

A Danish connection

IT IS WELL known that the second Viking invasion began in the late 10th century, and culminated in the reign of Cnut as king of the English, 1016-35. Tovi was Cnut's staller or standard bearer, and had estates at Waltham Abbey, Edmonton, Enfield, Cheshunt and many other places; his grandson Ansgar was staller at Domesday. The house history of Waltham tells us that Tovi was building a hunting lodge there, this would be c 1020.

A building excavated in 1969-71 was considered to be the hunting lodge and was judged to have been constructed of turf walls. The interpretation as a Viking hall was widely criticised, but alternative suggestions were at variance with the evidence. The Viking attribution was supported, if obliquely, by the finding in 1976, in a burial, of a Ringerike-style plate of the late 10th or early 11th century, with St. Neots ware and coarse-shell tempered pottery having parallels to that found in the clay floor of the hall.

More positive support came in November 1992. North of the church, excavations were carried out as part of a field evaluation for a new parish centre. Coupled with the 1969 evidence it is now known that, just to the south of the hall, the old ground level, meaning the turf and the underlying loam, as well as some of the sandy natural clay under, had been completely taken away over a north-south distance of about 50ft (15m). The east-west dimension of this stripping is not known, but it is easy to envisage sufficient turf having been removed to construct the walls of the hall. The side walls were about 3ft wide and the end walls 4ft wide, and it may have been that only facing turves were used, with the space between filled with the loam; also some of the sandy clay was seen in the wall trenches. Other loam had been used to fill a deep ditch under the hall. Thus the turf, the loam and the clay, missing to the south of the hall, are the very products judged to have been used in its construction. So the interpretation of the late-Viking turf-walled building at Waltham, suggested over 20 years ago, stands today braced more strongly against the ebbing tide of doubt.

Anyone who has seen the reconstructed turf-walled farm at Stong, or other buildings in the northern world, with the turves laid horizontally or in herring-bone fashion, will know what a beautiful timber-lined des. res. such can be. It is not impossible that this one lasted long enough to have been used by king Harold when his church was building in the 1050s.

Peter Huggins

Garden restoration at Hampton Court

HAMPTON COURT Palace is to proceed with the major restoration of King William III's Privy Garden, one of the most important of all the Royal Gardens. It will be the most ambitious garden restoration scheme to have been undertaken in this country.

Designed to complement the King's State Apartments, re-opened last year after the fire of 1986, the Privy Garden today is overgrown, and the original vistas and geometrical plans are lost from view. Archival research, confirmed by archaeological investigation, concluded that significant portions of William's design of 1702 lay preserved eighteen inches beneath the surface of the present garden. Fortunately, the Privy Garden has been exceptionally well documented, providing sufficient evidence for the restoration team to recreate the intricate designs of the garden accurately. Plants of the correct species can be propagated, and special 18th century turf for the "gazon coupe" is being grown in nurseries.

Preliminary work started in February and excavation will follow. The Privy Garden will be meticulously restored by a team of experts who will gradually reveal the formal parterre design that William III intended. Visitors will be able to review the progress of the project and supporting information will be available on site. The final form of the garden will be in place in the Spring of 1995.

Chantry Chapel to be restored

RESTORATION WORK on the Free Chapel of St Mary Magdalen, known as the Lovekyn Chantry Chapel, in Kingston, started in September 1992. The chapel will be used for music and the arts, and the adjacent Victorian cottage will be restored to provide four music practice rooms, a foyer and a kitchen. The chapel will also be available for hire for meetings and functions.

The chapel is believed to have been consecrated in 1310, and is in a transitional Decorated/Perpendicular style. As a free-standing chantry chapel, it may be unique in England. When Queen Elizabeth established her Grammar School at Kingston in 1561, the chapel became its schoolroom.

Donations towards the restoration should be sent to the Lovekyn Chapel Restoration Fund, 70 London Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT2 6PY.

Express service for air photographs

A NEW EXPRESS service has been launched by the National Library of Air Photographs (NLAP). It guarantees the supply of information within five working days, in contrast to the previous average of around eight weeks. The NLAP provides total air cover for England, taken at different intervals in time and thus providing historic depth. The service is used by solicitors, engineers, publishers and teachers as well as archaeologists, and has been well received in its first year.

For more information about the NLAP express service, contact Roger Harris at Alexander House, 19 Fleming Way, Swindon SN1 2NG, tel. 0793 414100 ext. 206.

Shopping in London's museums

THE LATEST leaflet in the London Museums Service's series What to See is *Where to Shop in London's Museums*. It features a selection of some of the most exciting museum shops in London, and is available free from museums, libraries, tourist information centres and hotels across London.

All change at London Transport

THE LONDON Transport Museum in Covent Garden closed in March for a major refurbishment. It is expected to re-open in December 1993. Meanwhile the Museum shop remains open nearby.

Anyone for an index?

THE PANEL of archaeological indexers, established by Cherry Lavell, is now co-ordinated by Lesley and Roy Adkins. If you need an index, and would like a free list of archaeological indexers, or if you are an archaeological indexer and would like to join the panel, please contact Lesley and Roy Adkins at Longstone Lodge, Aller, Langport, Somerset, TA10 0QT, tel. (0458) 250075. A SAE would be appreciated.

Congratulations

MAX HEBDITCH, Director of the Museum of London, was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters by the City University in December.