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NOTES

The British Transport Museum

In a note in Bulletin No. 42 (June, 1968) we drew attention to proposals affecting the future of the Transport Museum at Clapham. Mainly as the result of the efforts of Mr. Norman Nail in supplying us with information, the original note can now be amplified.

The threat to the future of the Museum was originally contained in The Report of the Committee on Rail Policy (Cmnd 3439) of November, 1967. In this report there is a proposal that the Railways Board should not have to pay for the upkeep of a national transport museum and muniment room. While there is nothing unreasonable in that proposal as it stands, the means of implementation raise many doubts.

The recommendations set out in the report have become part of the Transport Bill. In summary, these are that the present collections at Clapham and York shall be housed in the converted motive power depot at York, the conversion to be financed by the sale of the sites of the present Clapham and York transport museums. The records are to be housed in an annexe to be added to the new site at York and the museum and record collection are then to be handed over to the Department of Education and Science. The London Transport Board intends to retain its own material but it is not clear whether it will be able to exhibit it. Some important items will be retained by the Science Museum which already has a large collection of transport material.

John Grigg, writing in The Guardian of 10th October, has pointed out many of the disadvantages of this solution. The so-called 'National Transport Museum' will be housed on a site even smaller than the present inadequate Clapham site. It will have been emasculated by the removal of the important London material and selected key items to be held at South Kensington. Of even greater importance is the argument that the place for important national collections is in or near the capital.

A suitable site will soon be available at St. Pancras but considerable lobbying is needed. The Minister who will be responsible, Miss Jennie Lee, is not incapable of changing her mind or those of her officials. However, it would hardly be maligning her to say that she is strongly in favour of decentralisation and that she is more interested in the arts than in history. Therefore archaeological opinion must make itself known if it is to have any influence. Otherwise, the next thing might be the removal of the B.M. to Buxton and the P.R.O. to Saltash — which might reduce their cost to the nation and might be pleasant for their staffs but would hardly add to their usefulness and accessibility.

Card indexes

The Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society have built up a card index of over 12,000 cards in connection with their Regional Survey. The index covers all subjects within that society's range of interests including archaeology and local history. A full explanation of the index and its operation is given in *Bulletin 4* of the C.N.H.S.S. (January-February, 1968).

Miss Jennifer Scherr, of 14 Havelock Road, East Croydon, is compiling a card index of minor place names and field names of the old parish of Croydon, i.e. including Norwood, Norbury, Selhurst, Thornton Heath, Waddon, Croham, Coombe, Shirley, Woodside, Addiscombe, etc.

The Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Society are preparing a comprehensive series of card indexes dealing with archaeological finds from the Boroughs of Southwark and Lambeth and with allied topics.

The Wandsworth Historical Society maintains an up to date index of archaeological finds in the Borough of Wandsworth.

(P. Sowan, Miss J. Scherr, S.L.A.S., and W.H.S.)

Operation Pipeline again.

The cutting of two fresh gas-main trenches in the Banstead area, has given a fresh impetus to the search for surface finds and the possible location of fresh archaeological sites.

The whole length of the two new cuts has been examined between the northern boundary of Oaks Park and the southern edge of Banstead above the Chipstead Valley (TQ 285615 to 278592). Bad weather hampered observation.

Oaks Park. A dozen worked flakes, including one true pygmy, and also part of a large coarse core were found. The only pottery found was some coarse early 18th century sherds of a type that was also found in Woodmansterne village. These finds were concentrated at the northern end of the park while the end near the mansion site yielded nothing earlier than mid 18th century glazed sherds.

Woodmansterne (TQ 272601-272602). The northern trench showed chalk near the surface and was barren of any finds until about a third of a mile from the village two medieval sherds were found, one being a heavily gritted rim sherd. About a quarter of a mile from Woodmansterne Lane approximately a hundred flint flakes, very mixed in quality and, presumably, date, were picked up. These included some pygmy flakes and a core while a few showed some secondary working.

Woodmansterne (TQ 282597-282602). The southern trench between Hatch Lane and the south eastern edge of Big Wood produced many flakes and a fine end scraper.

Banstead. South of Woodmansterne Lane a small area of loam yielded three flakes and a few sherds — the earliest being of Tudor date. Between here and the Chipstead road the lack of finds was disappointing in view of previously reported finds.

It is hoped to examine the area between Big Wood and the B 280 further, especially near Little Woodcote, as R-B pottery has been found nearby.

(E. A. Baxter).

Trenches for gas mains are still being cut in the County. Members willing to help watch these operations for further archaeological finds are asked to contact Mr. John Hampton, 5 Lindsay Close, Epsom, or Mr. Eric Wood, 21 Ganghill, Guildford.

Carshalton : Woodcote House, Wrythe Green (TQ 276652).

The application for a Building Preservation Order in respect of this property (described in *Bulletin* No. 4, April, 1965) was the subject of an appeal in September. The London Borough of Sutton, the Carshalton Society and the Beddington, Carshalton and Wallington Archaeological Society supported the G.L.C.'s application for a B.P.O.

(Miss E. M. Fox).

Carshalton : Flint projectile point. (TQ 279641).

In the autumn of 1967 an interesting flint point was found in the garden of 7 The Park, Carshalton. It is of the form of a leaf shaped flake 7.8 cms long and 2.3 cms maximum breadth with a tiny patch of cortex remaining near the pointed tip. A little delicate secondary working has been applied to the butt end to form a somewhat assymmetric tang approximately 1.3 cms wide. The flake is of grey flint and has a patchy milky-blue patination. This patination is quite thick near the butt and has been cut through by the secondary working to give a clear indication that the secondary work represents re-use at a date considerably more recent than that at which the flake was originally struck.

Leaf-shaped flakes with trimming to narrow the bulbar end have been noted in late Mesolithic contexts in Ulster (*Archaeological Survey of Northern Ireland : County Down*, (1966), 4 and fig. 6.) with the suggestion that the type may have an ancestry in the earlier phases of the Irish Mesolithic. These Irish examples may themselves be ancestral to the well known 'Bann flakes' of the Irish Neolithic. Small leaf shaped flakes were noted by Leakey at Abinger (*Preliminary Excavation . . . at Abinger Common*. S.A.S. Research Paper No. 3, 25).

(D. J. Turner).

Carshalton : Burials.

W.R. Church's *Advertising and Family Almanack for 1877* (p. 3) reporting the events of 1876 states:

'While excavating about 3' from the surface (on the Sutton Estate) a workman came upon a scull (*sic*) and other bones of a human body supposed to have been buried for a hundred years or even longer.

MEETINGS

DECEMBER

Saturday, 7th. 3.0 p.m.

HADRIANS WALL. A talk by MR. K. A. PRYER to the BEDDINGTON, CARSHALTON AND WALLINGTON ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY at the Darby and Joan Club, Cooper Crescent, Nightingale Road, Carshalton. Visitor's fee 1/-.

Wednesday, 11th. 5.0 p.m.

EARLY NORMAN CHURCH AT YORK MINSTER. A lecture by MR. H. G. RAMM to the R.A.I. at Burlington House.

Wednesday, 11th. 8.0 p.m.

STAGE COACH TO ROUTEMASTER: TRANSPORT IN PUTNEY AND WANDSWORTH. A talk by MR. P. K. GERHOLD to the WANDSWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY at West Hill Library, Wandsworth.

Friday, 13th. 8.0 p.m.

ORIGINS OF THE CASTLE IN ENGLAND. A talk by MR. B. K. DAVIDSON to the HOLMESDALE NATURAL HISTORY CLUB at The Museum, Croydon Road, Reigate.

Saturday, 14th. 3.0 p.m.

ARMCHAIR TOUR OF CHERTSEY. A talk by MR. B. F. J. PARDOE to the WALTON AND WEYBRIDGE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY at Brooklands College, Heath Road, Weybridge.

Wednesday, 18th. 5.0 p.m.

IRISH PASSAGE GRAVES: FINDS AND CONTEXT. A lecture by DR. M. J. HERITY to the PREHISTORIC SOCIETY at Burlington House.

JANUARY

Thursday, 10th. 8.0 p.m.

POST MEDIEVAL ARCHAEOLOGY. A talk by MR. N. NAIL to the NONSUCH AND EWELL ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY at Pit House, Cheam Road, Ewell. Visitors welcome.

Many of the bones broke into pieces while attempting to lift them. It is, of course, idle to attempt to assign the reason for human remains being found in the spot mentioned !'

The Sutton Estate included Ringstead Road, Croft Road and Meadow Road and so the find spot of these bones may have been close to those discovered in 1903 when Carshalton Road was widened (*Surrey Arch. Coll.*, XXIII, 213). Excavation adjacent to the Carshalton Road find spot (TQ 270642) in 1961 failed to locate further graves (*London Naturalist*, 41, 28-30; *Surrey Arch. Coll.*, LX, 50-3).

(C. L. Quinton).

Mitcham : Excavations at Hall Place (TQ 27346860).

Now an overgrown wilderness abutting Lower Mitcham, or Whitford, Green, at the junction of Church Road and Lower Green West, the site of Hall Place is owned by the London Borough of Merton, and is awaiting redevelopment.

Until shortly after the last war it was occupied by a large Victorian house, Hall Place, erected c. 1870/80, replacing a much older house which dated from the 17th century or earlier. This latter house, good illustrations of which survive, adjoined a private chapel erected in 1349. A stone archway and fragment of flint walling, presumably part of this chapel although restored fifty years ago, still exists.

For a time in the 14th century the house was the residence of Henry de Strete, vintner of the City of London and lord of the Manor of Ravensbury, the successor to the Domesday Manor of Whitford. A great deal is known about the history of the occupation of the site, and of many of its former inhabitants from the mid-14th century until the present day. Eventually, it is hoped to publish the full story in one of Merton Historical Society's booklets.

With a known history of over 600 years, the site has a considerable archaeological potential. It is bound to contain a large amount of late medieval and Tudor material, and there is a strong possibility of discovering evidence of early medieval, and possibly Saxon occupation. A small scale exploratory excavation was conducted last summer by Merton Historical Society, and a quantity of medieval pottery sherds, both glazed and unglazed, has been recovered, in addition to Tudor building material and large amounts of 18th and 19th century china and earthenware. This material is now being evaluated, and will be reported upon at a later date. Digging has now ceased, but it is intended to recommence work early in the new year.

(E. N. Montague).

Ockley : Trouts Farm (TQ 166429).

This fine timber-framed house continues to deteriorate but the gradual decay has exposed a beam in the fireplace room, formerly covered with plaster, on which is the inscription "THY \diamond GETTING \diamond IS". This is adjacent to the wall-post inscribed 1581 from which the S.C.C. (in

Antiquities of Surrey) have dated the house. Both are obviously in the same style of lettering with serifs and with the uprights of letters and figures notched at top and base.

Manning and Bray and the Gentleman's Magazine *Topography of Surrey* state that "at an old Farmhouse called Trouts on a beam in the kitchen are the following . . . in raised letters:

Look well to thine house
In every degree
And as your means are
So let your spending be."

The inscription is therefore from the third line but inaccurate as quoted. Also the letters are not raised but incised. No further inscribed timbers have been found though further falls of plaster may reveal some.

(Mrs. J. Banks).

Putney : Lost memorial brass.

Lysons, writing his description of Putney parish church in 1792, lists a whole series of memorial brasses recorded by earlier writers but destroyed or unrecognisable by his day. In fact, it seems that only one tomb with brasses and black letter inscription had survived more or less intact, that of John Welbeck and Agnes his wife.

Since then, perhaps at the rebuilding of the church in 1836, this too has gone, leaving only the figure of John Welbeck, in his 15th century armour, and part of the inscription. These, together with one other surviving fragmentary brass, that of Elianor Agar (1583) are mounted under glass on the wall of Bishop West's chapel. For many years, in spite of her Elizabethan costume, Elianor was wrongly described as the wife of John Welbeck, an error which was even carried into print in the history of the church published in 1936.

By an amazing stroke of good fortune, Mr. M. Bull, who is keenly interested in the parish church, has come into possession of an original water-colour painted about 1787, which shows the complete pair, John and Agnes, the latter 'habited in a long robe', just as Lysons says, as well as the full black letter inscription.

(*News Sheet*, Wandsworth Historical Society).

Weybridge Museum

We are pleased to welcome the appointment of Mrs. A. Lansdell as curator of the Weybridge Museum. Our good wishes go with Mr. Brian Blake on his new appointment in Oxfordshire.

Weybridge : Old School Cottage (TQ 07586475).

The Minister of Housing and Local Government has decided to confirm the Building Preservation Order sought on this building by the County Council. It is proposed to make the property the subject of a *Walton and Weybridge Local History Society Monograph*. (See *Bulletin* No. 12, December, 1965.)

(*Dialstone*, No. 24).