

## NOTES

MR. R. C. S. WALTERS contributes the following notes on historical springs and wells in Buckinghamshire. Two such sites will already be well known—St. Rumbold's Well in Buckingham, and John Schorne's Well at North Marston :

For some years I have been collecting information concerning springs and wells which are of historical interest. These include English wells attached to British and Roman Camps; also those attached to Churches and Monasteries and others with more secular associations.

(1) *QUEEN ELIZABETH'S WELL, BISHAM (NEAR MARLOW)*. Concerning the latter group it may be appropriate, to call attention to the Queen Elizabeth Well at Bisham near Marlow, which not strictly within our County, is only just across the River Thames; and the payment of some dissolved Buckinghamshire monasteries was given as endowment to Bisham on its re-foundation.

Bisham Abbey was one of the pre-Reformation abbeys and there is no doubt that the spring was re-named after Queen Elizabeth when she stayed at the Manor with Lady Bacon and Lady Burleigh and their brother-in-law Sir Thomas Hoby. Here Elizabeth, when a princess, stayed some part of a period of three years.

The spring is marked in italics, *Queen Elizabeth's Well*, on the six-inch map and is fairly easily found, being 100 yards west of the fork of the Marlow—Maidenhead and Marlow-Henley roads. (The dell in which the spring rises may be seen below from the Marlow-Henley road at 100 yards west of this fork.)

The spring rises at about 90 ft. O.D. at the foot of the lovely wooded cliff margining the valley of the Thames. It may be reached from the by-road from

Bisham to Temple, at 150 yards from the main road at Bisham where at the first right-angled bend there is a lane leading southwards for 100 yards to a bridge crossing the stream coming from the well. If this stream is traced over the meadow to the south-west to the foot of the escarpment the dell will soon be found where there is a large clump of trees including a particularly fine although dying oak.

Formerly the dell could be reached from the fork of the Marlow-Maidenhead Marlow-Henley roads where there was a stile and footpath downhill across the field to the above-mentioned bridge and stream; but the field has been ploughed and the stile done away with.

The water first makes its appearance from under some tumbled rough flint stones with one or two dressed stones in the vicinity. It flows vigorously sometimes, say, at about a quarter of a million gallons per day in a pretty little rill at the foot of the chalk hills and thence flows along the alluvium past the willows north-eastwards to Bisham and the Thames.

I have not been able to find any reference to the spring of the days when it was attached to Bisham Abbey, but in all probability it was the water supply and would probably rank as a "holy well."

(2) QUEEN ANNE'S WELL, CHALVEY. The only other "Queen Well" which I have come across in Buckinghamshire is that at Chalvey, between Slough and Windsor, where there is a fine spring which formerly supplied watercress beds.

The place is in sight of Windsor Castle, but there appears to be no history beyond the fact that Queen Anne used to visit the place; no doubt the dedication to Queen Anne took the place of an earlier dedication.

The spring rises at the west end of Chalvey in a once pretty pond (now occupied by an electric sub-station with pylons) surrounded by a large area of Taplow Gravel, which collects the water and supplies the pond, which appears to have been artificially enlarged for the growing of watercress (now disused). The pond overflows and a little stream runs away eastwards towards Chalvey and thence southwards to the Thames at Windsor.

The place is on private property, but may be seen by looking southward from the old quarry now largely filled with rubbish at the west end of Chalvey just west of Queen Anne's Cottages. The name on the latter has been painted out.

The spring is some two miles north of Windsor Castle and according to the *Mirror* of 1832, p. 248, Queen Anne is said to have used the water and Queen Charlotte for many years had some of it taken to Windsor. According to *Murray's Handbook* (p. 119), it was good for eyes.

It seems a pity that the place has been allowed to get into such a state of neglect.

HIGH WYCOMBE: *Roman Villa in Great Penn Mead*. The High Wycombe Borough Council has announced its intention of building a swimming bath on the site of the Roman Villa in Great Penn Mead on the Rye. The Ancient Monuments Department of the Ministry of Works has fortunately forbidden this until the site has been excavated. Accordingly work has been started under the Ministry's ægis this summer (1954). It is doubtful if anything spectacular in the way of finds will be made since the site has been rifled on a number of previous occasions and the mosaic pavements broken up. But it is to be hoped that the scientific examination of the site and its stratigraphy (hitherto ignored) will yield valuable information as to history, development and dating, particularly of the subsidiary buildings.

WING: *Mound on Leighton Buzzard Road*. Another emergency dig (undertaken

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Thomas Gurney

Hurtwell Collection, B.A.S. 60/40.

PLATE 5A. GRANT OF RENT OF LANDS IN GREAT KIMBLE AND STONE BY THOMAS GURNEY IN 1480. Signature at foot.

Iste liber composuit fuit decimo die p[ro]p[ri]etas anno regni Regis h[ab]et  
 Quidam Gurney fuit exre p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas  
 Robertus Gurney de p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas Gurney de p[ro]p[ri]etas & p[ro]p[ri]etas Gurney de p[ro]p[ri]etas  
 p[ro]p[ri]etas Gurney de p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas  
 p[ro]p[ri]etas Gurney de p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas p[ro]p[ri]etas

Dashwood Collection, B.A.S. 1/11.

PLATE 5B. FIRST TWO PARAGRAPHS OF PEDIGREE, compiled by Thomas Gurney between 1459 and 1479.



*Bucks Advertiser.*

PLATE 6. OPENING OF THE MUSEUM EXTENSION. Left to right: The Mayor of High Wycombe (Alderman J. F. J. S. Bunn), The Mayor of Aylesbury (Alderman F. B. Howard), Mrs. Howard, The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, the Curator. Behind—Sir Allan Barlow and Mr. Worboys.

by our member, Mrs. A. Young, F.S.A., and Miss Richardson on behalf of the Ministry of Works) concerns the mound or tumulus on the Leighton Buzzard road at the east end of the village, to be destroyed in a road "improvement" scheme. Mrs. Young has kindly provided the following notes:

"HAWKESLOW: A local landmark, the tree-covered mound between Wing and Leighton Buzzard, has been demolished in the process of widening and improving the road. The mound stood on land which was formerly the village green of Ascott.

Excavation showed that the mound was built of the local gravel and sand, in which pottery, worked and burnt flints, and a fragment of smoothed stone, possibly part of a quern, were recovered from a dirty sand level, which suggested occupation and included a rim fragment of Roman ware at ground level.

A clay pit 3 ft. in diameter and 2 ft. in depth, sealed by a wide area of ash and charcoal lay at a varying depth of approximately one foot below the sub-humus. This feature is probably intrusive. The mound included Roman debris, and cannot therefore antedate the occupation.

I am indebted to Mr. Vere Woodman for information which gives the early name. Orders dating from the reign of Charles I concern 'Hawkeslow field in the comon fields of Ascott'.

The name suggests that the mound had some importance in the Dark Ages."

LANGLEY MARISH. *Kederminster Library*. The active interest and co-operation of the Bucks County Council has helped to keep the Library in good order. The thermostatic heaters have been adjusted, and the room kept clean. Treatment of the furniture and parts of the panelling against woodworm is in hand. The Rev. F. C. Heward has prepared a very full, annotated and classified catalogue of the books in the Library. It is hoped to have a few duplicated copies made which will be deposited at Aylesbury, the British Museum, and the Bodleian Library. Mr. Heward's keen interest in the Library and his great labour in compiling the Index is greatly appreciated. *Kederminster and Seymour Almshouses*. The Pilgrim Trust, following a report by Mr. W. H. Godfrey, F.S.A., F.R.I.B.A., to the Langley United Charities, made a grant towards the cost of repairs and modernisation of this charming group of buildings. *Church*. A stone bearing the carved date 1808 on the interesting and delightful west porch—a rare feature at this period—has been defaced on the instructions of the Vicar, the Rev. Palmer, on the grounds that it made many people think the Church only dated from the early nineteenth century. This unauthorised and unnecessary piece of destruction of a valuable dated feature is to be deplored.

STANTONBURY. *Remains of St. Peter's Church*. A report reaches us that nothing further has been done about the fine Norman chancel arch removed from the old Chapel, and the stones remain most unsuitably stacked. The incumbent who engineered their removal has left; and money for the scheme to re-erect them as part of a Church extension at New Bradwell has failed and the whole scheme languished. The fate of this interesting feature is therefore highly uncertain.

CHURCH RESTORATIONS: A good deal of work has been going on in a number of Buckinghamshire Churches. In some cases interesting discoveries have resulted; and in any event it may be useful to note what has been done. So far no County Trust has been set up for Buckinghamshire in connection with the Historic Churches



Preservation Trust, although the matter has been raised in Council, and Mr. Bulmer-Thomas and the Bishop of Buckingham have both addressed a meeting of our Society on the subject. Church appeals have therefore had to rely for support on local efforts and on grants from the Morris Fund of the Society of Antiquaries, or from the Central Body, which in most cases can only account for a fraction of the large sums needed. If any members feel disposed to help in the formation of a County Trust their assistance will be very welcome, and they should write to the County Museum at Aylesbury.

WING: Probably the most important discoveries, the full extent and import of which is not yet fully realised, have taken place at Wing. Mr. A. V. Woodman, F.S.A., contributes the following notes:

"Early features of great interest have recently come to light in Wing Church. The removal of defective plaster at the eastern end of the north aisle has revealed an original doorway of Saxon date. Although the external features of this doorway were uncovered in 1893, when the walls were stripped of plaster, it would seem that no search was then made for traces of it within the church. The doorway, which is in very good condition, was probably intended to open into an ambulatory, similar to that still existing at Brixworth, around the apse. But, even while the church was in the course of erection, this idea seems to have been abandoned and the doorway was blocked and hidden beneath the plaster. Of even greater interest was the finding of two original doorways, some sixteen feet above the floor level, at the western ends of the north and south walls of the nave. Several years ago the writer noticed what appeared to be the head of a blocked clerestory window projecting above the lead of the roof of the south aisle. In view of the recent discovery in the north aisle, it seems likely that at least some remains of this opening might be concealed beneath the plaster within and, on investigation, this proved to be the case, for not a window but another doorway was uncovered. Its head had been more or less destroyed when the fifteenth-century clerestory window was inserted, but the corresponding doorway, found in the north wall, is substantially intact and retains some of the original plastering. It is obvious that the doorways were intended to give access to a gallery devised for the use of a personage of high distinction.\* Baldwin Brown, in his *Arts in Early England*—Vol. II, p. 331—mentions that Charlemagne's biographer, Eginhard, possessed in the upper storey of the western choir of the basilica he erected at Seligenstadt a "coenaculum", or upper chamber, which he used for his own accommodation during the Services. Access to such galleries was usually by a doorway in the tower and only at Tredington, Worcestershire, are there slight remains of an arrangement resembling that now found, far more completely, at Wing. The existence of these doorways explains the recess high in the west wall of the South aisle. It is evident that it was the doorway of an external staircase leading to the gallery with which it was connected by a short platform. Presumably there was a corresponding doorway in the North aisle, but no trace of it is visible. Although a good deal of the West end of the Saxon church seems to have survived, the stairways have, of course, disappeared; they may have flanked a narthex, or porch, that pre-existed the present fifteenth-century tower."

PENN: Much work has been done on the Church during the past two years, and the Vicar, the Rev. O. Muspratt, is to be congratulated on his constant vigilance throughout the whole time, as a result of which, not a single ancient feature or shred of evidence of the Church's history and development has been missed.

\* No doubt the lady Aelfgifw, the builder of the church.

The work was in charge of Mr. J. E. M. MacGregor, F.R.I.B.A., and was largely executed by Messrs. Frank Perfect & Sons.

On the exterior, the early plinths were cleared, and removal of roughcast revealed the extensive use in medieval times, of roofing tiles in the walling. (Penn, of course, was a centre of manufacture of both roof and floor tiles in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.) Experimental areas have been left exposed to see whether it will be possible fully to expose the charming texture of the walls beneath the rendering. But much is flint or chalk rubble and is in poor condition. The very yellow nature of the mortar suggests that the North wall may be of twelfth-century date. The clearing of the South porch has revealed charming brick, flint and tile work of two periods.

On the interior, the old walls were cleaned down and freed from their peeling coats of distemper. Considerable evidences of painting were found. At the East end of the South arcade several superimposed series of post-Reformation texts came to light. Opposite the North door a panel containing traces of pigment was carefully examined, but nothing could be made of it. The most important discovery was that of the remains of a fine series of thirteenth-century Consecration Crosses on the South and West walls of the nave. They were evidently considered of importance in former restorations, for they survived on little "islands" of ancient plaster in the midst of later work. Their principal interest lies in their unusual elaboration and in the fact that they are all different. Two survive tolerably complete, and about half of a third Cross out of the original set of twelve. Each is 16 inches in diameter and set out by compass in the plaster. The Crosses themselves, about 9 inches in diameter, are alternately red on pink or cream grounds, and pink or cream on red, and are contained within three bands or circles, some being decorated with yellow roundels, some coloured light red or vermilion, and some black or grey with evidence of ornament in the form of scallops. The Cross north of the tower arch has the arms covered with open scrollwork in yellow. They have been cleaned and preserved, the plaster repaired, and measured drawings made of them. All uncoloured areas have been re-limewashed.

The socket for holding the Rood over the chancel arch was found, in connection with the Doom (the latter was lent to the Victoria and Albert Museum during the work). The opening of the Rood Loft staircase was also found, and two blocked windows were opened up—one a double light clerestory window on the North, probably of Tudor date since the jambs and mullion are of brick, and one a tall and wide (probably fourteenth century) lancet east of the North door. Evidence of the latter is seen in the eighteenth-century print of the Church reproduced opposite page 138 in J. G. Jenkins' *History of Penn.*

Evidence of colour and the outline of charges on some of the shields composing the roof corbels was also found, and it was decided to re-colour and gild these. For the others which bore no evidence of their former tinctures a series was prepared representative of the patrons of the living down the centuries. This was done by Mr. E. Clive Rouse in collaboration with Mr. P. S. Spokes, the heraldic authority of Oxford, and the colouring was done under Mr. Rouse's supervision. The arms now read as follows: North side East to West. 1. Shield of the HOLY TRINITY (to whom the Church is dedicated); 2. PENN; 3. TURVILLE; 4. Head of a Bishop, possibly a member of the SEAGRAVE family who became Bishop of London in 1306; William of Wykeham or a Bishop of Lincoln, in which diocese Penn was situated in the middle ages; 5. BAYEUX or BAYOUS; 6. MOHUN. South side East to West. 7. SEAGRAVE; 8. BAYEUX repeated; 9. ST. GEORGE;

10. A crowned King, very probably Edward III, a fine piece of portrait sculpture and not a random conventional kingly type; 11. A grotesque head in curious head-dress, very possibly intended as a caricature of Richard II wearing a form of cap of estate following his deposition; 12. CURZON-HOWE. Shields 5 and 8 had the charges already carved; shields 6 and 9 were restored from evidence of colour and incised lines.

Opportunity was also taken to examine the Penn and Curzon vaults which had been closed for almost a century. The Penn and other brasses were moved to a more suitable position in the South Aisle, when dry-rot-infested pews were removed and a small Chapel constructed. It is hoped to publish the results of all these researches in detail in due course.

BIERTON: The Rev. E. A. Steer received a comprehensive report on the fabric of this very fine fourteenth-century cruciform Church, from Messrs. Rogers & Surman, showing that extensive work was needed at an estimated cost of more than £3,000. So far Messrs. Symm, of Oxford, have dealt with the following items: South West buttress of South transept rebuilt and refaced with Corsham Bath stone; North transept, pebble-dash rendering removed from East wall and stonework pointed; brick and tile parapet dismantled and rebuilt in stone; both buttresses underpinned and refaced; North window (seriously damaged by previous cement repairs) almost wholly restored. All guttering and spouting renewed, and bases of walls cleared of vegetation, and drainage improved.

Much work remains to be done, principally on the tower, the South East turret, and the South East buttress of the South transept. Investigation of cracks in the North porch (hitherto considered a comparatively modern construction) has revealed sixteenth-century work which should be uncovered and made good.

The interior roof and walls also need attention, when it is hoped opportunity will be taken to preserve the interesting remains of wall paintings and explore for more. The Church was among the first to receive a grant from the Historic Churches Preservation Trust, as well as from the Morris Fund, Incorporated Church Building Society, the Diocese and other sources. But much remains to be collected to enable the necessary work to proceed.

EDLESBOROUGH: This fine Church on its artificial mound lying below the Chilterns beyond Ivinghoe, has for many years been in an increasingly poor structural condition, with serious settlement cracks in the tower and elsewhere, and extensive disintegration of the stonework. Activity and funds have languished. But the present incumbent, the Rev. Denys H. Jones, seems to be tackling the situation. He has issued a well-illustrated but not very informative appeal pamphlet in which it is stated that some £10,000 is needed for all the work which should be done. The following account of the work so far done has been kindly provided by the Vicar. One rather regrets the expenditure of money on the bells and the clock when so much vital structural work remains to be done. But the pressure of Parish wishes has sometimes to be respected, though it is rather like putting down a Persian carpet in the drawing-room when there are no windows or roof!

The main task of 1953 was to repair and strengthen the tower. This involved the erection of scaffolding from the base to the full height of the tower, the stripping off of the cement facing (which has caused so much damage to the fabric) and the pointing of the walls so that they could be dressed with a lime solution. Cracks and fissures made necessary extensive rebuilding, and in particular the staircase turret had to be dismantled and rebuilt. The frames of the windows needed considerable remoulding and new louvres have been fitted to them. A



concrete beam to tie the tower has been inserted South to North over the tower arch, involving the tricky task of tunnelling right through the tower. The tower is now firm again and there are hopes that the bells will be put in order. The bells are mentioned in the sixteenth-century documents, though the disastrous fire of 1828 when the tower was struck by lightning brought them crashing to the ground and they had to be recast. The experts agree that this fire had much to do with the weakening of the tower, and so a necessary step has been taken in providing a lightning conductor. Another minor improvement has been the repairing and painting of the clock. At the end of 1953 and in the early months of 1954 further work on the North side has followed the completion of work on the tower. Two buttresses at the North West corner of the Church have been taken down and rebuilt. At present a major stage of the work continues in the restoration of the North porch which had almost fallen down. Great skill is being shown here (as elsewhere) in preserving the character of the building, although large amounts of fresh stone are being used. In one respect indeed the porch has greatly improved. Underneath the plaster ceiling which had to be removed has been found the original timber in good condition, and thus an addition is made to the rich treasury of wood carving that the Church already contains. This is the second discovery of importance made during the reconstruction, the first being the little window in the North West wall of the nave belonging to the Priest's chamber that must once have existed there as the evidence of a fireplace on the inner wall shows.

There is still much to do. The walls of the nave and chancel will need the same treatment as the tower, i.e., the stripping of the cement, pointing, and strengthening of buttresses. The Parish Church Council are anxious to use the last of their funds in restoring the bells, and if a faculty for this is allowed it will be the end of work for the present. Immediately another £1,000 is available the battlements, which are in a very poor state, will be replaced.

When that stage is complete there must be a long pause until sufficient funds are raised to tackle the walls of the nave and chancel. This may well cost another £3,000 or £4,000.

All this work has been in the hands of Mr. John E. M. Macgregor, F.S.A., F.R.I.B.A., and the Church at Edlesborough owed a considerable debt to his sensitive treatment which has assured that the new work blends happily with the earlier structure. A word of tribute should also be paid to E. E. Chandler, and R. F. Plumeridge, the two workmen who have shown such interest in their tasks. The former in particular has displayed craftsmanship unusual in these times. "Sam" as he is known to his friends, can be compared with a medieval craftsman and deserves a special niche in the history of the Church's restoration.

CHALFONT ST. GILES: Further extensive work has been done in the church, involving the almost complete renewal of the South aisle roof, only a few rafters and parts of four wall brackets having been suffered to remain out of the fifteenth-century timbers. The chancel roof had already been replaced. While regretting the necessity of such a complete renovation, one is glad to be able to praise the quality and design of the new work. In particular it is a pleasure to record sound and imaginative new features in creative sculpture such as the really fine series of carved stone roof corbels in the chancel. These are the work of Mr. Arthur J. Ayres in conjunction with the architects, Messrs. Dawe, Carter and Partners, of Watford. They are eight in number, in light stone with salient features faintly coloured and gilded, and they represent an epitome of the life of the Church's patron saint, St. Giles. The corbels represent: North side, West to East, 1. Angel

head with scroll, referring to the Golden Legend version of the Life when an angel placed a scroll on the altar recording the one sin the King of France had not confessed; 2. Head of St. Giles; 3. The hand of St. Giles, wounded by an arrow, protecting a hind; 4. Hind's head, the Saint's symbol; South side, East to West, 5. Ship, emblematic of St. Giles' journey from Greece to France; 6. Floating doors, placed by the Saint in faith in the Tiber and miraculously delivered safely to him in France; 7. Head of the King of France; 8. Beggar's head, symbolising the Saint's especial care of cripples and mendicants.

AIR PHOTOGRAPHS OF MONASTIC SITES: It may be useful to give a list of the air photographs of Monastic sites in Buckinghamshire available in the Cambridge University Collection (as at January 1952). They are in the charge of the Curator in Aerial Photography, Dr. J. K. St. Joseph, Selwyn College, and are temporarily housed in the Museum of Classical Archaeology, Little St. Mary's Lane, Cambridge. The photographs are oblique views, taken with an air survey camera, from heights between 800 and 2,000 feet. They are not all of value in elucidating the details of the site and former layout; and indeed in some cases no medieval features survive. But they form an interesting record of former monastic sites. They are given below with their references. (Cf. Plate 1.)

BRADWELL (Benedictine) F K 12-13.

SNETTESHALL (? meant for SNELSHALL near Whaddon and spelt SNELLESHALL in Dugdale's *Monasticon*; given by St. Joseph as Benedictine but originally Premonstratensian—see Review of Jenkins' *Cartulary of Snelshall Priory* on p. 55). D A 4-5. In any event there are good vertical stereoscopic photographs of the site of Snelshall on prints 6242 and 6243 of sortie 3 G/TUDD/UK 86 Part III, 26th March, 1946.

BIDDLESDEN (Cistercian) C U 50-1.

MISSENDEN (Austin Canons) G C 51.

NOTLEY (Austin Canons) C A 72-7.

ASHRIDGE (Bonshommes, formerly in Bucks) C O 5-7.

LAVENDON (Premonstratensian). No. reference given.