

Notes and Queries.

DEATH OF ASSISTANT EDITOR.

It is with deep regret that we have to record the death of Dr. J. A. Parry Price, who had been Assistant Editor of this Journal for some years and was keenly interested in archaeological research.

He was the son of the Rev. Howell Price, Rector of Llanfyrnach, near Brecon, and was educated at Christ's College, Brecon. He proceeded to Queen's College, Oxford, in October, 1871, with an Open Exhibition and took first class honours in Natural Science.

For his professional training he entered Guy's Hospital, where, on completion of a distinguished career as a student, he was for some time a member of the staff. He settled in Reading in 1884. He had meantime obtained successively the M.B. and M.D. from Oxford University, the M.B. of London and the M.R.C.S. and L.R.C.P. of England.

Dr. Price soon became a well-known practitioner in Reading and served for many years on the staff of the Royal Berkshire Hospital as a surgeon, specialising in ophthalmic work, the department of which he was the first to organise. As a Major (T.F.) of the R.A.M.C. he gave freely of his time and energy during the Great War. In his later years he continued his zealous public service in the medical superintendence of the children in the elementary schools of the borough, with special interest in the measures for the benefit of mentally and physically defective children.

He found time for much reading and his antiquarian knowledge in certain fields was wide. For many years he was a keen student of the works of Dante and on one, if not two, occasions he spent a vacation at Ravenna amidst the mediaeval splendour of the city immortalised by the great poet. After considerable study of mediaeval scripts and illuminative art, he wrote out the whole of *La Divina Commedia* in antique script adorned

with illuminated headings and capitals. It is understood he bequeathed this work to Reading University as an addition to its Dante collection.

INSCRIPTIONS ON THE CHURCH BELLS OF LONG WITTENHAM.

The ring of six bells in this tower came from the old-established Whitechapel foundry and were, as stated in the Spring number of this JOURNAL, recast by Lester and Pack in 1765.

When Messrs. Webb & Bennett, of Kidlington, rehung the bells in 1924 they sent the second bell, which had become cracked, to its birthplace to be recast.

There is also a Sanctus bell which contains no inscription or date. It is fixed inside one of the tower windows, slightly above the other bells, and has cannons and an iron stock with lever combined. At the end of the lever a rope is attached for chiming the bell.

The inscriptions on the other bells are as follows :—

Treble and Fourth.—LESTER & PACK OF LONDON FECIT 1765.

After the date appears the ordinary Whitechapel border pattern.

Second.—L. & P. LONDON FECIT 1765.

On lower part of the waist above the rims : MEARS & STAINBANK FOUNDERS LONDON ○

After the word "London" is placed the firm's circular foundry stamp with three bells and the initials "A.H." representing Alfred Hughes, the proprietor at that time.

Third.—On upper part of the waist below the rims : LESTER & PACK OF LONDON FECIT.

This bell has no ornamental border.

Fifth.—PEACE AND GOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD ○ LESTER & PACK OF LONDON FECIT 1765 (○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○)

The circular stamp after the word "Neighbourhood" is rather indistinct and appears to have lobe-shaped marks in circles.

Tenor.—Between rims round the crown of the bell: JAMES PROWSE & JOHN STEVENS CH: WARDENS O (circular stop as on the fifth) LESTER & PACK OF LONDON FECIT 1765.

Then the border pattern as on the Treble and fourth.

(Between the second rim): OUR VOICES SHALL WITH JOYFUL SOUND MAKE HILLS & VALLEYS ECHO ROUND.
(o o o o o o o o o o o)

This pattern on the two largest bells contains upwards of thirty circles between the V-shaped borders.

There are tombstones to several members of the Stevens' family in the south-east part of the churchyard.

Thomas Lester commenced business at the Whitechapel Foundry during the time Richard Phelps was proprietor and it was under Phelps' management that this foundry assumed the importance which it has preserved ever since. In 1735 Phelps took his foreman into partnership and died three years later. His burial entry occurs in the Whitechapel Register as follows:—"1738, Aug. 23, Richard Phelps, a man from ye High Street."

By his will, Phelps bequeathed to Lester all his trade implements, business, and the lease of his premises. Lester after being sole proprietor for three years, took into partnership Thomas Pack, who had probably been his foreman. They worked together till 1769, in which year Lester was taken with a fit and died on June 19th, aged 66. Pack did not long survive him, dying of consumption in 1781. Pack was succeeded by William Chapman and then came several members of the Mears' family in succession. About 1863 George Mears took into partnership Mr. Robert Stainbank, who was born at Nottingham. He found the business much neglected, but with a good opening. In 1865 he acquired the entire control and brought it once more into a flourishing condition. Mr. Stainbank died at his residence, Spring Lodge, Lawrie Park, Sydenham, on 24th January, 1883, and was buried at Boston, Lincolnshire, where his parents are interred.

The business of this old-established foundry is still carried on under the same title.

L. H. CHAMBERS.

“COBBLER’S CITY” : PLACE-NAME.

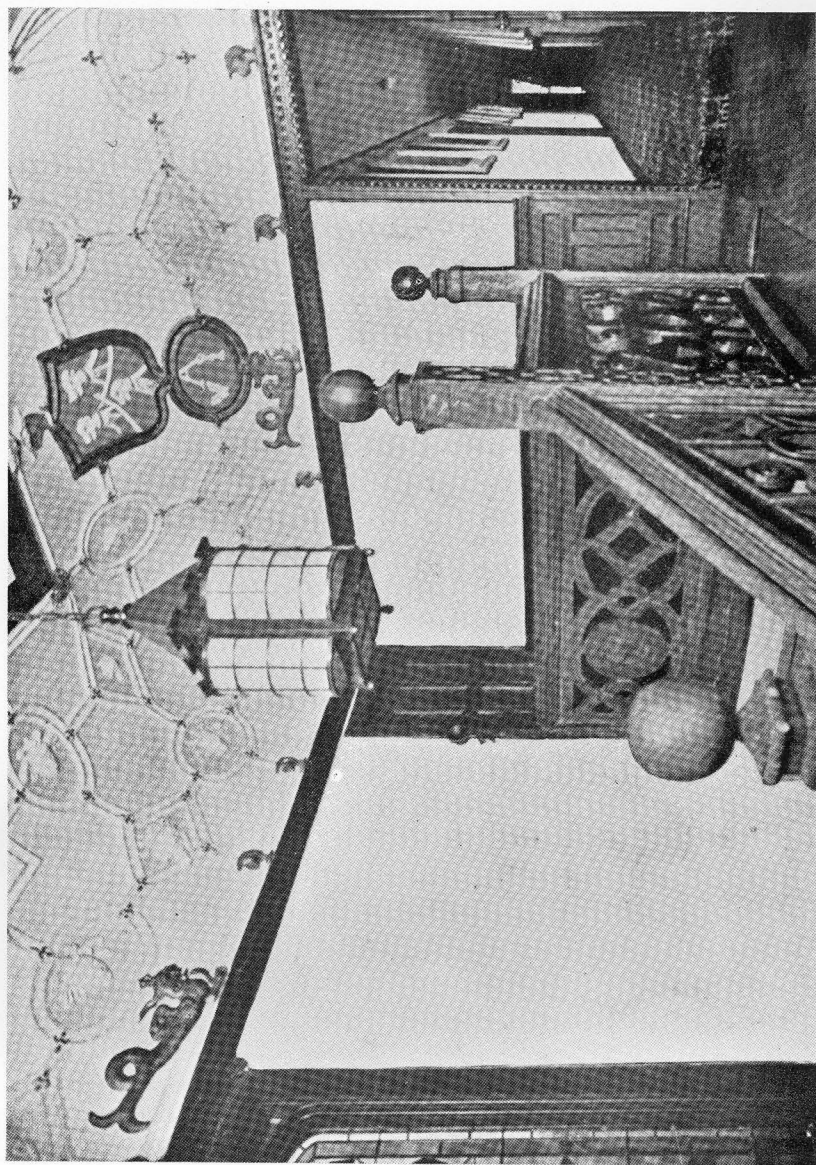
Can any of the readers of the *Berkshire Archaeological Journal* give the origin of the place-name of “Cobbler’s City” in the liberty of Woodley in the parish of Sonning? It is postally known as “Woodley Green.”

L.D.

THE OLD RECTORY, CAVERSHAM.

The Reading Corporation have purchased this property, known for several centuries and until quite recently as The Rectory, Caversham. The ultimate purpose to which the house will be put has not yet been decided; but part of the site will be utilised for improvements to the highway at this somewhat narrow and dangerous spot. The present house has not a great deal to commend it to the antiquary, although in parts it contains some early work. Portions have been badly “gothicised.” There is an interesting staircase and ceiling dated 1638, with the initials probably of a member of the Alexander family in the richly ornamented plaster work. An old tithe barn and other outbuildings are obviously part and parcel of the mediaeval economic administration of the district. There is little doubt that in the present structure the kernel of an ancient building is incorporated. The figure of Cardinal Wolsey in a niche above the entrance porch has given rise to a tradition that the Rectory was at one time associated with this prelate. There appears to be no documentary evidence to support it.

The Church of St. Peter, Caversham, was part of the original endowment of Notley Abbey, near Long Crendon, in Buckinghamshire. The Abbey was founded by Walter Giffard, Earl of Buckingham, and a distant relative of the King. The tithes of Caversham were appropriated by the Abbot and convent of Notley, who appointed one of their canons to the local duty. There was always “a canon’s lodging” at Caversham. From



Staircase and ceiling at old Caversham Rectory.

many points of view the arrangement was an unfortunate one, since the Abbey were more concerned with the revenue they obtained from the Rectory than with the spiritual needs of the folk of the Thames-side village. There seems never to have been any settled provision for a minister at Caversham and a legal vicarage was never constituted, the perpetual curate being paid by the Abbots or by their lessees up to the time of the Dissolution and even beyond it. It is fairly obvious that the Rectory was looked upon solely as a source of revenue to the distant religious house and in mediæval days the income from this source was considerable; one of the "relykes" preserved in the chapel being termed by Cromwell's commissioner, Dr. London, "the principall relik of idolytrie within this realme." To this and other "wonders" there was great pilgrimage.

A sidelight upon the rather casual manner in which the mother church held its charge is contained in a document which yet remains among the multitudinous papers connected with the Augmentation Office. It is the original lease by the Convent to a farmer named William Rolte, who appeared in the Court of Augmentations on the 23rd January, 1543, and produced the agreement made between himself and the canons on the 24rd December, 1535, as follows:—

"Memorandum that in Hilary Term, viz., 23 January 34 Henry VIII., William Rolte came into court, and produced an indenture under the conventual seal of the late monastery of the blessed Mary the Virgin and St. John the Baptist of Nottley, in the County of Buckingham, which he prayed to be allowed, the tenor whereof follows:

"Indenture made 23 December 27 Henry VIII. between the right reverend father in God, Richard, abbot of the monastery of Nottley and the convent of the same place, and William Rolte, serjeant-at-arms of King Henry, witnessing that the said abbot and convent, with consent of their whole chapter, have granted, demised, and to farm letten to the same William all that their church and parsonage of Caversham in the county of Oxford, and all manner of lands,

tenements, rents, tithes, oblations, fruits, profits, etc., to the said parsonage and church belonging. To hold the same for three score and six years at the rent of 18*li.*, and the said William covenanted that, during the said term, he would find a sufficient and able priest to serve the said cure and minister all manner of sacraments and sacramentals, and over that to find pay and bear all manner of charges and demands whatsoever concerning the premises; and the said William also covenanted to repair, sustain, and maintain all manner of howsynges, and buildings to the said parsonage and the chancel of the said church belonging, except only principal timber, tile, and stone work which the said abbot and convent shall find. And the said abbot and convent covenanted that the said William should have howsebote, fyrebote, caretbote, ploughbote, and hedgebote at the appointment of the said abbot and convent.'

"Which said indenture was allowed by the Court of Augmentations."

The Rectory seems subsequently to have been dealt in by the Alexanders, the Skidmores and the Brighams. From the first-named it came to the Brownes, a branch of the famous Betchworth family who were warmly attached to the cause of Charles I. After the Brownes it appears the Lovedays were interested parties and within living memory the Simonds family held it.

The ecclesiastical affairs of the parish have now been regularised. In 1916, the chancel and rectorial rights were purchased from the Simonds family and the living is now a rectory in the gift of Christ Church, Oxon, and the rector's house is but a stone's throw from the building which seems never, or seldom, to have housed the incumbent of the parish.

E.W.D.

LOCKINGE AS LOW GINGE.

This is doubtless a blundered rendering of the name. Though Morden's map gives it as Low Ginge, Blome's Map, 1671, prints it as Locking, and Cary's map Lockinge.

It also appears in the corrupt form on a mural monument on the S. wall of the Nave in Buckland Church as follows :—

Here lyeth the body of Richard Southby gent. of Carswell and Iane his wife Richard the sonne of John of Carswell gent. Iane the eldest daughter of Edward Keate of East Lowginge in the countye of Berks. Iane deceased the 4 of September, 1648.

W. H. HALLAM.

The following article appeared recently in the columns of the *Reading Mercury* :—

BERKS ANCIENT MONUMENTS.

LEGAL PROTECTION.

INCOMPLETE SCHEDULE.

(By a Correspondent.)

All historic remains of value are protected under the Ancient Monuments Acts, 1913 and 1931, provided they are scheduled in the Commissioners of Works list. This list aims at including finally everything of value in the kingdom, but it is still incomplete as the scheduling of such a prodigious number of items is a lengthy process.

It may be of interest to see what progress has been made with the historic remains in Berkshire. The list includes 20 items, not a very great number. If we look at the items in detail we shall be able to see exactly how far the listing has, as yet, proceeded.

Of mediaeval items there are as follows :—Abingdon bridge, including Burford bridge and Maud Haile's bridge ; Kingston Bagpuize bridge, and Ockbridge, Abingdon ; Great Coxwell tithe barn and the County Hall at Abingdon ; Uffington and Donnington Castles, and Reading Abbey remains. Then for early times—barrows or tumuli at Wasing, Combe Gibbet, Hamstead Marshall Park, Stratfield Mortimer, Inkpen hill and Newbury. Camps at Little Wittenham and Combe, The White Horse, Dragon Hill, Wan's Dyke, Inkpen, and Wayland's Smithy.

Now as to how far this list is short. It may perhaps be best to glance first at the definition of what things should be included in the list. The term by which historic remains are known at law is "ancient monuments." It includes any building, structure or work, above or below ground, that is of historic, architectural, traditional, artistic or archaeological interest (except dwelling houses and churches in actual use). An ancient monument is therefore anything from a village cross to an abbey, or a tithe barn to a castle, or a pre-historic camp to a mediaeval guildhall. It is clear, therefore, that the list for Berkshire as given above does not include everything in the county that falls under this definition.

Now the importance of every ancient monument in Berkshire being included in the list as soon as possible lies in the fact that unless and until a monument is so scheduled it is not protected at law. Any monument, of however great historic value, which does not figure in the list may be damaged, altered or demolished without let or hindrance, and no one can be held accountable at law. The idea, indeed, of the schedule is to bring every monument of value under the protective provisions of the Ancient Monuments Acts, not one being left outside.

The only reason why the list has not yet been completed is because of the insufficiency of voluntary helpers locally. The work of reporting as to what monuments are to be found in a county rests mainly with the antiquaries, architects or others who voluntarily undertake the duty. In some counties more help is forthcoming than in others, so some lists are much more forward than others.

The present schedule has been some ten years or so in preparation. The first list was issued in 1921; the last one takes us up to December 31st last year. It will be seen that the scheduling of the Berkshire historic remains has been a somewhat slow process—20 items in 10 years. Not that anyone is to blame. The tardiness is inherent in the procedure, which so depends on necessarily irregular help. In view of the desirability of protecting the remaining unscheduled ancient monuments of the county,

it may be a matter worth considering whether the assistance might not be increased and also organised more systematically, so that the list may be finished off. The work entailed, if distributed locally, is by no means big. All that is entailed so far as local work is concerned is to record the name of the monument, who is the owner, and give any references to books where the monument is dealt with—and if necessary mark it on the ordnance map.

So far as post-Norman remains are concerned, they do not need much searching for, as, for instance, Sonning bridge or Wallingford Town Hall, or the ancient cross at East Hagbourne, or the abbey gate at Abingdon, and so on. The final decision as to what is to rank as an ancient monument rests, of course, finally with the Ancient Monuments Board or the Commissioners of Works, but this is not the responsibility of the local helpers, who are only concerned with recording the monuments that have a *prima facie* case for inclusion.

It might be worth while considering if the local authorities could, directly or indirectly, take some kind of responsibility for completing the list of eligible monuments in their respective districts. Under the Ancient Monuments Acts local authorities are given quite extensive powers in regard to the ancient monuments in their areas, so it might not be inappropriate for them to help in this preliminary scheduling which brings the monuments under the same Acts. Anyhow, it is clear that hastening-up the completion of the schedule as regards any county, rests to a very great degree with the county itself.

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY : MISSING VOLUMES.

The Librarian reports that the following books listed in the Catalogue of the Library published in the Society's JOURNAL have not yet been received by him :—

Bridges. Introduction to Heraldry. 1845.

Gould, B. Curious Myths of the Middle Ages. 1884.

Hurry, J. B. Reading Abbey. 1901.

Lewis. Parliamentary History. 1825.

Lewis. Topographical Dicty. of England. 1835. (4 vols.).

Parker. Glossary of Terms used in Architecture. 1875.

Thoyts, E. E. How to decipher and study old documents.

Third Edition. 1909.

Crawfurd, G. P. Registers of St. Mary, Reading. (2 vols.).

Eustace, G. W. Arundel : Borough and Castle.

Lowsley, B. Glossary of Berkshire Words and Phrases.

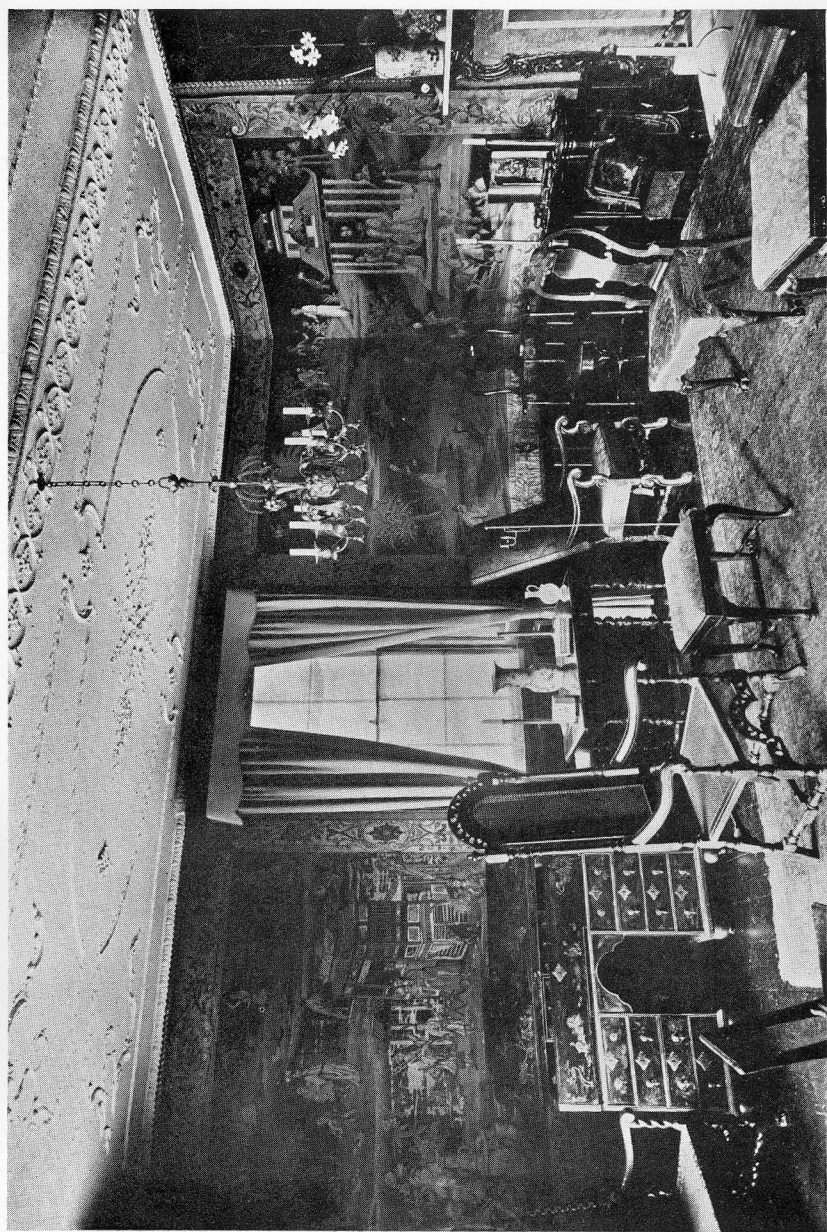
Money, W. History of Newbury.

Tighe & Davis. Annals of Windsor. (2 vols.).

It is requested that if any of the above volumes are in the possession of members of the Society, they will return them to the Librarian in order that a complete catalogue may be prepared.

THE PASSING OF ANCIENT ESTATES.

One by one the ancient manors and estates of England are losing their individuality and passing into the hands of the speculator and builder. On the eastern and south-eastern borders of Reading the tale is a sad one. Bulmershe, an ancient manor, once a possession of the Abbot of Reading, and later the home of the Rt. Hon. Henry Addington, Viscount Sidmouth, Prime Minister in the early years of the nineteenth century, was the first to fall to the auctioneer's hammer ; at the present moment the Erleigh Court and Maiden Erleigh estates are announced for disposal. The former of these has an exceedingly interesting history dating from before the Norman invasion, and its delightful old manor house still stands in the park facing the main highway to London just beyond the boundary of the Borough of Reading. The Maiden Erleigh estate is also of some age and importance and, although there has been lavish expenditure in recent years on the old manor house of the Goldings, the writer believes that somewhere buried within are parts of old-time interest and value. Thus within a few short years three of the four ancient estates on the borders of the county town have come into the market. The leasehold life of the fourth, Erleigh Whiteknights (" Herlei Regis " in the Domesday survey), is none too long ; but here no ancient manor house remains.



The Tapestry Room at Erleigh Court.

The illustration shows the tapestry room at Erleigh Court when it was in the occupation of the late Captain Rushby. The tapestry, which is considered to be of the late seventeenth century, is reputed to have been brought from Donnington Castle, near Newbury, by John Bagnall in the late eighteenth century, but of this there is no documentary evidence.

E.W.D.

DISCOVERY OF HUMAN REMAINS AT CAVERSHAM.

Recently while some road widening was being carried out near Caversham Court a human skeleton was discovered about four feet from the surface in undisturbed brickearth. The bones were preserved and taken to the Reading Museum. Mr. Geo. W. Smith and Mr. Seaby carefully examined the site and took notes of the particulars of the find. The skull, which was in fairly good condition, is being examined by a specialist whose report is awaited with interest. In the meantime it may be noticed that the discovery is remarkably like one which was made at Marlow in 1925, a brief notice of which was printed in *THE BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL JOURNAL*, Vol. 29, p. 80, and a fuller one in *The Reading Mercury* for May 2nd in that year. Since that date further work in the Marlow brickyard has revealed objects of neolithic types which suggest a date for that specimen. Unfortunately the circumstances of the Caversham find prevented anything being obtained beyond the bare skeleton.

T.