

Miscellaneous Notes

DENE-HOLES AGAIN

TOWARDS the end of the eighteenth century, John Banister of Horton Kirby, Kent, published *A Synopsis of Husbandry* . . . which gives an interesting picture of Kentish agriculture in his time.

Among many other matters he deals at length with manures, and his chapter on chalk is particularly valuable for the description which it gives of the two ways of quarrying—the first by uncallowing a piece of ground and making a pit, the second (to be preferred in Banister's opinion) by sinking several shafts, according to the extent of the field. "These pits are to be made in the form and circumference of a well, with an apparatus at the top, and a bucket to draw up the chalk. The people who undertake this business, having been brought up to it from their cradle, perform it with great facility, and without timidity, though attended with much danger" (the pits often collapsed) "when the labourer has dug some little time in the chalk in the perpendicular form wherein he began the pit, he proceeds to form apertures in different horizontal directions." This shows clearly the origin of some of our "deneholes," and the regular shallow depressions which are frequently seen in fields in certain parts of the county are often to be explained as the sites of pits which have collapsed—and beneath some of them no doubt, lie the bones of those who excavated the chalk "with great facility and without timidity," at a wage of one penny a basket.

In this connection it may be well to record that in 1938 my brother was shown a typical dene-hole near Lenham, and he was shown it by a man aged 80 who as a youth had helped his father to sink it. He came from a family of chalk-diggers and fruit-pickers, and there was something of the true Gipsy strain among them.

A dene-hole with trefoil chambers, some 60 feet deep, has recently been discovered in the playing field of Northfleet County Modern School.

FRANK W. JESSUP.

INSCRIPTION ON SMALL WALL TABLET ON SOUTH WALL OF STONELEIGH CHURCH, WARWICKSHIRE

IN affectionate remembrance of GEORGE JONES, C.E./who constructed the Royal Military Canal from Shorncliffe/to the river Rother, and in 1809 superintended the destruction/of the basin of Flushing by the English Forces/Born May 5 1767, died Stareton Warwickshire July 12 1845.

RUPERT GUNNIS.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

BRONZE IMPLEMENTS IN THE AVALON MUSEUM, GLASTONBURY
In this Museum are a palstave from Sheerness and a flanged axe from Ashford. They are not included in the British Association Catalogue or in R. F. Jessup's *Archæology of Kent*.

L. V. GRINSELL.

A FAMOUS MAIDSTONE SURGEON

THE Maidstone Museum has recently acquired a rare black-letter book entitled *The Anatomie of Man's Bodie*, written by Thomas Vicary.

Vicary is described in Manningham's Diary as "being first a meane practiser in Maidstone until the King (Henry VIII) advanced him for curing his sore legge." In consequence of this successful treatment, the King made him his Sergeant Surgeon, a position which he continued to occupy under Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth.

In the Barber Surgeons Court Room in London is a picture by Holbein of Vicary receiving the Charter of the Company from Henry VIII.

At one time Pepys "tried to buy this picture for a little money. I did think to give £200 for it, being said to be worth £1,000 but is so spoiled that I have no mind to it and it is not a pleasant though a good picture."

The King granted to Vicary the tithes of grain, glebelands and chief house of the Rectory of Boxley, Kent; also ten pieces of land, Boxley field, Squire's and Carter's crofts, Great and Little Harpole, Wheat Park, Blackland, the Hale, Richett and Hoyton meadow (except all big trees and woods) and the advowson of Boxley parish church, for twenty-one years from March 25th, 1539, at the rent of £40, the King covenanting that Vicary should hold the premises free from other charge, Vicary covenanting to keep the buildings in good repair and to thatch them with straw but not shingle, tiles or slates, etc.

Several members of Vicary's family are mentioned in the registers of Boxley Church, and in Lambert Larking's transcript of the Oxenhoath papers in the Maidstone Museum.

It is remarkable that so little is known of such an eminent surgeon in his native town of Maidstone. This is probably owing to the fact that apart from Hasted's brief note that Vicary was one of Henry VIII's surgeons, he appears to have been completely ignored by all other writers of the histories and records of the town.

The book is on special exhibition in the Bentlif Gallery at Maidstone Museum.

JOHN W. BRIDGE.

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