



BRITISH  
BRICK  
SOCIETY

# INFORMATION

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July 1989

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BRITISH BRICK SOCIETY

# INFORMATION

# 48

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## EDITORIAL: ROOFQUEST FOR A DRAGON

One of the brick buildings with which I have been involved for a number of years is Rye House, Stanstead Abbots, Herts., a fifteenth-century moated manorhouse of which only the gatehouse now survives. It was only recently that a friend pointed out to me that the building is overlooked by a fine snarling dragon on a gable of the Rye House Public House on the opposite side of the road.

Ceramic roof-furniture underwent an important revival during the nineteenth century, as part of the medievalising tendency associated with the Gothic Revival. Ridge-tiles in a wide variety of patterns were mass-produced, as were various types of roof-finials. Many are quite simple: spikes, often with lobes, or simple knobs were quite common; others have a vaguely zoomorphic form, whilst yet others have various floral designs. More elaborate were the fleurs-de-lys and the crosses, the latter particularly suited to churches although they also occur on houses.

Sometimes even more elaborate designs are encountered, such as the tall sunflower rising nobly above a gable in Tenison Road, Cambridge. By the River Thames, in River Road at Maidenhead is a goblin- or demon-like creature looking down threateningly.

But my own favourites are the dragons, which occur in a variety of stances. That at Rye House snarls down at the visitor and has its tail wrapped around the tiles. On a small building in Jermyn Street, Sleaford, Lincs. another dragon cranes its neck vertically and holds a small ball in its maw. The adjoining ridge-tiles pick up the dragon theme in their curved serrations - like the upstanding plates on the back of many a Rupert Book dragon. Another dragon in the same town occupies a strategic corner spot at Sleaford Building in the High Street, whence it looks down angrily on the passers-by. Next to the house in Maidenhead which has the goblin are two houses each with a dragon looking down warningly from the front gable. A fine example with its head raised and mouth agape in, presumably, a blood-curdling dragonish shriek is illustrated in Ian Hesselberg's London in Detail (London: John Murray, 1986 edition): it is at Dulwich Park. I have also been told of others at Twickenham and Chislehurst.

The building in High Street, Sleaford is firmly dated by a plaque to 1883. Most of the dragons would appear to date from the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries, and, if never numerous, seem to have been quite widespread. They are a delightful phenomenon and it is always worth looking up for them. From my limited experience, you are not likely to be rewarded with a sighting too often - dragons are obviously retiring creatures - but the occasional spotting is worth the sore neck and, doubtless, the judgement of passers-by that you are some sort of a crank. But what does that matter to you? As a brick enthusiast you are probably used to it anyway. Besides, you've seen something that they haven't - and it's worth seeing too!

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The AGM at York on Saturday 8 July was well worth waiting for. The Chairman managed to get through the tedious business in his usual tedious way. But this was followed by an excellent preparatory talk by Lawrence Watson, who then conducted us on an informative tour of selected brick buildings in central York. His wit and enthusiasm were abundant and his tour was of just the right length, leaving some 'free time' at the end even for those of us who were in York just for the day.

cont./



I should like to thank Lawrence for all his hard work in preparing his talk and tour and also Michael Hammett, who - if he didn't manage to arrange the weather quite as well as he usually does - nevertheless again did all the backroom work on which we all rely for the success of such an occasion.

Terence Paul Smith  
Editor

## DAY SCHOOL AT CHILTERN OPEN-AIR MUSEUM 1989

*Mary Bentley*

The Chiltern Open-Air Museum at Chalfont St Giles, Bucks. was the venue for a one-day school on 'The History of Bricks and Brick Buildings in England' on Sunday 19 March 1989, as noted in Information 46.

Nearly a dozen BBS members were among the audience of more than 190 people, including architects, historians, archaeologists, members of the brickmaking industry, and restoration and conservation experts (several from English Heritage), as well as those with a more general interest in the subject. Many were members of COAM, whose Chairman, John Edmonds, was Co-ordinator of the event.

BBS was well represented by having as two of the three speakers its Chairman T.P. Smith and Secretary M. Hammett, who, with R. Baldwin - Past President of the Guild of Bricklayers - gave a series of lively lectures well illustrated with a selection of good slides.

Mike Hammett dealt with the development of the clay brickmaking industry from traditional handmade techniques through to modern machine-making and also covered firing methods both ancient and modern. Slides from recent BBS visits to Rudgwick (Sussex), Blockleys (Shropshire), and Bulmer (Suffolk) were among those used. Later in the day, Mike spoke of the changing rôle of brickwork from its major use in the past as a structural support to one of being a decorative skin over a concrete or steel frame as brought about by the requirements of open-plan office buildings. He mentioned that the suitability of a building to its surroundings and the emphasis on decorative effect require careful consideration of details such as pointing, brick size, and colour, and the use of 'specials' to achieve high quality work.

Terry Smith was our guide to an illustrated history of English brickwork. He started by showing an example of Roman bricks at Burgh Castle, Norfolk and examples of their re-use by both Saxons and Norman builders, and then journeyed through many counties to cover medieval buildings and subsequent use of brick down to modern times. He emphasised how far, in recent decades, different brick types and finishes, use of mortar, different methods of pointing, and the careful arrangement of the bricks can all lead to decorative effects, a long way from the tedious plain brick wall in Stretcher Bond.

The practical problems of bricklaying and its supervision were considered by Bob Baldwin, who emphasised that good brickwork can be achieved, but that it does not just happen. Contractors must be

given detailed realistic specifications so that the bricklayer can be told what is expected of him. For example, laying handmade bricks is difficult because of their uneven size and irregular surface, but, by using flush jointing, this irregularity can be minimised. Bob also said that brickwork using handmade bricks should be viewed from across the road and as such is not suitable for internal corridors where the viewing angle will always show up the inherent unevenness. He talked about the practical techniques of good pointing, gauge, and perpend.

The questions raised at Question Time showed the diversity of interests and knowledge of those attending, and enabled some general discussion to take place. A very interesting and informative day closed with the opportunity to walk round the Museum and to see a practical demonstration by Bob Baldwin of the various mortar joints that he had described earlier. We could see why tuck pointing is such an expensive operation and not to be encouraged!

## BRICK AND PAINT SEMINAR 1989

*David H. Kennett*

The Seminar arranged by the University of Cambridge Board of Extra-Mural Studies on 'Brickwork and Paint in Buildings of the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Century' announced in Information 47 was held in the Saunders Room of Newnham College, Cambridge on Saturday 24 June 1989.

John McCann opened the day with an account of 'Brick Nogging in Timber-Framed Buildings', which extended his previous work on Essex buildings.<sup>1</sup> The use of brick nogging in high status buildings was aptly brought out by one of the earliest examples: the gatehouse of Hertford Castle, a royal building of 1465. Dating from the early sixteenth century were three Essex buildings: Paycocke's House, Great Coggeshall, built between 1505 and 1518 by Thomas Paycocke II; Colville Hall, White Roding, built by John Browne between 1537 and 1550; and the barn at New Hall, High Roding, which dates from 1544. These were all buildings where the brick nogging was primary: a useful test as to whether the nogging is primary or not is to press an engineer's feeler-gauge between the brick and the post or stud. If the gauge bends with the side of the timber then the latter has been cut to take mortar or in some cases the bricks themselves. Usually, a V-shaped notch was cut for mortar, but a U-shaped notch for both mortar and bricks was also used. A greater number of buildings with primary brick nogging is known from the second half of the sixteenth century. McCann's examples included: Place House, Great Barfield, of 1564, in Essex, and, from Suffolk, Otley Hall of the 1580s and Wicks Green, Earl Stonham of the 1590s. Undated are a timber-framed porch with brick nogging added to a 'Wealden' house of c.1500 at Debenham, Suffolk, and Morden Hall, Guilden Morden, Cambs. Brick nogging was not always primary. A timber-framed building originally with wattle-and-daub infill was Parsonage Farm, Burwell, Cambs., which became the property of the University of Cambridge after the Dissolution. To emphasise its new ownership, the thirty-year-old infill was removed and replaced by nogging. Now a farm, it had been a court hall<sup>2</sup> when monastic property.

Terence Paul Smith, departing from his announced topic, offered

'A Survey of English Brickwork', beginning with the Roman Period and ending with the twentieth century. Points emphasised within this magisterial compass were first an engineering rôle for brick and second the high status of brick buildings in the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. The engineering role begins with the Romans, who used large, flat bricks to level a wall of flint-faced rubble at Burgh Castle, Norfolk, and continues with the structural brick of medieval churches such as the free-standing tower of St Michael's church, Beccles, or the central tower of Canterbury Cathedral, and the rendered brickwork of the upper part of the porch of the parish church of St Mary and St Nicholas at Wrangle, Lincs. and the north wall, the east end, and most of the south wall of the chapel of St Nicholas near Tuesday Market at King's Lynn. High status was indicated by a range of buildings from Dent-de-Lion, Margate of before 1437, through the courtiers' houses like Someries Castle, near Luton, of 1448-71, to the unfinished magnate's house at Kirby Muxloe Castle, Leics., of 1480-84. Equally, the status is emphasised by its use in contemporary Cambridge colleges: Queens', Jesus, and, now faced with stone, Christ's, with a continuing use in Cambridge at St John's, beginning with First Court of after 1511, followed by Second Court of the 1590s, and the library of 1624, added as part of Third Court. The collegiate use interlocks with the use of brick in late Tudor and Jacobean prodigy houses: Smith showed Hatfield House, Herts. and the smaller Charlton House, Kent.

A third theme was the interchange of ideas with the nearer parts of the European littoral: fifteenth-century designs for a trefoil shape at Ewelme, Oxon., and Prior Overton's Tower, Repton, Derbys., would be equally at home in Bruges or Delft. Seventeenth-century gables would also be at home on either side of the North Sea.

Smith continued his survey by emphasising the fine brickwork of the Georgian Period and the often vigorous use of brick at all levels of building during the nineteenth century. Finally, he brought the topic into the twentieth century by stressing the wide variety of styles and the often innovative use of brick during the last eight or nine decades.

When Timothy Easton spoke on 'The Use of Paint on Brick and Timber' he suggested that it was better to enjoy the 160 slides (using two projectors each with a full magazine) rather than take notes on a more profusely illustrated version of his earlier consideration in a paper on this aspect of houses in Debenham and the surrounding area of Suffolk.<sup>3</sup>

The final session was devoted to an examination of 'The Development of Brick Stacks and Hearths', mostly in Essex, by David Stenning. We were presented with an array of photographs and measured drawings of elaborate fireplaces inserted during the fifteenth century into existing houses at Pennels Ash, Pentlow; West Street, Prittlewell, once in the Victoria and Albert Museum but now more appropriately in Southend Museum; 17 South Street, Rochford, now the mayor's parlour of Rochford District Council; Little Radochs Farm, Easthorpe, a fireplace now in the Castle Museum, Colchester; Troys Hall, Fairstead; Potash Farm, Felstead; 'The Wheatsheaf', Castle Hedingham; 1 and 2 High Street and Bacons, Feering Hill, both Kelvedon; East Street, Prittlewell; the Old Manor House, Chipping Hill, Witham; and the Priest's House, Wethersfield. These fireplaces have niches with trefoil and/or quatrefoil corbel-tables and friezes of moulded bricks, whilst some also have crenelations as part of the decorative scheme, which is also painted in the recessed panels. One use of paint brought out by Stenning was the use of white plaster below the trefoils at the top of the courtyard face of the great tower of Oxburgh Hall, Norfolk, which is paralleled in Essex by the painted shields in holes of the trefoils of a similar frieze at Nether Hall,



Roydon, a feature now known only from an eighteenth-century description.<sup>4</sup>

A general discussion ended a most illuminating day. Our thanks are due to David Dymond for co-ordinating this valuable interchange of information both about the general use of brick and about some of its more specialised uses.

#### Notes and References

1. J. McCann, 'Brick Nogging in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, with examples drawn mainly from Essex', Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society, 31, 1987, 106-33, reviewed by G. Hines, BBS Information, 45, July 1988, 10-11.
2. Inspired by McCann's talk, the present writer hopes to gather together scattered notes on court halls in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, and Suffolk, to examine the group for its possible use of brick nogging.
3. T. Easton, 'The Internal Decorative Treatment of 16th- and 17th-Century Brick in Suffolk', Post-Medieval Archaeology, 20, 1986, 1-17; see G. Hines, 'Brick Cosmetics', BBS Information, 45, July 1988, 9-10, for a summary.
4. D. Stenning will be publishing his material in Transactions of the Essex Historical and Archaeological Society.

## POWERSTOCK COMMON BRICK KILN, DORSET

*Martin D. P. Hammond*

This brick kiln is situated on Powerstock Common, some 4 miles (6 kilometres) north-east of Bridport, Dorset, NGR: SY 542974. The kiln is a coal-fired 'side-fired Suffolk' type, and was probably built in 1857, when the adjacent Bridport branch railway line opened. In December 1858 the Bridport News reported that 'although Witherstone [Wytherston] has up to the present time been the bugbear of the Bridport Railway Company and the thief of the shareholders, it is possible that the soil may be turned into some utility as it is discovered to be a valuable clay and beautiful yellow bricks may be made from it in any quantity at almost nominal expense.' Extra land had to be purchased so that the slope of the sides of the cutting could be reduced. The land was owned by the Rev. William Jenkins, who would only sell on condition that a siding was put in at that point for his own use. There is no record of the siding being put in, but it may have been associated with the brickyard, which is shown on the 1887 Ordnance Survey map. The nearest station was Toller Porcorum, 1½ miles to the east.<sup>1</sup>

The kiln (fig.1) consists of a rectangular chamber, in which the bricks were stacked for firing, with a perforated floor carried on arches over four or five tunnels. The fires were stoked from a pit in front of the kiln. The chamber was filled and emptied through



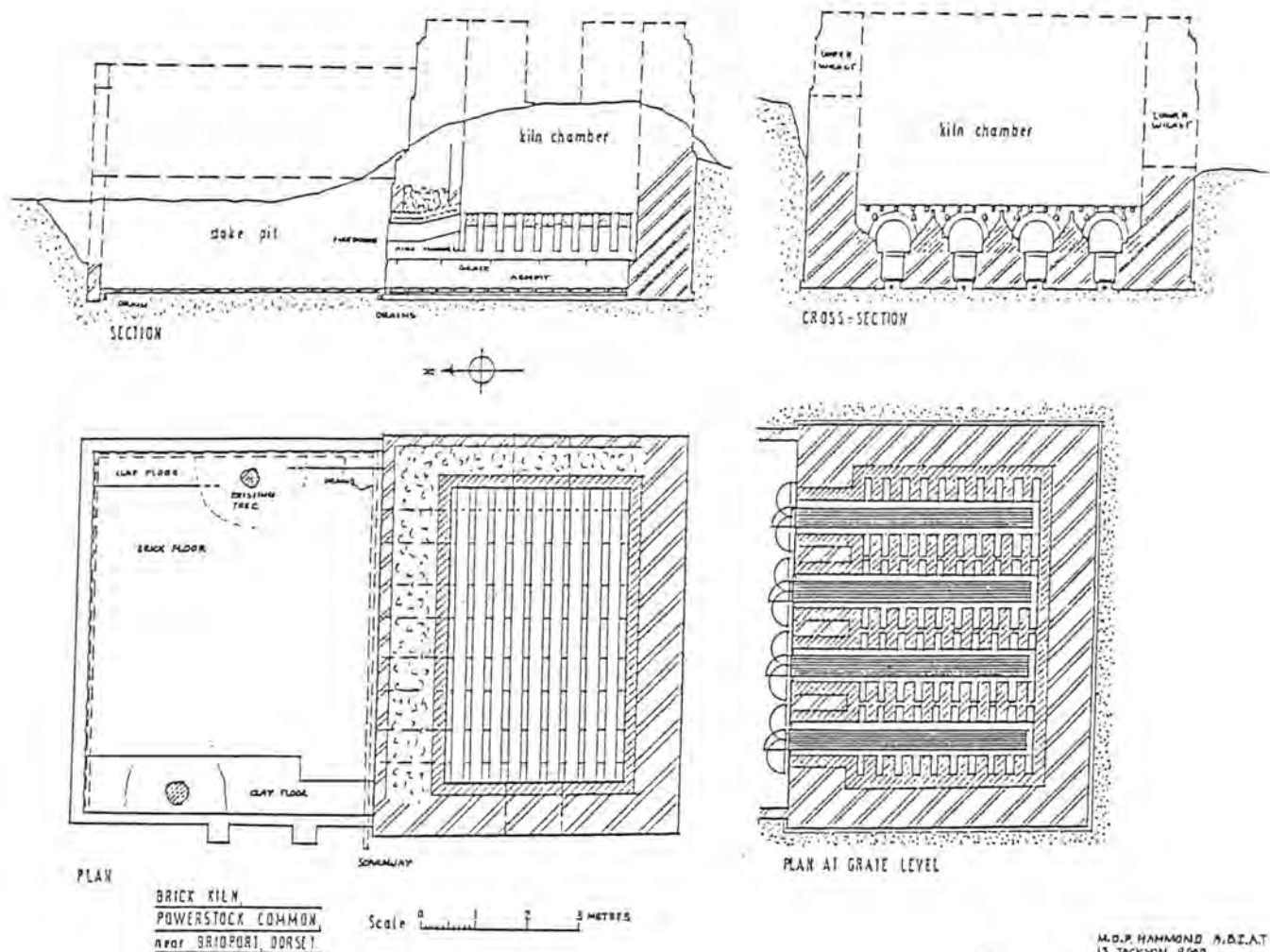


Fig. 1

doorways or 'wickets' in the end walls. No brickwork survives above ground level, and much of the structure had been preserved by burial under debris.

The chamber measures 5.42 by 3.36 metres in plan, and with walls 3.5 metres high would have held 25,000 bricks - about average for this type of kiln. It is built of bricks made on site, both hand-mades and 21-hole perforated wirecuts, laid in English Bond. The lining is of firebricks and red bricks laid in loam. The front wall over the fireplace has a core of brick rubble.

The fire-tunnel arches are 60cm wide by 65cm high above grate level and are lined with handmade firebricks by Rufford of Stourbridge. This firm exported all over the world during the nineteenth century. Tapered bricks are used for the arches and all the bricks were laid in fireclay. A notable feature of the tunnels is the 'bellmouth' towards the inside face of the front wall to throw some of the heat upwards into what is often a 'cold spot' in the chamber. The hottest part of the fire seems to have been one-third the way along the grate, which extends almost the full length of the tunnel, another unusual feature. The bricks spanning the slots between the arches in the chamber floor have triangular fillets of clay applied to them to streamline the flow of the flames.

The firebricks measure 230 by 110 by 65 mm. Arch-bricks taper

from 65 to 40mm in thickness, across their width. Below the front wall the sides of the fire-tunnel are built in fireclay 'horse block' such as were used in glassmaking tank furnace construction, measuring 740 by 270 by 120mm.

The grates are of flat steel bars 50 by 10mm in section, running the full length of the grate. Each bar rests in a notch in the top edge of the 20 by 80mm cast iron supports which span the ashpit.

The firedoor assemblies used (fig.2) are the most sophisticated

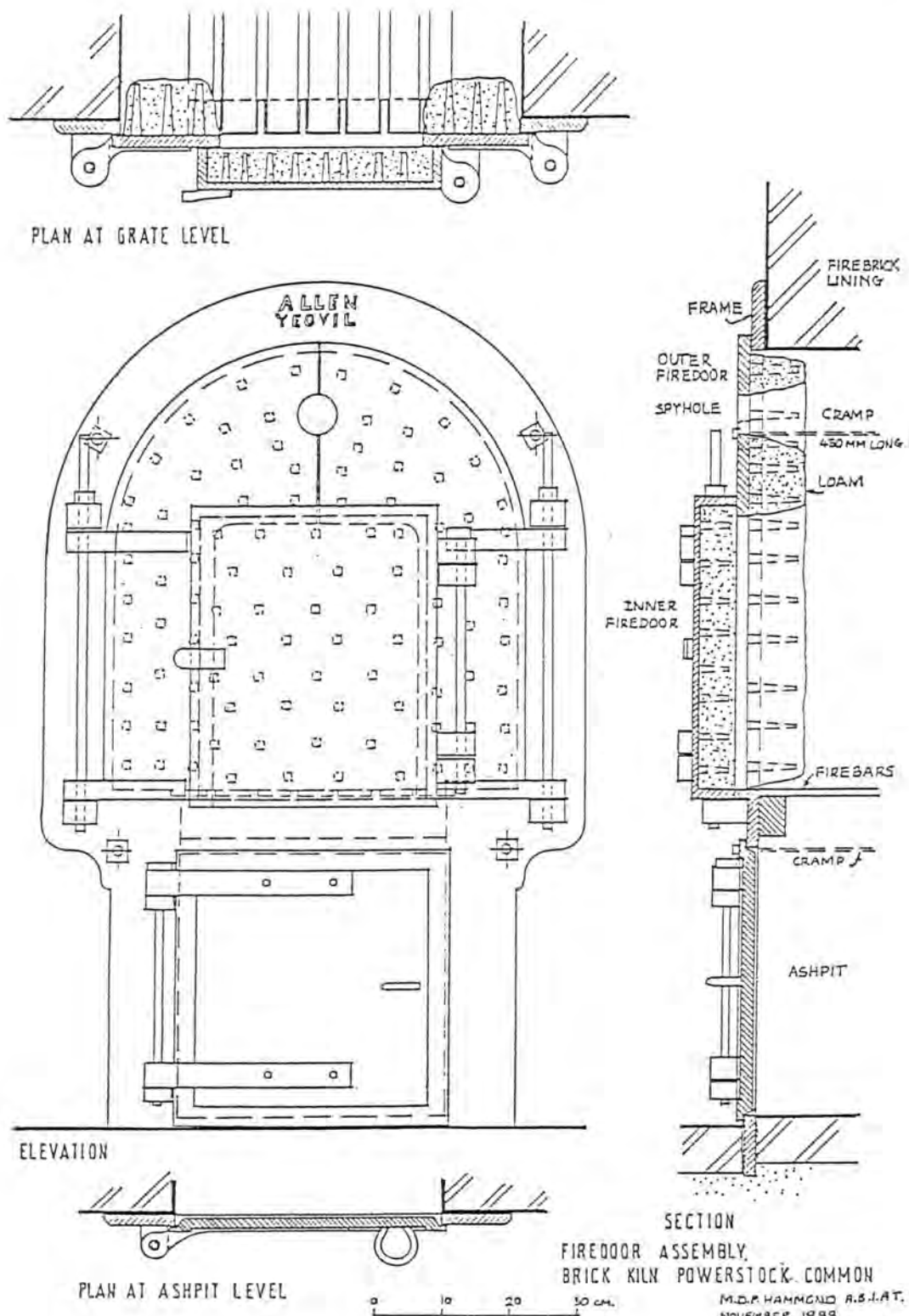


Fig. 2

known to the author. A frame is fixed to the brickwork by cramps at least 45cm long by 15mm diameter, with the outer end threaded for a nut. From this is hung the ashpit door and a pair of outer firedoors, normally opened for cleaning the grate. From the right-hand door hangs the inner firedoor, used when stoking the fire. The meeting edges of the outer doors are notched to form a spyhole and secondary combustion air inlet. The inside face of the firedoors has spikes which once held a protective coating of loam. All the ironwork is cast except the cramps and the door hinge-pintles. The frame of one set of doors has what appears to read ALLEN YEOVIL on it, but it is very corroded.

North of the kiln is the stoke pit measuring 6.8 by 5.5 metres by 1.6 m deep below ground level. It has a brick floor and walls, and probably once had a tiled roof. Large quantities of broken tiles, also apparently made on site, with rusted nails in the nail holes, were found. The tiles are corrugated single-lap tiles, measuring 250 by 310mm, made by extrusion, though some plain tiles were also found.

No masonry steps down into the pit were found, so wooden steps are assumed.

The stoke pit would have been used for tending the fires, storing the coal, of which about 13 tons would have been consumed in one firing lasting three days, and as somewhere for the kiln-burners to rest between shifts. Normally two men, working shifts, would stay at the kiln for the duration of the firing.

Small areas of the floor are unpaved, and a system of land-drain pipe drains was found below these, draining to a soakaway outside the south-west corner of the pit.

The site was virtually cleared and some 'first aid' brickwork repairs were done by a team from Dorset Countryside Volunteers during three weekends in May and August 1988, under the author's direction. Many buckets and barrow-loads of debris were removed, and any re-usable bricks and brickbats were salvaged. The most difficult task was clearing the fire-tunnels, which were nearly filled with debris. The firedoors had been broken off their hinges or were rusted open at various angles. In two of the tunnels part of the arches had collapsed, making access rather easier. All the grates were intact, and the ashpits under them have still to be cleared. This would be best achieved by lifting the firebars out of the way. It is proposed to do further restoration of the brickwork, but probably not a complete rebuild. Two small trees growing in the stoke-pit will be retained.

It is not known when the kiln ceased working. It was active in 1887, the date of the OS map. To the south of the kiln are several claypits, now colonised by mature coppice woodland. The geology is Fuller's Earth Clay, with outcrops of Gault and Greensand. The clay is yellowish-grey, and fires light red, turning yellow to cream with increased temperature.

Several fragments of circular cast-iron tie-plates were found during the clearance. These would have been used in association with tie-bars built into the brickwork in the upper part of the kiln walls. A quantity of 'hoop-iron', thin iron strips measuring 48 by 3mm, was found. This would have been laid in the horizontal joints of the brickwork as reinforcement.

It became apparent that the kiln had been very carefully designed by someone with considerable experience, though the standard of construction is not unusually high.

The author has proposed that the kiln restoration be a memorial to Donald Young, who pioneered research into Dorset brickmaking. It was he who first brought this kiln to the author's attention in



about 1972.

Since the first report following a visit to the site in May 1987 excavation has revealed the true size of the kiln chamber, and a fourth firehole, which had been completely buried, came to light.

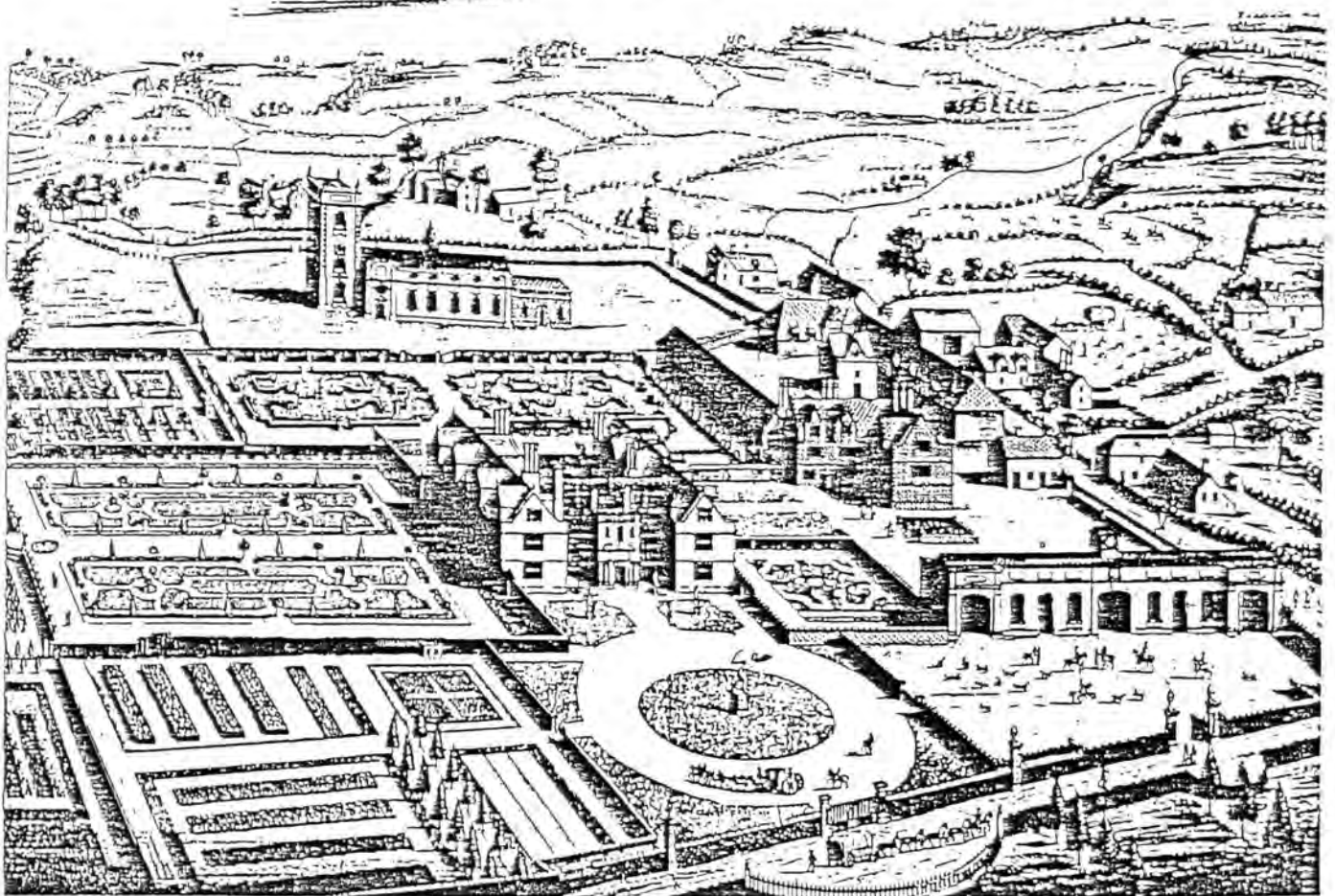
#### Note

1. B.L.Jackson and M.J.Tattershall, The Bridport Branch, Oxford Publishing Co, 1976.

## CASTLE BROMWICH HALL GARDENS RESEARCH PROJECT: EXCAVATION AND BRICK SURVEY

*Martin Locock*

The gardens at Castle Bromwich Hall, near Birmingham (seen below in a prospect of 1726 by Henry Beighton) represent a rare survival of a late formal garden, dating from the period 1700-1740. They were designed by William Winde and George London, authorities of the time. In the last fifty years the gardens had been allowed to deteriorate, but in 1983 Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens Trust was set up to restore



them to their appearance of the 1720s. An MSC team carried out limited archaeological excavation, and with the demise of the MSC alternative funding was sought. A grant from the Leverhulme Trust has permitted the appointment of Chris Currie as Research Fellow and Director of Excavations, and Martin Locock as Field Archaeologist.

They will be responsible for a three-year programme of excavations and other surveys to provide the archaeological evidence necessary for an accurate reconstruction of the 1720 gardens. It is intended to take the opportunity to evaluate a range of recognised and innovative techniques, and to assess their suitability for garden archaeology.

Around the gardens, a large number of walls and ancillary buildings from the original layout survive. Therefore, it is intended to undertake a detailed survey of the walls, recording their bond, mortar, brick size, and so on, with the aim of producing a precise phasing for the construction of the various parts. A pilot study, by Iain Soden, was published in West Midlands Pottery Research Group Newsletter, 12, 1989. The accounts of the building period survive, and so it may be possible to identify these phases with the individual records. Over one million bricks were used on the site between 1700 and 1750, supplied mainly by a local man, Abraham Parsons, 'ye brickman'. As well as the site survey it is hoped to carry out archival research into Parsons' activities, and more far-flung fieldwork in order to identify the brick kilns and clay-sources used.

The Brick Survey will therefore be a major contribution not only to the context of the excavations, but also to the more general study of the post-medieval brickmaking industry.

The address of the Trust is: Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens Trust, Chester Road, Castle Bromwich, Birmingham B36 9BT. Telephone: 021-749-4100.

## BAUMBER KILN

*Martin D. P. Hammond*

Restoration of the Braumber kiln in Lincolnshire (figs.1 and 2, overleaf; see BBS Information, 42, May 1987, 16; 44, March 1988, 15-16) was completed with the rebuilding of the firing sheds on 9 July 1988. Work has yet to start on the museum of local brick-making in the adjacent barn.

A 1:2500 scale Ordnance Survey map of 1887 has come to light, showing the brickyard in its heyday, with extensive drying sheds to the south-east and north-east of the kiln, several small sheds, probably tool sheds, and a horse-driven pugmill. No trace of any of these is visible on the ground, although the drying sheds are said to have been 'brick-built' and therefore quite substantial. I have suggested that local archaeologists could conduct a preliminary investigation. The firing sheds had to be rebuilt completely off the old foundations, and in the absence of old photographs, some of the detailing was guesswork, but based on typical examples known elsewhere in Lincolnshire.





# Little Cornard Brickworks

Information 43, November 1987, 4-8 contained a contribution from C.H. Blowers on 'Brickmaking at Great and Little Cornard, Suffolk', which included a map of the Little Cornard Brickworks. Martin Hammond has visited the site and has identified the various structures and other elements of the brickyard. On fig.1 (below) his reference numbers have been added to the originally published map. Martin Hammond's key to these figures is as follows:

1. Tramways into the claypit - possibly counterbalanced.
2. Double-side-fired Suffolk kiln.
3. Washmill for clay.
4. Wash pits.
5. P = Pump - to supply washmill.
6. Hacks.
7. Heated drying shed, with stokehole at southern end and chimney at northern end.
8. Suffolk kiln, end-fired, with coal cellar and sleeping room.

TPS

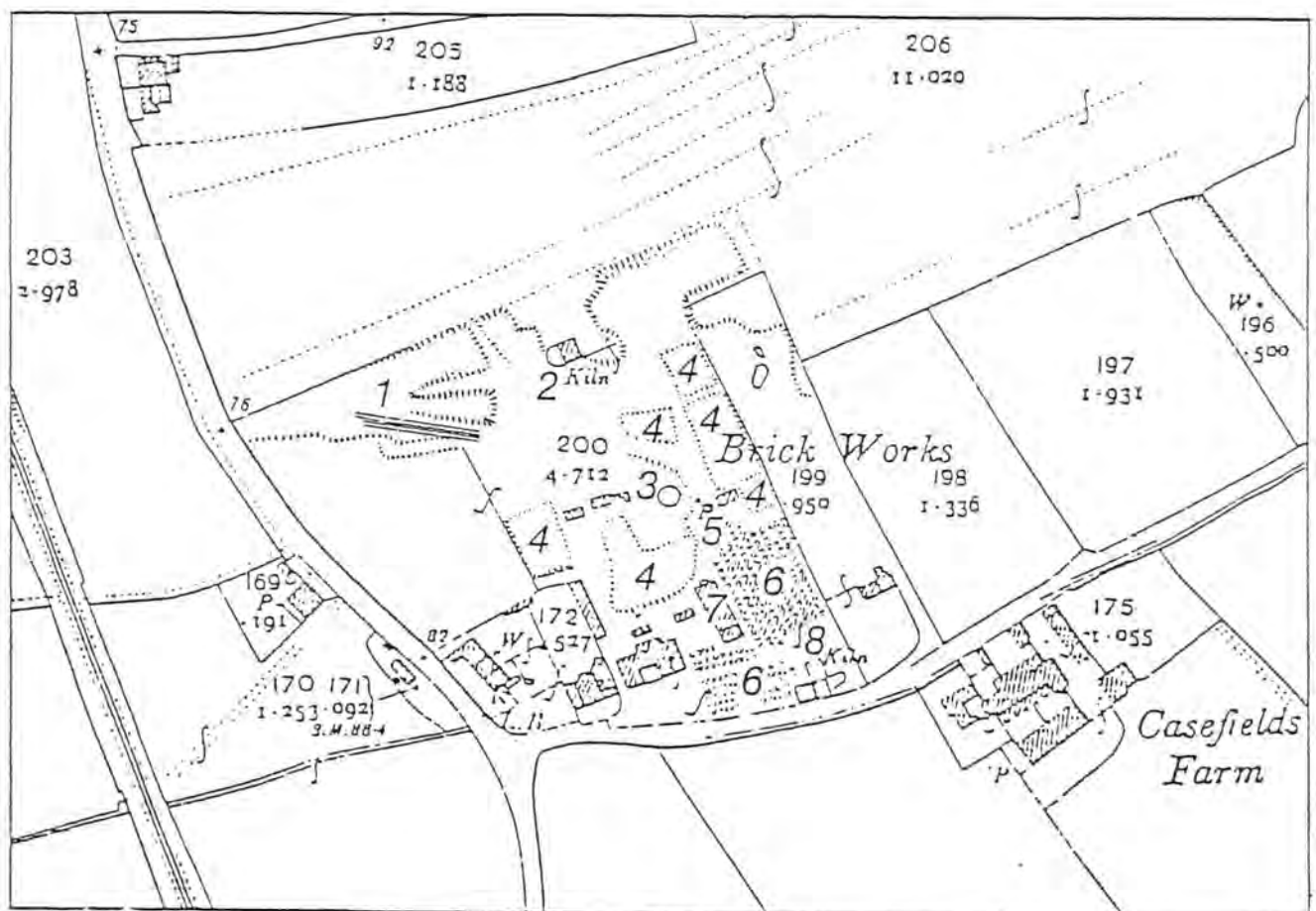


Fig.1 Little Cornard Brickworks, from O.S. 25-inch map, 1904 edition

## The Settle and Carlisle Railway

With reference to my note on the Settle and Carlisle Railway, Information, 44, March 1988, 8, I have since read Stations and Structures of the Settle and Carlisle Railway by V.R.Anderson and G.K.Fox (Oxford Publishing Co., 1986). The 'brickmaking' site south of Lazonby Tunnel turns out to have been a sand pit, where sand was extracted for railway use from c.1900 down to 1963. The book does mention the Lonsdale Brick and Tile Works, founded by Claude Lonsdale, on a track layout survey dated 6 August 1886 in connexion with the provision of a private siding to that works. By 1912 the works went under the name of The Carlisle Brick and Tile Co., but had reverted to Lonsdale's Brickworks by July 1927. The siding was lifted on 11 October 1964, the agreement between the railway company and the brickworks having terminated on 30 June 1964.

The Cumwhinton Brick Co. is shown on the 1886 plan, occupying a site adjacent to the railway, three hundred yards closer to Cumwhinton Station than the Lonsdale works. Still closer to Cumwhinton Station, and on the other side of the track, was The Crown Brick and Tile Works (I.Beaty and Co.). This too was served by a siding (Beaty's siding), in existence by 1912 but disused by 1932 and lifted by 1935. The 1912 survey shows some large drying sheds, a Hoffmann kiln, and a smaller rectangular kiln, possibly of down-draught type. A tramway passed from the works, under the railway via Bridge no.342, to the claypit on the far side of the tracks.

Martin D.P. Hammond

## Woolpit Exhibition

Adrian Corder-Birch has kindly sent in a cutting from the Sudbury Mercury (Suffolk), 21 April 1989, 17. This has a photograph of a model of the Woolpit Brickworks, which forms part of an exhibition being held in the local museum. The article reads: 'A model of the historical Woolpit Brickworks Company takes pride of place at a Woolpit History Group exhibition. / It boasts many examples of traditional village craftwork from brickmaking to butter-making. / It is the fourth annual exhibition staged by local historians at the Woolpit Bygones Museum since it was founded in 1985. The museum is housed in the 16th century Institute building, opposite the village post office. / Displays trace 400 years of brickmaking in Woolpit and a model layout depicts how the brickworks would have looked in 1900. / The museum is open from 2-5pm every weekend and bank holiday throughout the summer until September. Admission is free.'

TPS

## PLEASE NOTE

The sets of Information Sheets, formerly offered to members at 50p per set are now sold out.

W. Ann Los

# BOOK NOTICE

Dell Upton, Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia, Cambridge, Mass. and London: The Architectural History Foundation, MIT Press, xxii + 278 pp., 263 figs. including maps and photographs; documents, notes, glossary.

It is an error to think that the Church of England went into a long slumber between the Reformation in the sixteenth century and the liturgical changes introduced under the influence of the Oxford Movement in the nineteenth century. The alleged decline is mythical: on institution with the vigour to create the beauty of the Authorised Version of the Bible or the richness of the Book of Common Prayer can be called moribund. Neither does the supposed decline extend to architectural matters. Buildings were renewed and new churches were built. Staffordshire, for example, has no fewer than forty-four important ecclesiastical buildings in brick alone belonging to the period 1660-1840. Post-Reformation building also included, of course, the churches of Wren, Hawksmoor, Gibbs, and other architects of standing, as well as those by more provincial architects. Nor must one forget the splendid pre-Tractarian Gothic building in brick and stone at St George's, Ramsgate, Kent.

Above all, the intellectual vigour of the Anglican Church in the eighteenth century can be seen in its successful transplantation to the colonies south of the Susquehanna: Maryland, Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. These are lands very different, both in origin and outlook, from an Englishman's conventional view of Colonial America, biased as it is to the New England states - the Charles Ives country, so to speak.

Upon the churches of the Piedmont and Tidewater regions of Virginia, Dell Upton has produced, with the aid of his publishers, a beautiful book. He has thirty-seven extant buildings, and records of others from forty-six Vestry Books (the American equivalent of Churchwardens' Accounts). Much of the value of the book derives from drawings and photographs, which are the author's own and of a very high standard. These include reference back to churches in England. There are good photographs of the stuccoed churches of All Saints, North Runcton, Norfolk, of 1703-13, and of that dedicated to King Charles the Martyr at Shelland, Suffolk, built as late as 1767.

Brick was used for the Virginia churches, almost from the earliest recorded examples. Between 1680 and 1719 brick was used more often than timber-framing, but the choice of materials tilts in favour of the framed buildings in the period of greater numbers between 1720 and 1789: the 1730s and the 1770s have equal numbers of both constructions. Much of the brickwork is illustrated by good photographs, and the quality of the workmanship is well brought out. Cornelius Hall used English Bond on St Peter's Parish Church, New Kent County, in 1701-3, but Flemish Bond was used by Alexander Graves at Middle Church, Christ Church parish, Middlesex County, from 1712 onwards. It is these details, repeated for so many of the buildings, that make the book so interesting. These are the churches of small communities without a great deal of surplus disposable income, yet they consisted of men and women who felt sufficiently strongly about their faith that they were willing to raise a special tax to pay for the buildings.

They did not aspire to architecture on the grand scale. That at least one brick church of such quality was built in colonial America is illustrated by the photograph of Christ Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, constructed between 1727 and 1744. This has a presence that the other buildings lack. Equally, it does not have their



provincial charm.

It remains to consider, briefly, the interiors of these churches. Here the eighteenth-century view of God is illustrated to the full by many interior plans. At Christ Church, Lancaster County, of 1732-35, there is a cruciform plan based on a Latin cross; in Overwharton parish, Stafford County, the stately Aquia Church, of brick with stone dressings and built between 1754 and 1757, has the equal-armed Greek cross as its plan. In both, the squire's pew is next to the sanctuary. The Carter Pew in Christ Church is adjacent to a family tomb of 1669 and diagonally opposite the three-decker pulpit. One might almost be back inside one of the churches of bandit country of central and eastern Suffolk, England.

'Mixe not holy thinges with profane' is engraved on the silver chalice and patten of James City Church, Williamsburg, as also is 'Ex dono Francisci Morrison Armigeri. Anno: Domi: 1661'. An English parallel would not be hard to find. Anyone who wants to study the Church of England in the eighteenth century has the luxury, for an historian, of a controlled experiment three thousand miles away. Dell Upton's book has enriched our knowledge of that experiment, and in so doing has provided new insights into the English Church in the same period.

DHK

#### SHORTER NOTICES

Patricia Ryan has presented to BBS a copy of her new book on Woodham Walter, Essex because it includes a section on the village church, built in brick in 1563. The price is £5.00 + £1.50 p&p from: Patricia Ryan, 60 Malden Road, Danbury, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 4QL; telephone: 024 514 2237. The publishers are Plume Press Ltd, West Bowers Hall, Woodham Walter, Malden, Essex.

W. Ann Los

Francoise Le Ny, Les fours de tuiliers gallo-romains, Documents d'Archeologie Francaise, 12, 1988, 168F; 142pp, 73 figs including photographs. Available in Britain from: Oxbow Books, 10 St Cross Road, Oxford OX1 3TU; telephone: 0865 241 249.

Based on the author's Master's dissertation at the University of Rennes I, this study deals with Gallo-Roman building materials made from fired clay. Particular attention is given to the firing stage in the production of tiles and bricks. There is an inventory of 142 sites in greater France (including Belgium and Germany within the Roman Empire), accompanied by distribution maps of kiln types; on the latter, diocesan (formerly provincial) boundaries are shown, which allows regional types to be identified. Kiln technology is dealt with in depth, and all kilns have a plan, though none a section, illustrated. The exhaustive listing provides a typology which may have chronological significance. If there be a criticism, it is that this well-produced volume concentrates on the manufacturing processes rather than on the products.

DHK

John Houston, 'Painters in a Timber Frame', Country Properties, Spring 1989, 16-18.

Those of us who, Lear-like, find ourselves living in a hovel rather than a castle do not, perhaps, regularly take Country Properties. I was given a copy of this particular issue because it contains an article on Timothy Easton's house at Bedfield Hall, Suffolk. The

article considers various decorative uses of paint in the fifteenth-century and later house.

Amongst this work are several painted brick fireplaces, now finely restored. Bricks and mortar were alike painted with red 'ruddle' and thin white lines carefully painted along incised 'joints' the whole giving an effect of precision brickwork far beyond what could be achieved using the bricks themselves and the actual mortar joints. All this, and other decorative paintwork, is illustrated by excellent colour photographs.

TPS

Brian S. Ayers, Robert Smith, and Margot Tillyard, with a contribution by T.P. Smith, 'The Cow Tower, Norwich: a Detailed Survey and Partial Reinterpretation', Medieval Archaeology, 32, 1988, 184-207.

The Cow Tower is 'a freestanding brick structure built to three storeys with roof and integrated stair turret. It is reasonable to suppose that the existing building is that for which building accounts survive from the late 1390s'. Thus begins this new study of a part of the Norwich city defences. During recent consolidation by HBMC the opportunity was taken to study the building in detail. One point of interest that emerged is that the walls are actually of brick-faced flintwork.

Most puzzling is a series of irregular, diagonally-set chases and associated holes in the interior face between ground-floor and first-floor levels. The principal authors interpret these as primary and offer an intriguing reconstruction of a vaulted structure supported on heavy timber baulks. It is with this point that T.P. Smith is allowed to take issue in his contribution: he would rather see them as secondary, and as part of a hasty, ill-wrought construction, perhaps connected with Kett's Rebellion of 1549.

Margot Tillyard discusses the documents in full, and relevant sections of the Chamberlains' Account for 1398/99 are translated in Appendix I. This is useful, especially since earlier publications gave no indication that they were no more than incomplete snippets from the documentation.

Two points particularly emerge from this study: first, the need to refer to the original muniments rather than to printed sources unless the latter explicitly state that they are complete; and secondly, the fact that researchers are able to disagree but nevertheless work and publish together in an entirely friendly manner.

SR

Terence Paul Smith, 'Deception in the Precincts', Canterbury Cathedral Chronicle, 83, March 1989, 18-22.

In this article in the magazine of the Friends of Canterbury Cathedral, T.P. Smith describes and discusses the brick-tile or mathematical tile faces to some of the Cathedral Precinct buildings. After a general discussion of the context, based on the author's wider study of mathematical tiles, he deals in detail with such matters as corners, windows, doorways, and the tops of buildings. As the author remarks, the contribution of the mathematical tiles to the Precinct is minor but 'they are still worth seeking out and examining - a light hors d'oeuvre before the feast of the Cathedral, perhaps.'

SR

## BRISTOL MEETING 1989

*Alan V. G. Croucher*

A small but intrepid party of members of BBS and friends met on Saturday 20 May 1989 at Ibstock Cattybrook Brickworks, a few miles south-west of Bristol. The weather was kind, and it was suggested that Mike Hammett had connexions at a higher level which ensure such a fine day!

Arriving at the Ibstock Reception at Cattybrook, we were welcomed by Ken Smith, Regional Sales Manager, and whilst members were enjoying the refreshments provided, he gave an introductory talk on the history of the Cattybrook Brickworks. Ken mentioned that the brickworks was set up by Isambard Kingdom Brunel and Charles Richardson, who had recognised that the local clay was suited to the production of high quality bricks suitable for engineering purposes. We were to hear more of this later in the day from Evelyn Hammersley.

The trip around the production plant was most interesting, from the start of the process, watching the clay being extruded, and then textured to form a drag-finished wire-cut. The firing process was controlled from a control-room which was operated by one person, who was inundated with questions from a very interested and enthusiastic party.

Towards the end of the tour we were able to see the specials production area where the kilns travelled to the point where the specials were stacked after firing.

To complete the factory visit we were shown the clay modelling area where many one-off shapes are produced.

On completion of the tour we re-assembled at Reception, where Mike Hammett extended a vote of thanks to Ken Smith and his son, Jamie, for a most informative visit.

At 1.30 pm members were at the Ibstock Design Centre, where we were met by Peter Harrison, Architect in charge of the Ibstock Design Advisory Service, Brenda Hall, Ibstock Marketing Services Manager and Editor of Ibstock Brickwork Design Magazine, and Mary Gorwyn, responsible for Design Centre reception and enquiries. Members then dispersed for lunch. Afterwards, upon returning to the Design Centre, the Hon. Treasurer, Evelyn Hammersley spoke about Charles Richardson, the Engineer. Members were keen to ask questions and add tit-bits of information to a most relevant talk. On completion of the talk, members and friends went on a tour to the centre of Bristol.

From the moment one stepped outside the Design Centre there was interesting brickwork to be seen; a walk across the open space to the square led to the Quayside, where the restoration and refurbishments of many old warehouses is taking place. At all parts of the walk, the interest of members was held. At the Granary and in The Welsh Back we were able to see one of the finest examples of Victorian polychromatic decorative brickwork. Members were all rather sad that this fine old building was not occupied, and many suggestions were put forward for use, from a museum to offices.

Many other buildings of interest were viewed and discussed, including the terracotta-faced offices of the Prudential Building, the Art Nouveau faience facade of the Everard Printing Works (now



the NatWest Bank), and the Foster's Almshouses alongside the Christmas Steps.

In all parts and at all times members stopped to discuss the architecture and the Buddleia which seems to adorn every building. Even at ground level it was interesting to see the corners and kerbs protected by cast-iron upstands, originally designed to save the kerbstones from being damaged by the iron tyres of the carriages and wagons of the Victorians.

The final pièce de résistance for brick enthusiasts must be Walter Ritchie's modern sculptured brickwork panel, depicting the Creation, at the Bristol Eye Hospital.

The day finished back at the Ibstock Design Centre, where members were able to select from excellent publications produced by Ibstock. Mike Hammett thanked the Ibstock staff who had worked so hard to give us an interesting and informative visit.

## YORK MEETING 1989

### *Brenda Hall\**

Some twenty people braved the elements to attend the AGM and visit to York on Saturday 8 July 1989.

Some of us travelled through floods and torrential rain, arriving at the Bar Convent Museum near Micklegate Bar in time for coffee. The museum is well worth visiting - not for its bricks perhaps (although the narrow joints of the external window-heads provoked discussion) but more for the surprise one receives on entering. The astonishing atrium where we had lunch, the modern comfortable coffee shop, and the cinema-like meeting room in which the AGM was held each provided its own new sensation for the first-time visitor.

York is a beautiful city, and Lawrence Watson RIBA, FCIQB, who adopted it as his own twenty years ago, gave us an interesting illustrated talk, chossing brick buildings as his topic rather than some of the more famous stone landmarks.

After his talk, Lawrence led us on a walk around the city (it had stopped raining at last!) with the purpose of visiting the three buildings on which his talk had concentrated. In the course of our walk, however, Lawrence also drew attention to other aspects of the city, including a fine brick-built stable building near Lendal Bridge, the stone-built boom-towers of the city defences at the same bridge, some splendidly exuberant Victorian brickwork near the Minster, and an engaging stone carving of four men in a boat (St Nicholas and his companions?) on the north side of the Minster itself. This part of the Minster is not normally open to visitors but Lawrence's charm enabled us to see it. After passing a seventeenth-century house with a fine display of brickwork, which some of us stopped to admire, and after a short detour to see a brick ice-house near Monk Bar, we proceeded to Bedern Hall, stone-built but repaired using old bricks and roofed with pantiles. This fourteenth-century college hall is now used as a Guildhall by three present-day Guilds. The oak scissor-braced roof structure is both handsome and fascinating, but, personally, I should have preferred to seek out the new timbers for myself rather than have them shout their youth from the roof-top!

Outside the hall we were able to admire the brickwork of the new Bedern development before walking to Peasholme House, built in 1752 as a speculative venture by Robert Heworth, carpenter. In the

1970s a warehouse in front of the house was demolished and the house itself beautifully restored.

From there we went on to Fairfax House, built by John Carr in the 1850s as an inducement to possible suitors for the plain Miss Fairfax, who had insufficient attractions of her own! The house has been carefully restored to its original glory and stands close to the new and successful Coppergate Development, which is a monument to twentieth-century architectural design and planning.

After this, members were free to spend their time as they wished. My own day concluded with a return to the Minster to see for the first time the awe-inspiring restoration work completed since the South Transept fire in 1984, and finally with a 2.7 mile walk all round the city walls. Altogether, this was an interesting day in pleasant company. We must all be grateful to Lawrence Watson for his admirable guidance on this occasion.

\* With additional material by the Editor

## QUERIES

1. From: W. Ann Los. HUNZIKER BRICKS. Do any members know anything about these bricks? They were specified on a factory plan of 1936. Replies to: W. Ann Los, Peran, 30 Plaxton Bridge, Woodmansey, Beverley, East Yorkshire HU17 0RT.

2. From: Adrian Corder-Birch. I am currently assisting an Essex author with research for a proposed publication about East Anglian Maltings, Hop Kilns, Hop Growing, and Breweries. I am helping him to collect together information and photographs of old Maltings, Hop Kilns, etc. A substantial part of these buildings was of brick, and any information about any brickworks which supplied bricks, etc. for maltings and hop kilns would be appreciated. In particular, information is required about the manufacturers of the perforated malting floor bricks. I live on the site of a former Maltings at Little Yeldham and have found two types of perforated maltings floor bricks. Some are the traditional red colour and others a hard white brick. Some of the latter bear a maker's name and place of manufacture: STANLEY BROS. LTD NUNEATON. PATENT. Will anyone who has any information about Stanley Brothers Ltd of Nuneaton or of any other manufacturer of such bricks please let me know? Replies to: Adrian Corder-Birch, The Maltings, North End Road, Little Yeldham, Halstead, Essex CO9 4LE.

### Good Home Wanted for a Brickmaking Machine!

Our member Alan Hulme has come into possession of a brickmaking machine which had been intended for a local museum in Cheshire, which, however, can no longer accommodate it. Alan Hulme is anxious to find an appropriate museum-type repository for the machine. Any ideas about this should go direct to Alan Hulme at: 20 Swan Close, Poynton, Stockport, Cheshire SK12 1HX.