

SOCIETY NEWS

THE BULLETIN OF THE ENFIELD ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



SEPTEMBER 1966

No. 22

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES (See inside for details)

Friday 23rd September 1966	Film Show.
Saturday 24th September 1966	Field Excursion.
Sunday 2nd October 1966	Visit.
Friday 11th November 1966	Lecture.
Friday 9th December 1966	Lecture.

'Society News' is published quarterly in March, June, September and December. The Editor is Mr. G. R. Gillan, to whom articles and notes for inclusion and correspondence regarding the Bulletin should be addressed. The Bulletin is free to members. Extra copies may be obtained from the Editor (9d post free).

EDITORIAL

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Membership of the Society is nearing the target figure of 200. This gratifying increase is due to the activities of the Publicity Group. Several new members were enrolled at the exhibition recently staged in the Market Place. We shall again be exhibiting at the Town Show in September and it is hoped to arrange further displays elsewhere in the Borough later in the year.

Peter Blakebrough has been appointed Press Officer and he ensures that our activities are reported to all the local papers in the London Borough of Enfield. This, too, has resulted in new members but, more important, it helps in getting archaeological discoveries reported to the Society with the minimum of delay.

The December meeting will be the last we shall hold in the Eastern Gas showrooms as the Demonstration Theatre will no longer be available for use by local societies. Details of our new venue will be given in the December Bulletin. We hope the alternative accommodation will be of an equally high standard as that previously enjoyed. Meanwhile, we take this opportunity to record our grateful thanks to Eastern Gas for the use of the Theatre during the past ten years.

Progress is being made with the New History of Enfield. Seven draft chapters have been submitted and a publication date will soon be announced.

There are still a few 'gaps' to fill, one of which is the story of the development of the London Borough of Enfield, from the Board of Guardians, through the Urban Districts and Boroughs. If any member is interested and would like to help with this chapter they are invited to write to Mr. G. R. Gillam, 23, Merton Road, Enfield, who would be pleased to discuss the matter with them.

A few subscriptions are still outstanding and Mrs. J. Adams, the Hon. Treasurer, has asked that they be sent to her at 14, Uvedale Road, Enfield, as soon as possible

* FORTHCOMING EVENTS *
* * * * *

The following meetings will be held at 8 p.m. in the Demonstration Theatre of Eastern Gas, Sydney Road, Enfield. Members are invited to bring their friends.

23rd September 1966 FILM SHOW.

STORY IN THE ROCKS: How scientists can trace successive stages of the formation of the earth and look back into the past; to learn from the rocks the story of creatures that lived long ago, were buried by wind and sea and then turned into stone.

LASCAUX, CRADLE OF MAN'S ART: A film showing the famous prehistoric cave paintings of Lascaux in the Dordogne district of France.

BISKUPIN: A description of the prehistoric lake settlement of Biskupin in Poland, which has been completely excavated, with part of the settlement reconstructed to full scale.

THE RIVERS OF TIME: A film of considerable cultural interest, covering the earlier Mesopotamian cultures and the subsequent Islamic periods with particular reference to the development of technology.

11th November 1966 LECTURE. EXCAVATION OF A BRONZE AGE SETTLEMENT SITE AT WESTON WOOD, SURREY. Miss Joan Harding.

Miss Harding is a librarian in the Civil Service. For the last six seasons she has been directing excavations of a Late Bronze Age settlement site in Weston Wood for the Surrey Archaeological Society. The site is particularly important because unlike similar sites on the South Downs it was found to be perfectly sealed.

9th December 1966 LECTURE. THETFORD, EXCAVATION OF A SAXON TOWN. Brian K. Davison, B.A.

Mr. Davison is an Assistant Inspector of Ancient Monuments in the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works. On behalf of the Ministry he has been carrying out large scale excavations at Thetford in Norfolk during the last three summers and uncovered important evidence of the Saxon Town.

* FIELDWORK *
* Reports from Observers *
*

Excavations are still in progress at Cheshunt Great House. Work has been concentrated on the south side of the building in an effort to trace its original extent in this direction. One of the more exciting discoveries was a buried stairway leading from the floor of the main hall to the cellars below.

Observations were made in trenches dug across the northern end of Little Park Gardens, Enfield, where property has been demolished as part of the 'Town Plan'. A brick drain was noted running across the site from north to south and continuing under the roadway of Little Park Gardens to Church Street.

This site is worth watching when development takes place as it may be possible to observe the junction of the Taplow Gravel and Brickearth which occurs here.

Roman pottery has been discovered in the garden of 94, Landseer Road, Enfield. Evidence of the Roman occupation in this area has been known for many years. Newspaper accounts and an article in the Illustrated London News published in April 1902, describes how 'layers of dark soil containing Roman pottery, coins, brooches and roofing tiles were uncovered during the construction of the houses in that year. None of the objects has survived and it was assumed that the subsequent cultivation of the gardens would have destroyed all the remaining evidence. However, when Mr. Taylor the new tenant at 94, started to dig over the garden, which does not appear to have been cultivated since the house was built, he cut through a ditch containing Roman pottery. He reported the discovery to the Forty Hall Museum who asked the Society to investigate and an emergency excavation was immediately commenced. The pottery is of first to fourth century dates and includes mortaria, samian, colour-coated, and Castor Ware. A full report will be given at the Annual General Meeting and eventually published in the Bulletin.

A watch is being kept on the extension of the dual carriage-way of the Cambridge Arterial Road. Nothing has been noted to date.

The Convenor of the Observers Group is Mr. W. Gates, 8, Seymour Court, Eversley Park Road, N. 21, to whom all reports should be sent.

An Architectural and Historical Report on
Southgate House, High Street, Southgate, N. 14., now part of
Minchenden School - by W. L. Gates & P. Blakebrough.
(by kind permission of the Headmaster).

This building, built between 1780 - 1800, and listed as Grade II by the Ministry, stands well back from the road behind a high brick wall, and is built of yellow brick, with a green slate roof, leaded ridges, stucco cornice and stone parapet and dressings. The original house consisted of a symmetrical double-fronted house onto which a further wing was added, (possibly early 19th century), on the North. This spoils the balance of the facade, and the gracefulness of the building has been further debased by the addition of a large Victorian bay onto the North wing at the front plus a two-storey bathroom block at the side, and a gymnasium, in matching brickwork, on the South.

The original double-fronted house has an interesting facade; there is a gently-curved pillared porch incorporating the front door, with stone steps and a narrow railed balcony above. This is flanked on either side by wide semi-circular arched insets, framing a single sash window. Above these the matching single sashes have been replaced to ill effect, by modern double sashes with concrete lintels. Above the porch, however, the triple windows appear to be original. A simple cornice, topped by a stone parapet with blind balustrading panels repeated at the rear completes the facade, the dormer windows of the attics (all unaltered) being set back behind the parapet.

The arched insets are repeated on the South side of the building, and also on the East front, where they frame Venetian windows (three apertures, the central one being glazed, original glazing bars removed) on the ground floor, with single sashes as before on the first. The central rooms on this East front are extended into a great semi-circular bay, having three curved sashes on each floor.

This side of the house faces the playing fields and is separated from them by a ha-ha built of similar brick to the house. The original estate extended to the "Woodman" in Bourne Hill.

To the North-West of the old house stand the walls of the Kitchen gardens, facing South, now laid out as Tennis Courts. Flanking these are the Old Stables, a pleasant little building with a small pediment and semi-circular windows on the first floor level. The remaining wall of the stable yard appears to be late Victorian, as does the yard itself.

To the North of the house, adjacent to the later North Wing, and standing between the house proper and the 1939 New School Block, is the dairy, an octagonal building with deep eaves and volutes, surmounted by an octagonal slate roof and a ventilator in the same style. This little building, now forming part of a corridor, has an early 19th century round-headed window, and the surrounding single-storey buildings, of varying ages are surmounted by a fire-bell in an iron frame, now used for school purposes.

INTERIOR: The entrance doorway, set in the pillared portico already mentioned, opens into the hall, and it is at once plain that the gently curved exterior of the porch is in fact one side of a beautifully symmetrical oval entrance hall, with doors left and right, and another leading to the staircase well straight ahead, flanked by two deep alcoves.

There is a band of plaster decoration making a frieze, which includes acanthus decoration and a heavy chain design that is almost Jacobean in spirit. This, together with the inelegant cabinet-work above the doorcases, and the 'lincrusta' wainscoting (noticeable throughout the ground floor covering original panelling) gives the impression, confirmed elsewhere in the house that a certain amount of redecoration took place in Edwardian, or possibly late Victorian times. However, the doors with their beaded panels, and the (lincrusta-coated) window shutters seem to be original.

The room to the left was inaccessible, but the one to the right was inspected as far as possible. What was originally a small reception room has been sadly cut about to provide access to the gymnasium, and the rest serves as a store-room. However, it was possible to ascertain that it contained some good wainscoting, with mould ribbed panels which appear to be original, and a plaster frieze below the cornice which included in the design amorini and garlands of flowers.

Proceeding through the central hall doorway into the staircase well, it became evident that this had been modified by the insertion of a strengthening wall including arches and cupboards, under the outer edge of the stair-treads. It is fair to say that these essential alterations seem to have been carried out in such a way that they do not detract from the beautiful proportions and grace of the staircase. An almost oval stair-well has the staircase rising on the left, following the curve of the wall over the entrance doorway until it reaches first-floor level, when it meets a straight gallery crossing the width of the well, with the flat wall of the East bedroom behind it. (The staircase itself terminates at this first-floor gallery, access to the second floor (attics) being gained by a service staircase in the North wing which runs from the basement to the top of the house).

Beneath the gallery, a door leads into the Oval Room, the finest in the house, and doors on either side lead into the two flanking reception rooms facing East, having the Venetian windows already noted. The one on the right (the Music Room) retains its original size, but the one on the left, cut into by a passage leading to the North wing, has been further re-divided in two, by a modern partition.

The Staircase itself has stone treads, originally unsupported on their outer edges, which have all been retreaded with stone insets (This may have weakened the staircase, meriting the strengthening wall already mentioned). The hand-worked iron balustrading, a rare and important feature, is composed of a graceful acanthus design on each stair-tread, within a lyre shaped frame. (Fig. 1.). The entire balustrade especially along the gallery, is badly damaged, and merits protection.

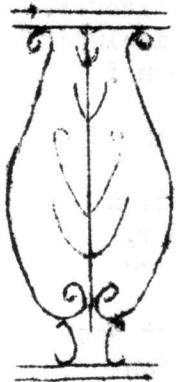


fig. 1.

The stair-well is lit by an oval opening in the second floor, having an unbroken balustrade of square iron railings each bearing a rosette motif, above which is an elliptical lantern of glass panes, having a flat ceiling decorated with a plasterwork rosette. This lantern has a double frieze of festoons and ovals. The stair-well floor is of white marble slabs, inset diagonally with black squares at the corners, and is contemporary with the building. (Fig. 2.). The frieze decoration under the gallery, whilst of a happier design than that in the entrance hall, appears, again, to be Edwardian.

This straight gallery running across the width of the stair-well leads respectively, on the right to bedrooms over the Music Room, and the S.W. corner, and on the left, to a corridor leading to the North Wing, and bedrooms off. The

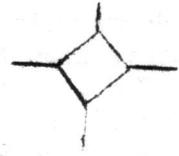


fig. 2.

basic plan of the first floor comprises

the central stair-well, having three bedrooms at the back (facing east) and three at the front of the house, facing West.

THE OVAL ROOM: This room must have been the principal reception room of the house, and has three shaped windows in the great curved East Bay already noted, (affording wide panoramic view of the estate) opposite the door which is plain. Flanking the door are two alcoves, with fine 'Folded Shell' plaster coves, and rococo leaf and flower panels. The frieze below the cornice consists of garlands and urns; the cornice itself has a delicate sort of filigree inset into a guilloche pattern, now badly choked with whitewash, but worth renovating. Some wood-block flooring in this room (on the verges) may be original - it has a skilfully worked Greek key pattern. The fireplace in this room has been blocked up (as are most in the building). The 'decoration' over the doorcase seems again to be Edwardian.

THE MUSIC ROOM (also called the "Adam Room"). This has three fine broken pedimented doorcases, with central ledges - one on the inside of the entrance, and the others over the flanking alcoves or book-cases on the right. These pediments surmount a panel decorated with urns, sprays of leaves and flowers, and a central panel depicting in each case a different pastoral scene in relief. One shows a shepherd with his dog, a sheep wearing a bell, and a grape vine bearing fruit in the background. Another shows a harvest scene, with cherubs bearing sickles and sheaves of corn, whilst another drinks from a

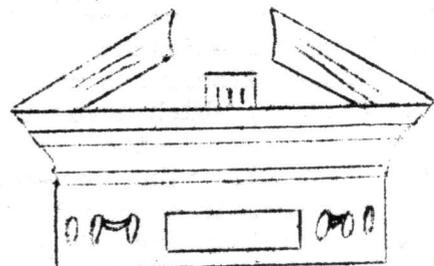


fig. 3.

bottle. The third represents a seated woman, bearing a bow across her knees. A quiver of arrows lies on the ground, with grapes etc., in background. A fox appears

to be attacking a sheep on the left, whilst under the tree and apparently distracting her attention from the fox stands a male figure (head missing).
Fig.3.

The frieze of plaster in this room includes lions heads with scrolls, alternating with a laurel wreath design round an urn. The cornice is rather more elaborate, being perforated, and is slightly damaged. The walls have on their surface ribs of plaster enclosing panels. The wainscoting is moulded and ribbed as before.

THE FIRST FLOOR: Rooms along the front of the house. There are three rooms on this West front of the building, interconnecting, and now used as a library. They have fairly simple cornices, and plain solid woodwork, but present some unusual features. The rooms at either end retain chimney-breasts and hearths, but the windows have been altered. Both front single-sash windows have been replaced, as noted before, by double sashes, but the single-sash wall cavity remains in each case. The room on the South side has had its lateral window blocked halfway up, to afford space for bookshelves, and the Northern room has no window at all on this side, due to the North wing next door. This latter room possesses a small chimney breast, with a curious chamfered top. Fig. 4.

The middle room, however, possesses, apart from the three windows overlooking the porch balcony, two fireplaces, facing each other, with the breasts in the thickness of the wall, and has a partly-curved wall (following the staircase well) in one corner, but this space is utilised as a cupboard in the other. The curved corner has the top panels of a door protruding above the floor boards.

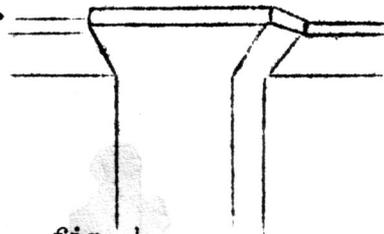


fig. 4.

The boards in this area have been laid differently to the rest. On the staircase-well side, it is possible to discern the shape of a six-panelled door about three-quarters of the way up the staircase. It is curved to follow the shape of the wall, and would seem to have opened onto a narrow landing with steps, leading up into the central bedroom already mentioned. From these unusual features, it seems possible that this room may have been used as a night-nursery, and the "staircase" door, with its own little staircase inside the room, may have been intended as a quick means of escape in case of fire. It seems to be still there, but has been painted and plastered over, and the stairs boarded over, too.

On the first floor, the decorative features are, as is to be expected, rather limited. Cornices and doors are plain. One room over the Bay has a fireplace in the Adam style, in carved wood, having a panel showing cherubs with torches carrying a flat basket, in the manner of Dionysiac revels. Another with an urn and leaf design in the same room (formerly two separate rooms).

THE BASEMENT, now given over to a Biology laboratory and heating arrangements, follows the basic plan of the Ground Floor, but has been much altered. In a cupboard over a former fireplace there is a bell-wire bracket, but no other signs of the bell system were noticed.

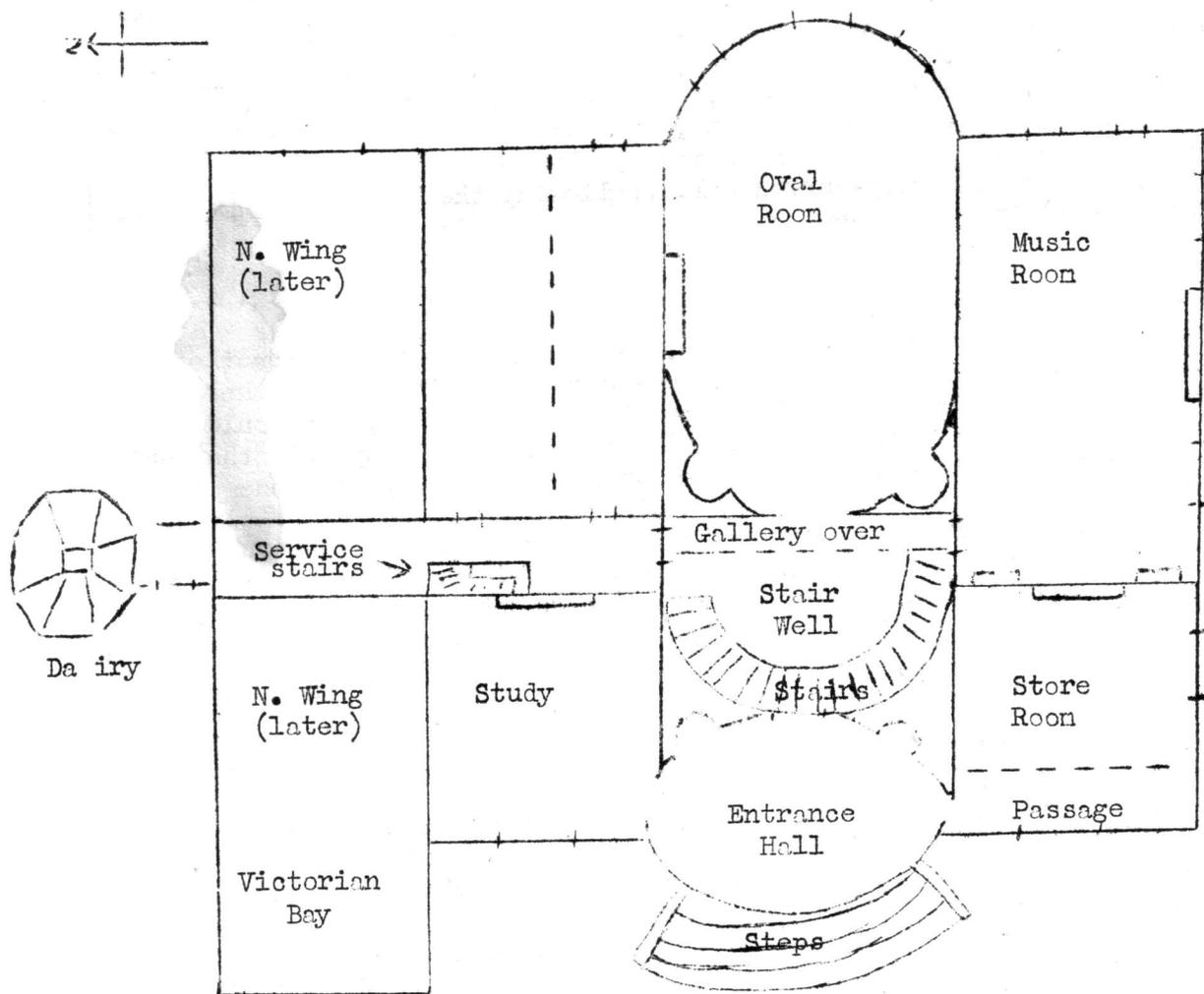
On the front of the building is a plaque which announces that the house was at one time the residence of "Baron Laurence of the Punjab,"

K.S.I., K.C.B., (Sir Joh Laurence) Governor General of India, 1864-1869.
 Chairman of the First London School Board, 1870-73. Lived here 1861-63.
 Buried in Westminster Abbey, 1879"

Robinsons 'History of Edmonton' has a map of the enclosures, in the front, and this property appears to be the same as that marked "Pole's Trustees" on the map, although no other details of the house are mentioned.

A member of the domestic staff at the school asserts that there is a tradition that the family that lived here last were related to the Haslucks, who lived in "The Wilderness" in Blagdens Lane (now Southgate Technical College grounds). The premises became a school in 1910.

Rough sketch of Ground Floor, Southgate House.



COACH VISIT, SUNDAY 2ND OCTOBER 1966: Most members will have heard that we have had to postpone our proposed visit to Wilton Hall until 1967. Instead we are indebted to Mr. Hugh Shortt Curator and his Assistant Mr. Moore for undertaking to open the Salisbury Museum specially for us on Sunday 2nd October 1966. This must be before lunch which means leaving Enfield Market Place at 8 a.m. (PLEASE NOTE EARLIER TIME). The cost of a seat on the coach will be one guinea, admission fees will be extra.

TIME TABLE

8 a.m. Coach leaves Enfield Market Place for Salisbury Museum.

1.30 p.m. The coach will leave the Museum for Rockbourne Roman Villa where work is in progress by the owner Mr. Morley Hewitt who has kindly invited us to the villa and the site museum.

3 p.m. (approx). The coach will leave for Old Sarum, two miles north of Salisbury. The fortifications of Old Sarum enclose an area of 29½ acres and contain an inner bailey and remains of the castle together with the foundations of the original Salisbury Cathedral. The site is under the guardianship of the Ministry of Works.

Members who wish to attend are asked to complete and return the attached application form as soon as possible to the Social Secretary;

Mr. E. L. Fereday,
779, Great Cambridge Road,
Enfield.

ENFIELD ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

NAME BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE

ADDRESS

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I shall be attending the visit to Salisbury, Rockbourne Roman Villa and Old Sarum on Sunday 2nd October 1966 and wish to reserve seats on the coach. A Cheque/Postal Order to the value of is enclosed.

Date.....

Signed.....

FIELD EXCURSION: Arising from the activities of our Observers Group and our current emergency digs, on Saturday 24th September 1966 there will be a joint Field Excursion by the Edmonton Hundred Historical Society and the Enfield Archaeological Society. The inclusive cost will be 10 shillings each.

TIME TABLE

- 2 p.m. Coach leaves Lansdowne Road, Tottenham.
 - 2.15 p.m. Pick-up at Enfield River Front, opposite the Town Station.
 - 2.40 p.m. Meet Mr. J. Edwards at Cheshunt Library Entrance, move to buildings opposite for illustrated talk on Cheshunt Great House.
 - 3.30 p.m. Leave for Cheshunt Great House (Goffs Lane) to look at ruins and our emergency dig.
 - 4 p.m. Meet Mr. & Mrs. Hindell at Theobalds Park School for a brief conducted tour of the buildings and nearby Temple Bar. (Light refreshments). There will be a small display of Roman pottery from our emergency excavation at Landseer Road, Bush Hill Park.
 - 5. 30 p.m. Forty Hall to look at the restoration of the 1630 mansion. (Mr. Paterson, the Curator, hopes to be present).
- Return via Enfield to Lansdowne Road, Tottenham.

There are only 40 places to be shared by both Societies so if you wish to attend please return the attached application form at once to the Social Secretary; Mr. E. L. Fereday, 779, Great Cambridge Road, Enfield.

ENFIELD ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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I shall be attending the Field Excursion to Cheshunt on Saturday 24th September 1966 and wish to reserve seats on the coach.
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