

NOTES

SECULAR WALL-PAINTINGS AT AMERSHAM

An allusion was made in the article by Mr. F. W. Reader, published in the last issue of the *Records* (p. 237), to some paintings discovered in a house adjoining the Old Grammar School, Amersham.

The large figure, attributed to the early 17th century, has now been identified as that of Hercules. The remains of a whole set of figures of that or a little earlier date has now been uncovered in another house in the town. These figures, of which six remain more or less complete, undoubtedly represent the characters of the Nine Worthies:—Three Jews, three Pagans and three Christians. Of the first group, Joshua and David remain; of the second, Hector and Julius Cæsar, and of the last, Charlemagne and Godcfray de Bouillon.

Mr. Reader is kind enough to promise a full account of these important discoveries, which will appear in the next number of the *Records*, with illustrations. It is remarkable that mural paintings of such various dates should fall to be recorded in this number as the primitive, but beautiful work at Little Missenden, and the later and most curious work in the adjoining parish of Amersham.

 WOOBURN DEYN COURT

Last year the County lost a most important monument in the only existing portion of the 15th century manor house of the d'Eyncourts and Lovells at Wooburn. The buildings, owned by Col. Du Pre, had been condemned by the Wycombe Surveyor, and

were entirely pulled down in December, 1931. Previously, in 1920, another portion of the same group of buildings (classified in *R.C.H.M., Bucks*, Vol. I., p. 324 as possibly the Hall) was demolished to make room for the new road which now runs west of the church.

Unfortunately, through various misunderstandings, there was no one on the spot to make measured drawings or take proper photographs. However, one of our members, Mr. A. S. Kerry, was able to take a few snapshots and glean sufficient details to show the important character of the building, and from these and other data carefully collected, a highly interesting conjectural restoration can be made. Sections of the stone mouldings have been made by the courtesy of Mr. F. Jackson, Wharton House, Bourne End, in whose rockery they now repose, and details of the roof timbers have been noted in the builder's yard. All this material, with an account of the building and its conjectural restoration, will be placed in the Society's archives. Mr. Kerry was further instrumental in obtaining for the Society's Museum some representative stone door and window mouldings (presented by Mr. Jackson) and two king posts from the roof, with four-way braces (presented by himself and Mr. Trickey). Mr. Trickey also presented four signed and dated bricks.

The building was of exceptionally interesting type, as its roof was supported in part on wooden piers, with chamfered corners, standing right out into the rooms, making a hall of three (possibly four) bays with narrow aisles, similar to the Savoy at Denham, but later in date. The tall octagonal king post shows traces of original red colouring, while the other (both now in the possession of our Society) is of different type, and is coated with an accumulation of soot, as much as $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick in places. This suggests that

there was an open hearth in the hall, the smoke escaping through a louvre in the roof in the vicinity of the second king post.

From the foregoing facts, and comparing the photograph of the other roof in the Commission's account, it is far more likely that the building recently destroyed was the great hall of the manor.