

Worcester, Lark Hill. Six rings and one brooch, not seven rings, were found in this hoard.

Wyke. Found in a pot. The reference in *Archaeologia* is to vol. xxviii, not vol. xxvii.
D. M. WILSON

MEDIEVAL INQUISITIONS AND THE ARCHAEOLOGIST

Only a handful of large-scale plans survive from the middle ages to afford evidence of local topography or of the character and position of single buildings. The archaeologist who looks for documents to elucidate some puzzling structure or topographical feature is therefore driven to written documents; the reverse process, beginning with documents and then moving into the field, is less commonly undertaken, and is perhaps a sufficient indication that the classes of document where detailed information may lurk are not well known among professional archaeologists.

It is obvious, of course, that any documents at the Public Record Office which are listed in the printed index to *Rentals and Surveys*³ will be informative about physical features which had an economic value; and the machinery of auditing expenditure by the Crown and its officers has also produced a class of documents, conveniently termed *Accounts*,⁴ which have been put to good use by the students of building—latterly (with great effect) by the alliance of historians and archaeologists concerned with the King's Works.

Economic interest or curiosity at the Exchequer was also responsible for the great class of feudal enquiries by which the Crown sought to have valued the possessions of its tenants-in-chief or in certain circumstances its sub-tenants. These *Inquisitiones Post Mortem* have been well calendared up to 1377 during the last half-century,⁵ and there are older *Calendars*⁶ of a more summary kind which bridge the gap before a modern series of calendars recommences in 1485. For the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, in particular, the *extents*⁷ which formed part of very many inquisitions *post mortem* are detailed enough to indicate the presence and sometimes the character of the principal buildings which lay on the demesne, from the manor and its precincts to the fulling-mill and the ferry-house. In those thousands of villages for which no manorial accounts have survived the extents may afford the only opportunity of learning the range of physical capital with which the countryside was equipped in these two important centuries.

Because of their close relation to the manorial system and to genealogical research the inquisitions *post mortem* have been known to some field-archaeologists.⁸ Much less well-known, because of their miscellaneous nature and disordered archive arrangement, are other feudal enquiries, equally economic in their motive and equally likely to throw a sudden burst of light on some minor topographical feature. A large class is that of *Inquisitiones Ad Quod Damnum*,⁹ each the result of an order from the Crown to hold a local enquiry to discover what loss to the Crown (if any) would result from some proposal put forward by a private subject or by a corporate body, lay or ecclesiastical.

³ *List of Rentals and Surveys and other analogous documents* (P.R.O. Lists and Indexes, xxv, 1908).

⁴ *List of Foreign Accounts* (P.R.O. Lists and Indexes, xi, 1900); *List of Exchequer Accounts, Various* (*id.*, xxxv, 1912), and other typescript indexes available at the P.R.O.

⁵ *Calendar of Inquisitiones Post Mortem* (Henry III to Edward III, 14 vols., 1904-54; Henry VII, 4 vols. 1898-1957); the inquisitions of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, much more summary in their form, are indexed in P.R.O. Lists and Indexes, xxiii, xxvi, xxxi, xxxiii.

⁶ J. Caley and J. Bayley (eds. for the Record Commission) *Calendarium Inquisitionum post mortem sive excaetarum*, 4 vols. (1806-28).

⁷ The *Calendars* indicate whether there is an extent included in the document; only a small minority are printed in full translation.

⁸ The call-numbers for the documents themselves, if production of the originals is desired, range from C132 (Henry III) to C141 (Richard III). The file numbers are given in the *Calendars*. The older *Calendarium* uses a now obsolete system of numeration which needs a key, on the shelves of the Round Room, for translation.

⁹ This class has the P.R.O. reference C143.

This may not seem a promising way of bringing down to parchment a verbal description of physical features and buildings. But the proposal was often to erect a building or to make alterations; to construct roads, bridges and causeways; to drain land; to create or close down ferries; to create parks; or to divert roads and footpaths. In such cases the building or improvement will be described in the document, both in its existing state and as proposed to be changed, or the old topography and the new proposals will be indicated where lines of communication are to be changed or where new provision, such as bridges or ferries, is under scrutiny. The relevance of such a class of documents to the dating of buildings both surviving and buried is clear; and the class of document is equally relevant to the other works of man in town and country which come in for archaeological examination.

The inquisitions *ad quod damnum* are briefly calendared seriatim in a Public Record Office *List and Index*,¹⁰ the entry usually giving the date, location and parties concerned together with a very brief indication of the subject of the inquiry. The full flavour of such an inquisition can be caught from those for Yorkshire, which have been published in translation by the Yorkshire Archaeological Society in its *Record Series*.¹¹ For example, one enquiry in 1255 establishes the date of the diversion from the Roman road which is such a marked feature of the Tadcaster-York road just north of the site of the deserted medieval village of Steeton;¹² another records the widening of the city ditch of York alongside Blossomgate and Micklegate in 1241.¹³ Of the unprinted documents one might instance the enlargement of the chancel of St. Peter's church, Winchcombe, Glos., in 1246, a conduit in Northampton in 1292, a mill-race at Chaddesden, Derbyshire, in 1293 and the new chapel at Henley-in-Arden, Warwicks., in 1369.¹⁴

The purpose of the assessment of 'damage' by the sworn jury was usually not to prevent the work being done but to assess the size of the payment which the king might ask in return for licence to proceed. A number of these licences can be traced via the inquisitions *ad quod damnum* to the *Calendars* of the Patent Rolls.

The machinery of local enquiry initiated by a writ from the Chancery also produced a number of miscellaneous documents which have been brought together from parts of six different Public Record Office classes. The fourth volume of the *Calendars of Inquisitions, Miscellaneous* has just appeared,¹⁵ and although considerably shorter than its three predecessors¹⁶ it nevertheless contains as good a mixture of archaeological fodder as they did. What the documents making up this miscellany have in common is that they, too, were the product of an order to describe or value someone's property, someone's proposed work, or the physical and economic effects of some neglect of property by a tenant or former owner. The contents and fittings of the city house in London in which the wife of Sir William Windsor, better known as Alice Perrers, had lived, occupy 3½ pages;¹⁷ another document describes the state of Somerton Castle, Lincs.,¹⁸ and another the size of the ferry-quay at Herringfleet, Suffolk, whence one crossed to Haddiscoe in Norfolk.¹⁹ The rooms and outbuildings of the manor houses of Findon, Sussex, and Willington, Beds., are detailed,²⁰ while we learn that the manor house of Southburton, E.R. Yorks., had four long forms fixed in the ground²¹—an

¹⁰ *List of Inquisitions Ad Quod Damnum* 2 vols. (P.R.O. Lists and Indexes, xvii and xxii, 1904-6).

¹¹ *Yorks. Archaeol. Soc. Record Series*, xii, xxiii, xxxi and xxxvii (1892-1906).

¹² *Id.*, xii, 44-5.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

¹⁴ P.R.O. C143/1/8; C143/17/5; C143/19/20; C143/368/17.

¹⁵ *Calendar of Inquisitions, Miscellaneous*, iv (1957).

¹⁶ *Id.*, i (1916); ii (1916); iii (1937).

¹⁷ *Id.*, iv, no. 17; her rural manors appear in adjoining documents.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 43.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 47.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 123.

²¹ *Ibid.*, no. 395.

interesting set of post-holes for someone to investigate. Another document dates the final blocking of a manor-house well by stones,²² and there are many accounts which detail decay and dilapidations within manor houses and their adjacent buildings.

The descriptions are not confined to the manor house. The subject index, which supplements a very full *index locorum et personarum*, has 30 entries concerned with building materials and 55 dealing with various buildings from aviaries through forges, granges, prisons, privies and sheepcotes to wardrobes.

The latest volume brings the series up to 1387. The earliest volume begins in the mid-thirteenth century, and in final recommendation of the contents of all four to archaeologists I append a short note on a few of the documents which have caught my eye.

In 1290 the arrival and departure of Ravenserod on its Spurn Head sandbank are described;²³ in 1313 a good architectural description of a Norfolk manor house;²⁴ in 1312 of the Scarborough staithe,²⁵ in the same year of the weirs and obstructions on the Yorkshire Derwent.²⁶ In 1351 we hear of the complete destruction by fire of the village of Bloxham, Lincs.,²⁷ now rebuilt; in 1360-1 of the disrepair of York and Scarborough castles.²⁸ In 1359 there is mention of the slate quarries of the Lake District, among land whose agricultural value defeated the jury: 'It cannot be measured on account of the rocks and crags: if the wood were cut it would not grow again owing to the poverty of the soil.'²⁹

A particularly useful group is that which arose from the Scottish incursions into Yorkshire in 1318. There is detail of villages which were wholly or partly destroyed (one or two never to recover),³⁰ and another document, of great value for the archaeology of settlement, where the jury declare how the abbot of Jervaulx has been forced by economic conditions to 'make towns of his four granges of Newstead, Rookwith, Akebar and Didderton'. Thirty messuages stood in Newstead, 40 in Rookwith and 24 at Didderton.³¹ This rare example of new rural settlement on the eve of the Black Death cries out for field investigation.

MAURICE BERESFORD

A FRAGMENT OF EARLY MEDIEVAL GLASS FROM LONDON

During June 1957, while the site was being excavated for the foundations of Cheapside House, on the north side of Cheapside in the city of London, Mr. John Vockings noticed a disturbance, possibly a post-hole, at a depth of 17 ft. below street level. The hole was filled with a substance like damp sawdust which contained some fragments of glass which Mr. Vockings presented to Guildhall Museum. There were no associated finds.

The fragments formed part of a bowl (PL. XIX, A-B; FIG. 43) of pale green glass, about 1 mm. thick, containing a few small bubbles, and in a very good state of preservation. The fragments include a small section of the rim, part of the side, and about one-third of the base. The base (D. c. 11.5 cm.) is richly decorated, but the side (H. 2.9 cm.), which slopes outwards slightly to a simple, fire-smoothed-lip, is plain.

The bowl was intended to be looked at from the inside. The decoration consists of

²² *Ibid.*, no. 50.

²³ *Id.*, I, no. 1512.

²⁴ *Id.*, II, no. 143.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 144.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, no. 1312.

²⁷ *Id.*, III, no. 75.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, nos. 366 and 435.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, nos. 243 and 363.

³⁰ *Id.*, II, nos. 385, 453, 455, 489.

³¹ *Ibid.*, no. 1797.