



<http://kentarchaeology.org.uk/research/archaeologia-cantiana/>

Kent Archaeological Society is a registered charity number 223382

© 2017 Kent Archaeological Society

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES.

LITTLEBROOK WALLS, DARTFORD.

IN view of the possible importance of this site it seems worth while to describe some of its potentialities which seem to be generally unrecognized, and to amplify Mr. Cumberland's report.¹ The writer visited Littlebrook Walls early in 1940, and found that although much had been rendered inaccessible, half the area remained untouched. The part buried is roughly that to the north of the cross-bank which divides the enclosure into two parts.² The banks are much spread, but still stand to a height of two or three feet and are clearly visible in winter, but they would be less easy to locate when covered by summer vegetation.

In spite of the disgraceful destruction of half the site without investigation, a large area still remains open, and it is the main purpose of this note to urge the great desirability of a trial excavation as soon as it becomes possible. There is good reason to believe² that Littlebrook Walls was the site of an important settlement in late Saxon times. This could be verified by a few trial trenches, and if it should prove to be the case, it is hard to overestimate the importance of the site. The area is free from later occupation. Its position on the Thames estuary renders it probable that local pottery and other objects would be associated with imported goods, providing much information for dating the English material in a period which is at present obscure. And the damp nature of the site would probably preserve wooden objects, and might even enable a "tree-ring" date series to be established.

At present, the site is probably in no further danger except from bombs, which it is to be hoped will prevent its final destruction by the erection of industrial works. But after the war there will be grave risk of further development

¹ *Arch. Cant.*, LIII, p. xliii.

² Plan and description by F. C. J. Spurrell. *Arch. Cant.*, XVIII, p. 311.

in the area, and it would be deplorable if the site were to be destroyed without investigation. If it is in fact a late Saxon town site, it is probably no exaggeration to state that its excavation is one of the most important and urgent archæological works required in south-eastern England.¹

A. H. A. HOGG.

A NOTE ON THE LIBRARY OF LESNES ABBEY.

LESNES ABBEY in Erith was dissolved by Cardinal Wolsey in 1525, in order that its revenues might be used to augment the endowment of his proposed colleges at Oxford and Ipswich; and it may be supposed that at this time the suppression would not involve that wholesale destruction and robbery which too often attended such proceedings in 1535-9. This would account for the fact that the Abbey library, alone among those of the smaller Kentish monasteries, has left appreciable remains.

Mr. A. W. Clapham (*Lesnes Abbey*, 1915) gives an account of eight extant MSS. which formerly belonged to the house, and as his catalogue is capable of enlargement it seems worth while to give a complete list of the MSS. so far identified, if only to encourage further research in a field where, no doubt, fresh discoveries yet remain to be made.

No catalogue of ancient date has been found, and as no system of press-marks appears to have been used, we are left in the dark as to the original extent of the library. It does not seem likely, however, that it was ever remotely comparable in size to those of Canterbury, Rochester, or even Dover; and as no room which might have housed it has been discovered in the course of excavations on the site of the Abbey, we may assume that the convent followed the very general practice of keeping their books in presses in the cloister.

The existing books from the library may be readily identified by an inscription, usually written at the top of the first leaf, to this effect: *Hic liber est ecclesie beati Thome Martyris de Lesnes. Quem qui ei abstulerit aut illi super eo*

¹ The position of the site is shown on Fig. 5, p. 24.

fraudem fecerit, nisi eidem ecclesie plene satisfecerit, anathema sit maranatha. Sometimes the name of the donor is also given.

With the exception of the missal in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which is a service-book for the altar rather than a library book, the existing MSS., though some of them are well written and decorated, are on the whole a dull lot, sermons and outworn theological tracts predominating; and they do not give one a very high idea of the level of culture and learning in the monastery. One must beware, however, of attempting to reach any conclusion on this point on the scanty evidence so far available.

The full list of MSS. so far identified as having belonged to the Abbey is as follows. I should be very glad to hear of any further identifications which may be known to readers of this note. Nos. 5, 6, and 12 were given to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, by William Moore (d. 1659), and Nos. 1, 2, and 10 to St. John's College, Oxford, by Richard Tilesbye, Archdeacon of Rochester, in 1619.

1. AUGUSTINE: Homilies on Psalms lxxi.-cxviii. Donor, Thomas de Sandwich, Abbot of Lesnes in 1314. A page of the works of St. Benedict is bound up with the front cover. Cent. xiv. (S.J.O. MS. 19.)
2. AUGUSTINE on the Annunciation, together with thirty anonymous sermons on theological subjects. Cent. xiii.-xiv. (S.J.O. MS. 134.)
3. BEDE on the Parables, written in a hand like that in use at Christ Church, Canterbury. Cent. xii. (Lambeth Palace MS. 147.)
4. BLOIS, Peter de, Archdeacon of Bath 1175-91 and afterwards of London c. 1192-1204: Letters, Sermons, and other works. Five illuminated initials and others in red and blue. Cent. xiii. (Brit. Mus. Royal MS. 8.F.xvii.)
5. COMESTOR, Peter: Allegorical History, together with sermons, proverbs from Latin authors, etc., in a

- number of hands. Donor, Abbot Thomas de Sandwich. Cent. xii. and xiii. (G.C.C. MS. 135.)
6. FOLIFTO, Hugo de : Concerning the Cloister of the Soul. Late cent. xii. (G.C.C. MS. 121.)
 7. GREGORY : Moralia. Inscription at end : "Dompnus Eudo de Mere fecit scribere hunc librum et dedit domui beati thome martyris. Anima eius et anima patris eius Geruasii et omnium filelium anime per misericordiam dei requiescant in pace. Amen." Cent. xii. late. (T.C.C. MS. 1236.)
 8. MISSAL. English, cent. xii. Fine illumination. The pikes or luces which occur in the arms of the Abbey and of the de Lucy family, its founders, are prominently featured in the ornament. The canon of the mass presents unusual features and has been printed by the Woolwich Antiquarian Society. A list of relics owned by the Abbey, including part of Our Lady's handkerchief, parts of the chasuble and handkerchief of St. Thomas Becket, and a piece of the sere-cloth in which the latter's body was wrapped before its translation, is written on a fly-leaf. (Vict. and Albert Mus. MS. L.404-1916.)
 9. PAUL : Epistles, with gloss. English. Good outline initials. Cent. xii. (Lambeth Palace MS. 207.)
 10. PETER, Augustinian canon of Holy Trinity, Aldgate : *Pantheologi*. Finely written with large initials and scroll-work in red, blue, green, and brown. Cent. xiii. (S.J.O. MS. 31.)
 11. ROLLE, Richard, of Hampole : on the Psalms. Latin text of the Psalter with commentary in English. Well written with good English ornament. Cent. xv. Note : *Iste liber constat dompno Ioh. Colman abbati monasterii de Lesnes*.¹ The book afterwards belonged to Archbishop Parker. (C.C.C. MS. 387.)

¹ He was Abbot 1460-74.

12. SERMONS. Cent. xii. Red initials. (G.C.C. MS. 426.)
13. SERMONS, with miscellaneous tracts and notes, including a description of Jerusalem, tracts on the Creation, canon law, and the Decretals, Exposition of the mass, notes on arithmetic, the Calendar, the Council of Chalcedon, and a list of Roman emperors, in a number of hands. Cent. xii. and xiii. (G.C.C. MS. 151.)

ABBREVIATIONS USED.

- C.C.C. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.
 G.C.C. Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge.
 S.J.O. St. John's College, Oxford.
 T.C.C. Trinity College, Cambridge.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

- BRITISH MUSEUM: Catalogue of the MSS. in the Old Royal and King's Collections, 1921.
- JAMES, M. R. : Catalogue of the MSS. at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.
 ——— Catalogue of the MSS. at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, 1907.
 ——— Catalogue of the Western MSS. at Trinity College, Cambridge, Vol. III.
 ——— The MSS. at Lambeth Palace (Cambridge Antiquarian Society, 1900).
 ——— The Sources of Archbishop Parker's Collection of MSS. (Cambridge Antiquarian Society, 1899).

POSTSCRIPTUM.

When this note was in proof my attention was drawn by the Librarian of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, Dr. Z. N. Brooke, to a new list of MSS. from Lesnes in *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: A List of Surviving Books*, Ed. N. R. Ker (Royal Historical Society, 1941).

Only the principal author and the date of the MS. are given in each case, but there are several books not in my list, viz. :

- C.C.C. 319. P. Comestor, etc. Cent. xii.-xii.
 Lambeth 144, ff. 164-314. Gregorius. Cent. xii.-xiii. (May originally have formed part of No. 9 above.)
 Oxford Bodl. 656. P. Riga, etc. Cent. xii.-xiii.
 Douce 287. W. filius Stephani, etc. Cent. xiii.
 330. Berengaudus, etc. Cent. xii.

The only one of these MSS. of which I have had an opportunity of obtaining further details is the Corpus Christi volume, which contains part of the *Allegorical History* of P. Comestor, another tract, *Honorii Gemina Animæ*, with further items. Dr. James assigns it to St. Albans, but from what can be distinguished of the erased inscription of ownership on f. 1 the Lesnes attribution seems very possible.

C. R. COUNCER.

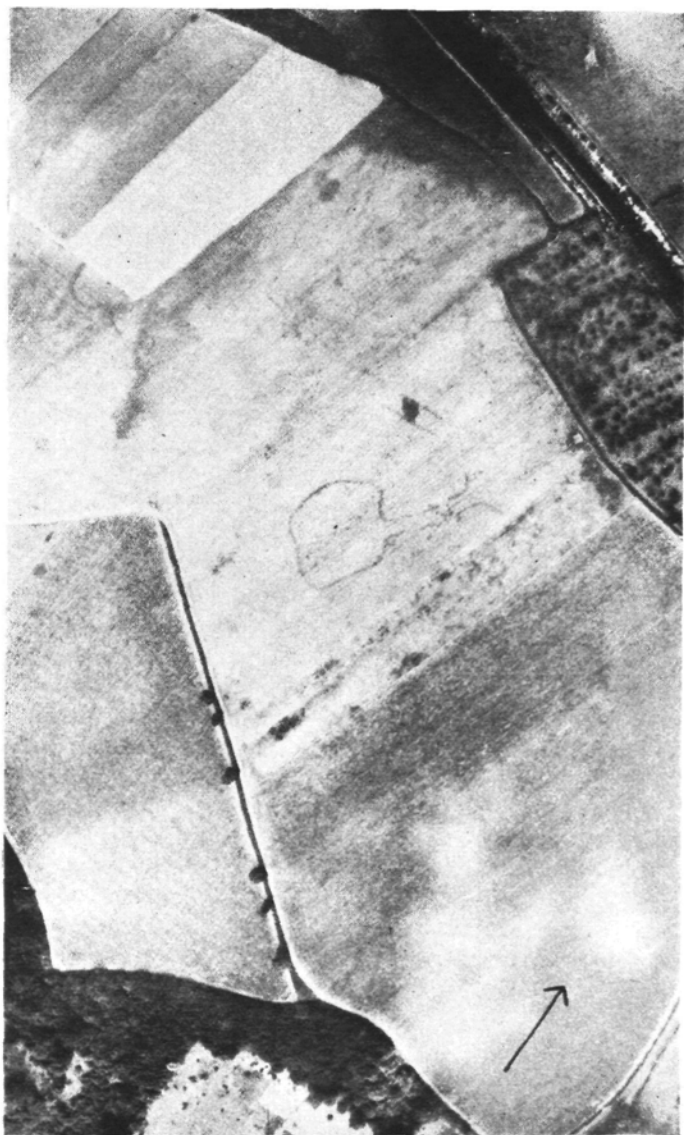
CROP MARKINGS AT FAWKHAM, KENT.

The investigation of the suggestive crop markings at Fawkham, Kent, first noticed by Mr. Raine and afterwards recorded by the late J. M. Brander (*Arch. Cant.*, XLVII (1935), 241) will now have to be postponed until field work on any scale again becomes possible. In the meantime, the attached oblique air photograph obtained through the kind offices of Mr. O. G. S. Crawford is of distinct interest.

The chief feature is a rounded pentagonal-shaped enclosure with a wide entrance road-way or ditch in one side. The entrance is expanded at its outer end and joins at an angle of some 25 degrees a ditch or road-way, one side of which is clear for some distance until it appears to meet another enclosure of lobed form to the west. The entrance to the first enclosure is interrupted, and other points of interest are the dark patches in the angular ditch, in the enclosure itself, and in the immediate neighbourhood. The white patches in the lower right-hand part of the picture are ploughed-in dene-holes, and another dene-hole exists in a field bank to the north of the site.

Visits to the site at various times over a period have not revealed any clues on the ground except two sherds of sub-Roman pottery from inside the first enclosure, and half a dozen poor flint flakes from other parts of the surface of the field. Auger tests of the ditch areas produced no conclusive results. The whole area would certainly repay detailed examination by the spade, but for the present one can but record it and notice its general similarity in plan to the early Iron Age farm called Woodbury, near Salisbury, which was excavated with such success by the Prehistoric Society. It may perhaps be worth noting that the site is almost at the junction of the parish boundaries of Longfield, Fawkham, and Horton Kirby.

R. F. JESSUP.



CROP MARKINGS NEAR SALT FARM, FAWKHAM.

Approximate scale: 1/3360.

Ordnance Survey: Crown copyright reserved.