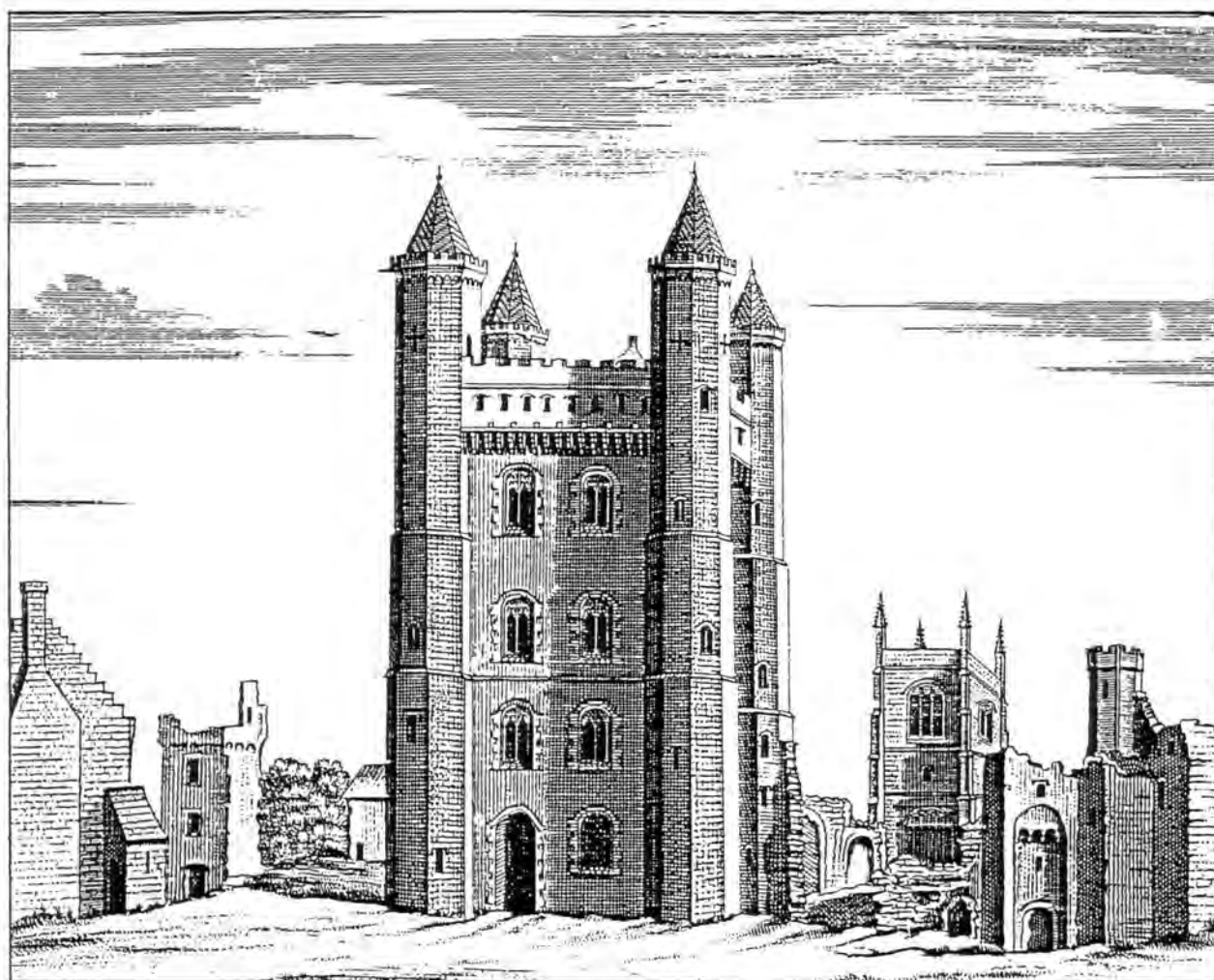


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BRITISH BRICK SOCIETY

INFORMATION 66

OCTOBER 1995



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EDITORIAL:

AT THE END OF THE DAY

One theme may be said to connect, albeit somewhat loosely, the first three visits made by the British Brick Society in 1995. At the end of the morning session of the Spring Meeting in St Albans we viewed the almshouses of Runshaws Charity. At the end of the afternoon session on the same day, members saw first the Pemberton Almshouses and then the Duchess of Marlborough's Almshouses. Among the buildings we saw on the visit to Tattershall, Lincs., after the Annual General Meeting in Horncastle was the single-storeyed range of seventeenth-century almshouses.

Although members viewed no specific buildings erected because of the munificence of the Humphrey Booth's legacy to his native town in 1635, excellent brick-built modern dwellings exist in a number of locations throughout the city of Salford. These purpose-built maisonettes and flats for senior citizens are a modern expression of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century brick-built structures members saw in St Albans and Tattershall.

Seventeenth-century Salford was a small hamlet, although also a chartered borough with market rights which pre-date those of adjacent Manchester. Humphrey Booth owned Booth Hall, a now demolished timber-framed house situated on Greengate, an original Salford street, once called Back Street and also Back Salford Street, in the bend of the River Irwell opposite to the collegiate church of Manchester. Salford had no place of worship for the established church; it was part of the ecclesiastical parish of Manchester. Humphrey Booth gave the site for, provided the resources for the building of and endowed a chapel of ease in Salford, dedicated to the Sacred Trinity. The chapel of ease was consecrated in the year Humphrey Booth died, 1635. As a chapel of ease, Sacred Trinity church has no burial ground.

Humphrey Booth also endowed a charity to aid "the poor, aged, needy or impotent" residents of the town. Humphrey Booth had purchased a barn, meadows and pastures in the Piccadilly area of Manchester; rents from these properties were allotted to the relief of "the poor, aged, needy or impotent" residents of Salford. Building leases on the lands in Manchester were granted by Act of Parliament in 1776-77. The lands had been let on short-term leases; they were where such well-known structures at Piccadilly Station, the original UMIST building, the Piccadilly Hotel, and the Watts Warehouse stand in Manchester.

The Booth Charities were able in the 1960s and 1970s to spend over a million pounds on the provision of housing for senior citizens in Salford. The endowments had been judiciously built up, both literally in brick and stone and metaphorically in increasing investments in land.

Seventeenth-century almshouses were financed in the same way. A local person, usually the squire, but sometimes a young man who had made his fortune elsewhere, would buy land, or bequeath money to buy land, to enable the construction of a range of old persons' cottages and sufficient future revenue to provide for the upkeep of the buildings and the upkeep of the elderly people in the almshouses. A variant on this was that the income from the endowment would be used to give pensions: Humphrey Booth of Salford envisaged his charity operating in this way.

The foundation of an almshouse could be part of a more general set of endowments given to a place. In Walthamstow, Essex, Sir George Monoux (died 1543) founded the school, now sixth-form college, which bears his name and endowed the Monoux Almshouses. Like the almshouses at Tattershall, the Monoux Almshouses were rebuilt after service of two hundred years. The present building, north of St Mary's church, Walthamstow, dates to c.1760. At Tattershall, the building was redone sometime in the seventeenth century; it is clear that the structure is not that for which a contract with the local carpenter in 1486 is extant. A contract with a carpenter does not mean that the building is necessarily going to be timber-framed: as with a modern multi-skilled firm, the person with whom the contract is made may be the head of a group of diverse tradesmen.

As the two structures seen in St Albans indicate, almshouses differ greatly in size: the Pemberton Almshouses of 1627 are a single-storeyed row of six dwellings, but the Marlborough Almshouses of 1736 are three sides of a courtyard, two-storeyed and contain accommodation for over forty pensioners.

The Pemberton Almshouses are typical of a seventeenth-century type: a single brick-built range. Often these are the final building of an early modern town. Fields began beyond the almshouses. This was certainly the case in St Albans and in the north Hertfordshire towns of Baldock and Hitchin. In the former, the Wynne Almshouses are on the west side of High Street. It was on vacant land that the Keyser-Bondor factory, a good example of 1930s style, was built. The site is south of the Wynne Almshouses. In Hitchin, the Skynner Almshouses are two single-storeyed brick-built ranges, dating to 1670 and 1698 respectively. Behind them is a public park, beyond the eastern end of Bancroft is housing of a late-nineteenth-century date.

Ralph Skinner died in 1697 and has an epitaph inside St Mary's church, Hitchin; Roger Pemberton of St Albans was buried beneath a brass showing himself, his wife and his children, in St Peter's church, almost opposite his almshouses. The Tattershall almshouses were endowed by money from the estate of Lord Cromwell, who built and was buried in Holy Trinity church; the almshouses here form the northern boundary of the churchyard.

Representing a grander tradition is the Duchess of Marlborough's Almshouses in St Albans. Sarah Churchill had been born Sarah Jennings at Holywell House, St Albans. When her husband, the first duke, was granted the old palace of Woodstock by a grateful nation the estates which were given with Blenheim Palace were not, even by early-eighteenth-century standards, those commensurate with the status of a duke, the highest rank of the English peerage. In the first half of the eighteenth century the Churchills set about acquiring miscellaneous estates in various counties, particularly in the south Midlands, purely for the income the rents from the farming lands would provide. One of the purchases was the former Gostwick estate in Willington and Cople, Beds., which was later sold on to the Duke of Bedford. Part of such rents were used to endow the St Albans almshouses.

In the same tradition, of a returned native endowing his birthplace are the various buildings given too Buntingford by Seth Ward, Bishop of Salisbury. He endowed the hospital in 1684, noting that he had been

born in yⁱs town Wth in the parrish of Aspden & education
& education in y^e free-school of Buntingford.

Ward's Hospital is grand yet intimate. It must be twenty years since I was last in Buntingford but I distinctly recall warm red brick with white stone in contrast as the quoins, pediment in the centre, and pediment over the front door. Adjacent is the small brick church, in a Greek cross plan, of 1614-1626, which is dedicated to St Peter and was built as a chapel of ease to St Bartholomew at Layston. Buntingford town on the old Cambridge road, used in the early nineteenth century by several of the coaches which plied between Cambridge and London, is on the borders of four parishes. Seth Ward mentioned his birth in Aspenden and his education in Buntingford in the dedicatory plaque over the front door of the hospital. The school building, now a private house, survives as Layston Court. Part is early seventeenth century in date, the former schoolroom; but the schoolmaster's house at right-angles to the other wing dates to the end of the same century.

Of the same date as the Duchess of Marlborough's Almshouses, 1736, is the earliest part of the Warner Almshouses, Boyton, Suffolk. These are immediately north of St Andrew's church. Boyton, I should explain, is somewhat remote, being on the seaward side of the Bawdsey peninsula, high above the River Ore, before that river becomes the River Alde, but with three miles of Orford Ness keeping the North Sea away from the embanked meadows. Architecturally these are unpretentious: three sides of a courtyard, lacking all embellishments but providing accommodation for the elderly from several parishes. The buildings are of brick, three wings dating to 1736 that to the north, to 1828 that to the west, and 1860 that to the east. Refurbishment was taking place when I first encountered these almshouses in 1984.

Like the Pemberton Almshouses in St Albans, the Warner Almshouses in Boyton are not a grand building despite the two storeys and three ranges round a courtyard. These, like the later provision of parish and hundredal workhouses in late-eighteenth-century Norfolk and Suffolk represent an honest attempt to provide what modern jargon calls "care in the community" but which I prefer to consider as provision at the end of the day.

- - - - -

The British Brick Society has been exceptionally active in 1995. This issue of BBS Information contains reports on meetings at St Albans, Salford, Horncastle and area in Lincolnshire, and Edenbridge, Kent. The finished master sheets were given to the Honorary Secretary on the occasion of the meeting in Darwen, Lancs.; a report on this and on the brickmaking day at Snibston, Leics., will appear in the next issue. If any member of the British Brick Society was able to go along to the 'Design a Brick' sessions at the Design Museum, London, in July and August or took one of their children or grandchildren, an account would be most useful to include with these.

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The editor of BBS Information has several long articles for use in future issues of the newsletter but he is always grateful for contributions. Notes about brick buildings in the news and shorter articles would be much appreciated.

DAVID H. KENNETT

Editor

British Brick Society Information

St James the Apostle, 1995

Brick in View

1995 IN RETROSPECT

There was a time when the British Brick Society held only one meeting each year: the Annual General Meeting as is required by law. Those times are now ten years distant. Since 1986, a Spring and subsequently an Autumn Meeting has been held; since 1994 a Northern Spring Meeting has been added to the society's calendar of events. In 1995, the society also held a July meeting because of the special invitation of the brickworks at Chiddingstone.

The geographical range throughout England has been wide: Hertfordshire and Kent in the south, Lancashire and Lincolnshire in the north.

Reports in this issue of BBS Information cover the first four meetings of 1995; a report on the visit to the Terracotta works at Darwen, Lancs., will appear in the next issue.

The editor thanks those who have contributed.

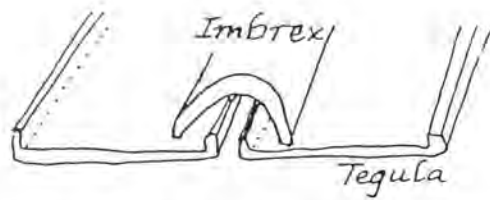
ST ALBANS, HERTFORDSHIRE

Spring sunshine warmed the backs of some fifty members and guests as we listened to Terence Smith introduce us to St Albans and its history as we gathered outside Verulamium Museum on the morning of Saturday 8 April 1995.

Settled by the Celts in the Iron Age, the Romans called the place Verulamium, from place of the marsh - Verulamio, when they set up a fort soon after their conquest of southern England. Boudicca burnt the wooden settlement and there were later city-wide fires. Learning from this, in AD 155 rebuilding of a more durable city with temples, theatre, forum, and defensive stone walls began.

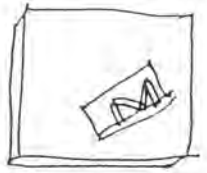
It was in AD 209 that Alban a citizen of Verulamium, gave shelter to a Christian priest, Amphibalus, who was fleeing from pagan persecution. Accepting his teaching, Alban refused to deny his new-found faith and was executed, so becoming the first Christian martyr in Britain. A shrine was set up at the place on the hill where the execution had taken place. In AD 793, Offa, King of Mercia, founded a Benedictine monastery. In AD 1077, the building of the huge Norman church began, re-using the wealth of Roman bricks left from their city.

Inside Verulamium Museum, History came alive with dioramas, sounds and voices setting scenes from the past. Members of the British Brick Society were treated to several display cases of Roman bricks and tiles: one showed a wide variety of animals which had left footprints in unfired tiles as they lay drying - cows, goats, deer, dogs, cats, and hares. The tiles had been fired, nevertheless, and had been put to use. Another case showed 'tegulae' and 'imbrex' roofing tiles, a 'pila' square thick tile used in the stack to support raised floors in a hypocaust heating system; this particular one had the maker's mark 'M' stamped into its surface. A box flue tile from a hypocaust system had free-hand figure-of-eight swirls scratched into its surface, whilst another flue tile had a roller-stamped pattern embossed into its surface, probably as a key for plaster or possibly as a trade mark. Other thick tiles with a curved profile were used to form half columns attached to a wall. Apparently any poorly fired tiles were crushed or broken for use as tesserae in mosaic floors of which there were several beautiful examples.



Overlapping Roman roof tiles.

PILA tile
with maker's
mark from
a kiln near
Park street

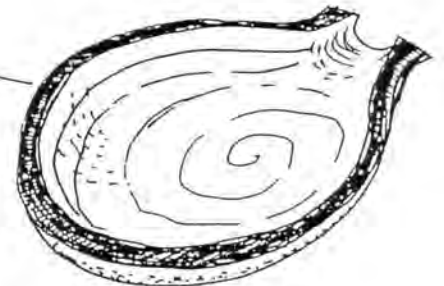


Tiles used to form
half columns
attached to a
wall

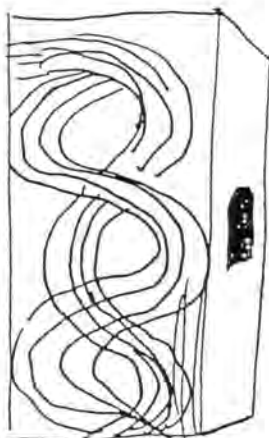
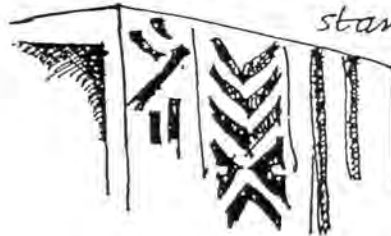


EXAMPLES OF
ROMAN TILES
& POTS SEEN
AT VERULAMIUM
MUSEUM.

Roman
mixing
bowl



Flue tile with roller-
stamped design.



Box flue tile
with scratched
design



Ancient
trowel found
in city wall

Coming from the Colchester area, as Roy and I do, it was interesting to note the link between the two Roman towns through their potters and mosaic floor makers: both Albinus (a mortar maker) and Gaius Atticus Marinus (a maker of mixing bowls - beautiful wide saucer-shaped vessels with a pronounced pouring lip) started work in Colchester and later came to Verulamium to continue, leaving the same recognisable maker's marks on their wares. There is a wealth of material to see in the museum, including drawers full of further exhibits which one was at liberty to pull out and inspect, and press-button screens displaying sequences of buildings. Everyone enjoyed their hour of browsing.

Once outside again, Terence Smith led us round the exterior of the eleventh-century St Michael's church, next to the museum, pointing out much re-used Roman bricks and the late Saxon work; Lord Grimthorpe, who re-designed the collapsing west end of the Abbey, was also responsible for much nineteenth-century work on St Michael's, including the tower.



Fig. 2 The Black Lion Inn, Fishpool Street
Note the diaper work on the first floor, the curving courses of bricks above the fenestration in the string course.

Passing the eighteenth-century Darrowfield House with its chequered Flemish Bond we made our way into the town of St Albans with Terence Smith pointing out interesting details in a wide variety of buildings. First at Kingsbury Watermill we saw an eighteenth-century facade with chequer work and diaper, and then at the bottom of Fishpool Street the delightful Blck Lion Inn, built in 1700 of red brick with black diaper work between the first-floor windows and black brick window arches on the ground floor which are topped by three curving courses of red brick headers (see Fig. 2). The sun shone pleasantly as we worked our way along this street of warm red brick houses. Passing St Michael's Manor (built in the seventeenth century and now an hotel), we climbed a slight incline to view Homeland House, a distinguished building in brown/purple brick with red brick window surrounds, a handsome Georgian doorway with a Venetian window above, and a Diocletian window in the pediment above this. As Terence Smith explained, "Rome" in this context meant "Room" or "Space", and he suggested that this area of the city offered more space for the houses of the well-to-do.

Just before we broke for lunch, David Kennett led us into Spicer Street to point out the Abbey National Boys' School, built in 1846 and extended in 1847 and again in 1884. This adjoins the Independent Chapel built in 1811. Opposite the chapel is a row of almshouses, Runshaw's Charity Houses, delightfully diapered with header bond to assist the patterns, and next to this a former alehouse with faint lettering still just showing on its brickwork, and its old sign - bunches of grapes - fixed over the front door.

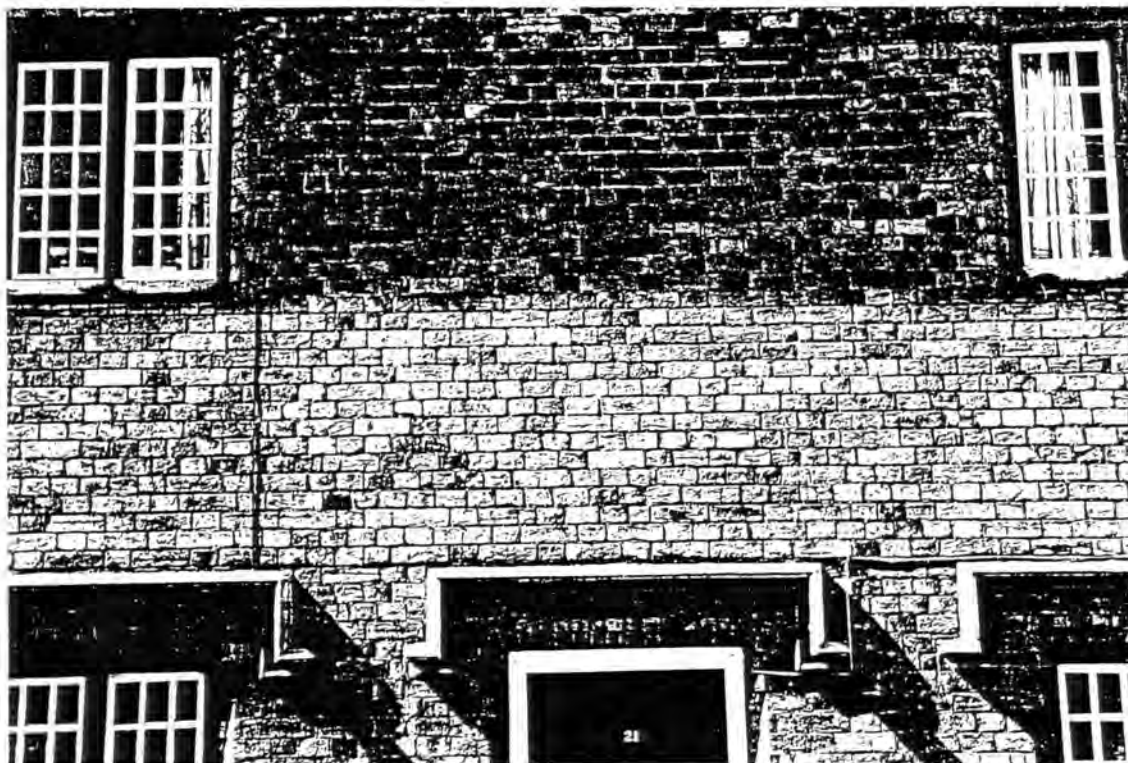


Fig. 3 Diaper work in header bond, Runshaw's Charity Houses, Spicer Street, built in 1846.

Setting off with our guests to find some lunch, we passed the fine Dagnall Street Baptist Church, built in 1884, and admired its complementing modern Hall, rebuilt in 1988.

After a pleasant lunch in a town centre pub once used to imprison the King of France, we rejoined the group at the west end of St Albans Abbey to hear David Kennett give us a brief history of the building. The nave and the tower are Norman, remaining from the work started in 1077. The outside walls positively glow with the abundant Roman brick salvaged from the nearby site of Verulamium. An earthquake in 1250 disrupted the structure; after this the Lady Chapel was rebuilt and the south side of the nave re-ordered with pointed arches of Early English style. Outside on the south side one can see the remains of the cloister arches set into the wall and above these are bricks from the Reformation period. Although no use of brick was made in Lord Grimthorpe's restoration of the west front in 1879, he continued the re-use of Roman brick in the north wall of the north transept by encircling the great circular window which he put into the upper part of this wall with a warm red band of bricks which echoes the curved Norman window arches beneath (see Fig. 4)

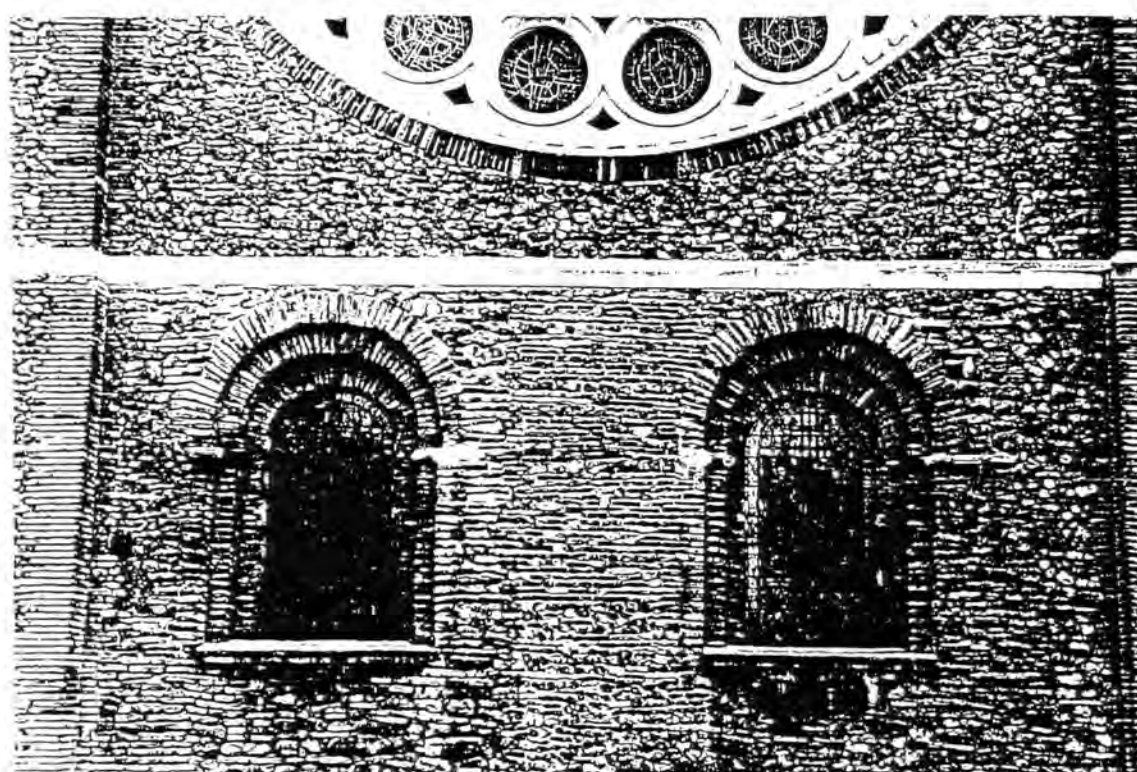


Fig. 4 Brickwork on the north wall of the north transept, St Albans Abbey. The two semi-circular headed windows and the walling between them are of Norman date. These are re-used Roman brick and tile. The lower edge of the nineteenth-century circular window is marked by a circle of thin bricks laid on edge. The edge of the buttress to the left is Roman tiles re-laid in the nineteenth century; the buttress to the right has specially made tiles of the same dimensions but is wholly nineteenth-century work.

Moving to the south transept we admired William Whitfield's Chapter House, built in 1962 on the site of the medieval one. The specially-commissioned narrow bricks, the arch-topped windows and doorways, the semi-circular arch patterns of brick let into the walls over the larger windows and the coarse texture of the mortar used to bond the bricks in stretcher bond which is just slightly less than flush so as to give just a hint of shadow and pleasing texture all help to link it with the rest of the cathedral. One can appreciate why the Chapter House won the Brick Development Association's Bricklaying Award.

Moving away from the Abbey we walked to see the Pemberton Almshouses, built in 1627 and still in use. Nearby in contrast is one of the few surviving brick-built bus garages of the 1930s. Opposite to St Peter's church, where he is buried, is the house built for himself by Edward Strong, Wren's chief mason at St Paul's Cathedral. The church itself has a brick tower with stone corners and is nearly all of Lord Grimthorpe's time.

Our last visit was to the Marlborough Almshouses opposite to the St Albans City Museum. Built in brick round a large front lawn at the instigation of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough in 1736, it is still in use, and looking at both the front and rear of the building we were intrigued with the number and complexity of the entrances: it would seem that occupants would need to be quite compos mentis to find their own apartments.

Thus ended a very pleasant visit, and since none of us were quick enough off the mark to publically offer a vote of thanks to Terence Smith and David Kennett for all the hard work they must have put in to make our visit so informative and enjoyable, I have been asked by those who were there to put our appreciation in writing, so Thank you, Terence and David.

PENNY BERRY

SALFORD, LANCASHIRE

A small group assembled to meet David Kennett in the former aisle of St Ambrose Church, Pendleton, on Saturday 13 May 1995. It was the first church we saw on a long day crossing England's least regarded city: five weeks after our visit a report made Salford the penultimate entry in an urban favourability table. City status was granted in 1926; the Catholic Cathedral, a stone building with a fine Minton Tile pavement in the chancel, was designed by the Sheffield firm of Weightman and Hadfield in 1855.

Most of the best-known nineteenth-century architects designed at least one church within the modern city: Paley and Austin designed St Clement of Rome in 1877 and G.F. Bodley created St Augustine, Pendlebury, in 1871. Here the celebrated painter L.S. Lowry RA was resident from 1909 to 1948. Lowry wrote of Pendlebury:

one of the most industrial villages in the countryside. ... At first I detested it. And then, after a few years, I got pretty interested in it and began to walk about. Vaguely in my mind, I suppose, the pictures were forming and then for about thirty years after that I did nothing but industrial pictures. That's how it all happened. I wasn't brought up to it.

David Kennett wasn't brought up to Salford but he clearly likes living there, which enlivened our day.

The middle session was taken up by a walk along Salford's main street: The Crescent with the university at one end and the brewery at the other. Between is a remarkable survival, a terrace of brick houses of c.1810, once continuous over half a mile. Modern development allowed members to view both surviving frontages and the rebuilt back parts. At one end of The Crescent is the large house where James Prescott Joule grew up after 1818. Another such large house was demolished for the Salford Police Headquarters designed in 1952 by Arthur Heywood Hope of the Bolton firm of Architects, Bradshaw Gass and Hope. It is a building much in keeping with the late Georgian terrace. Not so the dark brown brick or even plate glass to the south which the spreading needs of the university have purchased; thus a structure built as the City Health Department has become the university's Arts Faculty.

The university building dominates the western end of The Crescent. It is red brick, but not Redbrick. The Royal College of Advanced Technology, Salford, founded as the Royal Technical Institution in 1896 became the University of Salford in 1967. Pointed out to us were the panels on the original building: spinning and weaving on the south side, recalling how important cotton was to the south Lancashire economy in the late nineteenth century, and on the east face are Chemistry - Joule was taught by the famous chemist John Dalton -, Construction - large stone blocks rather than bricklaying -, and Mechanical Engineering.

Education at an earlier stage of human development was represented on our walk by the former Salford Higher Grade Board School, now part of the terracotta-faced Education Offices, built to the designs of the Manchester based J.H. Woodhouse then in partnership with George Willoughby in 1895.

Another terracotta-faced building caught our collective eye: called Salford Cinema and given the terracotta facade in 1912. It began life as a chapel and has returned to this use since 1985.

Our final session saw the most unexpected items. We began with a remarkable survival: the refuse dock, off the River Irwell, for the barges taking away night soil, refuse and cinders. As one of the party, a junior school teacher, remarked, "The kids would love it!"

In the council estate and overshadowed by a tower block stands a remarkable survival; Ordsall Hall, unfortunately not open on a Saturday. From the east we saw the brick facade in header bond of Darbyshire's work in 1899 paid for by the Earl of Egerton who turned it into a theological college. From the south and west the brick wing of 1639, much reworked two hundred and sixty years later; and from the west, again, the timber-framed facade of a major house. It had nineteen hearths in 1664. Col. John Birch, owner between the Radclyffe family and the Egertons, in 1662 had purchased a structure of equivalent size to Smithmills Hall, north of Bolton, and exceeded in Salford Hundred only by the 21 hearths of the Lord Chief Justice's property at Great Lever and the 24 hearths of Trafford Old Hall.

We ended the day with the old source of Salford's work, Manchester Docks, which were not in Manchester at all. Now these have office blocks where once there were brick-built warehouses. One such office block, Harbour City, Salford Quays, was the National Winner of the Brick Development Association's Quality Brickwork Awards in 1994. The Fairhursts Design Group, a long-established Manchester architectural practice, were the designers; the bricks are by Ibstock Building Products; and Roger Kendrick was the chief bricklayer. In this nine storey building 1.2 million bricks were used including 105 types of special bricks. Much of the wall facing the dock basins is blue glass. Adjacent to the glass and at each floor level are granite band courses. Using this technique demanded carefully controlled brick tolerances. The near perfect arches in the facade to the incorporated multi-storey car parks had very accurate cutting around the arch extrados; arch bricks were evenly spaced.

Below this building the other boat race now takes place at the May Bank Holiday weekend: Manchester provide the opposition.

At the other end of the basin is a less well-constructed brick office block; it looks better from the other side but someone put a blue brick relieving arch into its design whose flattened curve did little justice to either architect or bricklayer.

W.H. HOWES

HORNCastle AND AREA

Tattershall Castle, c.1432 ff, the quintessence of English medieval brickwork, was an appropriate place to start the tour of central Lincolnshire which followed the British Brick Society's 1995 Annual General Meeting. The meeting was held on the morning of Saturday 8 June 1995 at Horncastle College: minutes with full proceedings were sent to members with the July mailing.

David Robinson of Louth, an authority on bricks and brickmaking in Lincolnshire, and the society's chairman, Terence Paul Smith, had collaborated to plan a very interesting itinerary for the weekend.

At Tattershall, Terence Smith in his introductory comments pointed out that Ralph, Lord Cromwell was one of the richest men in England and what we see of his great castle today was once only part of an extensive fortified complex of buildings. As Lord Treasurer of England, Cromwell intended to show off his great wealth and status. Even today the splendid 110 ft high keep of four storeys with its state apartments, gothic fireplaces and brick vaulting remains impressive. The structure is eminently robust and the machicolations are functional, not just decorative, but the tall, traceried windows to the south, undeniably a rich and elegant feature of the grand state rooms, would have been very vulnerable to any attack. One is left wondering how much of the fortification was done for show rather than of necessity.

Cromwell also built the neighbouring church of the Holy Trinity - not of brick but stone. Nevertheless we found it interesting, particularly the geologists in the party who were to be seen on their hands and knees puzzling over the possible origin of some rare stone in the flooring. The church was built over a period of forty years or so from 1440. Terence drew to our attention the unusual, cusplless, window tracery as being a form not normally found before the early sixteenth century (the significance of this was revealed the next day).

Tattershall College was built and generously endowed by Cromwell. A modest two-storey brick building, surviving only as a ruined shell, may be the schoolhouse (or possibly a stable block) connected with the college. David Robinson showed us some interesting details of the fabric before we left Tattershall to conclude our day at the Tower-on-the-Moor, Woodhall Spa. An octagonal staircase tower is all that remains of the four-storey hunting-lodge for Tattershall Castle, but at 60 ft high it is an impressive ruin of red brick. The date of the building is uncertain, but Ralph Cromwell commissioned it and he died in 1456. However, castle accounts show that as early as 1472 bricks were being taken for reuse elsewhere. Possibly the tower was never completed?

Several members met on the Sunday morning for a walk around Horncastle guided by David Robinson. The site was originally fortified by the Romans as Banovallum, but today the character of the town is derived from nineteenth-century rebuilding and development. Although stone is evident in important buildings, for example, the parish church where we saw some green-tinged local limestone, brick is the principal masonry material and there are many attractive buildings of the Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian periods. A much earlier brick building is the south chapel of St Mary's church, probably dating to the later fifteenth or early sixteenth century.

After lunch we visited Baumber Brickyard, by kind invitation of the curator, Mrs Ann Fawcett, to see the vaulted Scotch kiln that has now been restored. British Brick Society member Martin Hammond surveyed the kiln in the mid 1980s and his drawings were the basis of the restoration. Work continues with the aim of recreating the brickyard as it was in the nineteenth century and eventually opening it as a regional museum. Various bricks, tiles, tools, and items of equipment used in brickmaking have been collected, or received as donations, and work has commenced on an exhibition building.

The weekend tour concluded at the fifteenth-century stone-built church of St Lawrence, Bardney, where we looked at the brick chancel. Terence Smith pointed out that the cusplless tracery of the windows is a development of that in Tattershall church. He also said that it is almost identical with that of windows in Wainfleet Grammar School (about 25 miles east) which dates to 1484. Master brick-mason John Cowper is known to have worked on Wainfleet School and on the belfry stage of the tower of Tattershall church, and there are similarities between his brickwork at Kirby Muxloe Castle, Leicestershire, of 1480-1484, and that of Bardney chancel. These observations lead Terence to believe that the Bardney chancel was built much later than the 1435 date usually accepted, and perhaps in the 1470s.

With that persuasive reasoning in our minds our weekend concluded. After expressing our thanks to David and Terence for their scholarly guidance on a most entertaining and interesting series of visits we left on our journeys home.

MICHAEL HAMMETT

CHIDDINGSTONE BRICKWORKS

On Saturday 15 July 1995 twenty-eight members of the British Brick Society and guests visited the Chiddingstone Brickworks at Bore Place, Chiddingstone, Kent. Chiddingstone is in the Weald, just to the south of the ragstone ridge - one of the few sources of decent buildings stone in south-east England, which is used substantially in some of the buildings in the area, where there is also a strong tradition of building in brick.

Chiddingstone Brickworks has an interesting background, and is part of a larger enterprise, the Commonwork Trust, which began life in 1976, when Neil Wates left his family building firm and bought Bore Place, a farm in a rundown condition. The soil is Wealden Clay, which is good for grass and operating a dairy farm, but not for other uses. Neil Wates established a dairy farm (which now has a herd of 280 cows) and in creating the new buildings formed a large tip of clay soil. With the example of a commercial brickworks 5 miles to the west, and a history of brickmaking on the site, Neil Wates' intuition was that his clay tip would be suitable for brickmaking, and he ran a pilot firing off the site at Keymer's brickworks at Pluckley, which confirmed this.

Neil Wates' motivation in this and other enterprises on the site was his belief that it is possible to make profitable use of waste materials - a conservationist before the cause became popular, who saw no conflict between business and conservation and that, with thought, they can go hand in hand.

Chiddingstone Brickworks was the result, a newly-established traditional brickworks. Tony Nichols, one of our guides during the visit, began work early in the works' life. He had not intended to stay but became enthusiastic about brickmaking, and is now Managing Director of the works. He explained that the plant was salvaged from disused brickworks in the neighbourhood. The brickmaking operation starts in a Lewis & Lewis mortar mill, which they had recovered from Red Lane Brickworks, Hurst Green, Surrey. Tony and his brother make the bricks, and a third member of the team loads and runs the mortar mill. Tony pointed out that the clay can contain pieces of ragstone, and that these are usually picked when the clay is loaded into the mill; failing this they are crushed in the mill. We saw the turning irons which enable the clay to be handled relatively easily. Water and Coalite breeze are added at this stage: a particular challenge for their colleague is the fact that Tony and his brother have different preferences for the consistency of the clay they handle, but this appears to have no adverse effects on the harmony of the operation, or the quality of the product!

From the mortar mill, the mixed clay is loaded into a Lintott pugmill, the works' first acquisition, which came from Wilkes' Brickworks, Chiddingstone Causeway, which had closed in 1954. This extrudes the mixed clay on to two brickmaking benches, where Tony and his brother can mould a total of two thousand bricks a day. Tony showed us how he took the clay from the bench, using his two-handled cuckold, walked it across the bench, sanded it, threw it into the mould, cut off the excess with his bow, struck the surface with his strike, and lifted the mould to leave the brick on a pallet board which he placed on a hack-barrow. We saw his wooden box moulds for specials (half-round copings during our visit), and slip moulds for rectangular bricks, and the two youngest members of the party had their turn at brickmaking, with a five-minute apprenticeship.

We moved to the drying shed, gas-fired, where the bricks are dried before firing. This was relatively empty: our visit was some weeks brickmaking before the next firing.

The kiln, a Scotch kiln with a capacity of 32500 bricks, was in a Dutch barn with a retractable roof. We saw how the open front is closed with bricks in a herring bone pattern, to ensure it remains closed although the space expands during firing. When the kiln is full, and capped with previously-burnt bricks, Tony explained that it would be fired through seven fire holes on each side, using diesel oil, judged by eye. This would continue for 36 hours, when the burners would be shut off, the openings sealed, but the Coalite breeze would continue to burn for a week. After a few more days the bricks would be cool enough and could be unloaded.

Annual production from the kiln is 250000 bricks, in about eight firings a year.

We concluded our visit with a short tour of the dairy sheds. Slurry from the sheds is mechanically removed into digestion tanks, where it is processed anaerobically, forming methane, which fuels the process, and producing a sterile product which serves as the basis for a compost the Commonwork Trust markets - another example of Neil and Jenifer Wates' philosophy of making effective use of waste materials.

We enjoyed our visit to an enterprise with a difference and thank Caroline Dunmall, Commonwork's Marketing Coordinator, who began our tour, and Tony Nichols for their help, information and hospitality.

MICHAEL OLIVER

THE BRITISH BRICK SOCIETY IN 1996

During the summer of 1995, various officers have been actively arranging a programme for 1996 meetings and visits. Details of the two Spring Meetings will be included with the February 1996 mailing; details of the Annual General Meeting will be forwarded in April/May and of the Autumn Meeting with the July mailing.

The renewed collaboration between the British Brick Society and the British Archaeological Association has resulted in the resumption of the annual 'brick' lecture in the Autumn-Winter programme of the British Archaeological Association and details of this are given in the list of dates for members diaries which appears on page 15.

- Wednesday 6 March 1996
Lecture to the British Archaeological Association
by Terence Paul Smith
'Tudor Brickwork: Problems and Controversies'
at 5.00 p.m. (tea at 4.30 p.m.)
in the rooms of the Society of Antiquaries,
Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1
(tube: Green Park, turn left and head north)
- Saturday 30 March 1996
Spring Meeting
morning: visit to London Brick Company
(Hanson Brick) new works at Kempston,
Bedfordshire.
afternoon: walkabout in Bedford
- Saturday 27 April 1996
Northern Spring Meeting
morning: visit to York Handmade Brick
Company, Alne, North Yorkshire
afternoon: selected brick buildings in York
- Saturday 8 June 1996
Annual General Meeting
Weald and Downland Museum, Singleton,
near Chichester, West Sussex
- Saturday 27 Sept 1996
Autumn Meeting
Eton College
extended guided tour with tea to follow
cost £10-00

We hope that members will be able to support as many of these meetings as possible. Ideas for future meetings are always welcome. Suggestions please to either Michael Hammett or David H. Kennett.



Can you help find a film ?

John C Hodge, L.M.G.B., for many years Senior Lecturer in the Construction Department at the Northern Polytechnic, London, died earlier this year. He had been retired for some years. His well known textbook *"Brickwork for Apprentices"*, first published in 1944, has been a standard work for training bricklayers for over 50 years; the 4th edition (revised by Bob Baldwin) was published in 1993.

John's son, Keith Hodge, has asked us for help in locating a copy of a film which featured his father demonstrating craft skills. It is believed that the film was made in the 1950's and is a 16 mm movie film. No other details are known.

If you can recollect any details (eg. proper title, sponsor, date of production) or better still if you know where a copy of the film is held please contact the Honorary Secretary on:

Keith Hodge, 30 Firs Park Gardens, Winchmore Hill, London, N21 2PX
Tel. 0181 360 3346

A. KILN IN SCOTLAND

There is a Hoffmann brick kiln at the Scottish Mining Museum at Prestongrange which is situated just north of the A1 between Musselburgh and Prestonpans about six miles east of Edinburgh. The kiln is part of the Scottish Mining Museum which is based at the Lady Victoria Colliery at Newtongrange on the A7.

The Prestongrange site is close to the Firth of Forth where a small harbour was built from which both salt and coal were exported. The first shaft of the Prestongrange Colliery was sunk in 1829 and some of the coal was used in the adjacent brickworks which were owned latterly by the National Coal Board. The brickworks made tiles and pipes as well as bricks and originally had down draught 'bee-hive' kilns the foundations of which can still be seen on the site. There was originally an earlier Hoffmann kiln (demolished many years ago) which stood at right angles to the present kiln. The same chimney served both kilns but when the second kiln was erected, between the wars, the height of the chimney was extended by about 9 feet. The colliery and brickworks closed some years ago but the site is still open for visitors to explore and there is also a visitors centre where refreshments are available and a guide for those wishing to have a conducted tour of the site including the salt works and colliery as well as the brickworks.

It is also possible to explore the interior (i.e. the chambers) of the Hoffmann kiln.

ADRIAN CORDER-BIRCH

BRICK BUILDINGS IN THE NEWS

INTRODUCTION

Comments given to the editor have suggested that a round up of brick buildings in the news does serve a useful purpose. Thus the experiment begun in the last issue of BBS Information is continued.

The editor would welcome items other than those he finds in The Manchester Guardian or architectural magazines like Perspectives and the trade press. Penny Berry put me on to the news about the Roundhouse.

LANCASHIRE COTTON MILLS

One of the great achievements of Edwardian England was to re-equip the cotton industry of Lancashire with new buildings. The two Beehive Mills, south of Bolton, dating to 1895 and 1902, and visible from the Salford to Bolton railway line are typical examples. Incidentally during the summer of 1995 these have had their joint chimney stack truncated and replaced by a tall metal one: rather garish against the dull red brick of the mills.

New listing procedures by English Heritage will give statutory protection to a further 41 mills; even with the 65 mills already listed buildings, this is barely ten percent of the survivors and far less than five percent of those built.

Five mills have been upgraded to Grade II*. These include Swan Mill, Bolton, by specialist mill architects, Stott and Sons of Manchester. There are splendid terracotta swans on gables, chimneys and gateposts.



Fig. 1 The military academy at Woolwich Arsenal, a little-known brick building designed by Sir John Vanburgh.

WOOLWICH ARSENAL

Most members of the British Brick Society would associate Sir John Vanburgh with stone and Castle Howard, Yorkshire North Riding.

Much less well-known is Vanburgh's work for the governments of Queen Anne and George I. Supreme among these is the brick buildings of the Royal Artillery's Military Academy in the grounds of the Woolwich Arsenal.

Plans are afoot to convert this fine structure with the brick-built brass foundry, also by Vanburgh, and a covered quadrangle of brick and iron workshops into a Royal Arsenal Heritage Centre to include weaponry, archives, medals, and regimental memorabilia.

The former military academy, an English equivalent of the French St Cyr, deserves recognition too as a striking example of good quality design and brickwork.

THE ROUNDHOUSE, CAMDEN

The Roundhouse built in 1847 to store steam locomotives is now to become the ultimate storage centre for the vast collections of the British Architectural Library only part of which is currently in the Royal Institute of British Architects headquarters at Portland Place, London. The move, within walking distance - the Roundhouse is less than a mile north of Portland Place - will permit the world's largest architectural archive to be consolidated and placed on public display.

There are historic documents, drawings, manuscripts, archives, and photographs: the BAL is a veritable Potosi of a nation, a continent, and a trans-continental empire. Not even the vaunted Ecole des Beaux Arts collections in Paris are quite so all embracing.

The new use is a happy outcome to the saga of the Roundhouse in the twentieth century: see BBS Information, 58, February 1993, editorial, for some of the story.

BARLASTON HALL, STAFFORDSHIRE

South of Stoke-on-Trent, on the left-hand side of the railway as one goes down to London, a proud brick house stands above the skyline. This is Barlaston Hall, designed in 1756 by Sir Robert Taylor.

For twenty years (the 1960s and 1970s) it had been in a poor state of repair. But following its sale for £1-00 it has been renovated and is now being restored to a single house again. It is anticipated that the house, with the eighteenth-century interiors brought back from almost the point of beyond redemption, will be open to the public in the summer of 1996.

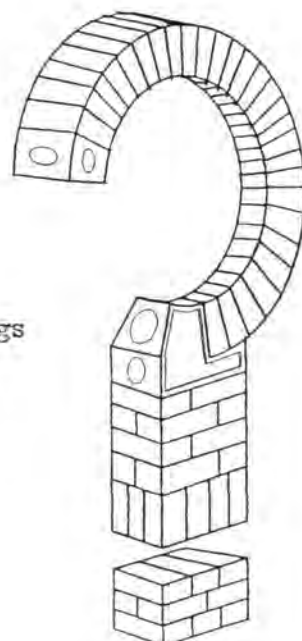
If members do visit they should also go to the City of Stoke-on-Trent Museum and Art Gallery, in Bethsaida Street, Hanley, to see the doll's house with its facade modelled on front of Barlaston Hall. Unlike the doll's houses of both Quidenham Park and Melton Constable Hall, both Norfolk, and both in the Norfolk Rural Life Museum, Gressenhall, near East Dereham, Norfolk, the Barlaston Doll's House does not appear to have been an architect's model given a new function.

BRICK QUERIES COLUMN

From time to time the British Brick Society receives requests for information about bricks and brick buildings. Some of these raise questions which no obvious answer or source of information is readily available.

These and answers, or replies, are printed in issues of BBS Information as space is available. Single queries are kept so that at least a page can be presented in any one issue of the newsletter.

DHK



BURTON AGNES OLD HALL, YORKSHIRE EAST RIDING

Returning from a visit to Bridlington in May 1994, I passed the splendid south front of Burton Agnes Hall. Consulting my copy of N. Pevsner, The Buildings of England: Yorkshire: York and the East Riding, 1972, page 207, I read of

Burton Agnes Old Hall,
W of the house. Built by Roger de Stuteville, c.1170-5. It seems to be of brick, a half-storey, a storey, a half-storey. But the brick hides a Late Norman hall. The stone chimney breast appears at the back. One enters an undercroft of four by two bays with short, thick-set round piers with spurs to the bases, square abaci, and waterleaf capitals. A spiral stair in the NW corner leads up to the former hall. (Dr Allison also points to the C15 roof and a large blocked traceried window.)

Does any member know any more of this building? Does the roof belong with the brickwork? St Martin's church, Burton Agnes, includes a substantial alabaster tomb of Sir Walter Griffith, died 1481, with his wife and infant son. Is he responsible for the brickwork, or is it another member of the family?

Brick came early to the East Riding: Kingston-upon-Hull is a major centre of early brickwork and Howden with its Bishop's Manor has somewhat less fame, while Beverley Minster has roof vaulting of brick and Beverley town its four gates.

But can anyone enlighten us further on Paull Holme:

A tower house of brick, probably late C15. Tunnel-vaulted basement, set back from the upper storeys.
(Pevsner, op.cit., 325)

Details of these and of any other little known fifteenth- and sixteenth-century brick buildings in the East Riding would be welcome.

David H. Kennett
3 Melmerby Court
St James' Park
Eccles New Road
Salford M5 4UQ

FOSTER KILNS

In Industrial Archaeology Review, Spring 1995, Iain Stuart writes about the Australian Hoffman Brick Company. He notes:

I have been unable to find out very much about Foster kilns and any information on the subject would be welcome.

Replies on this would also be welcome to BBS Information.

Owen Ward
77 Hansford Square
Combe Down
Bath BA2 5LJ

CLAY TILES FOR CORN-DRYING KILNS

Damp grain has to be dried before it can be milled. In this way sieves and millstones do not become burdened with wet grains.

Watermills, but apparently windmills, often have a drying kiln attached. These are structures of two storeys, a lower one for the fire and an upper one as the drying chamber. They were separated by a fireproof floor, consisting of cast iron joists on which are laid either iron plates or clay tiles. The clay tiles are square, about 12 inches in length, and about 2 inches thick. They are perforated by many holes which in turn are above larger holes on the underside of the tiles. Both the perforations and the larger holes are wider on the underside. This allowed for self cleaning.

Smoke rose through these to dry the grain. To ensure all grains dried the miller would use a large wooden shovel to turn the grain whilst it was in the process of being dried.

These tiles have a variety of patterns: square, circular and diamond layouts are known from corn drying mills in the north midlands, with four and five holes within square patterns, and five and nine holes within diamond patterns. Doubtless they were made locally in each case.

Do any members of the British Brick Society have any references to the manufacture of clay tiles for corn drying kilns? Or to specific manufacturers?

Are they found in areas other than the counties I have examined: Derbyshire, Staffordshire, and Cheshire?

Does anyone know of any manufacturers' catalogue or advertisements?

Barry Job
School of Sciences
Staffordshire University
College Road
Stoke-on-Trent ST4 2DE

One aspect of Dr Job's query can be answered. These tiles are found over a wide area of England.

The same principle of a large flat surface with perforations above larger holes was to be found on the malting floors of East Anglia. Fragmentary malting kiln tiles could be observed when the large double malting adjacent to Malting House Quay, Southtown, Great Yarmouth, was demolished in the early 1980s. This building was still standing, but unused, on Friday 15 August 1980, but I have no record of its demolition.

A malting, then in use as a store, was seen in Bungay, Suffolk, in 1985. The floor remained and was carrying heavy goods.

David H. Kennett