

BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER 123

MAY 1993

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The year 1992-3 was the year the Society came of age and I think we could be forgiven if, just for a moment, we looked at our achievements.

Firstly we have established ourselves in Basingstoke as a society with competence and integrity with a reputation for doing things well. We have a number of excavations to our credit as well as the publication of Anne Hawker's book "Voices of Basingstoke 1400-1600". We regularly publish a very worthwhile Newsletter and have a lively programme of lectures to which we seem to have been able to attract speakers of international standing. We have members in the Society whose opinions and experience are sought after by members of the community.

In 1992-3 all this seemed to come to a head in an Annus Mirabilis. The year's events started last summer with a highly successful Barbeque at Basing House. The highlight of the year, though, was a whole day conference we hosted in October with the Hampshire Field Club on the archaeology/history of Basingstoke and the surrounding area. A special Newsletter was published, giving an abstract of the subjects covered; this itself was a publication that was sought after in its own right. There then followed the publication of Past Pieces from earlier Newsletters which, because of its popularity, had to go into a further printing run.

And finally there was the Video BENEATH BASINGSTOKE, which crowned all other achievements. It is not possible yet to assess the full impact of its success, as news of its release is only just beginning to travel but it has received very favourable comment from a number of influential quarters.

I know full well that those responsible for such successes are too modest to allow me to recite their names each time, but we are all deeply grateful to Mary Oliver, Barbara Applin, John Horrocks, Peter Heath and Barbara & Tim Herrington for the way they have given so much to the Society.

And we must not forget the debt we owe to Gareth Thomas and his staff at Queen Mary's Centre. They not only made the Video project possible but also have gone out of their way to make us so comfortable at our regular meeting place.

And the future? Well, next year must see the marketing of the Video and a positive response to Sun Life of Canada's request for help in celebrating their centenary year, but after the help we received from them it will be a pleasure to answer their call.

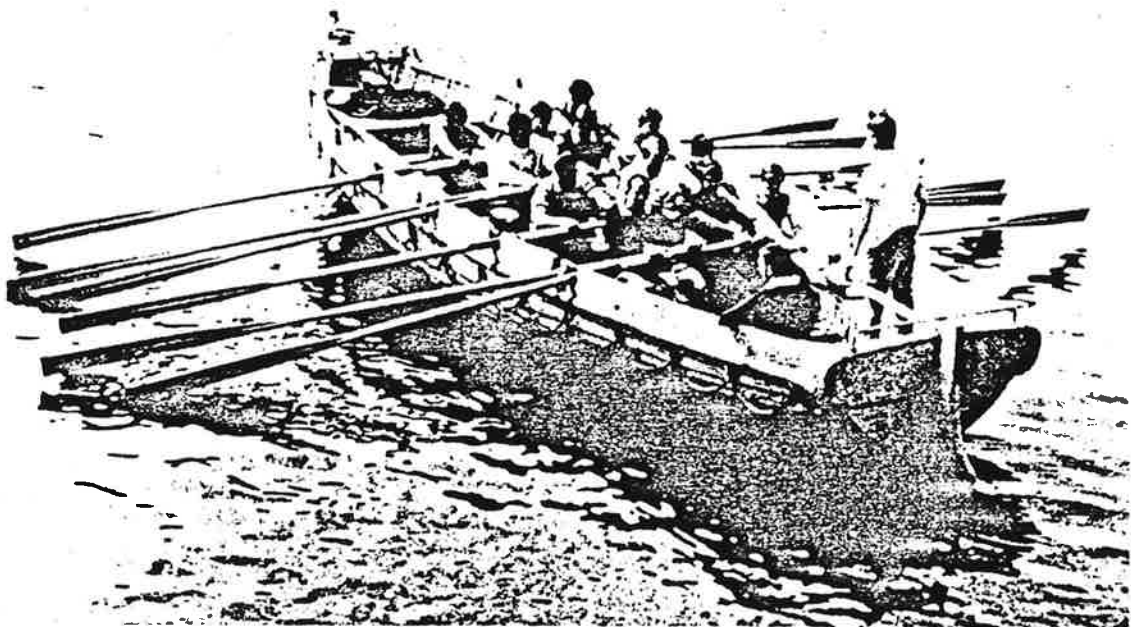
Richard Dexter

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Enclosed with this newsletter is the calling notice for the AGM to be held on Thursday, June 10th in the QMC Conference Room at 7.30 pm sharp. Sharp's the word as the AGM business will be followed by Alec Tilley's talk on The Alternative Trireme (see the article of the same title later in this newsletter). We look forward to a good turnout for this evening, which promises to have the same interest as the original talk on the Triremes given by Tom Hassall. Alec Tilley says he will welcome a lively debate on his thesis!!

THREE MEN TO A ROOM - A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT TRIREME

This is the title of a paper in *Antiquity* (volume 66, 1992 pp 599-610) by Alec Tilley. Those of us who enjoyed the talk on the Anglo-Greek Trireme project by Tom Hassall will be interested to learn about an alternative interpretation to be presented during a talk to the Society by Alec Tilley. This will follow the AGM business meeting on June 10th.



Rowing triple-banked, in the Siren Vase manner.

The new thesis is based on alleged mis-interpretations of Greek terminology and centres on the true meanings of single, double and triple banked boats - and the definition of a 'room'! The lecturer will argue that double-banked meant one line of oarsmen, not two lines.

"The merchant vessel known as a phaselos could be converted in an emergency to a phaselos trieretikos - the latter word, like the Greek and Latin words for trireme, implies a three-fold rowing system. Certainly, it would not have had six banks of oars."

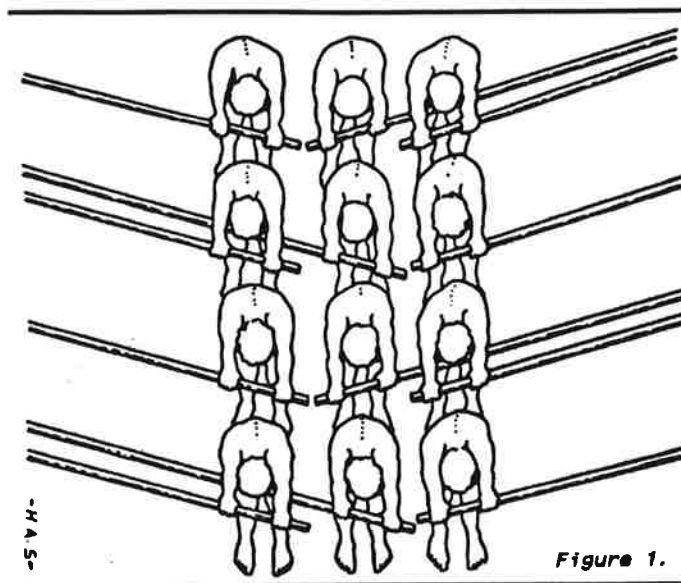


Figure 1.

The Ship of Odysseus, seen from above.

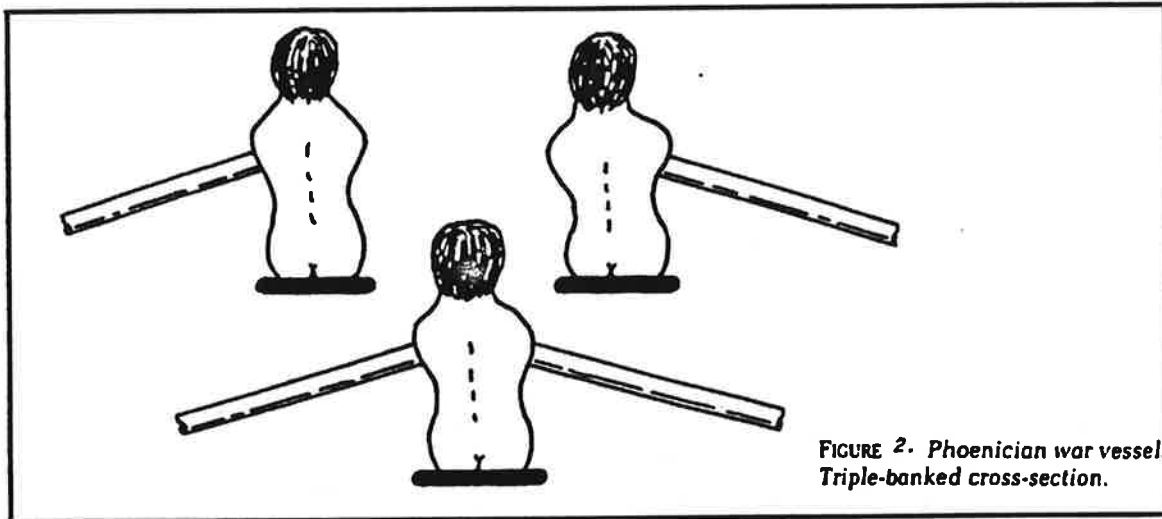
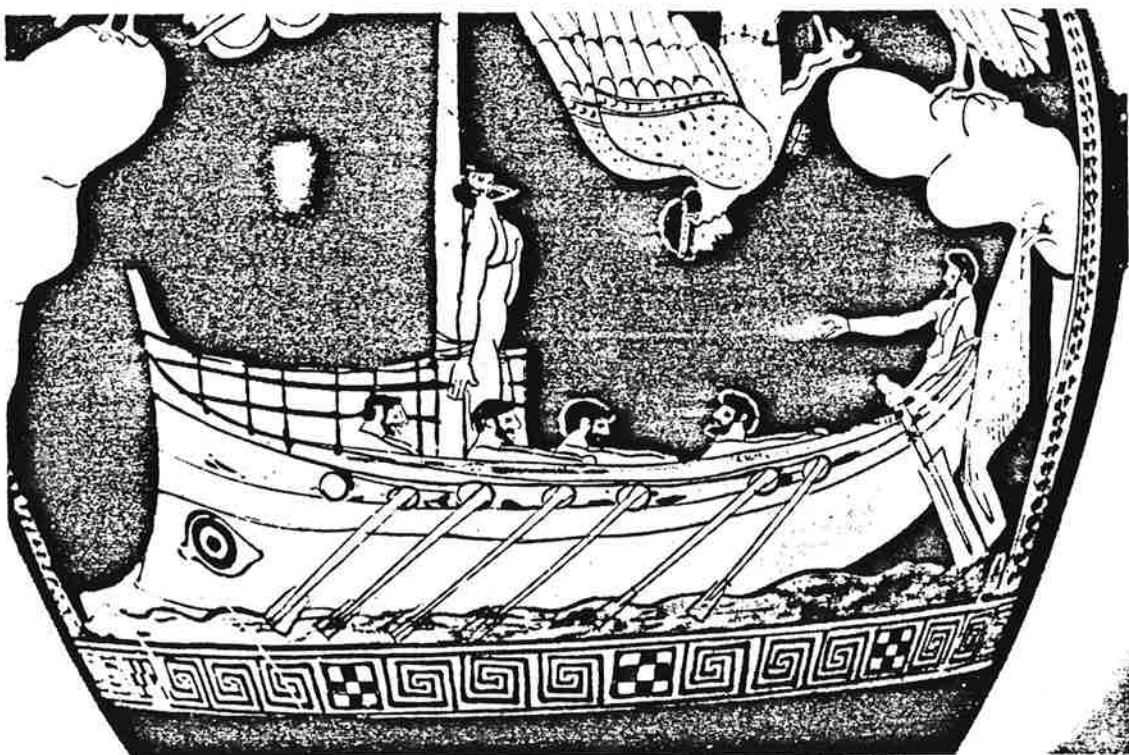


FIGURE 2. Phoenician war vessel.
Triple-banked cross-section.



Ship of Odysseus on the Siren Vase c. 490 BC. (Photo courtesy of the British Museum.)

It is suggested that a phaselos was double-banked and that a phaselos trieretikos had a third bank of oarsmen. Originally, the triremes were triple-banked, the earliest types having oars arranged as in fig 3 and others as in fig 1.

The speaker is anxious to enter into discussion at the lecture about these propositions and looks forward to seeing you on June 10th.

A copy of Antiquity will be available at the meeting; any member who has a further copy is invited to bring it to the meeting.

A CRUISE ON THE BASINGSTOKE CANAL

Richard Dexter



(actual size)

We are chartering an evening cruise on the "John Pinkerton" on Saturday, July 3rd. Our trip will start from the Wharf at the Barley Mow, Winchfield at 7.30 pm and will go towards Basingstoke as far as Colt Hill, Odiham, where it will turn round. In the unlikely event of it being a very dry summer, we will head towards Dogmersfield, but either way there will be an opportunity to disembark and stretch our legs. We intend doing our own catering, although the Bar on board, selling drinks including tea and coffee, will be run by the Basingstoke Canal Society themselves. Seating is under cover, and there is a toilet.

The cost of the trip is £8.00, which will include a buffet supper but not drinks. It will last about 2½ hours.. Tickets will be available from me at our Society meetings beforehand, or ring me (0252-622755).

The Basingstoke Canal Society have provided the following history:

"A plan to construct the Basingstoke Canal was authorised by Act of Parliament in 1778, but work was delayed for ten years owing to the financial crisis caused by the war with America for independence. The canal was finally completed in 1794. It was 37 miles long, with 29 locks and a 1230 yard tunnel through Greywell Hill.

The navigation was intended to boost agricultural trade in central Hampshire. Barges provided economical transport for bulk cargoes of coal and fertilizers from London, returning with timber, corn and other produce to the capital. But the canal was never a commercial success. Because it terminated at Basingstoke, trade was limited to local needs. In fact, it would not have survived but for a succession of speculative owners planning to extend the canal and create a continuous inland waterway between London and the major ports of Southampton, Portsmouth and Bristol.

None of the schemes materialised, but the canal survived on a series of local developments. First in the 1830s for transporting materials to construct the London and South-Western Railway, opened to Basingstoke in 1839. Then in 1854 for carrying bricks and timber to build the military camp at Aldershot. And once more in 1896, the canal was restored to serve the brickworks opened at Up Nately.

The most stable period of the canal's commercial history spanned 1922 to 1947, under the ownership of Mr A J Harmsworth.

The canal was auctioned in 1950 for £6,000. It continued to be privately owned by the New Basingstoke Canal Company Ltd for another 25 years.

By the mid 1960s the canal was semi-derelict. All the locks were decaying, the towpath overgrown and the water channel choked by weed, refuse and silt. Efforts to stop the rot were made by the Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society, formed in 1966. But it took a seven year campaign for public ownership before work began.

Restoration work was completed and the canal reopened in 1991. The 32 miles of waterway, from the River Wey Navigation junction to the Greywell Tunnel is in use again as a leisure amenity.

The 67ft long "John Pinkerton" was purpose built for the S & HC along the lines of a traditional canal narrow boat. Brightly painted and decorated with roses and castles in the style of former working boats, the "John Pinkerton" is named after the contractor who built the Basingstoke Canal over 200 years ago."

NEWS OF POSSIBLE SITE WORK FOR THE SOCIETY

The Vyne

Richard Dexter has written a letter to the National Trust Regional Office in which he brought to their attention the expertise available within our Society in terms of library and practical survey, and asked them to consider this if they had projects at the Vyne which might require help of this nature.

As a result, we have had a most encouraging reply from the NT to say that, currently, they are excavating an old drainage system at the Vyne and have evidence of former construction and an accumulation of material, some of which may have historical or archaeological significance. The NT suggest that we might consider helping at the Vyne with non-destructive surveys (eg documents, geo-physical survey) or, indeed, with excavation if this was considered helpful as an adjunct to any on-going work.

Richard will establish the necessary liaison with the NT, especially with the Administrator at the Vyne, Mr Douglas Whyte.

Bramley Frith Nature Reserve

The Society has had a letter from the Planning Office of the Hampshire County Council at Winchester in which an invitation was made to us to consider involvement in survey work to elucidate the significance of earthworks in the Reserve which seem to be a complex of mediaeval and archaeological interest. The relevant information and correspondence are now in the hands of Peter Heath who has agreed to set up a preliminary meeting with the Warden of the Bramley Frith Reserve, Mr Andrew Cleave.

**THE OAKRIDGE DIG (1965)
RE-SURFACES IN TRIUMPH**

The Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club & Archaeological Society, Volume 48, February 1993 have just seen the light of day, and they contain two papers of special interest to devotees of Basingstoke Archaeology. Turning to page 55, however, there is the title page we of more than tender age have been waiting for:

**Excavation of an Iron Age and Romano-British Settlement Site
at Oakridge, Basingstoke, Hampshire, 1965-6
by Mary Oliver et al**

Mary undertook the daunting task of dusting off all the site data, collating all the many documents, the finds reports, and delved again into site notebooks in order to bring together a coherent, detailed and professional final report on this (for those who took part especially) exciting window on the remote past of our Town.

How well she has succeeded in carrying out this task. Whether you were there at Oakridge at the time or not, the effort spent in reading this paper will be amply rewarded. And it will serve to illustrate just how much work and energy has been expended by Mary, her contributors (F.W. Anderson, Joanna Bird, S.A. Mays & P. Murphy) and the members of our Society, then and subsequently. The time-trodden phrase "team effort" is not out of place here. Well done Mary ! Those many hours spent in the dark depths of the well in the company of the ghosts of the past were not in vain ...

A copy of the Proceedings is available for loan from our Society library; also, Mary has a few offprints for sale - please contact her.

The second paper of special interest starts on page 5 of the Proceedings:

**Excavations of an Early Iron Age Building & Romano-British
Enclosure at Brighton Hill South, Hampshire
by D. Coe & E.L. Morris**

This paper describes the work undertaken during the excavation of one of the sites (X/Y) discovered at Brighton Hill South. The dig took place in 1990 following a small-scale excavation by The Trust for Wessex Archaeology where crop marks had been plotted.

This project was financed by the Hampshire County Council and Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council; our Society was not directly involved but liaison with Richard Newman and Duncan Coe was maintained as this site spanned the familiar Romano-British culture seen and investigated on several sites within our parish.

Good bedtime reading for you; it is instructive to compare the various aspects of the two sites at Oakridge and at Brighton Hill South to see the similarities in the pattern of life.

BENEATH BASINGSTOKE - ANCIENT METALWORKING

Clive Arnold

By now most people will have seen the video "BENEATH BASINGSTOKE". Among the finds highlighted are a number of items indicative of metalworking. In general these items can assist in the interpretation of a particular archaeological site. However, individual consideration of an artefact can illustrate the degree of skill and method involved in its manufacture.

Basingstoke and its environs have produced "classic" finds relating to Bronze and Iron Age metalworking. This article will describe two of these finds in their ancient metallurgical context.

BRONZE AGE

Daneshill
Copper Ingot
Late Bronze Age, 1,000 to 700 BC

This ingot was found by one of those metal detectors at Daneshill in 1978, not far from Cowdery's Down. This "plano-convex" bun ingot is thought to be of Late Bronze Age date. The most remarkable aspect was the high purity of copper, taking into account the ore smelting method of extraction. The copper ore is chemically reduced by heating with charcoal in a smelting furnace. This operation would cause many impurities to be deposited in the copper product.

Chemical analysis of the ingot has shown it to be of high purity. The main impurity is lead at 0.094% - i.e. not much! This high level of purity is not uncommon in similar copper ingots of the period. In fact, it was the shape and purity of the Daneshill ingot which dated it to the Late Bronze Age.

The ingot is not the direct result of a smelting operation but a product of refining. The copper had been melted in a crucible about the size of an egg cup and left to solidify. This operation would have been carefully repeated several times to "boil off" the impurities such as lead.

Dating of the ingot has been by interpretation, and therefore not definitive. However, there are two interesting facts of relevance here. Firstly, copper ore is not present in the Basingstoke area. The nearest copper ore deposits are in Devon and Mid Wales. Secondly, no traces of early copper smelting furnaces have yet been found in Britain.

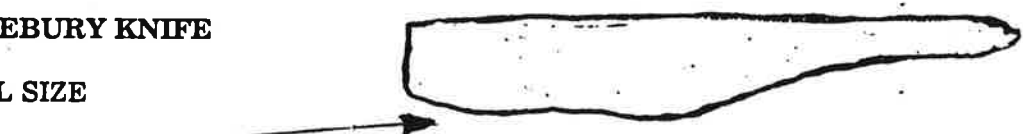
IRON AGE

Winklebury hillfort
Iron Knife
3rd to 1st Century BC

WINKLEBURY KNIFE

ACTUAL SIZE

BLADE



In the Iron Age, as today, knives were very important tools. To be useful a knife needs a sharp edge which would require a high degree of metallurgical skill to manufacture it. The Winklebury knife is an excellent example of this.

The diagram above shows the knife at its approximate actual size. This shows that the overall length is 80 mm. It takes the form of a narrow-bladed, single-edged knife.

The chemical composition of the knife makes it a "medium carbon" steel. This means that carbon was present up to a level of 0.50%. The knife is an example of an early steel implement.

A section was cut from the knife and examined under the microscope. This revealed that the knife had been made by piling. In this process the iron was heated in the smithing hearth, repeatedly hammered and the metal folded over on itself. Further hammering was required to weld the different layers of iron together to achieve the tool thickness and shape.

Inspection of the metal structure under the microscope also revealed that the knife had been heat-treated to between 700°C and 820°C. After this it was "quenched", slowly dipped in water, to harden the implement. Essentially, more carbon can be absorbed into the iron at higher temperatures, so, when the knife was dipped into water the carbon was trapped in the iron. The entrapped carbon gave the implement strength and hardness, allowing a sharp edge to be ground and retained.

Compare the temperatures quoted above with the maximum temperature achievable in a gas oven, around 240°C (gas mark 8/9). Temperatures of 700°C can easily be achieved in a smith's hearth if a draught of forced air is utilised. The skill would have been in not exceeding 820°C. If 820°C was exceeded, the knife would become very brittle and unusable.

Studying the metallurgical details of this knife clearly shows that the people of the Iron Age were capable of quite sophisticated metalworking. They obviously knew how to treat the metal of this implement to make it suitable for its intended purpose.

References:

- 1] Rescue Excavations on a Bronze Age and Romano-British Site at Daneshill, Basingstoke, 1980-81 M. Millett and T. Schadla-Hall
Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club, Volume 47, 1992
- 2] The Prehistory of Metallurgy in the British Isles
R. F. Tylecote, Institute of Metals, 1990
- 3] Aspects of Early Metallurgy, Edited by W. A. Oddy
British Museum Occasional Paper No 17, 1991
- 4] The Excavation of Winklebury Camp
Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society, Volume 43, 1977

BASINGSTOKE RECORDS - 6

THE FEATHERS

Anne Hawker



THE FEATHERS,
Wote Street

One of many coaching inns of the town, dating, in part, from the 16th Century of timber-framed jettied construction but heavily restored. A punch bowl,

believed to have been used by a Jacobite club meeting at this inn, is on display in the museum.

We have been fortunate in finding a full inventory taken in 1640 for the building later called the Feathers. It accompanied the will of William Manfield, clothworker, so we know that he had lived there. However it does not appear that he worked his cloth on the premises, as the rooms are nearly all described as bedchambers. The hall, cellars, outhouses and kitchen are the only places without beds.

I thought it might be possible to identify the rooms in the inventory if there had not been too much change to the building. I do know that this can only be guessing.

Anyway, with the Inventory clutched in my little hot hand, I went into the Feathers - at rather a busy time, coffee-time, but I thought that even if the manageress could not help me I could at least have a cup of coffee. In fact, she could not have been more cordial, and when she had sorted out the coffee she took me on a tour, starting with the cellar.

The Inventory begins with the hall, assumed to be the space entered by the main door. The original door is now built over, but it is quite clear where it was. The whole of the front ground floor is now open. In 1640 the hall contained two tables, two forms, two side cupboards and a settle, with no mention of fire furnishings. The next item was the main cellar, where the beer was stored. It still is, but now it is piped up. In 1640 there were jugs, glasses, pots, cans and goblets along with the beer so somebody had to fetch it every time.

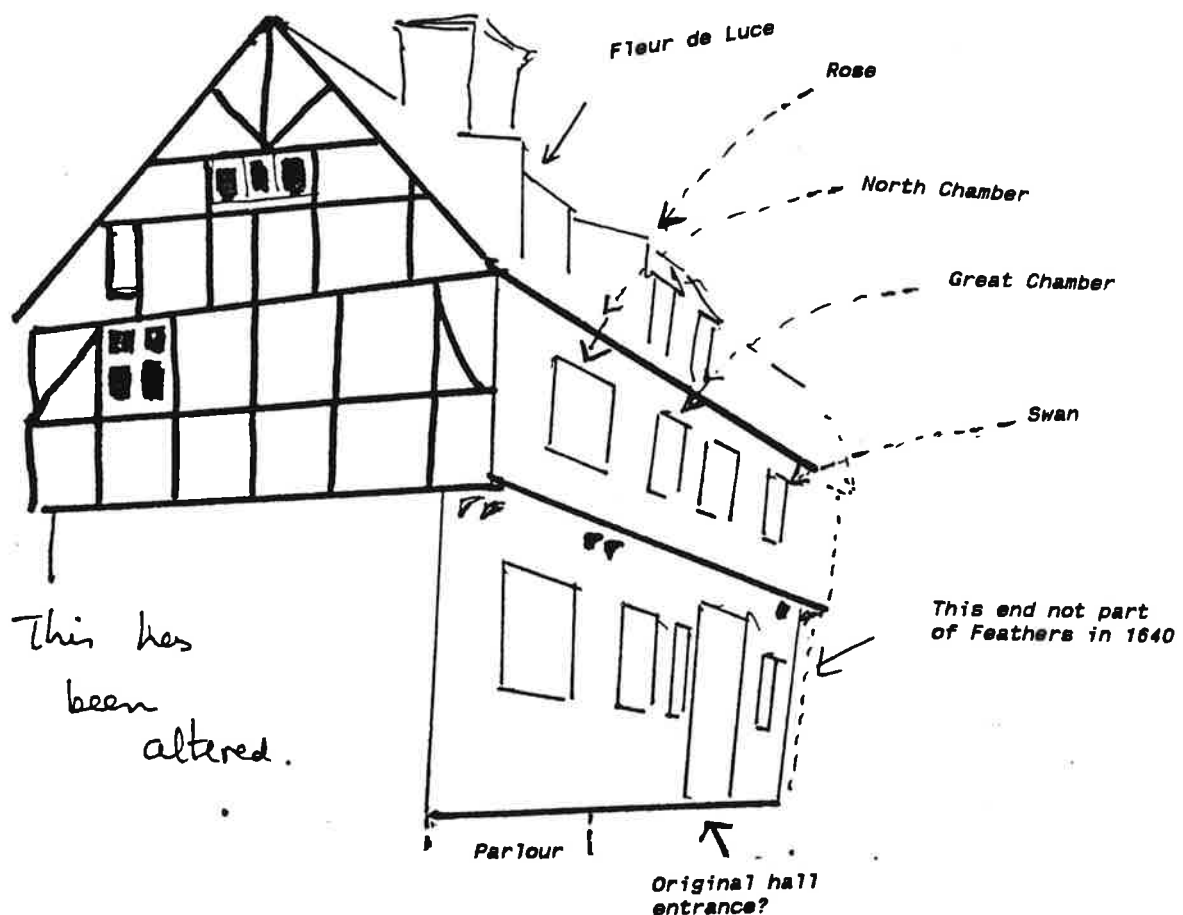
We can tell that the little cellar was used for salting meat, since it contained one salting trough, two powdering tubs (the word "powdering" means "salting"), one wash bowl and "other lumber". At present the little cellar leads out of the larger cellar, which is partly under the Bar, but in the Inventory it was reached from the kitchen. The site of the 17th century kitchen is uncertain; the kitchen now in use appears to be a Victorian extension.

The kitchen must have been of a fair size, because there were three dressers (for preparing food), one table and four little chairs. The list of metal objects begins with the pewter, including 32 pewter platters, ten chamber pots

and a dozen pewter spoons. There were various candlesticks, 7 of pewter, 4 of brass and a dozen of wood. There must have been a fire for cooking, as there were spits, a jack to turn the spits, even an hour-glass (to time the cooking?), dripping pans, fender and fire-pan. This indicates a newer type of fire, one in a sort of basket, not sitting straight on the hearth.

The question of fireplaces is rather difficult. In the larger cellar there can be seen the arch of brickwork to support a chimney stack, but above it in the Bar there is no fireplace. However, at chamber level there is a fireplace in the large room over the entrance, which I assume to have been "the Great Chamber over the entry". The room now backing onto it also has a fireplace using the same stack. In the attic above it there are again two fireplaces.

The Inventory list of the chambers begins with the chamber over the kitchen (stairs not mentioned, but then, they never are). Next was the north chamber, then the Great Chamber and the Swan. Following them was the Flower de Luce, an apple loft and the Rose. These, I think, were in the attic storey.



The chamber over the kitchen had two bedsteads with flock beds (mattresses), an old tub and a table and form. This was probably for the servants, since the total value of the contents was £2.

The north chamber had two bedsteads, but one had a feather bed, and there were two tables, curtains, and a carpet (still probably for the table), all valued at £6.10s.

The Great Chamber must certainly have had plenty of room, as it contained two high bedsteads, two truckle bedsteads (feather beds, pillows and bolsters for the high beds, flock for the others), two tables, two forms, five stools and a chair, nine cushions and a pair of andirons (so there was a fire there) and a pair of playing tables (backgammon). Value £10.10s.

The Swan was back to two bedsteads again, similar to the north chamber and also valued at £6.10s. There was one bedstead in the Flower-de-luce, and, as you might expect, none in the apple loft, but no apples either. There was only one hint of the occupation of William Mansfield - three pairs of shears and a shearman's board. So what he did with cloth was to shear or trim it, but not on a large scale.

Although it was in the loft, the Rose, like the Great Chamber, had two high bedsteads and two truckle beds, but only one table and chair and no playing tables. Still, the value was £9.6s.8d.

At present the stairs look Victorian and rise from behind the bar and lead to a long passage, north to south. Off it are the rooms, all facing Wote Street. The first, since it did face north, could have been the north chamber, the next the Great Chamber and the last the Swan.

The stairs up to the attic are contained in a kind of cupboard. The attics are not now used to sleep in, fire regulations requiring a fire escape, and the building being listed making it difficult to erect one. Mrs Minto said wistfully that it would have been nice to use the rooms and we were all sure that Americans, for example, would have been thrilled to sleep in places so heavily beamed.

The sites of the kitchen and the Parlour are not clear. The kitchen was probably near or over the little cellar, which would make it around the place where the beer is now delivered. The Parlour was very likely at the north end of the ground floor and has now become part of the main bar. Even in the parlour there were two high bedsteads, one truckle bedstead, two feather beds and one flock, curtains, valence (for the beds), as well as two window rods and curtains. The total value was £16.0s.0d.

It seems that there was one chamber pot for each bedchamber. Except for the landlord, no-one had a bowl to wash in, but perhaps there could have been hot water sent up on demand. Each room had a table and seating, pillows, mattresses and a few blankets. The stock of linen for the house was twelve pairs of canvas sheets, two pairs of Holland sheets, two pairs of flaxen sheets and eight pillowcases of lockram. This would not have been enough for every bed if the house was full, but fussy travellers took their own linen.

Food and drink would have been supplied to the traveller in his room, so the hall need not have been any larger than it appears to have been, as it no longer needed to house the whole company for meals. The inn brewed its own beer - there were seven hogsheads and two empty hogsheads in the larger cellar. There was two hundredweight of cheese in store, and there would have been apples in season in the loft. They baked their own bread and cured their own bacon. There could have been something to eat and drink at very short notice.

There is a wing out to the east at the south end of the building, but it is separately occupied and we could not see it. This may have contained the landlord's own chamber, and another called the Hart. There were also a brewhouse with a chamber over it, an oat loft, a bakehouse and a garden. In

the garden were pigs, pig troughs and hurdles, and two old tables. Perhaps in the summer the drinkers went out and kept the pigs company. Very much later, in the nineteenth century, I believe, there was a theatre in the garden of the Feathers. Now there is only a tarmaced yard and a long barn-like building, no garden. Oddly enough, there is no stable, but since there was an oat store, horses could have been fed if not stabled.

The rentals show that this building had a varied history:

- 1434 a tenement called Withers) usually paid for together by
- 1546 a tenement called Russells) the same man
- 1574 John Russell for his own tenement and for Withers 3s 4d
- 1601 John Headeach for his tenement 20d
- 1608 Heirs of Robert Manfield for lands purchased of John
Headeach called withers and for his tenement
- 1644 John Holmes for tent. late Wm Manfields now in John
Cherreys occupation 20d
- 1655 John Holmes for late Manfields called the PRINCES ARMS
- 1717 William Barber for the Inn called the Princes Arms
- 1733 James Barber heretofore Manfield late Holmes (the Inn)
1s 8d
- 1741 James Barber for the Inn called the Princes Arms
- 1780 Richard Booth for the Plume of Feathers the Princes Arms
late James Barber 3s 4d
- 1798 Mrs Booth widow of Richard Booth h.t.f. Princes Arms
3s 4d p/a
- 1800 " "
- 1815 T & C May 3s 4d

In 1824 Samuel Attwood recorded in his diary "Mr Bridge opened a temporary Theatre called the Pavilion in the Feathers Inn garden".

A reminder about the Canal trip ...



CALENDAR

13th May	ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS OF A MEDIAEVAL LANDSCAPE: EYNHAM, OXFORDSHIRE by Graham Keevill	****
16th May	16th century cooking display at Basing House	FOBH
19th May	HFC AGM & "Whatever Happened to the Bones of King Canute?" by John Crook: 7.30 pm Room 12, King Alfred's College.	HFC
20th May	An Illustrated Journey Through Reading John Dils, Willis Museum	FWM
22nd May	Children's Treasure Hunt at Basing House	FOBH
22nd May	Visit to St John's Hospital, Winchester	HFC
6th June	Roman Living History Display, 2nd Legion Augusta, Basing House	FOBH
9th June	Hampshire Landscape Fair in the Great Hall, Winchester	
10th June	THE ALTERNATIVE TRIREME by Alec Tilley - <u>Follows the AGM</u>	****
19th June	Visit to Warbrooke House, Eversley Rectory & Church	HFC
20th June	Visit to Cuckoo Hill, home of Heywood Sumner: 2 pm	HFC
3rd July	A CRUISE ON THE BASINGSTOKE CANAL (contact R.Dexter)	****
4th July	17th century Living History Display, Basing House	FOBH
8th July	Recent Work in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem (evening, provisional, in Winchester to be confirmed)	HFC
18th July	(PROVISIONAL) VISIT TO CHISENBURY EXCAVATIONS - (Mike Fulford): coach outing to be confirmed.	****

FOBH = Friends of Basing House
FWM = Friends of Willis Museum
HFC = Hampshire Field Club
**** = Our Society (capitals)