There are still many who remember his work for local archaeological and historical societies: in Hedgerley and Gerrards Cross, and for the Penn branch of the CPRE. It was at Penn that he brought off one of his most striking coups: spotting on a bonfire heap the timbers of the Penn Doom. It was of course Clive who restored it and supervised its re-erection over the chancel arch. He is remembered for being a charming and effective 'front man'.

During World War II he served in the RAF, working in the Central Interpretation Unit at Medmenham, interpreting aerial reconnaissance photographs. As well as identifying and monitoring targets like U-Boat pens in Western France and camouflaged launch sites for V1 flying bombs and V2 rockets he helped to choose sites for dropping and recovering agents and for landing small planes to help the Resistance. For this work he was awarded an MBE in 1946.

After the War he resumed his work on wall paintings, and one of his first tasks, which occupied him and his assistants for many years, was to remove the impermeable coatings and devise new, lime-based techniques for conserving the paintings. His assistants were all trained by him, and included many people who are now leading conservators. They remember him as an inspired teacher, and refer to him, by common consent as 'Sir'. He once remarked that "for a dyed-in-the-wool low churchman" he "had revealed a remarkable number of popish paintings".

In fact he restored paintings in at least 148 buildings, 30 of them in Buckinghamshire.

His bibliography extends to 169 papers, by no means all of them on wall paintings; subjects included 'John Schorne's well at North Marston', 'The Kederminster Library', and 'The Old Manor House at Stoke Poges' and he also published an attractive and scholarly book on *Old Towns of England* in 1938. *Discovering Wall Paintings* was published in 1968 and reissued as *Medieval Wall Paintings* in 1991. He worked very hard to educate clergy and architects to appreciate and care for wall paintings.

His work in Oxford, notably on the Bodleian Library, led to his being awarded an honorary MA in 1969. In the same year he was elected President of the Royal Archaeological Institute. For more than 20 years from 1947 he was editor of *Records*, having been Assistant Editor from 1934 to 194, and he designed and drew the Buckinghamshire Swan for the cover. He was President of the Society for ten years from 1969.

From 1974 to 1984 he helped to prepare the Hertfordshire volume of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments' great inventory; his part was a survey of the domestic wall and panel paintings, commenting on the origins of the designs and their iconography. The work gave full scope to his remarkable visual memory, and gave him the greatest satisfaction, covering one hundred and seven paintings.

His work on the Diocesan Advisory Committee for Chichester Diocese led to his being awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Sussex University.

He was an enthusiastic expert on Heraldry and became a dedicated collector of Chinese Armorial porcelain, and for a while was a national authority on this form of table ware – Chinese-made but decorated with European heraldic devices. Some of the choicest pieces were given to the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

All who knew Clive expatiate on his kindness and – what was really a manifestation of the same character trait – his geniality, which reflected a generosity of spirit and won all hearts. His kindness

was shown particularly to the young, with whom he had a special rapport, enthusing and encouraging them to develop any burgeoning interest in archaeology. He was an inspiring teacher.

One cannot nowadays say in an obituary notice that the subject never married without inviting misunderstanding, so perhaps it should be registered that several close friends agree that he had a number of 'near misses'. He was a soought-after

partner at dancing, and loved tennis and sailing, although, since he couldn't swim, he was an awesome responsibility to his crew.. He never learned to drive a car.

No account of Clive Rouse can be complete without mentioning his firm Christian faith, expressed and sustained by the Book of Common Prayer and the Authorised Version of The Bible. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant".

*J.C.T.*

### JOAN TAYLOR 1920–1996

Joan Taylor died in October 1996 after a short illness. She had been a friend of the museum and the Bucks Archaeological Society since the early 1970's. For several years she was Chairman of the Society's Natural History Section and in addition frequently oversaw the Society's domestic arrangements – a generally unacknowledged but vital task. She also served on the committee of the Council for British Archaeology Group 9 (South Midlands).

Joan was very active in her village, Great Kingshill, as was her late husband Fred. For a number of years she had been the post-lady which brought her into contact with many. She was a Secretary of the WI, served on the village hall committee and had a considerable knowledge of the countryside. During the war she had been evacuated to Devon and subsequently worked on a farm there. She had a keen and enquiring mind. I remember that not many years ago she embarked on a course of Latin since she thought this was a gap in her knowledge which needed to be filled!

She will be particularly missed for her generous contribution to the museum's work in Buckinghamshire Archaeology. An early member – perhaps a founder member – of the County Museum Archaeological Group, she gave assistance every Tuesday for many years, often coming to both day and evening meetings, and then enjoying socialising in the pub afterwards. During this time she washed her way through countless tons of pottery and bone, catalogued masses of air photographs, mapped field

names and carried out many other tasks, with great efficiency and good humour. Moreover, she assisted on numerous archaeological excavations throughout the County, responding with enthusiasm to emergency calls for help. The excavation of the medieval pottery kilns at Denham is but one instance which springs to mind. This site was discovered in the middle of the M25–M40 intersection under construction on the floor of the Alderbourne valley, half a mile from the nearest road. The kilns were excavated completely by hand during the winter of 1982–3; whenever the swollen river could be waded through, or the frozen ground penetrated, or sufficient snow cleared. At the end of each day the huge volume of finds (eventually totalling a metric tonne) had to be hauled up the side of the valley to the cars parked at Rush Green. Joan gave a great deal of her time to digging and carting pottery and her visits were invariably accompanied by welcome refreshment for the freezing workers! Nor would any CMAG fieldwalk have been complete without her presence. Although traversing rough-ploughed fields was no easy feat for her in recent years, she invariably managed to attend.

Joan once said that she would wish her epitaph to be – 'She did enjoy life'. It is fairly typical that not long ago she went off on a youth hostelling holiday. She was a woman full of surprises, generous, cheerful, talented, reliable, always ready to challenge, but never one to be taken for granted and with a mischievous sense of humour. She will be greatly missed by her many friends.

*MF*

### MISS THELMA VERNON 1900–1996

Miss Vernon was the society's senior member not only in age but by date of election; she and her close friend Cicely Baker joined together in 1921. Her early life was spent in High Wycombe where her father was a land agent (Vernon & Son). She moved to Wiltshire in 1954 where she was on the Council of the Wiltshire Archaeological Society and secretary of the Record Society and worked on the Wiltshire Quarter Sessions Rolls. In 1986 we revived the old custom of electing the senior member to honorary membership which delighted

her. Six years later she visited Bucks and asked me to tea at Hartwell House; it was a delightful occasion for she wore her ninety years lightly and had clear memories of how she was helped by Edwin Hollis, the Museum's Curator in the 'twenties. I remember saying that I hoped she would still be a member in 2001 when she would have equalled Canon John Wood, an original member in 1847, who died in 1928. She said she would do her best and that her mother had lived to be 101; sadly it was not to be.

E. V.

### EDWARD CHRISTOPHER HOHLER 1917–1997

Christopher Hohler was born in 1917 and died in February 1997, a few weeks after his eightieth birthday. In his youth he lived with his mother and step-father, Colonel Barry, at Long Crendon Manor. Educated at Eton and New College he turned first to archaeology, later moving more to art history and liturgical scholarship. His war service with the Royal Corps of Signals was mainly in Intelligence work in the Middle East where he became an expert in Arabic (and many other languages). When he returned to England in 1947 he was surprisingly recruited to the staff of the Courtauld Institute for which he had few obvious qualifications but where he became a most distinguished teacher with a great range of interests, mainly mediaeval. It was said that his influence there "was out of all proportion to the number of his publications"; although he wrote many papers he published no major work but he is best remembered and honoured as an inspiring teacher with a vast range of knowledge.

His first appearance in *Records of Bucks* can be found in XII, 4121 and XII, 58 which record some mediaeval titles found at Notley Abbey where he was helping Lloyd Haberly who was to write the standard work a few years later. These two notes are signed 'X'pher H. He was only sixteen years old at the time. His next paper was of great importance. 'Mediaeval Pavingtiles in Buckinghamshire' (XIV, 1) filled a war-time number and has remained a valuable paper. In 1966 (XVIII, 61) his 'St. Osyth and Aylesbury' is a little masterpiece of learning and wit.

When he retired from the Courtauld in 1979 he moved to Oslo with his second, Norwegian, wife but remained a vivid and sometimes controversial correspondent to the end.

E.V

### DOROTHY EYRE

With the death of Dorothy Eyre on 9 March, 1995, a very active member of the Natural History Section was lost, as well as a personal friend. For many years, Dorothy organised the Programme and led many of the field visits herself. We remember especially a particularly lovely outing to see Chiltern Gentians and Autumn Lady's Tresses. She loved wild flowers and grew many in her own garden and made literally hundreds of pressed flower bookmarks and cards for the Royal Horticul-

tural Society shop at Wisley Gardens. She also enjoyed painting watercolours of botanical subjects, particularly in her later years, and was also a most competent photographer – many of her photographs are at the County Museum. We shall remember her for her cheerful notes and telephone calls and sense of humour. Characteristically one of her last comments to us was 'When I fall off my perch you will be among the first to know.'

A.V.C. and J.A.C

Ted Bull's death on 14th April 1997, aged 61, left the Society, and Buckinghamshire Archaeology in general, the poorer. It also deprived a far wider community an opportunity to share with Ted, through his company Pingrum, his great pleasure in seeing the archaeology and natural history of many other countries.

Ted was Little Horwood born and bred, of a farming family, and never lost his sense of local community, nor his Buckinghamshire accent for that matter. Following National Service with the RAF he worked as a draughtsman and eventually joined the County Council in a department which was ultimately to become Management Services where he held a senior post. He took early retirement due to a series of health problems. He always said he was living on borrowed time: but he wasted none of it.

He was fascinated by the relationship between the present and ancient countryside and used his instincts, old maps, and local knowledge to explore to the full his part of the Vale of Aylesbury; in particular the Horwoods, Winslow, and Thornborough. His early contact with archaeology was through local archaeologists such as Charles Green who showed the considerable contribution amateurs could make to the subject and how much remained to be discovered about the ancient landscape. As archaeology in the county became more professionalised he became a very active member of the County Museum Archaeological Group and carried out extensive fieldwork, locating many new Romano-British sites and unrecorded earthworks as well as assisting on excavations and with fieldwalking. He was a welcome regular at Tuesday evening sessions at the museum, which always finished convivially at the nearest pub. He published the results of an intensive field survey at Pitstone in *Records* and was always particularly fascinated by the positioning of archaeological sites in relation to topography. His most recent work in *Records* on an apparent early bi-axial system of roads and trackways was the precursor to a predictive approach that he was developing on the location of Saxon and earlier settlements. Sadly this project was not to reach fruition.

His work for the Society was of great significance. He served on Council for many years, was editor of the Newsletter until 1992 and was responsible for arranging much of the winter programme of meetings. He was also a Liberty Trustee.

Ted was not a man who relished being idle. In 1984, as a consequence of arranging a weekend trip on behalf of an evening class that he was attending, he persuaded the writer to guide a tour to Brittany. This was to be the start of a series of independent tours both in the British Isles and abroad, often covering both archaeology and natural History, and organised completely by Ted under the banner of Pingrum Tours. He persuaded pretty well every member of the archaeological staff at the museum to lead a tour at one time or another before branching out more widely. 'Ted's Trips' were to become a byword for good value across Britain, which is not surprising since most of his guides and couriers were volunteers and he took no salary from his firm. The company was extremely successful with frequent tours to many Mediterranean countries but also venturing as far afield as New Zealand.

At the beginning many who came were friends; standards were initially basic. I remember once spending a couple of nights in a Jesuit College in Dublin with a wardrobe with no door, only cold water from the taps, and a saggy flock-mattress bed. All very good for the soul. Everyone had similar stories to relate of the early trips; dashes across countries in the early hours to meet ferries, journeys of hundreds of miles with minimal facilities, and unusual accommodation, to say the least. But things improved and there were rarely grumbles in later years. Ted arranged the trips for the enjoyment they gave his customers but also for himself. It was a brilliant combination and people came back again and again. He provided a great number of people across the country with educational holidays that gave enormous pleasure.

As an individual he had great determination and perception, was very well liked and respected with a considerable circle of friends. He was outwardly unflappable – whatever the problem . . . 'don't you worry yourself about *that* my dear . . .'; always reassuring. He is survived by his wife Margaret, brother, mother and three children who had to nurse him through serious illnesses and then to watch with mixed feelings as he gathered himself together, against all odds, and propelled himself onwards to fresh ventures. He will be greatly missed by numerous friends both within Buckinghamshire and beyond. For very many he opened new vistas.

Michael Farley