

ABBOT'S BARTON FARMHOUSE, WINCHESTER: NEW DATING EVIDENCE

By EDWARD ROBERTS

Recent papers in the *Proceedings* discussed the building of Abbot's Barton Farmhouse near Winchester (Fradgley et al. 1996) and showed how similar farmhouses in Hampshire were built in the the years around 1500 to accommodate the demesne lessees of large landowners (Roberts 1996). When the papers were written, however, the building date of Abbot's Barton Farmhouse was unknown. If of pre-Dissolution date, it would have been built when the farm was a possession of Hyde Abbey. If of post-Dissolution date, it would have been built by one of a succession of private, and relatively small-scale, landowners. A recent dendrochronological survey has dramatically resolved this question (Miles 1998).

In September 1997, nine samples – or cores – were taken by Daniel Miles from the timbers of Abbot's Barton Farmhouse. Four samples dated from what, by inspection, was taken to be the earliest phase of the building. These provided precise felling dates of spring 1491, summer 1491, winter 1491/92 and summer 1496. This latter sample from a floor joist in the kitchen is at variance with the cluster of felling dates around 1491/92, suggesting either that the whole building was constructed in or shortly after 1496, or that building took place in or shortly after 1491/92 and that the 1496 joist relates to an early alteration or repair (Miles 1998). The latter interpretation may be favoured in view of the apparently early alterations to the position of the spine beam into which the 1496 joist is jointed and evidence that the kitchen bay has been damaged by fire (Fradgley et al. 1996, 120; Miles 1998).

Setting aside these problems of interpretation, it is clear that the house was built some forty years before the Dissolution and thus well within the period of ownership by Hyde Abbey. However, as was argued in the earlier paper, this by no means implies that the farmhouse was built as a monk's country retreat or with some other quasi-monastic purpose. In design and detail it conforms to the typical large farmhouse of its day (Fradgley et al.

1996, 116). Indeed, a building-date in the 1490s closely matches the dates at which ecclesiastical institutions in Hampshire were granting many long-term leases of demesne farms, a trend associated with the building of large, new farmhouses (Roberts 1996).

It was clear at the time of writing the earlier paper that the stair tower and the oriel window at the north end of the house were features associated with a secondary building phase which probably occurred in Elizabeth's reign (Fradgley et al. 1996, 122). The recent tree-ring survey throws fresh light on this question. One sample from the inserted oriel window gave a precise felling date of 1560 and one sample from the stair tower gave a felling date-range of 1545–1577 (Miles 1998). Although further samples would be desirable, it does appear on present evidence that the oriel window was built in or shortly after 1560 and it is possible that the stair tower was constructed in the same building campaign.

In 1560, Abbot's Barton was held by Thomas Chaundler whose marriage to Mabel Paulet is recorded in an inscription on a chimneypiece in the so-called 'cottage wing' of the farmhouse. Thomas came into full occupation of the house after his mother's death in 1552 and he himself died in 1564 (Fradgley et al. 1996, 120–1). It would seem, then, that the refurbishment, or even building, of the 'cottage wing' was part of a general modernisation undertaken by Thomas Chaundler, a modernisation which included the insertion of an oriel window in the best chamber and probably the construction of a stair tower as well.

Acknowledgements

The tree-ring survey was funded by Hampshire County Council and Winchester City Museums Service. Their support is gratefully acknowledged, as is the hospitality of Ian Grant and Sue Fox.

References

- Fradgley, N, Lewis, E, & Roberts, E 1996 The chamber over the hall: two early, post-medieval houses in Hampshire *Proc Hampshire Field Club Archaeol Soc* 51 107–36.
- Miles, D 1998 Tree-ring dates: Hampshire Dendrochronology Project – Phase Four *Vernacular Architecture* 29 (in press).
- Roberts, E 1996 Overton Court Farm and the late-medieval farmhouses of demesne lessees in Hampshire *Proc Hampshire Field Club Archaeol Soc* 51 89–106.

Author: Edward Roberts, King Alfred's College, Sparkford Road, Winchester SO22 4NR

A CRYPTONYM OF c. 1633–45 IN THE BISHOP'S WALTHAM RENTALS

By H G BARSTOW

Recently, Dr E C Cawte of Ibstock, Leicester, informed me that there should be an amendment to the published Rental of Bishop's Waltham manors of c. 1630 (Barstow 1994; HRO 11M59Ecc.II 155651/2). On page 108 and the accompanying note on land belonging to 'The Bishop of Canterbury', a re-examination of the original rental shows that the suggested letter 'H' in the fourth line should be an 'T'. The column of letters now reads 'Will Laud', who was Archbishop of Canterbury 1633–45 and at an earlier date Rector of Ibstock.

Evidently the scribe disapproved of him, and calls him only a 'Bishop'. His name used as Ro-

man numerals is as follows, reading downwards; presuming he uses the 'W' as an 'X', and the capital 'J' normally used in documents of this period for the letter 'T'. The 'A' counts as 0, not being a Roman numeral.

William Laud (1573–1645) was educated at St John's college, Oxford, at the age of sixteen. He became a Fellow four years later and was ordained in 1601. He made himself unpopular with the university authorities by his open antipathy to the dominant Puritanism. Nevertheless, he rose steadily with the help of James I, Charles I and the nobility. His preferments included Bishop of St

The B'pp. of Canterbury.

W (X).....	10
J (I).....	1
LL.....	100
L.....	50
A.....	0
U.....	5
D.....	500

666

Compare these numeral letters
to ye 18 verse of ye 13 Cap: (*Chapter*) of ye Revelations.

*"Here is wisdom Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast;
for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six."*