



Notes and Queries

RELATING TO BERKS, BUCKS AND OXON.

Communications are invited upon all subjects of Antiquarian or Architectural interest relating to the three counties. Correspondents are requested to write as plainly as possible, on one side of the paper only, with REPLIES, QUERIES and NOTES on SEPARATE SHEETS, and the name of the writer appended to each communication.

Notes.

DISCOVERY OF A ROMANO-BRITISH VESSEL WITH ROMAN COINS AT READING.—The following comprehends a rather rare and remarkable discovery, and is a strong testimony that the Romans had established a settlement here; although it does not bring us nearer to the fact of Reading being one of their stations, as it is believed to have been by some of the earlier writers. The vessel was observed during the severe frost of the middle of February, lying on some ice in an old unused gravel-pit on Bob's Mount, by some lads who were sliding there. Around it was some thinly scattered gravel, which, loosened by the frost, had evidently fallen from the gravel-cutting, which extended along the border of the ice, carrying the vessel with it. Unfortunately one of the lads gave it a kick, and broke it, when a quantity of coins were revealed, as many as fifty or more it was stated; but such statements are to be received with caution, being usually exaggerated. There is no doubt there was a greater number than were recovered; but immediate attention being given to the matter, the urn, which has since been carefully repaired, was secured for the Museum; while of the coins eleven were obtained, and others will be added if possible. The urn is a plain rude thick form, in colour brown, with a single handle, and moulded rim. Its dimensions are $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches in height, $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches in width, the mouth with its lip being $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The coins are all silver *denarii* of the later Empire, and range from *Julianus* (355-363) to *Arcadius* (383-408), coins of *Arcadius* and *Honorius* being the latest which have been found at Silchester. They include three of *Julianus*, of which two are of the same type. One of *Valentinianus* (364-375). Two of *Valens*, same type (364-378). Two of *Gratianus*, same type (375-383). One of *Magnus Maximus* (383-388). One of *Arcadius*; and one broken coin, of late date, the inscriptions on which cannot properly be deciphered.—JOSEPH STEVENS, The Museum, Reading, April, 1895.

CAVERSHAM.—A few copies of the Rev. M. T. Pearman's *History of Caversham* may be obtained from the author at 2/6 each.

CAVERSHAM.—Mr. Wing in his "Old Caversham" speculates about the origin of the name and quotes a letter from Dr. Stevens giving the alternative meanings, "a woody place" or "The home of the Cavers." Both interpretations are rather doubtful, as the first part of the name is more probably derived from *cafer*, meaning an enclosure. "The home of the Cavers" is quite as correct as Bishop Kennett's derivation of *Caversfield*, which he supposes to mean *Carautiusfield*, Carautius being a British hero of mythical history. Might not another chapter of Caversham history be written shewing its connection with "The home of Carautius" !—OXONIENSIS.

HURLEY.—The Vicar of Hurley has discovered some most interesting documents relating to the history of his parish and the famous Priory of Hurley. He has recently published a translation of the Charter of Henry III., which is of great importance, and throws light upon the feudal laws and customs as they existed in England during the reign of that monarch. Another Charter of the time of Henry IV. grants to the Monks the right of cutting down trees for the repairs of the Church. Mr. Wethered has collected a vast store of curious records concerning his Church, which would make a most interesting volume.

A RELIGIOUS CENSUS OF BERKS.—Mr. Walter Money is publishing in the *Reading Mercury* "An account of the Separatist and Conformist Inhabitants of Berkshire, under the jurisdiction immediate of the Bishop of Sarum. By Seth Ward, 1676." It is a MS. in the Library at Lambeth Palace. Mr. Money, in publishing the returns for the Deaneries, has made valuable notes on the various places mentioned.

WHITE WALTHAM.—In a recent interesting article in the *Reading Mercury* (May 19th), Mr. Walter Money seems to consider this to be a modern appellation. It may be of interest to mention that I have frequently met with it so designated in documents of the 13th and 14th century. In the Assize Roll of 12 Edwd. I. it is described as the "vill de Blaunche Waltham."—NATHANIEL HONE.

Queries.

HERCY OR HERSEY FAMILY.—I find the earliest mention of this family in Berks in 1547 at East Hendred; but should be glad to hear of an earlier. A clue is wanted to the register of the baptism of Mary, daughter of Simon Ford, D.D., about 1653. Her sisters, Ann and Rebecca, were baptised at St. Lawrence's, Reading, 1654 and 1657. Their mother was Ann Thatcham of that town. Mary Ford married Lovelace Hercy, of Winkfield, whose second wife was Rebecca, daughter of Simon and Ann Ager or Ancher of Warfield. Who were the ancestors of this Simon Ager? The Rev. William Waterson, Vicar of Winkfield, married in 1738 Anne, daughter of Lovelace Hercy. Any clue wanted to Waterson's pedigree.—C. HERCY, 9, Bridge Street, Westminster.

FONTS.—Any information respecting ancient fonts, especially inscribed ones, or those showing peculiarities of form or material of composition, or having appendages of any kind attached to them, will be gratefully received by Miss SWANN, Walton Manor, Oxford.

MISERERE SEATS.—Are there any Churches in Berks, Bucks and Oxon which contain Miserere Seats, beside Windsor, Fyfield, Wantage and Sutton Courtenay?—E. PHIPSON, 5, Park Place, N.W.

Replies.

OLD CUSTOMS.—In many of the villages near Oxford, the oak-apple, which is worn still on the 29th May, is called shik-shak, the day itself being spoken of as Shik-Shak Day.—E. SWAN, Oxford.

SANBORNE FAMILY.—There is an inscription on a tablet in Rushton Church, Northamptonshire, to the memory of Charles Sanborne Le Bas, eldest son of Richard Le Bas. His grandfather, a native of Cadom, Normandy, married Anne, heiress of the Sanborne family. Richard was Marshall of the Ceremonies to four monarchs. Charles was pre-eminent in piety towards God, in munificence to the poor, in faith and kindness to all. He married Mary, daughter of Samuel Moyer, Baronet, and had one daughter, Rebecca. He was born 1675, died 1724.—EDITOR.

OYSTER SHELLS AT READING.—I believe Mr. Ashmole was not a geologist, and must have got his information from Dr. Plot's "Natural History of Oxfordshire," published in 1677, when nothing was known of the true character of the Woolwich and Reading Beds (*Tertiaries*), which have a wide range. I have no doubt the "five or six acres" refer to the oyster shells (*Ostrea Bellovacina*), very like the common oyster, so extensively found at the base of these same Woolwich and Reading Beds, lying almost immediately on the chalk, in association with often a little clay, and lying over them considerable beds of greenish and greyish sands, &c. Dr. Plot was evidently puzzled with these oyster layers; but he attempted an ingenious explanation or theory concerning them—that they were brought by the Danish fleet as food for the army, as it lay encamped between the Thames and Kennet. These oyster shells have, as I have said, a wide distribution, and are of course fossils associated, an enormous period ago, with the old Tertiary sea, as estuarine beds between the Tertiaries and the chalk.—JOSEPH STEVENS.

