

## NOTES AND NEWS, 1959.

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By FRANCIS FISHER.

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THE difficulty of providing in this *Journal* a comprehensive record of minor archaeological finds and of work of uncertain eventual importance has certainly led in the past to the neglect of some discoveries and excavations which ought to be on record. The appearance of the *East Midland Archaeological Bulletin*<sup>1</sup> is therefore to be welcomed as it aims to report these minor finds and the discovery of new sites in the counties of Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, Nottingham and Rutland. The first number, dated 1958, contains twenty-six Derbyshire items. They include flints from Bamford and Derwent, two overhanging rim urns from Beeley, a flanged bronze palstave from Cromford, pottery and coins of the Roman period from Hasland, Hazlewood and Wingerworth, and medieval sherds from Allestree. The sites reported include a barrow or earth circle at Bamford, a possible Iron Age homestead at Eckington, a boundary earthwork at Morley, charcoal burning pits at Walton, near Chesterfield, and a retting pit at South Wingfield.

*Creswell and Whitwell.*

Since the death of Mr. A. L. Armstrong in 1958, further excavations at Ash Tree Cave, Whitwell, have been conducted by Mr. D. N. Riley and Mr. S. E. West. At Creswell Crags other excavations have been started by Dr. C. B. M. McBurney. A revised view of the significance of these sites is likely to follow from this work.

*Hazelwood.*

The Romano-British pottery, mentioned earlier, came from the excavation following the discovery of kiln remains in the area known to have produced the distinctive Derbyshire ware. Pending the full report, it is only necessary to remark that the now certain origin of the

<sup>1</sup> Obtainable from the Department of Extra-Mural Studies, Shakespeare St., Nottingham, price 2/-.

pottery and the fairly close dating secured will be of considerable value in the excavation of Roman sites, particularly those of a military nature.

#### *Little Chester.*

It is strange that this Roman fort of some military importance at Derby has had so little systematic attention. Stukeley made an accurate drawing of the vestiges in 1721, since when there has been a succession of finds, mostly unrecorded and now lost. The area today is largely built over or in use by the Corporation Parks Department, but there are two places, one inside the camp and one on the line of the west wall, where a limited excavation is possible. Since Mr. Graham Webster made an inspection of the site this year, the Ministry of Works has decided to conduct an excavation here in 1960.

A short distance outside the walls, traces of a possible civil settlement have been discovered by Mr. John Fossey. He also watched the clearance of the ground during the erection of the new St. Paul's Vicarage. In the garden, there is a well to which a Roman origin has been attributed. The opportunity was taken in 1959 of clearing this of debris, but with negative results. The construction, of large squared stone, does not suggest any considerable age. The well has been covered over so that further examination will be possible if necessary.

#### *Codnor.*

Through the efforts of Mr. G. H. Large of Ripley, the ancient font found in the precincts of Codnor Castle in 1834 has been lodged in the parish church.<sup>2</sup> The frequent inability to house such relics suitably is a matter for regret, but it may be noted that the Society now has good accommodation available for the storing of bulky objects until a permanent home is found.

#### *Chaddesden.*

The efforts made by the Society to save the Wilmot Almshouses proved unavailing. The attractive row of 17th century cottages in the shadow of the church now stands

<sup>2</sup> It is suggested that it is more probably a stoup or detached in *D.A.J.*, XV (1893), 105.

empty and will presumably fall into decay. The excuse for their abandonment was lack of capital, but complete local apathy was the telling factor in the fight to save them. The Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings was prepared to continue the support it gave to this Society, and their interest was much appreciated. The advisory architect of the Ancient Monuments Society did not agree that these almshouses were worth preservation.

#### *Kirk Langley.*

The demolition of the vacant rectory at Kirk Langley was a matter for regret. This interesting building, possibly dating in part to the 16th century, was sold unfortunately without a restriction clause. Despite the fact that it was a "listed" building, which should have ensured prior notice of an intention to interfere with the structure, complete demolition occurred under circumstances which suggested a determination to avoid any obstruction.

#### *Derby.*

The considerable amount of clearance in Derby in preparation for the inner ring road and other developments has so far involved no architectural losses. No. 11 Friar Gate, of which drawings and photographs exist, was demolished during the year. It was interesting for its jettied construction, and during the dismantling some lath and plaster work was revealed.

### INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY.

A CONFERENCE in London in December 1959, sponsored by the Council of British Archaeology, marked the national recognition of Industrial Archaeology as a special branch of archaeological and historical studies. This conference was primarily concerned with the need to formulate a policy for recording and, in selected cases, for preserving early monuments of the industrial history of this country. As a guide to methods of recording and preserving these remains, the C.B.A. is preparing a *Handbook on Industrial Archaeology*. The Ancient Monuments Boards are being urged

to treat industrial monuments in the same way as traditional types.

These developments are of particular relevance to Derbyshire. In his *Notes on the Engineering History of Derbyshire*, Mr. Frank Nixon has already drawn attention to the importance of industrial history in this county and indicated many of the topics, which merit closer investigation. Excavations of pottery sites at Burley Hill, Duffield, and at Furnace Farm, Melbourne, have been reported recently in this *Journal*, whilst field-work is steadily adding to our knowledge of lead mining. Another aspect of this archaeological approach to the history of Derbyshire industries has been the study of the structure of early cotton mills on the Derwent, the value of which has been well demonstrated in *The Strutts and the Arkwrights*. In the study in this volume of a cotton mill, which has not survived, archaeological methods are profitably used with documentary sources.

Industrial Archaeology has its special problems, and a number of these have been encountered in the excavations, which have been conducted for some years by Mr. W. H. Bailey and Mr. E. S. Brook of the Sheffield Trades Historical Society, on an extensive site at Furnace Farm, Melbourne, in the valley that is soon to be flooded to form a reservoir for Leicester. Here important remains have been discovered of a comparatively early iron-smelting blast furnace, which may have been in use from the latter years of the 17th century, possibly succeeding a bloomery on the same site. Documentary evidence is so far lacking. The discovery of this furnace thus offers at present one of the best demonstrations of the way in which archaeology can contribute to our knowledge of the county's industrial history.