

LEICESTER MUSEUMS: ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT

The following records have been received during the year ended 31 March 1969:

OFFICIAL

Welfare Department, including Board of Guardians, 1846-1942, minute, letter, and account books, collectors' records, *etc.*, c. 800 volumes

ECCLESIASTICAL

Evington Parish Records (mainly Poor Law, *etc.*). Leicester Methodist Circuit, 1833-1925, including registers, preaching plans, minutes, Sunday School records, *etc.* Aylestone Civil Parish records. Burying book of the Congregational Church, Gallowtree Gate, 1838-61. Belton Parish Register Transcripts, 1875-1881

CHARITIES

Deeds relating to Leicester Charities, 1393-1791

BUSINESS

Messrs. Simpson, plumbers and valve-makers, 1883-1903. 300 bundles of plans from Messrs. Ashwell & Nesbit of the heating systems in buildings, ships, *etc.* Frederick Burton (family grocer). Pawnbroker's pledge book, New Bridge St. area, c. 1919-23. Cash book, 1874-1932, and ledger, 1913-1940, of A. E. Grimbley, brush-maker. S. Rowsell & Co., footwear manufacturers. Messrs. Raven & Co., knitwear manufacturers

ESTATE

Rental of Estates of Washington, Earl Ferrers, c. 1720

PERSONAL

Papers of the Russell family, including a funeral bill, 1760-1826. Diaries of Arthur Malin of Leicester (Secretary at the Infirmary, T.S.B., *etc.*), 1850-64

ORGANISATIONS

Leicester Secular Society, 1852-1959

EDUCATION

Four log books and two punishment books of St. Saviour's School, 1919-59. Two log books of Willow Street School, 1894-1946

RAILWAYS

Material from the Great Northern Station, Belgrave Road, mainly train routing records and operating handbooks, 1949-1962

TOPOGRAPHICAL

Deeds for Leicester and Markfield, 1705-36. Leicester maps, various districts, 1870-1927

MISCELLANEOUS

Three apprenticeship indentures, Leicester and Shepshed, 1830-69

Detailed lists of the Archives Departments holdings are in the Department, at the National Register of Archives and the Copyright Libraries. The Department is pleased to answer telephone or written enquiries about its material.

REVIEWS

THE ROMAN FORT AT GREAT CASTERTON, RUTLAND. By Malcolm Todd. University of Nottingham (1969). 55 pp., 4 pls., 20 figs. Bound. 25s. post free from M. Todd, Dept. of Classics, University of Nottingham.

This is the fourth excavation report to be published by the University of Nottingham on excavations at Great Casterton, Rutland. M. Todd has compiled the report from the records of the late Sir Ian Richmond and the late Dr. Philip Corder who directed excavations in 1960 and 1962. The Roman fort at Great Casterton was positively identified from the air by Dr. St. Joseph in 1959 after eight fruitless seasons' reconnaissance over the area.

The fort appears to have been founded shortly after A.D. 43-5 and was of 6.0 acres. At a date shortly after A.D. 70 there was a reduction in area to 5.16 acres. This reduction has previously been dated to the pre-Boudiccan era and the strengthening of these new defences was attributed to the events of A.D. 60. This report produces for the first time evidence which shows that the second fort is *after* A.D. 70.

The report covers the excavation of the defences, the annexe, the gates and some internal buildings, then discusses the garrison and the chronology of the forts. Finally, relevant finds are listed and some drawn. There are some useful comparative plans of gates of timber forts, unfortunately rather small, and a reconstruction of the period I defences by Dr. Corder.

For those working in the Roman period in the East Midlands the discussion of the pottery is of particular interest. It is instructive to see that on a purely military site founded soon after the conquest there is a fair amount of Gallo-Belgic pottery and it is worth bearing this in mind when considering the possibility of a pre-Roman settlement at Leicester. The pottery is presumably reproduced at one quarter of the original size.

A. D. MCWHIRR

DIEULACRES ABBEY, STAFFORDSHIRE. By M. J. C. Fisher. Printed Hill Bros. (Leek) Ltd. (1969). 63 pp. Illustrated. 9s. 6d.

A schoolboy's fascination, a Leicester University undergraduate's spare-time pursuit, and a Research Studentship at Keele University, have culminated in the printing of this neat booklet on a local monastic site, which traces the history of the buildings and the endowments from the reign of King John to the Dissolution.

Like so many Cistercian foundations, the origins of Dieulacres lay in the intense appeal of the order that had produced St. Bernard to the aristocracy of twelfth- and thirteenth-century England. Men like Ranulf Blundeville, earl of Chester, the founder of Dieulacres, were keen to establish and to endow with lands monasteries for monks who managed to combine great asceticism and devotion with an eye for beauty spots by fertile valleys and streams and with a commercial instinct that made Cistercian monasteries important centres for the medieval English Wool Trade. In the long run the commercial instinct seems to have won.

The Dissolution did not take the white monks of Dieulacres any more by surprise than many of their brethren. There, as elsewhere, the abbot and his handful of monks had made friends with the mammon of unrighteousness in preparation for the obviously long-awaited end. Abbot Thomas Whitney provided for his relations, and himself departed with a silver-gilt chalice, a Crown pension of £60 *p.a.* and a reward of £6; on these proceeds he lived and died in nearby Leek.

Mr. Fisher's excursion into local history is to be welcomed. He has used many new sources, and his little book is attractively written and useful. The larger picture of monastic history depends upon the history of local monasteries like Dieulacres, which also produced a chronicle of national importance for its account of the downfall of Richard II and the usurpation of Henry Bolingbroke.

JAMES CROMPTON