

Newsletter Number 231

May 2020

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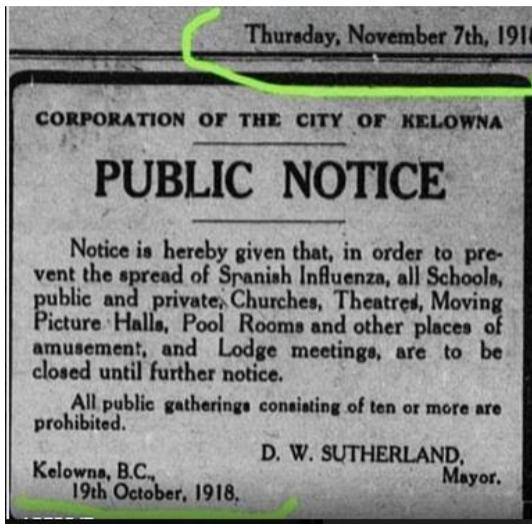
The Chislehurst Caves (see page 27)

From the Chairman

I trust that this newsletter finds you well and that it offers you some diversion from the strange situation that COVID19 has brought about. In normal times you would have received a calling notice for our AGM at the beginning of our June meeting, along with other AGM related papers. Our current plan is to hold the AGM the beginning of the September meeting, and so you will receive the papers with the August newsletter. However, should the current restrictions continue into the autumn and the September meeting has to be cancelled we will have to rethink how we hold the AGM.

On a more positive note, we are exploring how we might set up some “virtual interest groups” where members can get together to pool efforts to research a particular area of historical interest. If you think you might be interested in joining in, then please let me know.

Mark Peryer (email: markperyer@gmail.com, Tel: 07770 832397)



How Apposite! Spotted by Cathy Williams

The Boys' Garden Colony

Roger Ottewill

Between 1917 and the 1930s Basingstoke was the location of an institution known as the Boys' Garden Colony. This was the timely initiative of Henry Lannoy Cancellor (1862-1929), a Marlborough Street Police Court magistrate, who wanted to find an alternative to prison for the adolescents who came before the court. Described as 'a settlement for lads of 15 or 16 years of age, who ... [had] been placed on probation',¹ the aim was to equip them with gardening and horticultural skills which they could subsequently use to secure gainful employment.

Management of the Colony was vested in a committee comprising magistrates, probation officers and representatives of the London Police Court Mission, including the secretary the Rev H. Pearson. The boys were accommodated at South View House in Vyne Road where, until 1929, the master and matron were Mr and Mrs Cooke. They were undoubtedly highly regarded by Henry Cancellor who, at the 1920 anniversary



Figure 1: The boys with their produce - the identity of this nursery is unknown but may well be one of those mentioned in the article

(Courtesy of Willis Museum).

¹ *Derbyshire Advertiser*, 29 April 1927.

celebrations, referred to the ‘efficient manner’ in which they conducted the Colony and praised Mrs Cooke for ‘her catering abilities, and especially for the manner in which she look[ed] after the boys’.² Nine years later, at the twelfth anniversary celebrations, he again paid tribute to their contribution:

At the beginning of the year we lost our old friend Mr Cooke, who for many years was master of this Colony. No words of praise could be too strong for the excellent work which he and Mrs Cooke put in here.³

The Cookes were succeeded by Mr and Mrs Anderton.

In early October 1929 Cancellor also died, such was his renown that this event was reported in a large number of local newspapers. These reports unfailingly made reference to his courtesy and sensitive nature. As it was put in *The West London Observer*:

He was extremely popular in all the courts in which he sat, and devoted himself in an unobtrusive manner to valuable social work in connection with many of the unfortunate people with whom his duties as a magistrate brought him into contact.⁴

To develop their vocational skills, the boys were employed at various nursery gardens in the town, including those of ‘Mr [Gustav] Schroeder in the first instance and later on ... [those of] Messrs Tacon and Horwood’ (see Figures 1 and 2).⁵

In addition to acquiring practical skills, in various ways the boys developed their moral sensibilities, including the importance of discipline and appropriate behaviour. For example, one elderly resident of Basingstoke,

² *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 31 July 1920.

³ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 29 June 1929.

⁴ *West London Observer*, 11 October 1929.

⁵ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 29 June 1929.

Millie Day, remembered them marching from South View to nurseries in Winchester Road.⁶



Figure 2: The boys at the nurseries in the Cranbourne area (Courtesy of Debbie Reavell)

More formally, they constituted the 1/4th cadet battalion of the Hampshire Regiment; attended church parades; and were awarded prizes for their garden work and conduct. Again, at the 1920 anniversary celebrations, ‘The fine physique and healthy appearance of the boys was the subject of comment by many of the friends’.⁷ A year later the celebrations incorporated a service at the parish church, when the vicar of Basingstoke, Canon Harry Boustead, ‘gave an earnest address to the lads.’ This was followed by ‘an excellent display of physical drill and exercises’ on the lawn at South View.⁸

Such was the success of the Colony that, at the previously mentioned twelfth anniversary celebrations, it was reported that its fame had ‘spread to many parts of the world’.⁹ Moreover, in 1930 the Colony was described as ‘remarkably successful’ in a newspaper review of a posthumously

⁶ Debbie Reavell, ‘A short History of South View, Basingstoke, including the Holy Ghost Cemetery and the story of the ruined chapels’, 20. Available on-line at https://www.bas-herit-soc.org/A_short_History_of_South_View.pdf (accessed 14 April 2020).

⁷ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 31 July 1920.

⁸ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 30 July 1921.

⁹ *Hants and Berks Gazette*, 29 June 1929.

published book by Henry Cancellor, “The Life of a London Beak”.¹⁰ A year later, on Sunday 25 January 1931, listeners to the London Regional Programme of the BBC would have heard a financial appeal on behalf of the Colony which was the beneficiary of that “Week’s Good Cause”.¹¹

Notwithstanding the acknowledgment it received, it would seem that the Colony closed during the 1930s although the exact date and circumstances are unknown.¹² South View subsequently becoming a Boy’s Home run by Hampshire County Council.¹³

Testimonies from boys who spent time at the Colony have not been found, but it is likely that for many it marked an important turning point in their lives. It would be interesting to know how many secured permanent employment in horticulture and went on to have successful careers in this sphere. Since records relating to the Colony do not appear to have been lodged in any of the official Archives, any leads that are forthcoming from this article would be extremely welcome (please contact rogerottewill@btinternet.com).

Acknowledgements: Grateful thanks are due to Bob Applin, John Hollands, Debbie Reavell and Derek Spruce for their varied contributions to this article.

¹⁰ *Nottingham Evening Post*, 3 October 1930.

¹¹ *Northampton Daily Echo*, 24 January 1931.

¹² A document at the Hampshire Record Office Ref 40M74/E/T5, ‘Abstract of the title of the Boys’ Garden Colony to South View House, Vyne Road, Basingstoke’, dated 9 August 1932, gave the trustees permission to sell South View for not less than £1250.

¹³ South View was in use as a Boy’s Home by the time the 1939 Register of the civilian population was compiled. Today the site is occupied by Weale Court retirement flats.

Sea Urchin Fossil: Prehistoric Talisman on a 17th Century Site?

Text: Annabel Stowe

Photos, find, and all the important bits: Chloe Rowland

With thanks to the writers of the interesting article in *British Archaeology* (see footnote) which kindled the spark, and to Ian for information on the Worsley Hall dig.



The start of the story ... Our story starts a couple of seasons ago on the Worsley Hall dig that took place 2-16 June 2018. Chloe was trowelling away in the sub-floor layer of the structure being investigated, to the west of the demolished 12th century Church of St Nicholas (crypt alone remains) at Chilton Manor Farm. Her first find of the day: a small, fossilised sea urchin, attached to a flint

nodule (see photo). It was fused to the stone below, and very shiny on top. This was intriguing, but, in the absence of any known precedent at the time, its possible significance could not be fully appreciated.

Thrilling stuff ... Now comes the exciting bit (cue drum roll ...). A recent article from the May/June issue of *British Archaeology* refers to what sounds to be a very similar find from Barrow Clump, on the edge of Salisbury Plain, though the context appears completely different. A child burial was discovered, with flint nodules around the body, one of which contained a sea urchin fossil. Is this just coincidence? Hmm. At the child's feet a Beaker pot had been placed – the Beaker period being, as we

know, the transition between Neolithic and Bronze Ages, around BC2500-2200.

Curiouser and curiouser ... So assuming Chloe's fossil is from a similar prehistoric period, what is it doing at the Worsley Hall site? And what was its function? In the above-mentioned article, it is suggested, by analogy with other periods, that such amulets may have had some "apotropaic-protective magic-power", ie were a kind of 'evil eye' to ward off bad spirits. The fact that the Worsley Hall fossil is shiny on top suggests that it was handled or touched frequently, perhaps endorsing this hypothesis. But this still begs the question, what was a prehistoric object doing, in solitary splendour, on our 17th century site?

Meaning or mystery... Maybe it is just better to let this delicate and intriguing little object tell its own story, or hide its secrets, if it prefers. Perhaps let us simply conclude that it was lying there quietly, waiting to be discovered at a given moment in time (by Chloe's trowel), and to give pleasure to the discoverer. Searching too hard for explanations can (paraphrasing Tom Stoppard) lead us to find all the meaning but lose all the mystery.

And a final curious twist in the tale ... Just after writing this piece last night, I had an ocular migraine. The last time I had one – seriously – was on the same Worsley Hall dig! Perhaps I should start some vigorous rubbing ...

Footnote: This piece is inspired by the article from the May/June 2020 issue of *British Archaeology*: 'Warriors Ancient and Modern: Digging Barrow Clump', by Phil Andrews, Jonathan Last, Richard Osgood and Nick Stoodley. Our thanks to Richard and his team.

Worting Scrapbook

Compiled for the Worting Women's Institute, 1951. H.A. J. Lamb

(Edited, abridged, serialised and annotated by his great niece Richenda Power, April 2020 for the BAHS Newsletter)

I knew H.A.J. Lamb, esq. as 'Uncle Jack', a humorous and generous man, really my mother's uncle. He was born at 'Hillside', Church Lane, Worting, in 1891, but as his dad Arthur died when he was not quite 5 years old, and



his mother remarried and moved to Wadhurst, Sussex, with him and his two little sisters, it was not until summer 1945, just after World War 2, that he returned to rent the old house from his dad's youngest brother, Reginald, known as 'Rex'. This photograph from 1951 is of Rex holding me up against the yew hedge, mentioned later.

Herbert Arthur John Lamb's training as an architect was interrupted by World War 1, during which he kept a diary, now held at the Imperial War Museum. One place he served was Gallipoli. His main work after that war was in journalism, as both a writer and photographer. He was the editor of 'Hospital and Health Home Management' from 1938-1958, a fascinating time to be reporting on such essential services and buildings, through World War 2 and the setting up of our National Health Service.

Albums of his photographs and articles are on deposit at the Hampshire County Archives.

He and his wife Anne [photo right] threw themselves into Worting life, she with the Women's Institute, he with the Worting Cricket Club and St Thomas a Becket Church, where he was the People's Warden. (He died in 1973, leaving boxes of lantern slides of Worting and its village life.)



The history of Worting goes back very many years, for there is evidence of the work of Early Britons, Romans, Saxons and Danes here. Pack Lane, in fact, is thought to be part of an ancient British track which ran from the west to the east of Britain,

On the boundary of our Village there is Winklebury and old British encampments which the Romans made use of and fortified to guard their great road from Winchester to Silchester, and which crosses Worting Village at the aptly named Crossways Farm – the building of which was destroyed by fire in 1919.

Crossways is actually the most historic spot in the Village, for here the great Roman Road crosses the old British Harrow Way, now the present highway from London to the West Country, and the main line railway passes overhead.

The building of the Roman Road through Worting was made the subject of one of the scenes in Basingstoke Pageant in 1951, as part of the Festival of Britain celebrations, and the broad hedge way beyond Kite Hill cottages towards Kempshott, once known as the “Devil's Castaway”, or ancient causeway, is part of this road.

The country round Battledown Farm, near Worting, is reputed to be the scene of many conflicts between the Danes and Saxons in this part of England, about A. D. 870, and several Danish Barrows exist nearby. Several skeletons with curious armour have been found in the district when the chalk was being dug near Worting Junction railway bridge.

Through the ages the spelling of WORTING has varied considerably.

In the 11th century it was WORTINGES

In the 13th Century, WOTHING and WURTING

In the 15th century it became WORTHYNG

While in the 16th century the spelling changed to WUTINGE, and WORTINGS, WORINGE and WORTING in the 17th century. The last spelling being retained today.

The earliest direct reference to Worting is in a manuscript at the British Museum, which gives the important information that it was a Royal Manor, and that Edmund the King, called Ironside, and the son of King Ethelred who was killed at Basing, gave WORTINGES, in AD 1016, to the Monastery of St Peter at Winchester.

Another reference is made in the Domesday Book of 1086, and Worting is described as a territory of five ploughlands, worth five hides.

From early Saxon times the whole country was divided into shires, hundreds and tythings. The “hundred” being a territory of a hundred families. Worting, which included Monk Sherborne, Hannington, Baughurst, Church Oakley and Wootton St Lawrence, was the Hundred of Chuteley. The Abbott who “held Worting” was the head of the great monastery which King Alfred founded close to Winchester Cathedral.

There was a church in Worting in 1086, possibly built by King Edmund Ironside, in these Saxon times. He, like other lords of the Manor, appointed clergymen and charged the land in the parish with tithes for their support.

The dedication of our present church is interesting, as the old Saxon church was entirely rebuilt soon after 1170 when the fame and sanctity of

the murdered Beckett was at its height. The registers begin in 1604. It was destroyed by fire in 1655 and rebuilt.

One of the rectors, since the Reformation, was Richard White, great grandfather of Gilbert White, the celebrated naturalist of Selbourne.

The younger brother of the great judge, Sr William Blackstone, who planted an oak tree in the rectory garden, was also a rector. The church was again entirely rebuilt from its foundations in 1848, and the site of an old malt house, where the lych-gate now is, was added to the church yard. The old school which stood on the north west side of the churchyard was replaced by the building on the opposite side of the road. It was presented to the parish in 1855.

Some extracts from our church records are quaintly worded, such as
“Walter Bigg presented to Ye Living of Worting, April 1732”

“The churchyard rails were put up in June 1750. Being a Present to Ye Parish by Mrs Biggs”

“December 7, 1763. The sink at cesspool in Ye Parsonage Yard, about a foot and a half in Diameter was cleaned and covered with Plank. However it ought to be examined into twenty years hence, if not before.”

One of our postmen recalls that when he was a small lad, he used to work all day in the rectory garden, trimming the grass edges of the lawn for 6d.

The coachman used to cut his hair with sheep scissors in the harness rom. Once when he cut his hair too short, his father burst into tears at the sight of his son!

A specially interesting service was held in the Church in March 1889, when the son of the rector, the Revd. R.F. Bigg Wither, was baptised. Among the large congregation present were Count Stroganoff and Price and Princess Scherbatoff. At the close of the service the Russian National anthem was sung.

At one time there were two very fine walnut trees in the rectory garden, and on one occasion he hastily left the pulpit during his sermon because he heard boys throwing stones at his trees, and went outside to drive them away!

Almost opposite the church stands Worting Farm; built in 1639 by order of the Court of Assize at Winchester. It was directed to be kept open as a posting inn and be known as the "White Harte".

Four coaches daily went from Salisbury and changed horses there. This must not be confused with the present "White Hart" further down the village, where there once stood a stable for 16 horses for the road traffic, van horses being stabled where the "Royal Oak" now stands.

Bechers Cottage. The cottage was so named in remembrance of a Col. Becher, during the 1914-18 War. The age of the cottage is uncertain but during the Hungry Forties it was a bakery and was once stormed by a hungry mob during this period. The baker's oven still remains, but is bricked in with a modern fireplace.

Our village shop still further down the village was much frequented at one time by the drivers of hop waggons from Farnham, which at the season of Weyhill Fair were often drawn up the whole length of the village. (This may be what I knew as the post office, opposite the Worting Reading Room, both now demolished, but 'Worsam Court' flats stand in stead of the latter.)

Indeed, just over a hundred years ago Worting was full of life. There were four schools, two grocers, two blacksmiths, a butcher, a tailor and breeches maker, a shoemaker and a rat catcher, who is reputed to have once brought a cart load of rats' tails to Basingstoke Market.

Over 800 years ago, there were in Worting four villeins and nine borderers. A villein was a tenant of the manor and owned a homestead. He was not quite free, because having to supply one of more horses to the village plough, he had to give service on one of more days a week at

ploughing and harvesting on the lord's property, as well as making certain fixed payments in kind or money for his own holding. But he could not be turned out of his holding at the mere will of his lord, providing he duly performed his services according to the custom of the manor. His heir succeeded him by right, and his messuage and land were often held for generations in one family.

A borderer owned a cottage and some strips of land, and was in a lower position than the villain or tenant, He did not have to provide oxen or horses for the village plough teams. He was above the serf, however, who had to do all the menial work, but he had to supply food to the lord of the manor's board, and if the Abbott should suddenly take it into his head to visit Worting from Winchester, the nine borderers had to be very quick to bring him meat, eggs and drink, and generally look after him!

The lord of the manor did not lie in Worting. He was represented by a seneschal or steward who lived at the Manor House, known today as Worting House, with 1,150 acres.

Thus, well over 800 years ago, the parish of Worting was the landed estate of a manorial lord, with a village community living upon it, and all helping to cultivate it under his jurisdiction.

This lasted all the 500 years that the manor of Worting belonged to Hyde Abbey and long afterwards.

On the dissolution of the monasteries in 1538, Henry VIII seized most of their property and gave the manors to his favourites.

In a deed dated 1541, it is seen that the manor of Worting was granted to Sir William Paulet, afterwards first Marquis of Winchester. In Queen Elizabeth's reign, it passed to the ancient and distinguished Hampshire family of D'Abricourt, who owned Stratfield Saye. From then it passed through other families, in the time of James 1 to William Wither, in 1619.

About 1813 it was sold by Harris Big-Wither with 47 acres of land to Lord Spencer Chichester, from whose creditors it passed to Lady Jones and subsequently to Major R. P. Warren, whose family held it down to 1950.

Jack spoke about his own 'Hillside' garden and the one adjacent at 'The Limes' (now called Hatchedts) where his grandmother had once lived (Margaret Lamb d. 1911):

There are some remarkable old yew hedges bounding two gardens in Worting. They are about eight feet thick and fifteen feet high [photo below]. Cromwell is reputed to have hidden his horses behind one of them before attacking Basing House in person in October 1645.



(Jack discovered pike heads, dated back to that time, in the yew hedge.)

In fact so prolific is the yew in this county that it was once known as the "Hampshire Weed".

A squirrel was seen in the early autumn of 1951 burying chestnuts in a garden. When it had finished it wiped its paws on an iris leaf.

In a garden in the summer of the same year, a pair of robins built their nest a few inches from the ground in a lavender bush. A week later a cuckoo was seen "cuckooing" on a branch of a tree above, and afterwards the four eggs were found on the ground and replaced by a very large egg in the nest! The eggs hatched, and keeping the robins hard at work to feed it, the cuckoo grew larger and larger until it quite filled the nest and actually spent the last week on the ground before flying away.

BAHS member Lynn Martin has kindly photographed this framed print she's made from an old postcard. This is the Worting Road, in the part of

Worting known as 'Worting Town End' and is looking directly east towards Basingstoke. It would have been a road that went straight to Sarum Hill, without the several roundabouts we know and love today. Foreground left is the chapel, that was later the Red Cross centre, and is now a Welding Supplies outfit. Just beyond the cottages behind it is The Royal Oak. Quite a number of the other buildings are no more.



These are just the first extracts made from quite a long document, probably prepared for an hour's talk, possibly with lantern slides. More to follow, if readers are interested, about the 'Historic Court Book', 'Jane Austen at Worting House', 'Education', 'It happened in Worting', and 'Beating the Bounds'.

The Hampshire Churches Medieval Graffiti Survey

Ginny Pringle



A wealth of material in Hampshire churches awaits further research, including religious imagery, text inscriptions and images of people.

Bringing this material together will provide an invaluable resource for further study and understanding of the medieval world.

Imagery from St Cross, Winchester

A group is being setting up to cover the Basingstoke area and enthusiastic volunteers are welcome. St Michael's Church, Basingstoke has more work to be done and some of the surrounding rural churches may also need surveying.

Previous experience is not required and training will be given. The aim is to plan forwards for autumn this year (hopefully things will have returned to normal by then).

Contact Ginny if you are interested in volunteering:
ginny@powntleycopse.co.uk.

Was Æthelred “Unready”?

Cathy Williams

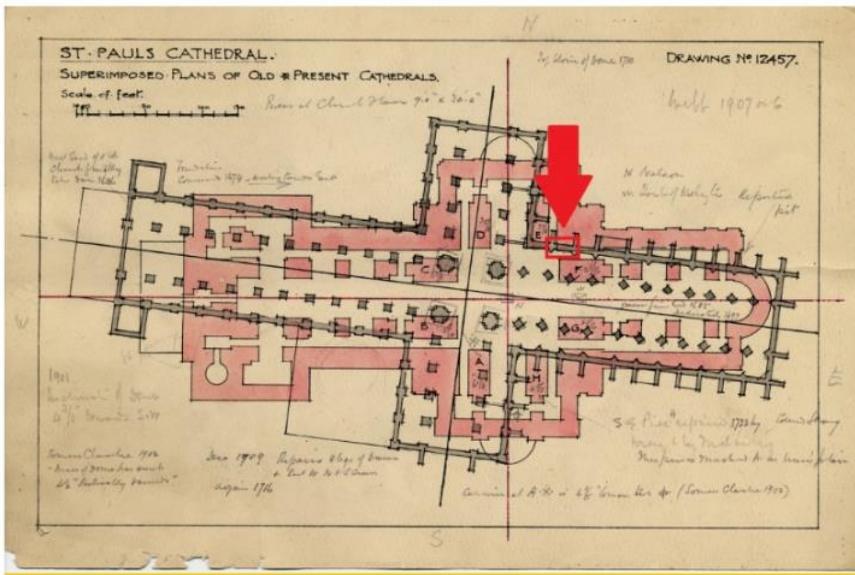
Under his father King Edgar, England had experienced a period of peace after the reconquest of the Danelaw in the mid-10th century. However, beginning in 980, small bands of Danish invaders carried out coastline raids testing defences across England that included Hampshire, Thanet, Cornwall, Dorset and Cheshire.

After several successful Danish raids such as the Battle of Maldon, where a sizable Danish fleet defeated Byrhtnoth, ealdorman of Essex, Æthelred turned to paying tributes to hold off the invaders and keep the peace in his realm.

This policy was to change when Æthelred ordered the massacre of all Danish men in England to take place on 13 November 1002, St Brice’s Day, otherwise called the “St. Brice’s Day Massacre.” Historians have generally viewed the massacre as a political act which helped to provoke Sweyn’s invasion of 1003. In 1004, after the Danish sacking of Norwich, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle reports a bloody battle between the East Anglians led by Ulfcytel Snillingr and an army led by Swein Forkbeard. The battle at Thetford seems to have been a draw as the Danes managed to escape. Two of the Chronicle manuscripts state that the Danes later “admitted that they had never met with harder hand-play [fighting] in England than Ulfcytel gave them”. The Danish army left England for Denmark in 1005, perhaps because of their injuries sustained in East Anglia, or perhaps from the very severe famine which afflicted the continent and the British Isles in that year.

Sweyn later returned to England in 1013 with an invading force intent on crowning him King of England. By the end of 1013, English resistance had collapsed and Sweyn had conquered the country, King Æthelred sent his sons Edward (Ironside) and Alfred to Normandy, and retreated to the Isle of Wight, where he fled overseas in exile to seek support from his ally, the Norwegian king Olaf.

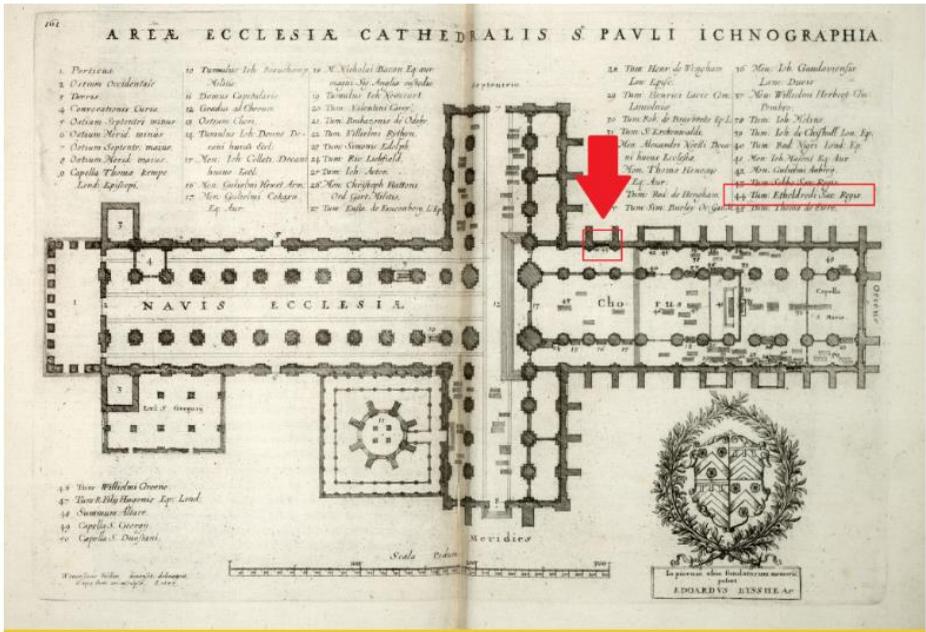
In 1014, Sweyn suddenly died, leaving his son Cnut the Great as King, but secretly a deputation was sent to Æthelred to restore him to the throne. Æthelred then launched an expedition against Cnut and his allies, the men of the Kingdom of Lindsey. Cnut's army had not completed its preparations and, in April 1014, he decided to withdraw from England without a fight leaving his Lindsey allies to suffer Æthelred's revenge. Cnut maintained his power over England by uniting Danes and Englishmen under cultural bonds of wealth and custom, rather than by sheer brutality. The protection he lent against Viking raiders (many of them formerly under his command) restored the prosperity that had been increasingly impaired in England.



Old St Paul's overlaid on the present building, indicating where the former tomb would be roughly located. Credit : majorprojectemmartin.wordpress.com

Æthelred went down in history as being branded with the notorious nickname “unready”, from Old English *Æþelræd Unræd*. Bosworth-Toller’s Anglo-Saxon Dictionary defines the noun *unræd* in various ways, but generally it means “evil counsel”, “bad plan” or “folly”. The epithet would seem to describe the poor quality of advice that Æthelred received throughout his reign, presumably from those around him, specifically from the royal council, known as the Witan. Æthelred was buried in Old

St Paul's Cathedral, London, where he was placed next to King Sæbbi of Essex (d.697). The location of his tomb was outlined in the plan of the Cathedral created by Wenceslaus Hollar in 1658, where much of the detailed information historians have of the cathedral is taken from William Dugdale's 1658 History of St Pauls Cathedral. The tomb and his monument were later destroyed along with the cathedral in the Great Fire of London in 1666.



Hollar's plan of "Old" St. Paul's Cathedral in London, 1658.



Basingstoke YAC Update April 2020
Penny Martin, Co-Leader Basingstoke YAC

Sadly, in accordance with Government and CBA guidelines we have cancelled planned sessions from March to the end of the school year and are planning to try and reschedule into next year's programme. Keeping everything crossed our programme will restart in September with the new school year. We plan to start with our erstwhile March session at Pots2Paint in the Viables centre, where we will be learning about and making medieval-style floor tiles.

We now hold a waiting list of 5 children and are officially at capacity for the room/number of volunteers. Going forward we may need to address how to accommodate more and look at a booking system to make it fair to all who wish to join. Parent responses are very positive and the children are enthusiastic and enjoying the sessions. We had two requests from parents as to what to buy in the way of kit boxes as Christmas presents and one lucky young lady was bought a metal detector to use on our spoil heaps!

November 2019: Rounding off our Bones, Bodies and Burial theme, Penny arranged for Julian Richards to deliver a session on burial. He set up a simulated situation and the children were able to take part in the mock excavation – discussing details such as evidence and interpretation. Julian was impressed by their knowledge and all seemed to enjoy the topic.

January 2020: Territory. Nikki organised a walk up to the War memorial in Basingstoke, discussing the idea of territory and the war memorial's origins. From there they visited the Discovery Centre to utilise their computers to use the CWGC.com website to research where the fallen of Basingstoke had lived. These home addresses were then plotted on an A1-sized 1912 map of Basingstoke to show where the soldiers had lived before the war and to give an idea of the proximity of some of the men. It also helped to illustrate that some of the men had signed up side by side. Their final resting places were also plotted onto a map of Europe/near East to illustrate their journey.

February 2020: Typology. Penny explored typology, why we have it and how it is useful when trying to date/match a site. We looked at typologies for weaponry, jewellery, coins and pottery. Mike Whitty - our guest speaker - brought along and talked about Iron Age coins which we were able to handle and identify. At the end of the session we made torcs, bracelets and rings, but the most fun was the typology of the mobile phone; we all brought along old phones and sorted them in different ways in accordance with their characteristics.

Future sessions which were planned but not able to run included Fieldwalking (assisted by Ian Waite); Tudor session (with Alan Turton); How to drill like a Civil war soldier with the Sealed Knot Society and finally a trip to the Mary Rose and Historic Dockyards (funded by the kind donation from NEHHAS).

The Portsmouth outing is rescheduled to October and the remaining events should hopefully be rescheduled for next spring. If the BAHS summer excavation goes ahead in August we will plan to involve our young people as usual, but this decision will be made in due course (fingers crossed).

In the meantime, we all hope that our young people and their families stay safe and well and we look forward to seeing them - raring to go - in September.

Benjamin Thorne: 'Architect'

Colin Williams

Restoration Man

With Mapledurwell's parish church, St Mary's, being on the route of a ramble, a pre-walk check of Pevsner's 'Winchester and the North' provides a history of the church. Pevsner comments: 'Rustic exterior distressingly over-restored in 1853 by Benjamin Thorne, who destroyed the c. 14th C timber N porch'. The Pevsner index finds him also at St Nicholas, Newnham: 'A hard Neo-Norman re-modelling of 1846-7... a crude sort of Rhenish helm [*a pyramidal timber roof typical of the Rhineland*] by Benjamin Thorne, financed by the Earl of Dorchester.'. [*Both Mapledurwell and Newnham parishes were within the domain of the Dorchesters of Greynell.*]

Thorne's work at St Mary's, Mapledurwell, is also mentioned in the New Victoria History Hampshire 'Mapledurwell' volume: "In 1850-4 Benjamin Thorne of Basingstoke and the Revd Wylie carried out a new phase of restoration at a proposed cost of £231.". This information derives from the church plans at Lambeth Palace Library, those plans being annotated '**Benjamin Thorne Architect**'. However, neither RIBA nor the Victorian Society know of Benjamin Thorne so what is to be discovered about this Basingstoke Victorian and his ambitious claim to professional status.

Making his way

Benjamin was born in 1810 in West Meon and it is not until 1840 that he and his wife Sarah can be placed with certainty in Basingstoke when their daughter, Sarah Ann, was baptised there. They were living, according to the 1841 Census, in Church Lane [*once linked Flaxfield Road and Mortimer Lane*] with Benjamin's occupation being recorded as carpenter.

Building respect

Within five years Benjamin must have demonstrated abilities and created confidence sufficient for him to be entrusted by the Church and the Dorchester Estate with, in 1846/7, the restoration of St Nicholas, Newnham. Financially this may have allowed the family, now increased by the birth of Henry Edward, to move by 1848 to Church Street. Another

indication of Benjamin's raised status is his appointment in 1849 as one of the parish overseers.

Where in Church Street?

In 'Going Down Church Street' Barbara Applin grappled with the problem of identifying properties and their occupiers before properties were numbered. However – see 'In Court' below – Benjamin's house and yard backed onto what would in 1865 become the site of the Corn Exchange which gives an approximate position. But his actual property is no more as that part of Church Street was replaced after the Great Fire of 1935. Modern numbers 4 [Surya's] and 6 [Arc] would seem to approximate.

The 1851 Census records a change of occupation to builder and upholsterer but no mention of 'architect'. Additionally, the Census is annotated 'employing 28 men'! Employed at what is an unanswered question but Benjamin's second church restoration, that of St Mary's, Mapledurwell, in 1853, may suggest an answer. And although 'architect' would never return, by 1859 he had added 'auctioneer' and 'cabinet maker' to his interests.

Ascendant: Financial Probity

Benjamin had become a person of some standing and in particular would be seen as financially sound. In 1863 he was appointed trade assignee to deal with the bankruptcy of a Mapledurwell market gardener. Additionally in 1863 he negotiated a lease of land with 1st Baron Basing of Hoddington House. In 1866 he obtained a mortgage of £450 from D Chandler [sols] for Eastrop Farm. In 1867 he was leasing out properties.

Death of Sarah

Sarah died in November 1863; her grave in South View is not now identifiable. Daughter Sarah Ann then took on the role of housekeeper to her father and brother.

In Court

Mayor and Burgesses v. Benjamin Thorne

In 1872 Benjamin was summonsed for non-payment of Pavement Rate [*Public Health Act 1848*]: immediate payment ordered plus costs of 8s 6d.

Benjamin Thorne v. Mayor and Burgesses

The next year Benjamin took action against the Town Council claiming intended building work at the Corn Exchange would obstruct light and air to his warehouse and workshop; agreement reached to appoint an arbiter. Following the arbiter's report Benjamin was awarded damages and costs.

Criminal proceedings

The Reading Mercury in October 1874 reported a court case: Benjamin Thorpe robbed of 2s 6d by Elijah Welling, a hawker, at Chesham. Elijah got 2 years imprisonment followed by seven years police supervision.

Downed: death of a tradesman

Was the robbery an omen of what was to come? By late 1874 with devastating suddenness Benjamin was almost certainly experiencing the early stages of a progressive and debilitating disease, to the extent that he could no longer manage his own affairs, and one that would eventually end his life. Already by February 1875 a Sale Notice advertises the forthcoming sale of shop stock, tools and household furnishings.

After a final month during which he was completely incapable, Benjamin died on 5 May 1875. He is buried in Basingstoke, presumably with Sarah, but their grave cannot now be identified. No will is recorded.

The Hampshire Chronicle reports – THORNE on the 6th [1] inst.

In Basingstoke Mr Benjamin Thorne cabinet maker and upholsterer an old and respected tradesman of that town in the 65th of his age.

[*Note. The Chesham robber would have still been serving his sentence.*]

IN LIQUIDATION--~~Re Cooper~~
CHURCH STREET, BASINGSTOKE, Hants.—Upholsterers, Cabinet Makers, Persons Furnishing, and Others.
—Important Two Days' Sale of Modern HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, Stock-in-Trade, and Effects.

MR. W. J. COOPER has received instructions from the Trustees of the above Estate, to Sell by Auction, on the Premises, without reserve, on Thursday and Friday, March the 11th and 12th, 1875, the whole of the Stock-in-Trade of Mr. Benjamin [Thomas] Upholsterer, Cabinet Maker, and Builder.

The First Day's Sale will comprise the STOCK-IN-TRADE, including excellent chimney glasses in gilt frames, mahogany duchesse table, several mahogany and birch marble and tile-top washstands, easy chairs in morocco leather, crottons, and hair, sets of toilet ware, dining-room, fancy, cane, and other chairs, sofas and couches in crotton and hair, capital mahogany-frame dressing glasses, several ottoman and music stools, oak knee-hole writing table, a capital mahogany side-board with plate glass back, 6ft. 6in., handsomely fitted and carved, several cheffoniers, walnut card tables, wood Arabian and iron bedsteads with mattresses, mahogany and other chests of drawers, clocks, ladies' work tables and boxes, pairs of capital blankets, Japanese curtains, Sutherland table, 100 yards of Indian matting, 50 yards of floor cloth, cocoa mat-

etc., etc., etc., etc., etc., etc.,

The Second Day's Sale will include 1,500 feet of deal board and plank, the contents of the carpenters' shops, benches, a small quantity of oak, cedar, and mahogany, pair of yard gates, slate and marble slabs, also the Household FURNITURE in the private residence, which comprises capital rosewood loo, sofa, occasional tables, settee, easy and other chairs in crimson and gold damask, carpets, mahogany bookcase with secretaire under, fender and fireiron, a few oil paintings, several water-colour drawings, and engravings, window curtains, reading desk, crotton pianoforte, harmonium, chimney and dressing glasses, clocks, mahogany Arabian and birch bedsteads, wardrobes, chests of drawers, leather beds and bedding, whatnots and ottoman, sets of toilet ware, thermometer, cane-seat and other chairs, kitchen and culinary utensils, and many useful articles too numerous to mention.

Posterity

Son Henry continued as upholsterer and picture frame maker at 39 Winchester Street [*Lamb Brookes solicitors*] but with his family living for a time at 4 Winchester Road [*now incorporated into block opposite Winton House*]. Later he added newspaper reporter – Hampshire Chronicle – to his activities. And his wife Annie set up a Servants Registry Office.

Daughter Sarah Ann died in 1894 and is buried in Basingstoke.

Footnote: The Little Dustpan

'*Going Down Church Street*' notes an association of Benjamin with a furnishing warehouse titled *The Little Dustpan*. Certainly, the

contents of his premises as revealed in the Stock-in-Trade Sale Notice demonstrate 'warehouse' is an apt description but the Sale Notice makes no mention of trading as *The Little Dustpan*. The dustpan was, says Wikipedia invented in 1858, and in America, [the long-handed, non-stooping version, not till 1897] so once news of this boon to housewives [and any Victorian househusbands] became known, and supplies available, Benjamin could have been early to adopt the name of this innovation in order to attract business; however, court cases, legal documents and directories always refer to Benjamin by his name. Late Victorian sources do demonstrate that the business was at least by then *The Little Dustpan*.

Sources include Applin and Felgate's '*Going Down Church Street*'; '*Reading Mercury*' and '*Hampshire Chronicle*'; Lambeth Palace Library; New Victoria County History; and Pevsner's '*Hampshire: Winchester and the North*'.

The Chislehurst Caves – The 35km Cave City

Cathy Williams

Chislehurst Caves is an extensive complex of subterranean tunnels of uncertain origin that stretch up to 35km in the suburbs of south London in Chislehurst, Bromley. Despite being called caves, they are entirely man-made and were probably first constructed as a mine to extract the flint deposits in the London chalk layers. The last known date of active mining in the caves was around the mid-19th century. An Ordnance Survey map of 1862–63 describes the place as a “chalk pit” and marks an “engine house” and two remaining kilns used for the extraction of flint and lime.

During the early 20th century, William Nichols, then Vice President of the British Archaeological Association proposed that the caves were first built by the Romans, Saxons or Celts. This, however, is nothing more than speculation as there is no supporting archaeological evidence to give credibility to the theory. The first recorded mention was actually noted in medieval documents of circa 1250AD and in post-medieval church records of 1737AD.

With the outbreak of both World Wars, Chislehurst Caves was pressed into military service and became an overflow ammunition depot for London’s Royal Arsenal in Woolwich. The cool, damp conditions made it highly suited for the storage of explosive materials and limited the damage radius of any unforeseen accidents. With a population living in close proximity in an enclosed space, the cave was modified to include electric lighting, running water and an air ventilation system. By 1941, there was even a cinema, barber, three canteens, a police station, a local shop, chapel and a hospital with seven wards and an isolation unit.

From the 1960s, the caves were used as a music venue for its acoustic resonance through the long tunnels. Famous acts to perform in the caves include David Bowie, Status Quo, Jimi Hendrix, Pink Floyd and even the Rolling Stones.

Whacky Theories

Annabel Stowe

The appeal of wacky theories is, of course, that what is wacky one minute can become mainstream the next. I don't think for one minute this will be true of these modest musings, but here goes ...

Waters breaking ... The idea of Silbury Hill representing a pregnant belly is, of course, far from original. But has anyone specifically associated the abundant springs, that pop up in the vicinity in wet weather, with a mother's waters breaking, and the imminence of birth? (Answer: probably yes they have. Still let's press on) ...

Stones changing ... Staying in our native Wessex, why did our ancestors periodically take down and replace monumental megaliths, that must have taken so much time and effort to erect? Doubtless there are many highly-plausible theories, but could it be as simple as: if the stones represented the ancestors themselves, then replacement and renewal were inevitable?

Spirits rising ... Now let's fly to the other end of the country, to the Tomb of the Eagles, on South Ronaldsay, Orkney. This Neolithic chambered tomb contained not only 16,000 human bones, but 725 bird bones, predominantly belonging to the white-tailed sea eagle. So what's the wacky theory? Well, we know that, during excarnation, it was believed that the spirit of the deceased was released, so could it be that these birds of prey, picking the flesh from the bones, speeded up the process of release, and were therefore revered? In other words the spirit, 'pecked out' by eagles, was then borne aloft by them? Why, in particular, white-tailed sea eagles? Anyone who has looked up at the sky and seen the sun shining through the fanned-out tails of these magnificent birds might simply conclude – because they are magical.

So that's it, dear fellow enthusiasts. I hope there aren't too many groans. Over to someone else now to take up the wacky theory baton ...