more come to light it is likely that regional schools of manufacture for these more expensive pieces will emerge. Design elements apart, for instance, it is interesting that the diameter of the circular lobed plate of the Canterbury tag illustrated by James Graham-Campbell is to within a millimetre the same as that from High Wycombe and this can scarcely be a coincidence. It may be noted that this is only the third tag to be recorded from Buckinghamshire, the other two being a simple ring and dot decorated disc from Walton, Aylesbury and a decorated triangular hook from Shenley Church End.

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NOTES

1 Buckinghamshire County Museum, Accession Number 64.1986, ref. CAS 5720. The writer is grateful to both parties for their assistance over the acquisition, to Mr Peter Trenfield for bringing it to the Museum’s attention, and to Leslie Webster, British Museum, for commenting on the content of this note.


4 D. W. Griffiths, ‘A group of Late Anglo-Saxon hooked tags from Cheshire’, Journal of the Chester Archaeol. Society, 70 (1967-88), 39-49, and James Graham-Campbell, ‘Some new and neglected finds of 9th century Anglo-Saxon ornamental metalwork’ Medieval Archaeol., 26 (1982), 144-51. It should be noted that a stray zero has apparently attached itself to measurements in the latter article, e.g. 310 mm should be 31 mm.


6 Information from R. J. Williams, Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit.

TOMEN LLANSANTFFRAID: A MOTTE NEAR RHAEADR, POWYS
(Figs. 3, 4, Pl. II, b)

Set in the Radnorshire hills close to the border with Brecknockshire, the compact mid-Wales town of Rhaeadr and the small settlement of Llansantffraid Cwmdeuddwr face each other across the R. Wye. The river in its upper reaches runs in a valley whose precipitous sides alternate with more gentle slopes that offer easier access and crossing places. Rhaeadr has grown up at a natural crossing; the predecessor of the bridge now linking it to Cwmdeuddwr was a ford below the rapids whose location can still be determined from the track that runs down the Rhaeadr bank.

Rhaeadr incorporates a castle constructed in 1177, of which almost nothing now remains, while Llansantffraid has a small earthwork which forms the subject of this note. Whilst the history of Rhaeadr castle is documented, at least in outline, nothing is known of Tomen Llansantffraid, though it has been surmised that it was thrown up earlier in the 12th century and was placed to command the ford across the Wye. Indeed, there is a possibility that Cwmdeuddwr is an earlier settlement than its larger neighbour. St Bridget’s church in Cwmdeuddwr has a longer history than St Clement’s in Rhaeadr which until 1735 was no more than a chapel in the parish of Nantmel, perhaps the castle chapel. Rhaeadr itself may have been a planned town of the 13th century.

The motte is now a sad reflection of the earthwork that once commanded the ford across the Wye. Surrounded by houses, it is almost invisible from the road, the slopes have been cut back to accommodate dwellings and stone walls; its encircling ditch and putative bailey have disappeared, leaving no trace (Fig. 3). The gradual envelopment of the motte seems to have occurred over the last two hundred years. The Radnorshire historian, the Reverend J. Williams, writing about 1818, commented that the mound was deeply ditched with a high rampart, implying that the earthwork’s appearance has changed considerably since the beginning of the 19th century. Lewis noted that the mound was surrounded by cottages and that in 1830 ‘part of this entrenchment was demolished … but an artificial mound is still remaining …’. By the time the Royal Commission compiled the inventory of ancient monuments in Radnorshire a hundred years later, the mound was ‘completely built in on all sides’. 
The construction of a garage block in place of cottages which had formerly stood against the mound’s north-east flank led to the first recorded archaeological activity in May 1982. A section revealed by the removal of the cottage wall was cleaned and photographed (Pl. II, b), pressure of time preventing a drawn record and written description from being compiled.

Partly as a result of local initiative, the motte was scheduled in February 1983, providing it with some statutory protection against future development. Further recording work was required in April 1990, after Radnor District Council had been granted Scheduled Monument Consent for the stabilization of the eroding slope and the replacement of a revetment wall behind ‘Hyfindle’, a house on the E. side of the motte. The unstable slope was cut back to give a split-level section which was photographed and drawn before remedial work began (Fig. 4).

**The Sections**

The works reported here were separated by eight years, the circumstances necessitated different levels of recording, and the exposed sections were at right-angles to each other. The results from the two pieces of work have, however, been integrated in the following description for the stratigraphy is broadly comparable.

Neither of the faces offers a true diametric section of the mound. Both were close to the original mound edge and the more recently exposed section was not a straight face, but had to be cut according to the requirements of subsequent building work. Unfortunately from an archaeological viewpoint, neither section was horizontally complete because of the constraints imposed by adjacent buildings. There is also some difficulty in matching the upper and lower parts of the split-level section recorded in 1990, because the lower face was stepped out by up to 0.8 m.

**The Stratigraphy**

The detailed description of the stratigraphy of the motte is based on the 1990 section with reference to details visible in photographs of the 1982 section where appropriate. Numbers refer to the 1990 section (Fig. 4), letters to the 1982 section (Pl. II, b).

Subsoil beneath the motte was a loose orange and grey gravelly loam (5') which became firmer and more gritty (50) just below the old ground surface. The pre-motte turf line (49) appeared as a layer of black loam, continuous except for breaks towards the N. end of the section. A similar buried turf was encountered in 1982, though this is not well-defined in the excavation photographs.

Piled on the old turf was a loose and essentially soil-free heap of pebbles (48), up to 0.25 m in length. Nothing comparable was found in 1982 (although a small patch of pebbles can be detected just to the left of the ranging rod in Pl. II, b). A thin turf layer covered only the lower slope of the stone pile.

A low and irregular spread of dark soil (A) was recognized towards the outside of the mound in 1982, and this was perhaps mirrored in the later excavation by a composite dump of gravel and loam (58, 60–64).

The core of the mound as seen in the earlier excavation consisted of a wedge of almost stoneless loam (C) that had been subjected to considerable animal disturbance. This was capped with distinctive dark turves on the E. and W. slopes (B), and with less well-defined turves on the top. The whole formed a dome-shaped inner core to the mound. On the E. side of the motte, wedges of silty gravel (e.g. 46) and stoneless loam (e.g. 54) were capped by a leached loam with turf bands showing as darker stains (44 and 14). These turves became more distinctive as the surface of the section dried out and were similar in appearance to the dome-shaped core revealed in 1982.

Deposits of gravel and gravelly silt (24–27) were tipped downwards from the edge of the mound against an inner fill of loam that butted the dome-shaped core. Similar, though less distinctive tip lines (D) can be recognized on the adjacent face recorded in 1982, but the division between this material and the loam infill beyond was considerably less pronounced.
FIG. 3
Tomen Llansantffraid: location
Layers of loam (e.g. 13) and silt (e.g. 3), some stretching the full length of the section, others visible over shorter distances, formed the upper levels of the mound. Interspersed with these were thinner layers of silt gravel (e.g. 35), and in one place a deposit of charcoal (7) which suggested the incorporation of a burnt branch or piece of wood in the make-up of the mound. Photographs of the earlier section reveal similar horizontal banding (E) in the upper levels.

An irregular loam-filled disturbance (15) appeared to be sealed by the upper layers of the mound, but there was no evidence of any features in the top of the motte. No structural evidence was found in 1982 or 1990.

Artefacts were sparse: a folded bronze strip and the fragmentary remains of an iron knife were recovered from the base of the mound in 1982, the latter from the old ground surface, the former from c. 0.15 m above it. A flint flake was recovered in soil slip from the eroding motte face prior to the 1990 investigation.

Discussion

The original size and profile of the motte are difficult to establish from either the surviving earthwork evidence or the recorded sections, although it is clear that the mound was comparatively small. It seems unlikely that the original profile of the motte was accurately reflected in the recorded sections, the slope probably having been cut back to a steep angle some time after construction. However, parts of the original profile possibly survive on the S. side above Triangle Villa and on the NW. adjacent to the line of the 1982 excavations, suggesting an approximately circular mound about 3.8 m high, with a flattened top at least 12 m in diameter. The original basal diameter cannot be calculated with any certainty, but was probably in excess of 18 m. Most of the mound material is likely to have been quarried from an encircling ditch, which on the basis of the Reverend Williams's account was probably infilled and largely built over during the 19th century. The motte itself may have been partly cut back to refill the ditch at that time.

The recorded sections show a sequence of four or five major constructional elements, and provide a valuable, if incomplete, picture of the way the motte was raised. The heap of
pebbles at the base of the mound may represent a feature that pre-dates the planning of the earthwork. Deliberate collection is implied by the absence of a soil matrix, and in appearance the stones are more like river pebbles than aggregate from the subsoil. There is a local tradition, articulated as early as the 19th century, that the mound is in fact a 'tumulus'. Barrows and cairns are known to have been incorporated within mottes in Wales and elsewhere. A cairn with a cist was found at the heart of a motte in Rûg Park near Corwen, Clwyd, and a cairn also at St Weonard's Tump, Herefordshire; at Tre Oda, in the suburbs of Cardiff, an inner turf mound with central stone setting was recognized as a barrow. However, at Tomen Llansantffraid, the heap of pebbles with no covering turf layer, except on its northern edge, is likely to have had an origin more recent than the prehistoric period.

The remaining layers probably belong to a single sequence of construction. A ring or low platform of loam and gravel, more evident in 1982 than in 1990, possibly defined the extent of the mound and prevented material from spilling back into the putative ditch. The core was constructed of a steep-sided heap of loam and turves about 2.2 m high. The sequence of layers suggests that turf, presumably cut from the line of the ditch, was put to one side, and then used to cap a mound 1.5-1.8 m high, built of various grades of subsoil. The mound then appears to have been extended to the limits of the ring or platform by tipping further layers of gravel and silt against the inner core. The sections imply careful selection of subsoil: the inner dumps were predominantly of stoneless loam, while the outer were of stony gravel, yet the lie of the strata implies that the two deposits must have been built up in conjunction rather than successively. Finally, the top of the motte was capped with broadly horizontal layers of subsoil to achieve the required height. There was no trace of timber structures on the summit or sides of the motte in either the 1982 or 1990 sections, although there is no reason to suppose that evidence of these is not still to be found beyond the limits of excavation. Earlier reports of a crude masonry wall within the motte have not been substantiated by the more recent excavations.

The sequence of construction is of some interest since comparatively few sections of mottes have been recorded; Tre Oda, Glamorgan is one of a very small number that have been half-sectioned. More frequently, excavation has been carried out in a series of steps, revealing some information about the surface layers but little about the core of the mound, as for example at Sycharth Castle, Clwyd; Alstoe, Leicestershire and Baile Hill, York. A clearer picture of the stratification has emerged where sections have been excavated across the outer edge of a mound, as at Hen Domen, Powys, or where sections have been revealed by natural erosion, as at Aldingham, Lancashire and Lower Luggy, Powys.

The sections of Tomen Llansantffraid display a fairly complex make-up: low marker bank, consolidated central core, expansion of mound with layers tipping inwards to provide the most stable face using loose subsoil, and a horizontal capping of more stable soils. Previously recorded sections at other mottes have often revealed a relatively simple stratigraphy. Several appear to have had little more than a central core with additional material tipped down the sides, as at Sycharth and Tre Oda. Others appear to have irregular layers or dumps levelled off and consolidated with horizontal layers of material, as at Lower Luggy, and Winsbury, Shropshire. The construction of the small motte at Lorrha, Co. Tipperary, affords a closer parallel to Tomen Llansantffraid. There, the excavator postulated a primary ring bank which provided the means whereby tips of soil were tipped down towards the centre of the motte, thus providing stability for the mound. A similar sequence on less secure evidence was suggested at Alstoe Mount.

Whether Tomen Llansantffraid is atypical in the care taken over its construction remains to be ascertained. There are numerous other small mottes in the Welsh borderland and undoubtedly opportunities will arise in the future to consider the question further.

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NOTES

1 I. Soulsby, The Towns of Medieval Wales (Chichester, 1983), 224.
3 Radnorshire Inventory (R.C.A.H.M. Wales, 1933), 103.
4 S. W. Williams, 'Rhayader and its antiquities', Montgomeryshire Collect., 30 (1898), 211–35.
5 M. Beresford, New Towns of the Middle Ages (Gloucester, 1988), 573.
6 J. Williams, 'History of Radnorshire', Archael. Cambrensis, 4 (1858), 469–616.
7 S. Lewis, Topographical Dictionary of Wales (London, 1833).
8 Radnorshire Inventory, op. cit. in note 3, 103.
9 For preliminary reports on work in 1982 see: Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust Review of Projects (Welshpool, 1982), 11;
11 Information from Mr C. Musson.
12 Williams, op. cit. in note 6, 543.
14 T. Wright, 'Treago and the large tumulus at St Weonard's', Archaeol. Cambrensis, 10 (1855), 168–74.
16 Radnorshire Inventory, op. cit. in note 3, 103.
17 Knight and Talbot, op. cit. in note 14.
26 Dunning, op. cit. note 18, 399.
27 Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, 7a Church Street, Welshpool, Powys SY2 7DL.

THE WARWICK CASTLE CAULDRON (Fig. 5)

A copper-alloy cooking pot was such a vital item of domestic metalwork in the medieval and later periods that it featured in inventories and wills relating to the full range of dwellings from cottage to castle. Of those which have survived, vessels carrying dates are from the 16th to 17th centuries and very few are believed to be from an earlier period. There are considerable difficulties in dating domestic metalwork since stylistic reference points, so useful with items of artistic merit, are largely lacking with utilitarian objects. However it is becoming clear that analysis of the alloy used can help because comparisons can be made with other object-types, such as weights and measures which are datable, so long as similar technology has been involved in their manufacture.

The subject of this note is a large cauldron now displayed in Warwick Castle, but comment is also included on two other large cauldrons which have survived in the Trinity Hospital, Leicester¹ and in Lacock Abbey, Wiltshire.² The latter is a signed and dated vessel made in Flanders in 1500. The Warwick Castle cauldron is unusually large and the weight of such a large object would militate against its easy transport. There is therefore the possibility that it was made locally; unfortunately there is no record in the castle archives of any other than its most recent history. Various features apart from its large size make this vessel notable.