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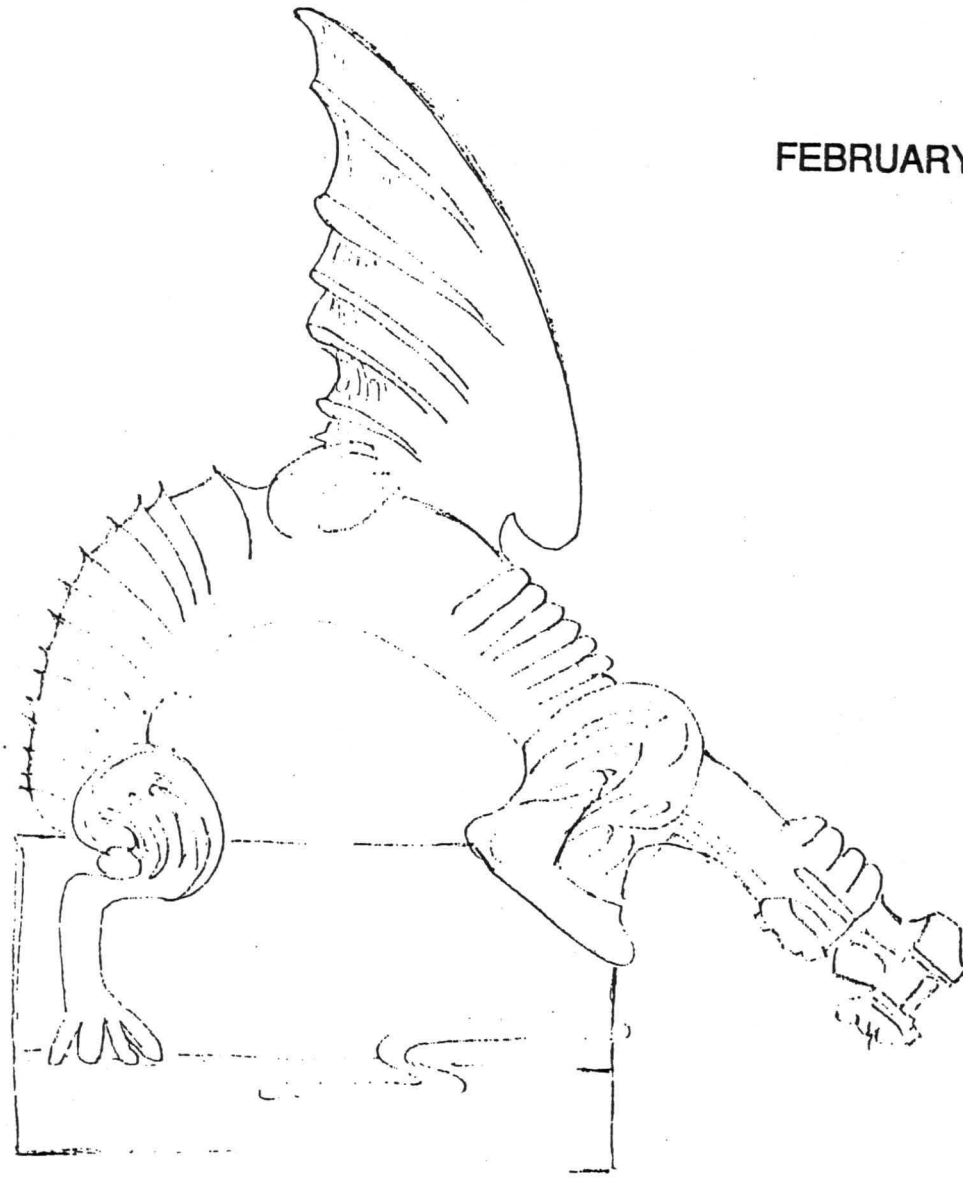
BRITISH BRICK SOCIETY

INFORMATION 73



FEBRUARY 1998

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CONTENTS

Cover Illustration
Dragon roof finial from 38 Wood Street, Stratford-upon-Avon. There is an identical dragon on no 39 adjacent.

Editorial:
Dragons Resurgent

Staring down at the traffic going west along Wood Street in Stratford-upon-Avon are not just a single dragon but an identical pair of the beasts. On the twin gables of nos. 38 and 39 our friends released from Grendel's lair are perched high above the street. I was not looking for dragons: Stratford-upon-Avon is not instantly seen as an obvious place to look for manifestations of terracotta art forms or, for that matter, Edwardian buildings. But in July 1997 while the bus to Birmingham stopped for other traffic, or perhaps the pedestrian crossing, one of the beasts caught my eye. The pair were seen in full glory when I walked down Wood Street less than a week later: now, of course, I hardly fail to notice them every time I am in Stratford-upon-Avon. This pair of shops with Art Nouveau-like fenestration to the ground floor and Edwardian timber-framing to the three-storey facade were once one property and built as a public house: change of use has happened within the past decade.

Equally unexpected as a town with dragons is Cheltenham, once a relatively short railway train ride away from Stratford-upon-Avon. Some time ago one of the society's members, Judith Patrick, told me about three on buildings in the Gloucestershire town. One surmounted the tea rooms in the middle of Pittville Park where the Cheltenham Waters were taken. Another graces the roof of a corner house in the north-west of Wellington Square and the third is on the porch of no 16 Albert Road. In Cheltenham, too, many of the cast iron lamps have dragons flying round their tops.

In this issue we resume the quest for terracotta beasts with a multi-authored account of 'Dragons in Surrey'. It may not be a full county survey as has been attempted for Sussex (see *BBS Information* 56, July 1992, 13-17). It does, however, mean that Surrey can join its southern neighbour as "more fully surveyed".

Several of the Surrey dragons sat atop public houses, some now in other uses, like those on the Stratford-on-Avon property. It would be interesting to find out what prompted the penchant of breweries for such showy adornments. It would also be worth discovering whether, like some Birmingham brewers in the 1920s and 1930s, those of thirty and forty years earlier used outside architects or whether like Lacons Brewery, Great Yarmouth, they had an in-house architect. Mitchell and Butler in Birmingham used Holland William Hobbis who was in private practice; an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects by examination in 1904, he was made Fellow in 1931. In contrast, in Great Yarmouth, A.W. Ecclestone, much better known as a town councillor and local historian, was the local brewery's designer from the 1920s to the 1960s. This one-time Member of the Society of Architects (and hence after 1925 a Licentiate of the RIBA) had many tunes in his repertoire but the fiery breath of a dragon, as far as I know, was not among them.

Unlike that is the architect of 'The George and Dragon', Cley-next-the-Sea on the north Norfolk coast. Over the entrance at the south-west corner of the building he commissioned a scene of two triangular panels at right angles, one with the dragon

breathing fire, the other with the lance-bearing knight.

The terracotta dragon may have had an origin in a myth about a knight from Cappadocia; however, this writer looks to two other sources: China and ceramics and a growing awareness in the 1880s and subsequently of northern Europe's oldest poem for possible explanations of the popularity of the use of dragons on contemporary buildings.

How far, one may ask, is the use of dragons as a decorative motif bound up with the re-emergence of cult of chivalry amongst cultured people? And equally, how far does the idea of going back to things medieval (or supposedly medieval) influence the use of these roof finials?

These are questions rather than answers but they seem worth pondering.

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Observant members will have noticed yet a further change of both address and location by the editor. Indeed correspondence and contributions for future issues of *BBS Information* have reached him at his new address in Shipston-on-Stour. This address is certainly going to be stable for the academic year 1997-98 and probably for a period afterwards.

Most of the editing of this issue of *BBS Information* was done while still living in Salford, a city for which, as members will have realised, the editor retains considerable affection. The move to Shipston-on-Stour has happened for personal reasons.

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The last issue of *BBS Information* was edited by the society's chairman, Terence Paul Smith, and I thank my friend for his hard work in putting the issue together.

BBS Information 72 (October 1997) looked different to those of the previous twenty-three years. The society's Publications Officer, Mrs Ann Los, has valiantly taken on the task of actually producing the finished issues of *BBS Information* and members will share the editor's appreciation of the finished product.

Given that in 1998, the society celebrates its silver jubilee the continuing health of *BBS Information* and its new, enhanced appearance with double-sided printing and staple binding bodes well for the future.

As with much that has been at the core of the society's many activities in the past fifteen years, printing successive issues of *BBS Information* has been among the tasks happily undertaken by the society's retiring Hon. Secretary, Michael Hammett. As with so much the society owes him the heartfelt thanks of its members. And I and my predecessor as editor, Terence Paul Smith, wish to pay our own thanks for translating our camera-ready copy into the finished newsletter three times a year.

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The society held two Spring Meetings in 1997; reports of these, the visit to the Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings which followed the society's Annual General Meeting , and the Autumn Meeting appear in this issue of *BBS Information*.

The editor has sufficient items for the remaining issues of *BBS Information* due in 1998 and several for use in the three issues due in 1999.

Members are reminded that *BBS Information* 76 (February 1999) will feature articles on 'Brick in Churches'; any member wishing to submit an article for this is requested to give advance notice by 1 August 1998 and to submit before 1 November 1998.

DAVID H. KENNETT

Editor, *BBS Information*,
Shipston-on-Stour
12 January 1998

Dragons in Surrey

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

During 1993 and 1994, several members sent the editor sightings of dragons in Surrey. These have been combined into a single list and for completeness earlier observations have been noted anew. Surrey is defined as the original county and includes the portion taken into the Greater London Council region in 1965 and also that part of the old London County Council area which before 1888 was in Surrey. It does not include parishes north of the River Thames once in Middlesex which were transferred to Surrey in 1965. This definition of Surrey is therefore that of *The Victoria County History of England: Surrey* (four volumes with index volume, 1902-1914) rather than that of Ian Nairn and Nikolaus Pevsner (revised by Bridget Cherry), *The Buildings of England: Surrey* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, second edition, 1971).

Members contributing to these notes are Penny Berry, Alan Cox, G.E. Howard, Tony Lewis, R.G. Martin, Derek F. Renn, Mary Saaler, and Terence Paul Smith. Alan Cox was shown the dragons in Croydon by John Greenacombe. Tony Lewis sent the editor a list of dragons from various places in west London and the Thames Valley. The full list with other known dragons and friends from London, Middlesex, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, and Oxfordshire will be printed in an issue of *BBS Information* in 1999.

The editor and the contributors thank T.P. Smith for drawing the distribution map.
(DHK)

CATERHAM

Two dragons were installed on the gables of 'The Valley Hotel', Caterham, (TQ/432566) in 1902 (fig.1). This is the second hotel on the site and was designed for Samuel Whitbread and Sons Ltd., the brewers, by A. Dixon. His drawings show that it was intended to have two large turrets on the front in Scottish-baronial style. Instead, traditional gables were built with impressive ridge terminals in the form of dragons made of terracotta.

These remained in situ until 1987 or 1988 (see *Croydon Advertiser* 22 April 1988) when the hotel was demolished and replaced by a shopping precinct but, during the demolition process, the dragons "disappeared". Although they were recovered as stolen property, the originals were never replaced. As the result of local protests, the building developers were persuaded to put replica dragons on the gables of the shopping precinct. (Mary Saaler)

A photograph of the dragon (fig.2) shows a beast very similar to that on the former 'Railway Hotel', Great Western Street, Aylesbury, Bucks. The head of the Caterham dragon points down rather than horizontal; the mouth is closed rather than open; and the unicorn spike of the Aylesbury dragon is either replaced by a knob or broken off. The tail positions, the body posture, and the leg of the two beasts are virtually identical. The ridge of the tile at Aylesbury is horizontal; that at Caterham is elaborately crested. (DHK)

Fig. 1 The Valley Hotel, Caterham.

COBHAM

In the revised second edition of *Semi-Detached London*, (Didcot: Wild Swan Publications, 1991), Alan A. Jackson illustrates on page 90 two views of the High Street, Cobham, in about 1908. The upper one clearly shows a gabled group of shops with at least two dragons, possibly five. I have not yet been able to check whether these are still there. (Alan Cox)

CROYDON

John Greenacombe has shown me a number of dragon finials in the

Croydon area which have, apparently, escaped attention and which I list below:
a: Dial House, no 63 Purley Downs Road, South Croydon:
two dragons: one on main gable, the other on the dormer gable.
b: No 71 Beechwood Road (corner with Brambledown Road), South Croydon: two dragons: one on ridge of main roof, the other on the gable.
c: No 263 Addiscombe Road (corner with Northampton Road), Croydon: three dragons: one on front gable, one each on side gables.
d: No 257 Addiscombe Road (corner with Ashburton Road), Croydon: three dragons: one on front gable, one each on side gables.
No 257 is mirror image of no 263, these two detached houses being divided by a pair of smaller semi-detached houses without any dragons.
(Alan Cox)

EPSOM
Somewhat late in the day, I have got round to joining the search for birds and beasts on roof tops and have found a few specimens here in Epsom. I do not pretend that this is a definitive survey but I have been round all the roads that I can think of that contain medium-sized to large late Victorian houses.
Wyvern: No 6 St Martin's Avenue (TQ/212601)
It is on a gable at the front of the house with one foot on each side of the ridge and is crouching with wings extended and is glowering down the path.
Dove (or perhaps a pouter pigeon): No 35 Alexandra Road (TQ/2186089).
Dolphins: Nos 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 45 and 47 Bridge Road (TQ/216610).
No 15 is a detached house, 17/19 are semi-detached as are 21/23, and 25 is detached. Although these houses are next to one another they are all of different design. No 25 has two dolphins, the others one each. Nos 45/47 are semi-detached.

In the course of my perambulations, I have found a rich collection of finials including most of those shown in Barham Brothers catalogue (*BBS Inf.*, 56, July 1992, 4-6 with trade handbill illustrated on p.5). I have seen a few more types as well. Only three are on dated houses: numbers 3 and 6 Upper High Street, 1883 and 1881 respectively; and Grove Lodge in Grove Road, a modest detached house dated 1901.
(G.E. Howard)

ESHER
One dragon on the turning opposite to Sandown Racecourse (TQ/144652).
(Tony Lewis).

GREAT BOOKHAM
On the gable of a small Victorian structure, once 'The King's Arms', now called 'Wyvern House', at the junction of Lower Road and Church Road (TQ/135546).

The beast is similar to that from the 'Railway Hotel' Aylesbury (*BBS Inf.*, 56, July 1992, 11) except that the head droops and only one corner of the tile is notched (further details of the Great Bookham beast see *BBS Inf.*, 60, October 1993, 6).

(Derek F. Renn)

Fig.2 The dragon from 'The Valley Hotel', Caterham.
Note the crested back repeated on the crested ridge of the tile.
Note also the bat-like feet of the front leg.

GUILDFORD
One dove on building at Dapdune Wharf (SU/993503).
(R.G. Martin)

KINGSTON
One dragon on building on south side of St Albans Road (TQ/182705).
(Tony Lewis)

LEATHERHEAD
In addition to examples in Epsom, I have noted one beast in Leatherhead:
Dog: on front gable of no 12 The Crescent (TQ/167564).
(G.E. Howard)

LINGFIELD
Two members report a series of beasts on a range of adjacent properties; these do not appear to be the same group.
a: Junction of East Grinstead Road and the High Street: a row of two dragons aand two wyverns on a parade of shops (TQ/386435).
(G.E. Howard)
b: Nos 1-4 Newchapel Road: two dragons, two wyverns (TQ/384435).
(R.G. Martin).

PURLEY
Nos 1-11 (consecutive) Purley Parade, Purley High Street: two dragons on gables, while on other gables are what appear to be Dodo-like birds and an unidentified seated beast, and possibly one gable which has lost its finial.

Since this parade must date from 1930s, this indicates that contrary to the suggestion in *BBS Inf.*, 60, October 1993, 8, dragons were made and put up well after 1910.
(Alan Cox)
Nos 2,10, 12, and 20 Tudor Court, Russell Hill Road (TQ/312616).
(R.G. Martin)

PUTNEY
Florian Road and Deodar Road:
Sphinxes, sejeant: one each on dwarf wall on roof between gables.
(G.E. Howard)
Address unknown:
Row of dragons seen on front gables of row of houses east of the District Line, south of Putney Bridge and north of East Putney.
(Penny Berry)

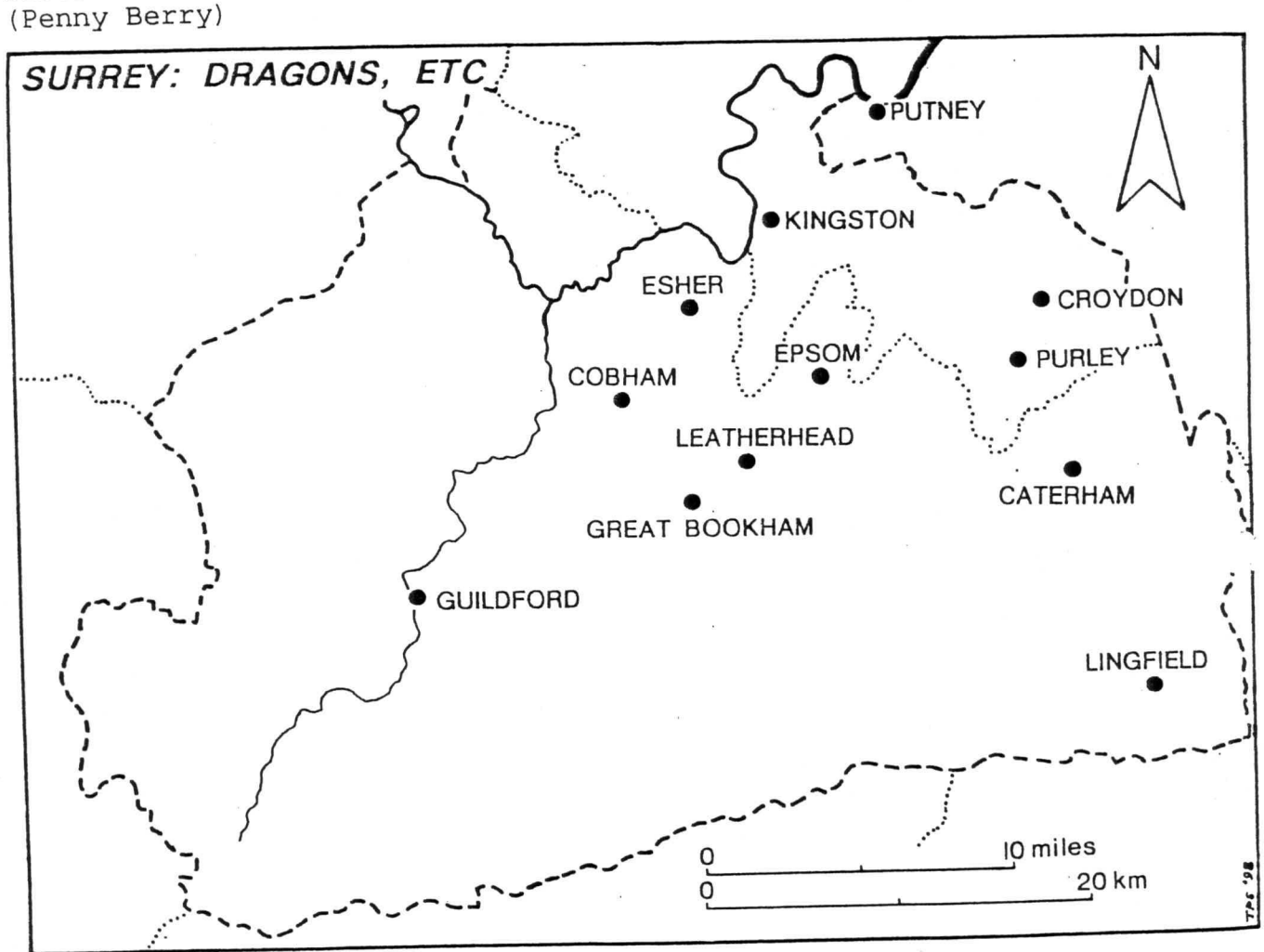

Fig. 3 Dragons in Surrey: Location Map of Reported Sightings
County boundary 1888 to 1965 shown by dashed line; area taken into the County of Greater London indicated by

QUERIES *?????*

From time to time the British Brick Society receives enquiries and queries about bricks, other ceramic building materials and brick buildings. These are printed, with responses in issues of BBS Information as space is available.
Replies are welcome.
DHK

STAMPED FIREBRICKS FROM A PENNINE LIMEKILN

I am at present researching the history of a limekiln on the eastern escarpment of the Pennines. This kiln has never been used but is lined with firebricks which are stamped 'H & Co'.

So far I have been unable to trace the source of these bricks.

Does any member of the society have any suggestion as to their origin and the brick kiln where they were made.

GRAHAM BROOKS
Coomara, Carleton, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA4 0BU

FIRE-CLAY BRICKS FROM LANGHAM HILL, SOMERSET

Can any member could assist with the identification of the makers of the fire-clay bricks from the engine house at Langham Hill reported in 'Brick Dating Problems in Somerset', elsewhere in this issue of *BBS Information.*

BRIAN J. MURLESS
46 Holway Avenue, Taunton, Somerset TN1 3AR

BRICK BATS

ST PETER'S CHURCH, CROSTWICK, NORFOLK

With the revived interest in medieval brick churches shown in BBS Information, I advocate a visit by a good draughtsman/woman to St Peter's church, Crostwick, Norfolk (NGR TG/257158). The church lies just to the east of the B1150 (Norwich to Coltishall road), being hidden by trees and bracken, and is reached by a narrow path opposite the 'Old Rectory Hotel' at Crostwick.

The three main areas of brickwork are all late medieval and red brick; each is of interest. The north porch is of flint, brick and moulded brick, with an unusual cusped pair heading the statue niche. The south doorway is blocked but has a segmental pointed arch with three layers of mouldings, including the ingenious repeat of one moulding for the label stops. Possibly best of all is the blocked and ruined rood-loft stair by the south wall, wholly brick and with its structure instructively exposed: photogenic, too, of course!
JANE WIGHT

TERRACOTTA UPDATE

Two articles and a recent book have come to notice which members may not have seen. In 'Our Architectural Ceramic Heritage', in *Structural Survey*, 12/2, 1993/94, 10-13, P.G. Swallow discusses the development of terracotta and in the illustrations shows the wealth of its uses in Leicester in the 1890s. One, the frieze of means of transport on the original Thomas Cook building, easily could be mistaken for granite. Brief notice is also given of the use in the late 1930s Odeons of faience on the part of the facade above the entrance to the cinema.

The cinema is the direct focus of a photographic collection by John Crenar with commentary by Mark Irving, 'Palaces for the Principality', *Perspectives in Architecture*, issue 32, December 1997, 46-49. Nine buildings are featured, none of which is still used as a cinema.

Susan Tunick had already given us *Don't Take It for Granite* about the terracotta facades of New York. She has now followed up the three walks with a book, *Terracotta Skyline*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997). We hope to have a review in due course.

DAVID H. KENNETT

BRICK DATING PROBLEMS IN SOMERSET

Brian J. Murless

The identification of objects bearing the name of a manufacturer may not seem a duly onerous task; after all, in the world of antiques, precious metalwork can often be often be fairly accurately dated and the original provenance found using widely available catalogues which list hallmarks. However, with artifacts which are relatively modern and somewhat more prosaic such information is less easily forthcoming, a particular example being the clay products of the building industry such as bricks and tiles.

The bricks from the lime kiln at Snowdon Hill/Pope's Quarry, near Chard, illustrate the problem especially well[1]. They are stamped 'HARRIS & PEARSON/STOURBRIDGE' but some considerable detective work was necessary to shed further light on their origin. The name of Pearson is a very familiar one in the Black Country with firms trading under various titles such as E. & J. Pearson which, like Harris & Pearson, became incorporated into Price-Pearson Ltd., still in existence in 1973[2]. It seems probable that the bricks found at Chard were made at Bretell Lane, Brierley Hill, a site which began in the eighteenth century and in the 1890s supplied firebricks, furnace linings, gas retorts, glass-house pots, crucibles, glazed and architectural bricks, and field drainpipes. The works is noted in a regional gazetteer[3] and the former office building of Harris and Pearson was listed in 1997; it dates to 1888 and is highly decorative[4].

The above details are helpful but clearly not specific enough to closely date the lime kiln and a similar situation is currently being encountered with bricks from the archaeological excavation at Langham Hill engine house, a structure associated with nineteenth-century iron mining on the Brendon Hills. As at Chard, the stamped bricks are of fireclay and some bear the mark 'H' or 'HD'. The uncovering of the reservoir in October 1997 produced a third variant, an incomplete fragment and ,as yet, the only example on the site with lettering which can be partially identified as '(?)ANSON/(?H)EN(?L)'. Although a Somerset origin cannot be entirely ruled out (there were fireclay works at Temple Chard and at several colliery sites), it is most likely that the bricks of this type discovered at Langham Hill came from south Wales or the west Midlands by water transport. The engine house was only at work for a limited period in the 1870s.

Unfortunately, as regards native (Somerset) bricks few printed catalogues detailing brickyard products survive and their day appear to have been used by builders and traders as working documents with pages cut out and/or "vandalised" by pencilled orders. Even the late-nineteenth-century illustrated catalogue of William Thomas of West Buckland has yet to be found in a complete form though numerous copies were printed at the time[5].

An attempt has been made to list and date Somerset makers[6] but the shortcomings are obvious particularly as the index is based on readily available trade directories which in themselves are suspect without adequate cross-referencing to other historical sources. During the nineteenth century commercial operatives and estate brickyards began the practice of stamping some, but by no means all, products and its only by finding examples "in the field" that a truly comprehensive register of marks can be compiled. Allied to this an active collecting policy by museums, a daunting task given the implications for storage of often bulky, heavy objects but a start was made in the 1970s largely through the efforts of the Bridgwater and District Archaeological Society and these form the core of the County Museum collection to be displayed at the Somerset Brick & Tile Museum, East Quay, Bridgwater. Fortunately Somerset material has also found its way into the Bristol Industrial Museum[7].

Naturally any collection reflects the intentions of the donor and/or the circumstances in which it was collected and therefore much of the County deposit relates to the multi-yard companies which once operated in the Sedgemoor District. But every artefact has the potential to question and supplement existing knowledge and amongst many roofing tiles at Bridgwater is one of the Eclipse Lockjaw pattern, a machine-made product bearing the stamp of Hunt and Robins[8]. To date, this is the only known example from an equally unknown company which features briefly in a local trade directory[9] and probably had a small works on the banks of the River Parrett[10]. A similar challenge to the historical record is presented by a brick on display at Castle Cary Museum stamped 'C.WELCH/DITCHEAT'[11]. Although two brickyards in the parish have been identified from map evidence neither can yet be associated with the brickmaker. As the industry was subject to economic recessions it may be that Mr Welch's enterprise flourished for only a short period and the brick is the sole piece of evidence of his trade.

Prior to the disastrous Bridgwater Town Mill fire in 1995 which destroyed its collection, the Somerset Industrial Archaeological Society had begun to assemble products from former lesser known brick and tile makers. Whilst S.I.A.S. is now encouraging such artifacts to be deposited in existing recognised collections this should not deter the society from compiling an inventory of brickmarks, a task already completed by the other "S.I.A.S" in Scotland[12].

References

1. P. Daniel, 'Notes on Site Visit to Snowdon 'Caves', Chard', *Bulletin Somerset Industrial Archaeological Society* (hereafter *Bull.SIAS*), No.74, April 1997, 12-14.

2. G. Stevens, 'Staffordshire Blues Quarries and Half-Enders', *Blackcountryman,* 1973, 60-65.

3. J. Crompton, *Industrial Archaeology of the West Midland Iron District,* (Association for Industrial Archaeology, 1991), entry DU32.

4. Minutes AGM of British Brick Society, 14 June 1997, item 10(c).

5. Catalogue, William Thomas & Company Limited (Wellington, July 1891). N.B. a Price List with a description of each numbered item was published in October 1891 by the company.

6. B.J. Murless, 'Somerset Brick and Tile Makers. A Brief History and Gazetteer', *Supplement Bull.SIAS* No.58, December 1991.

7. Anon., *Hand-made Bricks*, Technology Sheet 3, (City of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, 1978).

8. Accession BWR MUS 23.

9. J. Whitby & Sons, *Handy Directory of Bridgwater and Neighbourhood* (1897).

10. The suggested location is at ST/305363 of which there is no evidence on the O.S. 25 in. 1st Ed (1886) Sheet L15 but the revised edition, surveyed in 1903, shows the site as *Brick & Tile Works (Disused)*.

11. The writer is grateful to Tony Setterington for drawing his attention to this artifact.

12. G.J. Douglas *et al.*, *A Survey of Scottish Brickmarks*, (Scottish Industrial Archaeology Survey, 1985).
Notes written December 1997.

Review Article:
Brick and the Transformation of the Town

David H. Kennett

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, towns have been places whose public facade is mainly, if not exclusively, brick. Richard Brown III, a maltster, built a new house on the street of Luton, in 1748 or soon after, which had a brick front to a timber-framed building. His son, Richard Brown IV, built another new house, some messuages to the south, before 1797 which has all four external walls of brick. Two sixteenth-century properties, on plots immediately north of the father's house, were given new brick fronts before 1804; refurbishment of the northern one with stucco probably from this period like the new house of 1767 of Thomas Burr, brewer, on the opposite side of the street.

By the 1830s, new properties in Luton were invariably brick-built: the court books of Luton Manor Court have presentments for nuisance caused by piles of bricks on the pavement from 1831 onwards. New building on the old town street was the precursor of a more general urban expansion: by 1851 the population was 10,648, a figure almost double that of a decade earlier and three times that of 1821. Yet even in 1851, Luton was still a market town heavily dependent on agriculture and services needed by a farming community.

In contrast, Shoreditch, immediately adjacent to the City of London, had grown from about 10,000 people in 1750 to over 35,000 at the time of the first census and by mid-century it was home to 109,257 persons in the third smallest of Middlesex's ancient parishes; and at 640 acres (259 hectares) physically the smallest of the London Boroughs created in 1900. However, the population density remained high: the peak in numbers of 129,364 in 1861 was diminished in the next thirty years by less than five thousand. It was the 1890s and the three subsequent decades which reduced numbers to 97,042 in 1931.

In contrast, Middlesborough, as is well-known, is the classic case of a town created de novo in the Victorian age. A fishing hamlet of only four houses in 1801 was transformed between 1831 and 1841 into a town of 5,463 people which sought incorporation as a municipal borough in 1853: the population in 1851 was 7,431 but by 1861 this figure had risen to 19,641. The town became an inaugural county borough in 1888: Middlesborough was home to 75,532 people in 1891; Luton at that date had 30,053 inhabitants. Two volumes published in 1996 illustrate our theme of brick and the transformation of the town: David Mander on Shoreditch is a single author's view in ten chapters while Tony Pollard's edited collection on Middlesborough has eight essays, only one of which concentrates on the twentieth century. Mander has a single chapter on developments since 1900. Not all contributors to Pollard's volume are expert on buildings yet the illustrations and extensive text on Oddfellows' Lodges and insurance companies suggest a fruitful vein of untapped gold for future research on the built environment. Oddfellows' Halls are a group of (brick) buildings about which we know little. In contrast insurance offices, especially the red brick edifices designed by Alfred Waterhouse for the Prudential, are much

better known.

Usefully Pollard reprints Asa Briggs' pioneering chapter from *Victorian Cities* (1963) and provides it with illustrations. Both books are copiously illustrated and if there is one caveat to be entered it is that in Mander's volume there is no picture of the early electricity works which gave the London Borough its motto, 'More Light, More Power'. Surely one must exist.

This is of some importance. In 1891 Shoreditch vestry, the predecessor of the borough, had become only the second authority in London to gain the right to generate electricity. In 1899, it became the second municipality in England to provide it. For example, provision of electricity did not happen until 1904 in Salford and 1907 in Luton.

The double turbine hall of the Salford building is a red and yellow brick structure, now lacking its chimney, to the north of Peel Park and the university.

One early customer of many municipal electricity undertakings was the local tramway, again often municipally controlled. That in Salford constructed a new brick-built depot on a corner site between Frederick Road and Seaford Road in 1907. It has a fine entrance portal. A similar, but smaller, structure appeared in Luton in 1908 at the south end of the built-up area. A pioneer authority in electric tramways was the sole survivor: Blackpool. The tramways here were converted to electric power in 1889. Tramway buildings seem another neglected area of brick and the transformation of the town.

Shoreditch electricity generator was powered by heat from the adjacent municipal refuse destructor: it all sounds incredibly late-twentieth-century but here was an idea that worked for over forty years from 1899. The complex was damaged by a bomb in the Second World War.

Included in the complex opened in 1899 was the Passmore Edwards Library and adjacent baths and washhouses; these designed by H.T. Hare used red brick and terracotta. The use of bands of different materials, which Mander's photograph of 1905 brings to the fore, recalls similar uses a decade earlier by Norman Shaw at New Scotland Yard, London, and in the mid-1890s by J. Francis Doyle, with Norman Shaw, in the offices for the White Star Line, Pier Head, Liverpool, they who commissioned the *Titanic*. Mander's photograph also demonstrates the use of a corner turret at the north-west corner of the building on Pitfield Street, Shoreditch, a feature which appears also on the two buildings just noted. The use of banding reappears in a later public library by Hare, that opened in 1902 at Wolverhampton, where the gables of the Shoreditch building are also recalled.

The baths and washhouses belong to a long tradition. These Victorian buildings derive their impetus from the Commission for Baths and Wash Houses of 1844, with local boards following two years later. Lancashire's towns were prominent in this provision, aided by architects like Thomas Worthington who both made long study of the needs of these buildings and had a commitment to a better environment. Remarkably surviving in August 1997, albeit in a somewhat dilapidated state, the first baths designed by Worthington, those opened in 1856 at Collier Street, Greengate, Salford, bear testimony to the purpose displayed. The choice of red brick recessed as window surrounds with neat coursing on the upper floor and as mixed fenestration

on the ground floor shows a more than utilitarian approach to design. The brick pillars between the repeated arches of the ground floor have vestigial capitals before the springing.

Worthington went on to design the Mayfield Baths, Ardwick, Manchester, in 1857 and a third in Leaf Street, Hulme, also a working-class district of Manchester, in 1859. By the time of the plans of the Salford baths (1855), London had thirteen public baths including those of 1847 at Goulston Square, Whitechapel. Thomas Markus in *Buildings and Power: Freedom and Control in the Origin of Modern Building Types* uses Chapter 15 to discuss 'Cleanliness is next to godliness' where other examples of public baths, from Liverpool dating to 1826-29 and 1842 are illustrated.

Two essays in Pollard's volume discuss housing: Linda Polley specifically on 1830 to 1914 and J.W. Leonard on the effects of the Middlesborough plan of 1945. There is a fascinating table on page 166 relating occupation and income to the size of house, its construction cost and the annual rent charged together with the number of servants required to maintain the householder and his family in the state to which they wished to become accustomed. All houses were brick-built. At a basic level are flat-fronted houses with the parlour entered from the street; a cut above these, let to aspirant and better-off steelworker or clerk with an equivalent income, were houses with a ground floor bay, but still entered from the street such as those illustrated on Angle Street. More prestigious, with both storeys with a bay and a small front garden, guarded by a brick wall with neat railings and an iron gate, were houses in Ayresome Park; these could be found in any expanding Edwardian suburb: Roath Park, Cardiff, is similar. These were the homes of the aspirant.

Polley also illustrates the downwardly mobile: condemned in 1900 but still standing thirty years later were terraced houses with small rear courts and outside sanitation on Nile Street. These two-bedroomed dwellings were without a rear extension for a kitchen. This, a scene from 1950s Middlesborough and photographs from Shoreditch were eloquent testimony to the task facing town councils, urban planners, civil servants, and builders in the challenge issued on 23 November 1918: 'to make Britain a fit country for heroes to live in'. The solutions were not always the same. In Shoreditch from blocks of 1900 designed by Rowland Plumbe, low rent flats were preferred; in Middlesborough, the semi-detached house, both privately and municipally provided, was seen as the panacea ,

Books reviewed in this article are:

More Light, More Power: An Illustrated History of Shoreditch,
By David Mander.
Stroud, Glos.: Sutton Publishing. ISBN 0-7509-1217-0. 128 pages, numerous (unnumbered) figures, maps. Price £9-99 (paper).

Middlesborough Town and Community 1830-1950,
Edited by A.J. Pollard.
Stroud, Glos.: Sutton Publishing. ISBN 0-7509-1270-7.
xiv + 202 pages, plates, 2 maps. Price £18-99 (hardback).

Brick for a Day

During 1997, the British Brick Society held four meetings; ALL are reported here. The editor invites notice and accounts of any relevant day schools and meetings of interest.

BRICK IN LIVERPOOL

The Northern Spring meeting of the British Brick Society was held in Liverpool on Saturday 12 April 1997. David Kennett was guide.

The city has many brick buildings. We were particularly pleased to see the restoration to its original conception of John Hughes' horseshoe of St Andrew's Gardens, built as municipal flats in 1934-35, and refurbished once before in the 1960s with inappropriate fenestration, one example of which remains. The quality of the brickwork is very high including a great semi-circular arch at the main entry and horseshoe-shaped arches at subsidiary entrances: the brickwork evoked much comment from the members present.

Of the last years of the same decade is one of the major works of another Liverpool graduate, the Philharmonic Hall by Herbert J. Rowse with brickwork in starkly cubic shapes, the style of Willem Dudok in the Netherlands. The job architect was Alwyn Edward Rice who had written his final year thesis on 'A New Concert Hall for Liverpool'.

We saw too the wealth a great trading city could invest in commercial buildings, not all of which have brick exteriors. But the nearly-identical Carlisle Buildings and Jerome Buildings, of 1883 and 1885, on Victoria Street have load-bearing external brick walls. These excited much comment.

Two decades earlier, two non-brick buildings were erected: Oriel Chambers, no 14 Water Street, in 1864 and no 16 Cook Street in 1866. The architect was Peter Ellis whose training was as a civil engineer. He used an iron frame and minimal stone mullions on the exterior. In both buildings, the fenestration is held in iron framing. Pushed out for maximum light the window structure clearly influenced the windows of the building adjacent to Oriel Chambers, a set of chambers in yellow brick. Here there are long bricks in arches over the fenestration; in St Andrew's Gardens, we saw long bricks in the arches. Our guide waxed lyrical on the influence of Peter Ellis' buildings on John Root's finest Chicago skyscraper, The Rookery of 1885-89, to LaSalle Street all red brick and red terracotta but with its pale yellow brick and glass interior court and circular stair which echoes that of no 16 Cook Street. John Wellborn Root went to school in Liverpool just when Peter Ellis' buildings were being constructed. In the year when Root was designing The Rookery, Alfred Waterhouse built part one of the Prudential Building also in red brick and red terracotta where our tour ended.

Here, one of the party remarked "When are we having a Brick Society tour of Chicago?"; it was a fitting reward for our guide's effort.

H.H. WILLOUGHBY

BIRMINGHAM AND ITS BUILDINGS

The Spring Meeting of the British Brick Society was held on Saturday 17 May 1997 in Birmingham. Brick and terracotta were much in evidence. We particularly enjoyed the visit to the Victoria Law Courts by Aston Webb and Ingress Bell with red terracotta exterior and buff terracotta interior to the Great Hall and the corridors. Built in 1887-91, this is a sumptuous display of late Victorian command of resources.

We saw too the interior of the Birmingham School of Art by Martin and Chamberlain of 1881-85. Much comment was exercised on the tuck pointing of the pillars of the Museum. This is entered from the transverse corridor connecting the two wings of the building. The large spaces needed for studios on the top floor use great pointed iron arches as structural members which allowed fenestration to be hung almost independently. The School of Art is an amazing combination of J.H. Chamberlain's Ruskinian feeling and his partner's daring use of structural capabilities.

Between these and after seeing the art school we trod the city's streets, viewing many commercial buildings contemporary with these and of the two decades after. I was particularly struck by the circular tower in red unglazed terracotta of the H.B. Sale Building of 1896.

Our day ended with a canal boat trip. During one part, we were adjacent to the Birmingham to Wolverhampton railway line. It seems to me that many of the techniques of construction were transferred from canals to railway lines: brick-lined tunnels, brick-revetted cuttings, even adequate loading places for freight. What was also apparent was the sheer dependence of industry before 1939 on the canal as much as on the railway and the road.

The society's thanks are due to Michael Troughton for his organisation of a superb day and keeping us smoothly on time with the guiding.

DAVID H. KENNETT

AVONCROFT MUSEUM OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

The society held its 1997 Annual General Meeting on 14 June 1997 in the Long Room of 'The String of Horses' at the Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire. After the meeting, members were free to explore the grounds and examine the preserved structures. This account reports reactions to some of the buildings seen. While concentrating on brick buildings, the report notes first some of the timber-framed buildings.

Originally from Shrewsbury, 'The String of Horses' began life as two adjacent sixteenth-century timber-framed merchant's houses before becoming an inn in 1786. The ground floor became a shop for the Shrewsbury Co-operative Society in 1912. Brick was seen in the part of the building numbered no 4.

Striking in its setting is the roof of the Guesten Hall of Worcester Priory of about 1330, later re-used as the roof structure of Holy Trinity church, Worcester, in 1865. It has yet another use as the roof to the modern conference hall of the museum. Another Guesten Hall in restoration, this time in situ,

is that of Leiston Abbey, Suffolk. This is mainly built of flint. Another timber-framed roof at Avoncroft is that from Plas Gadwgan, near Wrexham, Clwyd, complete with cruck blades and a spere truss, of fifteenth-century date, and very like the contemporary interior of Ordsall Hall, Salford.

Avoncroft is in the lush countryside of Midland England. The collection of brick farm and other buildings reflect the culture. The granary from Temple Broughton, Worcs., dates to the late eighteenth century. The grain store is raised on three rows of four pillars. The circular pillars have seven bricks to each course above the square bases. Large bricks are used to infill. The brick stairs to the timber-framed store are so built as to include a dog kennel.

Pigeon pie is a dish not often found in recipe books today. Our forefathers ate it far more and in all classes. At Avoncroft is preserved the dovecote from Haselour Hall, Staffs., which has a complex history. The original seventeenth-century structure for 750 birds was timber framed but was encased in brick and enlarged in the eighteenth century. There is a top entry for the birds. This is similar in size to the brick dovecote behind the modern police station at Stratford-on-Avon. Similarly preserved in an incongruous setting is a dovecote at Brooke, Norfolk, with four 1970s detached houses for neighbours. Practically every major country house had a dovecote, perhaps even as at Oxburgh Hall, Norfolk, built into the turret at the top of the famous brick gatehouse. The separate building is more customary; a little-known Elizabethan brick house is Croxall Hall, Staffordshire. There is fine brick dovecote adjacent. A spectacular stone dovecote is at Willington Manor, Beds., where the early-sixteenth-century house of the courtier Sir William Gostwick was built of brick.

Country houses also had ice houses where a very efficient form of refrigeration could be practised. The Avoncroft Museum have preserved one of the eighteenth century from Tong, Salop. This brick structure was built into the ground and ice cut in winter would be stored in it throughout the year preserving meat and fish caught in the spring and summer. One of the functions of the great lake at a major house was to provide ice for the ice house. Often the ice house is situated within a hundred metres of the lake as at Holkham, Norfolk, although that at Blickling, also Norfolk, is more distant from the main lake but within two hundred metres of the secondary lake which served the estate sawmill. We need to remember that these brick ice houses were constructed at a particularly cold time: "the Little Ice Age" began with the harsh winter of 1564-65 and did not really end until the 1820s.

Tong. Salop., has had more than one great house. The first we know about was built for the Vernons buried in Tong church; it was described by John Leland in the 1520s as brick and timber-framed but a search, in 1982, of the published Shropshire Hearth Tax failed to locate it. This house or a successor was replaced by another house designed by Capability Brown in 1765; however, this has now gone.

Grain is essential for life and bread has been the western staple for millennia. Since the twelfth century the air has been used to drive the grinding wheels. At Avoncroft is preserved the post mill from Danzey Green, Warks., a nineteenth-century timber-framed structure with a brick round house. A pleasing

part of the windmill is the collection of photographs of windmills from different parts of England.

Transport at Avoncroft is represented by the brick toll house of 1822 from Little Malvern, Worcs., the living room of which is half-octagonal in plan with windows to look both ways down the road. This toll house was built by the Upton-upon-Severn Turnpike Trust. Surviving on the turnpike road from Harleston to Bungay on the Norfolk side of the River Waveney is the toll house at Denton.

Altogether the buildings at Avoncroft made an absorbing end to the day for the members. Our thanks are due to Michael Hammett for organising the Annual General Meeting and to the Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings for their hospitality.

DAVID H. KENNETT

HATFIELD AND HATFIELD HOUSE

He was right Jonathan Swift 'walls have tongues' and so it seemed on that visit to Hatfield by thirty-two members and guests of the society on Saturday 27 September 1997.

Although this was a visit to Hatfield, it was to cover the Old Town, the Old Bishop's Palace and, of course, Hatfield House itself.

Hatfield woke up to the effects of the Industrial Revolution with the arrival of the railway and the then occupant of Hatfield House, the 3rd Marquis of Salisbury, had a new driveway built from the house to connect with the newly-opened railway station. As befits a fine house, a fine new gateway was constructed directly opposite the railway station and it was here that we started out tour.

The society's chairman, Mr Terence Smith, was our guide and his usual grasp of all the relevant historical aspects of what we were about to see, plus his little stories and dry humour kept us to peak attention throughout the day.

The gateway comprise of buff terracotta pillars from which hang some fine ironwork gates some 7 metres (22 feet) high and a credit to both brickmaker and ironworker. We departed for the Old Town of Hatfield but would return to the new driveway to view another element of its construction later in the morning.

Church Street, Fore Street and Park Street were the morning hunting ground and plenty of good sport there was. A pair of houses in Church Street built entirely in Rat Trap Bond (1880-90) held our attention for some time with much discussion between various parties as to the relevance and advantage of this form of construction. A house with no bond at all, just higgledy-piggledy brickwork was visited at the top of Church Street together with a fine nineteenth-century school, sadly disused and in need of some attention.

Fore Street was until 1850 part of the main London Road and naturally contained coaching inns and alehouses. A fine three-storey Georgian house of tuck pointed brickwork was viewed together with a modern example of mathematical tiling.

Park Street's buildings were mostly of brick and in nice order. At the bottom end was the other element of the new driveway to Hatfield House. A brick arched viaduct was constructed to carry the carriageway across a small ravine and being built in the Railway Age could easily be mistaken for a railway carrying viaduct. Constructed in red brick with a multi-

brick key to the arch crown its English Bond walling contrasting with Stretcher Bond for the barrel vault soffits.

The morning's tour finished at 12.30 prompt and a full hour and a half was available for lunch: ample time for reflection and maybe to pop back and take that photograph missed during the tour.

We started the afternoon by viewing the Old Palace which for most of "us brickwork people" must be the jewel of Hatfield and where you do feel that walls have tongues and speak to you of past history. What we now see is the surviving West Wing of the Old Palace of 1497, restored in this century by the 4th Marquis of Salisbury. Built by Cardinal Morton, Bishop of Ely and a leading minister of Henry VII, it became a royal residence exchanged by James I for Theobalds, the house Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury inherited from his father, Lord Burghley. The bricks which formed three ranges of the building were used in the construction of Hatfield House. The palace is notable for its elaborate diaper work in black bricks and the roof of oak and chestnut above the Banqueting or Great Hall, which remains a notable example of fifteenth-century brick architecture.

Hatfield House is a glory of English building; our chairman/ guide told us 'it is in a style which was to prove something of a dead end architecturally'. It was, however, developed a little later (1529) at Blickling Hall, Norfolk, by the same architect, Robert Lyminge. Hatfield was built for Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury, who was to die in 1612 just before the house was finished. Hatfield is red brick Jacobean with stone quoins and window dressings and some fine decorative brick chimneys. Its plan followed a design popular in Elizabethan times, that of two wings joined by a central block, the whole forming the letter E, the initial of a great queen. Unfortunately some of Hatfield's major contributions to its appearance were removed long ago: the gatehouses, pavilions, turreted lodges, statues, and gilded lions. Access to view at close quarters the front of the house (south elevation) was restricted due to extensive remodelling of the garden, but its ornate treatment could be seen to contrast sharply with the more austere and robust north elevation.

The official visit was completed at about 3.00 p.m. which gave time to those wishing to view the interior of Hatfield House before departing. Our grateful thanks to Terence Smith for making the arrangements for the visit and for his informative commentary covering a variety of unusual and interesting brick buildings.

PETER HARRISON

BRITISH BRICK SOCIETY IN 1998

Five visits and meetings in 1998 are planned.
Preliminary details are as follows:

Spring Meeting
Saturday 16 May 1998
Visit in morning to Williamson Cliff Ltd., brickworks at Little Casterton near Stamford; makers of bricks for new and restoration work at Cambridge and Oxford colleges. Afternoon visit to the 1650 brick Aslackby Manor House (courtesy of Alan Baxter).
Details in this mailing.

Northern Spring Meeting
Saturday ~~26~~ April 1998
Edgar Wood and his use of brickwork in Middleton and Oldham; with brickwork of mills and the town hall in Chadderton, Lancs.
Details in this mailing.

Annual General Meeting
Saturday 13 June 1998
Visits including St John's College, Cambridge, and other colleges built in brick: Jesus', Magdalene, and Sidney Sussex.

July Meeting
Saturday 25 July 1998
Morning visit to New Hall, Boreham, near Chelmsford, Essex.

Autumn Meeting
Saturday 26 September 1998
Dorset Brickwork.
A walk round Old Town, Poole, with an afternoon visit to sand-lime brickworks.

Full details of the first two meetings are in this mailing; details for others will be included in later mailings in 1998.

Among the projected venues for one of the society's meetings in 1999 is High Wycombe, Bucks. Preliminary indications are that the Annual General Meeting in 1999 will be at Gainsborough, Lincs.; more than half of the returns so far received have indicated a first or sole preference for this venue. The society would like to hold the Northern Spring Meeting in Yorkshire in 1999, including a visit to a brickworks.

Future meetings in preparation include visits to Wolverhampton, Derby, Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon, Oxford, and Wigan. Wigan is the probable venue of the Northern Spring Meeting in 2000.

The British Brick Society is always looking for new ideas for future meetings. Suggestions please to David Kennett or Terence Smith.