



## Notes and Queries

RELATING TO BERKS, BUCKS AND OXON.

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*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.*

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HURLEY.—ECCLESIASTICAL RECORDS.—Some very interesting Ecclesiastical documents have quite lately been brought to light in Hurley Church whilst arrangements were being made for converting an old oak chest in the Vestry into a suitable wardrobe for church furniture, such as Altar cloths, stoles, etc. Amongst old books and portions of books there are three pages of an old Prayer Book with "black letter" text, the heading of the pages and the rubrics in Roman characters. This dates from the reign of William III., whilst he was reigning alone, after Queen Mary's death; that is to say, from the very end of the seventeenth century or, at latest, before 1702. The book to which these pages belonged was, from the size of them, evidently one in use by the clergyman or the parish clerk. Then there is a Queen Anne large Prayer Book (or, rather, a great deal of it), much dishevelled, printed at some date between March 8th, 1702, and August 1, 1714. There were, once, engravings in this book, which have at some time or other been cut out. But the most interesting items discovered in this old Church chest are the papers. There are some leaves once forming part of a minute book, in which the appointment of churchwardens on the 13th April, 1669, for the "year now ensuing," is amongst the entries. The earliest date on these sheets is 1667. Then there is an order dated Nov. 7th, 1744, and headed as follows:—"By the King [George II.], a proclamation for a general fast," the motive being "that both We and Our People may humble Ourselves before Almighty God, in order to obtain Pardon for Our sins, . . . and for restoring and perpetuating Peace, Safety, and Prosperity to Us, and Our kingdoms, etc." This is, clearly, a notice-form posted at Hurley Church door in the eighteenth year of the reign of George II. More than this, a portion of the form of prayer to be used on the occasion is amongst the papers. Both the notice and the form of prayer are printed, for the most part, in "black letter." Then, there is a copy of the form of prayer appointed in George III.'s reign to be used "during His Majesty's present indisposition," dated 1810, and also "a form of prayer and thanksgiving to Almighty God for His Majesty's recovery from his late dangerous sickness," dated 1820, in a beautiful state of preservation. Then there is a pompous and very lengthy proclamation by George IV., "for the Encouragement of Piety and Virtue, and for the preventing and punishing of Vice, Profaneness, and Immorality," and every minister is commanded "in his respective Parish Church or

Chapel to read, or cause to be read, this, Our Proclamation, at least Four Times in every Year, immediately after Divine Service." This long homily is "given at Our Court at *Carlton House*, the Twelfth Day of February, One thousand eight hundred and twenty, in the First Year of Our Reign." A set of "Articles of (Bishop's) Visitation and Enquiry concerning Matters Ecclesiastical exhibited to the ministers, churchwardens, and sidesmen, of every parish within the diocese of Salisbury," dated 1798, is interesting (Berkshire was in the diocese of Salisbury, until October, 1836, at which date it was transferred to the diocese of Oxford). The Visitation Articles are issued by John [Douglas], Lord Bishop of Salisbury. Hurley was cited to appear at Reading on Monday, July 30th, 1798. A confirmation preceded the visitation, and the candidates, who had to be at Reading by 9 a.m. (at which hour the confirmation service was held) were enjoined "to behave themselves with attention and decency during the Confirmation Service." This must have been a trying day for the Hurley candidates! The Bishop of Salisbury's confirmations were held in that year during the latter part of July and in August, at Windsor, Reading, Newbury, East Ilsley, Abingdon, Faringdon, Swindon, Marlborough, Chippenham, Devizes, Salisbury (2), and Warminster; whilst the visitations (held after the confirmation at each place) were centred at Reading, Newbury, Abingdon, Swindon, Marlborough, Chippenham, Devizes, and Salisbury.—F. T. WETHERED. June 2nd, 1899.

HURLEY.—A twelfth century instrument, belonging to the Westminster series of Hurley Charters, has recently been brought to light, and is being exhibited in the Chapter House at Westminster, as of special interest. It is a grant by Gervase de Blois, Abbot of Westminster, in King Stephen's reign, in favour of Hurley Priory, to the extent of a portion of the pannages at Edmonton, "in pigs and money," belonging to the Abbey. The instrument addresses itself to "Earl Geoffrey [de Mandeville]," first Earl of Essex and his Barons. Gervase de Blois was a natural son of King Stephen. The great feature of interest, attaching to the Charter, is that the grant was made "to God and to the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, and to St. Leonard, Confessor, and to William Prior, and to all his successors and to the family of Christ, to wit—the Monks of Hurley Monastery." Thus it appears that the High Altar in the (present) Church of S. Mary's Hurley, was dedicated to St. Leonard, the Patron Saint of prisoners, *in conjunction with* the Blessed Virgin, Mother of our Lord. This early Charter (of course) is not dated; but, inasmuch as Geoffrey de Mandeville (II.) first Earl of Essex, was not created Earl until 1140, by King Stephen, and as he was killed at the battle of Burwell, in 1144, the date is thus limited to within four years. The seal of Westminster Abbey is attached, and a reverse, the Abbot's small seal, light red wax, oval—3½ in. by 2½ in.—F. T. WETHERED.

THE EXCAVATIONS AT SILCHESTER.—The annual exhibition was recently held at the rooms of the Society of Antiquaries in Burlington House of the objects brought to light during the operations of the Silchester Excavation Fund last season between May 2nd and November 26th. The area examined consisted of eight acres in the extreme south-west corner of the city, and it is probably owing to the remoteness of the site from the more central and busy parts that the finds have been scarcely so numerous as in former years. One of them at least is quite out of the common. This is a large mosaic pavement

found in one of the rooms of an old house in insula 19, which is quite different from anything that has hitherto been discovered at Silchester, and indeed nothing like it is known in Britain. The mosaic is unusually fine and though only local materials such as Purbeck marble, hard chalk, burnt brick, etc., have been used, the skill shown in their employment has produced a beautiful piece of work. The house from which it was obtained was doubtless one of the earliest erected at Silchester, for a part of it was overbuilt by another house, itself of early date and of the largest size with fine hypocausts. There are the usual specimens of earthenware vessels, of which the largest, a mutilated amphora, unfortunately without either top or foot, is probably of the first century, seeing that it was found in a pit under the house that yielded the mosaic already mentioned. Another interesting pot, ornamented in the rough and ready manner produced by the potter making indentations with his thumbs in the still wet clay, is an excellent specimen of New Forest ware, which is not at all common at Silchester. Near the earthenware exhibits is a case containing pieces of plaster cleverly painted to imitate various kinds of marble—for example, polished porphyry, white marble with its bluish veins, and Numidian with its red ones. On the same table there is a quern, both the upper and lower stones of which were found in situ, though badly broken, and also an upper quern stone still retaining its original wooden handle, which, however, has shrunk greatly since it was dug out of a pit in insula 19. Among the iron objects there are a pair of manacles or handcuffs with a big lock, the working of which is not quite obvious, a well-preserved set of hooks such as might be used for slinging barrels, a little scone to screw into the wall and hold a candle, and one of those articles of doubtful purpose which have been named hipposandals. The ornaments on view include brooches, fibulæ, intaglios for rings and pins. A dozen or so coins include a silver one of Carausius, and a British bronze one. There is a certain human interest about the brick or tile upon which, before it was baked, some workman has scrawled with the tip of his finger the word "Satis," doubtless meaning to indicate thereby his opinion that he had done enough for that day. In the current year the Committee propose to turn their attention to the other side of the city and excavate two insulæ in the northern part, lying to the east of the portion examined in 1890. The work is carried out under the personal supervision of an executive Committee of experts, and costs money at the rate of about £500 a year. Over £4,000 have already been subscribed, and it is estimated that a further sum of £3,000 will be required to complete the examination of the area (100 acres) within the walls. The Honorary Treasurer of the fund is Mr. F. G. Hilton Price, 17, Collingham Gardens, London, S.W.