

PBHS

11

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CONTENTS

PAGE

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|----|
| H.A.C. CONFERENCE | | 2 |
| BASKETS LOT OR SILK WEAVERS HALL | Helen Baker | 3 |
| JOHN BYNG RIDES AGAIN | M. Tomkins | 5 |
| CORRESPONDANCE | | 7 |
| THE SOCIETY LIBRARY | | 8 |
| NOTICES | | 10 |
| MESOLITHIC BURIN | B. Warren | 11 |

POTTERS BAR AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PRESIDENT : Mrs. Muriel Brittain, M.P.S.

CHAIRMAN : G. Pulzer

HON. SECRETARY : C.T.Overend, 30 Deepdene, Potters Bar.

Tel.44493

Formed in 1959 to encourage the preservation of things of local interest and to study both local and general historical matters. Meetings are held throught the winter months at intervals of about three to four weeks. Details of these are exhibited on the public library notice boards or may be obtained from the secretary. Subscription rates are 75p. per annum and 40 p. for those under the age of 21 and for senior citizens.

The Society is affiliated to the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, The East Herts. Archaeological Society, the Hertfordshire Archaeological Council and the Hertfordshire Local History Council.

Members of the public are welcomed at our meetings whether or not they are members of the Society.

HERTFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

COUNCIL

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 25th. FEBRUARY 1978 (SATURDAY)

Time : 10.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.

Place : Mid-Herts College, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City.

Morning : Recent Archaeological Discoveries in Hertfordshire.

Chairman : Mr. Robert Kiln.

Afternoon : Pre-Roman Iron Age in Hertfordshire and South-East England.

Chairman : Mr. Gareth Davies.

Admission : £1.00, full time students, children and senior citizens 50p.

Afternoon session only : 50p. for everyone.

Programmes are obtainable from the secretary.

A opinions expressed in this journal are those of the contributors and are not necessarily the views of the members of the Potters Bar and District historical society either as a body or as individuals.

Hon. Editor : C.T.Overend, 30 Deepdene, Potte rs Bar.

Published by the Potters Bar and District Historical Society.

3

BASKETS LOT

OR

SILK WEAVERS HALL

Mr. Gelder's book on Georgian Hadley gives an interesting description of the house called Baskets Lot, which stands half hidden among the trees behind the obelisk on Hadley Green. Although it is now within the Borough of Barnet it was originally in the parish of South Mimms and its history is recorded in the records of our district.

The western part of the site was part of Kitts End Green belonging to the manor of South Mimms while the eastern side was an encroachment into Enfield Chace and is recorded as such in a survey of the chace made in 1769, which shows the line of the Gannick bank passing through the site.

The story that I have so far traced of this cottage, starts with an entry in the South Mimms vestry minutes for 1763 which orders that Benjamin Gage and John Bocket, the two churchwardens, "do forthwith make use of all lawful means to get Joseph Nettleship out of possession of the house he now lives in at the obelisk that divides the great road leading from London to Hatfield and St. Albans in the parish of South Mimms, and to pay all expenses that shall attend sute or trouble that shall be necessary to get possession for the use of the parish."

An entry in the court roll of the Manor of South Mimms in the following April, shows that they had been successful for at that court Benjamin Gage and John Bocket were admitted tenants of a piece of ground formerly part of the waste of the manor at that corner of Kitts End Green which divides the road from London to Hatfield and St. Albans, together with the cottage now standing upon it at a yearly rent of one shilling.

Although no mention is made of Joseph Nettleship this was undoubtedly the cottage referred to as it is the only building shown on this site on early maps. I have so far found no earlier records of who made the original encroachment and built the cottage on this piece of waste; but a building with trees behind is shown on John Roque's map of Middlesex dated 1754.

Dr. Brittain, who made a copy of the vestry minutes I have quoted, says in his book on South Mimms that the house was to be used as an additional poorhouse, but as the vestry minute book for that period is now lost it is impossible to search for any other references to its use by the parish. Its later history however suggests a possible use at least for a time.

At the manor court of 1765 the house at the obelisk, then named as Silk Weavers Hall, was transferred to William Jordan, silk weaver of South Mimms. This suggests that the house was already used for silk weaving so perhaps the cottage had been obtained with a view to providing employment for some of the workless poor with the craft of silk weaving.

Earlier vestry minutes make it clear that the employment of the poor in the workhouse had always been a problem. Spinning had been taught by one of the inmates in the 1730's soon after the workhouse had been established in South Mimms village. And many years before records show that the Earl of Salisbury at Hatfield House had sponsored the

establishment of a trade for weaving and making of fustians to employ the workless poor of his manors and had invited people from his manors of South Mimms and Hoddesdon to go to Hatfield to be instructed in the craft. This was over a hundred years before but the case may have been similar as a local craftsman had been found willing to instruct and employ those willing to learn. This may have been the case with William Jordan. There was certainly a family of that name in South Mimms at that time and a William Jordan had been a churchwarden in 1756.

In 1770 the house at the obelisk changed hands again, the new owner was Turpin Bastick, a victualer, who had been licensee in 1761 of the Maypole further up the Great North Road near where the gates of Wrotham Park stand today. After he moved to Silk Weavers Hall in 1770 he became licensee of the Earl of Warwick. Whether this was at his new house or elsewhere we have no means of knowing, but it would be an appropriate name so near the obelisk. In 1772 he was granted an additional piece of land to the north of his house and in 1776 he mortgaged the property to Thomas Clutterbuck and his son, brewers of Stanmore. Perhaps by some agreement with these brewers the Earl of Warwick was no longer licensed. But from 1780 to 1786 Turpin Bastick reappeared as the licensee of The Crown with no clue to its whereabouts.

At the closure and division of South Mimms common and portion of Enfield Chase in 1780, Turpin Bastick was granted an allotment of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres to the north of his property, this he also mortgaged to the Clutterbucks.

In 1799 a descendant of the Clutterbucks claimed the property as the mortgage had never been repaid. He then transferred it to Samuel Hussey whose descendant sold it to Thomas Jordan a farmer of South Mimms in 1822. Perhaps this Jordan was related to the silk weaver William Jordan.

Two years later Thomas Jordan died leaving the house to his wife for her life and then to Henry Jordan Corry who inherited it in 1843. After his death it was bought from other heirs by the Misses Mary and Jane Corry in 1888. A valuation of the house made at this time describes it as having a fair sized drawing room, dining room and back parlour with a kitchen and usual offices and five or six bedrooms. There was also a coach and stable of sorts and about half an acre of land in addition to the site of the buildings.

In 1897 the two Miss Corrys applied to Lord Salisbury, as Lord of the Manor, to have the property enfranchised. For the first time the alternative name of "Baskets Lot" is given, probably derived from Bastick's allotment. It was quite usual for the manor court records to continue to copy the old description from the last entry, ignoring the changes.

There was some slight dispute over the value which was said to have increased as it formed a corner of the parkland of Lord Strafford, who was intending to purchase it. The area of the site given in the Ordnance Survey also differed from that entered in the manor court record. They probably forgot that part of the title had been in Enfield Chase and not part of the manor. It seems odd that the ages of the two ladies came into the calculations.

At last agreement was reached and Silk Weavers Hall or Baskets Lot was made freehold and in due course was sold to Lord Strafford of Wrotham Park whose descendants, the Byngs, still own it today.

Helen M. Baker

Sources used : Dr. F. Brittain's "South Mimms" p.59 and his collection of Records of South Mimms, Vol.1 (1763).

South Mimms manor Court Books from 1732-1872, books 1-5 Hatfield House; by permission of the Marquess of Salisbury.

Victuallers Licences of South Mimms; GLC/Middx. Record Office.

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ERRATA - "MR. BYNG PASSES BY" - PBHS 10

Most readers will have noticed the typographical error in this article (p.3, line 5) where the date 1970 should read 1790.

We apologise to our readers for this mistake and to our contributor Malcom Tomkins.

* * *

JOHN BYNG RIDES AGAIN

The journeys that John Byng made in 1790 along both the Holyhead Road through Kitts End and South Mimms and the Great North Road through Potters Bar, were but two of many he recorded in his journals. Two entries relating to overnight stops at the White Hart at Bell Bar, then on the Great North Road, make particularly lively reading.

He first noted in his journals that he 'put up at the White Hart, Bell Bar' on July 9, 1793. 'At a few yards distance from my parlour,' he wrote, 'stands a tortur'd tree, with a summer house in its bosom.' A sketch of this ~~house~~ summer house, which he made presumably from his parlour, is in his journal and was reproduced in the "Torrington Diaries" (edited by C. Bruyn Andrews) vol.3, facing page 190.

The White Hart, Byng noted, was only an alehouse, so he was gratified to find 'there was a pretty display upon my supper board of cold ham, cold fillet of veal and sage cheese.' He was served by the daughters of the landlord, a Mr. Mayes. It was, it seems, because he had 'long known' this Mr. Mayes that he had decided to stop at the White Hart. Mayes had 'formerly kept the New Inn at Stevenage'; and perhaps that was where Byng had made his acquaintance. Eighteen years previously Mayes had purchased 'a famous black chaise horse' from Byng and now 'ran on about it 'and my little pony', his present mount. Byng soon found him 'a fawning, chattering chap'.

He began to wish he had chosen a more 'elegant tavern' when he was disturbed by 'much noise and drunkenness of the haymakers in the alehouse kitchen', but philosophically noted: 'it is summer time, and may be endured'. Perhaps he had had enough, even so, when he 'took a short walk upon the road' before he went 'to bed at 10 o'clock.' In his 'summer alehouse bedroom' he 'slept well' till he awoke at half past four. It was hot 'even at that hour' and he decided to set off, early as it was, on his way to North Wales.

After this experience, he might not have patronised the White Hart again if it had not been for a storm that overtook him on the Great North Road just over a year later.. September 9, 1794, would have been, he noted in his journal, 'a bad day for November'. He and his son Frederick reached the 'White Hart Alehouse, Bell Bar' and glad of any refuge, 'came in benumb'd by wet and cold'. Mr. Mayes was not there to receive them; having consequently to 'bustle ourselves to blow a good fire,' they ordered 'beds and supper' presumably from his daughters. 'It appeared to me,' wrote Byng, 'like an old hunting eveing at an inn' - but, he added, 'wanting hope and comforts.'

Not till 9 o'clock did Mr. Mayes return, and when he did he was 'drunk and very fatiguing.' Byng recorded that 'he hung upon us'; and to Frederick he said: "Dear, how does your Mummy?" Byng plied him with a pint of port but he was apparently too drunk to 'swallow a glass.'

Having seen to their horses themselves, Byng and his son 'climbed to the garret' for the night. Frederick slept in a truckle-bed; Byng 'rowled about upon a feather-bed cover'd with blankets.' The storm without evidently disturbed his rest: 'the rain and the wind continued during the night,' he wrote, 'and heavily in clouds brought on the morn.' He rose early again, wanting only to get away; but 'no one of this drunken alehouse was awake' and he had to hang about 'till at length Mr. M. stagger'd forth to receive the reckoning.'

It is an incident of no particular note but is interesting because the everyday happenings of the past are so seldom recorded. Here, thanks to John Byng's account we get a glimpse of local life at the end of the eighteenth century; we can picture the tiresome Mr. Mayes, overhear the haymakers roistering in his kitchen, savour the ham, the veal and the cheese; and it is possible that we can still see the house where all this happened.

There are several reasons for believing it was the building now called Elm Tree Farm on the west side of the road at the upper end of Bell Bar - a backwater today but once a stretch of the Great North road. One reason is that the owner of the house in 1972 understood that it had once been the White Hart. The matter is complicated, however, by the fact that he understood it to have been later called the Bell (Hertfordshire Countryside: 160, p. 32). Now the Bell and the White Hart existed contemporaneously in 1756, when the billeting return recorded the White Hart as having beds for four visitors and stabling for ten horses. It is known from the tithe map of 1844 where the Bell then stood - on the east side of the road at the upper end of Bell Bar. By then the White Hart had ceased to exist as such and the building that is now Elm Tree Farm consisted of cottages. The Bell shortly afterwards was demolished, after the Great North Road had been diverted. I have found no evidence - nor does it seem very likely - that its name and licence were transferred to the building across the road that is now Elm Tree Farm but was in the mid-nineteenth century divided into cottages. It is possible, however, that one of them became a beerhouse and called itself the Bell.

Doubtful as this evidence is, there are other reasons for supposing that the White Hart may have been the present Elm Tree Farm. One is the proximity to the latter of a field called on the tithe map White Hart Field; and another is perhaps to be found in the appearance of the farm. It has none of the obvious features that so often betray a former inn, but it is a curious building. When later additions are discounted, it is only one bay deep, but while on the side that faces the road it is lighted by no less than twelve windows.

a former inn, but it is a curious building. When later additions are discounted, it is only one bay deep, but while on the side that faces the road it is lighted by no less than twelve windows - four on each of its three stories - the back is almost devoid of fenestration. Could the deceptively impressive facade it presents to the road have been designed to attract custom to it as an inn? It is supposed to date back to 1641 (Hertfordshire Countryside, 160) but its symmetrical brick front suggests that it was refaced in the eighteenth century, probably not long before 1756 (when the White Hart is known to have been in existence).

I am indebted to Mrs. Baker for making available to me the records she has collected about Bell Bar. Can anyone else throw any light on the identification of Elm Tree Farm with the White Hart where John Byng spent those two uneasy nights?

M. Tomkins

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CORRESPONDANCE

SIR - I hope the note in PBHS-10 about John Byng will help to make his diaries ("The Torrington Diaries") more widely known. But John Byng never "knew the Great North Road"; in his day it was merely the North Road, a name which applied to the London-Manchester road as well, and several others.

I am trying to find out when the name "Great North Road" (with capital G, and accent on the "Great") came into use. With one exception, the earliest example I have is in Lincolnshire in 1800. The earliest I have for Hertfordshire is 1839 - but it means the road from London through Barnet to St. Albans. The earliest I have for any part of the Barnet - Hatfield - Baldock road is 1850. Can anyone provide earlier examples?

A. C. Lynch
Potters Bar

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Pacemaker Perhaps?

From the HAC Conference Programme -
Exhibitions: One free ticket for each exhibiting society.

THE SOCIETY LIBRARY

Members wishing to borrow books etc. from the library should first telephone Helen Baker, Potters Bar 53659.

1. Mr. Butcher's Records :-
 - Vol. 1 - High Street West.
 - Vol. 2 - High Street East.
 - Vol. 3 - Causeway.
 - Vol. 4 - Barnet Road and Southgate Road.
 - Vol. 5 - Kitts End - Green Dragon Lane - Bentley Heath.
 - Vol. 6 - North End - Hatfield Road - Darkes Lane.
 - Vol. 7 - Billy Lows Lane - Mutton Lane - Baker Street.
 - Notes on Northaw.
 - Scrapbook.
 - Jottings, memories etc.
2. South Mimms, F.C.Cass, 1877.
3. Monken Hadley, F.C.Cass.
- ~~East Barn~~ Barnet, F.C.Cass.
5. History of Potters Bar and South Mimms, published by Potters Bar Urban District Council, 1966
6. English Mediaeval Sculpture, Arthur Gaedner, Cambridge, 1935.
7. Catalogues :-
 - Potters Bar Exhibition, 1950.
 - Potters Bar Exhibition, 1959.
 - Middlesex in Shakespeares Day Exhibition, 1964.
 - Sources of Local History, Greater London Record Office - Historical Association Exhibition, 1966.
 - Middlesex Maps and Surveys - Historical Association Exhibition, 1957.
8. The Personality of Britain, Sir Cyril Fox, published by the National Museum of Wales.
9. Local History in Hertfordshire, W. Branch Johnson, published by Herts. Local History Council, 1964.
10. The Antiquities of England and Wales, Francis Grose, New Edition 1783. A collection of fine engravings with a map and information for each county plus plans of castles.
 - Vol. 1 - Introduction and Counties Bedford to Cumberland.
 - Vol. 2 - Counties Derbyshire to Hertfordshire. The latter county would appear to be incomplete; only Hertford Castle and Rye House are dealt with.
11. The Deserted Mediaeval Villages of Hertfordshire, K.Rutherford Davis, 1973. Published for the Herts. Local History Council by Phillimores.
12. Memorials of Old Middlesex, edited by J. Taverner Perry, 1909.
13. The Coal Duty of the City of London and its Boundary Marks, Martin Nail 1972. This interesting history of these stones which mark the boundary was presented to the Society by Norman Hill of North Mymms.
14. A Brief Guide to the Hertfordshire Record Office.
15. Hertfordshire Archaeology, St. Albans and Herts. Archaeological Society, 1968.
16. Hertfordshire Archaeology, Vol. 4 1974-1976.

17. Hertfordshire Past and Present, Vols. 6-13, 1966/73
18. Hertfordshire Past, Vols. 1 & 2, this is a joint publication of the Herts. Local History Council and the Herts. Archaeological Society.
19. Barnet and District Local History (formerly Record) Society Bulletins:
 - No. 8 Great North Road.
 - No. 9. Roman Site, Parkfield (Potters Bar).
 - No.13. Battle of Barnet.
 - No.16. Kitts End and Wrotham Park.
 - No.17. Dancers Hill and the Manor of Mandeville, H.M.Baker, 1971.
 - No.19. Barnet Physic Well, Brian Wise, 1976.
 - No.20. The Red Lion, High Street, Chipping Barnet, 1977.
20. London and Middlesex Archaeological Society - Transactions :-
 - Vol. 21 part 3, 1967
 - Vol. 22 part 1, 1968 - part 2 1969.
 - Vol. 23 part 1, 1971.
 - Vol. 24, 1973.
 - Vol. 25, 1974.
 - Vol. 26, 1975.
 - Vol. 27, 1976.
 - Special Paper No.1 - The Archaeology of the London Area: Current Knowledge and Problems, 1967.
21. Middlesex Local History Council - Bulletins :-

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| No. 7 - Nov. 1958. | No. 8 - July 1959. |
| No.10 - March 1961. | No.15 - April 1963. |
| No.17 - April 1964. | No.18 - Oct. 1964. |
22. Historical Manuscripts Commission :
 - National Register of Archives - H.M.S.O. - 2nd. Edition, 1947.
23. London and Middlesex Historian :

| | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| No.1 1965 | No.3 1966 | No.4 1967 |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
24. Iain N. Macleod, M.P. - Thanksgiving Service, Westminster Abbey, 1970.
25. Dr. Frederick Brittain - Memorial Service, St. Giles, South Mimms, 1969.
26. Northaw House - Sale catalogue with a plan of the estate and a description of all buildings, 1970.
27. Mimms Hall Manor House - Historical paper with a plan of the house and part of a map of about 1600 showing the "scite of the Manor", by R. Harcourt Williams M.A., Archivist and librarian at Hatfield House.
28. Blanche Farm, South Mimms - A report made by Malcolm Ares for the Greater London Council at the time of the demolition. Included is a set of photographs and drawings.
29. Enfield Chace - Part Copy of Enclosure Act of 1777 (Hadley and South Mimms).
30. South Mimms - Ratebook 1827.
31. 6" Ordnance Survey Map - Middlesex Sheet I, Hertfordshire Sheet XL, Potters Bar and South Mimms area (surveyed and published 1868/77), reprinted 1883.
32. Miscellaneous Items :
 - (a) Newsheets and Notices of other societies.
 - (b) List of Wyllyotts Manor Records at Guildhall.
 - (c) List of Mr. Butcher's slide etc.
 - (d) Potters Bar and District Historical Society Newsletters.
 - (e) P.B.&D.H.S. - Historical Records.

NOTICESPUBLICATIONS

Phillimores have published the first rate edited version of Dr. Morris's Hertfordshire Volume of the Domesday Book.
Price: £2.50 paperback; £5.00 hardback.

Potters Bar and District Historical Society: Historical Records No.3, Northaw Parish Registers Transcripts.

It has now been discovered that these transcripts were compiled previously by Mr. Wilton-Hall and that his record has been filed in the Hertfordshire County Record Office, Ref. D/873/15. Certain discrepancies have been found between the work of Mr. Wilton-Hall and the Society's publication.

SOCIETY LIBRARY

Mrs. Baker reports that the library's set of Newsletters is incomplete. If anyone has copies of PBHS 2 and PBHS 3 which they no longer require we would be grateful if they would donate them to the Society Library. Please phone Helen Baker, Potters Bar 53657.

LOCAL HISTORIES

We hear from Mrs. Baker that she is asked from time to time if she knows of anyone who would be willing to a copy of either Dr. Brittain's "South Mimms" or the P.B.U.D.C's. "The Story of Potters Bar and South Mimms." If anyone has a copy of either or both of these books for disposal (or who knows of anyone else with a spare copy) will they please phone Helen Baker, Potters Bar 53657.

FUTURE PROGRAMME

Monday 13th. February - "Napoleonic Defences and Martello Towers"
a talk by A.D.Saunders.

Monday 20th. March - "Local History" a talk by Brian Warren.
PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE FOR THIS MEETING

Wednesday 19th. April - Annual General Meeting followed by "Some Historical Buildings in Cheshunt" a talk by Jack Edwards.

Monday 8th. May - "St. Albans Abbey" a talk by Dr. Eileen Roberts.

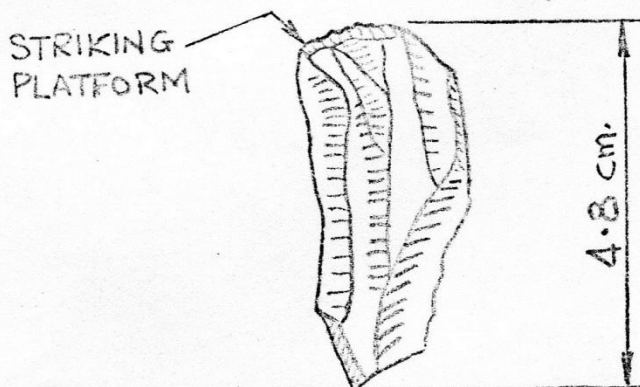
MESOLITHIC BURIN

In March 1977, a Mesolithic Burin was found in the back garden of a house in Hatherleigh Gardens, Potters Bar. The flint implement was identified by Mr. Lee, of the East Herts. Archaeological Society, who has been investigating a Neolithic/Mesolithic site on the slope of Cuffley Ridgeway for several years.

Hatherleigh Gardens is at the head of the catchment area of the Turkey Brook. This minor valley joins the main valley from the Cuffley Ridgeway in White Webbs Park, thus confirming a possible link between early man in Potters Bar and Cuffley.

Mesolithic Man (4000 - 5000 B.C.) in this area could no longer cross to Denmark, as England had been separated from Europe, so they spent the summer in northern England, e.g. Yorkshire, and travelled in their kayak-type canoes to winter in southern England, e.g. the Lea Valley. At this time the Lea Valley was a major source of food - salmon, eels, reed rhizomes, birds and deer.

On reaching the Lea Valley, Mesolithic man would canoe up the present river valleys to find a suitable site to erect the poles and make a crude tent. The next job would be to collect flints and make flint implements, before sitting at the lakeside to kill fish and deer as the latter came to drink.



The above Burin was probably chipped from a double core, and has a damaged striking platform, where it was difficult to chip out. It was used to cut grooves in antlers, so that pieces of antler could be prised out for use as harpoons, or hair-pins, depending on the length. This was a winter occupation, while the antlers were soft.

It is unlikely to be an isolated find and there should be evidence of a Mesolithic camp site in the vicinity of Hatherleigh Gardens.

There has been only one previous record of early tools in Potters Bar and this was recorded in the 1959 catalogue of a local history exhibition held at Oakmere House, thus :-

No. 326 Two pre-historic flint implements excavated at Potters Bar .
(J.N.Hart, Esq.)

Mr. Hart has since died, but if anyone knows any more about the flint implements would they please contact me at 122, Westpole Avenue, Cockfosters, Barnet, Herts.

I wish to thank Mr. and Mrs. Trotman, Mr. G. Gillam, and most of all Mr. Lee, for their help and assistance in finding and identifying the Burin

B. Warren