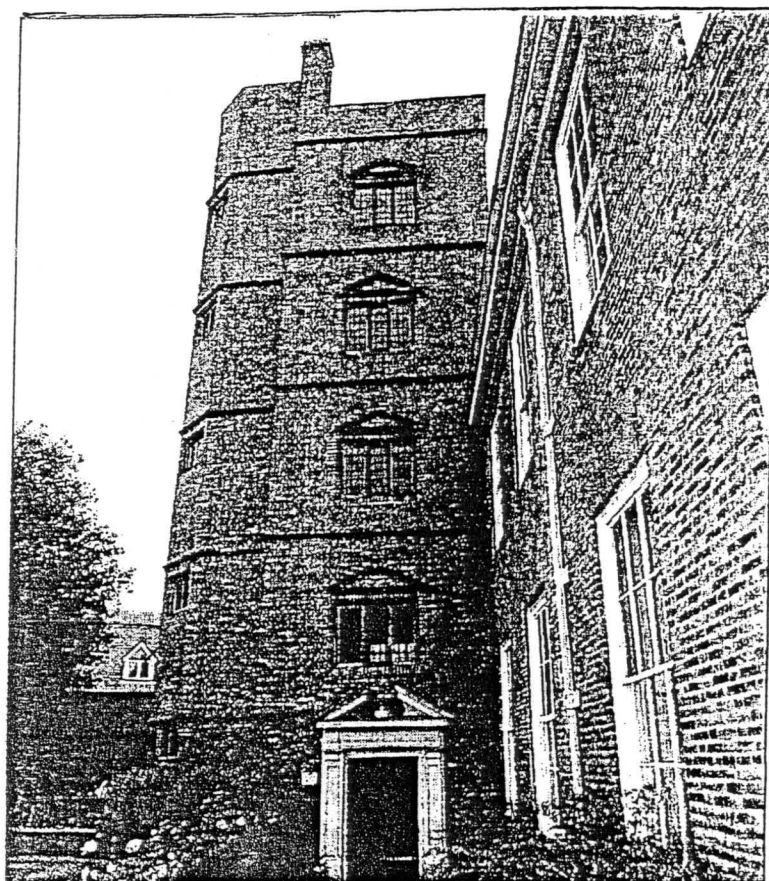


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BRITISH BRICK SOCIETY

INFORMATION 86

DECEMBER 2001



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* Members of the BAA may join its brick section and, as such, will be eligible for affiliation to the British Brick Society at a reduced annual subscription of £5-00 per annum; for BAA Life Members, the subscription is waived: they should inform the BAA:BS secretary of their interest so that they can be included in the Membership List. Telephone numbers of members would be helpful for contact purposes, but will **not** be included in the Membership List.

British Brick Society web site:

<http://www.britishbricksoc.free-online.co.uk/index.htm>

Contents

Editorial: A Further Bonus for Members	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2
Geoffrey Hines: an appreciation									
by Martin Bussell	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	3
Broseley Clay Weekend 2 and 3 June 2001									
by Tony Muggridge	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	4
The Myth of the Seventeenth-Century Pug Mill									
by James W.P. Campbell	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	7
Victorian Jubilee Plaques from Hampshire									
by Kathleen Clarke	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	9
Brick for a Day 2001	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	19
Brick Queries	.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	24

Cover Illustration:

The five-storey look-out tower at Clifton House, King's Lynn, Norfolk, was one of the highlights of the visit to the town after the Annual General Meeting of the British Brick Society in June 2001. members were able to ascend the sixteenth-century tower and view the River Great Ouse, in much the same way as the merchant who had the tower built was able so to do. On the right-hand side of the photograph is later brickwork covering the earlier building at Clifton House.

Editorial: A Further Bonus for members

In November 2000, no sooner had the editor of *British Brick Society Information* cleared his files of unpublished articles than the basket became full again. By July 2001, no fewer than seven pieces had been received, written by three different contributors, each of whom is represented in this issue of *BBS Information*. The subjects are varied: the date of the earliest pug mill, Victorian jubilee plaques and an experiment in clamp kiln firing.

This additional issue of *BBS Information* has been produced to ensure that the series of articles on 'Brick and its uses in the twentieth century' does not crowd out other contributions, all the more so because the author of the two articles on 'Britain, 1895-1919' and the three on 'Britain, 1919-1945' is in fact the journal's editor. Postage considerations will tend to limit most issues to twenty-eight pages or less; binding means an absolute limit of forty-four pages.

As the title of this editorial implies, the production of a fourth issue of *British Brick Society Information* in a calendar year is a bonus for the society's members. Currently the funds are available to provide an extra issue. Should these become more sparse, this journal will definitely revert to three issues in a year, as would be the case if the number and size of contributions received permit only three issues in a year.

At the moment there are no plans for an additional issue in the last months of 2002; however, this may change if more contributions are received. It is more probable that if a fourth issue of *British Brick Society Information* is to be produced in either of the next two years, it will be at the end of 2003.

Two of the articles received in early 2001 were on aspects of historic bricklaying. With a further article also suggested as suitable to be published with these, it is proposed that the issue of *BBS Information* due for publication in June 2003 will have as its theme 'Historic Bricklaying'.

As noted in the last issue of *BBS Information*, the editor holds a number of contributions concerning the use of brick in churches. These will form the basis of the October 2003 issue of *BBS Information*.

Members with potential contributions on either of these topics are requested to contact the editor fairly soon with details of any potential piece and to submit on or before 25 December 2002. A reminder of this date will be provided in issues of *British Brick Society Information* to be published next year.

During 2001, the society held a series of successful visits to a variety of sites of brick interest, culminating in its visit to the 'Midland Grand Hotel', St Pancras, now known as 'St Pancras Chambers'. An appreciation of this and other visits appears in this issue of *British Brick Society Information*. Both this visit and one earlier in the year to the offices of the Daneshill Brickworks, Basingstoke, have prompted contributions from members which will be appearing in issues of *BBS Information* to be published in either 2002 or early 2003.

DAVID H. KENNETT
Editor, *British Brick Society Information*,
Shipston-on-Stour, 1 December 2001

Geoffrey Hines: an appreciation

I was saddened to read in *British Brick Society Information*, **84**, June 2001, of the passing of Geoffrey Hines. This brief reminiscence is personal.

I joined the society around 1973 and, like I am sure many others who were early members, had frequent personal contact with him in the next year or two. This was either by phone or by that "particular style of note" described so well in the obituary: the palimpsests of type-script squeezed on to sheets of already-one- or twice-used paper. Quite how I agreed to accept nomination to replace him as the society's Honorary Secretary in 1976, I cannot recall, but doubtless this was as a result of his persuasive powers!

The hand-over (literally) took place at the society's AGM in Nottingham on 28 February 1976, held at Wollaton Hall, following lunch in the ancient 'Trip to Jerusalem' and a guided tour of the tunnels under Nottingham Castle. I, car-less, had come up from London by train, and was slightly taken aback when presented by Geoffrey with the Secretary's papers in two large and heavy boxes. I had expected the affairs of the then fledgling society to be documented on a smaller scale! Some kind soul gave me a lift to the station and I recall my rare indulgence in a taxi to bring the archive back home to west London.

A look through the files when my arms had returned to their normal length revealed that Geoffrey had organised them with a thoroughness that perhaps reflected his military training. The master file index was, if I recall correctly, organised by subject and, separately, geographically, using the decimal basis to three levels. That many of these classifications had as yet few papers filed, or none, mattered little: Geoffrey obviously planned ahead.

As the authors of the obituary wrote, he was an enthusiastic catalyst - something that I experienced during my brief tenure of two years as secretary, before work pressures finally obliged me to hand over the role. A week rarely passed without at least one note from him, often on half-a-dozen matters, usually ending with an amiable suggestion that I could arrange something, or contact someone, for most of them. He was a hard act to follow! I can recall sitting here throughout the day of the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977, with the celebrations on television in the background while I worked my way through British Brick Society correspondence - no doubt at least half of it arising from Geoffrey's various initiatives and "suggestions".

I lapsed from the society for many years after that, until I rejoined quite recently, but after more than two decades, I retain grateful memories of Geoffrey as a good friend, a most energetic "apostle" of brick, a tireless correspondent, as - as was so rightly written - a *gentleman*.

MARTIN BUSSELL

Hon. Secretary, British Brick Society, 1976-1978

BROSELEY CLAY WEEKEND, JUNE 2001: RESULTS OF THE CLAMP FIRING

Tony Mugridge

Before the advent of the downdraught kiln during the early to mid nineteenth century, the more generally used method of firing a brick kiln was by clamp. That they were widely used there can be no doubt and yet, with their demise also went the basic knowledge and technical skills that underpinned the firing process.

As part of the on-going development of the Shropshire Brick Museum, it was decided to construct and fire a typical small, brick-clamp and with this in mind, an early summer weekend was set aside and the firing incorporated into a number of clay-related events, including pottery workshops, the making of hand-thrown, soft mud bricks, and roofing tile moulding. The venue for the clamp was the "Truckies Brick Kiln", a country brickfield in Jackfield, near Ironbridge, a site which is ordinarily used for the manufacture of hand-made semi-plastic and soft mud bricks.



Fig. 1 Barrowing bricks to the kiln.

The design of the clamp was based on the remains of a small twin-flue clamp at Sutton Maddock brickyard (disused before 1840) and constructed from three thousand dry "green" soft-mud bricks supplied free of charge by Blockleys of Telford. Fuel would be solely timber, using cut birch, hazel and ash, cordwood, and scrap pellets. This was prepared during the previous month and stacked near to the intended clamp site.

Following the unloading of the bricks on to pallets, on the roadside next to the yard, two

channels were dug, approximately 14 inches wide, 4 inches deep, and 6 feet in length, and spaced about 2 feet apart. Between these were laid the first four courses of brick, allowing the channels to extend further than the intended width of the clamp. Each course was laid in alternate directions to assist the flow of hot gases between them. Across the centre of both flues was constructed a dividing wall two bricks in thickness, and when the arches were closed over, this dividing wall was keyed in to ensure that no hot gases and draughts passed straight through the flues instead of hitting the wall and travelling upwards and sideways through the layers of brick.

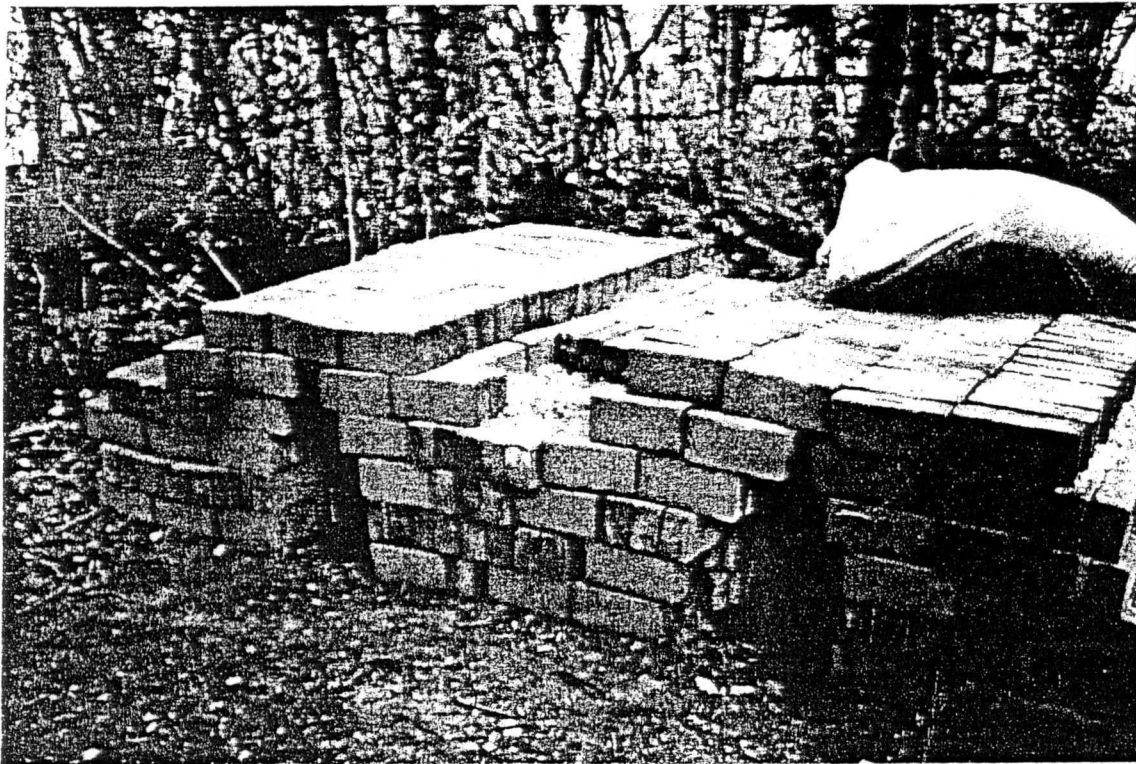


Fig. 2 Preparing firing hearths.

Once the arches were closed over, a layer of hardwood shavings was put across the whole area and two more courses of bricks set over, then another layer of shavings and so on, until the clamp had reached the height of about 5 feet, with the layers tapering towards the top.

The firing flues were then kindled and lit in an anti-clockwise sequence at 3.00 p.m. on Friday 1 June 2001. Drawing was controlled using initially wood boards across the firing hearths, but as the heat intensified, these were replaced with steel sheets.

By 7.00 p.m. pyrometer readings were taken from various points on the outside of the clamp and the average temperature was found to have reached 72°C. By midnight this had increased to 145°C. Firing continuously, by adding wood every twenty to thirty minutes, this temperature had risen to around 200°C at the outside, with an estimated 'heart' temperature of 850°C. Firing was then kept constant until 2.00 a.m. on Sunday morning when charging ceased and the fires allowed to burn down. By 4.00 a.m. the hearths were bricked up, thereby retaining the heat of the hot ember beds and allowing the clamp to cool gradually.

The external temperature of the clamp by the evening of Monday 4 June 2001 was still around 45°C and so it was decided to leave it until the Tuesday before breaking it open.

The best quality bricks were found to be in the centre of the clamp above and between the two arches. Bricks in the immediate area of the hearths were over-fired and those on the

outer edges, the top and foot of the clamp were either under-fired or still green.

During the ensuing week, these bricks (around 1,000) were removed and replaced by green bricks 'turned in' from the outside of the clamp and the whole rebuilt in preparation for the next firing.

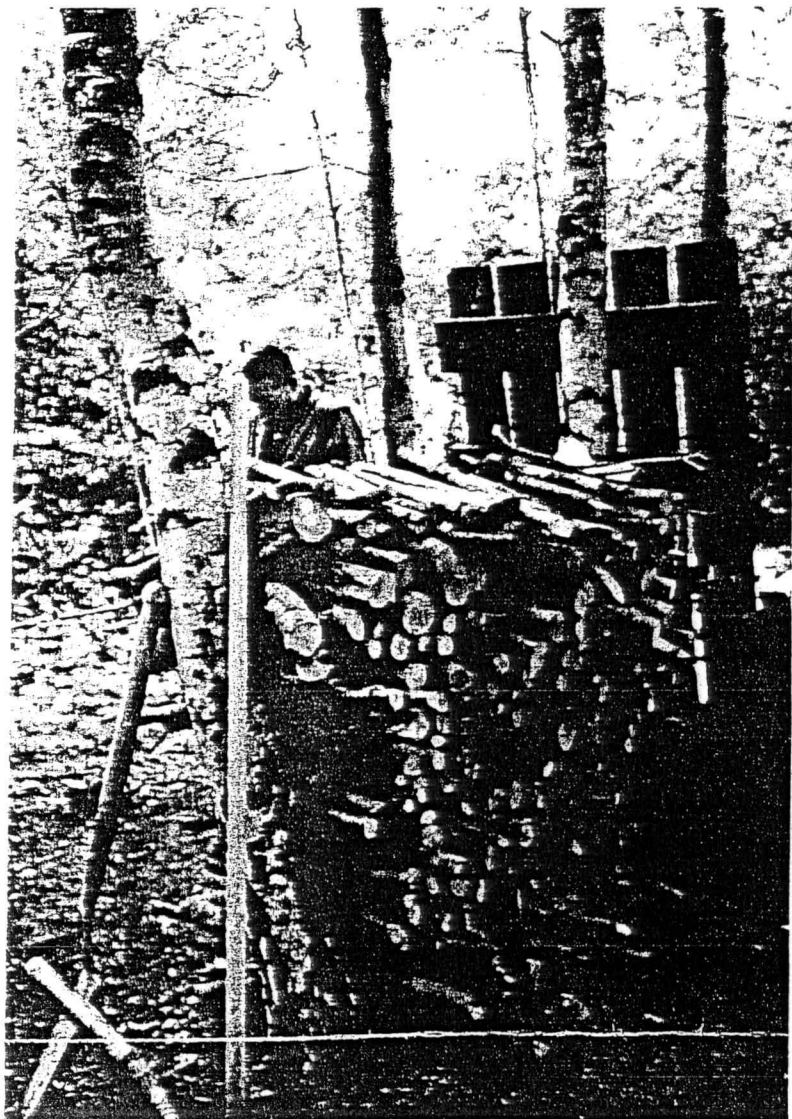
The condition of the fired bricks would suggest that although the temperature in the clamp was uneven throughout, at its highest point it appears to have reached in excess of 1600°C!

Though labour intensive, the firing was deemed a success and will be repeated again in July 2001 and in early September 2001. Thanks to an enthusiastic team of volunteers the clamp was kept in continuous supply of fuel. In all it used around a ton of wood.

A special thank you must be extended to BBS member Gerald Box who helped with construction of the clamp and moving several thousand bricks on to the bank above the road and also for taking the photographs of the clamp under construction.

During the June weekend, several BBS members paid a visit including John Cooksey, Liz Barnes-Downing and Robert Simpson, the Ironbridge Gorge Museum's brickmaker. But we would love to see more BBS member at the next firing.

Fig. 3. Cord wood stacked ready for burning as fuel in the kiln at Broseley.



THE MYTH OF THE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY PUG MILL

James W.P. Campbell

History is a cumulative task: we build and constantly revise the work of others. In an ideal world as historians we would always check our sources, but inevitably time dictates that a certain amount has to be taken on trust. Occasionally this means that errors creep in, are repeated and become accepted fact. Such seems to be the case with the seventeenth-century pug mill.

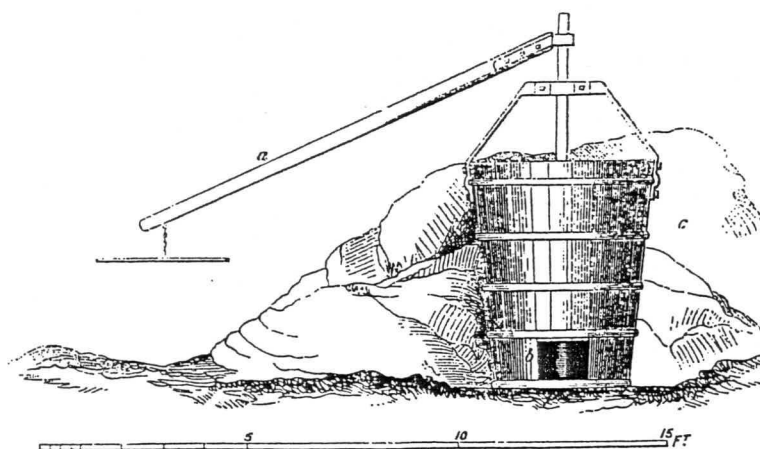


Fig. 1 A Pug Mill from Edward Dobson, *A Rudimentary Treatise on the Manufacture of Bricks and Tiles*, 1850.

It currently seems to be accepted that the pug mill was invented in the late seventeenth century. The idea is propounded in Gerard Lynch's excellent *Brickwork: History, Technology and Practice* (1994)¹ and in R. W. Brunskill, *Brick Building in Britain* (1990)² and it can also be found in James Ayres, *Building the Georgian City* (1998).³ The last-named cites as its source Alan Cox's essay in Hermoine Hobhouse and Ann Saunders (eds.), *Good and Proper Materials* (1989), which does indeed state that the pug mill is a seventeenth-century invention⁴ and in turn cites John Woodforde's *Bricks to Build a House* (1976).⁵ There the trail ends, for Woodforde offers nothing by way of evidence for this claim that pug mills are a seventeenth-century development. That so much has been built on so little is a tribute to the power of the printed word, but is it true? Let us pause to examine the facts.

The pug mill, as members of the British Brick Society will no doubt be aware, is a device for mixing clay consisting of a number of blades rotated from a shaft mounted vertically in a large barrel. The shaft was turned by a lever normally pulled by a horse or mule. The earliest technical descriptions of the device seem to have appeared in Dobson's *A Rudimentary Treatise on the Manufacture of Bricks and Tiles* in the middle of the nineteenth century.⁶ There are numerous subsequent illustrations showing a pug mill in use and many of these are faithfully reproduced in James Ayres, *Building the Georgian City* (1998).⁷ Indeed the latter author is to be congratulated on being an excellent source of illustrations for all the building crafts of the period. Nonetheless what is most important to note is that all these sources are nineteenth

century; there seems to be no mention in any of the normal sources of the use of the pug mill in the eighteenth century, let alone its existence in the seventeenth.

Furthermore, Ayres states that the pug mill is mentioned in Houghton 'The manner of making bricks at Ebbisham in Surry'⁸ which is reprinted in Nathaniel Lloyd's *A History of English Brickwork*, but if we return to Lloyd's book, or for that matter to the original which was printed twice in the seventeenth century, we find that far from mentioning pug mills the text is quite clear that the clay was trodden under foot and mixed by hand using a spade.⁹ Houghton's description is not contradicted by Neve¹⁰ or Chambers¹¹ in the eighteenth century. Another set of sources that might be employed to prove the point are the inventories of brickmakers which contain lists of tools used in the process from the seventeenth century, but none of the ones I have come across mention pug mills despite that fact that they mention other possessions in detail. In fact the pug mill seems to be noticeable by its absence from seventeenth-century accounts.

Did pug mills exist in the seventeenth century? Presented with the above evidence, I do not think we can say for sure. It is tempting to associate the increase in the quality of bricks made in the period with the invention of the pug mill, but it probably just reflects a greater care taken in using the traditional process. We do have evidence that the pug mill was used in the nineteenth century. From this it might not be unfair to extrapolate that it may have been used earlier, perhaps in the late eighteenth century, but I think that it is highly unlikely that it was in used before that. The seventeenth-century pug mill seems to me to be a myth and one which we would do well to put behind us. Nevertheless, I would be delighted if any member could come forward with some information to prove me wrong and solve the case once and for all.¹²

Notes and References

1. G. Lynch, *Brickwork: History, Technology and Practice*, (London: Donhead, 1994), p.10.
2. R.W. Brunskill, *Brick Building in Britain*, (London: Gollancz, 1990), p.22.
3. James Ayres, *Building the Georgian City*, (New Haven CT and London: Yale University Press, 1998), p.104.
4. A. Cox, 'Bricks to build a Capital' in H. Hobhouse and A. Saunders (eds.), *Good and Proper Materials, the Fabric of London since the Great Fire*, (London: Royal Commission on Historical Monuments for England in association with the London Topographical Society, 1989).
5. J. Woodforde, *Bricks to Build a House*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976), p.61.
6. E. Dobson, *A Rudimentary Treatise on the manufacture of Bricks and Tiles* (London: John Weale, 1850; reprinted as *Journal of Ceramic History*, No. 5, 1971).
7. Ayres, 1998, figs. 151 and 153.
8. Ayres, 1998, note 23.
9. N. Lloyd, *A History of English Brickwork*, (London: Antique Collectors Club, 1983, reprinting the original 1925 edition), p.34.
10. R. Neve, *The City and COUNTRY Purchaser*, (London, 1726)
11. E. Chambers, *Cyclopaedia or an University Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*, (London, 2 vols., 1728)
12. Paper received July 2001.

Victorian Jubilee Plaques in Hampshire

Kathleen Clarke

VICTORIAN JUBILEE PLAQUES

In 1887, Queen Victoria's devoted and loyal subjects wished to celebrate her fifty years on the throne, an event now known as her Golden Jubilee. One of the ways chosen was to cast a mould of a plaque illustrating her and recording her empire. In the centre we see a sculpted profile of the ageing queen, facing towards the right, and not to the left as on contemporary stamps and coins. She is wearing a short, lacy veil whose folds and pattern have been meticulously drawn. Her neck and ears are bare of jewellery; just the ruffle of her dress shows at the shoulder. VICTORIA 50 YEARS QUEEN OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND was proudly proclaimed in a circle round her head. Breaking the circle stretching outwards to the left and right is written EMPRESS OF INDIA, a title the queen assumed in 1877. An outer square border contains the names of the Dominions and Colonies of CANADA, AUSTRALIA, on the top; N^W ZEALAND, BURMAH, to the right; AFRICA, W. INDIES, to the left; and GIBRAL^R, MALTA, CYPRUS, EGYPT on the lower row. For reasons of space, New Zealand, the West Indies and Gibraltar have all been abbreviated in some form. In the spandrels between the circle and the square, strong lions passant look over their shoulders, guarding the sovereign. In each of the outermost corners is the royal crown. These features are clearly visible in plaques from Southampton (fig. 1) and Havant (fig. 9).¹



Fig.1 Plaque of 1887 on the house of Hugh Grierson, Northlands Road, Southampton.

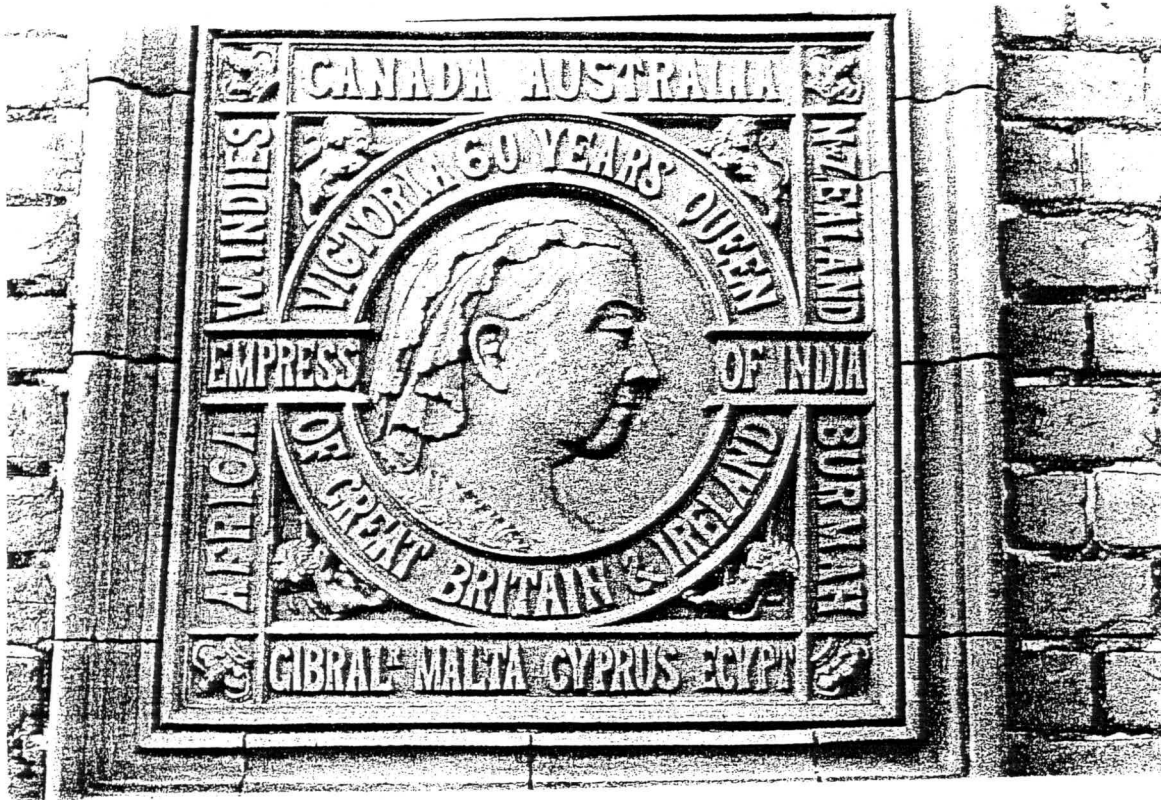


Fig. 2 Plaque of 1897 from Queen's Terrace, Romsey, with the raised figure "6" in the "60" clearly indicating that the mould was re-used from ten years earlier.

This plaque came as an entity to be bought by customers who felt inspired to mark the auspicious occasion. Sometimes the plaque was inserted directly into a wall with the date scroll over it. One could doubtless, for more money, buy the terracotta moulding which came in sections and beautifully enhances the plaque in a fitting frame, as happens with both the Southampton and Havant plaques (figs. 1 and 9).

These plaques were meant to be seen and admired. Some private owners these days are, understandably, not anxious to advertise their treasure.

In 1897, the year of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, there was a re-issue of the 1887 plaque; only two numbers needing to be altered in the mould which must have been stored. The change is just visible; the figure "6" in the "60" stands slightly proud of the rest. The date could have been recast completely as this was a separate entity.

The altered plaque was displayed on a stand at a building exhibition early in 1897. It was noticed in *The British Clayworker* in April 1897, with an illustration, stating that it was designed by Stanley Bros., Nuneaton.² Arthur Sadler, of Oadby, Leicestershire, had explored the raw materials and manufacture of these plaques further:³

The Nuneaton area has a varied supply of clays ranging from the red Keuper marl (or Mercian mudstone) to the buff, beige and greyish types of the coal measures, all of which are suitable for the plaques.

The plaque measures approximately twenty-four inches square and weighs just over one hundredweight. An 1897 plaque in private ownership, is 3½" thick. A plaque of 1887 is full thickness all over but with about 200 holes of ¼" diameter in the back. In the 1897 plaque, larger areas were removed from the back. It is thought that these were for weight reduction and maybe helped in the firing.

The raised "6" is clearly visible on the plaque from Queen's Terrace, Romsey (fig. 2) among

those from Hampshire and also in the plaque on the former Nurses Home in Beccles, Suffolk.⁴

Such plaques, described by observers as red (terracotta), brown, dark brown, buff, white, or grey-black can be seen throughout the country. Mr Sadler has counted about a hundred in England, but none is known in Scotland. They are marvellously preserved. The clay must have been of a very special type to be so weather resistant. Sometimes the plaques were glazed, giving the appearance of a tile.

They fitted best into a brick wall which is why, perhaps, there are fewer in the north of England, and none so far recorded in the granite country north of the border.

It is surprising how few people notice such ornamental additions to a house. Even a museum and a library, both of which shall be nameless, did not know of plaques in their towns until I pointed them out in the course of my enquiries into jubilee plaques in Hampshire.



Fig. 3 Queen's Terrace, Romsey, with plaque at eye level.
(The plaque from here is shown in detail in figure 2).

THE HAMPSHIRE PLAQUES AND THEIR BACKGROUND

On the north side of the Winchester Road roundabout in Romsey is a row of four Victorian houses, numbered 30-36 Winchester Road, also known as Queen's Terrace. In the middle of Queen's Terrace, (fig 3) is a plaque erected in 1897 to commemorate "60 Glorious Years" of the then reigning monarch. The terrace is close to 'The Crown' public house.

What is unusual about this plaque is that it is at eye-level; so easy to look at and admire. It has intricate carving, especially in the detail of the veil, and the work has a distinct sharpness. Strength, skill and quality are evident in every line.

I first saw such a plaque in Southampton in 1987, exactly one hundred years after it had been put there. It pre-dated the Romsey plaque by ten years. I had been passing the former Hampshire County Cricket Ground in Northlands Road when I "discovered" it. You could say

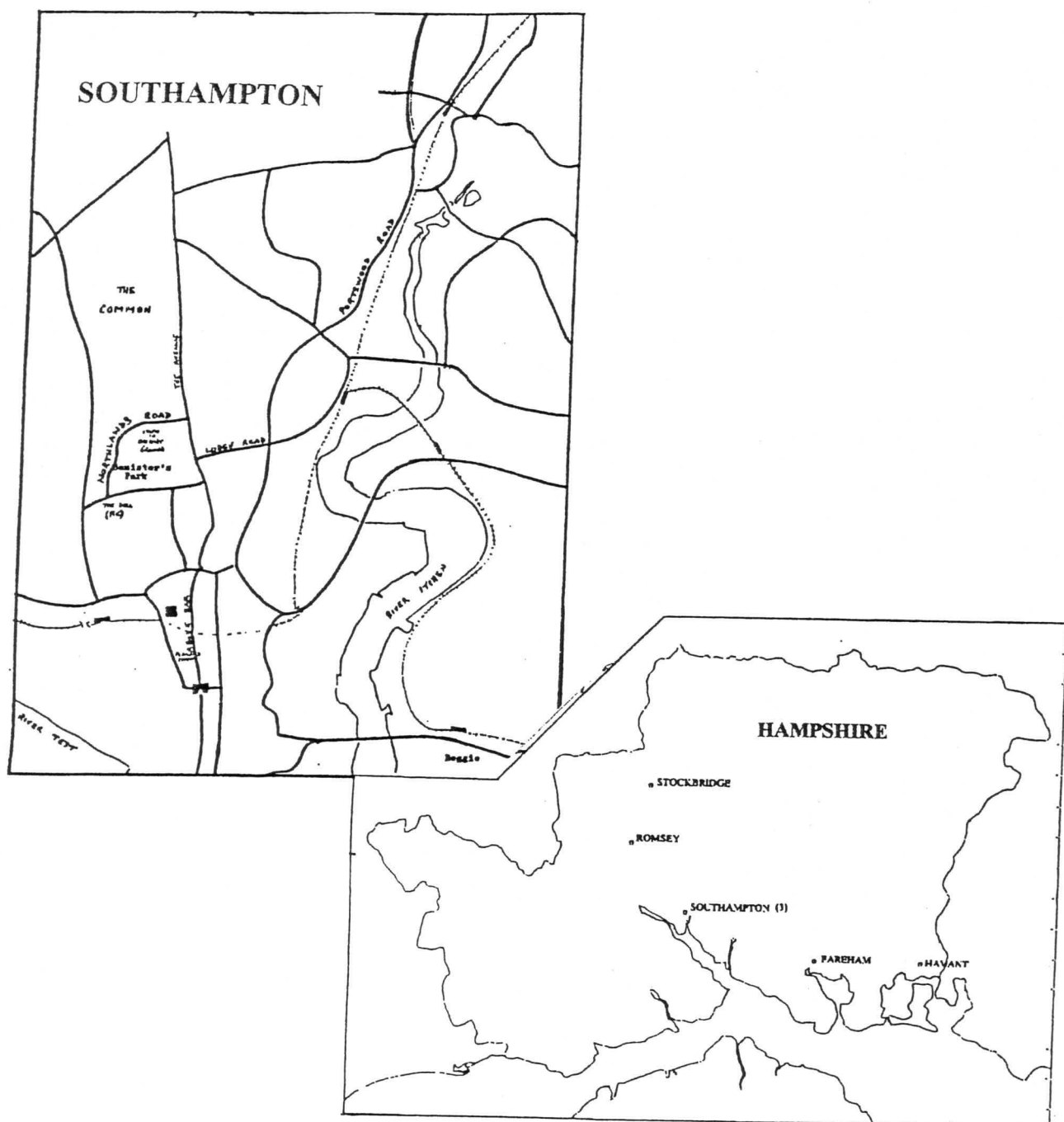


Fig. 4 *Top Left* Location map of jubilee plaques in Southampton.
Bottom Right Location map of jubilee plaques in Hampshire..

that I was "bowled over" by the sheer forceful beauty, the token of loyalty and the statement it was making. It was then that I began my search for plaques.

The 1887 plaque in Southampton (fig. 1), one of the first to be ordered, I should think, was put up in Northlands Road at a time when one of Southampton's great entrepreneurs was developing the area known as Banister's Park. The first fine Victorian house in this road was built for William Burrough Hill. It had a series of finials on the roof; these were pointed out to members who came on the coach tour of Southampton, organised as part of the society's Autumn Meeting in 1992. This house has now been demolished and flats built on the site.

That and a "cottage" were the only residences in the road in 1887 as shown in Kelly's

Directory of Hampshire for that year:

Northlands Road (Banister's Park)

the Avenue to Archer's Road

HILL, William Burrough, Banister's Hall

BESSANT, William, labourer, The Cottage

here is Archer's Road ...

Two houses only in the whole of Northlands Road.

In the 1889 edition of Kelly's *Directory of Hampshire* there is no distinction between the north and south sides of Northlands Road. But by looking at entries in later editions of Kelly's *Directory for Hampshire* it is clear that there were four houses only at the Dell end of Northlands Road.

In Kelly's *Directory of Hampshire* for 1897, past the then site of the Hampshire County Cricket Club ground, we come to:

Pearse, Mrs., Ravenscourt

Southampton Bowling Green W.B. Hill secretary

here is Banister's Park

The first owners and names of the next houses (there were no numbers then) were:

Cameron, David Alt Ruadh

Brinton, Major George Westfield

Grierson, Hugh Kirkpatrick Kynance (now No. 75).⁵

Gutteridge, Alfred Fowler, Littlecroft.

The houses known as 'Kynance' and 'Littlecroft' were a semi-detached pair.

Four houses only, past Westrow Road, are shown for Northlands Road on the Ordnance Survey map for 1897. It was to remain so until after the First World War.

William Burrough Hill, the up and coming man of the moment, either persuaded the first owner of what is now number 75 to build a plaque into his new house or he admired it so much that he copied him ten years later.

Hugh Kirkpatrick Grierson who lived at 'Kynance' was a solicitor, in the firm of Page and Grierson, at 29 Portland Street; he was *inter alia* the Deputy Coroner for Hampshire. In 1898, Hugh Grierson did the conveyancing of some property at Bishopstoke, part of the Longmead estate, when it was being parcelled out.

Albert Fowler Gutteridge was an architect in the firm of W.H. Mitchell, Son and Gutteridge, practising from 9 Portland Street, Southampton.⁶

An earlier photograph of the plaque on Mr Grierson's house was taken when renovations were taking place in 1987; builder's scaffolding is in place and the semi-sheltered position of the plaque is evident. The later photograph (fig. 1) shows the plaque as it is today, somewhat protected from the gaze of passers-by, unless, like me, you are curious. This angle also shows the blank brick frame at the side of the house (fig. 5), which may have been intended for the plaque. It could also have been for the date (as was usual), the initials of the owner, builder, or architect, or, as very often happened, filled in with fancy bricks as in the house, now 'The Wessex Hotel', across the road.

In the 1890s, some of the local gentry and richer burgesses who were moving out of town, built their imposing red-brick villas, complete with conservatory and stables, in Northlands Road. In 1899, the Mayor of Southampton, George Alfred Ernest Hussey JP, who was later knighted, lived here, quite close to William Burrough Hill. Jonas Nichols, the builder of much of early Eastleigh, also lived here.

Today most of the Victorian houses have disappeared. Many flats of doubtful architectural interest have taken their place, although there are one or two pleasanter developments. 'Littlecroft', the house next to the one with the plaque, is now a block of flats



Fig. 5 The house of Hugh Grierson, Northlands Road, Southampton.
The plaque (shown in detail on figure 1) is not easy to see under the small gable.
Note the space on the first floor which may originally have been intended for the plaque.

which has retained its original name.

William Burrough Hill had an elaborate letterhead (fig. 6). In 1906, his professions included auctioneer, valuer, building surveyor, house, land and estate agent, mortgage and insurance broker. His valuation work included probate and fire assessment. From the letterhead he would appear to have had a telephone but apparently no secretary.



Fig. 6 The letterhead of William Burrough Hill showing his various professions.

In 1906, William Burrough Hill wrote in his own hand, with thin upstrokes and thick down strokes, the latter particularly strong on the letter "t", to Eastleigh Rural District Council,

WILL BURROUGH HILL
 AND ASSOCIATES
 Surveyors & Architects
 10, Market Street
 Southampton

Wm Burrough Hill
 Esq.

T. C. Burrough Hill
 Esq.

Fig. 7 A sample of the handwriting of William Burrough Hill.

at their offices, with reference to private street charges in Bishopstoke. The signature is a powerful flourish, oozing self-confidence, ability, and artistry (fig. 7). The character of William Burrough Hill, his self-confidence, his ebullience, his showmanship, his business acumen; all the thrusting, flamboyant qualities of the late Victorians can be seen here.

More evidence of William Burrough Hill's influence can be seen in the façades of a pair of houses which he erected in Portswood. Here he put up two more plaques in 1897. These once desirable residences, imposing villas, are now on a busy main road and are not so desirable to those who like more peace and seclusion.

The companion plaques here are buff in colour (fig. 8).



Fig.8 A pair of houses at Porstwood, Southampton, with two plaques. Note the elaborate white plasterwork in the gables. The initials "WBH" for William Burrough Hill appear in the centre of the right-hand gable; in the left-hand gable are the initials "TBC", which refer to an unknown person or company.

Above the plaques, in a most impressive, white-painted apex, is some very ornamental plasterwork which encases a "look at me" monogram of the architect, surveyor, etc. I wonder how many people have looked up to see them? I incurred the wrath of a local flat owner while I parked for two minutes in front of her entrance to take a picture of the same! She was not interested in local history.

William Burrough Hill would have been typical of those who wished to celebrate the jubilees of Queen Victoria and at the same time demonstrate their own standing in the community. He owned the gates and the stags which used to be at the top of them at the west end of Lodge Road, still known as 'Stag Gates'. The gates were demolished in June 1919 to make way for a wider sweep for traffic, including trams, into and out of Lodge Road. It is said that William Burrough Hill, who had given them to the town after the First World War as a token of thanksgiving and in memory of his son, was so incensed at this destruction that he came with cart and horses and took the stags away to his later house at Millbrook. The stags, the subject of much correspondence in one of the local newspapers, the *Southern Evening Echo*, have disappeared. The plaques are still to be seen.

Initials are very clearly to be seen below the plaque on a house in the High Street, Stockbridge.⁷ These initials belong to Cornelius Keel Fry, grocer, baker and draper. Entry 197 in the 1891 census reveals that besides Mr Fry, the proprietor, living in the house were also his wife, eight children and two servants. The census form also says "china shop". Further along the same street is a house called 'Jubilee House', but this does not have a plaque.

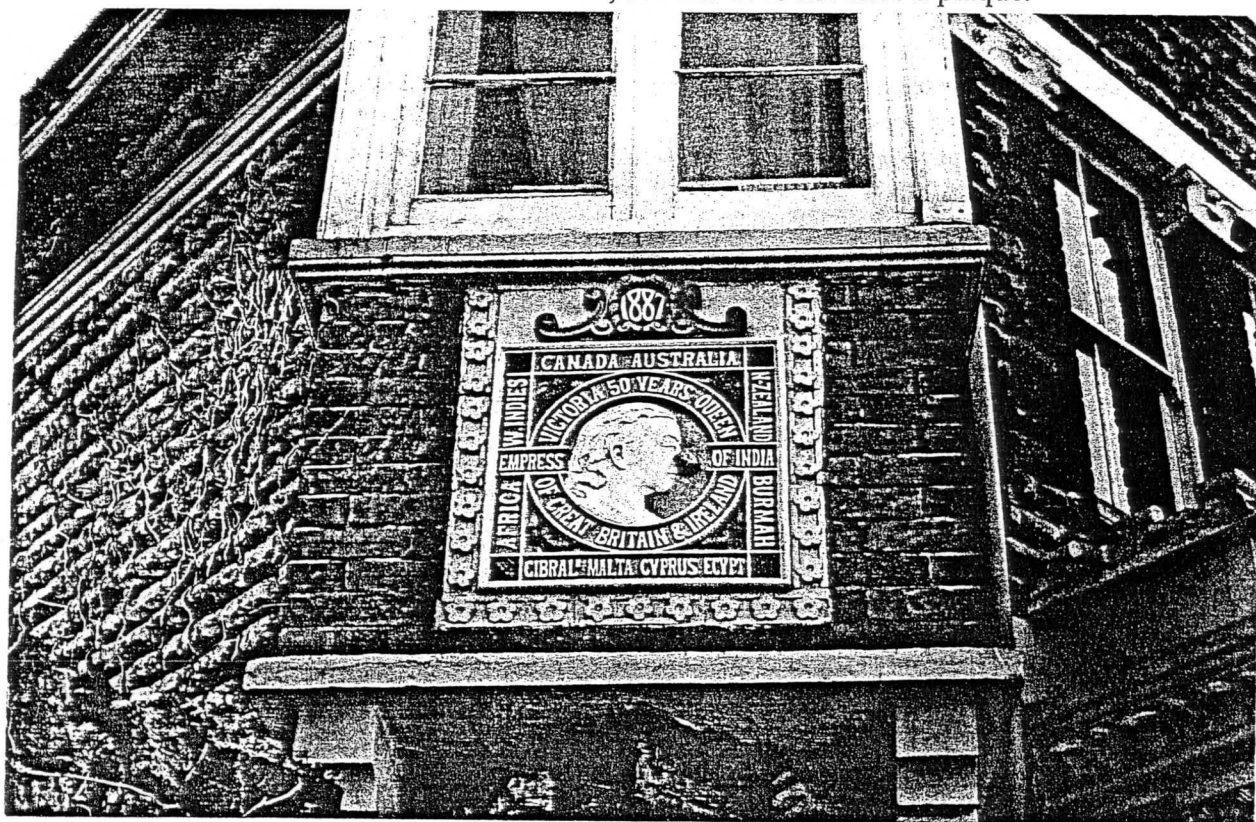


Fig.9 Plaque of 1887 at Havant.

Sometimes the plaques, and sometimes the surrounds, are painted. Purists would possibly prefer the original terracotta. The one at Havant is very colourful (fig. 9). Here, another colour was added in 1991 and not just to make the three patriotic colours of red, white and blue. A clown's nose was affixed for "red nose" day. Can one hear Queen Victoria saying, "We are not amused"? This plaque, framed by Victorian daisies, is set on the end of a row of very striking

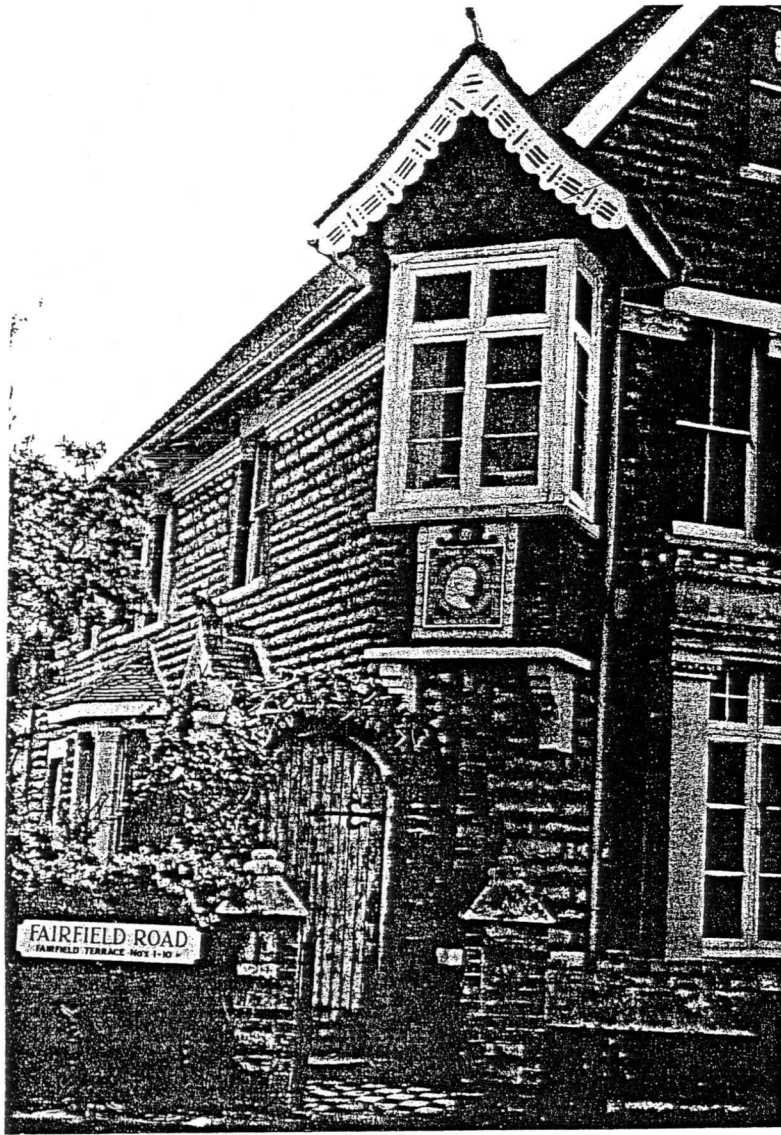


Fig.10 House with plaque of 1887 at Havant.

"Victorian Gothick" houses, called Fairfield Terrace. Walter Edward Rayson was the first occupier of No 1 (fig. 10) where the plaque is. The middle houses in this terrace are the most unusual in their building materials: a hotch-potch of stone, flint, and brick. In the *Town Trail* booklet for Havant, it says this about it:

Fairfield Terrace deserves to be looked at for its exuberance in design and materials. It is probably best described as a monsterpiece, but it delights by its splendid self-confidence. A terra-cotta medallion above the door at the north west corner carries the date 1887 and a relief of Queen Victoria. The name records the fact that the terrace was built on the Fair Field, where records show that a yearly fair was held on St Faith's Day from the 15th century to the 19th century.⁸

There is another plaque, placed high up on the side wall of a house in West Street, Fareham. This plaque has the usual moulded surround as a frame but no initials. It is interesting to note here, that it is next to a public house, patriotically called 'The Crown', whose sign shows prominently the initials 'VR'. The background in this plaque has been painted pale green.⁹

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge with thanks information obtained from Dr Lyle Perrins, who wrote an article entitled 'Decorative bricks and tiles of Hertfordshire', published in the *Hertfordshire Countryside Magazine*, volume 34, number 238, page 30.

I also owe a great debt to Mr Arthur Sadler of Leicestershire. He, I discovered, has been collecting the sites of such plaques for longer than I have. To date, there are getting on for a hundred in total of these sites/sightings. I have reported new finds to him and am glad to say I have discovered some in Hampshire which were not on his list.

I am grateful, too, to Mr Stan Roberts of Bishopstoke who has pointed me in the direction of some.

I thank the University of Southampton Special Collection Assistant, the Hampshire Record Office in Winchester, and the Local History Department of Southampton Public Library for their help in making material available.

Notes and References

1. Earlier notes on jubilee plaques in *BBS Information* are: K.M. Clarke, 'Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee Plaques', *BBS Inf.* 51, December 1990, 13-14; D.H. Kennett and M.D. Hammond, 'Jubilee Plaques', *BBS Inf.* 78, October 1999, 14; A. Cox, L. Perrins, D.H. Kennett, 'Jubilee Plaques', *BBS Inf.* 81, October 2000, 26-27; R. Kennell, V. Montagu, D.H. Kennett, 'Jubilee Plaques', *BBS Inf.* 82, February 2001, 3.
2. This reference was given to Mr Sadler by the late Dr Michael Stratton, then of Ironbridge Gorge Museum, Telford. [Surprisingly in his book, *The Terracotta Revival*, Dr Stratton makes no reference to jubilee plaques although he does illustrate earlier plaques: the months at the Wedgwood Memorial Institute, Burslem, Staffs., of 1863-73, *ibid.*, pl. 49 and col.pl. 6. DHK].
3. A.W. Sadler in *Out of Town*, June 1987, listed 45 plaques for 1897 and others for 1907.
4. Illustrated by V. Montagu, *BBS Inf.* 82, February 2001, 3. In *Hampshire Advertiser* for Saturday 16 January 1897 is an interesting note on the Queen's wishes for her Diamond Jubilee celebrations. She "wanted established the Jubilee Nurses Institution ...". This would account for the buildings in Beccles and Salford, both of 1897, noted in *BBS Inf.* 82, February 2001, 3. [A similar wish may underlie the building of a large nurses home opposite to Alexandra Park, Great Yarmouth, in 1935, the year of King George V's Silver Jubilee. DHK]
5. See the property write up in *The Southern Property Times* of Friday 25 June 1993, page 4, with photograph of the house. The account ends with a note of "another Victorian feature, a commemorative plaque inscribed to celebrate 50 years of Victoria's reign!".
6. [The firm is recorded at the Portland Street address in 1894; in 1888, it was based at 8 York Place, Southampton. William Henry Mitchell, who flourished 1868-1900 was the senior partner; his son, W.E. Mitchell was born either 1859 or 1860 and died in 1904. A.F. Gutteridge (dates unknown) subsequently practised with his son, Reginald Fowler Gutteridge, (1882-1965: ARIBA 1909 by exam; FRIBA 1926). As Mitchell, Son, and Gutteridge, the firm was responsible for the Urban District Council Offices in Eastleigh of 1898-99, first premium in competition. In 1938, Gutteridge and Gutteridge were responsible for the design of County Hall, Newport, Isle of Wight. Unfortunately, A.F. Gutteridge does not appear in *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1834-1900*; information about W.H. Mitchell is derived therefrom. DHK]
7. Regretably, the only available photograph is too dark to reproduce adequately.
8. *HAVANT A Clue What to Look For*, (Havant, Borough of Havant, 1978, revised 1983, ew-painted 1987), 10.
9. Paper submitted March 2001; it was originally written in 1992 or thereabouts. No additional plaques have come to light in Hampshire since I conducted the initial survey.

Brick for a Day 2001

The British Brick Society arranged a number of meetings in 2001. Reports of the walk around King's Lynn following the Annual General Meeting and the Summer Meeting at Basingstoke have appeared in *British Brick Society Information*, **85**, September 2001.

This issue of *British Brick Society Information* contains reports on the Day School at Burton Agnes Hall, East Yorkshire, which formed the society's Northern Spring Meeting on Saturday 12 May 2001, the Autumn Meeting in south Hampshire on Saturday 29 September 2001, and the Late Autumn Meeting at St Pancras on Saturday 3 November 2001.

Unfortunately the first meeting planned by the society for 2001, a Spring Meeting in south-east Warwickshire visiting the brick kiln at Fenny Compton, Wormleighton Manor and Chesterton Arch had to be postponed due to the restrictions imposed at the beginning of the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease. This has now been re-arranged for March 2002 and a report on this and other meetings of the society in 2002 appear in future issues of *British Brick Society Information*.

BURTON AGNES HALL, NEAR BRIDLINGTON, EAST YORKSHIRE

As one approaches the house from the south, the picture of gatehouse and south front is one of the most perfect of Jacobean architecture.

For members of the society, the visit and the brilliant Spring day compounded the perfection recorded by Nikolaus Pevsner and David Neave in the second edition of *The Buildings of England: Yorkshire: York and the East Riding*, published in 1995.

The study day started with a short introduction to the history of Burton Agnes Hall by Margaret Imrie, followed by a look around the outside of the hall, the nearby manor house and the church dedicated to St Martin.

Burton Agnes Hall, probably designed by Robert Smythson, was built in 1601-10 for Sir Henry Griffith. The estate came to the family before the mid fourteenth century and has remained with them ever since. The hall has a traditional courtyard plan with four three-storey ranges around a small internal court. As a symbol of power and authority in the East Yorkshire landscape it is imposing but its scale, construction in brick and the ratio of windows to wall make it a light and welcoming family home.

To the west of the hall is the Manor House, built c. 1170-80. On the ground floor there is a vaulted stone undercroft and a spiral stone staircase leading to the first-floor hall. The fireplace here is probably original. The walls of the Manor House are stone, but bear witness to many repairs and changes in fashion. On the rear elevation there are some repairs carried out in brick.

Behind the Manor House is a small building used to house a seventeenth-century donkey wheel, used to raise water from a well which dates to the twelfth century, and so is contemporary with the Manor House.

Members were able to visit the nearby church of St Martin, passing through a cool shady tunnel of old yew trees, the main part of the church is Norman with many additions and alterations carried out in every century since. Of interest to members of the British Brick Society is the brickwork on the north side of the chancel dating from 1730. The party was particularly fascinated by a memorial to Sir Henry Griffith and two wives (unnamed) of 1654. Instead of effigies there are three black coffins and on the tomb-chest there is "a still life of skulls and bones, generously higgledy piggledy" as Pevsner and Neave record.

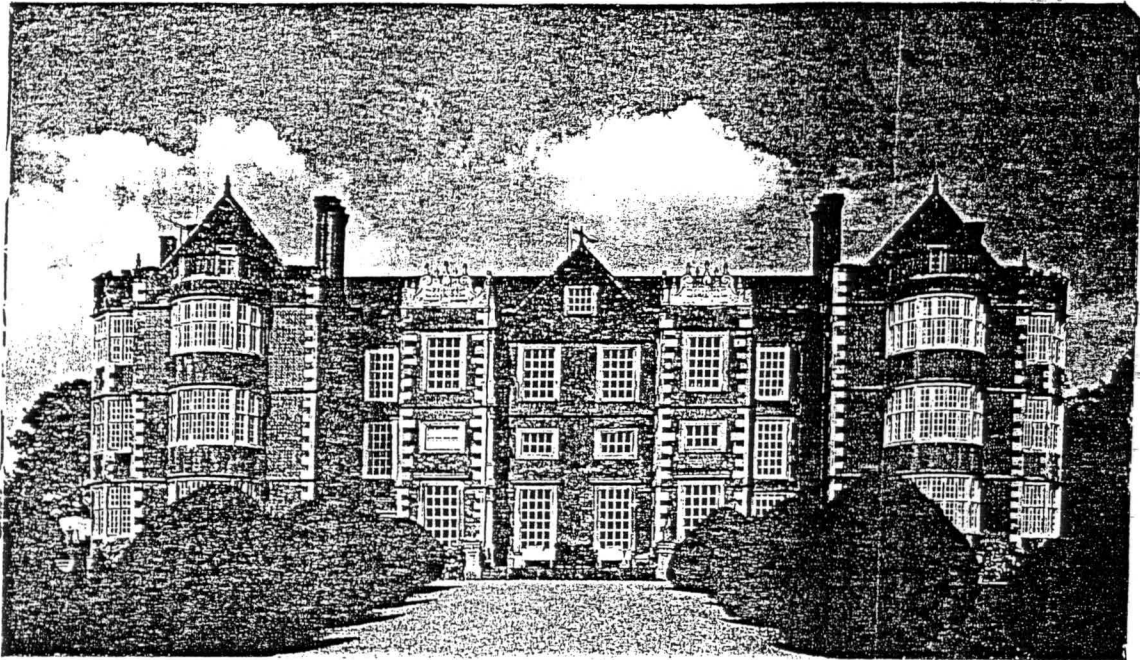


Fig. 1 Burton Agnes Hall, near Bridlington, East Yorkshire
The main front.

During the afternoon tour of the interior of the hall we were permitted to see two places not usually open to the public. The first was the housekeeper's flat. The housekeeper had removed some fitted cupboards to reveal the remains of a brick fireplace, chimney and bread oven, evidence that her sitting room had formerly been a kitchen. The range now forms the focal point of the room and was the envy of many of our party. We were then conducted to the cellar to see some of the brick foundation piers. The cellar is paved with clay tiles of unusual sizes.

Above ground level the rooms open to the public had many interesting features which reflected different periods of the hall's history and the tastes of the occupants. The great hall has the most crazily overcrowded screen and the most crazily overcrowded chimneypiece of all England,

to quote Pevsner and Neave again. Both pieces are carved with many figures from the Bible, interspersed with members of the family and classical figures. The screen is a combination of wood and plaster while the chimneypiece is alabaster.

While all the main rooms are worthy of note my favourites are the dining room, a lovely light room with a bay window large enough to take a small table if only two are dining, the Queen's bedroom which has a beautiful early-seventeenth-century stucco ceiling, with honeysuckle tendrils intertwining and forming circles and loops. on the top floor is a long gallery which runs the full width of the front of Burton Agnes Hall. This has Venetian windows at each end and a barrel-vaulted ceiling. Restoration of this gallery was completed in 1974. The intricate pattern on the ceiling, of intertwining leaves, branches and flowers, is a reconstruction of the original and is echoed in a line of small, connected wooden stools commissioned recently for the gallery. The current owner is continuing the tradition of his forebears in acquiring contemporary works of art for his home. The gallery offers views over the gardens, and over the Yorkshire landscape to the sea, a few miles away.

If there had been more time, members could have had a closer look at the brick and stone gatehouse, or had a walk around the village with its estate cottages, farms and farm buildings.

We could have enjoyed the warmth of the Spring sunshine in the beautiful gardens. There are plenty of points of interest to fill another day's visit to this lovely part of the East Riding, not least the hall's café and ice cream parlour!

Our thanks are due to Ann Los for arranging for Margaret Imrie, such a knowledgeable and amusing guide, to lead our study day. Thanks are also due to Ann for proving comprehensive notes on Sledmere, another East Yorkshire estate village, constructed in brick, which provides an interesting comparison with Burton Agnes.. A possibility for another year, perhaps?

JACQUELINE RYDER

ST MARGARET'S PRIORY, TITCHFIELD, HAMPSHIRE

St Margaret's Priory, Titchfield, was featured on the BBC2 programme 'The House Detectives' in the programme's 2000 series. Through the kind offices of the owners, Mr and Mrs MacKean, members of the society were able to see the house, ascend the tower, and watch the programme again.

St Margaret's is an exciting brick house, which was built as a hunting lodge on the estate of the Earl of Southampton. On the writer's arrival, a roe deer was seen to leap across the path leading to the house, before disappearing into the woods around it.

There is a tall brick tower with intermediate string courses designed to provide a platform from which to view the hunting. Adjacent is a brick wing with large rooms on the first floor designed for lavish entertaining. Timbers in the Banqueting Room have a dendrochronological date of Summer 1623.

The putative builder of this is Arthur Bromfield, a rising gentleman in the service of the third Earl of Southampton. In the first year of his reign, (1625) Charles I and Henrietta Maria, his queen, are known to have visited the earl and the building may well have been erected in anticipation of the royal progress.

The society's thanks are due to Mrs and Mrs MacKean for allowing us to see their house, and to Mrs MacKean, in particular, for providing coffee when we arrived and being such a gracious and lively guide to a house she so obviously loves.

DAVID H. KENNETT

TITCHFIELD VILLAGE

The bus from Farnham rail station had deposited me in the village somewhat earlier than the agreed time of arrival at St Margaret's. The village had a number of interesting brick buildings and it was agreed that members would spend time looking at these after lunch.

Members were particularly intrigued by the local chimney pots. Attached to the rear of St Margaret's is a Georgian wing, now a separate house, whose tall chimney pots are of an orange fabric, with yellow decoration. These tall chimney pots, with a variety of decorative schemes, recur in the village; members wondered about their origin, especially as they appear on buildings which were erected at various times, the most recent being on a former public house of the 1890s.

There are many houses in the Hampshire grey brick, offset by red brick dressings, a most attractive feature.

The church at Titchfield has an Anglo-Saxon origin; re-used Roman brick appears in the fabric of the porch tower. It has been enlarged several times. In the south chancel chapel are original tombs and a modern exhibition. The latter includes reproductions of maps showing an

earlier house at St Margaret's. Amongst the former is the bronze plaque put up by Arthur Bromfield to his wife Jane, with words expressing his devotion and his sorrow, words worthy of the age in which he lived.

DAVID H. KENNETT

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, SHEDFIELD

From the Hampshire County Council publication - Brenda Poole, *John Colson: a Hampshire Architect of the Victorian Age* [being *Hampshire Papers*, 20, December 2000] - purchased when preparing the meeting in Basingstoke in July, the society's Visits Co-ordinator learnt that the interior of the church at Shedfield is a magnificent example of polychrome brickwork: the publication has a splendid colour photograph on the outside back cover.

Through the good offices of the rector, the Rev Geoffrey Morrell, members were able to view the interior of this church built between 1875 and 1880. That the interior was done in polychrome brickwork was the insistence of the chief contributor to the building fund, a Mr Townsend. Red bricks of more than one colour are offset by blue, blue-black, yellow, white, and buff bricks. A tower was added in 1887; and on the south wall is a recently installed memorial plaque to the architect.

In the 1830s, John Colson had been articled to a Winchester architect, Owen Browne Carter (1806-1859), and there is an interesting publication on him: Robin Freeman, *The Art and Architecture of Owen Browne Carter (1806-1859)* [being *Hampshire Papers*, 1, December 1991].

DAVID H. KENNETT

ST PANCRAS CHAMBERS, THE MIDLAND GRAND HOTEL

Youth was bliss, the friendliest station in London, it was there for so many of the formative years of my life, initially twice a term, then weekly and ultimately for various periods almost daily. It was and is all that a railway station should be.

St Pancras shares my affections with Paddington, the subject of Francis Frith's painting, *The Railway Station*; my undergraduate journey from Luton to Cardiff was on the 08.00 out of Paddington for Abertawe, or was it Carmarthen in those far off days. It was only later that I found other London termini far less welcoming: an emasculation even more grim than that of New York Grand Central transplanted in the waste land of Liverpool Street and the blandness in the various termini of Southern Region matched only by the poor quality of their rolling stock.

If Victorian England needed a symbol of its maturity, 'The Midland Grand Hotel', St Pancras, was such a symbol, a place for a Bradford businessman to lodge with his wife (or his mistress) when in London on business. For the wealthy burghesses of the commercial centres of the east Midlands and the West Riding, the Midland Railway built its hotel.

If the train shed was pure engineering, with the underside serving as vaults for Burton beer, the hotel beyond the cast iron arches was the apogee of the builder's art: confident, sublime and, dare one say it, well-mannered, with none of the sham gentility of the gentlemen's club, as found in the off-putting atmosphere of Liverpool Street or in the Great Eastern Hotel next door. St Pancras was and is robust, symbol of honest toil, to which an engineering fitter's son could easily relate.

But by the 1960s the hotel had been offices for thirty years. Plans are now afoot to convert the whole back into an hotel, grand and welcoming, a fitting symbol at the end of the line from Paris via Eurostar when the dedicated track is finally built.

Members were welcomed by Calum Rollo in the Coffee Lounge, a great curving room looking out on to the drive up from the level of the Euston Road to that of the station's platforms. In the course of our tour we ascended the Grand Staircase backing a tall series of windows to be seen on Midland Road to the west of the station: I had long wondered what these represented. At the head of the staircase is a painted ceiling, seven of the nine virtues and the arms of the Midland Railway, which in value in 1904 was Britain's largest public company, and the second largest in the world. We walked through corridors and examined the main bedroom floor, the second floor of the building, with large rooms and suites looking over the Euston Road: surprisingly quiet they were too, although in the horse-drawn age in which the hotel was built the clop of hooves on cobbles would have made more sound than modern traffic. On the first floor were the principal reception rooms of the hotel including the curving Dining Room, above the Coffee Lounge, now split in two by the later use of the building as offices but always capable of being divided by moveable partitions. now lost although their tracks survive. Above the entrance is the Ladies Smoking Room, a vast space where the successive decorative schemes have been partially revealed.

Various members were kind enough to supply the editor of *British Brick Society Information* with notes on the bricks used in the railway station and the hotel, with an article on the stone used in the project, and with illustrations of building work in progress. These with other material on the complex will form the basis of a collaborative article in a future issue of *BBS Information*. So as not spoil the visit of the second party of members on 23 February 2002, record of this visit has been kept deliberately brief.

In conclusion, we must thank Calum Rollo for conveying his enthusiasm and his knowledge in the course of a most enjoyable tour.

DAVID H. KENNETT

AROUND ST PANCRAS

The railway station and former hotel stand between two other notable London monuments. Immediately to the west is the British Library; immediately to the east is the railway station at King's Cross, the London terminus of the Great Northern Railway from Yorkshire. The former stands on the site of the Midland Railway's potato and coal yards, buildings I can dimly recall from my childhood. The latter, built in 1850 to designs by Lewis Cubbit, is in yellow London stock brick.

On viewing King's Cross we turned round and saw on the Gray's Inn Road, a most interesting red brick building, built in 1910 to the designs of A.L. Hart and Percy Waterhouse, for Messrs Willings, advertising agents and publishers of *Willings Press Guide*. At the northern end of the asymmetric structure is a tall hipped roof capped by the stone figure of Mercury. The southern bay is characterised by a tall entry, clearly designed for horse-drawn carts laden with paper.

The meeting ended with a visit to the London Canal Museum, which is built round the ice houses of Messrs Gatti, suppliers of cut ice and makers of ice-cream. Members were fascinated by various early films; brick buildings alongside the canal were prominent in these.

The British Brick Society is particularly grateful to the volunteers who run the London Canal Museum for staying on after their normal winter closing time and for providing us with tea.

DAVID H. KENNETT

Brick Queries

From time to time, the British Brick Society receives enquiries about bricks, brickmaking, other ceramic building materials, and brick buildings. These are printed when space is available in *British Brick Society Information*. Responses are also included when these are forthcoming.

DHK

STAR OF DAVID BRICKS

The bricks with the six-pointed star of David in the frog have been discussed several times in these pages (see *BBS Information*, 79, February 2000, page 25, and 83, February 2001, page 34). The Star of David is a masonic symbol and may indicate that partners owning a brickworks were freemasons.

The symbol was also used by Bennett and Beddows, now Ibstock Atlas works at West Bromwich, West Midlands.

MARTIN HAMMOND

WOMEN WORKERS IN BRICKWORKS

Several instances are known of women working in brickworks as moulders and in other trades. My current research examining the role of women workers in brickworks would be enhanced by any information other members could provide and particularly by photographs relating to work done by women in brickworks.

ROBERT SIMPSON

Hopesay Farm, Craven Arms, Shropshire SY7 8HD

MADNESS IN ITS PLACE

On Radio 4 on 3 March 2001, in the Archive Hour programme, a slot on 'Madness in its Place' told the story of Severalls Mental Hospital, near Colchester, Essex, which was used from 1913 to 1997. The programme mentioned brickmaking as an activity for its inmates during the time when the director was Russell Barton, from 1959 to an unknown date. The institution was always self-sufficient, to a degree, with its own farm and gardens. Can any member supply further details of this hospital or the practice elsewhere?

MARTIN HAMMOND

13 Jackson Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset BH12 3AJ

BRITISH BRICK SOCIETY

MEETINGS IN 2002

The British Brick Society has arranged meetings in the forthcoming year as follows:

Saturday 23 February 2002

St Pancras Chambers tour

(a repeat of the November 2001 meeting for those unable to be accommodated first time)

Cost £10-00 for the tour of the Midland Grand Hotel. *This meeting is fully booked.*

Saturday 16 March 2002

South Warwickshire including the brick kiln of the Oxford Canal at Fenny Compton and the seventeenth-century Chesterton Arch.

(This is the re-arranged 2001 Spring Meeting which had to be postponed due to the restrictions imposed at the outbreak of the foot-and-mouth disease epidemic)

Saturday 13 April 2002

Spring Meeting

South Suffolk including an owner's tour of Kentwell Hall in the afternoon. The occupied building was described as newly completed in 1563, and has post-fire rebuilding of 1801, together with a twentieth-century maze and a fifteenth-century brick great hall beside the moat. A morning programme will be arranged.

Cost (including tea) £13-00 for the tour of Kentwell Hall.

Saturday 15 June

Annual General Meeting

Portsmouth

The Palmerston Forts.

Note the date in the middle weekend of June.

a Saturday in September 2002

Autumn Meeting

(date to be confirmed)

The Mausoleum at Castle Howard, North Yorkshire, which is only open to group visits. This is brick on the inside.

We hope also to arrange at least one other meeting in the year and possibly two including a visit to a working brickworks.

The officers of the British Brick Society welcome suggestions and ideas for future meetings. Notice of brickworks who would be willing to host a visit would be particularly invited. Please contact Michael Hammett, David H. Kennett or Terence Paul Smith. Thank you.