

NOTES

Oak Piles in Kings Sedgemoor

MR. FRANK NAPPER of Compton Dundon owns two fields in Kings Sedgemoor in which oak piles have been discovered. The fields are situated west of Street Drove, about half-way between Ivythorn on the Poldens and Lollover Hill near Compton Dundon. The southernmost of the two fields is very rough and swampy, and covered with sedge and coarse grass. The soil of the fields is peaty and the surface level is approximately 19 feet to 20 feet above datum line. The peat soil exposed by moles is black and contains numerous fresh-water shells. The piles have been sometimes pulled up by the harrow : at other times caught by the point of the plough. The piles are of oak sharpened to a point and from 4 feet to 5 feet in length ; some are flat boards, others square or angular in section as if split. Mr. Napper said a few have rectangular mortise-holes and some have a peg-shaped top with a square-cut shoulder. The pointed end of one pile that was dug up, Mr. Napper said, was resting on a stone slab. He could not say if the piles were arranged in line. The piles have been noticed from time to time as if the tops had been pushed up through the turf, in a similar way to those found at Greylakes Fosse trackway and also in a field adjoining Crannel Farm near Glastonbury, where the tops had to be sawn off at ground level before the fields were reserved for mowing-grass.

ARTHUR BULLEID.

Roman 'Amphitheatre', Charterhouse- on-Mendip

It is interesting to note that the Spelæological Society of the University of Bristol have published this paragraph in their *Proceedings*, vol. v, no. 2, for 1943, p. 101 :

Following the excavation of Gorsey Bigbury (1938), the question whether or not an inner ditch might exist at the Roman Amphitheatre, Charterhouse, was revived. A trial trench from
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the centre towards the ramparts failed, however, to provide any evidence of such a ditch.

This confirms the fact that my excavations on this site in 1909, fully described (with plan and sections) in *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lv (1909), pt. ii, pp. 109-137, did not reveal an inner ditch. On the other hand the writer, in his Cutting VI, obtained clear evidence of the existence of an outer ditch, which, however, was rather shallow at the point examined (depth 2·8 feet below the surface of the natural sand).

H. ST. GEORGE GRAY.

Babington Manor Deed, 1371

WHILST I was in charge of the Parish of Babington in 1943, during the vacancy of the Rectorship, I was privileged by the kindness of Mrs. Knatchbull, the Lady of the Manor, to make notes from the muniments preserved there.

The earliest document is the transfer of the Manor from Sir William Botreaux to William Cheddre, dated 7 June 1371, an illustration of which is here given (Plate VI). We translate it thus :

Be it known to present and future (people) that I Sir WILLIAM DE BOTREAUx KNIGHT have given granted and by this my present charter confirmed to WILLIAM CHEDDRE WILLIAM DRAPER Cleric ROGER SEWARD and JOHN STANES MY MANOR OF BABYNGTON with all its appurtenances in the County of Somerset. TO HAVE and TO HOLD the whole aforesaid manor with all its appurtenances to the aforesaid William Cheddre William Drapere Roger and John their heirs and assigns of the capital Lords of that fee by the services thence due and of right accustomed FOR EVER. AND I truly the aforesaid William de Botreaux and my heirs for ever warrant the whole of the aforesaid manor with all its appurtenances to the aforesaid William Cheddre William Drapere Roger and John. In testimony of which thing to this my present charter I have affixed my seal. These being witnesses, Richard de Acton, Knight, Henry Percehay Walter de Clopton, Walter Laurence John Donne and

others. Dated Monday in the Feast of St. Wolstan, bishop, in the year of the reign of King Edward the third since the Cónquest the forty fifth [seal of red wax perished].

Other documents included the compotus rolls of Babington and Stoneaston Manors from 1462 to 1474, made by Thomas Ayshman, steward and Collector for Dame Isabell Chedder, Lady of those manors. Her daughter, Isabel, carried the Manors to her husband, Sir John Newton, son of Sir Richard Newton, Justice of the King's Bench, whose son, Richard, settled Babington on his daughter Joan, wife of Sir Thomas Griffin of Braybroke, whose son, Rhys Griffin, having predeceased him the manor came to the daughter of the latter, Mary, wife of Thomas Markham. Their son, Sir Griffin Markham, got into trouble in Queen Elizabeth's reign, so Babington was sold by deed dated Easter 1572 by Thomas and Mary Markham to Joan Elcock widow. The Manor then contained seven messuages, one cottage, ten tofts, one water-mill, ten gardens, fourteen orchards, three hundred acres of land, one hundred and twenty acres of meadow, 160 acres of pasture, 20 acres of wood, 120 acres of furze and four shillings annual rent and one pound of pepper. Joan Elcock died 1573, leaving the manor to her two daughters, Dyonisia, wife of Thomas Pacye and Ursula, wife of Thomas Payne. Upon Thomas Pacye's death at Shiplade in Bleadon in 1576, his son Christopher Pacye succeeded to half the manor and died 6 January 1624. The other half of the manor came to Richard Stote, second husband of Dyonisia Pacye. Thomas Pacye, son of Christopher, acquired the whole manor, and dying in 1687 left the estate to his sister Mary, wife of William Crabbe, Mayor of Bristol, whose eldest daughter Elizabeth, whose first husband was Mr. Moore, married, secondly, Henry Mompesson (marriage settlement 18 July 1692), who built the Manor House. They had no issue, so her niece Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Richard Crumpe, wife of William Long, acquired the manor, and her daughter Judith married Major Norton Knatchbull.

R. GROSVENOR BARTELOT.

Orchard Wyndham

THE picture of Orchard Wyndham (Plate I, *frontispiece*) is from a painting of the second half of the eighteenth century, preserved at Orchard Wyndham, which appears to show the house as it was in the time of George O'Brien (Wyndham), 3rd Earl of Egremont, whose memory is more closely associated with Petworth, the great house in Sussex where he generally lived, than with his Somerset estates. He was F.R.S. (1797) and F.S.A. (1800), and a supporter of the Turf and of the Fine Arts. In the last six years of his life his charities are said to have amounted to £1,200,000.

The detached building in the left foreground has ceased to exist. The circular turret seen beyond the roof of the house represents the manorial dovecote: it has been demolished, but the site is clearly traceable to-day. It was situated in a part of the Park then known as Pigeon House Close, and now as Pigeon Field.

A terrace can be seen on the south-west front of the house, to the left of which is a continuation of the main north-west front. This wing no longer exists. The wing and part of the terrace have been replaced by a greenhouse; the rest of the terrace has been grassed over.

W. WYNDHAM.

The Pine Marten in Somerset

WHEN home on leave in 1915, in company with the late Mr. Pemberton Barnes—a keen observer and student of nature—we both saw, in the neighbourhood of Exmoor, a pine marten, and Mr. Barnes observed that it was by no means the only specimen that he had seen in the same locality.

Since then I have accumulated from my own observances and those of other people evidence that the pine marten continues to inhabit this neighbourhood. Now I have a very definite record to make. In the afternoon of 17 October 1945 I was sitting down on the side of a combe watching some deer through field-glasses, when I saw something moving in an oak tree a few yards off. It was most definitely a pine marten

and I watched it for about five minutes. It then came down to the ground and was joined by a second pine marten, smaller and much lighter in colour, probably the female.

This record was not made on Exmoor proper, but quite close. I might mention that I have seen pine martens in Westmorland on more than one occasion.

ERIC C. CLEGG.

The *Western Daily Press* (Bristol), 30 March 1946, records that a male Pine Marten had recently been shot in Prior's Wood, Portbury—the first of its kind to be seen in the Bristol district for sixty-four years. It cannot be assumed, however, that Pine Martens have long been enjoying undisturbed sanctuary in a Somerset wood so near Bristol.—ED.