

# LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND NOTES

In the reports below attention is drawn to a number of cases where historic buildings have been demolished or drastically altered. In some cases information has come too late even to allow of photographs being taken.

The Society in no way wishes to stand in the way of intelligent development, but frequently buildings are damaged through a lack of understanding as to their value and ignorance of suitable sources of help and advice. Under the Act of 1947 lists of buildings worthy of preservation *for the Nation* are now available, and it is hoped that members will take the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the listed buildings in their area so that the Society may be notified as soon as critical issues arise. In most cases a kindly and informed approach can save the day.

## ARCHÆOLOGY IN LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND 1958-59

### *Report from the Department of Antiquities, Leicester Museums*

(Year ended 31 March 1959. This report does not include casual finds, which are recorded in the Annual Report of the Museums. Thanks are due to contributors as recorded at the end of articles and Messrs. J. A. Daniell, R. D. Abbott and H. J. Turner for field records.)

### LEICESTER

#### LEICESTER EXCAVATIONS 1958

##### First Interim Report

During 1958 a total of three months' excavation was undertaken in Leicester. The work was carried out by means of grants from H.M. Ministry of Works and Leicester Corporation and was executed on behalf of the Leicester Museums, to whom thanks must be accorded by the writer for a great deal of assistance in the field, and also for undertaking all the administrative work.

Two sites were examined: one on the line of the new inner ring road, to the north of Blue Boar Lane, and the other at the junction of Cumberland Street and Elbow Lane, on the supposed line of the defences.

To take first the defences. A section was cut across the line of the town wall at the corner of Cumberland Street and Elbow Lane. This showed without doubt that the rampart was contemporary with the wall, although the latter had been almost completely robbed. The pottery from the rampart would suggest a date late in the 2nd cent. A.D. or possibly even early 3rd cent. A.D. for its erection. Outside the wall was found the inner edge of a ditch, which was recut further to the north during Roman times and again recut in the Middle Ages. The recutting in Roman times may have been due to the building of external bastions, and in this connection it is worth mentioning that on the edge of the earlier Roman ditch, in the E. part of the N.-S. trench, was an unmortared stone foundation 5 ft. wide, possibly representing the apron associated with such a bastion. Mr. David Clarke found a similar feature in Churchgate, but nowhere has the existence of a bastion yet been proved conclusively.

The area to the north of Blue Boar Lane proved to be of considerable interest. The earliest structure consisted of a good cobbled floor and a post-hole, which can be dated to Flavian times, apparently belonging to a timber house, which unfortunately could not be examined fully.

This timber house was soon pulled down and a more substantial building replaced it during the first decades of the 2nd cent. A.D. The walls were built as low masonry foundations, normally rising to just above the floor level, with a super-structure of unbaked clay bricks laid in yellow sand.\*

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\* Dr. Norman Davey, F.S.A., has kindly made a preliminary examination of these materials. He reports that "the bricks are composed of sandy clay which is fairly typical of the Keuper marl soils or glacial drifts derived from them. The 'mortar' between the bricks is a gravelly mixture with about 40 per cent. of silt and clay passing through a 100 mesh, and a small amount, less than 10 per cent., of lime. This material is probably the local marly earth".

The construction of this walling was quite clearly defined, and such regularity in the size of the bricks was noted as to suggest that any variation in their size may have been due to pressure within the wall. The normal dimensions were 10-12 in. wide by 15-17 in. long and 2-4 in. thick. It is probable therefore that all these bricks were cut to standard dimensions and that the variations would have occurred subsequently owing to compaction. The outer faces of these walls were then plastered and the plaster painted. In the first phase of the building's existence this plaster was comparatively plain, with a pattern of formal geometrical designs and imitation marbling. The floors corresponding to this phase were of clay or plain white concrete. In plan the building seems to have been conventional with rooms leading off corridors surrounding a central courtyard, although there do not appear to have been rooms along the south side of the corridor. These corridors must have been open on the courtyard side, and a large ashlar incorporated in the outside wall at one point, together with a similar block at the south-west corner with part of a column base still *in situ*, suggest a colonnade. It is interesting to note that even the outside walls of the house were constructed of plastered clay bricks. This might imply protection of the exposed fronts from the weather by means of a verandah, and two large post-holes found some 3 ft. away from the outside wall on the west side of the building go to support the suggestion.

The next phase appears to have been that of improving the existing building. All the rooms investigated had tessellated floors inserted, two of them displaying mosaics. The inner wall of the corridor surrounding the courtyard was also replastered and painted, and much very fine painted wall-plaster was recovered, both fallen and *in situ* on the walls. As yet the complete design is obscure, but some individual pieces can be identified. One particularly fine piece shows part of an arch, drawn in perspective with a coffered roof, containing a full-face cherub; others exhibit the face of a Silenus, parts of human figures, birds, wreaths and floral scrolls. The treatment of some is reminiscent of the painted plaster from Verulamium (*Antiq. Jnl.* xxxvii, Plate IIIa), but on the whole the designs are much more complicated, and a greater variety of colours is used. The conception is much bolder and the brilliance of the colours, as well as the quality of the paintings, is remarkable. In its original state it must have represented a very fine decoration indeed, although occasionally the artist has mistaken his perspective, as not seldom in classical wall-paintings. But the work as a whole must have been a brave attempt at decoration in the Italian manner, and this some 60 or 70 years after the destruction of Pompeii.

This phase does not appear to have lasted long. The floors wore out and the plaster fell from the walls, and none was replaced. The rarity of fallen roofing material would seem to suggest that the roof was removed. A pit was dug in the north-west corner of the courtyard, and a timber-lined drain inserted into the corridor and extended northwards into one of the major rooms. In order to do this a wall was cut through and part of a tessellated floor removed. In one room, which had once had a tessellated floor, about three dozen cows' heads were found lying in its exposed concrete bottoming.

The whole picture at this stage is rather squalid, but was one which, so near the centre of the town, did not continue for long. The building seems to have been levelled to make way for a large and imposing structure with massive walls up to 5 ft. thick. The date for the final demolition of the earlier building does not appear to have been later than c. A.D. 180, and the erection of the subsequent structure must have taken place very soon afterwards.

That part of the plan of this later building which was recovered is of some interest.

Four walls, at about 10 ft. intervals, run northwards from a wall at right angles to them. The westernmost clearly marks the outside of the buildings on that side, and extended S. of the E.-W. wall, along the edge of a street. To the S. of the E.-W. wall are three more parallel walls at intervals of 17 ft., 37 ft., and 16 ft. Thus the building is divided into two main parts, and in addition the floor level of the southern part must have been at least 3 ft. higher than that to the N.

To this building must surely be added another wall found under Blue Boar Lane in 1944 (*Trans. Leics. Arch. Soc.*, xxx. 119), approximately 158 ft. W. of High Cross Street, and it would also seem that the most southerly wall now found is a continuation of that discovered near the junction of Blue Boar Lane and High Cross Street in 1895. On this wall were two columns, apparently *in situ* (*Arch. Jnl.*, lxxv. 35).

The size of the building must suggest a public use. If so, what then could it be? It is reminiscent of the plans of certain Forum-Basilica complexes. Obviously a detailed discussion cannot be entered into here, but it is worth pointing out the following details.

The overall internal width of the part interpreted as the Basilica would be c. 105 ft., as compared with Cirencester, c. 100 ft. (*Arch.*, lxix. 168); Wroxeter, c. 112 ft. (D. Atkinson, *Wroxeter*); and Silchester, c. 96 ft. (*Arch.*, xlvi. 351-2). If not part of the Forum-Basilica complex, then its functions must for the time remain obscure, but the scale of the walling clearly implies a monumental building. In this respect one must not forget the building found to the N. of the baths at Wroxeter, which was not the Basilica, but not unlike one in plan.

The relation of this large public building to the street system needs clarifying, and it has been thought worthwhile to mention the following points, sometimes taken for granted, which stand in need of inquiry and which are in fact still open to question with regard to this street system. The main N.-S. street must be considered first and two possibilities occur. It could have been diverted round the sides of a Forum, or it could flank it to the E. In the latter case, the Basilica must become rather shorter than would be expected and could not have been much more than about 200 ft. in total length. The second point must concern the street to the south of the Basilica. It would be tempting to think in this connection that it represents the line of the main E.-W. street, carrying the Fosse Way through the town. But it has always been supposed that the street joining the sites of the two medieval gates was the major Roman one. Did the medieval East and West Gates have their counterparts in Roman times? This need not have been the case, and at Canterbury there are at least two Roman gates which did not have medieval successors: Quentin Gate and London Gate (*V.C.H.*, iii. 65; *J.R.S.*, xlvi. 144). Even at Leicester there must be a strong suspicion that the medieval South Gate does not overlie one of earlier date. Finally there seems to be no definite evidence that the Roman version of the Fosse Way did enter the walled area at the same points as the medieval road.

The only other area investigated concerned the buildings in the S.-W. corner of the Insula immediately to the W. of the postulated Forum. This revealed a series of successive buildings, all conforming very much to the same plan but on slightly different alignments. The earliest was constructed of clay walls and timber partitions. Here it should be mentioned that the clay wall was built of blocks in the same manner as was used in the house to the E., but in this case, not being laid in yellow sand, they were more difficult to see. The date of this building would seem to be Trajanic or possibly early Hadrianic. It was rebuilt in stone no less than twice after this, the last rebuild taking place in late Antonine times. The thin layers of superimposed mud which had accumulated on the successive floors would seem to suggest shops, a feature recently observed at Verulamium.

J. S. WACHER, B.SC., F.S.A.

#### LEICESTER. 31 AND 33 GALLOWTREE GATE

On the W. side the new site for Messrs. Stead and Simpson's revealed a large mass of masonry some 20 ft. from the frontage and about 12 ft. thick. It seems likely that this wall is a relic of the medieval town wall since the natural ground fell away in front of it as if towards a ditch.

(Photos in *Leic. Mus.*)

#### LEICESTER. GUILDHALL LANE

Cuttings for the extension to Messrs. Bell's printing works on the N. side opposite the Guildhall produced a number of interesting finds and also a section of gravel which was probably a Roman street running N.-S. It lay 6 ft. below the surface and would pass beneath the Guildhall 27 ft. from its W. end. It was between 3 and 4 ft. thick. This might line up with the fragment found in Highcross St. last year (*Trans.*, xxxiv. 78) and might reach the S. wall at a convenient place to join the Gartree Road, suggesting that the Roman south gate might not lie under the medieval one.

There was also a stone-lined well (not excavated) and two fragments of wall, probably Roman, to the N. in the same trench. The most notable find was a green-glazed jug of the 13th cent. We are particularly indebted to the workmen on this site for much interest and co-operation.

(Records and specimens in *Leic. Mus.* no. 355.1957)

#### LEICESTER. HARVEY LANE

During the removal of burials from the ground to the S. of the Baptist Chapel, gravel surfaces were discovered at high levels which may have been parts of the

PLATE I



The stump cross, Frisby-on-the-Wreak

PLATE II



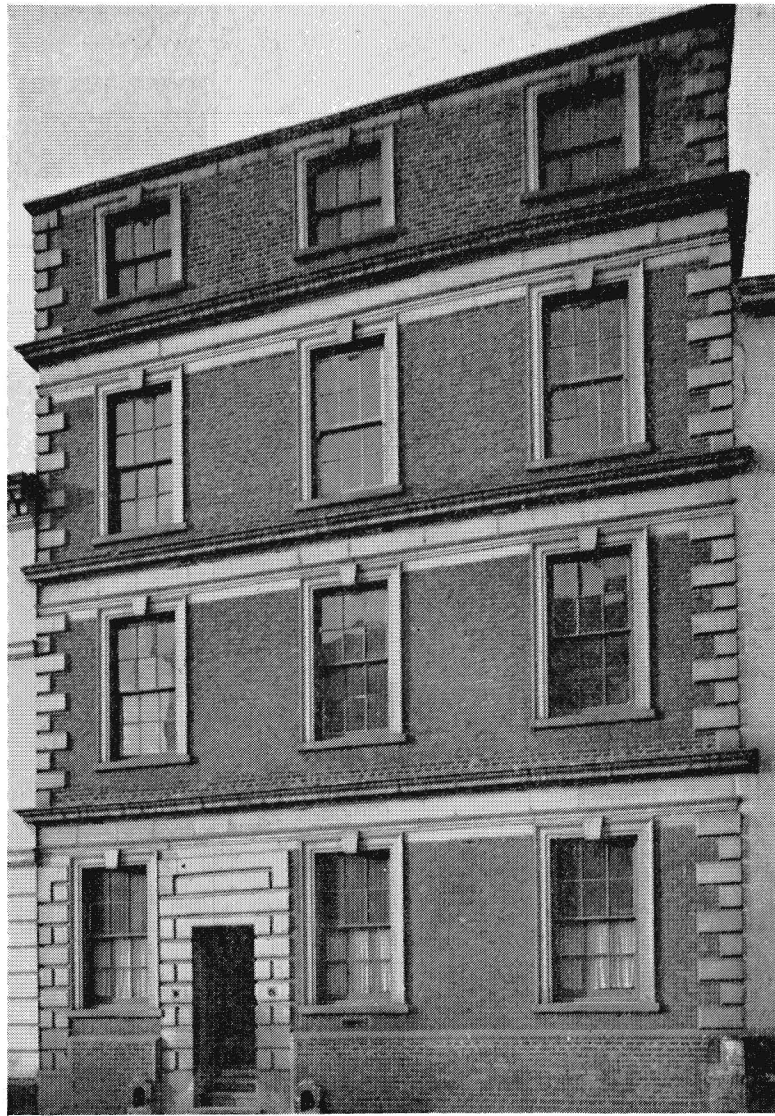
Galby church before removal of box pews

PLATE III



Dovecote at Court Farm, Houghton-on-the-Hill

PLATE IV



Melton Mowbray: No. 10 High Street. Photograph taken in 1945  
(By courtesy of the National Buildings Record.)

Roman street discovered in 1939 (*Trans.*, xxviii. 36). They spread over a larger area than might be expected, so it is possible there may be a street junction at this point. Some interesting sherds were retrieved.

(Plans and specimens in *Leic. Mus.*)

#### LEICESTER. OXFORD STREET

The conversion of the machinery at the factory of J. E. Pickard & Sons, Ltd., from steam power to electricity caused the scrapping of the steam-engine which had been in use since about 1880. When the Company purchased the engine it was already second-hand and was probably built in the 1860s.

In 1891 the *Leicester Guide to Arts, Trades and Manufactures* described it thus:

"The engine-house is certain to surprise the visitor: instead of a room suggesting smoke or dirt of any kind, we see a handsome and lofty chamber with walls lined with encaustic tiles, and the floor covered with oil-cloth, with the splendid engine in the centre. The engine, by Petrie & Co., of Rochdale, is a 300 h.p. compound McNaughten beam engine with a 22 ft. fly wheel weighing 30 tons, and gives a 6 ft. stroke; it is also fitted with a self-indicator of revolutions and a safety gauge. Evidently, it is in charge of those who are proud of their work: the beam, fly wheel and fittings are painted a dark chocolate relieved by gilt line, the bright parts shining like silver, and the whole working with perfect ease and smoothness."

The engine was broken up during the August Holiday, 1958.

R. D. ABBOTT

(Photos. in *Leic. Mus.*)

#### LEICESTER. LONDON ROAD

Stoney Gate, the late 18th-cent. house in the Gothic manner, where the library and the staircase were particularly fine, and believed to enclose an earlier structure, has been bought for demolition.

(Photos. in *National Buildings Record*; copies in *Leic. Mus.*)

#### LEICESTER. WELFORD ROAD CEMETERY

The twin chapels, built in 1849 in the Gothic manner by Messrs. Hamilton & Medland of Worcester, have been demolished. This Leicester landmark defied the contractors to the last.

(Several old prints exist and record photos. in *Leic. Mus.*)

### LEICESTERSHIRE

Grants have been received from the Historic Churches Preservation Trust for Breedon (£500), Kings Norton (£350) and Tilton (£300) churches. The Society looks forward to a local effort to supplement this excellent work.

#### APPLEBY MAGNA. 316098

A closing order has been placed on the 14th-cent. Moat House by the Ashby R.D.C. since, though it is in good repair, it has no water system. The owners have protested vigorously and the Society has promised its support, as has the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. This is one of the finest medieval secular buildings surviving in the county, and is well worthy of preservation.

A grant has been made by the Historic Buildings Council towards the restoration of Sir John Moore's Grammar School (*Arch. Jnl.*, cxii. 167).

#### ASHBY PASTURES. 715134

The cross shaft has been re-erected on its base by members of the Vaughan Archæological and Historical Society. The S.W. face bears a cross and there are two rows of holes below, perhaps for an inscription plate. It is mentioned in Nichols (iii. 20) and is probably a boundary stone.

#### BELGRAVE. 595072

The pleasant gravel road between Belgrave Hall and Belgrave House which leads to the church has been kerbed and covered with tarmac, a severe blow to the atmosphere of this area. The top storey of the nearby Talbot Inn has been removed and all the early Georgian windows converted to heavy late Georgian types, bay windows and shutters being added also. The brick front has been plastered and whitened, and parts of the interior have received oak beams. Hence this interesting 18th-cent. building, which was a part of the Belgrave setting, has become an Olde Worlde Inne.



## BREEDON. 407234

A sterling (penny) of John I Duke of Brabant (1268-1294) was found on the hilltop by Mr. W. Parker-Sutton.

## BILLESDON. 721026

The Historic Buildings Council has made a grant to repair the School, built in 1650, which is still in occasional use.

## BLASTON. 958794

Part of a Roman jar of grey ware and other sherds were found by the stream. Excavations by the Market Harborough Archæological Society revealed, however, little trace of habitation. The sherds are now in the Society's museum.

(*Market Harborough Advertiser*, 2 Oct. 1958)

## BOSWORTH FIELD. 402099

A base of Samian form 33 stamped PECVLARIS F (Antonine, central Gaul) was found near King Dick's Well. The Society of the Friends of the White Boar has erected a fence with concrete posts round the well with a partisan inscription. Roses planted at the same time are said to have blossomed red.

## BRAUNSTONE. 556031 (approx.)

A Roman silver coin inscribed DN GRATIANVS PF AVG/SECVRITAS REIPVBLICAE mm. CON was found in the garden of 55 Henley Crescent (Gratian 367-383 A.D.).

## CADEBY. 426024

The cruck cottage on which a closing order had been recently issued has been relieved by a private person who has undertaken to restore it. A piece of glass from one of the windows which is now in Leic. Mus. (122.1958) reads: John Swinfen, Market Bosworth, Leicestershire, 1789. Blumber Glazier Sculpt. Here I stand both|Day and night to keep|Hout could and let|in light.

## CHARNWOOD. 462180

The brick-built tower of Fenny Spring Windmill has been incorporated into a private house. The external aspect has been altered by the insertion of larger windows.

(*Leic. Mercury*, 11 Dec. 1958)

## COSSINGTON. 606135

Demolition of cottages on the E. side of the main street revealed four wooden crucks presumably from three cottages. By the time information reached the Museum they had been almost entirely destroyed.

(*Photo. in Leic. Mus.*)

## EATON. Site unknown.

"At one time up in one of my fields they were getting ironstone by hand. A lot of early graves were discovered and one man found a bracelet and another got two grinding stones. They found a heap of wheat too, it had gone black." Mr. Albert Watchorn, Vicarage Farm.

(*Leics. Advertiser*, 22 Feb. 1958)

## FRISBY-ON-THE-WREAK. 697171

The stump cross by the side of the Leicester-Melton road has now been repaired by the Society with the aids of gifts from Mrs. Marion Douglas, the finder of the shaft, the Vaughan Archæological and Historical Society and Lt.-Col. G. L. Aspell, our Hon. Auditor. The story of the negotiations is a good illustration of the difficulties in the way of caring for such small local antiquities.

After Mrs. Douglas found the shaft in 1956 by digging nearby to the directions of an elderly inhabitant of the village, the Hon. Secretary told her the monument was scheduled and offered to make the necessary arrangements for her to have the shaft re-fixed. After considerable correspondence the County Council agreed that they were the owners. The Ministry of Works then promised to send their foreman to advise on how the work should be done; however the local contractor did the job on a Sunday, and hence the Ministry did not send a representative until the following day when he reported that the work was unacceptable. The contractor carried out what modifications he could, and after three years the job is concluded and the County Council have agreed to maintain the stone in the future.

The W. face of the tower of the church has been refaced in local stone as part of a restoration programme.

## GALBY. 695011

The pews in the church have been infected by severe dry rot and since they were apparently 19th-cent. in date it was agreed that they might be destroyed. It was noted that the nave still has its 15th-cent roof and that the windows, though with 18th-cent. tracery, were probably of the 15th cent. in origin. The tower likewise seems to be substantially old and only to have been restored and modified in 1741.

(*Photos. in Leic. Mus.*)

## GRIMSTON. 685218

The stocks on the village green have been removed for repair after damage by visitors.

## HOUGHTON-ON-THE-HILL. 676034

The dovecote at Court Farm being roofless has been demolished. It bore the date 1716.

(*Plan and photos. in Leic. Mus.*)

## KNIGHTON. 599014

Representations have been made to preserve the 17th-cent. half-timbered cottage near the church, which has now been acquired by the Corporation. It is understood that plans are in hand to renovate it.

## 599017

Work on the new Women's Hall of Residence for the University in Knighton Lane and to the north of Knighton Hall has destroyed a number of mounds which seem to have been part of the medieval village. It appeared that the track of Queen's Road originally continued down to the stream and had been diverted when Knighton Hall was built.

## LOUGHBOROUGH. 537200

Opposition was expressed by Loughborough members of the Society to the proposal to pull down part of the Rectory in order to modernise it for the new incumbent. The front is very late Georgian but the rear has walls of the 15th cent. with early 18th-cent. windows and one wall is of the 14th cent. with an arched doorway. There is a timber arched door on the first floor. No important internal features would be affected, and hence it was felt that no reasonable protest could be made if the house was to be comfortably modernised. This scheme has now fallen into abeyance.

(*Loughborough Echo*, 5 Sept. 1958)

## LUBENHAM. 705872

A medieval painted decoration was discovered on the jamb of the E. window in the S. aisle of the church and was later whitewashed over.

A small bronze flask 1½ in. high with 2 ear handles found in the churchyard in 1871 has been identified by the British Museum as being a pilgrim bottle. It is hoped it may be deposited in a suitable museum.

(*Market Harborough Advertiser*, 13 Mar. 1958)

## MARKET HARBOROUGH. 7387

A coin of Faustina, wife of Antoninus Pius (137-161 A.D.), was dug up at 21 Fir Tree Walk. It was not more closely identifiable.

Three iron balls, presumed to be cannon balls, have been found in the River Welland behind the Harborough Rubber Co. works on St. Mary's Rd.

(*Market Harborough Advertiser*, 27 Nov. 1958)

A neck and shoulder of a Roman grey-ware jar have been found in Clarke St. opposite Charles St. and are now in the local museum.

(*M.H. Advertiser*, 25 Dec. 1958)

A new organ has been installed in the parish church to replace the old one which was hydraulically blown. This organ is at the E. end of the N. gallery, and in the course of modifying the gallery a mural painting was discovered on the S. side of the E. window. It consisted of a canopy of later 14th-cent. style, in black outline, the background being red wash. Over this there seemed to be two other paintings, one of Adam and Eve on either side of a tree and the other a black letter inscription, both of about the 16th cent. It survives, but is now hidden by the organ.

(*Photo. in Leic. Mus. and N.B.R.*; *M.H. Advertiser*, 20 Nov. 1958)

Mr. J. C. Davis, a member of this Society, commenting on field names on Clack Hill, suggests Overdale Acre and Middle Dale Acre are Saxon and that the fields Above Stable Gateway and Below Stable Gateway lie on either side of a track, still visible, called Staple (=post) Gate (=way).

(*M.H. Advertiser*, 26 Feb. 1959)

MELTON MOWBRAY. 752193

No. 10 High St., a fine house front of the later 17th cent. encasing earlier features, has been modified by the insertion of windows on the ground floor. This is a typical case where no use could be found for the house as it stood, and modification seemed a lesser evil than demolition.

(*Photo. in Leic. Mus. and N.B.R.*)

NEWBOLD VERDON. 444038

It is planned to rebuild the stump of the medieval church tower with a broach spire in the Sussex manner, covered with shingles.

NORTH KILWORTH. 617836

A set of 16th-cent. cottages formerly the property of a member of the Society have been renovated by the Lutterworth R.D.C. This is an excellent example of what can be done to preserve a village scene by intelligent conversion.

(*Leic. Mercury*, 11 Jan. 1959)

OADBY. 623006

Two cottages on the corner at the N.W. end of the main street, which were formerly one 17th-cent. house, have been demolished. The half-timbered house was of a T plan and parts of the timber had signs of previous use. Most of the original wattle had been replaced by brick, and there was an 18th-cent. addition at the E. end.

(*Drawings were made by Mr. C. Bramley, a member of this Society*)

RAVENSTONE. 402138

A grant has been made by the Historic Buildings Council to the Trustees for the repair of the Hospital (almshouses) which are to be modernised. The original plans would apparently have altered the facade drastically but thanks to the protection afforded by the Act of 1947 they have now been modified so that the front aspect will not be changed.

(*Coalville Times*, 20 Feb. 1959)

A cottage adjoining the Reading Room, no. 26 Main St., was recorded during demolition by Mr. J. H. Jones, a member of this Society. The timberwork was of interest and concealed by a brick facade. This work is a good example of how local correspondents can cover an emergency of this kind.

(*Photos. and drawings in Leic. Mus.*)

SAPCOTE. 486934. Moated Enclosure

During 1958, the Sapcote Playing Fields Trustees notified their intention of levelling the N. side of the moated enclosure known as "The Noble Park" to the W. of the village. A short excavation was carried out in Sept. 1958 by the Ministry of Works under the supervision of P. V. Addyman. The conclusions noted in these *Transactions* (xxix. 80) when a sewer trench was dug through the enclosure in 1952, were in general confirmed, but the excavations produced the following additional information. The moat had been dug through ridge-and-furrow formation characteristic of medieval open fields, which had not, however, been levelled within, suggesting that no buildings of permanence had ever subsequently been erected there. Two large rectangular banked structures at the W. end were investigated and seem best explained as fishponds. A number of small abrade potsherds of Roman and early medieval date were found on the buried ground surface and, in one place, in a shallow ditch, beneath the bank of the enclosure.

The site seems to be related to several other ditched areas nearby and has obvious connections with the complex of mounds on the adjacent Toot Hill, to which we must still look for the site of the castle or manor house. The excavated enclosure is probably part of a late medieval manorial scheme, although the possibility of its being post-medieval must not be disregarded. Both documentary and archaeological evidence was found for the partial filling of the moat in the late 18th cent.

It is hoped to publish a more definitive report on the excavations in a future issue of these *Transactions*.

P. V. ADDYMAN

**SHEPSHED. 481198**

Advice has been given to the parish on the reuniting of the monument to Samuel Philipps, 1774, attributed to Richard Hayward, which was taken in half some years ago in order to open a window in the chancel. It is hoped that this very fine piece of Georgian sculpture may soon be restored to its proper scale.

**WIGSTON MAGNA. 605986**

Church. The 15th-cent. roof has been painted in colour with the advice of Mr. G. A. Cope, a member of this Society. The walls have also been re-decorated and the resulting effect is an admirable example of how careful use of white and colour can transform a gloomy church.

The Society has been active in trying to save the Elizabeth Clarke Almshouses in the Main St., a brick building of 1781. Though not of outstanding importance, the building has been described as the only one of merit in Wigston and the National Association of Almshouses had prepared a scheme which would comply with modern standards. The local Council however declined to apply for a grant and the Trustees agreed to demolition so no further action can be taken. In this case information arrived too late to allow for any helpful activity to be undertaken by the Society.

606977

The field to the W. of the cemetery has been terraced for playing fields. At one point on the N. edge about 150 yards from the junction with the cemetery wall was a small ditch running obliquely into the field and containing Roman pottery and the lower stone of a rotary quern of Roman type. This ditch, which had a rounded section formed a broad V shape with another may perhaps be part of a Roman field system.

The Museum is indebted to Mr. F. H. Brewin for permission to investigate.  
(*Finds in Leic. Mus.*, No. 205. 1959)

**RUTLAND****TIXOVER**

Excavation was continued at Easter 1959 on the Roman villa at Tixover by students of archaeology at Leicester University. The whole of the surviving structures S. of the spinney were uncovered and followed into the spinney sufficiently to show the alignment of adjacent walls. One true, pillared hypocaust chamber and its associated furnace and flue were revealed, yielding painted plaster fragments, some pottery and a few small finds. This seems to have been the only portion of the building with deep-set foundations, and trial work N. of the spinney showed that wall foundations there are very shallow and much disturbed; it is likely to be difficult to recover an intelligible plan of this part of the villa. Within the spinney a small fragment of mosaic floor and its associated partition wall were salvaged from the destruction wrought by the tree growth, adding valuable information and making possible the interpolation of the 1932 mosaics into the general plan. A full report will be presented when investigations N. of the spinney have been carried out.

STANLEY THOMAS

**A NOTE ON SETTS**

When it became necessary to lay setts in the street at the Newarke Houses Museum some research was carried out on this method of paving. Appeals in the press led to several retired paviors coming forward with information about this almost extinct craft, by which all the streets in Leicester were at one time paved.

Setts were made at Mountsorrel and Croft, and two films are in the Museum showing how they were shaped from large blocks. The earliest streets were paved with "bastard" setts, small roughly-shaped cubes, the kerbs being rough also and about 9 in.-24 in. long. Pavements (side-walks) were cobbled with kidney stones (natural pebbles). Informants remembered when many streets in Leicester were made in this fashion but the staff were only able to locate a tiny strip in Court A, Middle Street, in the Newarke which was demolished in 1958. As much as possible was reset in the Museum.

About the middle of the 19th cent. the setts were made more regular and replaced the cobbles in the pavements. Some of these latter survive and are of very high quality and close fitting.

At the end of the cent. a new sett some 9 in. × 4 in. was made with the intention of fitting a horse-shoe. Many streets are still paved in this way. Kerbs were much longer and better shaped.

Setts were sent all over the country and were sometimes laid in interlocking quadrants (Darracq work) e.g. Manchester Central station entrance; but in Leicester Jarrom St. was the only example quoted and that is now tarred over.

The laying process was as follows: on a layer of small rubble was laid about 4 in. of cinders or sand. The pavior, equipped with a spirit level and two hammers, which could also be used for trimming, laid the setts in this, and they were then rammed home by a labourer using a heavy wooden ram which he swung between his legs. For this arduous work he received, of course, less pay. A complete set of pavior's tools was recovered, and several new hammers were found in the Corporation store, but a rammer has not yet been discovered.

A proposal has been put forward to repair and preserve Castle View as a typical example of this important local industry.

## LEICESTERSHIRE RECORD OFFICE

The following records have been deposited during the year ended 31 March 1959:

### TOWN RECORDS

*Melton Mowbray Town Estate*: Minute Books, 1572-1917; Muniments of Title, 1600-1895; Accounts and Papers (including Poor Law), 18th and 19th cent.

### PARISH RECORDS

1. *Billesdon*: Poor Law Records—Settlement Certificates, 1723-1816 and Examinations, 1741-1816; Removal Orders, 1735-1830; Bastardy Papers, 1742-1827; Apprenticeship Indentures, 1747-1833; Overseers' Account Books, 1818-1832; House Row Books, 1823-1830; Valuation of Workhouse, 1819; Parish Valuations, 1765 and 1864-67. *Billesdon Fair*—Minute Book, 1859-66; Treasurer's Book, 1846-59. *Billesdon National School*—Cash Book, 1875-89; Correspondence, Reports and Papers, 1875-1913. *Goadby School*—Log Book, 1878-95. Miscellaneous Papers, 1798-1912.

2. *Enderby*: Minute Books of Vestry and Parish Meeting, 1859-1907, and of Parish Council, 1894-1946. Overseers' Account Books, 1836-48 and 1877-98; Parish General Account Books, 1895-1937; Lighting and Watching Account Books, 1893-1901 and 1915-30.

3. *Hugglescote*: Churchwardens' Accounts, 1818-21 and 1826-29.

4. *Laughton*: Registers, 1754-1837 (and Banns, 1824-1926). Faculties, 1879 (Restoration of Church) and 1920. Church Restoration Accounts, 1881. Vestry Minute Book, 1834-90. Charity Trustees Minute Book, 1850-93. Coal Charity Accounts, 1809-35. Constables' Accounts, 1805-35. Apprenticeship Registers, 1804-9 and 1825. Poor Law Papers, 1716-1803. Miscellaneous Papers, 1802-87.

5. *Mowsley*: Registers, 1660-1837. Terrier of Parsonage and Glebe, 1712. Deeds of School, 1864-1925.

### ENCLOSURE RECORDS

*Husbands Bosworth*: Enclosure Award, 1765.

### TITHE RECORDS

*Garthorpe*: Tithe Award and Map, 1840.

### CANAL RECORDS

*Melton to Oakham Canal*: Plan, 1790; Register of Shares.

### RAILWAY RECORDS

*Midland Railway* (Leicester and Hitchin): Act, 1853.

### EDUCATION RECORDS

*Log Books for following Schools*: Copt Oak, 1874-1958; Fenny Drayton, 1878-1951; Owston and Withcote, 1877-1906 and 1912; Peatling Parva, 1897-1934.

*Admission Registers for Copt Oak School*, 1897-1956.