



ST ALBANS & HERTFORDSHIRE
ARCHITECTURAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER 221

August 2021



First Battle of St Albans postage stamp; painting by Graham Turner
© Graham Turner (www.studio88.co.uk); stamp design by
Royal Mail Group Limited. (See p. 36)

Included in this issue:

Problematic Roman Roads
New Society Publication
Amphibalus Shrine Project
Autumn Lecture Programme

Chroniclers Exhibition
Queen Victoria's Visit
Everlasting Lane
Coleman and the Turf

Table of Contents

Zoom Survey	5
17th Century Group Report	5
Library Report	6
New Acquisitions	6
Recent Journals	6
Clock Tower Report	8
Archaeology Group Report	9
St Julian's Research Group	9
Publications Committee	9
Local History Seminars	11
St Albans and Western Hertfordshire Slavery Initiative	12
'Hertfordshire Archaeology and History', Volume 17	14
A Plea	18
Restoration of the Amphibalus Shrine	20
The Origins of Everlasting Lane	22
Washington Wilson's Photo of the Clock Tower	25
St Albans and the Chroniclers of History	26
Notes and Queries	28
The Problem with Roman Roads	30
Gambling on the Turf Hotel	33
Triumphant visit of Victoria and Albert	34
The First Battle of St Albans Stamp	36
Lecture Programme	37

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

As many of you will know, it has long been a tradition that we hold our Annual General Meeting in early September, starting our new season of lectures. That was until last year when a certain pandemic forced us to change our plans, resulting in our first virtual AGM thanks to the wonders of Zoom, held in January. We may now be in something like 'normality' but your Council feels that we should still 'play safe', so currently intend holding our AGM in early January (exact date yet to be confirmed). We hope, fervently, that this will indeed be a 'live' meeting – just possibly supported by a Zoom transmission for those who are not able to join us in person. We shall keep you updated in the November *Newsletter*.

Bryan Hanlon
Secretary

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By the time you read this I hope you will have had a chance to catch up with family and friends you have not seen for some time.

Since I last wrote there has been much activity by Council on your behalf and this will continue in the summer. This will not be a traditional year where Council members and working parties take a well-earned break and recharge their batteries ready for the autumn season. The results of the lectures questionnaire are covered in Bryan Hanlon's update (see p. 5), and we will continue our investigations during the summer, working with Marlborough Road Methodist Church, to implement a technological solution with the aim of deploying face-to-face and simultaneous Zoom streaming in 2022.

There will be another meeting this August with Historic England, English Heritage, and our friends in the local authority to finalise proposals for preserving the Roman Wall in Verulamium Park. Professor Tim Boatswain and I were pleased with the results of our May

meeting with the interested parties. This resulted in agreement to protect the wall against both human and natural damage, and to create a better interpretation and visualisation of Watling Street and London Gate. Of course, we need to be vigilant – the mindless vandalism to the hypocaust



building in the park on at least two occasions this year shows that there is always a thoughtless minority who have no appreciation of their heritage, and evil happens when good people choose to do nothing. We are very lucky our endeavours have the strong support

of Councillor Anthony Rowlands who holds the Heritage brief on SADC.

Our strong working relationship with the team in St Albans Museum + Gallery is resulting in Society members not only helping to staff the new initiative of the local history hub, but also in providing advice to two future exhibitions. Another new initiative on slavery and St Albans will, hopefully, place this Society on the national map (further details in this newsletter). I am pleased that our Archaeology Group now numbers twenty, and that

members have already enjoyed a seminar and undertaken some geophys work (see p. 9).

The latest volume of *Herts Archaeology and History* has deservedly received many plaudits and I hope you all have purchased your copies at the incredibly low price of £5.00. Christine McDermott and Dr Isobel Thompson deserve great praise for their unstinting work in getting this across the finishing line. Over the summer Christine, David Moore (our Treasurer) and I will, with

others, be reviewing the future strategy and I will keep you informed on progress.

With the Clock Tower now open and run by Caroline Howkins, Mike Carey and the Clockateers, supported in a new initiative by our friends in the City Guides, and the first in our monograph series on Lady Anne Bacon nearing completion, it will truly be a busy summer.

All best wishes

Dr John Morewood
President

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to our new members:

Laurence Attewill	Oxon.	Matt Keen	St Albans
Steve Clarke	St Albans	Graham Kenyon	Harpenden
Louis Curtis	Abbots Langley	Miranda & Karol	
Jessica Davies-Porter	St Albans	Kowalczyk	Hemel Hemp.
Penelope Dynan	London	Paul & Pat Leggatt	St Albans
Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews	Hitchin	Jeremy Newton	Radlett
Dr Martin & Rosemary		Merle Thompson	St Albans
Goodman	St Albans	Christopher & Elizabeth	
Andrew Hall	St Albans	Webster	Welwtn G.C.
Patricia Harrison	St Albans	Liz Wright	St Albans

THE NEWSLETTER

Copy deadline for the November edition is 15 October 2021. If you have any comments about the *Newsletter* or wish to submit content, please email me, Jon Mein, via newsed@stalbanhistory.org.

ZOOM SURVEY

With thanks to all who responded, the results are in! A strong majority (94 per cent) of members wished – in some format or other – to keep Zoom lectures. The option ‘one lecture at Marlborough Road Methodist Church (MRMC) and two via Zoom’ beat ‘two lectures at MRMC per month and one via Zoom’ by a whisker. Your Council is still working to deliver the best of both worlds – i.e. all lectures to be held at

MRMC, but also transmitted via Zoom for those who cannot physically attend. This is not easy – besides the technological solution, we need an approach which will meet MRMC’s conditions, which are currently being formulated.

As previously advised, we shall continue streaming our lectures via Zoom only at least until the end of 2021. We shall keep you posted on what will happen for 2022!

Bryan Hanlon

17TH CENTURY RESEARCH GROUP – NEW LEADER SOUGHT

After many years, Jane Harris and I will shortly be standing down as leaders of the Society’s 17th Century Group. We are looking for someone with an interest in the period to take on the role.

We are part way through the publication of a three-volume collection of local probate documents. Following the success of the first volume, *Wills, Inventories and Probate Accounts from St Albans 1600-1615*, we are preparing the follow-up volume covering the 1616-29 period. Once it is published, we will step down although anticipate working alongside our successor(s) for the first few months.

The third and final volume in the series (1630-49) is the main focus of the group’s ongoing work. These years cover the lead-up to the Civil War, the war itself when St Albans supported Parliament, and concludes in 1649, the year of the regicide.

The leader’s key tasks involve maintaining the database, sourcing copies of documents for transcription, co-ordinating their transcription, editing the transcriptions for publication and writing an introduction.

This is fascinating research and very rewarding. Interested? Then please email me to organise an informal chat.

Pat Howe
pathowe777@gmail.com

LIBRARY REPORT

Finally, some good news – the Library is open again at our usual hours of 10 until 12 on Wednesday and Friday mornings. Because we want to protect both you and us, we will continue to request that you wear a mask and use hand sanitiser on arrival, and we will limit the number of people in the Library to six at any time. For this reason, access will be by appointment only. Please email us if you would like to come in – we will be delighted to see you.

New acquisitions

Throughout the lockdowns we have continued to acquire new material both by purchase and by donation and most is now catalogued and available for use. What follows is not a complete list of new additions to the collections but some of the more significant acquisitions.

First of all, a batch of books about local areas: *A history of Marshals Wick*, by Ray Perry; *The Colney Heath Chronicles*, by Ruth Herman; *Industrial Letchworth*, from the Letchworth Local History Research Group; *Wheathampstead*, by Dianne Payne; and of course *Secret St Albans* by Kate Morris.

Next, several books and pamphlets about the arts scene: *Odeon journey*,

which recalls the cinema in London Road from 1908 to 1995; *The Alban Arena*, which documents its construction and first fifty years, to 2012; *Stanley Kubrick: a life in pictures*, by Christiane Kubrick (Kubrick lived for many years at Childwickbury Manor); and *“They thought it was a marvel”*, by Tjitte de Vries and Ati Mul, about Arthur Melbourne-Cooper, a pioneer of filmmaking, who was born in St Albans and established the Alpha Picture House on London Road in 1908.

Finally, a couple of wild cards: *Music-making in the Hertfordshire parish (1760-1870)*, by Maggie Kilbey; and *The history of police stations in Hertfordshire*, by A.C. Wiseman.

Other newly-acquired and newly-catalogued items, along with all the books and pamphlets, can be found on our catalogue at:

<https://sahaas.soutron.net/Portal/Default/en-GB/Search/SimpleSearch>.

Heather Jardine
library@stalbanhistory.org

Recent Journal Articles

Abbots Langley Local History Society Journal, no. 54, Spring/Summer 2021
 Pp 4-6 & 11 “Village Water Supply: from “Abbots Langley Parish Magazine” no. 55, September 1885”, transcribed by

Richard Simons. The long summer drought caused the Parochial Committee to consider various schemes to provide clean water and decide upon a solution.

Herts Past and Present, no 37, Spring 2021

pp.3-29 "Foliate head carvings in Hertfordshire: A gazetteer of Green Men", by Nicholas Connell. Green men and women in England have been found dating back to the twelfth century. The author lists and describes those he has found in Hertfordshire, including many in St Albans.

pp.21-26 "Some thoughts on the name of Hitchin", by Keith J. Fitzpatrick-Matthews. The various explanations of the origin of the name Hitchin are explored, before the author offers his own theory.

Hemel Hempstead Local History Society Notes, no. 72, June 2021

pp. 1-2 "The A41 Corridor", by Michael Stanyon. The gap cut by the Bulbourne river has been used as a thoroughfare since prehistoric times. To Romans it was Akeman Street and it was later maintained by the Sparrows Herne Turnpike Trust. The coming of the canal and railway led to the industrialisation of the area.

The Record, London Colney Local History Society

no. 39, Autumn/Winter 2020, pp.5-9 "London Colney Village Club", by Ken Barker & Ian Holt. The club house was inaugurated in 1911. The club was possibly founded as an alternative social venue to the inns in the village. During the First World War facilities were provided for servicemen billeted in the area and later a large memorial hut was built alongside it.

no. 40, Spring/Summer 2021, pp.7-9 "North Mimms Rifle Range", by Peter Miller. Ranges were established to train new army recruits in 1915. A recent discovery at Kew has enabled the position of the North Mimms range to be plotted on a map, but unfortunately the site has been used for mineral extraction and no evidence remains on the ground.

Rickmansworth Historical Review, no 24, June 2021

pp.8-13 "West Hertfordshire: in the steps of Herbert Tomkins, Part 11: Great Gaddesden to St Albans" by Brian Thomson. The author continues his walk following the account in Tomkins' book of 1902, passing through the Gaddesden Estate, Flamstead, Redbourn and Gorhambury.

Lin Watson

CLOCK TOWER REPORT

The Clock Tower has finally opened its doors again to visitors. The Mayor of St Albans, Cllr Edgar Hill officially opened the Clock Tower on Saturday 26 June having his photo taken by the front door, holding the replica, 7lb bronze, Victorian ceremonial key.

When the Clock Tower was closed up for the end of the season in September 2019, little did we know that it would only open up to the public again 21 months later. Due to Covid restrictions we opened for one weekend only in 2020 and that was just for pre-booked ticket holders over the Heritage Open Weekend.



Cllr Edgar Hill officially opens the Clock Tower for the 2021 season (© Andy Lawrence)

Covid safety measures have now been put in place, along with a timed entry system of '6 in, 6 out'. This allows up to 6 visitors to climb to the top every 20 minutes without having to pass anyone on the very narrow staircase.

Apart from the Track & Trace table by the entrance, with its QR Code and hand sanitiser, another new addition to the Clock Tower is a contactless payment device. Even before the pandemic, we were looking into ways of taking payments other than by cash but the need to avoid handling money spurred us on to buying a SumUp card reader. Luckily, our volunteers have found it very easy to use as roughly two thirds of our visitors are paying by card or mobile phone banking.

Finally, I would like to thank all our volunteers who have continued to support the opening of the Clock Tower, and especially those who have been able to commit to a shift this season. Thank you, Clockateers, without you the Clock Tower would be just another abandoned, closed up old building.

Caroline Howkins

ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP REPORT

I have been delighted with the response to this initiative. The group now numbers twenty people with a range of ages and experience. Some have archaeology qualifications, some are studying for them, and some have none, but all are wonderfully enthusiastic. Earlier in the summer we had our first Zoom meeting which was a very interesting lecture by Dr Kris Lockyear on the online sites that can be used to help archaeologists.

This was followed in July by members of the group helping Kris in undertaking geophys work at Praewood House on the Gorhambury estate. This is close to the Fosse, the ditch the Wheelers looked at in the 1930s and which Kris believes is Iron Age.

The group has asked for future events to cover visits, writing up previous excavations, and seminars as well as more practical archaeology. Two Society members Lexi Diggins and Tony Berk are putting together our first site visit. There is also the likelihood of more geophys work, a guided walk following the layout of the Roman walls at Verulamium, a visit to the exhibits store at Sandridge Gate and a seminar programme.

I am grateful to Kris, David Thorold and Simon West for the enthusiastic support they have given this new group.

John Morewood

ST JULIAN'S RESEARCH GROUP

The group continues to turn up interesting items about the estate and its setting in St Stephen's parish. The mansion, and later Victorian gentleman's house, and the farm buildings on Watling Street are now well imagined and even beginning to be plotted using CAD techniques, whilst fascinating detail about the people, the operation of the farm and the estate's contribution to the parish are already the subject of articles, seminars etc.

For further information or to join in the group's activities, contact Kate Morris via kate@englishinfo.biz or visit the Society's website .

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

We are delighted to say that the first pamphlet in our new 'Concise Histories' series will be published this autumn. Entitled *Mistress of Gorhambury, Lady Anne Bacon, Tudor courtier and scholar* and written by Deborah Spring, it

describes the life of a formidable lady. See back cover for more details.

As a result of our July enews survey we have decided to go ahead with a launch event for the pamphlet, probably in the second half of September. The launch date and arrangements will be announced shortly.

The pamphlet will be available direct from the Society – from our online bookshop or by email. The price will be

£6.50 plus p&p (online banking to Lloyds, sort code 30 97 25, a/c 00811696, ref family name).

Our other news is a further change in the committee's membership. We are pleased to welcome Ruth Herman, Ian Jardine and Julia Merrick. John Cox has recently retired and I thank him for his support over the last five years.

Pat Broad
publications@stalbanhistory.org

HOT OFF THE PRESS: 'INDUSTRIAL LETCHWORTH – THE FIRST GARDEN CITY, 1903-1920'

In spite of being named the first 'Garden City', Letchworth was conceived as a model industrial town built on enterprise and employment. Never intended to be merely a pleasant place to live, it needed to be large enough to encourage the mass movement of manufacturers and their employees from overcrowded cities and to function as a self-supporting new town.

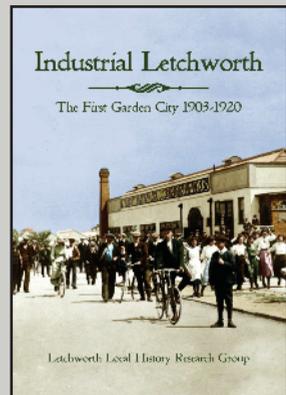
In this richly illustrated account, the Letchworth Local History Research Group looks in detail at the town's foundation in the early 1900s and the energetic organisation and administration that enabled it to get off the ground quickly and successfully.

Publishers: University of Hertfordshire Press (www.uhpress.co.uk)

ISBN: 978-1-912260-28-7

Cost: £14.99

Availability: via the web, local bookshops or the publishers.



LOCAL HISTORY SEMINARS

The seminar series will resume in September and will remain over Zoom for the foreseeable future. To maintain this pattern and allow ample opportunity for discussion following presentations, numbers will still be restricted to 25 so book early if the topic is of special interest. For members unable for any reason to attend, presenters are always willing to discuss the topic if you contact them after the event. Invitations to register will be sent via email a week before each seminar.

All seminars commence at 2.30pm and are usually on the third Thursday of each month in the season. The programme for September to November 2021 is as follows:

23 September

Parish welfare in St Stephen's near St Albans before the Poor Law Amendment Act 1834

Kate Morris

The poor rate disbursements for St Stephen's parish survive over a long period. The pattern of welfare, including pensions and outdoor relief, will be discussed as will the workhouse. Built in 1725, this was an early establishment compared with, for instance, St Michael's. Following the 1834 Act the

workhouse was sold and converted to cottages and the building survives still as a modern house.

21 October

The Impact on St Albans of the British Civil Wars 1643-1651

John Morewood

Although St Albans and the bulk of Hertfordshire was pro Parliament and no battles were fought in the county, this did not mean the town escaped unscathed, far from it. We will look at the information available to us to assess the impact on the town and its people and the meeting in the abbey church which led ultimately to the execution of Charles I.

18 November

A Street through Time: College Street c.1825-1925

Robert Pankhurst

College Street only came into existence when Thomas Telford built Verulam Road. We will look at its origins in relation to Georgian St Albans and follow it through Victorian and Edwardian times into the early twentieth century. Simple research based initially on census records highlights some of the more intriguing residents and their occupations as local industries came and went.

Kate Morris

ST ALBANS AND WESTERN HERTFORDSHIRE SLAVERY INITIATIVE

Little did I think when I started my PhD on Henry Brougham and anti-slavery how topical this subject would now be. The above initiative started as an idea to look at three key constituents in the period 1660-1843 – the West Indian Interest, the abolitionist movement, and the Black population. St Albans and Western Hertfordshire are well worthy of a study. Members of the West Indian Interest and their supporters had estates in our area. Joseph Timperon's tombstone can still be seen in St Peter's churchyard. George Hibbert (1757-1837) who lived at Munden near Bricket Wood and is buried at Aldenham, was a leading member of the pro-slavery lobby and Chairman of the Society of West India merchants.

Brocket Hall was the seat of Lord Melbourne the Home Secretary who believed slave emancipation would be the "death knell of the British Empire". But St Albans with its strong Nonconformist links also holds forth the tantalising prospect of having early abolitionists amongst its inhabitants who may have emulated John Liddon, the Baptist minister at Hemel Hempstead, who attacked slavery in a 1792 sermon. Then there are of course the Black people themselves who would come to St Albans and Hertfordshire as servants of the affluent: such as George Edward Doney who was taken from Africa as a slave and died in 1809 a respected servant of the Earl of Essex at Cassiobury. His gravestone is in Watford churchyard.

So far this leads perhaps to a monograph, a town trail and material to help schoolteachers with part of the curriculum. But working with a research group drawn from the Friends of St Albans Museum + Gallery who are looking at the Black population in St Albans over a much longer time frame this may inform an exhibition. There then of course is Mrs Worley's fountain. Anne Wares' excellent *The Quiet Philanthropist – a life of Isabella Worley* discusses the part guilt over the source of her



Munden House, 2013 (© Frank Iddiols;
courtesy of Henry Holland-Hibbert)

father's wealth played in her philanthropy. Perhaps moving her fountain to a more central part of St Albans will help as a symbol of understanding and reconciliation as well as forming part of Professor Tim Boatswain's city centre vision.

It is important this subject's emotive matters are looked at properly and not as a knee jerk reaction. True, a John Thrale was James II's agent for receiving customs duties at Barbados and the Leeward Islands and a John Thrale, part owner of a slave trading ship the *Delight*, petitioned Parliament in 1690 against his ship being seized. But is this the same John Thrale whose monument is in our cathedral? And is social media correct that the Black Boy pub in Bricket Wood is connected with the West Indies? After all the term 'The

Black Boy' was also given to Charles II because of his renowned swarthy complexion so the naming may have its origin in pro-Royalist nomenclature.

To ensure this initiative is undertaken properly I am delighted that the following have agreed to form an executive committee to supervise and give advice: Professor Tim Boatswain, Professor Lawrence Goldman of Oxford University, Professor Richard Huzzey of Durham University, and Councillor Anthony Rowlands of SADC. Prof. Goldman is also interested in the potential of showcasing the initiative as best practice in how a local history society, local government and schools work together on a historical subject. I will keep you posted.

John Morewood

HOTTISH OFF THE PRESS: 'SECRET ST ALBANS'

Announced earlier, Kate Morris' *Secret St Albans* is now readily available at the city's bookshops and on Amazon or directly from the publishers – www.amberley-books.com. Kate has come up with goings-on in early modern St Albans which will surprise and delight, though many are typical of that period throughout England. The chapter on practices of Birth, Death and the Married State demonstrates how attitudes have changed over the centuries. Some incidents and activities from education through health and welfare to sport and leisure, would perhaps be regarded today as patronising or extreme. The layout of the town then, its water supply arrangements, local occupations and personalities visiting the town complete a fascinating insight.

‘HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY’, VOLUME 17

Rather than focus on our newest volume, we have opted this time to remind our many new members about the previous volume, no. 17. Running to 212 pages, it was the first to be printed in full colour. We have invited the journal’s editor, Isobel Thompson, and Kris Lockyear to explore themes arising from this edition.

Christine McDermott
hertsarch@stalbanhistory.org

One of the points I like to stress about the county journal is that there is no real dichotomy between ‘archaeology’ and ‘history’ in its contents. It is all about the human past, whether from documents, placenames, possessions, the natural environment people lived within, their houses, how they lived their lives, disposed of their rubbish – and their dead. Vol. 17 illustrates this variety, from a handsome polished Neolithic axe from Welwyn Garden City to a Byzantine coin from Colney Heath with a Europe-wide setting; from the meaning of the place-name ‘Sarratt’ to sanitation through the ages in St Albans. Perhaps only archaeologists really appreciate the significance of prehistoric pottery at Aldbury and Apsley, but many readers might like the contrast between the detailed examination of Balls Park mansion and the archaeology in its

park. There is much more in the ‘Review of archaeological projects’ which provides summaries from the Historic Environment Record.

Dr Isobel Thompson

I subscribe to many journals on a variety of subjects, but all are linked, one way or another, to the study of our past. The arrival of a new volume is always a treat: what treasures lie within those covers? The publication of volume 17 in 2016 was no exception, combining, as it does, my passions for the subject and for the county. Articles that immediately caught my eye included one on sanitation in St Albans, and the report on the Old Rectory in Wheathampstead near where I currently live. One can imagine the excitement of finding that a building that externally looks late 18th/early 18th century has a 14th century building at its core. The reports of two sites with evidence for Hertfordshire’s elusive Middle Iron Age are important contributions to our understanding of the settlement of Hertfordshire. County journals are a vital part of archaeological and historical research, being both the end product of some projects, and the starting point of others. I already eagerly await the publication of volume 19!

Dr Kris Lockyear

The cost for non-members is £20 per copy whereas SAHAAS members pay just £5 for

their copy of each issue. This reduced rate is an important perk of membership of our Society. Please let Christine know by email if you want to order a copy.

- Our preferred method of payment is by BACS, to: account 'Herts Archaeology', sort code 30 97 25, account no 00978485 ref. HAH17.
- By post, with cheque payable to 'Herts Archaeology', to David Moore, 10 Oakwood Drive, St Albans, AL4 0XD. Please write HAH17 on the reverse.
- We can offer free delivery in St Albans, otherwise post and packing is £3.25.

CONTENTS OF *HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY* VOL. 17

1. Two Prehistoric Axes from Welwyn Garden City – Keith J. Fitzpatrick-Matthews
2. A Late Bronze Age & Medieval site at Stocks Golf Course, Aldbury – Jonathan Hunn
3. A Middle Iron Age Roundhouse and later Remains at Manor Estate, Apsley – Alexandra Grassam
4. A Middle Iron Age Settlement at Balls Park, Hertford – Pip Stone
5. Excavation at Thorley Park, Bishop's Stortford, 1983-4 – W. J. Wright
6. Sarratt and the Celts – Andrew Breeze
7. A Coin from Colney Heath and Links to the Byzantine Empire – Simon West
8. An Archaeological Watching Brief and Excavation at the Former Council Depot, Mill Road, Hertford – Peter Boyer
9. Excavation of a Medieval Pottery Kiln to the rear of 93-98 Bancroft, Hitchin – Helen Ashworth
10. Gardy-loo! A History of Sanitation in St Albans – Alison Turner-Rugg
11. Balls Park, a Seventeenth Century Mansion Revisited – Lee Prosser & Tansy Collins
12. Building recording of the Old Rectory, King Edward's Place, Wheathampstead – Tansy Collins, Lee Prosser & Kate Higgs
13. Building recording of a barn at Rotten Row, Furneux Pelham – Lee Prosser, Lisa Smith & Kathren Henry
14. Building recording of the Swan Public House, Watling Street, Park Street, St Albans – Amy Williamson & Lee Prosser
15. Review of Archaeological Projects in Herts, 2009-12 – Isobel Thompson

***Herts Archaeology and History* is produced by SAHAAS in partnership with East Herts Archaeological Society and Herts County Council**

CAN YOU SPARE A COUPLE OF HOURS OVER THE SUMMER?

If so, please consider becoming a 'Clockateer'. As members of the Society we have the pleasure and responsibility for keeping the Clock Tower open for the many visitors who climb the Tower each summer.

All we ask is that you do a 90 minute stint every so often. It is not taxing: just be welcoming. There are a few rules to learn which you will pick up working in the first instance alongside experienced members.

The money we raise goes in part to the Society's funds. This means we can, for example, run our extensive lecture programme yet keep the subscription at just £20 a year.

If you can spare some time, please email Caroline Howkins and Mike Carey via clocktower@stalbanshistory.org.

SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS – ONLINE ARCHIVE CATALOGUE

More commonly known as SPAB, the society has recently announced the availability of its new online catalogue. Formed in 1877, early members such as William Morris were “deeply concerned that well-meaning architects [were] scraping away the historic fabric of too many buildings in their zealous ‘restorations’.” (Source: SPAB website). No surprise then to find references in the catalogue to files covering Lord Grimthorpe’s work on the abbey as well as St Michael’s and St Peter’s churches. Similarly, there are records of other early *causes célèbres* at the so-called ‘Gables’ in Market Place and No.1 St Peter’s Street. More surprising is material relating to post-war work in French Row, presumably the preservation of the ‘Christopher’. The campaign to save the building was initiated by City Surveyor, Albert Moody, and highlighted in the ‘Conservation 50’ exhibition held at the museum in 2019. What was SPAB’s opinion of Moody’s work?

A quick skim of the catalogue shows there are 42 files relating to St Albans, 13 to Wheathampstead, 5 to Redbourn and 3 to London Colney. You can search the catalogue here: <https://catalogue.spab.org.uk/>

CONGRATULATIONS: SANDY WALKINGTON

Hearty congratulations to our immediate Past-President for the recent award of his MA by the University of Hertfordshire. Sandy spoke to the Society about his MA on 15 September 2020. St Albans has one of the largest Bangladeshi populations in the United Kingdom as well as significant other BAME communities, yet their lives and contribution to the city have been largely ignored in our local history research and writing. Sandy focused on memories of food – both the challenges for early migrants and new experiences for the indigenous popula-

tion, with the city having the first Indian restaurants in Hertfordshire. Thus his dissertation's title 'Spicing up St Albans'. Sandy conducted a number of oral interviews with local residents and also made 'innovative' use of Facebook as a research tool.

His examiners judged that it was 'an impassioned piece of historical research which makes a case for reassessing the history of St Albans [where] heritage and history are key to official place-making initiatives yet rarely acknowledge the presence and experiences of non-white residents'.

HOT OFF THE PRESS: 'ST AMPHIBALUS AND HIS SHRINE'

The recent restoration of the shrine of St Amphibalus has attracted considerable interest. In the introduction to this book, the former Dean of St Albans explains the rationale for the restoration. Amphibalus is the name now given to the unnamed priest (or cleric) who taught Alban about Christianity. The booklet then explains what is known of his story, and describes how the restoration of the cathedral's second shrine took place.

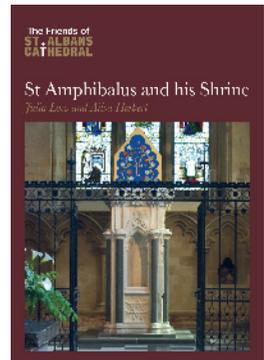
For more about the Amphibalus shrine project see pp. 20-21.

Authors: Julia Low and Ailsa Herbert

Publisher: Friends of St Albans Cathedral

Cost: £5.50. ISBN: 9780950251486

Availability: from St Albans Cathedral Shop (and online) or directly from the Friends (contact friends.publications@stalbanscathedral.org)



A PLEA

Writing history is difficult. One of the problems facing us is that the sources we rely on are not perfect. They have errors. The late Gerard McSweeney fought for many years to rebut the accepted position that the W.H. Smith's building in Market Place (Fig.1) was one and the same as the late-medieval Moot Hall. The source for this incorrect attribution? It was the Revd Henry Fowler, one of our illustrious early members, who in the 1870s made the case which no one had bothered to check until Gerard did so around 20 years ago. Who can blame researchers relying on Fowler as their source? His work has after all generally stood the test of time.



Fig. 1: Not the Moot Hall – the original Town Hall (© F. Iddiols)

There are plenty of other examples. As you will see on p. 33, the story that Thomas Coleman was responsible for rebuilding the Chequer inn in Chequer Street is wrong (Fig. 2). As this was based on Coleman's own claim, it is easy to see how it crept onto the Internet without anyone checking. It is also a reminder that research in the Internet age is not straight-forward.

However, having said this, it is worrying that once an argument has been debunked or a 'fact' is just plain wrong, how long it survives in the public domain. Like the hydra of Greek antiquity, having lost one head, the erroneous fact refuses to die, growing more heads, and repeats itself. The new official visitors' guide to St Albans published just this year very kindly credits our Society with contributing the 'Do you knows' that appear.

But what about those other parts of the guide that we were not consulted on? It has perpetuated (on p. 43) a story that has long been debunked: there is no evidence for the Devil's Dyke at Wheathampstead being 'the scene of a battle between Julius

Caesar and local tribes'. The same guide contains (on p. 7) the proud claim that we are 'the site of England's most important Roman settlement'. Really? What about Colchester and its temple to the god Claudius, and of course London? These examples just make me angry - why do writers not check their facts?



Fig. 2: James Pollard's view of the Turf Hotel (formerly the Chequer, c.1832 (Editor's collection)

We should always look to staunch the flow of errors reaching the public domain. So, here's my plea to anyone writing history for publication: please, please, please, ask people with at least some contextual knowledge to review your work.

Do write to our esteemed *Newsletter* editor on your favourite myths about St Albans and district and we will do our best to try and check the sources.

Bryan Hanlon

MORE BARGAINS COMING UP

A further batch of surplus library books will be offered for sale to members during August, at a moderate price. As previously, the full list will be posted on the Society's website, and an enews message sent out towards the end of the month, pointing members to the relevant page. Please look out for this!

The books are the usual eclectic mix of local and wider historical titles. Several feature interesting collections of old photographs of towns in Hertfordshire, including St Albans, and this time there is also quite a number focusing on archaeological topics. Items will be sold on a first-come first-served basis up to a closing date at the end of September 2021.

Sally Pearson

RESTORATION OF THE AMPHIBALUS SHRINE

“Without Amphibalus, there would be no St Alban”. This statement has been at the heart of the restoration project.

Around 300 AD an un-named Christian cleric, fleeing persecution, was given refuge in Roman Verulamium by a man called Alban. Alban was so impressed with the cleric’s teaching and prayerful life that he converted to Christianity. When the Roman soldiers came searching out Christians Alban exchanged cloaks with the cleric and gave himself up to the authorities. Refusing to go back to worshipping the Roman Gods and Emperor meant the death sentence for Alban and he was executed somewhere near where our glorious cathedral stands today.

What happened to the cleric? Very little is known about this man. It is believed he escaped (wearing Alban’s cloak) and journeyed to Wales to carry on converting and baptising the population into Christianity. The evidence is sparse, a few words written by Bede and later expanded by William, a monk at St Albans. The story tells us that the cleric at some point was forced back to Verulamium in chains where he was executed in a particularly gruesome manner. Some 400 years after the first

written account, in 1135, the cleric was given a name by Geoffrey of Monmouth who opted for a Greek word, Amphibalus, relating back to the cloak exchanged by the two men.

A supposed grave of Amphibalus was discovered in the late 1170s at Redbourn, and the installation of the bones into the abbey church is recorded in *The Deeds of the Abbots*. This gives us a description of a beautifully decorated shrine with scenes from the life of St Amphibalus which was near the high altar. Later the shrine was moved to be near the large wall painting of the two Saints which shows their parting. It can still be seen today and is one of the four reimagined using light projection.

The dissolution of the monastery in 1539 led to both the shrines being smashed and used as infill to build the walls separating the Lady Chapel from the abbey church. Not until the late 1800s when the walls came down was the fate of the shrines



The ‘largely ignored’ shrine
(© Julia Low)



The restored shrine (© Julia Low)

known. The stones were recovered and the Alban shrine was restored by casting missing pieces in resin. The Amphibalus shrine did not do so well. Over 55 per cent of the stone was lost, mostly of the middle area. The Victorians decided to support what remained using house bricks. By the early 1900s the shrine was moved to a dark corner of the north ambulatory aisle and largely ignored.

The restoration of the shrine became a central part of the 'Alban, Britain's First Saint' project. The first task was to find out, and record, what existed from the original stone and then plan

the restoration works, whilst also finding a new location for the completed piece. It was obvious that it could not go back in position in the retro-choir, it would have meant losing many seats in the Lady Chapel which is a busy working parish church and Ecumenical chapel. The decision was taken to use the Chapel of Our Lady of the Four Tapers; close to Alban but separate enough to provide an area of calm and prayer. At this point Covid-19 turned up. The shrine had been dismantled and was at the restoration workshop. Five tons of replacement stone had arrived and was shipped to the Master Carvers' home workshops, and everyone crossed their fingers!

Because traditional hand carving methods were used throughout and by being compliant with the regulations which finally allowed our two restorers to work in isolation on site, the restored shrine grew slowly behind hoardings in the cathedral. In January 2021 the hoarding came down to reveal the full glory of the restored shrine, testament to the skill of the restorers and carvers but a true tribute to the man, without whom there would be no St Alban.

Julia Low

Note: see p. 17 for details of the new publication about the shrine.

THE ORIGINS OF EVERLASTING LANE

Today Everlasting Lane is a public right of way, unmetalled for most of its route between its junction with Oysterfields in the south and Batchwood Drive in the north. (Fig. 1) Its present name seems to be a recent coinage, perhaps a comment on its ability to survive twentieth century housing developments that have threatened to obliterate it. It is obviously a very old lane – a tree-lined and sunken trackway and, for one section, what might more

accurately be described as a terraceway where it follows the side of a valley.

A study of early maps, documents and the landscape itself shows clearly that Everlasting Lane was at least twice as long as it is now, beginning possibly at St Michael's church or, more certainly, at Kingsbury manor and continuing to the north to Batch Wood on the edge of the Childwickbury estate. Roads tend to be named after their destinations; so it is significant that an earlier name for Everlasting Lane was Kingsbury Lane and, in the medieval period, St John's Lane, probably from St John's Cross that is believed to have stood at its junction with the present Fishpool Street. (Ref. 1) (2)



Fig. 1: Everlasting Lane between Kingsbury and the moated site in Batch Wood. OS 1:25,000 Sheet 52/10, published 1948

The precise course of the old lane to the north is uncertain as it appears to have had two branches, but the original destination, as I have suggested, was probably Batch Wood, a moated manorial site (Hertfordshire HER No. 6534) a walkover survey of which revealed twelfth to fourteenth century pottery.(3) More recent LiDAR images show the layout of the complex very clearly and the now disused continuation of Everlasting Lane from the corner of a small green at the junction of Green Lane and Francis Avenue to Batch Wood is clearly shown both on the LiDAR

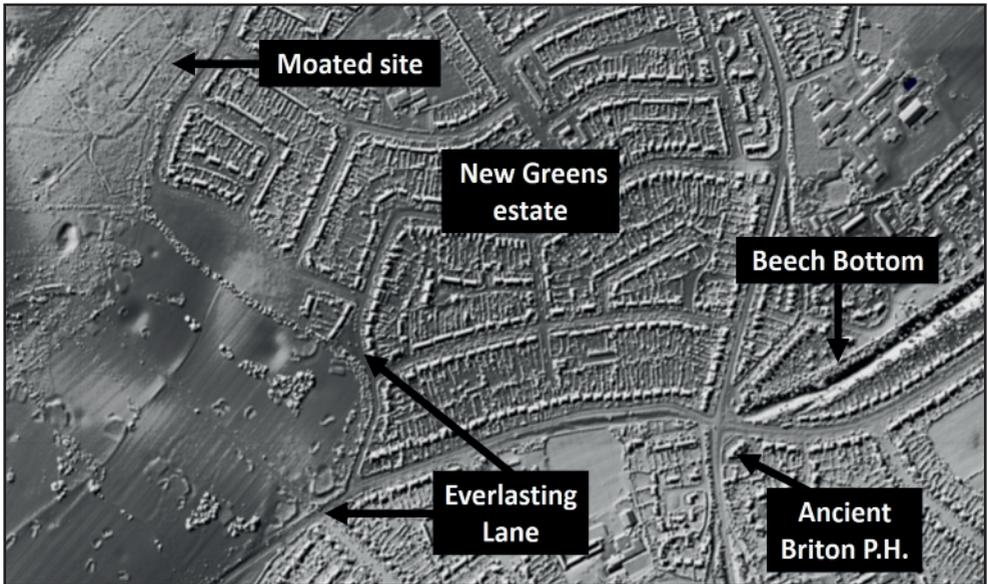


Fig. 2: LiDAR image of Everlasting Lane and moated site in Batch Wood. Source: Defra Data Services Platform. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0

image (Fig. 2) and the 1st edition 6-inch Ordnance Survey map (Hertfordshire Sheet 34) surveyed between 1872 and 1878, but it had gone by the time the map was revised in 1897.

A close examination of the LiDAR image shows that the old lane was directed towards the entrance to the outer enclosure of the site as indicated on Jonathan Hunn's plan.(4) The conclusion seems obvious: that during the Middle Ages Everlasting Lane linked the manorial centre of Kingsbury with the 'manorial complex' of Batchwood.

When Prof. Levett studied the fourteenth century copy of the Kingsbury court book,

extant for the years 1240 to 1331, she noted that the courts were held variously at Westwick, Childwick and Kingsbury, showing that these centres were linked and under the jurisdiction of the cellarer and subsequently the *refectorarius* of the abbey.(5) Further, the *Gesta Abbatum Monasterii Sancti Albani* tells us that 'Childewikshaye alias dictum Bacheworthe' – Childewikshaye was also known as Bacheworthe in the fourteenth century.(6) Childwickshay being 'the (*ge*)*hæg* or enclosure adjoining Childwick'.(7)

Until recently it was thought that deer parks were a Norman introduction, but it is now believed that the Old English '*(ge)hæg*', Middle English 'hay', a fence or

enclosure, sometimes referred to a pre-Conquest deer enclosure. A fourteenth century reference to a field in the manor of Batchworth (Batchwood) that butted up to 'Childwyk [deer] park' suggests that Childwickshay was a hay.(8)(9)

It might be mentioned as a footnote that the place-names Kingsbury, Westwick and Childwick suggest an interesting functional relationship within the abbey, and possibly earlier, estate. As the place-name scholar Richard Coates observed, Hertfordshire has an unusual number of place-names ending with Bury; Cyngesbyrig, mentioned in a late Saxon will being one of the earliest recorded.(10) The meaning of OE *burh* changed over the years but there is little doubt that in the late tenth century it was applied to a fortified enclosure or a secure estate centre. The precise location and form of Saxon Kingsbury are disputed but it was clearly in the area of St Michael's Church. Westwick and Childwick both contain the OE *wīc*, the meaning of which also varied over the years but during the Middle Ages it often meant a farm and, more especially, a dairy farm. The implication here is that Westwick and Childwick were outlying farms whose produce was collected and stored (some consumed and some sold) at Kingsbury. Perhaps the next time I walk up the lane I shall hear the creaking ox cart and the crunch of its iron-bound wheels on the stones as it makes its way slowly to Kingsbury, laden

with produce from the outlying farm of Childwick.

I would be delighted to receive any comments you may have about this article via: newsed@stalbanhistory.org.

John Pile

References

- (1) David Dean, 'Alban to St Albans, AD 800 to 1820', in Slater T. & Goose N. (eds), *A County of Small Towns: the development of Hertfordshire's urban landscape to 1800* (Hatfield, 2008), fig. 13.4; p. 313
- (2) Page W., *The Story of the English Towns: St. Albans* (London, 1920), endpaper map
- (3) Cartographic material: Verulamium Museum. 1980. Batchwood, St Michael's, site of the manor of Childwickshay or Bachesworth (survey of earthworks). Cited in Hertfordshire HER
- (4) Hunn J. R., *Reconstruction and Measurement of Landscape Change: a study of six parishes in the St Albans area*, British Archaeological Reports (BAR), British Series 236 (1994), fig. 31.2
- (5) Levett A. E., *Studies in Manorial History*, (Oxford, 1938; reprinted Merlin Press Ltd, 1962), pp. 82, 87-88
- (6) Rolls Series, 3 vols, 1867-9
- (7) Gover J. E. B. *et al*, *The Place-Names of Hertfordshire* (Cambridge, 1938), pp. 90-91
- (8) Liddiard R., 'The Deer Parks of Domesday Book', *Landscapes*, 4.1 (Spring 2003), pp. 4-23
- (9) Rowe A., *Medieval Parks of Hertfordshire* (Hatfield, 2009), pp. 188-9
- (10) Coates, Richard, 'So fair a bunch of berries', *Hertfordshire Countryside*, 30.189 (January 1975), pp. 18-19

WASHINGTON WILSON'S PHOTO OF THE CLOCK TOWER



The Clock Tower c.1883
(University of Aberdeen)

In the May 2021 Newsletter, we introduced the work of prolific Victorian photographer, George Washington Wilson & Co. Here's another of the company's local photos.

The photographer has captured the Clock Tower on a lovely sunny day, just before 3 in the afternoon. The clock informing us of the time was installed in 1866 and was lit up at night by three gas jets inside the tower. The ground floor is believed to have been used as a shop since the tower was built c.1405 and here we can see that it is being run as a "Saddler & Harness Maker". James Walklate ran this business from 1873 until he died in 1889, when his widow, Mary took over. She sold up in 1898 after going bankrupt and they are buried together in a grave in Romeland.

Next door, was the fishmonger Alfred Maggs, whose son, Charles, carved his name and the date, 1884, in the stone parapet at the top of the Tower, which is still there today.

Maggs' shop sign, the edge of which can be seen, only appeared in 1881 and Walklate's sign changed in appearance by 1886, leading us to date the photo between those years. It was probably taken from the belvedere opposite – a six-sided, small structure built on the upper part of a building in High Street.

Caroline Howkins

KEEP THE DATE: HERTFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY SYMPOSIUM, 2021

This year's symposium is scheduled for Saturday 21 November at Tewin Memorial Hall. The topic will be the county's rivers and waterways. More anon.

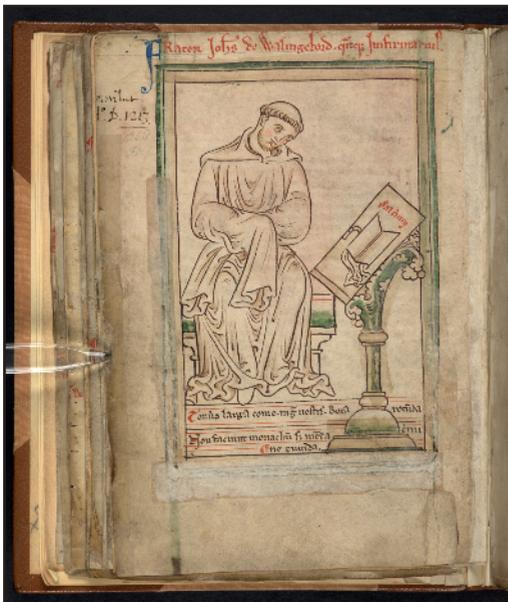
ST ALBANS AND THE CHRONICLERS OF HISTORY

David's article introduces the latest major exhibition at St Albans Museum: 'Chroniclers of History'. This runs until 31 October 2021. The Museum's website has plenty of information about the exhibition and associated programme.

While many monasteries produced chronicles, few produced works of such depth and quality as those of St Albans – and certainly none did so for so long. St Albans had a number of advantages in this; it was close to London and with the presence of the martyr's tomb, of

high status, so that the king and his retinue as well as the leading barons regularly visited, providing the chroniclers with ample first-hand sources of accounts of national and international interest. Many of St Albans' abbots were powerful figures who strengthened the abbey's position by developing political independence from both the king and the church, and increasing its landholdings. This also led to a need to produce records confirming St Albans' rights and ownership of these estates.

The chronicles produced by the monks of St Albans served as the records of events of their church and the events that affected it, with an eye always to the interests of the monastery above all others. Their accounts are not unbiased, but their independence from royal censure means that they provide an alternative history to the actions of the elite. St Albans' size and status – it was the premier Benedictine monastery in England – meant that what may affect it included national and international events, and the monks recorded their abbey's dealings with kings and popes with a similar bias – the Pope, although nominally their superior was considered greedy and far too influenced by the French; the king, although pious, was a fool who couldn't be trusted to safely handle affairs of state.



Abbot John of Wallingford at his writing desk with a book, by Matthew Paris (British Library Cotton MS Julius D VII f42v.)

What really set the chroniclers of St Albans apart from their fellows however, was simply the quality of their work. Although not the first chronicler, Matthew Paris was the first to really attract a name for the works of St Albans. He wrote copiously and widely, producing a number of histories that were particularly detailed for the events of his lifetime. His wide-ranging interests and his somewhat gossipy style of writing meant that he produced detailed snapshots of the medieval world that he lived in and gives a unique voice to his world. At the time he was widely well regarded, with the king specifically asking the monk to attend certain events and record them for posterity. Indeed, his fame was such that later in his life, Paris attempted to remove the more scurrilous comments he had made about his peers, as his works were beginning to be requested by individuals beyond the abbey – including the king!

Paris' writings, and his equally skilful drawings encouraged the development of chronicle writing at St Albans for many years, but by the late fourteenth century, times had changed. Few monks produced books directly in their scriptoriums any more; instead illustrators and often scribes were hired in to produce works for them. Thomas Wal-

singham, the second great chronicler from St Albans, purposefully worked to reverse this state of affairs. Directly influenced by Paris to such an extent that his major work, *The Chronica Maiora* shares its title with that of Paris' magnum opus, Walsingham rebuilt the scriptorium and set about producing a second golden age of chronicling. His themes and biases were also similar to his predecessor, but by Walsingham's time the world was changing and he is much more scholarly and academic. Being more aware of his biases and keen to show his learning in how he phrases his words – Walsingham's account of the Battle of Agincourt is purposefully written to echo the style of classical Latin works such as Virgil's Aeneid. Unlike Paris, Walsingham also intended his works to have a wider readership and influence later writers – although he also felt the need to correct some of his stronger views against some important individuals, later in his life.

From the early thirteenth century until the late fifteenth century, the monks of St Albans recorded events that affected them, and in the process wrote the history of England itself.

David Thorold
Curator, St Albans Museums

NOTES AND QUERIES

This new occasional series provides an opportunity for members and others to post questions relating to their research. Please send any replies to: newsed@stalbanhistory.org.

French Special Services in St Albans

I am interested in the training of operatives in St Albans during 1944/45 for clandestine missions in France. The base for this work was Praewood House on the Gorhambury estate (see photo below). The training was for the 'Sussex Plan', an operation to insert small teams of specialists north of the Loire to observe German troop movements both before and after D-Day. For more about the Sussex Plan see: <http://www.plan-sussex-1944.net/anglais/macro.htm>.

My query relates to one of these specialists, Lucien Millet (codename Lucien Marchand), who was captured and shot by German soldiers in August 1944. While in St Albans he married Marie-Louise Bates of 70 Beaumont Avenue. She worked for De Gaulle's secret service in London and was of mixed British/French parentage, her father being an employee with 'the War Grave Commission' – what is now the Commonwealth

Commission I assume. The family lived briefly in St Albans in the early 1940s.

Admittedly this is a long shot but do any members have knowledge of the Bates family or, more realistically, of the use of the Gorhambury estate during the last war?

Marie Ligonnière-Wouenzell

Remembering St Julian's?

You may have read in these pages of a team of volunteers who are uncovering the past history of the St Julian's estate in St Albans. St Julian's farm, farmhouse and buildings existed until 1955 and the monastic barn until the early 1960s. I would love to know if the farm workers of those days passed on stories of old times to their grandchildren. Families by name were Barrett, Bean, Childerley (he knew all the old crafts), Clough, Hadley, Hickman, Kinnard, MacNally, Seabrook, West, Whiting, Woodgate and Worbey. Others unknown may just have done seasonal work. Please get in



Praewood House, 1930s (SAHAAS Library)

touch if you know anything about them or their descendants. I am glad to say I have heard from the Willett family. Perhaps your parents bought produce from the farm, or scrumped apples or got cherries from the orchard. Do tell!

The family of the last farmer, Archie Muir, has been recalling what it was like to farm after the war. The dairy was run by Bill, Archie's older brother. The cowmen were Albert Barrett and Harry Woodgate. Hickman was a stockman who lived in the cottage attached to the farmhouse with Miss Hickman who helped in the farmhouse. The Whiting family with several sons lived in one or more of the farm cottages.

Julia Merrick

The workhouse chapel

The former St Albans workhouse chapel is hidden in plain view on the old hospital site off Waverley Road. The building was completed in 1893 to meet the religious needs of the inmates. Funds were raised by The Revd Canon Edward Liddell and the chapel was designed by Society member, F.T. Davys, and built by Miskin's. What interests me is the reredos, now removed. According to a report in the *Herts Advertiser* (16 December 1893, p.3), this was 'executed by Mrs [Mary] Watts'. Some readers may be familiar with her work and also

her husband's, George Frederic Watts, now displayed at the eponymous Watts Gallery at Compton in Surrey. Do any members recall the chapel before its closure and more particularly have photos of the interior?

Hilary Calvert

Defining customary acres

Frederic Seebohm (1833-1912) is best known for his book *The English Village Community* (1883), based on detailed research into the medieval and earlier history of Hitchin, his home town. In 1914 his son Hugh published some of his father's hitherto unpublished papers under the title *Customary Acres and their Historical Importance*. The acre is defined as a strip of land 4 perches wide by 40 perches long; the statute acre being based upon a 16 1/2 foot perch. However, there were local perches of various lengths in use giving rise to local, or customary, acres of different sizes. In an area of south-east Hampshire that I have studied, for example, the perch was 13.53 feet long, giving rise to a customary acre just 2/3 the size of a statute acre. Having found no reference in Seebohm's studies to either a Hitchin or a Hertfordshire customary acre, I wondered whether any of our readers had come across them in the St Albans area.

John Pile

THE PROBLEM WITH ROMAN ROADS

In scene 10 of 'Monty Python's Life of Brian', the rebels list what the Romans have done for us; roads are third on the list. Roads are one of the aspects of the Roman world that everyone knows about, or do we?

What do we mean by a 'Roman' road? For many the term 'Roman road' means an engineered road, one which crosses the country in a series of straight-line segments like Watling

Street or Ermine Street. There are some famous long-distance roads such as the Appian Way which connected Rome to Brindisi. The surface of the road was paved in some way, and the routeway delimited by a pair of boundary ditches. In some places, the line of such roads is quite obvious and, on occasion, is still used by a modern road. A good example is the road which connected Verulamium (St Albans) to Camulodunum (Colchester). The country lane between Datchworth and Watton-at-Stone follows the line of this road for most of the way, but deviates



Fig. 1: The Roman road either side of Watton-at-Stone seen in the 2018 imagery available via Google Earth.

to the north just before Watton. Aerial photographs show the boundary ditches crossing the aptly-named Upper and Lower Stony fields. Recent imagery available via Google Earth shows the continuation of this road to the east of Watton (Fig. 1).

But what about more modest routes? The Romano-British countryside was an occupied, exploited and managed landscape. In most of Hertfordshire, we estimate that there was some form of small farmstead every square kilometre or so. Then there were the larger settlements like Braughing, Baldock and Welwyn, and finally the *civitas* capital of Verulamium at modern St Albans. This dense network of settlements must have been connected by an equally dense network of tracks and roads. These tracks would be indistinguishable from their prehistoric forebears and their medieval descendants. Some of our footpaths and bridleways are the modern survivals of these routes. Many of these roads can be quite ephemeral, such as the road found at Turner's Hall Farm.

The great doyen of Roman road studies in Britain was I. G. Margary who published his survey in 1955[1], a volume that was re-issued many times. Inspired by his work, a group calling themselves 'The Viatores' undertook research on

roads in the south-east Midlands which included Hertfordshire west of Ermine Street. Two members of the Society were part of this group — C. Morris and R. H. Reid — and the odd notes about their progress are to be found in our early newsletters.[2] Their work was published in 1964.[3] Unfortunately, many of the roads they proposed are based on very little evidence. Isobel Thompson's entry on Roman Roads in *An Historical Atlas of Hertfordshire*[4] compares the road network proposed by the Viatores with the roads for which we actually have some evidence. There is quite a stark difference.

It is not surprising that some 57 years after it was published the research has been somewhat superseded. Such is the nature of academic endeavour. The problem, however, is how that work is used now. Isobel Thompson provides an entertaining example.[5] Most books on the history of Stevenage start with Six Hills barrow cemetery and the Roman road from the south.[6] What, however, is the evidence for the date of the Six Hills? Well, they lie on the line of a Roman road. So, what is the evidence for the Roman road? You may have guessed, it is the line of six burial mounds... Unfortunately, this entertaining example is just one of many where later researchers have assumed that the Roman roads listed by the

Viatores are fact rather than mere possibilities. Ever more complicated interpretations are developed on all sorts of themes from the boundaries described in Anglo-Saxon charters to the meanings of placenames, based on Roman roads for which there is no evidence. My plea, therefore, is that before you start building theories based on the routes of Roman roads, please check to see if there is any evidence for such a road existing. A good place to start is always the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record available via the Heritage Gateway.[7]

Kris Lockyear

References

- (1) Margary, I. G., *Roman Roads of Britain*, Vols. 1–2 (London, 1955)
- (2) SAHAAS *Newsletter* No. 3 (April 1961), p. 2; *Newsletter* No. 7 (January 1962), p. 5
- (3) The Viatores, *Roman Roads in the South-East Midlands* (London, 1964)
- (4) Thompson, I., 'Roman Roads', in D. Short (ed.), *An Historical Atlas of Hertfordshire* (Hatfield, 2011), pp. 36-7
- (5) Thompson, I., 'When was the Roman conquest of Hertfordshire?', p.133, n.1, in K. Lockyear (ed.), *Archaeology in Hertfordshire: Recent Research* (Hatfield, 2015), pp. 117–34
- (6) For example, Ashby, Margaret and Hills, Don, *Stevenage: a history from Roman times to the present day* (Stevenage, 2010), p. 1
- (7) <[heritagegateway.org.uk /gateway](http://heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway)>



The former gaol buildings c.1987 (SAHAAS Library, John Rudling Collection)

NORMAN STANLEY FLETCHER ...

Just before lockdown started, the Society's Library was presented with several black and white photos of St Albans by the family of the late John Rudling. There is a distinct value to the collection. Taken in the 1980s the photos record landmark buildings on the point of demolition or, as here, being demolished. The former prison governor's residence of course remains as the Register Office but much else was swept away in the late 1980s.

GAMBLING ON THE TURF HOTEL

Thomas Coleman is one of the most interesting characters in the nineteenth century history of St Albans. It was he who initiated the running of the first steeplechase in England turning the 1830s town into a hotbed for horse racing and gambling. Coleman's base was the Turf Hotel in Chequer Street which he paid to rebuild in modern fashion (*Baily's Magazine*, 1 June 1876). That was his claim anyway, and such is the general interest in Coleman, one that is now regularly repeated on the Internet. However, the story has always troubled me as his leasehold tenure and shaky credit history suggest someone else paid the bill.

A 'to let' advert in *The Times* newspaper (4 September 1826, p. 1) confirms that Coleman was indeed telling a tall tale. The advert records that the inn 'has been rebuilt' and that interested parties should apply to Mr Jeffries, the current tenant. As the date of publication was fifteen months before Coleman took the lease, he cannot have been responsible for rebuilding the inn (HALS SBR/354). Instead the Kinder family, owners of the local brewery and the inn's freehold, are the likely suspects.

Why does this matter? While it is always best to have our facts straight, there are

two key points to consider. Firstly, in repeating his claim about paying for the building, writers over-extend Coleman's story from sporting entrepreneurialism into property development.

Secondly, we lose sight of what really happened. After decades of decline, 1826 was an important year for the local inn trade. Not only was the Chequer redeveloped but two new inns were built from scratch. One was the plush Verulam Arms (now the Verulam House Nursing Home) whose cost was underwritten by Lord Verulam. The second was another Kinder venture. This was the (now-demolished) Cross Keys on the corner of Chequer Street and London Road. These three were the first purpose-built establishments in the modern history of the town, a sign of confidence in a trade boosted by the opening that same year of the Verulam Road bypass.

Coleman had no hand in these developments. For those who did – the Kinder family and Lord Verulam – their investment plans soon went awry. Just twelve years later, in 1838, the opening of the London to Birmingham railway brought the inn trade to its knees. Ironically, Coleman must have been relieved not to have had any capital tied up in the Turf's bricks and mortar.

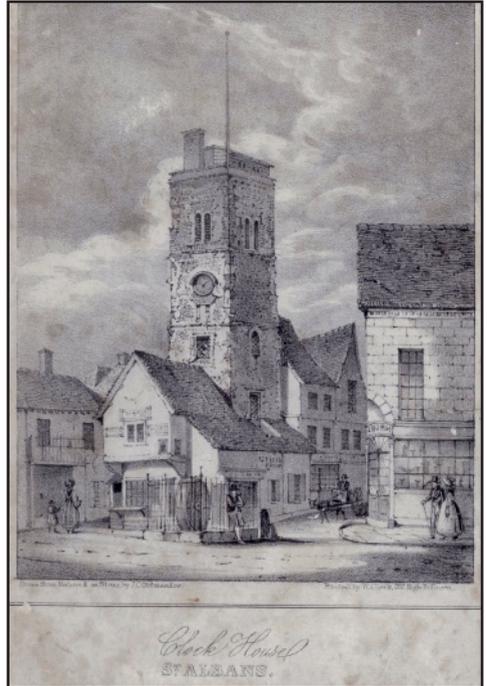
Jon Mein

TRIUMPHANT VISIT OF VICTORIA AND ALBERT

The people of St Albans were among the first among thousands in the home counties to be visited by the young Queen Victoria and her husband Prince Albert. The couple were only passing through on their way to and from Panshanger Park but nevertheless every effort was made to ensure the visits on Thursday 29 and Saturday 31 July 1841 would be triumphant and memorable.

The Queen made two expeditions that summer. The first was to Nuneham House in Oxfordshire and the second took the royal couple to Woburn Abbey, home of the Duke and Duchess of Bedford, and from there to the Hertfordshire home of the Earl and Countess Cowper at Panshanger.

On the journey from Woburn the royal party entered St Albans via Verulam Road, arriving at the high street where an elaborate 120-foot long triumphal arch had been erected. A 'Mr Boutell' was credited with planning this, almost certainly the Revd Charles Boutell of Sandridge parish who in 1845 became one of the founding members and first secretaries of our Society. He was an expert on heraldry and it was perhaps for this reason that he was invited to plan the triumphal arch 'formed of dif-



Clock Tower c.1840 showing flagpole,
J.C. Oldmeadow (St Albans Museums)

ferent foliage, on which were various ornamental devices, the whole surmounted with different emblematic flags'. The structure included seating with a canopy at its centre formed of the Royal Standard. Another immense Royal Standard flew from the Clock Tower.

The mayor John Horner Rumball met the royal carriage near the Verulam Arms Hotel with a welcoming party including members of the organising committee, boys from the Blue Coat School, girls from the various parish schools and the Corporation's sergeant-at-arms bearing

the mace. They led the way to the triumphal arch under which the Queen's horses were changed before her carriage proceeded onwards as the band played Rule Britannia, passing up Chequer Street and St Peter's Street at a rapid pace.

The Queen noted her impressions of St Albans: 'The old abbey is very fine and looks so well, as one approaches it. The town was immensely full and decorated with great taste and there were triumphal arches etc without end.'

Returning from Panshanger Park the following Saturday, the royal party entered St Albans via St Peter's Street, stopping in front of the Turf Hotel in Chequer Street where the horses were changed. Whilst detained at this spot the National Anthem was sung by local church and chapel choirs. The royal carriage then moved off at a very slow pace down Holywell Hill which was 'covered with brilliant equipages, equestrians and pedestrians of all kinds. It was like a huge sea as you looked on it from an eminence. Laurels, flowers entwined into fantastic wreaths and white satin rosettes were everywhere. This important event in the annals of the town was celebrated in the evening by a brilliant display of fireworks, and the town was a scene of

hilarity and universal merriment'. The Queen noted in her journal: 'It being market day the town was still more crowded than the other day and we again met with a very kind reception.'

The two royal expeditions in the summer of 1841 helped to unite the country at a time of bitter political conflict and bolster the Queen's standing, which had been dented by two incidents in 1839 – namely, the so-called Bedchamber Crisis and the Hastings scandal. A letter to her uncle King Leopold indicates that the expeditions were designed to appeal to the masses: 'Our little tour was most successful, and we enjoyed it of all things; nothing could be more enthusiastic or affectionate than our reception everywhere. I am happy to hear that our presence has left a favourable impression, which I think will be of great use.'

This was not Victoria's first visit to St Albans. The princess passed through on a journey to Wales in August 1832 noting in the first of her many journals: 'The situation is very pretty and there is a beautiful old abbey there.'

Full references will be included when this article is posted on the website in September.

Sue Mann

THE FIRST BATTLE OF ST ALBANS STAMP

"...twas a glorious day: St Albans' battle, won by famous York, shall be eternized in all age to come" [Earl of Warwick in Shakespeare's Henry VI Part Two, Act Five, Scene II.

The cover of this newsletter shows the Royal Mail's (RM) £2.55 stamp released on 4 May 2021 as part of a set commemorating the Wars of the Roses (1455-87). This stamp, the highest denomination in the set, remembers the very first battle in the wars here in St Albans on 22 May 1455. The scene is of Warwick the Kingmaker (left foreground) reporting the victory to Richard Duke of York (in the centre). It also shows the Curfew Tower and the abbey in the background.

There are eight stamps for different battles in the set, and this follows a long RM tradition of commemorating wars and battles (usually British victories!) with stamps. Other sets have included the First and Second World Wars, the Napoleonic Wars, the 17th century Civil Wars and the Armada.

The artist for our set is Graham Turner, who has painted other historical commemorative stamp sets in the past. Graham uses a naturalistic style and

specialises in historical re-enactment paintings. (He is a full-time artist who also depicts motor sport themes).

Graham prides himself for his historical art on meticulous research to authenticate the weapons, armour, clothing and locales. The picture on the stamp will stand close scrutiny. There are two pictures by him of the First Battle, the other called 'Concealed Attack' showing Yorkists outflanking Lancastrians in an alleyway off Market Place .

He has painted just one picture of the Second Battle of St Albans (Lancastrian victory, 1461), an atmospheric study called 'Disturbing the Peace' of Lancastrian soldiers patrolling the town's streets the night after the battle. He is working on a second painting.

If the picture in the stamp looks vaguely familiar to some of you, Graham gave Harvey Watson, Mike Elliott and myself permission to use it for the cover of our book on the Battles of St Albans (Pen and Sword, 2007) so there is a SAHAAS connection here already.

Graham's work is exhibited from time to time and you can also see (and purchase) limited editions of it on his website at <https://bit.ly/3wCi9at>.

Dr Peter Burley

LECTURE PROGRAMME

7 September – 16 November 2021

All lectures commence at 7.45pm.

All lectures will be held on Zoom.

Any changes to the programme will be notified on our website and via enews.

Non-members are charged £5 for attendance at a lecture (unless stated otherwise).

Full abstracts and biographical details are available on the Society's website.

Tuesday 7 September

Hans Holbein: A Life Revealed

Franny Moyle

Our lecturer discusses Hans Holbein, King Henry VIII's painter, who embodied the Tudor Court. She reveals a previously unknown portrait of the artist, and a newly-discovered miniature of Anne of Cleves. Providing an overview of Holbein's life, she also unpacks two fascinating works: 'The Body of the Dead Christ in the Tomb', and the 'Ambassadors'.

After a successful TV career, in 2009 Franny published Desperate Romantics, a serial biography of the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood, later adapted for TV. In 2016 she released The Extraordinary Life and Momentous Times of JMW Turner. This talk is based on The King's Painter, published in May to critical acclaim.

Tuesday 14 September

Smuggling – "To the King's Deceit"

Dr John Morewood

Smuggling was a major problem in the second half of the 18th century. Prevalent in most coastal counties it was not simply 'five and twenty ponies trotting through the dark'. Behind the smugglers lay a sophisticated network ensuring the smuggled goods reached towns and cities inland. We will look at why smuggling reached epidemic proportions, the authorities' attempts to suppress it and ask who organised the smugglers (it may not be who you think!). Smuggling did not end with the Napoleonic wars. Only in the 1840s did the Crown gain the upper hand.

John Morewood is the Society's President. An 18th century and Napoleonic historian, he co-authored HMS Vanguard at the Battle of the Nile. His book Waterloo General featured in the London Standard's Best buys for Christmas 2016. He is currently writing with his PhD supervisor: Henry Brougham and anti-slavery – an intellectual and political biography.

Tuesday 21 September

Losing your marbles, finding Utopia: the results of a dig on a council estate

Professor Carenza Lewis

1960s Britain saw the construction of 8 million new homes, more than half of them social housing. Many had safe, green, pedestrianised layouts inspired by

Utopian 'Garden City' ideas but many such estates have since become disadvantaged and the visionary layouts viewed negatively as a cause of social problems. This talk explores what light was thrown on this when residents of a Lincolnshire estate took to their travels.

Carenza Lewis is an archaeologist and Professor for the Public Understanding of Research at the University of Lincoln. She was previously a presenter on the popular archaeological TV series 'Time Team' and Director of Archaeological Outreach at the University of Cambridge. She is currently extending work excavating more than 2,500 test pits in England to other European countries.

Tuesday 5 October

Plotting for Peace: American Peacemakers and British Codebreakers in the First World War

Daniel Larsen

In 1915, Britain began systematically breaking American codes and reading the most secret American communications. Yet rather than being used to help Britain manipulate the Americans, British political leaders weaponised this intelligence in their fights against each other and this great secret was nearly betrayed to the Americans in the process. This talk shares exciting new findings showing how this intelligence was misused in a grave battle within the British leadership over allowing

the Americans to pursue a negotiated settlement and end the war in 1916.

Daniel Larsen holds a fixed term College Lectureship in History at Trinity College, University of Cambridge, and is the author of Plotting for Peace: American Peacemakers, British Codebreakers, and Britain at War 1914 to 1917 (2021).

Tuesday 12 October

Wars of the Roses Battlefield Archaeology: comparing Barnet and Bosworth among others

Sam Wilson

In 2015–16 Sam directed archaeological fieldwork searching for the 1471 battlefield of Barnet as part of a University of Huddersfield team. The results of the project will be discussed alongside evidence from other Wars of the Roses sites including Bosworth, Charlton and St Albans.

Sam is an archaeologist specialising in the study of medieval and post-medieval conflict. His work has taken him to some of the most iconic sites in British and European military history, including Bosworth and Waterloo.

Tuesday 19 October

How weird is that? Late Iron Age to early Roman burials (and Oppida) in Hertfordshire.

Dr Isobel Thompson

Recent research, including large and usually science-based projects, has started to transform what we understand about the more distant past, and the transition period from Iron Age to Roman is no exception. It is now evident, for instance, that disposal of the dead was much more complex and varied than we imagined. This talk will outline recent discoveries and ongoing work in Hertfordshire and well beyond, with a look at what these practices may be telling us about the meanings and mindsets behind them.

After compiling the St Albans Urban Archaeological Database in the mid-1990s, Isobel worked for Herts County Council retiring as the county's Historic Environment Record Officer in 2018. She is now an honorary research fellow at UCL's Institute of Archaeology.

Tuesday 9 November

The Unique Street Memorials of the Abbey Parish

Dr Tony Berk and Ann Dean

St Albans has a series of ten street memorials which remember those lost in the Great War from the Abbey parish. These memorials are unique in that they remember the dead from the very streets where these plaques are situated. This talk introduces the memorials, speaks of some of the men lost and their personal details as well as describing the environment in St Albans at the time and on the battlefields

where these men fought in the War to End all Wars.

Always interested in history, Ann and her late husband David joined SAHAAS in the 1970s. She is honorary archivist of St Michael's Church and has been a St Albans Blue Badge Tour Guide for the last 25 years.

Tony has worked as a lecturer, electronic engineer, technical writer and author, and is currently in business developing residential property. His interest in history started at an early age and in 2018 he trained as a Green Badge Tour Guide in St Albans.

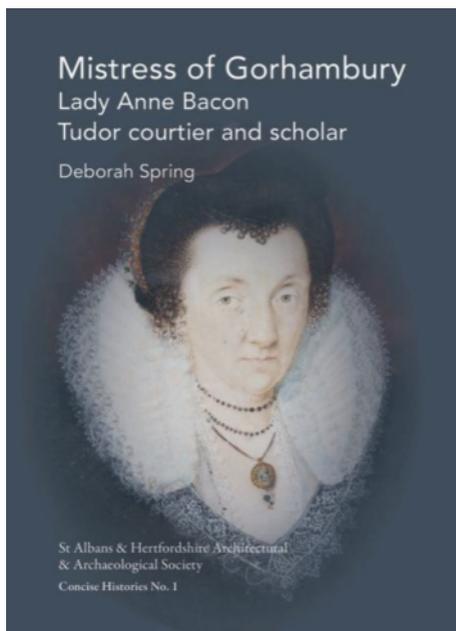
Tuesday 16 November

An Architect in Practice Spanning the World

Andrew Daws

Andrew is an architect with broad professional experience and a world-wide knowledge of architecture and design. He worked as a design partner in London-based CZWG Architects LLP in which he was responsible for several high profile and award-winning buildings. He has since, in collaboration with a former pupil, established a practice in India (Daws and Kahlon) in which he has applied skills acquired from various regeneration projects in Britain and Ireland to inform designs for new cities in India. He will provide an overview of his work in the UK and India, illustrating some of the best and worst aspects.

NEW SAHAAS PUBLICATION



Lady Anne Bacon was mistress of Gorhambury, St Albans, from 1561 until her death in 1610. Educated, connected and astute she lived through the upheavals and reverses of four Tudor reigns. Anne was committed to religious reform, and a published translator of key works of the English Reformation. Anne served both Mary I and Elizabeth I at court.

As a widow, she ran the Gorhambury estate alone for thirty years and supported the radical puritan preachers of St Michael's and Redbourn. Her opinion of the townfolk of St Albans was typically forthright: 'tippling, taverning and drunken idleness and gaming...is almost this town's profession'.

Married to Sir Nicholas Bacon, Elizabeth I's Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, she was the mother of Francis Bacon, lawyer, statesman under James I, and leading English philosopher.

Like many women in history, Lady Anne Bacon has largely remained in the shadows. Drawing on contemporary evidence this account describes the life of a formidable woman and her place in the story of the 16th century.

Like many women in history, Lady Anne Bacon has largely remained in the shadows. Drawing on contemporary evidence this account describes the life of a formidable woman and her place in the story of the 16th century.

***Mistress of Gorhambury, Lady Anne Bacon, Tudor courtier and scholar* is the first in our Concise Histories series. Written by Deborah Spring it is expected to be published in late September. For further details see pp. 9-10.**