

Notes and Queries

RELATING TO BERKS, BUCKS AND OXON.

Communications are invited upon all subjects of Antiquarian or Architectural interest relating to the three counties. Correspondents are requested to write as plainly as possible, on one side of the paper only, with REPLIES, QUERIES and NOTES on SEPARATE SHEETS, and the name of the writer appended to each communication.

Notes.

CHENEY FAMILY.—Can any of your readers furnish any particulars of the Berks, Bucks or Oxon branches of the Cheyne or Cheney family? The writer is desirous of compiling the 17th and 18th century pedigrees of this family.—A. D. CHENEY, 23, Billiter Street, London, E.C.

BUCKLAND.—I can add one earlier name to the list of rectors. William parson of Bocland occurs in 1249-50 in a deed relating to the parish of St. Mary V. in Oxford, preserved in Magdalen College (*notes from the Muniments of Magd. Coll., 1882, p. 47*).—W. D. MACKAY.

BURFORD.—In the "Memorials of Old Oxfordshire" it is stated that the maiden name of Lord Chief Baron Tanfield's wife was Elizabeth Cobbe, and that she was a Burford lady. I knew Burford many years ago, and there was, and I suppose still is, a very remarkable old house there known as Cobbe Hall. I have always felt sure it had a history, but have never been able to meet with any information respecting it. Lady Tanfield's maiden name makes it probable that it was the residence of her family. The house stood at the lower end of the High Street at the angle formed by a short lane leading to an old mill, there being only this lane between it and the river and the bridge. The principal entrance was through a large archway facing the High Street closed by heavy iron-studded folding doors, apparently opening into a court-yard. The side of the house skirted the lane, and in one of the gables there was a very noticeable round or oval, I think oval, window. At one time a large room in it opening to the lane was utilised as a parish schoolroom. The rest of the house was, I think, let off in tenements. There was a tradition attached to it that a subterranean passage led thence to the Priory, or to the Church.—MARY L. STEVENSON, Oldfield, Balking, Standford-in-the-Vale.

CROSS AT EAST HAGBOURNE, ROMAN REMAINS IN WEST BERKSHIRE, ETC.—I have lately read and been greatly interested in your book entitled "English Villages," as also has one of my sons, which must be my excuse for troubling you with a letter. Among the plates in the book I note one of the ancient Market Cross and Church of East Hagbourne, Berks, most familiar to me. If you are personally acquainted with the place you will doubtless remember that there is also a broken cross, just a base and portion of a pillar, standing on a mound at the cross roads, as you enter the village from the direction of Didcot. I believe it is well-nigh forgotten that this cross is not in its original position. My father who was born in the ancient moated Manor House of East Hagbourne (since pulled down) in 1818, told me that it formerly stood on a hedgerow bank by the way-side, at the little hamlet of Crosscutt, now called Cosscutt, near Hagbourne, and that the field on the edge of which it stood was called Broken Cross Piece. I believe he could perfectly well remember it there.

A relative of his, an uncle I think, but am not clear on this point, removed it to the place where it now stands. No reason can be assigned for my ancestor's unfortunate action but that he probably thought this relic of antiquity would be lost sight of, perhaps destroyed, on the out of the way by-road where it was located, and would be a mark of interest in the village. Had he been better acquainted with its history he might have taken pains to preserve it as it stood. Broken Cross Piece doubtless retains its ancient appellation, and there may be an old inhabitant or two remaining who could point out the spot where the Cross stood, or the parish records might show. I enclose a small flat ring which was dug up by my son in his garden at Little Coxwell. Some one has told him it is probably a Roman fibula. If not trespassing too much on your time perhaps you will kindly let him know if this is so. His work often takes him over little frequented short cuts and by-ways, and in striking across the fields near Ashbury he came across a group of Sarsen stones, apparently about eight in number, at the foot of a small combe about a quarter of a mile to the north-east of the large lonely farmhouse called Adstone, which stands in the valley just below Wayland Smith's Cave. These stones, which are deeply sunk in the earth, gave him the impression of another tumulus resembling Wayland, but much smaller, and he thinks they have escaped notice. There is a spring close to the stones running into a hollow, which appears to have been deepened, and is utilized as a pond. In the parish of Little Coxwell there is a very remarkable cluster of pit dwellings, known as Coles Pits, covering the surface of a hill about half a mile from the village, and one and half miles from Faringdon. Some of these pits, said to be over 200 in number, are partially ploughed out, but others, particularly those among the fir trees which have been planted on the hill, are very large and deep, the top branches of a good sized tree growing in the bottom of one being level with the edge. Ashes and bits of bone have been turned up in the pit bottoms. The bit of stone was picked up there, my son thinks it is only a bit of the sandstone of the district, but it is remarkably heavy. In a letter to the "Reading Mercury," of March 16th, the writer, a lady, remarks that Berkshire is poorer in Roman remains than any other county. I think there are many yet undiscovered or very little known. Some remains of pavements and portions of walls, evidently Roman, were found at Watchfield last year. The Roman villa at Wolstone, the skeletons from which were sent to the Oxford Museum, is of course well known, but the existence of a Roman Station near Stanford-in-the-Vale seems quite unknown beyond the immediate neighbourhood. The labourers call it Chinnon Town, or the City, there are evidently pavements at no great depth below the surface, hundreds of coins (locally called Chinnon bits) have been picked up, and a labourer digging stones there some years ago unearthed an ancient steelyard. The coins are not so easily come by as they used to be, as the men and lads who pick them up dispose of them to their employers or other collectors, and the specimens enclosed are a loan to my son. As he is responsible for their safe return I must ask you to let him have them back at your early convenience. Most of those which have been found are copper or bronze, but I understand a few silver and gold, or perhaps brass ones (I have not seen any of these) have been picked up.—MARY L. STEVENSON.

Queries.

SNOW FAMILY.—Will anyone knowing the family history or having letters written by the Snows of Offchurch or Southam kindly communicate with me? Bernard Gery Snow, of Southam, married for his first wife Prudence Vyner, of Eathorpe, co. Warwick, at Wappenbury Church by licence the third day of

August, 1775, witnesses Bernard Gery, Elizabeth Adams; she dying he married secondly Rebecca Rolls, daughter of Henry Rolls, draper, of Bicester, who married Rebecca Basely, of Prior's Marston. My mother has a portrait in oils of her maternal grandfather, Bernard Gery Snow, of Southam. It is a face singularly beautiful both in features and sweetness of expression. My mother tells me that by family tradition her maternal grandfather's mother was a Gery, and that his father sold the ancestral acres at the time of the South Sea Bubble. In reference to Gery my people have a piece of silver bearing for crest a stag couchant, which we always associate with the Gery family. Bernard Gery Snow's name occurs in the trial of Captain Donnellan for the poisoning of Sir Theodosius Boughton "as Sir William Wheler's Apothecary." The Snows of Offchurch were cousins to the Snows of Southam. On the Church tower at Offchurch I noticed the name of Snow in connection with an almost obliterated inscription in Latin, surrounding the sun-dial. Near Offchurch there is a Snowford House marked on old Warwickshire maps; was it ever owned by the Snows? The Snow Arms and Crest are: Arms, a lion passant on fess embattled; Crest, a lion passant.—T. CHAMBERLIN TIMS, Little Bourton, near Banbury.

Proceedings of Societies.

BERKS ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—EXCURSION TO GREAT COXWELL, COLESHILL, HIGHWORTH, AND BUSCOT.—The first summer excursion of the Berks Archæological Society took place on Saturday, when a visit was paid to the north-west part of the county and the adjoining district of Wiltshire. The Newbury District Field Club also joined in the excursion. There was a large attendance, the party being over 40 in number. The arrangements were much facilitated by the providing of a special train from Didcot to Faringdon, the cost of which was generously defrayed by the President, Mr. Keyser.

On arriving at Faringdon brakes were in waiting and the party drove to Great Coxwell Church. Here the visitors were received by the Vicar, and Mr. Keyser was invited to give an address.

Mr. C. E. Keyser, in the course of his address on Coxwell Church, said the church was originally one of several chapelries in connection with Great Faringdon. As a structure it belonged to the latter part of the 12th century. The history of the place commenced later. Coxwell was one of the royal demesnes of King John, who granted the manor to the Cistercians, founders of the Abbey of Beaulieu. The church is of stone and consists of chancel, nave, north porch, and a battlemented western tower. The east window of three lancets is flanked on each side by a plain niche, and there is a niche over the Communion Table with a locker on each side. In the south side is a piscina, with a shelf, and a low side window. There is a western gallery, and the remains of a turret leading to the rood loft; at the junction of the chancel and nave is a sanctus bell gable. On the floor are brasses to the Mores family.

The visitors then proceeded to the Great Tithe Barn, which the Rev. P. H. Ditchfield said was one of the finest in England. It was not so large as some others, and was surpassed in size by Cholsey barn, now destroyed, and Tisbury