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SURREY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
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Bulletin

Number 309

March 1997

COUNCIL NEWS

At the January Council meeting, Dr David Bird, County Archaeologist, and Mr Matthew Alexander, Curator of Guildford Museum, were co-opted to Council for the current year.

Council approved the election of Mrs Anne Watson as an Honorary Vice-President, in recognition of her services to and support of the Society's activities over many years.

The Hon Secretary reported that a review of the Society's insurance policies was being undertaken and that guidelines would be issued in due course. In the meantime any event planned should be reported to Mr Brian Moore, the Society's insurance advisor, to ensure that cover is provided.

Council approved proposals to computerise the Society's Library and Research material to improve the search facilities and to give better access to the material. It is hoped work on this project will commence later in the year and further details will be given in future issues of the Bulletin.

LECTURES AND SYMPOSIA COMMITTEE

Lecture Series: Buildings in the Surrey Landscape

Six Tuesday evening lectures at the Shalford Village Hall in April and May 1997; 7.30 pm for 8.00 pm. Details in Bulletin 307, and a booking form was included with Bulletin 308. Members are asked to order their tickets in advance from Nancy Hawkins, 103 Westfield Road, Mayford, Woking, Surrey GU22 9QR. Tickets: £15 for the whole series or £3 for individual lectures.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Recent Accessions to the Society's Library

Archaeological evaluations and reports by MoLAS, SCAU and TVAS have been omitted, but a current list of recent additions is available on request.

GENERAL — LOCAL

Andrews, P (ed), Southampton finds, Vol 1: The coins and pottery from Hamwic. Southampton City Museums 1988

Aston, M A & Gosten, M D, The Shapwick Project: a topographical and historical study. The fifth report. Univ Bristol 1994

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- Chelsea Speleological Society, Records of the Chelsea Speleological Society Vol. 22. Caves and tunnels in South East England. Part II compiled by H Pearman. Pamphlet Chelsea Spel Soc. 1996
- Clarke, G. Winchester Studies 3: Pre-Roman and Roman Winchester Part II The Roman cemetery at Larkhills. Clarendon Press 1979
- Dobney, K M et al, Of butchers and breeds: report on vertebrate remains from various sites in the city of Lincoln. Lincoln Archaeological Studies No: 5. Lincoln Arch Studies 1995
- Evison, V I & Hill, P, Two Anglo-Saxon cemeteries at Beckford, Hereford and Worcester. CBA Research Report 103. CBA 1996
- Foreman, M, Further excavations at the Dominican Priory, Beverley, 1986-89. Sheffield Excavation Reports 4. Sheffield Academic Press 1996
- Gwyn, D & Williams, M, A Guide to the industrial archaeology of North West Wales. Association for Ind Arch 1994
- Hawkes, C F C & Crummy, P, Colchester Archaeological Report II: Camulodunum 2. Colchester Arch Trust 1995
- Hinton, D A, Southampton finds Vol 2: the gold, silver and other non-ferrous alloy objects from Hamwic, and the non-ferrous metalworking evidence. Alan Sutton Publishing 1996
- Kemp, R L, Anglian settlement at 46-54 Fishergate. The archaeology of York. Vol. 7: Anglian York Fasc. 1 and Fasc. 1 Figures 29-31 CBA 1996
- Kemp, R L & Graves, C P, The church and Gilbertine Priory of St Andrew, Fishergate The archaeology of York Vol. II. The medieval defences and suburbs. General editor P V Addyman. Vol. II Fasc. 2 Illustrations CBA 1996
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- MacDonald, K & Jones, D (joint eds), Planning for the past Vol 1 A Review of archaeological assessment procedures in England 1982-1991. English Heritage 1995
- Martins, S W, Historic farm buildings: including a Norfolk survey. Batsford 1991
- Mason, R T, The architectural topography of south east England. Reprinted from the Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society. Vol 21, 1976. Ancient Mon Soc. 1976
- Philp, B, The excavation of the Roman forts of the Classis Britannica at Dover 1970-1977. Third Research Report in the Kent Monograph Series. Kent Arch Rescue Unit 1981
- Philp, B & Keller, P, The Roman site at Fordcroft, Orpington. Kent Special Subject Series No. 8. Pamphlet Kent Arch Rescue Unit 1995
- Rippon, S, The Gwent levels: the evolution of a wetland landscape. CBA RR 105 CBA 1996
- SCOLA (Standing Conference on London Archaeology), Archaeology & planning in London: the effectiveness of PPG 16. Pamphlet SCOLA 1995
- Southern History, Vol. 17 A Review of the history of Southern England. edited by R Wells. Alan Sutton 1995
- Van de Noort, R & Ellis, S (eds), Wetland heritage of Holderness: an archaeological survey. Humber Wetlands Project, Univ Hull 1995
- Wacher, J S, Excavations at Brough-on-Humber 1958-61. Reports of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London. No XXV. Soc of Ants 1969

Watts, L & Leach, P, Henley Wood, temples and cemetery: excavations 1962-69 by the late Ernest Greenfield and others. CBA RR 99. CBA 1996
Wedlake, W J, The excavation of the shrine of Apollo at Nettleton, Wiltshire, 1956-1971. Society of Antiquaries 1980

SURREY — GENERAL

Bannister, N R, Woodland archaeology in Surrey: its recognition and management. Surrey County Council 1996
Crocker, A & Phillips, A, The Ball family, papermakers of Surrey and Northern France. Studies in British Paper History Vol. 1. The Oxford Papers: Proceedings of the British Association of Paper Historians fourth Annual Conference at St Edmund Hall, Oxford, 17-19 September 1993, edited by P Bower. Pamphlet Brit Assoc of Paper Historians
Davis, R, Railways from Staines to Sunningdale 1856-1996. Egham by Runnymede LHS 1996
Smith, G, The place of religion in old English place-names: a study of Surrey. [Unpublished paper. Update of that produced in 1989.] 1996
Surrey County Council, Researching Surrey's past: a guide to sources. Two copies — loan and reference. SCC 1996
Trotter, W R, The hilltop writers: a Victorian colony among the Surrey hills. Book Guild Ltd 1996

VISITS COMMITTEE

The Tercentenary of William Hogarth (1697–1764) Wednesday 14th May 1997 arranged by Josephine Carter (01483 505502)

Pick-up points:

8.30 am: GUILDFORD Guildford Park Road, Station entrance. 9.00 am: DORKING Council Offices. 9.15 am: REIGATE Bus stop in London Road, opposite Red Cross pub.

11.00 am Visit to Hogarth House, Chiswick, where the artist lived from 1740 to 1764. He is buried in St Nicholas Churchyard nearby.

LUNCH in pub or at Chiswick House (English Heritage), cafeteria or picnics.

2.00 pm Thomas Coram Foundation for Children — the Foundling Site. Here there are paintings by Hogarth, who was a generous benefactor to the Charity, including an important full length portrait of Thomas Coram.

3.30 pm Sir John Soane's Museum, Lincolns Inn Fields, to see *The Rake's Progress*, bought by Mrs Soane in 1802, bidding for her husband. In 1823 Soane purchased *The Election*.

5.00 pm Leave for home.

Party limited to 25. Members £12, Visitors £13, Students £6, to include donations, gratuities and expenses.

Tickets from: David Evans, 48 Guildford Park Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 5NF. Please enclose SAE.

Provisional Programme of Other Visits in 1997:

We have been busy compiling a programme of meetings for 1997 and details of each meeting will be available nearer the event.

Saturday April 19th Visit to Ashted Pollards organised by Alan Gillies.

Saturday June 22nd visit by coach to the ever popular **Essex History Fair at Harwich** organised by Jo Carter.

Saturday July 19th Visit to Spitalfields organised by Joyce Banks.

Sunday September 21st Coach visit to **Hastings and Battle**. This is the third in the "2000 Years of History" series of visits organised by Barbara Blatchford.

Sunday October 19th A visit to the **Gunpowder Works at Chilworth** with Professor Alan and Glenys Crocker.

Other walks or visits may be added if possible. Rosemary Hunter 01483 47477.

NOTES

St Mary's Vicarage, Horsell (SU 9975 5921):

Evaluation

Jane Robertson, SCAU

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on 8th October 1996 by the Surrey County Archaeological Unit on the proposed site of a new vicarage. It is near the church (first built c1150) and the historic centre of the village, and the work was carried out on behalf of the Guildford Diocesan Parsonages Board. Three trial trenches were excavated and two features of archaeological interest were revealed in one of them: a small pit containing a sherd of whiteware of 13th-15th century date, and a narrow gully containing three fragments of burnt flint but no dateable finds. The fill of the gully was different from that of the medieval pit and may be of prehistoric date. A watching brief of the redevelopment of the area was recommended.

Duncroft, Moor Lane, Staines (TQ 032 720):

Evaluation

Jane Robertson, SCAU

An archaeological evaluation was carried out between April and May 1996 by the Surrey County Archaeological Unit on the proposed site of thirty-seven new houses. An earlier assessment by SCAU had identified the site as lying within an area of major archaeological potential. The work was carried out on behalf of Nicholas King Homes PLC.

Twelve trial trenches were excavated and each contained features of archaeological interest, the majority of which appeared to be Late Saxon, with others of probable prehistoric date.

Further archaeological work was recommended in the form of full excavation of three areas, additional trial trenching in the south-east corner of the site when it became accessible, and a watching brief during the redevelopment.

Excavations were carried out in June and July 1996. The additional trial trenching in the south-east corner of the site revealed yet more archaeological features and led to another area being fully excavated. The results of the excavations will be reported when the processing of the finds has been completed.



Evaluation trench with Duncroft House in background.

MSRG Policy on Research, Survey, Conservation and Excavation

Dennis Turner

The committee of the Medieval Settlement Research Group is preparing a revised policy on research, survey, conservation and excavation. The draft (November 1996) sets out a research and management framework for medieval rural settlement and includes a brief assessment of the current state of academic knowledge and practical issues and seeks to identify an agenda of future work which would fill gaps in our knowledge. The final section presents a strategy setting out priorities. In preparing the document, the MSRG are having regard to past policy statements on behalf of the group and its predecessors — the Moated Sites and Medieval Village Research Groups — as well as to UK and national frameworks.

The MSRG intend that their policy statement will be made widely available and will be used in counties and regions to develop a consistent and integrated approach to medieval settlement studies. The Group hopes that the policy will also be used in making decisions on the management and preservation of sites and will be helpful to those making research applications. The policy will be periodically revised.

(Membership of the MSRG is open to all for a modest subscription: enquiries should be addressed to Dr Robin Glasscock, Hon Treasurer MSRG, Department of Geography, University of Cambridge, Downing Place, Cambridge, CB2 3EN. The Group produces an excellent annual report of work in the UK and continental Europe and arranges occasional conferences.)

Archaeological Excavations at 2-8 High Street, Staines

Andrew Richmond, Malcolm Lyne & Trevor Ennis

During December 1995 an archaeological team from Tempus Reparatum, Archaeological and Historical Associates Ltd, carried out a detailed excavation prior to commercial redevelopment of a plot of open ground on which formerly stood numbers 2-8 High Street, Staines. The excavation followed on from an evaluation conducted by the Surrey County Archaeological Unit during October of that year.

Evidence for prehistoric activity was found at the northern end of the site where a buried soil and a mound of similar material were identified. The prehistoric soil contained a number of very abraded pellets of Late Bronze Age character pottery containing very coarse calcinated flint as a temper, whilst the mound contained an assemblage which could give a more accurate prediction of date, in that nine fragments were recovered. All sherds were, however, very abraded and it is possible that they may have been subject to long term plough change.

Small amounts of pottery of Late Iron Age character were present in the earliest occupation contexts of the site, but they could all be as late as the earliest years of Roman occupation, when Late Iron Age type wares were still in use. Four well stratified assemblages were assigned to the period cAD 0-55. The quantities of ceramics were small, but suggest occupation in the area at this time.

Many more features could be assigned to the period cAD 55-70 including a metalled surface, several associated draining gullies, some more substantial ditch features and pits and a sequence of burning episodes perhaps associated with a sill-beam construction building. It is clear from the pottery assemblage that at this time supply was largely from the London area, and in particular from the Highgate Wood kilns. Material from the Alice Holt and Farnham kilns on the Hampshire/Surrey border did, however, account for more than a third of all the Neronian pottery. There was a conspicuous lack of Gallo-Belgic pottery and continental imports consisted almost entirely of South-Gaulish samian from La Graufesenque.

Flavian activity was similarly represented by a wealth of features, including a fired clay layer and a series of rather substantial pits. It is important to note that globular Dressel 20 amphorae, no doubt carrying olive oil, were arriving on site by AD 70 and were present in such large numbers in early second century deposits as to suggest Staines was either a major distribution point in the olive oil trade within the province or that some local industry was re-using the amphorae. Throughout the 2nd century activity was quite intense across the site. During this time the pattern of pottery supply to Staines changed to one more dependent on local suppliers. As the supply of Highgate Wood wares and Alice Holt wares diminished, it becomes clear that the main beneficiary of the decline from London and the Farnham area was the Lower Colne Valley Kilns near Gerrards Cross to the north of Staines. It is evident that during the second century there was a radical shift away from supply by London and Atrebatian producers to potters within the heart of the *civitas* of the Catuvellauni.

As recorded elsewhere across Staines, the third century represented a time of flooding. Sealing much of the site was a rather homogeneous flood silt layer which contained very few artefacts. Dumped above this horizon, however, were make-up layers roughly datable to the later half of the third century. Later Roman assemblages were recovered, but the majority emanated from a conspicuous 'dark earth' horizon which covered much of the site. Excavation showed this to be largely disturbed across its upper portion. Within this spread were numerous finds, the bulk of which could be shown to be residual. It is thought the 'dark earths' formed across the site from cAD 270-400+ following the phases of flooding.

There was little Saxon or Saxo-Norman pottery recovered, and no features datable to these periods. What pottery that there was largely came from the 'dark earth' horizon, or was residual in Medieval and post-Medieval features. This part of the High Street was evidently peripheral to settlement in Staines throughout the Saxon period. The site appears to have remained peripheral to settlement activity through into the twelfth century. It is only after this date that significant occupation recommenced in the area which is represented by a road-side building, a possible house in the south-west corner of the site, a number of associated pits and gullies and several rubbish 'make-up' horizons. Post-Medieval activity was represented by a tile yard together with several poorly identified negative features. Much of this material was severely truncated by the relatively modern cellars across the site.

42 London Road, Bagshot (SU 9115 6345)

Geoffrey H Cole

Research excavations, by kind permission of Mr George Burrows and with financial assistance from Windlesham Parish Council, were concluded during the summer months of 1996, the project having been phased since 1993 due to the site area and modern obstacle restrictions. The final season of research intended to resolve some of the problems of interpretation of the site's earlier archaeology which had been seriously damaged by Tannery use in 17th to 19th centuries and by intensive hard landscaping in the 20th century.

Several lengths of the site's late 19th century boundary ditches were sampled, in one area proving to have truncated a Tanning pit of late 18th century date. Sufficient remained of the structure to identify its timber post and probable plank wall construction, it having been excavated deeply into earlier levels.

Further evidence was recorded of timber structures and flint laid working surfaces relating to the 17th century Tanning industry including a pit containing ceramics and three pairs of cow horns — all in very fragile conditions.

Cultural material from the 16th century occupation (sampled in previous seasons) was sparse and only a very light scatter of late Medieval ceramics were recorded — the whole area thought to have been open 'waste' leading down to the Windle Brook during that period.

During the first millennia AD, the site had been subjected to a series of flooding episodes which had effectively sealed all pre-Medieval levels with silts and gravels. Removal of these enabled Romano-British occupation to be identified in at least two phases, the latest of which dated to 200-300 AD. It comprised a building of timber post and wall trench construction, in two ranges and incorporating a finely laid flint pebble courtyard. This partially overlay an earlier timber building, on a different alignment. Again of timber post and wall trench construction and also incorporating rubble stone sole plate seatings, the building comprised several room areas served by a single corridor. Ceramics from within this structure indicated an occupation date of mid to late 1st century to mid 2nd century AD. In association with this building part of a Colchester type IV fibulae was recovered, unusually plated in gold and datable to c 50-65 AD. Various other metal objects were recorded from the earlier Romano-British phase, including an iron spear head.

The Romano-British occupation was, in part, founded upon an up to 25cms deep layer of clay with flints and elsewhere on fine silty gravels, all likely to have resulted from earlier episodes of silt inundation.

Beneath the silty gravels, part of an interrupted, concentric, double ditch system enclosure was excavated, which had been constructed within a meander of the

Windle Brook. Cultural material from within the enclosure included poorly fired, sand tempered coarse pottery, concentrations of burnt flint, flint cores and struck flint flakes of the early Neolithic tradition.

Adjacent to the enclosure, part of a timber post and wall structure was excavated. The structure was roughly rectangular, measuring 3,600 metres by a maximum of 2,500 metres (within the available area of research) and floored in roughly laid flint pebbles. From the surviving internal stratigraphy and the upper levels of the wall trench fillings, considerable quantities of lithics were recovered, including joining flint cores and flakes together with burnt flint and ceramic fragments.

The finds and site archives are currently deposited at The Archaeology Centre in Bagshot where research continues.

The Medieval Chamber at Guildford

The stone room recently discovered at Guildford (Bulletin 300) has generated controversy because of its tentative identification as a 12th century synagogue. Caught off-balance by journalists and Torah scholars, even English Heritage took to jocularly referring to it as an 'undergogue' for a while, as if they too were uncertain of its function ('undercroft' being a fully or partly-sunk medieval cellar built of stone, of which examples are known from the High Street, but closer to the street frontage than this chamber). The more important contributions to the debate last year were three letters to the magazine 'British Archaeology' which are re-published below. This is followed by a note from Mary Alexander of the Guildford Museum Archaeological Unit, ahead of her paper to be given at the 'Medieval Europe 1997' conference later this year.

from 'British Archaeology' no.16 July 1996:

Sir: The discovery by the Guildford Museum Archaeological Unit, led by John Boas, of a partly subterranean (2.6m by 2.5m) chamber on a burgage plot in Guildford has aroused international speculation.

There is no direct evidence, archaeological or historical, that this was a private synagogue. Indeed, Moyses's Hall at Bury and the Jew's Court at Lincoln are no longer accepted as such. However, there is considerable circumstantial evidence in favour of such a hypothesis.

The stone work is of high quality; both east and west walls are embellished with two attached columns, the bases dated c 1180. Similar decorative detail can be found in the adjacent royal castle. A finely cut portal gave access from the main structure to the north. This was apparently also of stone and of considerable size, as the chamber lies some 35ft back from the High Street. In Southampton's 12th century merchant quarter such a stone house might not be remarkable. In the small medieval borough of Guildford it is. Even in Worcester, Peter son of Edwin, the city's earliest known reeve, was highly proud of '*petrinum meum*' ('my stone House') in its prime position in the High Street close to *la Gyldehalle*, c 1190 ('Worcester Jewry, 1158-1290', *Trans Worcs Archaeol Soc*, 1990, 73-122).

Documentary evidence shows that early English synagogues were established by local magnates behind their dwellings on prime sites. Jacob of Canterbury in c 1190 built a large stone house on three burgage plots along the High Street from the corner of *Hethenmanne Lane* (Stour Street). Cathedral rentals reveal his synagogue flanked the rear wall. Records disclose similar backland sites at Cambridge, Worcester, Norwich, Lincoln, and at Old Jewry and Catte (Gresham) Street in the City of London — in this respect like the late 17th century dissenting chapel, and for the same reason (*J Eccles Hist* 44, 2, 1993. 182-980).

In each case a magnate family can be identified. In 1272 Isaac of Southwark, who inherited his business from his uncle of the same name, brought an action against Thomas Martin and William Harrewe for breaking and entering his Guildford house. This county town, with the protection offered by the royal castle, was a suitable halfway home for a business stretching from Southwark to Winchester where he also had houses.

Lack of an eastern apse for the Torah ark, is no argument against synagogue identification. There is none at Rouen (c 1115), Toledo la Blanca (c 1200), Toledo el Transito (c 1357), Prague Altneuschul or Kazimierz (Krakow) Stara synagogue (both 15th century).

On its backland site the English medieval synagogue was unpretentious externally but often lavish internally. Custom dictated it to be higher than neighbouring buildings, but this ecclesiastical legislation prohibited. Hence the floor below ground level (Psalms 130: 1).

JOE HILLABY, School of Education, University of Bristol

Two further letters from 'British Archaeology' no.18, October 1996:

Sir: After all the media hype about Guildford's so-called medieval synagogue it was a relief to see Joe Hillaby's measured and scholarly statement (Letters, July), emphasising that the identification is by no means certain. Even Hillaby, however, is more convinced than the evidence warrants.

He refers to high quality stonework, yet the attached half columns are of different lengths because the masons could not be bothered to make their supporting ledges level. He suggests that a large stone house in medieval Guildford would be remarkable, but we do not know that it was a stone house (rather than a stone sub-basement for a timber-framed upper structure). Furthermore the material used seems to be hard chalk, readily available in the immediate vicinity. In any case, however small, Guildford was Surrey's chief town, with a royal castle, and people of importance will have had interests there.

There may be documentary evidence that local Jewish magnates established synagogues beyond their dwellings, but there is none for Guildford. Isaac of Southwark can be shown to have had a house in Guildford in 1272, but not nearly 100 years earlier. There is some other evidence for Jews in Guildford, but no more than would be needed for the household of a man like Isaac. We have no particular reason to expect that there was a community large enough to warrant a synagogue.

Hillaby's references to the Jew's Court in Lincoln and the Rouen building are instructive. Jew's Court illustrates the tendency to find synagogues wherever possible. Experts on medieval Judaism in France are still arguing about the purpose of the Rouen building. This at least was in an area of the town occupied by a substantial Jewish community, and can be proved to have Jewish associations.

There is no direct evidence at all that the Guildford chamber was Jewish, let alone a synagogue, and Hillaby's circumstantial evidence can only be the basis for interesting speculation. Other avenues must also be explored and there will probably never be a definite outcome. The chamber remains, however, a very interesting discovery, which owes much to the enlightened attitude of the developer and his architect. Hopefully further detailed study will enable us to reach a more measured understanding of its place in Guildford's history.

DAVID BIRD, Principal Archaeologist, Surrey County Council

Sir: I would like to comment on the suggestion by Joe Hillaby that the 12th century chamber recently discovered in Guildford is a private synagogue. I have seen the site and would suggest that there is another, at present equally likely interpretation.

Much of the circumstantial evidence presented by Mr Hillaby can also be used if we think of the chamber as a stone porch to the lost stone building it would have appended, whatever its function. The larger house or building lay next to the street, but is now represented only by the modern boundaries.

Several 12th century (and possibly late 11th century) stone houses in the City of London have rear porches to their lower levels; and we should remember that even in Guildford a chamber now below the ground was probably more visible above ground in the 12th century. In at least one case, a house in Corbet Court, Gracechurch Street, the porch has blind arcading on two sides (see the evidence published most recently in my *Medieval London Houses*, page 30).

I am no expert on synagogues, but I think one telling detail at Guildford may be that the doorway into the main building from the chamber has remained, and this opens into the main building. This would argue that the chamber was an appendage of, or an entrance to, the lost house. Perhaps somebody could tell us if private synagogues were entered from outside; because if they were entered from the main building, this doorway seems wrong, opening outwards into the main cellar.

JOHN SCHOFIELD, Museum of London Archaeology Service

The Possible Medieval Synagogue in Guildford

Mary Alexander

Readers will perhaps remember that there was an explosion of interest in this late 12th century stone room when David Keys of "The Independent" newspaper suggested that it might have been a synagogue. We were as surprised as anyone about this interpretation, but it was not made lightly. Continuing research has shown that the synagogue interpretation is the best one *at present*. Joe Hillaby's opinions are

very important as he knows more about mediaeval jewry than anyone else.

David Bird's letter requires some comments:

1 The stonework *is* of high quality — the door jambs in particular are well-finished, with narrow joints. The stone bench and the columns are a puzzle — the bench runs at a slight angle but I don't think we can say that the masons "could not be bothered" to make it level. The bases of the columns are of indifferent workmanship, but the contemporary columns in the (royal) castle keep are rather crude so I think we need more information about local stone masons before passing judgement.

2 Joe Hillaby did not say "that a large stone house in medieval Guildford would be remarkable" — he was speaking of a *12th century* stone house, which is remarkable. The chamber, when complete, must have been entirely of stone, and as it is integral with what is left of the main building there is a good chance that the entire property was of stone. If it was not, that makes the stone chamber even more remarkable.

3 Synagogues in 12th and 13th century England were built by private individuals and were not necessarily related to the size of the Jewish community. Our room, if it had a religious purpose, might have served one household only. Jews took their religion very seriously and would use such a chamber for discussion, teaching and private prayer as well as more formal services.

John Schofield's letter makes two useful points. However, it seems most unlikely to us that the building was a porch as the doors are at diagonally opposite corners. The south door may be a later addition and was certainly blocked up during the lifetime of the room. The question of the way the door in the north wall opened is very interesting and should be pursued.

I do not want to make any definitive statements as there will be further excavation on the site, and a lot more research to do but the current position is this:

- the chamber is very unusual, if not unique.
- the stonework was expensive therefore the chamber was important.
- the wall paintings contain indigo which was extremely expensive and would not be used in a rear porch to an ordinary building. (John Schofield did not know this when he wrote.)
- the chamber was demolished deliberately, and apparently with the intention of obliterating it, at the time of the expulsion of the Jews.
- the size, location, layout and decoration of the chamber fits in with what we know about mediaeval synagogues from documents.

These points, and others, for and against the synagogue idea are elaborated in my paper which will be published in the Proceedings of the "Medieval Europe 1997" conference later this year.

REPORTS FROM UNITS WORKING IN THE HISTORIC COUNTY

Museum of London Archaeology Service. South West London Archaeological Committee — Archaeological Report July-September 1996

Croydon, 42-46 Bramley Hill: An evaluation close to one of the proposed routes for the Roman London to Brighton Road. Three E-W trenches were opened. No features or finds.

Croydon, Mayday University Hospital: An evaluation on a site close to London Road, which may be on the same alignment as the Roman London to Brighton Road. No features or finds.

Croydon, Pollards Hill Recreation Ground: A watching brief monitored six test pits. A series of low banks visible on the site have been recorded as earthworks of uncertain date in the SMR. No significant archaeological remains were revealed.

Croydon, Russell Hill, Purley: An evaluation at a school built in the 19th-century, when 108 Saxon burials were found. Two small test pits revealed no archaeology.

Croydon, Tamworth Road: An evaluation on a site heavily truncated by post-medieval and modern disturbance. The most easterly area of the site produced some struck flint, a sherd of pottery (undated), and possible evidence of prehistoric activity. The flint has been dated to between the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods.

GUILDFORD GROUP

Guildford Group Fieldwalking Projects

Mike Borrell reports that fieldwalking will probably begin in late March following ploughing in one of the fields, while the other field is likely to be ploughed in April. It may well not be possible to specify dates very much in advance and will be a "short notice" job on the telephone. Only a few people have volunteered so far — if the Group wants this project to go ahead, it will need volunteers to make it happen. To find out more and put your name on his list of volunteers, please write or phone him at 18 Blackheath Grove, Wonersh, Guildford GU5 OPU tel: (01483) 892800 day or evening.

MISCELLANY

The Field Archaeology Unit of University College, London

The Field Archaeology Unit of University College, London has operated its commercial contracts section as "South Eastern Archaeological Services" until recently. They would like it known that they are now "Archaeology South-East" but their address remains as 1 West Street, Ditchling, Sussex BN6 8TS. Tel: 01273 845497. From there you can obtain the latest (no. 5) edition of the Newsletter of the Field Archaeological Unit. Copies are available free on receipt of an A4 or A5 SAE.

CONFERENCES

SERIAC 97

**Avery Hill Campus
University of Greenwich
Eltham
London SE9
Saturday April 12th 1997**

Seriatic is a loose grouping of Industrial Archaeology and related Societies from South-East England. Each year, since 1983, one member Society has organised a one day conference of lectures supported by other displays. The 1997 conference is hosted by the Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society (GLIAS) and is being held in a fine Victorian Mansion formerly the home of John Thomas North who made a fortune out of the Chilean nitrate trade. The house boasts a superb steel and glass conservatory.

Further details of the conference from David Perrett 0181-692-8512

Papers include:

- "How our Cities Grew" GEF Mead (SIAG)
- "Housing the Multitudes: An Archaeology of the working class house" D Perrett (GLIAS)
- "Avery Hill, The Norths and the Guano Industry" F Ward (Greenwich Local History Centre)
- "Suburban Railways — A case study" E Course (SUIAG)
- "Urban Road Transport" M Dennison (London Transport Museum)
- "Workers' Playtime — The archaeology of home and entertainment" S Hayton (GLIAS)
- "A Dying Trade — The archaeology of the cemetery" B Flanagan (Chairman of Friends of Norwood Cemetery)

TICKETS: £6.95 per person to include coffee and afternoon tea. Details from Bill Firth, 49 Woodstock Ave, London NW11 9RG. Closing date 31st March 1997.

COURSES

A series of courses forming part of the Certificate in Practical Archaeology have been organised by the Centre for Continuing Studies, University of Sussex for the summer term of 1997. In most cases these can be taken as free-standing courses. They include:

The Study of Artefacts. To be held at Fishbourne Roman Palace
Environmental Archaeology. To be held at the University
Archaeological Illustration. To be held at Fishbourne
Archaeology by Experiment. To be held at Lewes
Recording Vernacular Buildings. Various venues

For further details contact Yvonne Barnes on 01273 678573

DAY SCHOOLS

The following courses are organised by the Centre for Continuing Studies, from whom further details may be obtained. Tel: 01273 606755. Please note that the date of the course on "Understanding Farm Buildings" previously planned for 8th March. has been changed to the 15th March.

- 17th May** "**Songs from this Earth**". Tutor: Richard Cupidi. To be held at Sussex University.
- 24th May** "**Sussex Medieval Pots and Tiles**". Tutor: Con Ainsworth. To be held at Fishbourne Roman Palace.
- 31st May** "**Archaeological Illustration: Pottery**". Tutor: Jane Russell. To be held at Fishbourne Roman Palace.
- 14th June** "**Archaeological Illustration: Flintwork**". Tutor: Jane Russell. To be held at Fishbourne Roman Palace.
- 21st June** "**Churchyard Archaeology**". Tutors: Tristram Bareham and Christabel Shelley. To be held at Anne of Cleves, Lewes.
- 22nd June** "**Experimental Earthworks**". Tutor: Peter Reynolds. To be held at Fishbourne Roman Palace.
- 28th June** "**Archaeological Illustration: Bone and Metalwork**". Tutor: Jane Russell. To be held at Fishbourne Roman Palace.
- 29th June** "**Prehistoric Woodworking**". Tutor: Tristram Bareham. To be held at Michaelham Priory.
- 5th July** "**The Archaeology of the Second World War**". Tutor: Peter Hicks. To be held at Sussex University.
- 19th July** "**Archaeological Textiles**". Tutor: Christabel Shelley. To be held at Michaelham Priory.

ARCHAEOLOGY SUMMER SCHOOL

"Ancient (Prehistoric) Crafts and Technology"

An opportunity to explore ancient crafts and technologies from a practical point of view. The course, based at the Iron Age Activity Centre, Michelham Priory, Sussex, covers the following topics:

- Pottery (pot building, kiln building, pot firing)
- Metal-working (smelting and casting bronze)
- Textiles (weaving, spinning, dyeing)
- Wood-working (early lathes, wood splitting, cleaving)
- Building technologies (timber work, thatching)
- Coracle making

Monday 28th July to Friday 1st August 1997

Fee: £110 (SAS and Surrey Arch Soc members £99)

For details phone Rosemary Miller of the Centre for Continuing Education, University of Sussex, 01273 678527

EXCAVATIONS

Training Excavations at Bignor Roman Villa, West Sussex. 7th July-17th August.

Several 5-day courses on Excavation Techniques (£100), and one on Surveying (£110); and weekend courses on Surveying (£50), Timber-framed Buildings (£55), and Planning and Section Drawing (£55).

For further information contact Sheila Maltby of The Field Archaeological Unit, 1 West Street, Ditchling, Hassocks, West Sussex BN6 8TS. Tel: 01273 845497.

Training Excavations at Fishbourne Roman Palace, Chichester, Sussex.

Monday 14th July – Saturday 16th August 1997. Fee £180 per course (excluding accommodation). Five courses, each of six days' duration. Places are limited to 10 participants each week and early booking is essential to ensure a place.

Please write or telephone for an application form **as soon as possible** to 1997 Training Excavations, Fishbourne Roman Palace, Salthill Road, Fishbourne, Chichester PO19 3QR tel: 01243 785859.

Excavation of a Post Medieval Manor House at Heckfield, 24th May to 8th June, by the North East Hants Historical and Archaeological Society, under the direction of Geoff Hoare. For further information contact Don Woollhead (01276) 33056, 127 Chapel Lane, Farnborough.

LECTURE MEETINGS

1st April

“The Two Palaces: Oatlands and Hampton Court” by Ian Platford to the Kingston upon Thames Archaeological Society at the Lower Hall, Friends Meeting House, Eden Street, Kingston at 8.00 pm.

5th April

“The Crystal Palace” by Ian Bevan to the Beddington, Carshalton & Wallington Archaeological Society at Milton Hall, Cooper Crescent, off Nightingale Road at 3.00 pm. A tour of the site will follow on 13th April (details to follow).

8th April

“Windmills and Watermills” by Kenneth Gravett (one of a series of lectures on Buildings in the Surrey Landscape: see 307) at Shalford Village Hall.

12th April

“Recording the Treasures of Surrey Churches the NADFAS Way” by Susan Filer to the Walton and Weybridge Local History Society at Elmgrove Hall, at rear of Elmgrove, Hersham Road, Walton-on-Thames, at 3.00 pm. Visitors £1.

15th April

“Smaller Houses and Dwellings” by George Howard (one of a series on Buildings in the Surrey landscape: see 307) at Shalford Village Hall.

17th April

“The Cinema in West London” by Colin Sorensen to the Barnes and Mortlake History Society at the Main Hall of the Sheen Lane Centre, at 8.00 pm.

17th April

“Anne Boleyn — A Woman out of Time” by Rosalind Barnes to the Egham-by-Runnymede Historical Society at the Literary Institute, Egham High Street at 8.00 pm.

18th April

“The Making of the Roman Gallery at the Museum of London” by Jenny Hall, Curator of the Roman Gallery, to the Richmond Archaeological Society at the Vestry Hall, Paradise Road, Richmond at 8.00 pm. Non-members £2.

18th April

Annual General Meeting of the Leatherhead & District LHS, followed by “The Roman Villa at Fishbourne” by Ernest Crossland, at the Dixon Hall of the Leatherhead Institute at 7.30 pm for 8.00 pm. Members 50p, non-members £1.00.

22nd April

“Great Houses and Manor Houses” by Nigel Barker (one of a series on Buildings in the Surrey Landscape: see 307) at Shalford Village Hall.

28th April

“The History of the Royal Grammar School, Guildford” by G Schofield to the Mayford and Woking District History Society, at the school itself (details not yet available).

29th April

“Churches in the Landscape” by Richard Morris (one of a series on Buildings in the Surrey Landscape: see 307) at Shalford Village Hall.

29th April

“The South Metropolitan Cemetery at West Norwood” by Bob Flanagan to the Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Society, at Hawkstone Hall; the Lambeth North end of Kennington Road, two minutes walk from Lambeth North Underground, at 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm.

6th May

“Farms and their Buildings” by Annabelle Hughes (one of a series on Buildings in the Surrey Landscape: see 307) at Shalford Village Hall.

6th May

“The National Monuments Record” by Diana Hale to the Kingston upon Thames Archaeological Society at the Lower Hall, Friends Meeting House, Eden Street, Kingston at 8.00 pm.

9th May

“Excavations at London Bridge Station” by Pete Thompson of MoLAS to the Richmond Archaeological Society at the Vestry Hall, Paradise Road, Richmond, at 8.00 pm. Non-members £2.

13th May

“Village Industries” by Peter Tarplee (one of a series on Buildings in the Surrey Landscape: see 307) at Shalford Village Hall.

16th May

“The Lost Palaces of Claremont” by Stephen Webbe to the Leatherhead and District LHS, at the Dixon Hall of the Leatherhead Institute at 7.30 pm for 8.00 pm. Members 50p, non-members £1.00.

20th May

“Reformation and Early Puritanism in Kingston c1534-1598: John Udall, the town’s Presbyterian lecturer” by Shaan Butters to the Friends of Kingston Museum in the ante-chamber of the Market House, Market Place, Kingston, at 8.00 pm. Voluntary donation of £1.50 is suggested.

23rd May

AGM, followed by “Medieval Botany” by Dr Gerry Moss to the Holmesdale Natural History Club at The Museum, 14 Croydon Road, Reigate, at 8.15 pm. Members may bring guests on payment of a donation of £2.

27th May

“Recent Finds from Roman London” by Bruce Watson to the Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Society at Hawkstone Hall; the Lambeth North end of Kennington Road, two minutes walk from Lambeth North Underground, at 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm.

Next Issue: Copy required by 21st March for the April/May issue.

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