

SURREY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
CASTLE ARCH, GUILDFORD

Number 33

BULLETIN

September, 1967

Edited by Mr. and Mrs. D. J. Turner, 21 Evesham Road, Reigate.

S.A.S. MEETINGS

23rd September: Walk in S.E. Surrey.

21st October: Visit to Newdigate Area.

Details of these and other meetings are given elsewhere
in this *Bulletin*.

EXCAVATION NOTICES

WOODLANDS PARK, LEATHERHEAD:

ROMAN BUILDING, POSSIBLE TEMPLE SITE.

(N.G.R.: TQ 151587)

Excavations will commence on this site immediately after the harvest, probably in early October. Digging will take place at weekends only. Volunteers should contact Mr. Hastings and they will be notified of the starting date.

Access to the site is by Oaklawn Road which connects the A244 to the A245, Oaklawn Road being mid-way between Oxshott and Leatherhead on the A244 and between Stoke d'Abernon and Leatherhead on the A245. The site is in the field opposite *Dorincourt*.

Enquiries to: Mr. F. A. Hastings, 47 Kingsmead Avenue, Tolworth, Surbiton (Telephone: 01-399 9774).

BADSHOT LEA: SITE OF MOATED MANOR HOUSE

(N.G.R.: SU 863486)

Excavations are continuing during September on Sundays. Work involves the examination of the extensive 13th century structures and the Tudor house complex.

All helpers welcome. Please bring personal tools.

Directions given in *Bulletin* No. 32 (August).

Enquiries to Mr. I. G. Dormor, 28 Bridgefield, Farnham.
(Farnham 5491).

NOTES

S.A.S. Library

New members and others visiting the Library for the first time are recommended to make themselves known to the steward on duty in Guildford Museum. One of the Museum staff will then be pleased to explain the Library system.

(Miss E. M. Dance).

Alfold: 16th century glasshouse at Knightons (TQ 016341)

Further excavation took place in the spring on the undisturbed glasshouse site, found in 1965 by Mr. F. W. Holling, in Sidney Wood, about half a mile from the well known site mentioned by Winbolt. This was carried out by the S.A.S. by permission of the owners, the Forestry Commission, under the direction of the writer of this note and Mr. Holling.

The site covers an area some fifty feet square: it is the normal kind of situation, on the southern edge of the valley of a small stream, astride a nearly flat but gently sloping ridge of clay.

Excavation has revealed a circular fritting furnace, about five feet in diameter, with a square apron of stones on one side, for working access. There are two working furnaces, very close together. One is of the Blunden's Wood or Bagot's Park type with parallel siege banks 10' long (for three pots each side) with flue between. The other is nearly square (8' 6" by 7' 6" internally) surrounded by a wall, at one end of which is a gap for access to the fire and a floor outside. There is a siege bank of clay resting on stones 2' 6" wide, probably for two pots, along each side wall with a fire-space between (rather like Bishop's Wood in type).

Annealing was carried out in a large furnace consisting of a straight central wall, on one side of which is a well made rectangular chamber, 5' 8" by 4' internally. On the other side is an alcove, 7' wide and 4' deep, extending beyond the end of the chamber (presumably for heat to pass from one to the other, but the firing arrangements are obscure). The walls of the alcove are well made for a few feet, then continue for several feet in a more ragged condition. One has a small round thickening, containing charcoal, and further out another hot area, not fully investigated. The chamber and alcove contained sheets of crown glass in stacks four or five deep, presumably fallen from a frame or the like higher up. Crown was undoubtedly the main product of the factory, although some vessel has also been found. The 'alcove' is puzzling and may turn out to be a partially robbed second chamber.

The footings found are of stout stone blocks, the fall indicating that the (robbed) superstructures contained brick as well, all embedded in clay. Other structures or features are suspected or known, some with burnt material. A cullet store has come to light, there is a 'yard' cut out of the clay ridge, and possibly a pond.

Complete excavation is intended and work will be resumed in the autumn. The finds so far indicate a very interesting and unusual site which should make a substantial contribution to the study of Forest glasshouses.

The crucibles have rims flattened off and pinched sharp on the inside. The pottery ranges from stoneware to late 17th century glazed earthenwares: the latter may represent the robbing of the structures which has

reduced them to one or two courses, if always that. Some iron objects have turned up, including what may be the knob of a pontil, and some which could be furnace furniture.

The site appears to date from the beginning of the late period of Wealden glass: a silver shilling of Edward VI (1550) is a valuable clue. The implications of this for the accepted dating are not yet clear. There may be two phases of building. The remanent magnetism determinations and the analysis of weathered glass, which are to be carried out, will be of crucial importance. Analyses of the glass, clay and crucibles have been made by Pilkington Brothers, Ltd. The problem of the origin of the crucible clay, which is very iron free, is being studied.

A full report will be published in the *Collections*.

(E. S. Wood).

Coulsdon: Historic buildings.

In March the Bourne Society approached the G.L.C. to request that greater protection than that provided by the inclusion on the Supplementary List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest should be given to Fox Shaw, London Road, Merstham. This 17th century house which, despite its postal address, is the southernmost house in the Coulsdon area, was the 'Fox Inn' where the famous wager was laid at the opening of the Croydon, Merstham and Godstone Iron Railway in July, 1805. Notes prepared by Mr. Tharby, of the Bourne Society, were submitted with the suggestion that a commemorative plaque should be placed on the house to records its connection with this, the world's first public railway. In April, following inspection by an official of the Department of Architecture and Civic Design, the Council Architect asked the Ministry of Housing and Local Government that it should be upgraded to the Statutory List. The request for a plaque is being considered by the appropriate committee. Decisions on both requests are awaited.

A Coulsdon landmark that may soon disappear is Ashdown Park Hotel, formerly Hookey House. This is now vacant after being bought by the Ministry of Transport in the expectation of routing the M23 across the site, and then found surplus to requirements when the line of the motorway was changed. The present house was built in 1749, in succession to a much older building on the site of the present stable block. Like Woodplace, Portnalls (Cane Hill) and Tauntons, it was a sub-manor of Coulsdon and is first mentioned in 1203. In 1323 Peter de Purle and his wife Julyan received permission for a chapel at their house in 'Holegh', presumably because of its distance from the parish church. In the eighteenth century it was occupied for a time by the Hon. Thomas Harley, who was Lord Mayor of London in 1767-8, and had a stormy year of office during the Wilkes riots. Early this century it was the home of the late Mr. Moorsom Roberts and was called for a time Chad's Court. Croydon Corporation is now considering buying the site for development. The house is of little architectural merit and has been much altered but its demolition will sever another link with Coulsdon's history. The Bourne Society will keep a watch on the site, mindful of possible relics of the medieval house.

Another Coulsdon loss of recent times was the flint cottage known as the Noswells, overlooking Happy Valley. This also was architecturally unimportant, but typical of the fast dwindling number of cottages in the local style. Its name was also interesting. In 1425 Geoffrey de Knowes-hayle was 'presented' in the Manor Court for granting 'Hartlees' to Henry

There seems to be little likelihood of finding out the detailed history of the mill, or indeed precisely where it stood: it is very poorly documented and was probably only of local importance in the valley. A further possibility is that the mill was in Coombe and that the name 'Mill Corner' was used in Wimbledon simply to indicate that it was on the boundary between the two parishes. If this is the case, then investigation of the local history of that area might shed some light on the subject.

(K. A. Bailey in Wandsworth Historical Society's *News Sheet*).

FUTURE MEETINGS

SEPTEMBER

Saturday, 23rd

S.A.S. WALK IN S.E. SURREY, GODSTONE AND TANDRIDGE AREA.

Walk of 5-6 miles lead by MR. K. W. GRAVETT.

11.00 a.m. Meeting at the south end of Godstone Green by the pond (by car park).

Bring packed lunches, and walking sticks are recommended.

Tickets from Miss C. Smith, Elyots, Minster Road, Godalming.
Members 3/-. Visitors 4/-.

Sunday, 24th.

Visit to Two Roman Mausolea at Keston. The West Kent Border Archaeological Group are excavating at this site. The visit is arranged by *The Bourne Society*.

Details from Secretary, Bourne Society, 59 Torwood Lane, Whyteleafe. (Stamped addressed postcards please). All members of the S.A.S. welcome.

OCTOBER

Wednesday, 18th. 5.00 p.m.

A FRAMEWORK FOR THE BRITISH LOWER AND MIDDLE PALAEOLITHIC HAND-AXE INDUSTRIES. A lecture by Dr. D. A. ROE, in the rooms of the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W.1, to the Prehistoric Society.

Saturday, 21st

S.A.S. VISIT TO NEWDIGATE

Details in the October *Bulletin*.

NOVEMBER

Saturday, 4th.

Surrey Local History Symposium at Dorking Halls.
Details will be given in the October *Bulletin*.

Saturday, 11th (Provisional date).

C.B.A. Group 11A. Annual Meeting at Maidstone.

Lacye without licence, a curious conjunction of names still known in Coulsdon. Perhaps, like 'Colgryms' on Bradmore Green, 'Noswells' could be revived as a house name in the vicinity.

(*Bourne Society Bulletin*).

Epsom : Pitt Place.

Members may have learnt from an editorial in *Country Life* (13th July, 1967) of the demolition of Pitt Place, Epsom, after a building preservation order had been confirmed. It appears that the owners considered that the building had become dangerous and that drastic action was required. The Surrey County Council are expected to hold an investigation and no comments can be made on this case until this has been carried out.

Every year the *Annual Report* of the Council for British Archaeology comments on the large number of listed buildings that have been demolished. In less public forms accounts circulate of this or that listed building being wilfully neglected, or worse, by an owner who is unsympathetic to the cause of preservation. The Civic Amenities Act is piously expected to improve the situation but, even before the Bill reached the statute book, there was talk of the amending legislation that it will need for greater strength.

An historic building, once destroyed, is gone for ever. Even if it has been recorded, which is rarely the case, this is a poor substitute for timber, stone, bricks or mortar. Commercial interests and local government apathy are too often allied with power and only fully mobilised public opinion can ensure that enough traces of our past remain for future generations to enjoy.

(D. J. Turner).

Godstone : Godstone Gap 'Camp' (TQ 350533).

Recent roadworks to alter the course of the A22 at Godstone Gap have given rise to some concern as to whether a Roman 'camp' to the east of the road was being disturbed or destroyed. This appears to have arisen from a misidentification originating (or confirmed) in Uvedale Lambert's *Godstone* (1929) pp 7, 19, 285-7. The present Mr. Uvedale Lambert remarks: 'My father understood that the situation was that probable tradition was correct in regarding Dial Bank as a Romano-British semaphore station but it was an *ad hoc* use and there was no permanent building, earthworks or any other evidence.'

The Archaeology Division of the Ordnance Survey now states: 'The supposed camp . . . has been examined by our field staff and is a natural hill which has been scarped by quarrying'. This conclusion is confirmed by the Bourne Society who have kept an eye on recent earth moving operations and have seen no archaeological evidence to the contrary. It may save confusion and correspondence if it is pointed out that the roadworks are well away from War Coppice (Iron Age Hillfort), TQ 331532 (*S.A.C.* LII, 101, etc.); Fosterdown Fort (a product of the post 1870 war scare featured in the B.B.C.'s *Battle of Dorking Gap*), TQ 347534; and Marden Castle (a picturesque Victorian shooting lodge, now, alas, demolished), TQ 355536.

(J. C. Batley).

Mitcham : Further excavations. (TQ 267691).

The discovery of three burials at Mitcham and preliminary trial excavations were reported in *Bulletin* No. 26 (February, 1967). Further excavations at the site have been carried out by the Merton Historical Society and the Beddington, Carshalton and Wallington Archaeological Society.

No further burials were found but a pair of flat bottomed ditches were explored for some twenty feet. The larger of the two ditches contained a significant amount of pottery but there was no stratification as earthworm activity had rendered the ditch profile uniform. The pottery from the ditch was, as far as has been ascertained, all Romano-British, apparently from the turn of the first and second centuries. In the ditch fill were a number of animal bones, presumably contemporary with the pottery. As the state of decay of these animal bones was remarkably similar to that of the human bones discovered last year, it may not be too incautious, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, to suggest that the burials may also be of R-B date.

(D. J. Turner).

Wimbledon : Mill on Beverley Brook (TQ 215707)

Previous mention has been made in the *Bulletin* (January and March, 1967) of a possible water mill site at Wimbledon. Further investigation into this topic has been reported to the Wandsworth Historical Society.

The only mention in the Wimbledon Manorial Rolls is in 1763, when Mill Corner was described as 'waste, abutting the sewer between Wimbledon and Coombe, 20 ac. in extent'. There is no indication of a mill on Rocque's map of 1762, or on a Surrey map of 1719, which must mean that it was defunct before then. Nothing is said of a mill in a detailed survey of Wimbledon published in 1649, but there is the significant sentence ' . . . there are eight several fishponds, well embanked, ordered and fitted for preservation of fish and fowl'. It does not, however, indicate where they were.

A mill was appurtenant to the Manor in 1348 or 1349, and several were mentioned in the Domesday account of Mortlake, which at that time included Wimbledon. Again there is no hint of their location. The entry of 1348/9 has been taken by earlier writers as referring to the Pontifex Copper Mill on the Wandle, which still exists (*Antiquarian Magazine*, II (1882), 56).

Johnson's *Wimbledon Common* (1911) has two references which may have some bearing on the puzzle of the ponds and mill. The first concerns the fish which were found in the Beverley in the early part of this century: they include pike, eel, dace, bullhead and stickleback, and were certainly present in commercial quantity when the ponds were constructed. Johnson also mentions an eyot of mud in the Beverley near Mill Corner which could have been the site of the weir dam for the mill.

The head of water required to drive a mill on the Beverley would have been considerable. The present current speed is only about 1½ m.p.h. and this is faster than of old as a result of the deepening of the brook in 1887. Thus the embankments could well have been mill dams as well as fishponds. The origin of the mill may well date back to the days when the 'Bever rith' (Beaver stream) really contained those creatures. Their damning activities could easily have led someone to see the possibility of extending the dam and constructing a mill on it.