

BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

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CALENDAR

- Thursday 17 February: London & South Western Railway & Lines in the Basingstoke Area J Spencer Gilks (Friends of the Willis Museum) Willis Museum, 7.30
- Wednesday 23 February: The Industrial Revolution in Agriculture in Hampshire Gavin Bowie (Alton Hist & Arch Soc) Alton Community Centre, 7.30
- Friday 25 February: The History of Bottles John Castle (NE Hants Soc) General Assembly Rooms, PAE Farnborough, 7.30
- + Thursday 3 March: ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS Graham Soffe, 7.30, Chute House, Basingstoke
- Saturday 12 March: Brush Up your Mediaeval Latin One-day school, Univ. of Reading, 9.30 - 5; £3.50. University, London Road
- Thursday 17 March: Saxon Churches and the Yateley Church Excavation David Hinton (Yateley Society) Drama Hall, Yateley Centre, 7.30
- and
Saving Hampshire's Heritage Kevin Stubbs (Friends of the Willis Museum) Willis Museum, 7.30
- + Friday 18 March: BARN DANCE Kempshott Village Hall, 8 - 11 pm £2.25 including supper (£1.25 for children under 16)
- Saturday 19 March: Mediaeval Manuscripts One-day school, Univ. of Reading, 9.30 - 5; £3.50. University, London Road
- Wednesday 23 March: A Musical Journey through History Martin Brice (Alton Hist & Arch Soc) Community Centre, 7.30
- + Thursday 7 April: THE MARY ROSE Richard Harrison, Carnival Hall, Basingstoke, 7.30
- Saturday 9 April: Reading Abbey One-day school, Univ. of Reading, 9.30 - 5; £3.50. Abbey Gateway, Abbot's Walk, Reading
- Saturday 16 April: Religious Minorities in Hampshire Symposium, Local History Section, Hampshire Field Club (University of Southampton)

NE If this issue reaches you in time:

- + Thursday 3 February EXCAVATIONS AT OLD DOWN FARM, ANDOVER
Sue Davies, 7.30 pm, Chute House (Iron Age/Romano-British & Saxon site)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Graham Soffe, of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, will be speaking to us on this subject at 7.30 pm on Thursday, 3rd March at Chute House. Graham was co-director of the Hayling Island temple site which was the subject of a lecture to our Society in April 1981. His thoughts on the interpretation of Aerial Photographs will be of particular interest to Peter Heath, who describes in this Newsletter how he recently took to the air to photograph some Basingstoke sites.

BARN DANCE

Tickets are now available at meetings, and from any Committee member, for our Barn Dance at Kempshott Village Hall on 18th March. Price £2.25 (children under 16: £1.25) - this includes a ploughman's supper. Dancing to BLACK VELVET, with our very own Katie Smith.

Please buy your tickets as soon as you can, so that we can estimate the catering.

POT WASHING

Sessions have now been arranged for the following Wednesday evenings: February 2nd and 16th and March 16th, from 7 - 9 pm, in the annexe behind the Willis Museum (use the side entrance in Flaxfield Road). As Dave Allen is kindly coming over from Andover to let us in, we need to make sure his journey is worth while by having a good turn-out. Peter Heath (Basingstoke 27713) would like to know beforehand who intends to go, but don't let this put you off turning up if you haven't managed to tell him. There is plenty of material from our field-walking at Worthing Wood Farm to be washed, marked and sorted. No previous experience needed, and this is a very good way of getting the 'feel' of pottery, flints etc.

THE MARY ROSE

Advance notice - our programme card gives 'Venue to be announced' for the lecture by Richard Harrison, Executive Director of the Mary Rose Trust. This will be at the Carnival Hall, Basingstoke at 7.30 pm on Thursday, 7th April.

Our fund-raising has been very successful, with a total to date of £100.

READERS' GUIDES (BRITISH LIBRARY)

Our students of local history may like to know that the British Library publishes a series of booklets known as Readers' Guides. These are produced, as the name implies, to help users of the Reading Room, but are a very useful aide-memoire for other researchers. The three of most value in the field of local history are:

No 2: British Parliamentary Publications

No 6: English Places; Sources of Information

and No 8: Family and Personal Names, a brief guide to Sources of Information

No 6 is sub-titled as follows after a general introduction. General Works and Bibliographies; Victoria County History; Directories; Gazetteers and books of Travel; Regional Surveys; Domesday Book; Buildings; Place Names; Illustrations; Maps and Atlases; Newspapers and general periodicals; Official Publications; Calendars and Registers of Archives.

No 8 is set out as follows. Introduction; General References; Bibliographies; Monographs; Personal Names; Periodicals and series.

A mine of reference information and FREE on application to: The British Library, Department of Printed Books, Information Branch, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG.

ANDREW DUCKWORTH

BASINGSTOKE'S OPEN FIELD SYSTEM

(During his lecture on 6th January, Derek Spruce referred to John Harrison's chapter in Basingstoke: A Historical Miscellany which had inspired much of his own researches. This unfinished chapter had been part of a manuscript by members of a WEA class, submitted to George Willis for comment, which had mistakenly been published among Mr Willis's other papers after his death. We are very glad to be able to give Mr Harrison the opportunity to set this unfinished chapter in context)

In 1967 I wrote a paper for a WEA group studying the history of Basingstoke, on the open fields of Basingstoke and their enclosure, half of which was printed in Basingstoke: A Historical Miscellany (Essays by George Willis) published in 1972. In view of later research on open field agriculture and new theories as to how open fields originated and evolved, the article needs expansion and revision.

In my article I stated that there was no map of the fields of Basingstoke in their pre-enclosure state. In fact there is such a map, showing in considerable detail the open fields, some twenty-four years before the Enclosure Act of 1786.

This gap was filled by Derek Spruce in an extremely interesting and stimulating lecture entitled 'Basingstoke's Open Field System', given on 6th January to members of the Society; besides illustrating his description of the fields with slides showing details of the map, he outlined some more recent theories as to the evolution of open fields and open field husbandry in general.

The map was made as a result of a dispute in Chancery between the Duke of Bolton and the Mayor and Corporation of Basingstoke and in itself is a splendid example of the eighteenth century map maker's art. It consists of seven fold-out sections bound in a single volume. The seven sections show the Town and its immediate environs, the Down which was the common grazing land of the parish, and the six open fields, Salisbury Field, Winchester Field, Hatchfield and Hackwood Field; Chapel Field and Northfield sharing a single sheet.

Each plot on the map owned by the Duke of Bolton is hand-tinted and numbered and can be referred to in the index at the back of the volume, where all the plots are listed together with their customary

and statutory acreage. There is also a table which summarises the Duke of Bolton's total holding in the common fields under the twelve farms which he owned, nine of which were let out to tenants. For each farm is given the total number of strips, their distribution in the six fields, their combined acreage, and the number of sheep which each farm was allowed to graze on the Down. For example, we learn that Squire Limbrey, tenant of Baynard's Farm, held 103 strips, scattered in the open fields - 13 in Chapel Field, 31 in Winton Field, 10 in Salisbury Field, 23 in Hatchfield and 26 in Hackwood Field, totalling 119 acres, and that he was allowed to graze 279 sheep. The names of other freeholders are written over their respective plots on the maps.

Also marked are the individual furlongs or shots. An examination of the topography of the terrain they cover could determine if they were sited according to the lie of the land and represent the step by step reclamation of arable from the waste in early Mediaeval times and before. On the lower slopes of Winklebury ridge, for example, were three long furlongs stretching right across Chapel Field, described on the map as Lower Shot, Second Shot from Salisbury Field and Second Shot from the Bury (that is, Winklebury Fort), the strips pointing down the slope, suggesting that this might indeed be the case.

With the classical, perhaps stereotyped, Mediaeval picture of open fields exclusively subdivided into long, narrow strips of about the acre size, what strikes one on examining the 1762 map is the number of quite large plots. The greater part of Hatchfield consisted of rectangular plots, 8 acres being a typical size. In Salisbury Field, the Duke of Bolton owned two plots of around 6 acres, among surrounding smaller strips, and a similar story could be told of the other fields. How long had this state of affairs existed? The Hospital of St John numbered several plots, well above the 10 acre size, in a terrier or list of its lands made in 1444. Further evidence of the long-standing existence of some of these larger plots is the fact that they were named on the map, like Dickethams and Drovershaw Piece in Salisbury Field. Honey Piece in the same field is mentioned in mediaeval court rolls.

It is no longer accepted that open field agriculture was a static, stagnant affair, and the fields themselves fossilised relics of an outdated and outmoded agriculture, inhibiting all enterprise, a view perhaps inherited from the eighteenth century improving writers, enthusiastic for enclosures. It is sometimes forgotten that these writers often criticised practises on small farms in areas of long-standing enclosure. Open field farmers were always sensitive to market changes and were able to expand production to meet the requirements of an increasing population. New crops and courses were tried and adopted. Communal control gradually became less rigid, allowing private agreements which permitted more individuality in cropping. Leys, that is, plots withdrawn from the communal arable and laid down to permanent grass for pasture, were in evidence from the sixteenth century onwards. Kerridge (The Agricultural Revolution, London 1967) has shown that in some parishes half of the total common field area could be down to permanent grass. Such private agreements would enable individual farmers to exchange strips, allowing them to throw several strips together, making up a larger plot.

Another development borne out by the map are the closes which had come into existence around the edges of the fields, such as the six closes in Chapel Field bordering on Sherborne St John parish. These closes further reduced the total arable under communal control. In them cattle could be fattened for market.

How much of the comunal open field agriculture remained in Basingstoke by 1786? The Enclosure Award acknowledged that the inhabitants of Basingstoke had "enjoyed a right of common in the stubble fields", but this was a right which often remained long after other communal agricultural operations had been abandoned. It was because this right was extinguished by the Enclosure Act that common right holders in Basingstoke were awarded a common. Whether communal cropping was still practised in 1762 it is difficult to determine, without more evidence. Plots belonging to the Duke of Bolton's twelve farms were unevenly distributed among the six fields, although some equality of distribution does become evident if we group the fields in three pairs, Northfield and Chapel Field, Salisbury and Winchester Fields, Hatch and Hackwood Fields, and consider them as single fields for the purposes of cropping, but in any case this sort of distribution might be no more than an inheritance of times when communal cropping was practised.

The map is of inestimable value in detecting changes in landholding in the twenty-six years between 1762 and 1788, when the award was made, and could throw considerable light on whether enclosure brought about significant changes in the land market. Changes in landholding there were. Names of freeholders which appear on the map do not feature in the award. In the intervening years the Duke of Bolton acquired new tenants. Some former tenants like Limbrey, a considerable freeholder in his own right, had increased their holdings, in his case from the 219 acres which he rented in 1762 to the 316 acres which he was awarded in 1788 by right of his tenancy.

However disconcerting it must have been to the townsfolk of Basingstoke to see the surrounding fieldscape altered so completely in such a short time, one might sum up by saying that the Enclosures were the culmination of a long series of changes stretching back to Anglo-Saxon times, or as Derek Spruce suggested in his lecture, even beyond to Iron Age times, rather than an event bringing about revolutionary changes.

JOHN HARRISON

URBAN ARCHAEOLOGY IN HAMPSHIRE

The second of a series of one-day conferences organised by the Archaeology Section of the Hampshire Field Club took place on 28th November 1982 at Southampton University. After rural sites last year, this year's theme was towns, from their prehistoric beginnings to post-mediaeval times. The conference was well attended and, with a very full programme from 9.15 to 6.00 pm, made a stimulating and enjoyable day out.

It was nice to see Prof. Martin Biddle on the conference platform in Hampshire again, and he introduced the subject with a masterly survey of trends in urban development from the post-Roman period, with special reference to Winchester.

Winchester was also the subject of two other papers. Ken Qualman, the City Archaeologist, spoke about his rescue work in the city in the period since Biddle's excavations. These had mainly been sited outside the walls, and in the Iron Age and Roman periods. In the Middle Iron Age, Oram's Arbour was the centre of occupation, densely settled in parts, sparsely in others - a trading centre, but not on the same scale as Danebury! Small scale excavations and contractors' trenches had helped supply details of the Roman defensive circuit, and settlement and cemetery evidence is building up the picture of a growing population in 4th century AD. Dr Barbara York, a historian from King Alfred's College, was the third speaker on Winchester. She gave us a study of the city in the ninth century, illustrating how the documentary sources can illuminate the archaeological evidence - and the dynastic ambitions of Alfred's family, the relations between kings and bishops, and the emergence of Winchester as a place of special importance by the end of the ninth century made a fascinating story.

One of the other Hampshire towns studied at the conference was Silchester, and Dr Mike Fulford spoke on the origins of the town. Each year, the results of his current programme of excavation add to the rather basic information obtained from the Victorian work and the picture becomes more complex. This year, the most exciting results have come from the basilica where the pre-Roman occupation hinted at last year has been followed up; this was replaced in the 60s by a Roman timber building, preceding in position and probably function the stone basilica which was begun about 100 - 125 AD.

The third Hampshire town to receive considerable archaeological attention in recent years is Southampton, with two papers devoted to it. Mark Brisbane has recently visited us in Easingstoke to describe his important excavations at Hamwih, and he gave a similar excellent lecture at the conference, describing the main features of this important Saxon town with its dense, planned occupation and ample evidence of trade and industry. The town flourished between c690 and 880 - just the period when Winchester began to grow in importance and the smaller site of mediaeval Southampton to the west of Hamwih grew up. Bob Thompson continued the story of Southampton, describing the results of recent excavations, which have revealed the existence of a defensive circuit - perhaps the burh of Edward which was filled in by 1000. There has also been work on the castle site, which included royal apartments. Very little is known from the north and east of the town.

The last session of the conference was devoted to the post-mediaeval period, with Mike Hughes giving a study of failed towns - many familiar places like Bishops Waltham, Titchfield, Kingsclere, Overton, Wickham, Odiham, which were given borough status in the mediaeval period and often a laid-out street grid, but which never became more than market villages. Some, like Newtown on the Enborne, in the northern corner of the county, were even more spectacular failures. An early thirteenth-century foundation of the Bishop of Winchester, with 67 burgage plots, and surrounded by a ditch, it was completely eclipsed by Newbury, which was better sited, and had no revenue at all by the 1400s.

The last paper of the day was a lively and enjoyable paper on the existing architectural joys of some of the South Hampshire towns by David Lloyd (who collaborated with Nikolaus Pevsner to produce the Hampshire volume of the Buildings of England series). He described the effects which can be achieved with the available materials in the area - timber framing, brick, flint, with some stone e.g. Binstead stone from the Isle of Wight as a rarity. He provided a stimulating end to a full - almost exhausting - day, and we look forward to next year's conference on 'Life and Death in Hampshire'.

JOHN BURGESS SOPER AND SOUTH VIEW HOUSE

Since writing her article on 'The Fuss about Maiden Acre' in our November/December 1982 Newsletter (75), Anne Hawker has made another discovery in the County Record Office. This is a note about John Burgess Soper, living at 'Hillside' in Wyne Road (i.e. the house I referred to as 'Soper's Castle' in my addendum to Anne's article). This note refers to strained relations between Mr Soper and Dr Croker who lived at South View House - so at least at that time it was not Mr Soper who lived there. Did Dr Croker lease it from Mr Soper?

Meanwhile, one of our members, Frank Butler, has produced the token illustrated below. This shows on one side the seal of Basingstoke (St Michael), with MAYOR OF BASINGSTOKE around it and 1888-9 under it. The other side has the lettering J.B. SOPER ENGINEER around a stylised view of a stationary engine with flywheel and connecting rods, on a brick plinth. The engine could have been powered by steam or gas, but my guess is gas, as Basingstoke was proud of its Gas Works, opened in 1834, and this side of the token has the date 1847.



BARBARA APPLIN

'THE MADDING CROWD'

The main attraction at The Friends of the Willis Museum Christmas Party, which took place in an especially decorated Museum on 10th December, was a performance by 'The Madding Crowd'.

The group of about 24 people, which included the Museum Curator, Dr Gavin Bowie and his wife, were dressed in period costume circa 1820 and made up an Orchestra and Choir which presented readings, sang carols and played music of that period.

The 'Madding Crowd' have researched and collected a wide range of West Country traditional village church and dance music that established itself after the Reformation and which only disappeared from the village church with the mid-19th century Oxford Movement when the harmonium and Hymns Ancient and Modern were introduced.

Until about a hundred years ago, nearly every village had a little band and choir. They led the singing in church and the village processions at Whitsun, also playing for dancing at harvest-time and Christmas. London trained musicians despised them, for the only teaching they got was from relatives and neighbours, yet every hymn book today contains some of their tunes, which have been adapted for the organ. Much of their music is quite unknown today and quite different from the church and band music that we are used to. Few bands could afford printed music and so they copied it out by hand. Many of the old manuscripts were burnt by reforming Victorian parsons; however, some families preserved their old books and it is from these, together with some tunes printed 'for the use of country choirs' that 'The Madding Crowd' takes its repertoire.

The Group, who come mainly from the Southampton and Winchester areas, were much in demand during the recent festive season. They presented a programme entitled 'Carols from the Villages' at Southampton in the Tudor Merchants' Hall, participated in a village church wedding, and were part of Twelfth Night Festivities at a private party at Alresford.

SHIRLEY WHATMORE

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

In October last I had the opportunity to fly over the Basingstoke area and to take some photographs. Through the good offices of Andrew Duckworth, it was arranged that the next time his son, Stephen, was flying locally, I would go with him.

As my experience of aerial photography was totally lacking, I had 'read up' the subject by borrowing books from the public library and visiting Kodak at their Holborn head office. I found them most helpful, giving me information about types of film and the correct filters to use (TRI-X PAN ASA 400 + yellow filter; camera: Pentax ME Super - 28mm lens, for the cognoscente!)

The main objects of the flight were to photograph the area we have been field-walking at Worting Wood Farm and also Kempshott Down where a new golf course Club House may be built in close proximity to some round barrows.

The first available Sunday, the visibility was so poor that there was little point in taking off, but the following week-end, after waiting for a rain squall to pass, we were able to get airborne.

The aircraft was a small two-seater Cessna with a high wing which enabled us to have an unrestricted view of the ground. With memories of flying in the Royal Air Force, I came equipped with plenty of warm clothing but found the aircraft had a very comfortable heated cockpit!

We took off from Blackbushe Airport at about 2 pm and headed west towards Basingstoke. There was a strong head wind and at times we almost seemed to stand still!

I took the opportunity to take a few exposures of Basing and Basingstoke as we passed over them and then we were quickly over our 'target area'. We circled a number of times to take exposures from different directions. The soil marks were quite plain to see but were even more interesting on the field next to that where we had been field-walking.

Then on to Kempshott, the strong winds making it difficult to guide the aircraft exactly over the area required. The ground there was a carpet of bright green as the new crops were beginning to show through. The ploughed-out round barrow showed clearly as a ring in the corner of the field. Unfortunately, the photographs, although showing the barrow, were not very clear. It seems that the camera still has a long way to go before it matches the naked eye!

From Kempshott we passed south of the M3 motorway and made our way back to Blackbushe - in good time with a strong tail-wind. The flight lasted for an hour and it passed all too quickly.

The photographs are now being examined by several members of the Society and although, so far, no startling discoveries have been made, I think they will prove useful to us. There is, of course, a great deal to learn about the technique of taking aerial photographs, but at least our first attempt has not been a total disaster!

At a later meeting of the Society this year the photographs will be displayed so that everyone has an opportunity of seeing them.

In conclusion, may I thank Stephen Duckworth for a most enjoyable flight and express the hope that the chance will present itself again to do some more aerial photography.

PETER HEATH

THE SOCIETY'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

Don't think that parties just happen! They're jolly hard work!

We all turned up for our annual 'do' at Church Cottage, laden with baskets of provender, bits of costume to add to the bits already on our bodies, items for our 'Links with the Past' table and bits of information for our quiz.

Church Cottage is about the best and most anciently romantic place to hold a Christmas party - and a great deal of thought had been given to costumes by some of our members. Amongst the sprinkling of mediaeval and Tudor characters, Arthur and Shirley Whatmore excelled as Henry VIII and his Queen (which one? you ask - well, he had so many in such a short time after poor Katharine of Aragon). Barbara Applin was a snazzily turned-out Pankhurst with her 'Votes for Women' sash, and husband Bob was Lawrence of Arabia, in his long white nightie and headdress - much more impressive than the original. Mary Oliver was Dick Turpin, Stephen sported the chain mail and white ensign of Richard Coeur de Lion, and Jane, in her Royal plaids, was Bonnie Prince Charlie. Mrs Atkinson was 'Mrs Bellamy' with her pork pie - and fooled everyone: history states that Pitt the Younger, on his death bed, cried 'Roll up the map of England - I shall have no further need of it!' Whereas, as everyone knows, he really said, 'Eh, what I could really do with is one of Mrs Bellamy's pork pies!'

Now the next bit is rather confusing - because we had two Julius Caesars - one taller and thinner than the other, both speaking quite a different dialect - probably the difference between classical and church Latin? One wore his laurel wreath slightly to the back of his head, the other had it rakishly tipped over one eye. One wore a cloak of purple, the other had a dagger sunk deep in the imperial bosom, dripping with his life's blood - one was John Caesar and the other was Peter Caesar - I leave you to guess who they were.

The quiz, devised by the Committee, was ably chaired by Graham Hall - the subjects ranging from Mary Rose to William Morris, from Wars of the Roses to Dorothy L. Sayers, Beowulf ... and many more. It brought to light yours truly's abysmal ignorance of matters historical and a heightened dedication to learning a bit more.

I suppose the most important things about any party are the company, venue, entertainment and last, but certainly not least, food

and drink. Betty Waters and Jean Mellor were dressed as serving wenches - and did they serve! They had organised a superb catering service - granted, everyone chipped in and we all provided flans, salads, pâtés, mousses, jellies, cakes, trifles, canapés - you name it and it was there - everything was the best of its kind. But this has to be said, catering is jolly hard slog. Betty and Jean prepared, served, waited and cleared up - no mean task when one considers the number of members and guests. I know you'll agree that they deserve a special vote of thanks.

It was a good evening, wasn't it!

NANCY WILLIAMS

LATIN TRANSLATION

When I translated M. de Kort's article on 'The Salomon Affair' for our September/October 1982 Newsletter (74), I did not attempt a translation of the snippets of mediaeval Latin, but I have since consulted people more knowledgeable than I am, and anyone who was puzzled may like to know their version:

- a) Salomon gratia Dei totius Britanniae partis Galliarum princeps.
Salomon by the grace of God ruler of all Britain and part of Gaul.
- b) Dux Britanniae nul tarumque aliarum regionum
Ruler of Britain and of no other regions
- c) Juga lapsus in paucherum secessit.
Having relinquished the yoke (of power?) he withdrew into poverty.

BARBARA APPLIN

TRAINING DIG

Once again, if there is enough demand, we hope to arrange a training dig over Good Friday - Easter Monday inclusive. Please contact Eric Robinson (28503) or Peter Heath (27713) as soon as possible if you are interested.

FIELDWALKING

Weather permitting, field-walking will continue at Worthing Wood Farm, probably till the end of March. Every Sunday, from 9.30 am to 12.30. Meet outside Worthing Church, and bring wellies! More details from Eric Robinson or Peter Heath (above)