

ton, Nuthall, Felley Priory and Bramcote (Notts.), etc. At a time when the Holdens' house is passing from private to public ownership, it seems appropriate to embody its history in book form, for its future will be void of historical interest.

WILLIAM DUESBURY'S LONDON ACCOUNT BOOK, 1751-3.

With a foreword by R. L. Hobson. Illus. 15/- net.

Pub. by Herbert Jenkins, November, 1930.

Many readers of *D.A.J.* will be pleased to know that this important document has at last been published in full, and is now available for the student of English porcelain. This account book is referred to in the Editor's paper on the "Derby Pot Works" on another page. It was the property of the late Mr. William Bemrose of Derby, and after his death it was for many years lost to the world. The writer of this note discovered its present location through the late Mr. H. Cheney Bemrose, son of the former owner of the book, who thought it might be in the British Museum. So it was, not in the B.M. library, but in a parcel of miscellaneous papers in the Ceramic Department, where it had lain for 25 years unnoticed and unrecorded. The book is a document, not a narrative, and as such is of greater interest to the expert than to the general reader.

FURTHER NOTE ON A HOLED STONE NEAR ARBOR LOW.

A paper entitled "Arbor Low and the Holed-Stone," which appeared in the previous *Journal*, while containing certain useful conjectures calls for critical comment. The main point of the article concerns a much weathered stone gatepost in a wall one field away from the Circle. The writer describes it as having been recently brought from a situation lower down the field where it served as threshold to a gateway since abolished. But its extra disused iron brackets show plainly that its earlier use for a

long period has been similar to the present. The appearance of the iron suggests prolonged exposure.

The chief feature of the post is a roundish hole about nine inches across and about midway from either end. This is described as 'beautifully cut' which seems hardly true, as the hole is ragged here and there. Now a holed-stone bearing good evidence of human handiwork, and of clear monumental association, is suggestive of primitive mystical influences and practice, and if such a stone were really found in Derbyshire it would make archaeological history. Unfortunately, however, there is ample evidence that the hole in question is of purely natural origin, a mere matter of weathering, or to be precise, it is just a large pot-hole of the sort that can be seen in profusion, both large and small, by the most casual observer of the prostrate stones of the Circle. Of course, these holes are vertical perforations, some shallow, some going through. They are caused by water and grit particles swept round by wind currents in the depressions of the horizontal surfaces. Their name is legion in the rocks of Derbyshire, limestone and gritstone alike.

The stone post we are discussing has the perforation horizontal, and this fact, added to the much weathered aspect on all sides of the post, has led to the theory that the hole has been drilled through a standing pillar, as is the case with genuine specimens. Such are very common in connection with ancestor worship. The spirits of the departed are granted these means of free passage to and fro. But adaptive chipping, followed by long periods of exposure will account for exaggerated appearances of weathering and in any case there is no evidence to show that the hole was not naturally formed while the stone was lying prone. Is it not regarded as an axiom in archaeological science to give obvious natural causes the precedence over thinly supported conjecture? Of course we need not refrain from looking at reasonable possi-

bilities. This stone, holed by nature, may yet have been set up centuries ago as an object of mystical regard, or even in more recent times, for are we really far removed from the days of magic and its curious beliefs?

A suggestion was made to the Ancient Monuments Board that this mystical stone should be moved and re-erected "in or near the Circle." On receipt of this suggestion the Board requested its County Representative to examine the stone and report on its character. It was his business to report on the lines of the foregoing remarks, and to add that although it is not unreasonable to imagine that this, as well as other large stones about the locality, may have once had some connection with the Monument, it would be assuming far too much to place the stone in any position of significance in relation to the circle.

There are other points to be noticed about the paper we refer to. The writer raises a question as to the probability of an avenue once existing as an approach to the Circle. It is not impossible, and the idea may stimulate search for suggestive earthworks in the neighbourhood. The writer also draws attention to certain lesser stones in the Circle, deeply sunk and standing with their cleavage lines vertical instead of horizontal as is the case with the greater monoliths. These, he suggests, are the remains of an older circle. This is worth consideration. Yet, on the other hand, these lesser stones may be the bases of larger ones broken off. If so, we are in face of another unsettled problem of first importance, i.e. the probable upright position of the great stones in the beginning.

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CUSTODY OF MANORIAL DOCUMENTS AND DOCUMENTS OF LOCAL HISTORICAL INTEREST.

By virtue of the recent Law of Property Acts the Master of the Rolls has been placed in general charge and