

Notes

SURVEY OF NORTHAMPTON DATESTONES

The survey, carried out between November 1972 and January 1973, covered all of pre-1920 Northampton excluding areas around the former villages of Duston, Dallington, Weston Favell and Kingsthorpe. As far as possible all dated buildings were noted and a brief summary is given below.

Pre-Victorian Only 7 datestones have been found. The oldest is the well-known 1595 datestone on Welsh House (2 Newland)¹. The next, a datestone of 1636, is now almost illegible and is not *in situ*.² It can be seen rebuilt into a wall at the side of "The Plough" in Victoria Promenade. A pair of cartouche tablets in Northampton Museum relate to three houses burnt in the great fire of 1675 and one is dated 1679, presumably the date when the houses had been repaired and the tablets put up.³ A datestone 1677, just post-fire, can be seen on the building at the corner of Market Square and Abington Street.⁴ The General Hospital, built in 1793 is clearly dated above the main entrance. The former Blue Coat and Orange School with adjoining schoolhouse in Bridge Street is built of brick, and dated 1811. Finally the facade surrounding the clock on All Saints Church is dated 1829.⁵

Early and Mid-Victorian (1837-70) Most of the 9 datestones identified from this period are to be found on buildings erected by religious or public bodies. Several church schools are dated e.g. All Saints 1839 (east side of Horsehoe Street), Spring Lane 1849, St. Giles 1861, Far Cotton 1865 (Main Road). The Loyd cottages between Abington Avenue and Park Avenue are unusual in being dated 1846 in Roman numerals.⁶

Late-Victorian (1870-1901) Most datestones in the town belong to this period. 200 have been noted on several types of buildings — houses, factories, chapels and schools. The most prolific area is around the east end of the Racecourse and in each of the following streets/roads there are 7 or more dated houses: Kingsley Road (south end), East Park Parade, Abington Avenue, Holly Road, Colwyn Road, Hood Street and Burns Street. The date-range here is mainly 1873-91. One of the most common types of datestone seen on terraced houses is the diamond-shaped plaque, which begins in 1874 (73 Lorne Road).

Post-Victorian The number of datestones declines rapidly. The latest diamond-shaped datestone which was seen is of 1906 (49 Balmoral Road) and what is perhaps the latest dated house is of 1927 (63 Clarence Avenue). The use of datestones after 1901 is mainly restricted to public and commercial buildings. A number of these have been seen with datestones particularly of the 1930's.

¹ *V.C.H.* III (1930), 37. Northampton Public Libraries, *Old Northampton* (1973), 51.

² Scott A. E., *Northampton Through the Ages* (1931), 46.

³ The two cartouche tablets are of oolitic limestone. The first has damaged edges but the second, virtually complete is 24½in. x 20½in. The first reads in eight lines:

THESE 3	HOUSES BE	LONGING TO	ST. THOMAS HO
SPITAL WERE	BURNT THE	20TH SEPBR	1675

The second reads:

FOR THE	USE OF THE	SAID HOSPI	TALL THE
25TH MARCH	ANNO DO	1679	

⁴ Northampton Public Libraries, *Old Northampton* (1973), 12.

⁵ *V.C.H.* III (1930), 51.

⁶ Pevsner N. *The Buildings of England, Northamptonshire*, second edition (1973), 345.

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Conclusions The survey has shown that, in Northampton, datestones are most frequent during the 1880's. Pre-Victorian datestones are not well-represented presumably because of the 1675 fire and the rapid replacement of town-centre buildings in the 19th-20th centuries. After 1901 there is a considerable decline in the use of datestones on houses, although public and commercial buildings continue to employ them.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY

DATED BUILDINGS IN NORTHAMPTON

<i>Pre-Victorian</i>		<i>Late Victorian</i>	
1500 - 1600	1	1870 - 1879	15
1600 - 1700	3	1880 - 1889	100
1700 - 1800	1	1890 - 1901	85
1800 - 1837	2		
<i>Early to Mid-Victorian</i>		<i>Post-Victorian</i>	
1837 - 1860	4	1902 - 1909	12
1860 - 1870	5	1910 - 1919	8
		1920 - 1929	7+
		1930 - 1939	19+

(Note: Post-1920 buildings not fully surveyed)

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NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY 1973

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GENERAL

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PREHISTORIC

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- J. A. Hadman "An Early Bronze Age burial at Perio"; D. Coombs "Perio, the finds", *ibid.* 24-5.
- D. N. Hall Neolithic polished stone axe, Wollaston, SP 907627. Note in *Bedfordshire Archaeol. J.* 7 (1972), 96-7.
- D. N. Hall "An Early Iron Age site at Irthlingborough", *ibid.* 17-20.

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 D. A. Jackson *et al.* "A Roman lime kiln at Weekley, Northamptonshire" *Britannia* 4 (1973), 128-40.
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 W. Manning "Three iron tools from Lynch Farm", *ibid.*, 28-30.
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MIGRATION AND EARLY MEDIEVAL

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NOTES ON SPECIFIC SITES AND AREAS

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