

OBITUARIES

EDWARD LEGG (1937–2008)

Chairman of Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society

Ted lived in Fenny Stratford most of his life, never losing his interest in his home area. A Wolverton Grammar School boy, he gained a place at St Andrews to study chemistry but his father's illness meant that after a year, he had to abandon the course and return to Fenny. However, as he was no longer at university he became liable for National Service and served his time below ground in the coalmines of Northumberland, where his knowledge of explosives stood him in good stead.

Ted became involved in local archaeology and history while still at school, helping on a local dig at Magiovinium. He was a founder member of the Bletchley Archaeological and Historical Society in 1961 and eventually became its president. He was closely involved with the Bradwell Abbey Field Centre. He was a trustee of the Rectory Cottages Trust and served for many years as Chairman, as he did for the Council for British Archaeology's South Midlands group. In 1999 he became Chairman of the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society, a post he still held at the onset of his distressing illness.

As several of his friends have observed, Ted was a private man who kept his interests compartmentalised. Few in the archaeological world realised that archaeology was only one of his many interests. These included an expert knowledge of horology and Ted was on the point of completing a book on the clockmakers of Buckinghamshire. He did much charity work, especially with The Samaritans. Ted was a magistrate, and for a period Chairman of the Bench. He was also an enthusiastic genealogist and in recent years he was engaged

in transcribing a massive burial register for a large Victorian London cemetery with several thousand entries.

Ted contributed several articles on the Bletchley area to the *Records of Buckinghamshire*, and a volume to the Buckinghamshire Record Society series on the 1851 returns of the religious census. As a sideline he wrote a number of well-researched booklets on local subjects such as *The Fenny Poppers – St Martin's Day Celebrations*, *Fenny Stratford: Genealogical sources in the Borough of Milton Keynes*, *The Early History of Bletchley Park 1235–1937*, various guides to local churches and *The Clock and Watchmakers of Buckinghamshire*. He was in demand as a lecturer and a guide to local monuments – his tours of Fenny Stratford were fascinating in their portrayal of what at first sight was an unremarkable little town.

Not long ago Ted volunteered to re-type Stanley Freese's work on *Buckinghamshire Watermills* when it was being considered for publication by the Society. He rapidly transcribed the much-altered typescript with great thoroughness and speed and the result was published by the Society in 2007. He was also an active member of the Friends of the University of Buckingham. Perhaps most surprisingly, after his death, his friends discovered that he had been once also been a qualified glider pilot! A man of talents who made a quiet contribution to public service in many ways, he will be much missed.

MF based on notes from Ted's many friends

MICHAEL CLEMENT JANCEY DAVIS (1940–2008)

Chairman of Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society

Mike Davis, who became Chairman of BAS in 2007 after the resignation of Ted Legg, died on 11

November 2008, after a gallant battle against liver cancer. Mike was passionately interested in archae-

ology in general, and church archaeology in particular. As a child he had been introduced to the delights of “church-crawling” by his clergyman father.

On leaving the Army after an eventful career of 37 years, he decided to formalise his archaeological knowledge, and enrolled with the Oxford Department for Continuing Education. He started with an “Introduction to Archaeology” course and then achieved a Diploma in British (Anglo-Saxon) Archaeology, an Advanced Diploma in Archaeological Practice (with a dissertation on the Landscape of Missenden Abbey) and finally an MSc in Applied Landscape Archaeology – completing the dissertation for the last, on the hilltop churches in the Chilterns, on his laptop from a hospital bed.

As a practical archaeologist he took an active part in numerous digs, at Frilford as part of his Oxford studies, with the Chess Valley Archaeological & Historical Society, at Common Wood, Penn, and elsewhere. Sometimes his part was almost too active, as when he toppled, from his considerable height, face down into a trench, breaking both wrists, and, on a subsequent occasion, he slipped on a muddy path and broke a leg. He gave many talks on archaeological subjects to numerous organisations.

Mike had a particular interest in abbeys and monasteries. As a youngster he had explored the remains of St Radegund’s Abbey near Dover, and he returned to it 50 years later. The result was a scholarly paper ‘St Radegund’s Abbey – a re-assessment of the Abbey Church’, published in 2006 in *Archaeologia Cantiana* (the journal of the Kent Archaeological Society). Before Mike’s work, this site was comparatively unknown, but now it is definitely on the archaeological map.

In 1962 Mike started building a model of a little

Saxon church, christened St Pomegranate’s, from tiny wooden blocks, with a tinfoil roof. Over the years he continued to work on the model, adding to it and rebuilding, just as happened with actual churches. At the time of his death he had drawn up plans for an octagonal west tower, to what is now a much larger and more complex model.

When Mike and his family moved to Great Missenden he quickly became involved with the parish church, and was fascinated by its history and its relationship to Missenden Abbey. He was able to put his practical knowledge to good effect as Chairman of the Fabric Committee and also led the bell-ringers as Captain of the Tower. He readily agreed to become the first Chairman of the church’s “Friends”, formed to raise funds for the conservation of the fabric of the church.

He was a Trustee and Membership Secretary of the Society for Church Archaeology, and a Trustee and Chairman of the Inspection Committee of the Bucks Historic Churches Trust. His interests extended to literature, music, history and the countryside in general, as well as archaeology.

Mike’s enormous enthusiasm and sense of fun endeared him to all who knew him. Grounded on his deep Christian faith, he had a real concern for the wellbeing of others. This was exemplified in his many years as volunteer with SSAFA – visiting ex-servicemen and their families both at home and in the Spinal Injuries Unit at Stoke Mandeville, and organising financial support where needed.

Those of us who knew Mike were privileged to do so, and we want Vivienne and Mike’s children to know that we remember him with admiration and affection.

Jennifer Moss

JOHN COALES, O.B.E., F.S.A. (1931–2007)

John was born on 12 May 1931 at Newport Pagnell, the only child of local miller John Leslie Coales and his wife Florence, née Webster of Aylesbury. John started his education at Bury Lawn School in Newport Pagnell, went on to Swanbourne House Preparatory School, and finally St Edward’s School, Oxford.

John’s formal education ended at the age of seventeen when he joined the family corn-milling

business of Francis Coales & Son. The firm had been founded in 1885 by his great-grandfather, Francis Coales, farmer and brickmaker of Chicheley, together with his second son, Walter John Coales, when they acquired the business of Hives & Son, corn, coal, seed and timber merchants, at the Shipley Wharf, Newport Pagnell. The property included a large building, formerly a brewery, with stables, sheds, and a railway siding.

Francis Coales farmed on a large scale at Chicheley and was a well-respected member of the local community. For many years he had been Chairman of the Board of Guardians and a Deacon of the Congregational Church in Newport Pagnell. His wife Emily was the daughter of William Bateman Bull, the grandson of Revd William Bull, who came to Newport Pagnell in 1764 as Pastor of the Independent Chapel.

The family were well-established locally and soon expanded the corn milling side of the business. In 1898 they purchased King's Mill at Bedford and in 1909 built a new mill on the Newport Pagnell site. In 1915 they installed a large gas-powered engine that ran day and night enabling them to produce animal feed for farmers in addition to milling corn for flour. By 1920 they had their first of many delivery lorries.

The company flourished under the direction of John's father, John Leslie, and his uncle Francis William. In 1928 it expanded further with the acquisition of the Cowper Mills at Olney, and in 1937 acquired the business of Herbert Grange, miller at Tring. John joined the company in 1947. In the early 1960s John and his father oversaw the building of a state-of-the-art animal feed mill at Newport Pagnell. Soon afterwards they ceased to mill flour for human consumption. At this time the business employed over eighty people, however, a series of disastrous fires followed; the Tring mill was destroyed in 1964, Olney Mill suffered a similar fate in 1965, and finally in December 1973 a fire at Newport destroyed much of their premises. John Leslie was now aged 77 and John was not the man to rebuild the business; his heart was not in it. Without an heir he decided to close and liquidate the assets.

Like his father, John was proud of his family's business achievements, and wanted to perpetuate the family name, and preserve the local heritage. In 1975 he established the Francis Coales Charitable Foundation, endowing it with most of the proceeds from the sale of the company. The objects of the Foundation were to provide grants or loans to meet the cost 'of Antiquarian research by Archaeological or other methods' and to assist with 'the Repair or Restoration of any Ecclesiastical or other buildings from time to time opened to public view which shall have been built before the year 1875'. Preference was to be given to churches and their contents in Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire

and Hertfordshire, where most of the business of Francis Coales and Son had been conducted. However, where the conservation of monuments and monumental brasses was concerned, John insisted that no territorial restriction should apply.

Since its creation the Foundation has given several million pounds of aid in support of church restoration and other projects. In the 2007 New Year Honours List, John was made an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, a well-deserved reward for his major contribution to our National Heritage.

John's father had been a justice of the Peace for Buckinghamshire from 1945–1969 and, like his father before him, was a local councillor for many years and a pillar of local society. A gentleman, an enthusiastic genealogist, and local historian with a magnificent library, he encouraged similar interests in his son. As a boy John spent many hours cycling around the neighbourhood visiting local churches. He also enjoyed holidays visiting churches throughout the country, with his mother or in the company of his relative the Revd. Ronald Bale, curate of Newport Pagnell and subsequently vicar of Buckingham.

John and I became good friends in the 1950s and for some years we attended evening classes and lectures on various historical subjects. As John did not drive I was allowed to drive his father's car, a large AC, to meetings at Bedford, Northampton, and beyond. I spent many hours in John Leslie's library and on my first visit he shook hands and asked who my binder was. John was an active member of the Wolverton and District Archaeological Society and the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society. He was a member of the Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire Societies, served for a time on the Council of the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society and was a founder member of the Church Monuments Society. He became a Vice-President of the British Archaeological Association, and an honorary member of the Northamptonshire Record Society.

His main interest was monumental brasses; he joined the Monumental Brass Society in 1956, and served as Honorary Secretary from 1966 to 1974. When he retired he became a Vice-President and was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

In 1977, shortly after closing the business and establishing the Foundation, he moved from

Newport Pagnell to The Mount, at Somerton in Somerset, but never lost interest in Buckinghamshire. Many of the Foundation Trust Meetings were held locally and following lunch, he enjoyed visiting churches to see for himself where the Foundation's money had or would be spent.

With his companions Gerald Wyld and Paul Cockerham he made many expeditions to Northern France, searching for more incised effigial slabs. Gerald, whom John met in the early 1970s, became a valued friend and partner, moving into The Elms at Newport and subsequently accompanying him to Somerset. In 1987 John edited *The Earliest English Brasses: Patronage, Style and Workshops 1270–1350* which was published in 1987 to mark the Centenary of the Society and, following an interregnum, was appointed as Patron in 2002. John utilised money, left by the renowned antiquary, Mr F A Greenhill in trust, to publish under the aegis of the Francis Coales Charitable Foundation, a posthumous volume *Monumental incised slabs in the county of Lincoln*.

John was immensely proud of his ancestry, particularly of his descent from a sixteenth-century resident of Aldwinckle, Northants. His father and his great aunt, Miss Margaret Annie Coales had

built up a large assemblage of related documents, photographs and memorabilia. Their enthusiasm inspired him to continue the research and in 2000, he published *Twelve Generations: Gleanings from the Coales Family Archives*, a large tome of over six-hundred pages. John inherited, and added to, an extensive collection of books and papers covering his family and local history and both Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire Archives have benefited from his bequests.

I last visited him in May 2007 and although he was then aware of his illness he did not mention it. However, it was clear from several boxes etc around his house that he was setting his affairs in order. At that time he returned to me a plan of burials in the old churchyard at Newport Pagnell that we had made in 1964 when it was to be cleared by the local authority. He passed away peacefully on Saturday, 6 October; his funeral on the 17 October 2007 was attended by many old friends. He was laid to rest in his parents' grave on the mound in Newport Pagnell Cemetery. On his coffin a wreath of corn was laid, a fitting tribute to this worthy benefactor, historian, and last representative of a well-known family of local millers.

Dennis C Mynard

PAULINE MARGARET CAUVAIN (1931–2008)

Pauline was born, raised, educated and lived her life in High Wycombe. For much of her professional career, she was associated with the export and shipping of products from Wycombe Marsh Paper Mills, and from Agropharm Ltd, Penn. She was a member of the Institute of Export, serving on many of the committees of the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce and the High Wycombe Export Society – which she chaired for a while. She was a keen member of the High Wycombe Society with a passionate interest in the history of the town and its environs. She served on different committees and represented the Society on several groups liaising with local councils.

She married Stanley in 1969 and they shared common interests in cycling, photography and archaeology. In the early 1970s they studied together for the Oxford University Extra Mural Department Certificate in British Archaeology.

Pauline's project on the industrial archaeology of South Bucks, focused on the mills of the Wye valley. Together with Stanley, Pauline was an active member of the Buckinghamshire County Museum Archaeological Group, taking part in much of the field and excavation work undertaken by the group and supporting a variety of museum-based activities and joined the Society in the mid seventies.

It was perhaps inevitable that Pauline and Stanley would share the same passion for archaeology when – soon after becoming involved with the museum group – they discovered that they had a Romano-British site in the back garden of their house in Micklefield, High Wycombe. This was their first small-scale excavation and they published an account of it in *Records of Bucks*. Later work included investigations of the post-medieval pottery kilns at Emmanuel Church, Chesham, a windmill mound in Penn Woods, a medieval site in Priory

Road and the excavation of the remains of Pann Mill, both in High Wycombe. Outside of the county, their work included excavations in the cellar of the Sally Lunn teashop in the centre of Bath. Pauline was particularly interested in the Penn and Tyler's Green tile and pottery industries and was involved in several of the discoveries of new material and its subsequent publication in *Records of Bucks*.

Less well known were Pauline's poetic talents that were displayed on cards for family, friends and

in poetry compilations. The following lines came from her own pen:

The gentle rain
A softening breeze
Warm on the sun-
Kissed trees
My soul at peace
My thoughts lie still

SC

DORIS WATERTON (1916–2008)

Doris Waterton was born at Ashendon, Buckinghamshire, and lived all her life in Buckinghamshire. Her father was a village policeman at Brill and then Prestwood, where she spent the main part of her life – marrying Harold Waterton, a Bucks man and bearing two sons. She served in the Land Army during the war and was at heart a country girl. She loved entertaining and was incidentally an excellent plucker of game, pheasants in particular.

Doris was a lifelong member of the Society and was initially very active in the Natural History Section. Her knowledge of wildflowers, trees, birds and mammals knew no bounds and included also all types of farming and horticultural activities. Her own garden 'Long Runnetts', Gt. Kingshill was a true reflection of the Gertrude Jekyll style of colour gardening, with its magnificent luxurious flower beds. A lover of animals large and small, her house was always occupied by some furry or feathered friend; she had a true affinity with them. Ollie the Tawny owl lived for 25 years next to the coal shed, bantams, hens and ducks came and went, and a chinchilla lived in a cage on the kitchen table. Let out in the evenings – he chewed various bits of furniture and slowly devoured the kitchen curtains. A

large oversized rabbit was for ever tunnelling out of its outside run.

After a field archaeologist was appointed to the Bucks County Museum, in the 1970's, a whole new world was opened up to her and her friend from Great Kingshill, Joan Taylor. Archaeology became an all-consuming interest and she proved an invaluable member of the County Museum Archaeological Group (known as the 'Tuesday Group'). She helped on a number of excavations, for example at Bourton Grounds, Thornborough in 1972, a memorable excavation with its fine Roman grave goods. Doris never tired of washing and sorting the pottery sherds and other finds from the many County Museum excavations. The discovery of a flint tool in her own garden, which she later donated to the museum, was certainly a highpoint in her life, as was the discovery with Joan Taylor, of the 17th century kiln wasters, confirming the presence of a production site at Potter Row, Great Missenden. (*Recs Bucks* 1978). At the CMAG annual Christmas event she was also a pretty mean darts player. She loved books and seeking out answers to questions about the local and natural history of the County.

BMH