

NOTES AND NEWS

The Trent Valley Archaeological Research Committee

THE report of the committee for 1969 includes reports on several sites in Derbyshire by its director of excavations, Miss Hazel Wheeler. The cursus at Findern (SK 317288), one of the six located by the committee, has been shown by aerial photographs to be at least 530m. in length, the ends remaining to be defined. In September and October a trench 95m. long was cut (approximately at right angles) to give a section across the full width of the cursus. The two ditches were identified cut into the natural gravel and filled with clean sand, but neither the ditches nor two intersecting pits close to the north ditch yielded any datable finds. Worked flints found in field-walking have not proved capable of close dating. Circular cropmarks, both within and near the cursus, probably represent round barrows. As the report says, "The site is clearly a religious and funerary complex of major importance for the late neolithic and bronze age in the Trent valley." Further work on aerial photography in the Trent valley revealed amongst other sites one at Willington consisting of a number of ring-ditches with linear and rectangular features, possibly a round-barrow cemetery with later farm boundaries. As elsewhere, excavations will be planned to keep ahead of the quarrying.

The committee was asked by Derby Museum to extend the excavations begun by Mr. M. Brassington on the Romano-British industrial site on the racecourse, particularly because of continuing erosion and extensive damage by workmen. It was hoped to establish the relationship between the stone buildings found earlier and the pottery kilns on the site. North of the Roman road running south-east from Little Chester a series of intersecting pits was located and dated to the same period as the pottery kilns, c. 110-120 A.D. They were cut by a very large pit, the edges of which have not yet been completely defined, but which may be dated by a coin to the later 2nd century. A pattern of postholes, cut through this complex of pits, together with a large amount of burnt daub with clear wood impressions, suggested a wattle and daub fence or building, later than the kilns but not necessarily earlier than the latest pit. At present interpretation must be tentative. There is, however, here an excellent opportunity to uncover a substantial part of a Romano-British industrial site, where the presence of slag suggests that smelting may have taken place and where magnetometer surveys indicate further ovens and kilns.

At Repton Miss Wheeler completed excavations started by members

of the Society before a bungalow was built on land adjoining the churchyard. A limited time had been allowed by the owner and the areas available for excavation were extremely limited, but a valuable group of pottery ranging from the 12th to 14th centuries was recovered. The earliest is of Saxo-Norman type, whilst some of the 13th- and 14th-century material may have been produced locally. The bulk of the pottery lacks parallels in Nottingham and Derby, and some of its affinities seem to be closer to medieval pottery from Yorkshire.

A new Royal Crown Derby porcelain museum

Mr. A. L. Thorpe, Curator of the Derby Museum, has contributed the following note on this new development. In 1964 the Royal Crown Derby porcelain works became part of a group of factories controlled by Allied English Potteries Ltd. With a sense of history as commendable as it is rare the new management showed itself conscious of the traditions associated with porcelain making in Derby for over 200 years and committed itself to maintaining the high standards of quality and design. This policy quickly took practical form through the decision to build up the works museum to the standard of a comprehensive historical collection of high quality with examples from the mid-18th century down to present times. Such a collection, it was realized, would not only put the present products into perspective by showing how these have been developed, but also provide a source of inspiration for today's craftsmen and women and help them to understand and appreciate the traditions they have inherited.

In the short time since collecting began in 1966 it has not been possible yet to build up an historically balanced series. Nevertheless, the works museum already possesses a number of remarkably fine and important pieces, and much careful thought is being given to making the collection worthy of the reputation long enjoyed by the factory itself.

The museum is not ordinarily open to the general public. It is included in the tour arranged for official parties visiting the factory and admission for private persons will usually be granted on written application.

Burials at Rowthorne, Glapwell

In October, Mr. H. C. Lane was asked to assist the police in the investigation of human skeletal remains found at Rowthorne Lane near Glapwell (SK 48006517). He has reported that these remains were discovered during the laying of a sewer pipe when a concrete drive to a bungalow had been cut by a trench 29 in. wide, 32 in. deep, 20 ft. long and aligned in a west-east direction. At various points in the trench side freshly fractured skeletons were to be seen, buried some 12-24 in. below the surface of the topsoil. An examination of other bones already excavated established that the only damage to them was caused by the recent excavation and that all the bones were those of adult males. The soil

profile did not indicate that individual burials had taken place, and in fact the closeness of all the remains suggested some form of communal burial. There had been no other finds within the trench.

When the trench was extended southwards, Mr. Lane carried out further excavations and in addition to other skeletal remains found a wall fragment of an olive-green glazed pottery, which is considered to be not later than 17th century in date. The absence of any complete skeleton may have been due to the position and width of the trench. It may be noted that the tithe apportionment roll of 1839 names one parcel of land (no. 718) Chapel Yard. It seems that hereabouts was the chapel of Rowthorne recorded in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of 1535, but of which J. C. Cox said "there does not now appear to be even a tradition of its former existence". (*Derbyshire churches*, I, 473.)

Industrial archaeology

It was a happy coincidence that the formation of a new Industrial Archaeology Section took place in the year in which Mr. Frank Nixon's book *The industrial archaeology of Derbyshire* was published. Further stimulus to this subject was given by the exhibition organized by Mr. Christopher Charlton at Tawney House, Matlock, on the industrial history of Derbyshire. Mr. Nixon's book not only provides a valuable survey of the pioneering work that he and others have done, but by indicating aspects of the county's industrial history about which little is yet known will give a new impetus to work in this field. Another volume which appeared in this series during the year was that on *The industrial archaeology of Lancashire* by a member of the Society, Mr. Owen Ashmore, whose early work on cotton mills was in the Glossop district.

The new Section has been notably active in a number of directions this year. Two which may appropriately be mentioned here have involved close co-operation with the County Planning Officer, Mr. A. Latham. On his invitation, the Section has been engaged on a survey of toll-houses throughout the county as a contribution to the County Treasures Survey. Members of the Section are also actively engaged in the work of preserving the Middleton Top winding engine (an 1825 Butterley beam engine) of the Cromford and High Peak Railway. For such projects and for the general work of recording, the Section is anxious to enlist the support of many more members and other people interested in the industrial archaeology and history of Derbyshire.

The Arkwright festival at Cromford

In 1971 the second centenary of Richard Arkwright's momentous building of his first cotton spinning mill on the Derwent at Cromford is to be celebrated by a major festival from 17 July to 8 August. This will be extremely wide in scope with events ranging from traditional village customs to scientific and historical lectures to appeal to individuals

and organizations of very diverse interests. For the historian and archaeologist it will offer an exceptional opportunity to see the community Arkwright created at Cromford and many other associated industrial buildings and sites in their Derbyshire setting. A brochure and further information may be obtained from the secretary of the Arkwright Festival Committee, Christopher Charlton, Tawney House, Matlock Green, Matlock DE4 3ST.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS RELATING TO DERBYSHIRE

Unless otherwise stated, the date of publication is 1969

- BURT, R., "Lead production in England and Wales, 1700-1770", *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, 2nd series, vol. XXII, 249-68.
- CLAPHAM, A. R., ed., *The flora of Derbyshire*. Derby Museum and Art Gallery.
- DUNSTAN, J., *The story of Methodism in Totley*. 1968.
- EDWARDS, I. M., *Glebe terriers of Ilkeston St. Mary's*. Ilkeston Historical Society.
- HOFFMAN, H. C., *King Ecgbert and the Treaty of Dore*. Dore Village Society.
- JOHN, W. D., *William Billingsley (1758-1828)*. Ceramic Book Co.
- JOHNSON, R., *The history of Alfreton*. Alfreton U.D.C.
- MOTT, R. A., "The water mills of Beauchief Abbey", *Trans. Hunter Arch. Soc.*, IX, part 4, 203-20.
- NIXON, F., *The industrial archaeology of Derbyshire*. David & Charles.
- PRESTON, F. L., "The Roman road through Hallamshire to Brough-on-Noe", *Trans. Hunter Arch. Soc.*, IX, part 4, 235-44.
- REDFERN, R., *Portrait of the Pennines*. Robert Hale & Co.
- RICHARDSON, G. G. S., "Excavations on early roads east from Brough-on-Noe", *Trans. Hunter Arch. Soc.*, IX, part 4, 245-51.
- SENIOR, D. J. H., *Ten years at Crich*. Tramway Museum Society.