NOTES


2 Glass and lead from a 14th-century lancet window were found at East Haddlesey, W. Yorkshire. H. E. Jean Le Patourel, *The Moated Sites of Yorkshire* (Soc. for Medieval Archaeol. Mono. 5, 1973), 89–94. A similar find was made in 1983 at Carmarthen Friary: information from Kate Hunter, University College, Cardiff.

3 P.R.O. E36/165.


FIFTEENTH-CENTURY CONTINENTAL BRICKMasons

The important role played by continental workers in building with brick in England during the 15th century is well established. Recently two draft letters of interest in this connection were discovered in the Essex Record Office amongst the manorial records of Havering-atte-Bower (ERO D/DU 102/52). Although there is little evidence to indicate who the correspondents were the letters clearly demonstrate the writer's preference for a continental bricklayer as can be seen from the following extracts. In order to make the letters more intelligible to the modern reader contractions have been expanded and deletions omitted. The medieval character 'yogh' has been replaced by 'y' and the personal pronoun Y by I.

Letter 1

‘... and thyght more as ever I may do any thyng for yow in tyme to come that ye well ordeyne me a mason that ys a ducher or a femyng that canne make a dowbell Chemeny of Brykke for they canne [?] best fare ther with and I wold have seche one as cowde maket wele to voyde smoke and al so to hewe the mantell of the same Brykke for the fre stone [illegible] ther to and that I have hem as sone as ever I myghte, for lenker [longer] than the monday after sent Lukys day may I not a byde and yf ye have hym I pray yow send me myghte with hem to me and lete hem brynge hys axis with hym for to hewe with brykke and yf ye may no flemynge have than I wold have an enkelesche [English] man if he were a yonge man for a yonge man ys sharpest of witte and of cunning and sech a one as walde undyr take to make it fitely [fitly] and yf ye canne none kete [get] atte all I pray yow Send me word ther of in a letter so that I may have it Trustely upon Wednisday atte Rumford markett or ellys atte nyghte or ellys on the Thursday by none [Noon] and for ellys I wyl to Chelmysford that nyghte and so fourthe to Witham for to have a man there yf I may ...’

Letter 2

‘Dere and welbelovyd frend with all my hert I grete well. Thankyng yow Evyr more of yowre gret labour that ye have had for me a bowte my mason for in gode feyt [good faith] my lykkyt hym ryght well and as by his [illegible] and so I have made covenants wht hem² so that he shal come a gen in hast this weeke likke as he hath [illegible] for I wold fayn it were doen by cause of my wyff for sche wayteth the tyme of hyr delyverons with in thys fortenyght ...’

The first draft letter was written at the head of the recto side and the second squeezed into the space left at the tail of the dorse of the first of four membranes of manor court precedents that had been stitched together to form a roll. The latest date mentioned in the cases was 12th May, 1466, which must be the earliest date the correspondence could have been completed. The roll was attached to draft records of manor courts held between 1467 and 1469. The handwriting on the roll is different to that of the draft courts to which it is
attached but is similar to court records drawn up between 1437 and 1446 (PRO SC 2 172/31-32). John Joye, who was named in the letters, appeared at courts between 1437 and 1451, and Robert Spencer, also mentioned, was bailiff between 1442 and 1446. It seems more probable, therefore, that the letters were written in the earlier part of the period, that is about 1446.

A further point of interest lies in the writer’s statement that if his correspondent could not obtain the services of a brick mason, he would go to Witham to try and get one there. Witham is only one and a half miles away from where Sir John Montgomery, who died in 1448, built his brick mansion of Faulkbourne Hall.²

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Mr Victor Gray, County Archivist of the Essex Record Office for permission to publish these excerpts and to Mrs Jo-Ann Buck for assistance with transcribing several difficult passages in them.

PATRICIA M. RYAN

NOTES

² 'for viiid to the day and hys mete' has been deleted at this point in the letter.

THE TRURO CONFERENCE 1986

The 29th Annual Conference of the Society was held in Truro from 11-14 April 1986 on the theme of ‘Post-Roman and Medieval Cornwall’. The opening lecture on Friday 11 April was given by Charles Thomas (Vice-President of the Society) on ‘Early Christian and Medieval Scilly’. The following lectures were given on Saturday, Sunday and Monday: ‘Cornish place-names and medieval archaeology’ (Oliver Padel), ‘The medieval landscape of Bodmin Moor’ (Peter Rose), ‘Medieval tin working in Cornwall’ (Sandy Gerrard), ‘The material remains of documented pre-Christian religious houses in Cornwall’ (Lynette Olson) and ‘Enclosed Christian cemeteries of Cornwall’ (Ann Preston-Jones). There were three excursions, on Saturday (Tintagel), Sunday (Bodmin Moor) and Monday (St Michael’s Mount, Breage and Germoe). As an extension of the formal proceedings of the Conference there were two optional excursions on Tuesday 15 April, to the Scillies or West Penwith. The Conference dinner was held at Trelissick House on Saturday 12 April by kind permission of the National Trust.

All the lectures took place at the County Museum by invitation of the Royal Institution of Cornwall and the Cornwall Archaeological Society whose members gave the Society much greatly appreciated help and a warm welcome. Staff of the Cornwall Archaeological Unit and the Institute of Cornish Studies were responsible for the organization of lectures and excursions and the Society is greatly indebted to them for making the Conference an outstanding success. A final word of thanks goes to Professor Charles Thomas whose work as Local Secretary made the Truro Conference one of the most worthwhile and enjoyable meetings held by the Society.

HELEN CLARKE