

BRITISH BRICK SOCIETY
Summer Meeting
Saturday 25 July 2015
THE FRINGES OF MILTON KEYNES
BRICKWORKS, RAILWAY STATIONS, CHURCHES
Buildings Notes

INTRODUCTION

Timgad in a green field: the City of Milton Keynes is an artificial creation, no less than the Roman city on the edge of the desert in Algeria. Some of us remember the land between the M1 to the east and Watling Street (or the West Coast main railway line) to the west as green fields bisected by pleasant country roads and having isolated villages within them. The writer did the journey from Luton to Northampton very frequently in the late 1960s and the first seven years of the 1970s.

Along the fringes of the new city the village centres and their eighteenth-century churches remain: Fenny Stratford, Bow Brickhill (not taken in by the new city), Willen, Great Linford. These notes will concentrate on these villages but will also record buildings in two of the old market towns — Bletchley and Stony Stratford — now subsumed within the new metropolis.

The notes concentrate on three aspects of brick activity: brickworks and their surviving structure, railways and the buildings erected for them, and a group of churches, rebuilt in brick in the early eighteenth century.

BRICKWORKS

Beside the railway line from Oxford to Cambridge were many brickyards; this is particularly so in the Buckinghamshire section from north of Marsh Gibbon to Woburn Sands. The yards producing the self-combusting Flettons in the late nineteenth century and through to the end of the twentieth century are well-known. But the brickmaking industry around the fringes of Milton Keynes is much older than the last decades of the nineteenth century.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, bricks and tiles were made at Little Brickhill : excavation of two tilemaking kilns in 1930 and 1968 showed that bricks were used in their construction. Fragments of bricks were found during the excavation. These bricks were probably made at the site.

Floor tiles from Little Brickhill have been found in several north Buckinghamshire churches; Roger Hunt's brass of 1473 records that a pavement of Little Brickhill tiles was laid at St Andrew's church, Great Linford, in the north-east corner of Milton Keynes.

The famous Saxon church at Wing was re-roofed in Little Brickhill tiles in 1527 and 1530.

At Caldecote, Bow Brickhill, in a field called 'Kiln Furlong Ground', brick and tile wasters amongst a layer of partly-fired clay were found during digging for a pipeline on the future Sherbourne Drive in 1980. This is the road through the Tilbrook Industrial Estate.

The site was almost certainly a seventeenth- or eighteenth-century clamp-fired kiln producing both bricks and tiles.

Around Milton Keynes are a number of churches with substantial portions of brickwork of an early eighteenth-century date in their fabric (see 'Brick Churches' below). There are also important brick country houses of the same decades in north Buckinghamshire. Chicheley Hall built between 1719 and 1724 has brick made on site by Samuel Burgen, brickmaker. Chicheley Hall is north-east of Milton Keynes on the road to Bedford (the A422). Winslow Hall, south of the small town west of Milton Keynes, was built between 1700 and 1704. In 1700, John Stutsbery was given £20 "for building ye

middle kiln in Norden”, on the north side of the small town. A circular line of bricks observed in 1981 may represent a brick kiln.

Both Newport Pagnell and Olney have eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century brick houses in them. Of these, Cowper’s House of *circa* 1700, is one of the most significant: William Cowper, the poet and hymn writer lived there from 1767 to 1786.

Directory entries in both towns show brickmakers working between 1830 and 1915 but with the majority of entries recording men active between 1830 and 1865.

In the second half of the nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth century, in Bletchley and the adjacent parishes, there are records of two brickyards in Bletchley, two in Fenny Stratford, one in Newton Longueville, and four in Water Eaton.

In Duncombe Street, Bletchley, Robert Holdom in the 1870s and William Edward Clarke in the 1880s had a brickyard. This is under the car park of the Brunel Centre. The lake in the nature reserve between the two railway lines may represent an associated clay pit.

Also in Bletchley, Thomas Yirrel is recorded in directories issued between 1895 and 1928 as a brick and tile maker. He may have continued to work the existing brickyard on Duncombe Street.

In 1876 at Foxhole, Fenny Stratford, on the north side of Watling Street, John Munday, a timber merchant, bought hand-made bricks and built the houses in Albert Street with them; he also built houses on adjacent streets. The brickyard had closed by 1898. In 1995, Andrew Pike reported that the houses had been demolished and that the site of the brickyard was uneven and partly waterlogged.

Also in Fenny Stratford, Samuel Bragg of the ‘White Hart Inn’ beside the canal had a small brickyard in the 1860s.

The sole brickyard in Newton Longueville is probably the best-known of the sites around Bletchley. In the mid 1970s, this works was in full production: Sir Frank Markham recorded a weekly production of 4,250,000 bricks made by a workforce of 375 men. Its development is associated with the Read family, particularly John Thornton Read (*fl.* 1890-*c.* 1931), the remains of whose kilns could be seen in the early 1970s. In 1991, one wall of this kiln with five stokeholes was extant.

Read and his partners, Richard Andrews and W.T. Lamb and his sons, had adopted Fletton production methods in 1924 and the company, the Bletchley Brick Company, incorporated in 1923, was bought by London Brick Company and Forders Ltd in 1929. New works were erected by LBC in the 1930s of which two chimneys and various buildings survived in 1991. The works had closed in the previous year.

In Water Eaton there were at various times no fewer than four brickyards. In the nineteenth century, the prominent brickmaking in the village was the Clarke family: Gregory Odell Clarke between 1820 and 1870 and then his son, William Edward Clarke, until at least 1891. They also had business interest in malting, coal distribution, canal barges, the distribution of building materials and timber and the father was the prime mover behind the local gas works, whose raw material — coking coal — could conveniently be delivered by canal barge. After 1877, the latter also had brickyards in Bletchley and Simpson. In Fenny Stratford, his brickworks were conveniently near to the Great Union Canal, between the canal and the River Ouzel.

Canal Bridge House on High Street, Fenny Stratford, was built in the mid nineteenth century for Gregory Odell Clarke

A late addition to the area’s brickworks was opened by A.E. Lamb at Skew Bridge, Slad Farm in 1933; it continued in business until at least 1975, when 1,300,000 bricks were produced per week and it employed 90 men. In 1991, the bases of two kilns were extant on a derelict site.

In the north-east corner of Milton Keynes is the village of Great Linford where three different brickyards are known. Great Linford, like Fenny Stratford, is a village on the Grand Union Canal. Pigot & Co’s *National and Commercial Directory* of 1830 records “Keeps, Labrum & Taylor” as brickmakers and lime burners at Great Linford Wharf. Just over a decade later, Richard Sheppard was a brickmaker and lime burner at Railway Terrace, Great Linford.

Kelly’s *Directory of Buckinghamshire* for 1911 notes John Read as “brickmaker at Great Linford”; when Andrew Pike was compiling the first edition of *Gazetteer of Buckinghamshire Brickyards* in the late 1970s, he was able to talk to Walter King who had worked at the yard and

confirmed that Jack Read had lived at Brickyard Cottage and overseen the work there. The works had been owned by George Price & Son of the nearby town of Newport Pagnell, where they had another, older, brickyard. The history of this brickworks is intermittently recorded: in 1830, it was operated by William Yates. George Osborne Price was there from before 1899 to 1915 or just after.

The yard was in operation from the 1880s to the onset of the Great War. It had two circular downdraught kilns and there was a steam navy to dig out the clay. When opened it was one of the most modern claypits in the area. Both kilns remain and two former claypits are now water-filled with lush aquatic vegetation.

Most of the bricks produced at the Great Linford brickyard went to construct buildings in either Newport Pagnell or to the railway town of Wolverton, which developed in the 1840s.

RAILWAY STATIONS

Two early railway lines cross at Bletchley: the London and Birmingham, opened in 1838, and the Oxford to Cambridge line opened as a through route in stages between 1846 and 1862. In 1845, the former amalgamated with lines connecting Liverpool and Manchester with Birmingham to become the London and North Western Railway.

In the first few months of its operation, the London and Birmingham Railway stopped at Denbigh Hall and passengers transferred to a horse-drawn coach to take them north to Rugby as work on the tunnel through the Jurassic limestone of Northamptonshire was not yet completed. The problems of tunneling were one of the reasons why Northampton was missed off the original line from Birmingham to London; the other was directness. Early railways were designed to connect major cities, and sometimes serving even important towns on the route was of secondary consideration. The Liverpool to Manchester Railway of 1830 misses both St Helens and Warrington.

The Oxford to Cambridge line was always a branch of the LNWR, beginning with the first portion from Bletchley to Bedford, for many years the only part still operating passenger trains; the portion from Oxford to Bicester having been connected with the much later Great Western cut-off line from King's Sutton to London Paddington reopens for passengers on 26 October 2015: final tracklaying between the new Oxford Parkway station and the line to London Marylebone was completed in early July 2015. It is also planned that the modern Chiltern Railways will work towards opening as much as possible of the full route from Oxford to Cambridge by 2020.

The line westwards from Bletchley was originally conceived as going from Bletchley to Banbury via Verney Junction; it opened in 1850. In the year of the Great Exhibition (1851) a new line from Verney Junction to Oxford was opened and the line to Buckingham and Banbury became a branch line, but until the 1960s with trains running from the former LNWR station at Banbury Merton Street to Bedford St Johns. The line was expanded east from Bedford to Cambridge in 1862: in 1962, trains still ran from platform one on Cambridge Station all the way to the former LNWR station in Oxford. The Oxford station was important because it had an iron framed front made from the same moulds as the great glasshouse of the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, London. The station site in Oxford is now occupied by the Said Business School of the University of Oxford.

The tracks east of Bedford were ripped up in the 1960s following the disastrous Beeching Report of 1963, and in Cambridgeshire the trackbed in Barton was recycled as the site of the 1971 array of radio telescopes; the original telescopes were replaced by more powerful ones in 2004. Lord's Bridge Station and the adjacent goods shed now do duty as offices for the various telescopes in that vicinity. But freight traffic from the brickworks in Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire kept the track from Bedford and Bletchley south to Oxford open and in good repair, even though from Bletchley to Bicester parts had long ceased to be double track.

Around the southern fringes of Milton Keynes there are some notable railway structures, including the station, flyover and signal box at Bletchley; and the stations at Fenny Stratford and Bow Brickhill. (Surprisingly, Bow Brickhill has not been swallowed up by the monster that is Milton Keynes.)

Bletchley station and associated structures are modern. The railway station of 1881 in a Jacobean style (architect unrecorded) has been rebuilt but the new structure was deemed insufficiently interesting by

Elizabeth Williamson to warrant an entry in the second edition of *The Buildings of England: Buckinghamshire* in 1994.

The new *Buildings of England: Buckinghamshire* did however find room for the concrete Brutalist signal box of *circa* 1965.

The flyover, designed to take freight trains over the former LNWR mainline to the west midlands, north west England, north Wales, and the west of Scotland from London Euston (now the West Coast mainline) remains a monument to a different concept of a railway from one where the only major provincial interchange is at Birmingham New Street. The flyover, built in the 1950s, was almost the only part of a scheme to decentralize the railways and provide a variety of cross country connections, just as the former connections of the Great Central Railway allowed trains from Newcastle to south Wales to run through Sheffield, Nottingham and Leicester to Banbury, and either Oxford and the west curve at Didcot or Chipping Norton and Cheltenham.

The railway stations at *Fenny Stratford* and *Bow Brickhill* on the original Bletchley to Bedford line of 1846 are part of a group of five stations serving villages on the Duke of Bedford's Woburn estate: the three others are Woburn Sands, Ridgmont, and Millbrook, all in Bedfordshire. The duke insisted on the style adopted. The duke was also the chief promoter of the branch of the LNWR from Bletchley to Bedford and provided most of its initial finance.

The station buildings at Fenny Stratford are in red brick laid in English Bond. Brick is combined with flint in the chimney stack at the east end of the building in a stack which goes from being rectangular to diamond-shaped. Much of the interest of the building lies in the use of timbers painted white attached to the brickwork and the use of fancy bargeboards.

In the late nineteenth century, the duke's estate extended into Water Eaton (now a suburb of Bletchley). Late examples of what appear to be Bedford estate cottages are the pairs at 1 and 3 Mill Road, and 5 and 7 Mill Road, plus a group of three cottages at 29,31, and 33 Mill Road. These are built of a dark red brick laid in Flemish Bond.

EARLY-EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CHURCHES

In the villages around both the northern and the southern fringes of Milton Keynes, several churches were rebuilt either totally or in part in the final quarter of the seventeenth century or in the first six decades of the eighteenth century. To the south, at Fenny Stratford and Bow Brickhill the rebuilding was done in brick; at Bletchley the restoration retained the stone fabric of the medieval church. Restoration, refenestration and rebuilding also occurred in the villages along the northern fringe of the new city. At Willen in 1678-82 a completely new church was built in brick but the new church in Stony Stratford was done in stone. The work on the church in Great Linford retained the stone carcass of the medieval church but provided new windows.

Restoration and rebuilding in the early eighteenth century of the churches along the southern fringe of Milton Keynes will always be associated with Browne Willis (1682-1760), the antiquary and local landowner. On attaining his majority in 1704, he restored Bletchley church in memory of his parents; between 1724 and 1730, he rebuilt the church at Fenny Stratford; and towards the end of his life, he had the east wall of the chancel of the church at Bow Brickhill rebuilt in brick in 1756-57. Browne Willis was also responsible for saving the tower of St Mary Magdalene, Stony Stratford, after fire destroyed much of the town in 1742.

In November and December 1703, great storms raged across southern England. The November storm had raged for eighteen days before the hurricane on 26 and 27 November which claimed the newly-built Eddystone Lighthouse. Daniel Defoe recorded that the greatest intensity of the storm began on Wednesday 24 November and lasted until Wednesday 1 December 1703. There were further great gales on 7 and 8 December and again on 27 and 28 December 1703. But prior to the great storms there had been much rain in April, May, June, and July 1703, with periods of heavy shows in the July, thus weakening the ground beneath the foundations of buildings. The storm was as fierce as that which crossed southern England and East Anglia on 16 October 1987.

One of the casualties of the storm was *the church dedicated to St Mary Magdalene at Little Brickhill*, a village on Watling Street not taken in by the new city of Milton Keynes immediately to the north. The church is on a prominent hill which exposed it to the full severity of the wind. At the time of the great storm, the church had a fourteenth-century north transeptal chapel which was destroyed and not rebuilt. The east end of the chancel was damaged. This was repaired in brick at the expense of Browne Willis.

The church is built of the local dark ironstone rubble with stone quoins. The roof is slates. In its present form it has a chancel rebuilt in the second quarter of the fourteenth century (either the 1330s or the 1340s) which is the probable date also of the former north transeptal chapel. The south chapel has a piscina of thirteenth-century date but its arch to the south aisle was renewed late in the sixteenth century. The nave is earlier than the first half of the fourteenth century and was extended southwards by a south aisle the arcade to which was of similar date to the arch between the south chapel and the south aisle. To guard against building failure on the sloping site, the fifteenth-century west tower was placed off-centre to the nave.

After Browne Willis's work, the next restoration was that directed by Ewan Christian in 1864-65, which each of *VCH*, Nikolaus Pevsner and Elizabeth Williamson consider to be "drastic" in Williamson's phrase and see as "over restored" to quote Pevsner; *VCH* describes it as "church rebuilt (modern windows)".

In 1914, the architectural writers in the *Victoria County History of Buckinghamshire* recorded the following internal dimensions, with east-west preceding north-south:

| | |
|--------------|---------------------|
| Chancel | 27 ft × 17 ft 6 in. |
| South chapel | 15 ft × 12 ft |
| Nave | 48 ft × 18 ft |
| South aisle | 12 ft wide |
| West tower | 7 ft 6 in square |

Browne Willis' second venture into architecture was the restoration of *St Mary, Bletchley*, between 1704 and 1709. The new squire was not going to spend money on "Marble Statues or fine Embellishments, whilst the other part of God's house in which they lay wanted a requisite Decency

and Convenience". His father, Thomas Willis II had died in 1699 when Browne Willis was seventeen and an undergraduate at Cambridge University. His parents have plain slabs on the chancel floor. His wife, Catherine, who died in 1724, merits a white marble slab with painted shields on the base. In seventeen years of marriage Catherine bore Browne Willis no fewer than ten children; only two unmarried daughters survived their father. Browne Willis' eldest son, Thomas Willis III had married and it was his son, Thomas Willis IV, who inherited his grandfather's estates.

The *Victoria County History* draws attention to a print of 1794 showing a door to the chancel that had been inserted during the work financed by Browne Willis.

At St Mary, Bletchley, an original late Norman church was extended and refurbished in each century of the middle ages the original south doorcase being reset when the south aisle was built in about 1300, that is before the Great European Famine (1314-1325); the north aisle to the nave was erected a generation later, in the two and a half decades between the famine years and the arrival of the Black Death (1349) but perhaps not completed until a generation after the plague. In the previous century, before the nave aisles were constructed, rebuilding, possibly involving an extension, had been performed on the chancel: the north chapel is roughly contemporary with the south aisle. The chapel contains the tomb of a man in plate armour; he is wearing an SS collar and is thought to have been Richard, Lord Grey of Wilton (*d.*1422). In the fifteenth century, the west tower was rebuilt, partly enclosed by the nave aisles. Also erected in the century and a quarter before the Reformation was the fourteenth-century clerestory over the nave was heightened and in same lengthy building programme new roofs were built over the aisles. The same 1784 print also shows three fifteenth-century windows in the chancel.

In 1914, the architectural writers in the *Victoria County History of Buckinghamshire* recorded the following internal dimensions, with east-west preceding north-south:

| | |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| Chancel | 30 ft 3 in × 18 ft 2 in. |
| North chapel | 30 ft 9 in × 13 ft 6 in |
| Nave | 48 ft 2 in × 19 ft |
| North aisle | 13 ft 6 in wide |
| South aisle | 10 ft 6 in wide |
| West tower | 14 ft × 12 ft 9 in |
| South porch | 11 ft 6 in × 9 ft 6 in |

At Fenny Stratford, the surviving remains of the medieval chapel dedicated to St Margaret had been severely damaged in the English Civil War and the site left ruinous. The chapel had probably been erected in 1493 but the east part had been pulled down in 1550, during the reign of the boy king, Edward VI.

In 1724, Browne Willis instigated a building programme to erect a new church, dedicated to *St Martin*, as a memorial to his grandfather, Thomas Willis I (*d.*1675) the celebrated physician. And as a high church Anglican, Browne Willis felt it necessary to counteract the influence of nonconformity in north Buckinghamshire.

Unusually for a new church in the first half of the eighteenth century, Willis chose Gothic as the style for his new building. It was a relatively small single-cell building to which a west tower was added. To pay for his new church, Willis appealed for funds from Oxford and Cambridge colleges and to the local gentry, amongst whom he was well known as an antiquary. Browne Willis engaged Edward Wing of Aynho, Northants., as his architect-builder and Daniel Estment as his bricklayer. Wing resigned in 1728 and was replaced by John Simmonds. Willis' building has been extended several times and his church is now the north aisle. A table of the significant dates is as follows:

| | |
|---------|--|
| 1730 | Willis' building consecrated: single-cell nave and west tower. |
| 1823 | South aisle added to design of Charles Squirhill. Church doubled in size. |
| 1865 | Squirhill's aisle demolished. |
| 1865-66 | William White built the present nave south of Willis' church; he added a chancel. |
| 1907-08 | John Chadwick, surveyor to Bletchley Urban District Council built the south aisle. |

All four men worked in red brick as far as the exterior is concerned, although each of the three surviving contributions is distinctive. The eighteenth-century portion is in Flemish Bond; the later builders used English Bond. All four employed stone dressings and used the Gothic style.

The interior is different. Willis' work is sober, crowned by a flat ceiling on which are painted the coats of arms of the principal donors. White employed polychrome brickwork in spectacular but controlled patterning. Chadwick, too, uses polychrome brickwork but his patterns are more sober than those of forty years earlier. The arcades are red sandstone. White's nave extends westwards beyond the line of Willis' tower; Chadwick's aisle respects Willis' building line.

At *Bow Brickhill*, the church dedicated to *All Saints* was restored by Browne Willis in 1756-57 when the upper part of the east wall of the chancel was rebuilt in red brick; the lower part of this wall is in the local sandstone, the greensand. Browne Willis found a church which had been disused for a number of years. However, a century and a quarter before, there had been a congregation or a patron with sufficient money to re-roof the nave in 1630.

The church is built of the local ironstone with dressed stone quoins. Much of what can be seen is fifteenth-century work but the original nave, of which a stub remains shows evidence of the earlier, twelfth-century church. The chancel was rebuilt in the fifteenth century and the present arcades and south aisle windows belong to the same period.

As noted the nave roof was renewed in 1630 and sensitive internal restoration work was undertaken by local architect E. Swifen Harris in 1883. The south porch was added in 1907.

In 1914, the architectural writers in the *Victoria County History of Buckinghamshire* recorded the following internal dimensions, with east-west preceding north-south:

| | |
|-------------|--------------------|
| Chancel | 25 ft 6 in × 11 ft |
| Nave | 34 ft 6 in × 15 ft |
| North aisle | 9 ft 6 in wide |
| South aisle | 9 ft 6 in wide |
| West tower | 12 ft square |

In 1742, the Watling Street town of *Stony Stratford*, at the northern end of the future city of Milton Keynes, suffered a fourth devastating fire in four decades: earlier eighteenth-century fires had been in 1793, 1725, and 1736. The fire which raged in 1742 caused damaged estimated to be in excess of £10,000 and destroyed 146 houses and the church dedicated to St Mary Magdalene. The fire in 1736 had already destroyed 53 houses.

The church dedicated to *St Mary Magdalene* was abandoned after the 1742 fire but Browne Willis managed to ensure that its west tower was preserved. This provides useful clues as to the plan of the former church. The tower has blocked arches to the north, east, and south, which indicate that the tower was enclosed by the aisles: *i.e.* the aisles were longer than the nave to which they were attached. The three arches have been blocked up to preserve the stability of the tower.

The tower arches suggest that it was built in about 1450. Not quite a century before this an Eleanor Cross had been built in Stony Stratford to commemorate that the corpse of Queen Eleanor was given overnight repose at Luffield Priory. The Eleanor Cross seems to have been a casualty of the English Civil War; it was taken down *circa* 1646.

Stony Stratford was the northern end of an early turnpike trust, that from Hockliffe, north of Dunstable, Bedfordshire, to Stony Stratford of 1725 and this accounts for the large number of former coaching inns in the town. Despite the series of fires the town recovered and during their rebuilding after the fires, the houses gained brick or stone fronts.

The second church in Stony Stratford, dedicated to St Giles was rebuilt in stone in 1776-77 by Francis Hiorne of Warwick. The Bishop of Oxford, the owner of the advowson (the right to present the incumbent to the living) issued briefs for its repair and enlargement in 1774-75 and 1779-80. Briefs were a form of appeal issued to all churches to be read out on a single Sunday at Divine Service and could cover anything from prisoners of the Turks and captured men forced to work as galley slaves by Mediterranean corsairs to rebuilding of churches and relief of persons made destitute by fire, flood or tempest.

There was a rather awkward restoration in 1876-78 by E. Swinfen Harris and work was done on the chancel by C.G. Hare in 1928.

At the time of the 1736 and 1742 fires, Lionel Sedgwick (d.1747) was the vicar of the combined parish of St Mary and St Giles with St Mary Magdalene, Stony Stratford. Being on a major road, Stony Stratford was originally part of two parishes, each with a chapel of ease in the town: St

Mary and St Giles of Calverton to the south and St Mary Magdalene of Wolverton to the north. They were combined as a single parish for the town in 1661.

Another roadside town, Buntingford, Hertfordshire, was originally split between four parishes — Layston, Westmill, Aspenden, and Throcking. Before 1626 when the parish church was consecrated the town had only a chapel of ease to Layston; St Peter's was built as a church for the new parish. From 1614 onwards, building was largely financed by the locally-born Seth Ward, who had become the Bishop of Salisbury.

On the eastern edge of Milton Keynes is the old village of Willen, where the celebrated scientist Robert Hooke rebuilt the church dedicated to St Mary Magdalene for his former schoolmaster, Dr Richard Busby between 1678 and 1682. Busby was headmaster of Westminster School between 16xx and 1671. Busby retired to Manor Farm, Willen, in that year and commissioned the 'the greatest Mechanick this day in the world' to design the church for him. Hooke had been Busby's pupil.

Hooke built his old schoolmaster a single-cell church with a west tower and vestries flanking the tower. The present semi-circular apsidal chancel was added in 1861 by T.H. Lewis; Lewis took his cue from Hooke's work.

Hooke's church is tall and built in red brick laid in Flemish Bond with limestone dressings and quoins; the lowest stage of the tower is faced in limestone. The nave has three arched windows on the north and south sides.

The vestries at the west end were one for the incumbent and the other to house the parish library given by Dr Busby in 1695. Externally, rising curves tie them to the west face of the tower.

In 1914, the investigators for the *Victoria County History of Buckinghamshire* gave the following internal dimensions, with east-west preceding north-south:

| | |
|------------|--------------------|
| Chancel | apsidal |
| Nave | 44 ft 6 in × 24 ft |
| West Tower | 8 ft 6 in × 6 ft. |

A different form of patronage lies behind work on three important stone buildings at *Great Linford* done for Sir William Pritchard (*d.*1704); in order of construction or restoration, they are the Manor House, the almshouses and schoolhouse, and St Andrew's church. Great Linford is one of the successes of the Milton Keynes Development Corporation, preserving the old village centre and restoring the older buildings.

The *Manor House* was constructed in 1688-89 for Sir William but was refaced in stone for Thomas Uthwatt (*d.*1754) either in the 1720s or the 1730s. Sir William's workmen were George Kempe, a contractor mason, and William Adderbury (or Atterbury), a joiner. Both these men had worked with Robert Hooke at Willen church and would also work for Pritchard on the schoolhouse and almshouses project.

The *schoolhouse and almshouses* at Great Linford, erected in 1696-97, are between the manor house and the church. The centrally-place schoolhouse is two-storeyed with an attic lit by dormer windows under hipped roofs; it is flanked by the single storey almshouses for six persons, three either side of the school. The schoolmaster was expected to teach the boys in his ground floor living room. The first floor and the attic rooms provided sleeping accommodation.

The end walls of the almshouses and those of the much higher schoolhouse have gables with ogee curves and rounded tops.

The building was converted into craft workshops by MKDC in 1975; the project architect was Paul Woodfield.

St Andrew's church is a medieval building of twelfth-century origins but with work done in each medieval century and again in the early eighteenth century. The original church was a nave and chancel within the footprint of the present nave to which a west tower seems to have been added fairly soon after the initial work was complete. It is possible that the first south aisle was added at the same time as the tower was built. The tower was "modernized" in the thirteenth century with a double-chamfered arch to the nave and again in the fifteenth century when diagonal buttresses were added to the corners on the west side. The tower top is part of the early-eighteenth-century work but the windows of the second and third stages of the tower are round-headed from the late twelfth century. In the thirteenth century, the nave was extended northwards, without creating an aisle; the result is that

from the west the tower appears out of kilter. Much was done in the early fourteenth century: a north chapel and a north porch were added and a three-bay south arcade was erected for a rebuilt south aisle. Fifteenth-century work includes an apparent narrowing of the south aisle and the erection of a clerestory. The now hidden late-fifteenth-century king post roof is part of the work on the clerestory. Before 1473, a new pavement of tiles from the kiln at Little Brickhill was laid in the nave: remains of it were found in 1980 below the present flooring at the east end of the nave. The pavement is noted on the brass of Roger Hunt who died in that year.

Early-eighteenth-century work at the church was comprehensive. The chancel was rebuilt and the chancel arch widened in 1706 and 1707 but the tripartite responds were kept. A new floor was inserted upon which box pews were placed; the pews were cut down in a later restoration, that of E.G. Bruton in 1884. Chancel and south aisle were given windows with mullions and transoms: two mullions and one transom in the aisle windows but only a single mullion in the south window of the chancel; the clerestory windows have single mullions only. The king post roof of the clerestory was hidden beneath the curved nave ceiling which also obscured the arms of King Charles II. The tower top was rebuilt as part of this work.

Sir William Pritchard died in 1704 and is buried inside the church; his successor at the manor, Thomas Uthwatt, died half a century later. Their tablets can be compared as to how the style of monument of prominent local men changes in the space of fifty years.

In 1914, the investigators for the *Victoria County History of Buckinghamshire* gave the following internal dimensions, with east-west preceding north-south:

| | |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| Chancel | 30 ft × 17 ft |
| Nave | 47 ft × 21 ft |
| North aisle | 27 ft 6 in × 11 ft 6 in |
| South aisle | 6 ft wide |
| North porch | |
| South porch | |
| West tower | 13 ft × 12 ft 6 in |

FURTHER READING

Buildings: General

N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Buckinghamshire*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1960.
An early volume in the series, it was completed at least a decade before Milton Keynes was contemplated.

N. Pevsner and E. Williamson, *The Buildings of England: Buckinghamshire*, London: Penguin Books, 1994.

This second edition devotes almost ninety pages (pp.482-570) to Milton Keynes. Relevant entries are Bletchley (pp.506-510), Fenny Stratford (pp.521-524), Great Linford (pp.527-531), Willen (pp.561-563). Bow Brickhill is considered on page 187.

N. Lister, *Building Conservation in Milton Keynes: a photographic index*, Milton Keynes: Milton Keynes Development Corporation, 1971.

A picture book with 300 historic buildings within the area of the then proposed new city. It provides illuminating illustrations of a great variety of pre-1914 buildings, not all of which remain extant. Captions only for the photographs which give name, street address, whether a listed building or not, approximate date, and occasionally further information.

Brickworks

A. Pike, *Gazetteer of Buckinghamshire Brickyards*, Aylesbury: Buckinghamshire County Museum, 1980 and 1995.

Includes Milton Keynes area under individual parishes, with extensive cross-referencing.

Historical Background

F. Markham, *A History of Milton Keynes and District*, Luton: White Crescent Press, 2 volumes, 1974.

VCH Buckinghamshire, 4 volumes with index, London: Constable & Co, 1905-1928.

The work for volumes III and IV was done before 1914; publication was delayed by the Great War. The Milton Keynes area (Newport Hundred) is in volume IV, 1927.

All volumes of the *Victoria County History of England* has been digitised and can be consulted at:

www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/ followed by the standard county abbreviation and volume number if known.
