



“Notes and Queries”

RELATING TO BERKSHIRE.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications are invited upon all subjects of Antiquarian or Architectural interest relating to the County. All Literary Communications should be sent to the EDITOR, Barkham Rectory, near Wokingham, written on one side only of the Paper.

It is requested that all MSS. intended for printing should be written on foolscap paper, in an orderly manner, with REPLIES, QUERIES, and NOTES on SEPARATE SHEETS, and the name or initials of the writer appended to each communication.

Notes.

BERKSHIRE HISTORY.—The Reading Library has just begun what will in time prove a most valuable and unique County History in manuscript. Usually such collections of MSS. are left unfinished and then sold after the collector's death, but the Library has been fortunate in securing Miss Thoyts' MSS., and also the very able services of that lady to continue the work and arrange any MSS. which may be sent; and it is hoped that Berkshire people will be sufficiently interested in the bygone history of their native place as to send drawings and accounts of old houses, tombs, transcripts of deeds and diaries; epitaphs (especially from churchyard tombstones), pedigrees, and entries out of other parish Registers, in fact, anything local will be of value. Among Miss Thoyts' MSS. is a complete transcript of Lord Fingal's curious old Charter Book or Cartulary of Reading Abbey, an additional interest to this being the discovery of the book at the end of last century in an old Manor House at Shinfield belonging to the Wollascots, from whom Lord Fingal is descended, the book having doubtless lain there concealed ever since the Reformation. It contains a full list of charters of gifts of land to the Abbey from its foundation up to the 13th Century, besides lists of relics, books and vestments. In the British Museum is another Cartulary, known as the Wollascot MSS., which seems to be a list of later grants continuing up to the Reformation. It would be a great advantage if transcripts of this could be obtained for the benefit of the Local Antiquary as Berkshire at present has little written history. There is plenty of information, but it lies scattered in many places. The British Museum has a large collection, similar to that of Miss Thoyts, which was gathered together by Dr. Richardson and was sold by his widow. In the Bodleian are Mr. Clarke's MSS. The Reading Library Committee are most anxious to make their MSS. department as perfect as possible, and will be grateful for any additional MSS., which may be sent to Miss Thoyts whom they have empowered to receive and arrange them.

BINFIELD.—On the 2nd of August Mr. Browne gave a garden party, which was numerously attended. Before the party broke up, Mr. Browne led his guests to Priests' Wood (now called Pope's Wood), of which he is the owner, and pointed out to them the words, "Here Pope Sung," which he has caused to be cut on one of the largest beech trees, near the northern extremity of the grove. The words were cut first on one of the trees at the eastern edge of the wood, looking down the valley, and under it was a seat on which the Poet used to sit and meditate. That tree was blown down, upon which the words were inscribed on another tree nearer the middle of the grove; and when this tree also disappeared, some time after 1833, the words were not renewed until the present owner of the wood had them re-cut in July, 1893. At the request of Mr. Browne, Mr. Ditchfield, the Secretary of the Berks Archæological Society, gave a short account of what is known or surmised respecting the authorship of the words. It seems to rest (he said) between Lady Gower and Lord Lyttelton, both of whom are said, by different authorities, to have been the first to inscribe the words on one of the trees.—*Binfield Parish Magazine*.

Canon Savory is collecting much information with regard to the origin of this inscription, which we hope ultimately to publish. Our thanks are due to Mr. Browne for his restoration of this interesting memorial of the past.

EDITOR.

Queries.

ARE there any remains now of Harrison's Barn? There is mention in an account of the Siege of Reading of "the Invincible Fort at Harrison's Barn, a strong brick and stone barn, which flanked Caversham Road, and prevented entrance either by Caversham or Pangbourne Roads." Sir Samuel Luke (Butler's Hudibras) in his diary says that, at the time of the surrender, "they had only three ways out of the town, where they built three sconces, one at the Forbury, one at Harrison's Barn, and the other at the end of Pangbourne Lane."

A.C.

Replies.

THE ARMS OF READING.

HERALDS COLLEGE, LONDON, E.C.,

22nd September, 1893.

MY DEAR SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter of the 20th instant, which has been handed to me as the Officer in Waiting, and have much pleasure in answering "A Puzzled Burgess's" query. I have made a search through the Records and find that the men's heads only occur in the town seal (see extract from "C 12" enclosed, where the word "arms" wrongly occurs), while the *arms* contain maiden's heads as registered at our Visitation of Berkshire in 1566, and this design as then registered cannot be departed from by the Corporation of Reading

without a fresh registration by Patent. They are therefore the correct arms, and would be confirmed to the Borough when they apply to register a crest.

Yours faithfully,

H. FARNHAM BURKE,
Somerset Herald of Arms and Genealogist
of the Order of St. Patrick.

To the Rev. P. H. Ditchfield, M.A., F.S.A.,
Barkham Rectory, Wokingham.



I, Henry Farnham Burke, Esquire, Somerset Herald of Arms and Genealogist of the Most Illustrious Order of St. Patrick, do hereby certify that the Arms above depicted, namely, azure a maiden's head and neck affrontée, couped at the shoulders proper, regally crowned or (with lining gules) and the neck encircled with a necklace and pendant also, or between four similar heads uncrowned, and without necklaces and pendants, do of right belong and appertain unto the Corporation of the Mayor and Aldermen of Reading, and were so registered to them at the Herald's Visitation of Berkshire, 1566.

H. FARNHAM BURKE,
Somerset Herald.

Heralds College, London, 22nd September, 1893.

C. 12, d, Her : Coll :



These are the Armes apperteyning to the Maior and Aldermen of Reading in the County of Berks. And at this present Visitac'on Thomas Kenton was Maior, Edward Dalby, Esqr., Steward, William Braxton senior, George Thorne, Thomas Seakes, Robert Creede, James Winch, Edward Johnson, Thomas Cotes, William Braxton junior, Robert Terrold, Michael Reading, Tho : Tilliard and Richard Fellowes, Aldermen. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand the Five and Twentieth day of March in the Seaventeenth Yeare of the Reigne of our most gracious Sovereigne Lord Charles the Second of England, Scotland, France and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith, Annoq'

D'ni 1665. THO : KENTON, maior.

I, Henry Farnham Burke, Esquire, Somerset Herald of Arms and Genealogist of the Most Illustrious Order of St. Patrick, do hereby certify the above to be a true copy of the Seal of the Borough of Reading, as registered at the Herald's Visitation of Berkshire, 1666.

H. FARNHAM BURKE,
Somerset Herald.

Heralds College, London, 22nd September, 1893.