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WEST MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY
34, 1991



CBA REGIONAL GROUP 8

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AND ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICE
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WEST MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY

34, 1991

Edited by John Darlington

CBA West Midlands, Group 8

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Editorial

The last year has been an eventful one for archaeology in the West Midlands with changes to national CBA and to local CBA. National CBA now has a new Director, Richard Morris, and is undergoing a process of restructuring and constitutional change. The proposal that all members should only join the national CBA and then be allocated to their appropriate regional group has been modified - individual members can join the regional group without having to join CBA nationally.

CBA West Midlands has had a busy year as can be seen from the large number of reports in both the Forum and the County round-up section within this volume. "Archaeology Day, West Midlands 1991" had to be expanded to "Archaeology Week, West Midlands 1992". Another notable development has been the increased involvement of CBA West Midlands in informing, advising and consulting on all aspects of archaeology in the West Midlands region. Here the group can act as a completely independent advisor and pressure group on the archaeological issues of the moment. This is to be encouraged and should extend to the opinion of the whole membership of the region.

1991 also saw the second year of the operation of the Planning Policy Guidance note 16 "Archaeology and Planning" (PPG 16). The guidance note, which pulls together and summarizes various pieces of legislation, represents the main line of protection and management for 90% of the country's known archaeological sites. The effectiveness of the PPG has recently been reviewed for English Heritage with the conclusion that the advice given in the PPG had been "*....adopted by every local planning authority in England, to the extent that, at the end of 1991, the archaeological significance of virtually all planning applications in England is properly considered*". This statement is slightly misleading in that although every local planning authority may have adopted PPG 16 it does not follow that it is always effectively implemented. This is particularly true of the situation after advice has been given and a planning application has been determined. Monitoring of such planning applications is still difficult as there is often no feedback as to whether an application has even been approved. It is still up to the local authority to weigh up the relative importance of archaeological advice against other considerations - not surprisingly the value attached to archaeological matters varies from area to area and against a background of local politics. A further interesting finding of the review of PPG 16 is that the guidance note *has* generated an increased workload for county and district archaeologists, particularly in preparing briefs and specifications for archaeological work and in monitoring site activities. This is despite assurances that the PPG would place *no additional burdens on local authorities* (WMA 33, 1). One wonders how much that workload will increase when the construction industry comes out of recession.

The coming year looks even more eventful: planned changes in the structure of English Heritage, the review of the operation of local government, several large road schemes and two proposed forests - all of which will have archaeological implications, and, I'm pleased to say, the publication of a new leaflet to encourage people to join CBA West Midlands.

In the editorial for last year's West Midlands Archaeology reference was made that CBA Group 8 was willing to consider making a small grant towards the cost of publishing articles which deal with aspects of the archaeology of the Group's region (Hereford & Worcester, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and West Midlands) in established national or regional periodicals. Somewhat surprisingly no such requests were received so it is worth repeating the offer:

Authors are warmly invited to send such articles to the Hon Editor of CBA Group 8 for consideration. They should be typed, double-spaced, on A4 paper using one side of the paper with ample margins.

A copy of each intended illustration should be included (good photocopies of plates and of authors' rough versions of line drawings are acceptable).

Each article will be read by a referee who will report to the Officers and Committee of Group 8. An author may be asked to make revisions in the light of the referee's comments as a pre-condition of the making of a grant. Articles which have already been submitted to a publisher will not, therefore, be eligible for a publication grant.

Finally, especial thanks must be made to Rachael Edwards who co-edited this journal for the previous two issues. Her contribution has been considerable and her help will be sorely missed.

John Darlington 12.11.92

THE FORUM

This year the Forum concentrates upon the Roman period with three papers on sites from the region. Steve Cracknell begins with a report on the excavations of Alcester's Roman defences, carried out on a development site in 1986. Tony Habberley, of the Penk Valley Archaeological Group, outlines recent discoveries on the site of a Roman villa at Acton Trussell, Staffordshire and Colin Baddeley reports on the Legionary Fortress recorded at Mancetter by the Atherstone Archaeological Society. In the fourth paper, Martin Locock and Chris Currie summarise the results of excavations carried out by Peter Twigg at Castle Bromwich Hall. Finally, Philip Wise continues with a theme he introduced to the Forum last year with a report on further discoveries of medieval seal-matrices in Warwickshire.

ALCESTER'S ROMAN DEFENCES: EXCAVATIONS AT THE GATEWAY SUPERMARKET SITE, 1986

Stephen Cracknell, Warwickshire Museum

This article is a summary of the report on the Gateway Supermarket site, Alcester, which was excavated in 1986. The report was completed in 1988 and accepted by the Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society for publication in its *Transactions*. However, given the number of articles awaiting space in the journal, there was no immediate prospect of publication. By 1991 English Heritage was considering the creation of an Alcester 'series', monographs on various aspects of the Roman town to be published, it was hoped, by the CBA. It was thought appropriate to include the Gateway report and so it has been withdrawn from the *Transactions*, although the Alcester 'series' is still some way from rolling off the presses. I feel that the Gateway report has fallen into a kind of publication limbo and the purpose of this article is to put some of the more important points into print. I am well aware that this summary does not do justice to the artefacts and ecological remains recovered and nor is the discussion adequate but limitations of space have necessitated drastic pruning of the original work. Readers who wish to follow up particular details prior to full publication are welcome to contact me directly.

Method of investigation

Following proposals to develop a site on the Roman defences, five trenches (Fig 1 A-E) were excavated by Warwickshire Museum with the help of a grant from English Heritage. The western part of the site was not available for large-scale excavation as the owners - in the days before developer funding - were not prepared to entertain the extra construction costs which this would have entailed. Accordingly, this area (of prehistoric marsh) was investigated by means of extracting cores from boreholes. In addition, a watching brief was undertaken whilst the construction work was in progress and Trench 7 of Booth's Coulters Garage excavations (Booth 1985) was reopened.

Summary of the stratigraphy

The Roman activities on Area B were divided into two phases, A and B. Phase A covered the construction and use of the earthwork defences, and phase B their disuse. These remains were stratigraphically unrelated to the Roman activities on Areas A, C, D, and E, which were also divided into two phases, in this case labelled I and II. Phase I comprised the construction and use of the stone granary building first seen at Coulters Garage (Booth 1985). Phase II witnessed the building of the town wall (phase IIa) and an external tower (phase IIb).

The whole of the site was underlain by river terrace gravel. At the west end, the gravel was covered by layers containing peat interleaved with clay.

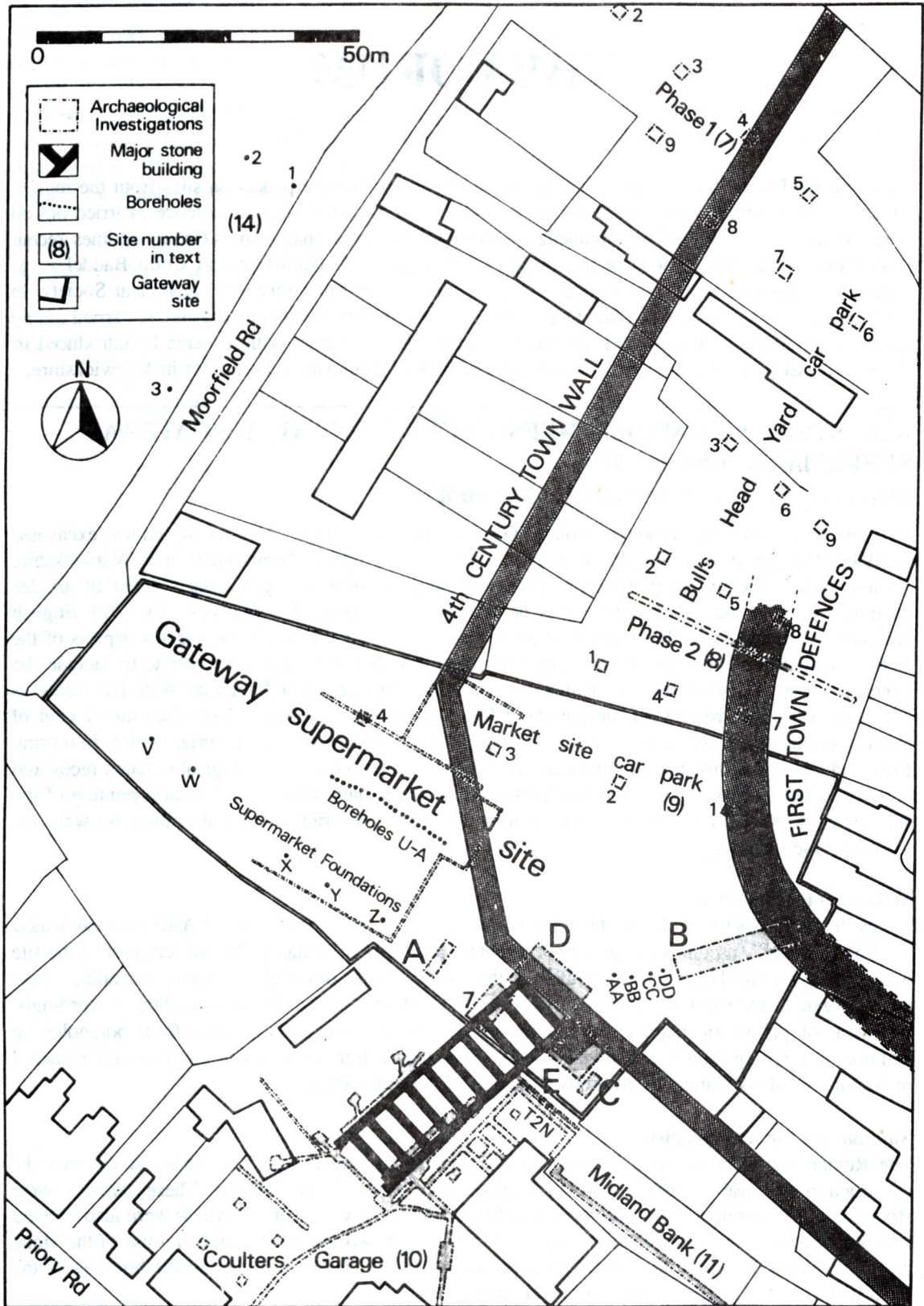


Figure 1: Location of the Gateway Supermarket site Areas A-E, boreholes, and adjacent archaeological work at Bull's Head Yard (phases 1 and 2), the Market site (9), Coulters Garage (10), the Midland Bank (11), and on the Moorfield Marsh (14)

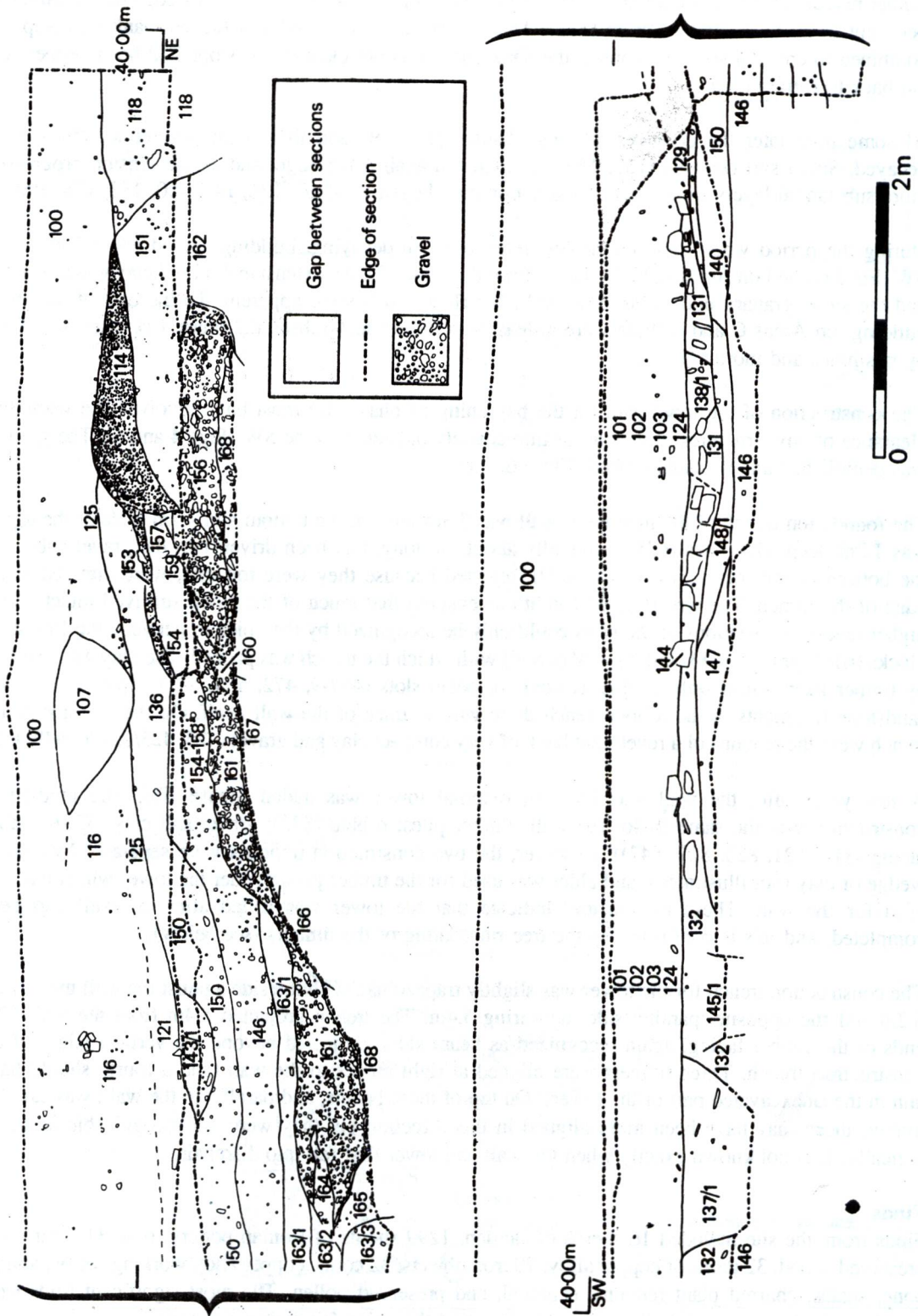


Figure 2: NW side of area B: composite section showing Phase A bank at NE end

The earliest archaeological remains were on Area B (phase A). The first town defences were represented by a rampart of clay and gravel with a near-vertical face on its SW side suggesting that a timber revetment of some kind had supported the soil (Fig 2 114, 151). The back edge of the bank had been cut away by a modern ditch (118). The natural lie of the land and the pre-bank make-up had combined to create a slope in front of the bank but it was not clear if this slope had been deliberately cut back to form a ditch.

At some time later the defences fell into disuse (phase B) and the facade was either removed or decayed. Small soil deposits (157, 159) accumulated against the edge, and as the erosion progressed more substantial layers were laid down and dumping began to occur (136, 146, 150, 153, 154, etc).

During the period when these earthwork defences were decaying, building started some 30m to the SW (Fig 3 phase I on Areas A, C, D, and E, Booth's Trench 7). An extensive dump of clay was deposited and the stone granary built (550, 623, 850). No floor levels were apparent. To the east of the stone building, on Areas C and E there were at least two further less-substantial phase I structures, defined by postholes and mortar floors.

The construction of the town wall (at the beginning of phase IIa) must have involved the wholesale clearance of any structures in its path or immediately outside it to the SW (Figs 4 and 5). The granary was demolished and its walls robbed (Fig 5 624/1).

The foundation trench of the new town wall was 3.3m wide at the bottom and 4.1m wide at the top. It was 1.2m deep. Oak piles (628), originally about 2m long, had been driven into the gravel subsoil at the bottom of the trench. Two (626, 629), rejected because they were too thin, were dumped at the edge of the trench. The waterlogged conditions ensured that much of the wood survived intact, but at higher levels the positions of the piles could only be recognized by the voids in between the limestone blocks (619), gravel (618), and clay (456, 834) with which the trench was packed. The clay was overlaid by timber lacing, now only visible as voids or beam slots (467-9, 472, 503, 532). Apart from a few sandstone fragments in the robber trench there was no trace of the wall itself. On the NE side of the trench were the remains of a revetment bank of very compact clay and gravel (425, 425/2, 426, 449-452).

A few years after the wall was built an external tower was added (phase IIb). The method of construction was the same as for the wall (timber piles; rubble (833); gravel and clay (829); timber lacing (818, 821, 823, 827, 842)). However, the two construction trenches were separated by a small wedge of clay (not illustrated), and alder was used for the timber piling under the tower whilst oak was used for the wall. These two factors indicate that the tower was added after the wall had been completed, and this is confirmed by the tree ring dating of the timbers (see below).

The construction trench for the tower was slightly trapezoidal, with the side against the wall measuring 6.2m and the opposite, parallel side measuring 5.4m. The trench projected 5.4m from the wall. The ends of the timber lacing, again recognized as beam slots, projected beyond the vertical edges of the construction trench. Three timbers were aligned at right angles to the wall (and a fourth should have lain in the unexcavated part of the tower). On top of these beams, and parallel to the wall, was another timber; there may have been more aligned in this direction but they were not recognizable archaeologically. It is not known exactly when the wall and tower first fell into disrepair.

Finds

Finds from the site included 16 sherds of samian, 1299 sherds of Roman pottery, over 31 samples of preserved wood, 32 items of copper alloy, 70 iron objects, 32 coins, copper alloy working debris, animal bone, snails, charred plant remains, charcoal, and preserved pollen. The most significant finds were the charred plant remains indicating gardening, and the coins for dating purposes.

Discussion and dating evidence

Today the river Arrow runs round the east side of the Alcester town centre but it now seems certain

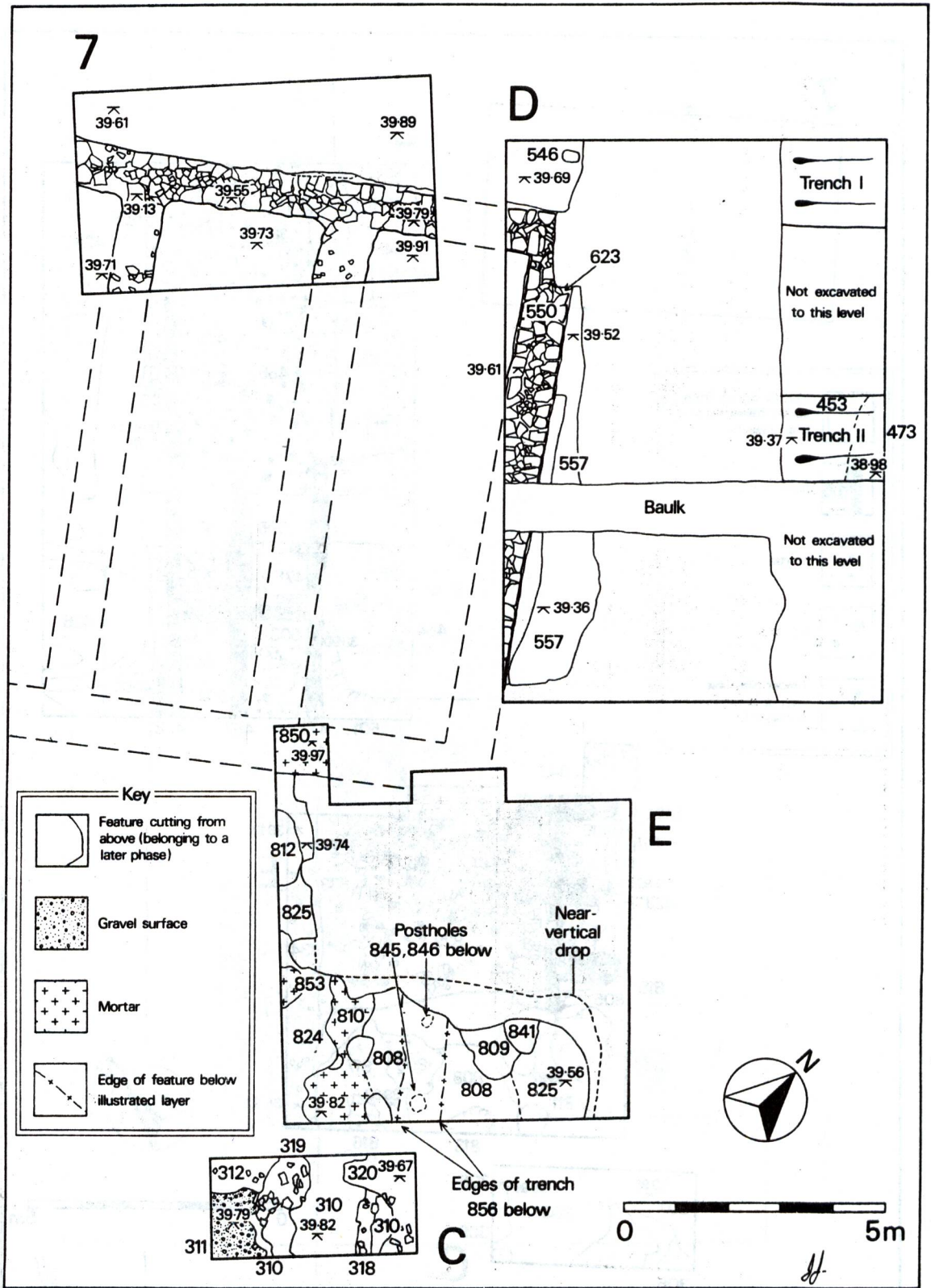


Figure 3: The substantial stone building and contemporary remains at the end of Phase I in areas C, D, E and Coulters Garage area 7 (excluding Phase III remains). Area 7 plan courtesy of Paul Booth

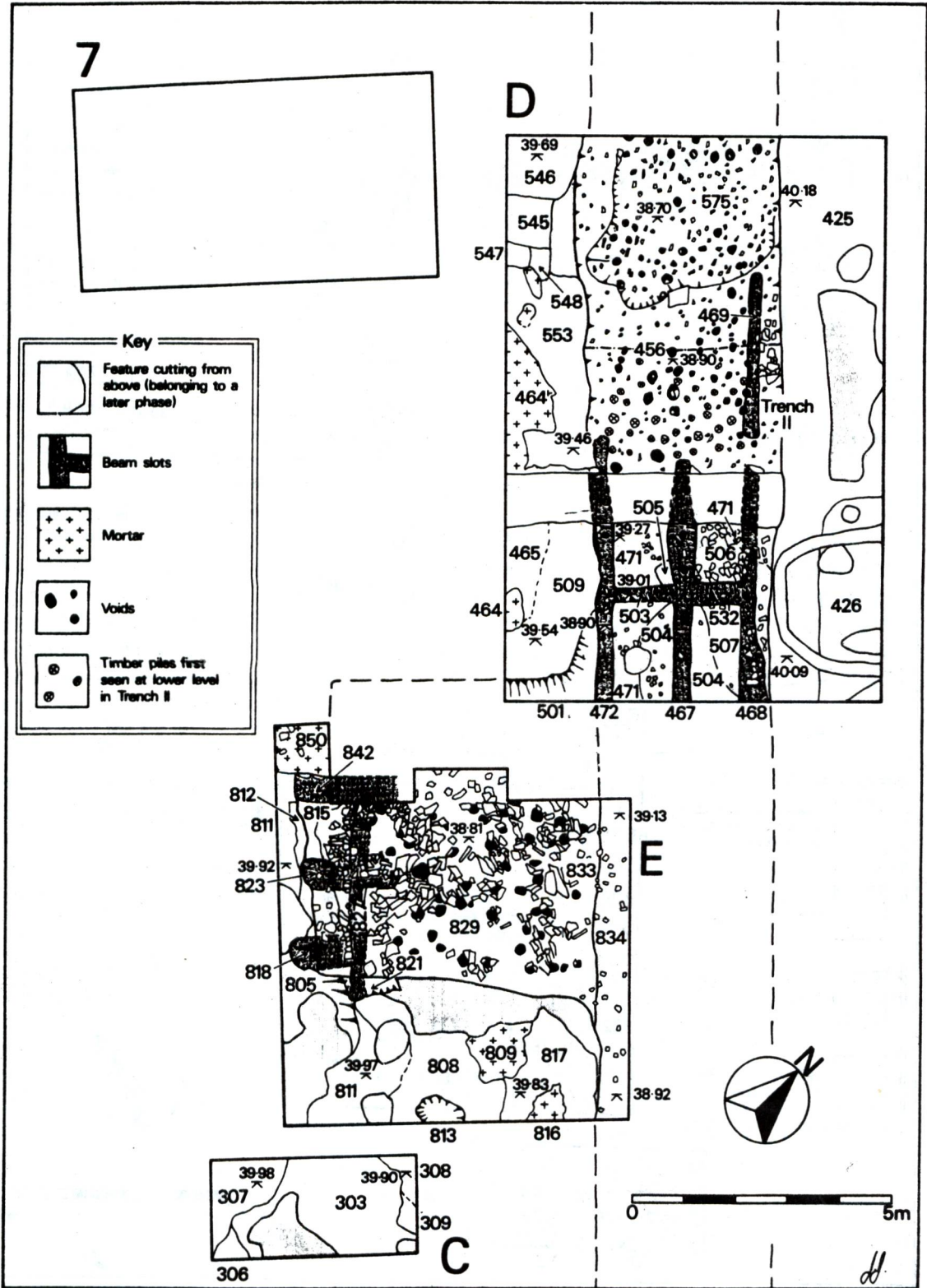


Figure 4: The surviving traces of the construction of the Phase IIa town wall and the Phase IIb bastion, and other contexts dating to the end of Phase IIb. Areas C, D, E.

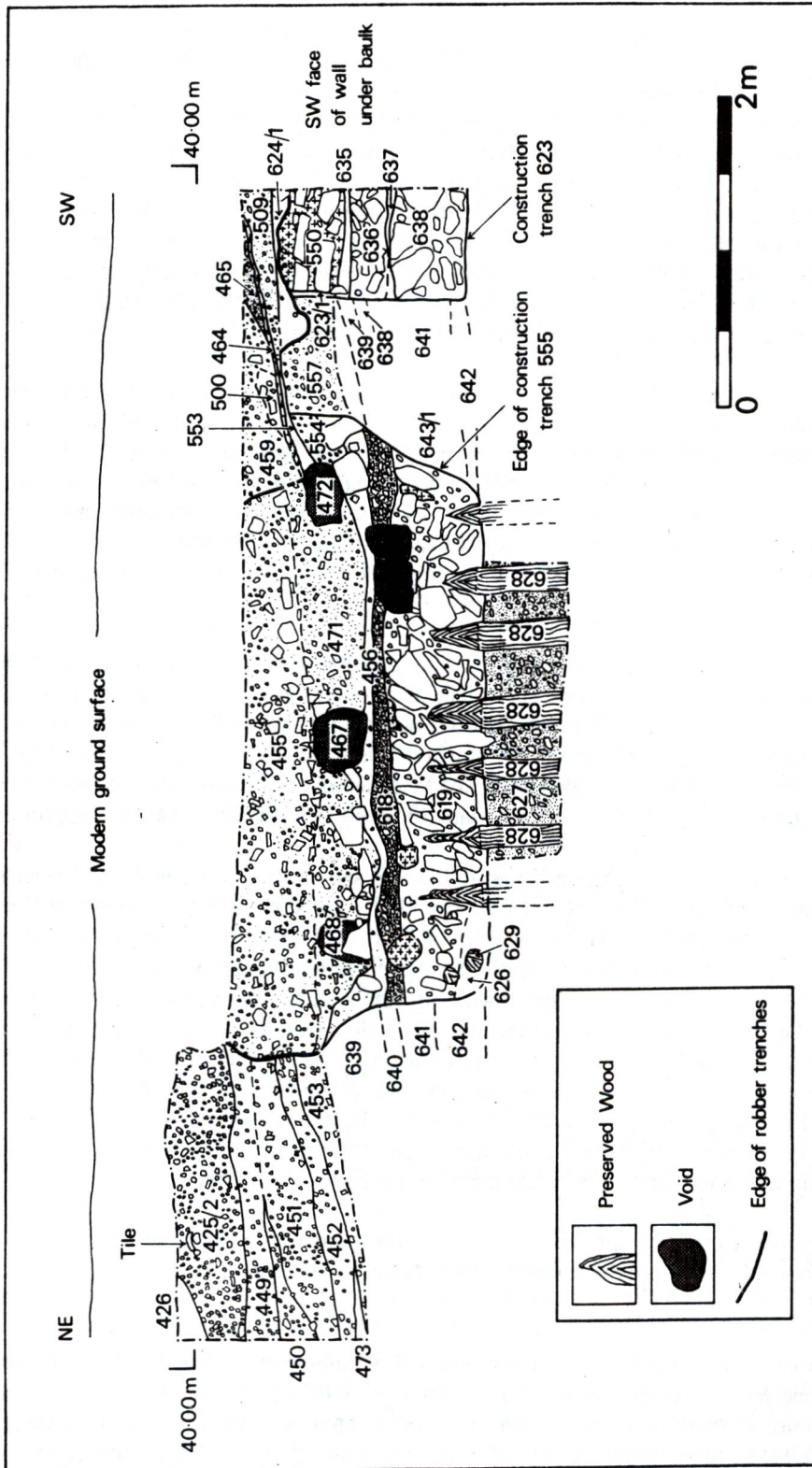


Figure 5: North west side of the central baulk across area D: NE-SW section showing Phase IIa rampart (left), construction and demolition layers of town wall (centre) and Phase I stone building and subsequent layers(right).

that it originally ran round the west side, not far from Moorfield Road. Peat and organic deposits have been found over a large area at the south end of Moorfield Road and soil analysis, the presence of aquatic snails, and the pollen assemblage all confirm that the area was once wet. Three pieces of dating evidence are available. A deposit at Coulters Garage had a C-14 date of 460 +/-110 bc (HAR 4905). Secondly, a determination of peat at Bulls Head Yard gave a date of AD190 +/- 60 (HAR 2257). Thirdly, the town defences were rebuilt in the middle of the 4th century (see below) extending the circuit to include areas with peaty deposits on the eastern margins of the Moorfield marsh. As there would be little point in enclosing standing water, it seems that the marsh must have partly dried out by that time. It is likely that the peat deposits started to accumulate when the river became blocked at some time in the middle of the first millennium BC, a phenomenon which may be related to the erosion of Mercian Mudstone deposits higher up the Arrow valley (Shotton 1978).

As a result of the limited area available for investigation at the Gateway Supermarket site the first town defences could only be tentatively identified. However, subsequent work at Gas House Lane has revealed a complete section across the bank and confirmed the proposed interpretation. Both sites produced evidence for a vertical front edge but on neither site were there traces of postholes or tie beams within or in front of the bank which might have supported the revetment; this remains an outstanding problem in the interpretation of the structure. At Gas House Lane, once again, no formal ditch was identified but the broad area of marshy deposits may have obviated the need for such a barrier.

The Gateway Supermarket site adds nothing to the dating of the first set of town defences. There were no sherds from the lowest layers of Area B. In fact, there were only three sherds from undisturbed Roman deposits. These were from phase B, associated with the decay of the rampart: an undatable fragment of Severn Valley ware, a fragment of samian dating to AD140-200, and a small sherd from a 4th-century BB1 bowl. In so far as it goes, then, the evidence is compatible with the recently revised dating suggested for the bank at Meeting Lane (late 2nd-early 3rd century; Mahany forthcoming).

The results of work elsewhere in Alcester indicate that the settlement continued to thrive outside the defences. The main evidence for this at the Gateway site is the stone granary, for which Booth has proposed a construction date of *c* AD300. A coin of Tetricus I (AD270-3) from the clay deposit in Area A seems to confirm this date. Stratigraphically, there was no direct link between the destruction of the granary and the *construction* of the town wall although the destruction of the granary was demonstrably earlier than the *destruction* of the town wall. However, it is inconceivable that a structure as substantial as the granary would have been left standing directly outside the new defences. It is surprising that the granary was not actually included in the newly enlarged circuit. If, as Booth suggests, it was an official building, perhaps a collection point for the *annona militaris*, it would have been a prime candidate for inclusion in the walls. Its demolition at the time that the wall was built suggests that it was already obsolete, although it could have been rebuilt on another site.

There were few finds from these phases but of particular note was a dump of deliberately burned hemlock seeds found in a layer (473) sealed by the rampart, and seeds of beet in an adjacent context (452).

The available evidence now points to the town wall being built shortly after AD 364. The structure consisted of a stone wall supported on timber lacing and piles and backed by a clay-and-gravel rampart. The customary third element of Roman town defences, a ditch, was missing: although the phase I granary was demolished to accommodate the wall, there was no sign of a ditch cutting its 41m length.

There was no stratigraphic link between the wall and the rampart as the wall had been completely robbed out. The coins from the rampart were not particularly helpful: all three date to the late 3rd century, compared with the mid-4th-century date proposed for the wall. Nevertheless, there are several reasons for believing that the bank and the wall were built at one time. Firstly, an earlier defensive bank existed elsewhere (on Area B) reducing the likelihood that this feature was part of an earlier

structure. Secondly, the rampart was made up of soils similar to those which would have been dug out of the top of the foundation trench. Thirdly, the slope of the layers indicated that it was piled up against some nearby structure. This analysis is confirmed by Mahany's Meeting Lane site (site M) where the rampart partly overlay the construction trench for the wall.

It is not known for certain why the town wall was on a different alignment to the earlier defences. Although an extra area of about 2ha was included within the new defences it could not have been particularly good building land, as the late date for the deposition of peat at Bulls Head Yard indicates. Very little excavation has taken place in the area between the two defensive circuits but the preliminary indications are that the area was never extensively developed. It may be that the circuit was increased so that the defences were again bounded by a muddy impenetrable barrier, the retreating Moorfield Marsh. Alternatively, such a blank area might have been used to provide secure accommodation for mobile field army units.

Eventually dendrochronology may provide an accurate date for the wall - the rings have been measured but do not fit well enough with established master curves to indicate an absolute date at this stage. For the present, the dating relies largely on a single coin found on the Coulters Garage site. The coin, issued by Valentinian I and dated AD 364-7, was found in a context associated with the demolition of the granary which presumably happened as the wall was being built. It seems hardly likely that the granary would have been demolished any earlier: for such a well-built structure a lifespan of only 64 years is in any case short. It is, however, recognized that a single coin from a demolition deposit can never be regarded as definitive dating evidence.

The calibrated C-14 dates from the last 20 rings of some of the timber piles from under the town wall (Cal AD 255-380 at 1 sigma) are compatible with a date in the 3rd quarter of the fourth century but they do not refine the dating. Equally, the pottery is in general agreement with the other dating evidence but does not provide independent confirmation.

The external tower was added to the wall after a few years. Dendrochronological analysis tentatively suggests that the timbers used to support this structure were cut down seven years later than the wood used to underpin the wall. The C-14 dates from these timbers are statistically identical to those for the wall (Cal AD 255-410 at 1 sigma) but again this only provides a general confirmation of the late date and the proposed *terminus post quem* of AD 371.

None of the superstructure remained but the nature of the foundations gives some indication of the shape of the tower. The piles covered the whole of the area and the timber lacing probably did the same, presumably indicating that the tower was solid rather than hollow. At ground level the foundation trench was slightly trapezoidal but the shape of the robber trench and the position of the demolition rubble suggested that the above-ground structure had a flattened-D, semicircular, or perhaps polygonal shape, projecting about 5m from the wall.

One further find of note was a dispersed coin hoard found by a local metal detector enthusiast on the site during the construction of the supermarket after the main excavation had been completed. This hoard was deposited in the AD 380s, in what was then waste ground just inside the defences. Much of the pottery from the disturbed Roman and post-Roman Area B contexts dated to about this time, indicating occupation of the area within the defences right to the end of the Roman period. The earliest post-Roman pottery dated to the 12th or 13th century with a limited amount of 13th-century pottery coming from the robber trench of the town wall. The wall must have been demolished in part before that date but the 13th century was a time of noticeable activity in medieval Alcester and such a source of stone would have been a valuable asset.

Acknowledgements

Information contained in this article is based on the work of Rowan Ferguson, James Greig, Cathy

Groves, Lisa Moffett, Stephanie Ratkai, W A Seaby, and others who contributed their specialist knowledge to the excavation report.

Booth, P, 1985 Roman store buildings at Alcester, *Transactions of the Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society*, **94**, 1985 (1989), 63-106

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Shotton, F W, 1978 Archaeological inferences from the study of alluvium, in the lower Severn-Avon valleys, in *The effect of man on the landscape, the lowland zone* (eds S Limbrey and J G Evans), *Council Brit Archaeol Res Rep*, **21**, 27-32

A ROMAN VILLA AT ACTON TRUSSELL, STAFFORDSHIRE

Tony Habberley, Penk Valley Archaeological Group

Excavations have continued on the site since the reported discovery in 1985 (WMA No 28, p48). The first interim report has been published covering the first 5 years to 1990. Extracts of this are included here, together with more recent unpublished data.

Building remains (Fig 6 & 7)

The stonework exposed was that of an apsidal wing of a building (Fig 7). The outer line was semi-hexagonal and contained walls A, B, C, D & E.

Wall B is stepped inward at each of the top two courses. Four courses survive, the top only partially, the lower two are foundation courses being generally angular and more irregularly laid. The walls sit on a marl sub-foundation strengthened with the insertion of large cobbles. Contained within the apse was an *opus signinum* floor, damaged by subsidence and by the intrusion of at least 42 post-holes and stake-holes.

Across the corridor of the apse and mostly covered by the floor, was a sleeper wall (D). The apse was lightly keyed to this wall by two stones - the interpretation however is that the apse was a later addition. The present floor was not the original - an earlier floor possibly exists, or existed, below. Evidence for this is provided by a course of plaster sandwiched between the floor and the third course of the apse wall. In section it can be seen that this plaster is painted. It is unlikely that the decoration would be applied to the plaster before laying the concrete, suggesting that the plaster is associated with an earlier lower floor and is contemporary only with the lower three courses of stonework. In addition, the surviving fourth course of stonework did not follow the building line.

The evidence suggests that there was some re-alignment of the apsidal wings of a building. The floor was laid over part of the third course of wall C. The remaining uncovered area would not be sufficient to support even a wooden structure. This partial fourth course of stonework lines up with a marl foundation (F48) running along wall C. The interpretation is that walls B & E are Phase 1 of the building. These were foundations for a mainly wooden structure. A large post-hole (F41) in wall E is contemporary with this phase.

Phase 2 included the construction of the apsidal wing, at this time just three courses of stonework, on a marl foundation, supporting a wooden structure. An earlier floor would be associated with the phase.

Phase 3 involved major reconstruction, probably in stone - the wing was re-aligned, with the new fourth course following the lines of walls A & B but laid partly on wall C, with the overhang sitting on the marl foundation (F48).

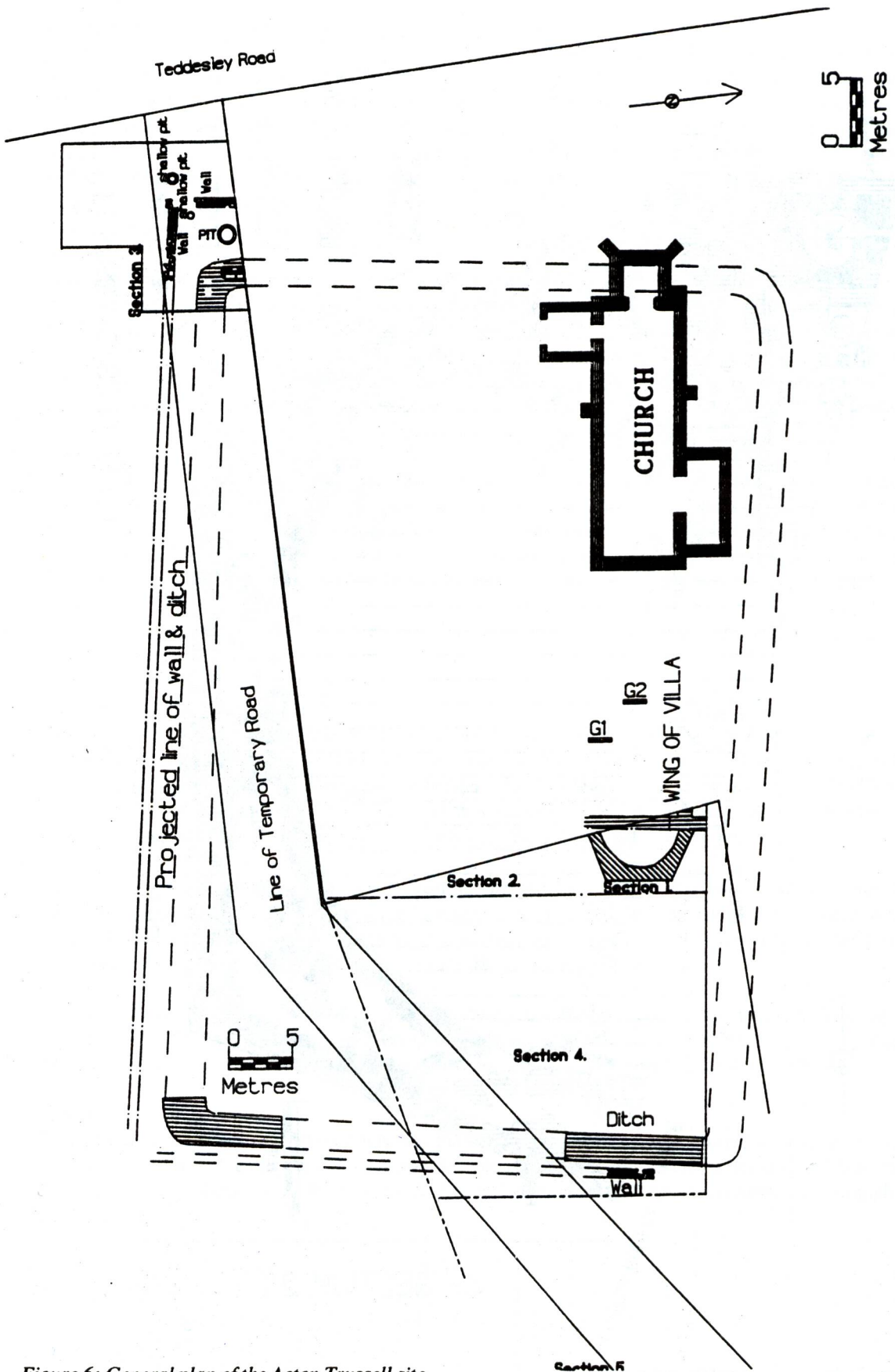


Figure 6: General plan of the Acton Trussell site

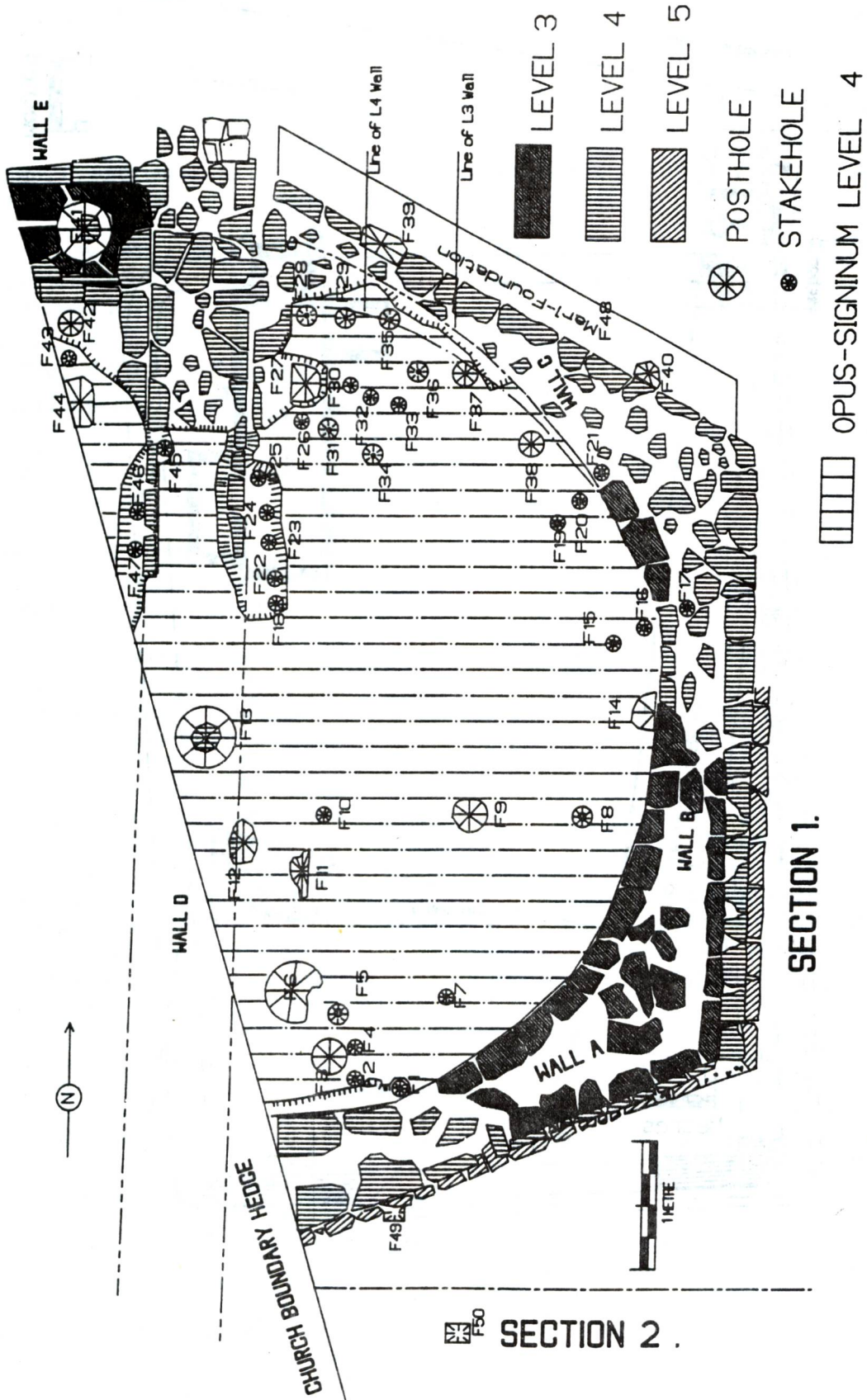


Figure 7: Apsidal wing of the building

Dating evidence

There was a layer of painted plaster lying immediately in contact with the floor surface of the apsidal wing. Above this were quantities of broken micaceous slate roof tile. Above the slate deposits were disturbed levels containing substantial pottery and stone debris. The conclusion reached was that the wing of the building was already unused and decayed when the material was deposited. The probable sequence of events was that in which the plaster had already fallen off the walls, followed by the removal and reuse of the roof tiles. Once the roof had been removed it is probable that robbing of the wall also took place, although the presence of Midlands Purple indicates that this may have occurred during the medieval period.

Sealed beneath the debris spread alongside the outer north wall (C) were two coins, one circa 325-330 of Constantine 1, the other Constantines mother Helena after she had acquired the title Augusta in 324 AD. The pottery included a mix of cooking bowls and pots, mortaria, narrow necked jars, dishes, bowls and the odd sherd of samian. The samian was the exception in an otherwise late 3rd early 4th century assemblage. The coins date the start of stone robbing to post 324 AD. Tentatively, therefore, the present floor and the re-construction (phase 3) occurred during the late 2nd to early 3rd century.

Enclosure

The building is contained within a ditched enclosure (Fig 6). The south-east and south-west corners together with a 10m section have been located and excavated. There is evidence of some re-cutting before the ditch was allowed to silt up. The ditch was eventually deliberately filled to be replaced, possibly, with a light wall. Two short sections of the wall have been exposed, running parallel to, and outside of, the ditch. One of the wall sections (section 3) follows the south-west turn of the ditch.

Also in section 3 a rubbish pit was recorded. This was inside the confines of the wall and outside of the filled ditch.

Dating evidence

The silt deposits in the ditch contained sherds of samian (type 18/31R and Curle 46 cup), late 2nd century mortarium, several bowls and just three examples of early 3rd century Black Burnished ware 1 cooking pots. In the primary silt of the ditch was a denarius of Vespasian dated between 75-79 AD. The backfills of the ditch were of dark soil and sandstone rubble, possibly associated with the construction of the walled compound, and contained mid-to-late 3rd century pottery.

The large quantities of stone debris surrounding the remains of the wall and spreading over the backfilled ditch (section 4) also contained quantities of late 3rd-4th century pottery. There was a concentration behind the single remaining course suggesting a rubbish area outside the wall. The "collapse" of the wall would appear to date to after the mid 4th century.

Within the fill of the pit were several pieces of window glass, well preserved bone, including two carved bone pins (Fig 8). Also included was a complete imbrice, an iron key, several iron nails, and pottery. The pottery has yet to be examined, but has provisionally been dated to the early 4th century.

Coins

In addition to the two Constantine coins and that of Vespasian found in stratified levels, there were also a 3rd century illegible copy from below the ploughsoil (section 4) and a denarius of Septimus Severus minted in Rome (196-197) (section 2). Several other coins have been recovered in surrounding fields, they include:

Mark Antony	31 BC	1
Hadrian	117-138	1
Faustine 11	161-175	1
Gallienus	258-268	1
Postumus	259-268	2

Victorinus	268-270	2
Claudius 11	268-270	2
Constantine 1	306-337	10
Total		20

Brooches

A Trumpet Brooch (5000) was discovered on a cobbled area of section 5. Nine other Fibula have been recovered in nearby fields. The brooches were all located in one field approximately 600m north-west of the site, adjacent to the River Penk. The brooches are listed together with that found on the Villa site, and are illustrated (Fig 8) together with bone pins from pit (F134).

- 5000. A trumpet brooch well preserved. Signs of a tinned surface. Front view illustrated straightened out in order to show design. Found during excavation of the Villa site.
- 5001. Leg only, well preserved. Same design as 5000 but slightly smaller.
- 5002. Trumpet derivative with two Orange enamel strips (parts missing). Distorted by plough?
- 5003. Dolphin with Polden Hill spring gear. Well preserved.
- 5004. Plain Dolphin. Badly corroded. The spring gear appears to be completely enclosed.
- 5006. Small Dolphin no more than 2cm when complete. Badly corroded.
- 5007. Dolphin. Extremely corroded. Possible Polden Hill type.
- 5008. "T" Brooch decorated with Red enamel pellets. No surviving spring gear. Badly corroded.
- 5009. Knee brooch. Little corrosion except at the head

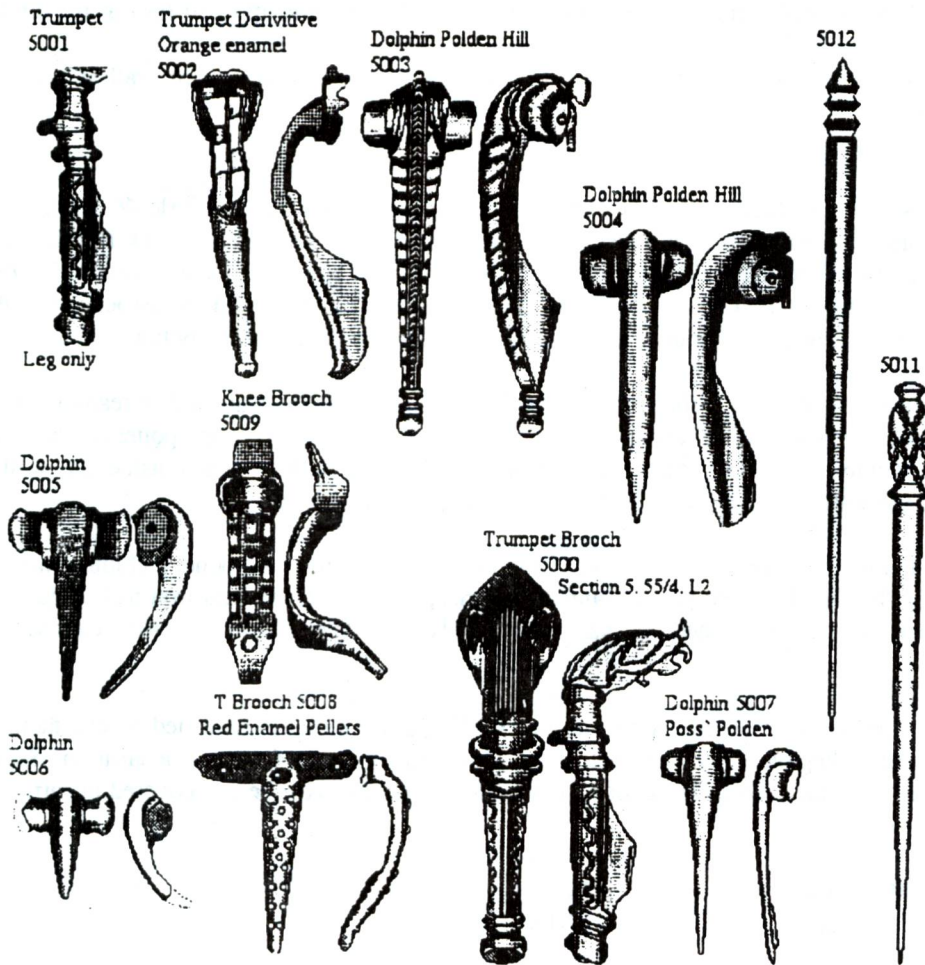


Figure 8: Brooches and pins from Acton Trussell

MANCETTER, ROMAN LEGIONARY FORTRESS

Colin Baddeley, Atherstone Archaeological Society

A Roman legionary fortress - or rather half fortress - has now been firmly located at Mancetter (Fig 9). Mancetter lies in the heart of England just off the Watling Street, four miles north of Nuneaton, and today it is a suburb of the small town of Atherstone. Three Roman sites have now been located here.

The most obvious is a small defensive enclosure in the vicinity of the Bull Hotel of the Watling Street, which Graham Webster has identified as a "burgus", one of a number of strong points along the Watling Street created under Constantius Chlorus following the recovery of Britain for the rebel Emperor Allectus in AD 296.

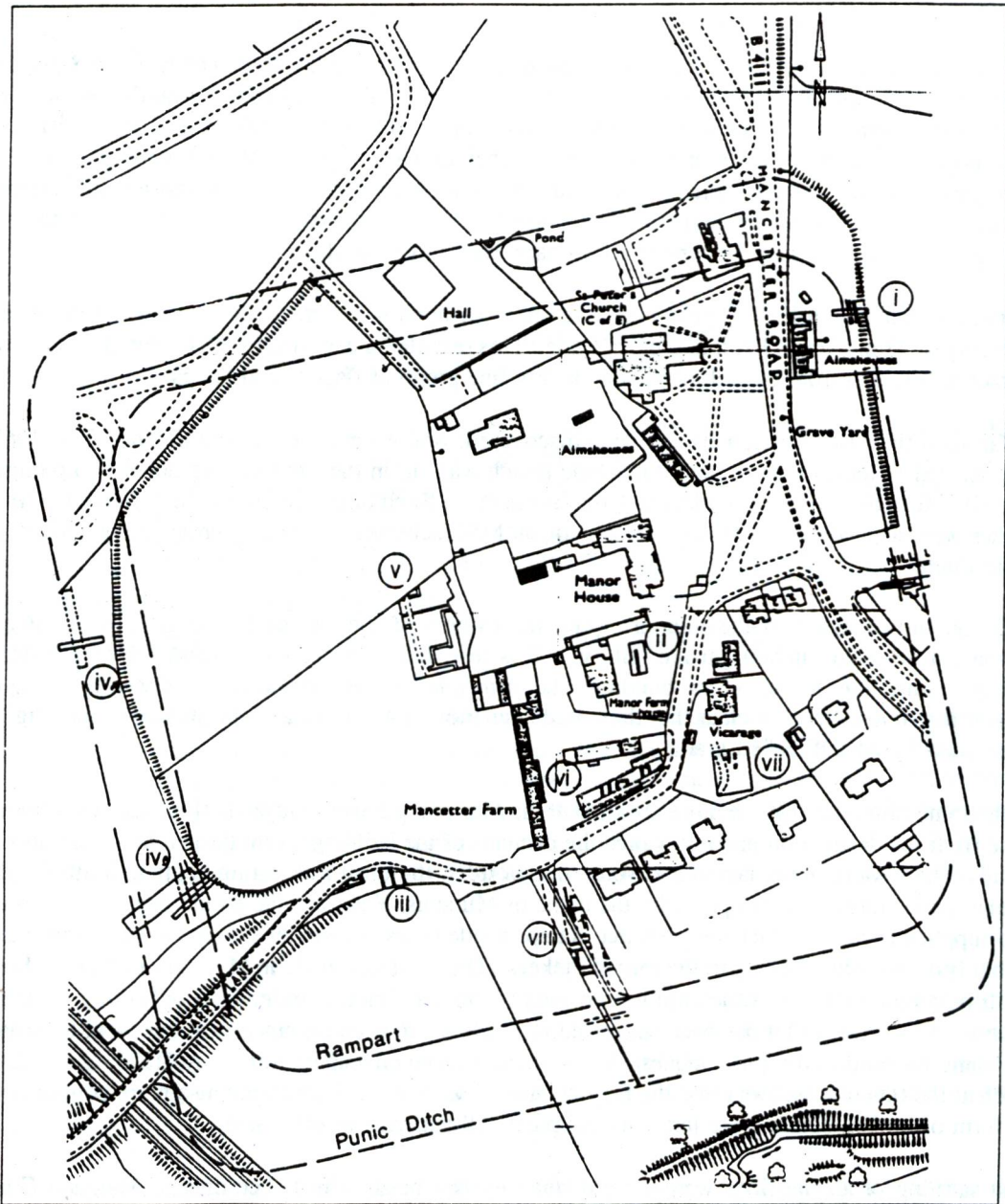


Figure 9: Plan of Mancetter showing the position of the excavations and the outline of the fortress

To the south there is a large area where pottery was manufactured, stretching over many hectares down to Hartshill on the outskirts of Nuneaton. Mortaria were produced here in large quantities especially in the second century and kilns have been excavated over many years.

However, earlier antiquarian writers had long postulated a Roman "station" on the hill on which the church and manor house now stand, but it was not until 1955 when Adrian Oswald, the Keeper of Archaeology at Birmingham City Museum first located definite signs of military activity. His trench through a medieval earthwork near the almshouses, site k) revealed a Roman military ditch underneath, from which a sherd of mid 1st century samian ware (form 29) was recovered.

Subsequently casual remains began to reveal early Roman occupation. In 1964 a small coin hoard was found when a water pipe line was being laid near the Manor House. All the coins were Claudian or earlier.

The first excavations by the Atherstone Archaeological Society under its Director, Keith Scott, took place ten years later in 1968 when they re-located the eastern defences near Oswald's trench. Then in 1975 the owner of the house next to the manor dug a hole near his drive to install a Victorian lamp-post, and came upon two amphorae; he was then prevailed upon to allow a good portion of his front garden to be excavated (site ii). The results were not as dramatic as the amphorae find, but three pieces of *lorica segmentata*, legionary body armour, were discovered. These provided the first indication that the site may have been a legionary, rather than auxiliary fort.

More finds came the following year when a rescue excavation was carried out on site iii when the local authority was removing a bend in Quarry Lane. This revealed a centurion's latrine pit at the end of a barrack block, and from the fill there came a very fine group of flagons and lamps.

So far, only the eastern defences had been discovered: where were the western defences? In 1967 it was decided to look for them, and a machine trench was cut in the field sloping down to the railway (site iv). Here they found a punnic ditch, that is the outer ditch of the defences. In 1980 the two inner ditches were located (site ivB), while a subsequent MSC scheme excavated approximately 100ft of the punnic ditch.

Attention turned again to the interior, when the owners of the Manor House gave permission to excavate a dis-used kitchen garden (site v). This revealed evidence for a major military building, perhaps either the headquarters building, the *principia*, or the commanding officer's house, the *praetorium*. It also became clear that there had been more than one phase, for the major building was superseded by an unfinished granary.

At the same time, site vi was being excavated at the Mancetter Farm farmyard. Here the best evidence came from the destruction pits into which the contents of the buildings were thrown by the demolition squad. There were glass, lamps and some fine pottery, the most interesting being a South Gaulish Samian bowl (form 29), stamped with the name of Muranus. However, the mould came from a potter who supplied Licinius, which suggests that stamps inside bases of form 29's do not always, and indeed probably do not often belong to the mould makers. The bowl was made in Montans, one of the South Gaulish Samian factories, which did not normally export to Britain. Indeed the only other examples come from London, and it has been suggested that only a single consignment was ever sent to Britain. The same pit produced a pre-conquest British coin, a Donunnic silver coin of ANTED, circa AD 20 which at the time of discovery was the furthest north ever found. There were also paint containers in the form of broken coarse ware jars with the paint still adhering to the inside.

Most startling of all the finds were several small eyeball beads which according to Margaret Guido come from the Black Sea area. Most of the pits related to the demolition of the first phase buildings, but one of them produced an *as* of Vespasian minted in Rome in AD71. It would appear that even the latest phase at Mancetter was over by the mid-70s.

In 1989, the Society turned its attention to the southern defences. An area of 220ft by 18ft was machine stripped to the south of Quarry Lane (site viii) and a similar area in 1990. The southern defences were duly discovered, the two inner ditches fronting a rampart and an outer puny ditch, some 65ft further out. Coins and pottery were again Claudian in date. Phase 1 buildings were revealed but beneath all the military activity and effectively sealed by it was a pit containing a quantity of carbonised grain. This is a rare find in the West Midlands and a full specialised analysis has been carried out, while English Heritage are undertaking a radiocarbon date.

We are reasonably confident that the first fortress is at least nine hectares (22-23 acres) in size. This means that it is far too big to be a standard fort of an auxiliary unit which is around 6 acres in extent. On the other hand a full legionary fort is usually between 40 and 50 acres in extent. Mancetter therefore would appear to be a half legionary fortress, similar to a number discovered in Britain at this period, notably that at Longthorpe near Peterborough.

It is possible therefore to try to put Mancetter into its historical setting. The first frontier to the province is thought to be the so-called Fosse Frontier but Mancetter is the wrong side of the Fosse Way being 12 miles to the north-west of Venonae or High Cross where the Fosse Way crosses Watling Street. Mancetter therefore should belong to the second phase of the conquest when it would almost certainly have been occupied by Legion XIV Gemina in the early 50s. By the late 50s however the legion had moved forward to its more permanent base at Wroxeter.

However following Boudica's rebellion in AD 60/61, the site was reoccupied, but on a smaller scale. The ditches found on site viii are pointers to the progressive reduction in the fort size. Again it did not last long and was finally given up, possibly under the governorship of Agricola as the army completed its conquest of Wales and commenced operations against the Scottish tribes.

Mancetter has proved to be a site of major importance. Fortunately much of the interior of the fortress is scheduled and will be available for further research. The Atherstone Archaeological society are already planning their next season when they will be looking for the West Gate of the fortress.

CASTLE BROMWICH HALL, EXCAVATIONS DIRECTED BY P. TWIGG, 1985-8: A SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

Martin Locock and C K Currie, Gardens Archaeology Project

Introduction

In the period 1985-8, excavations were carried out in the historic gardens of Castle Bromwich Hall financed by the Manpower Services Commission and Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens Trust (Fig 10). Following the withdrawal of MSC funding, the archaeological project closed before post-excavation work had been completed. In 1989, a grant from the Leverhulme Trust allowed the appointment of C.K. Currie and M. Locock to carry out further investigations on the site (Currie 1990a, 1990b; Currie & Locock 1992, forthcoming; Locock 1990a, 1990b), and as part of this research the earlier excavations were re-examined.

A team of twenty had carried out the excavations in advance of restoration work on the garden. Stratigraphy was recorded using a single feature sequence for the site and separate context sequences within each trench, which was given an Excavation No. Phase plans were drawn at intervals and most features were photographed. Work included area excavations (Ex. 13 and 21), numerous smaller trenches, and clearance of rubble. For most excavations the findings were summarised; a detailed report was produced for the Ex. 13 (Twigg unpublished).

The results of the excavations are interpreted in the light of further work on the site (Currie 1990b; Currie and Locock forthcoming); where the authors' and excavator's interpretation differ, the fact is indicated in the text. A general site history has been defined, with five main phases of activity:

I Medieval and pre-1600, relating to A) domestic occupation and cultivation, c.1100-c.1350 and B) manor house, c.15th-C.-1599.

II Hall phase (c.1599-c.1700), Hall built, small garden laid out to the west of the Hall.

III Main garden building phase on Middle and Lower Terraces (c.1700-c.1747), construction of the surviving garden walls, the water conduit running down the site, landscaping of terraces, construction of garden buildings and three ponds, new layout in Best Garden

IV Garden planting (c.1820-c.1850), creation of Holly Walk, planting of Upper and Lower Wildernesses, reshaping of Western Vista, layout of Best Garden changed, planting of maze

V Later 19th Century alterations (c.1850-c.1900), installation of boilers in Melon Ground and Orangery, building of Summer Houses, new layout for Best Garden

The Excavations (Fig 10)

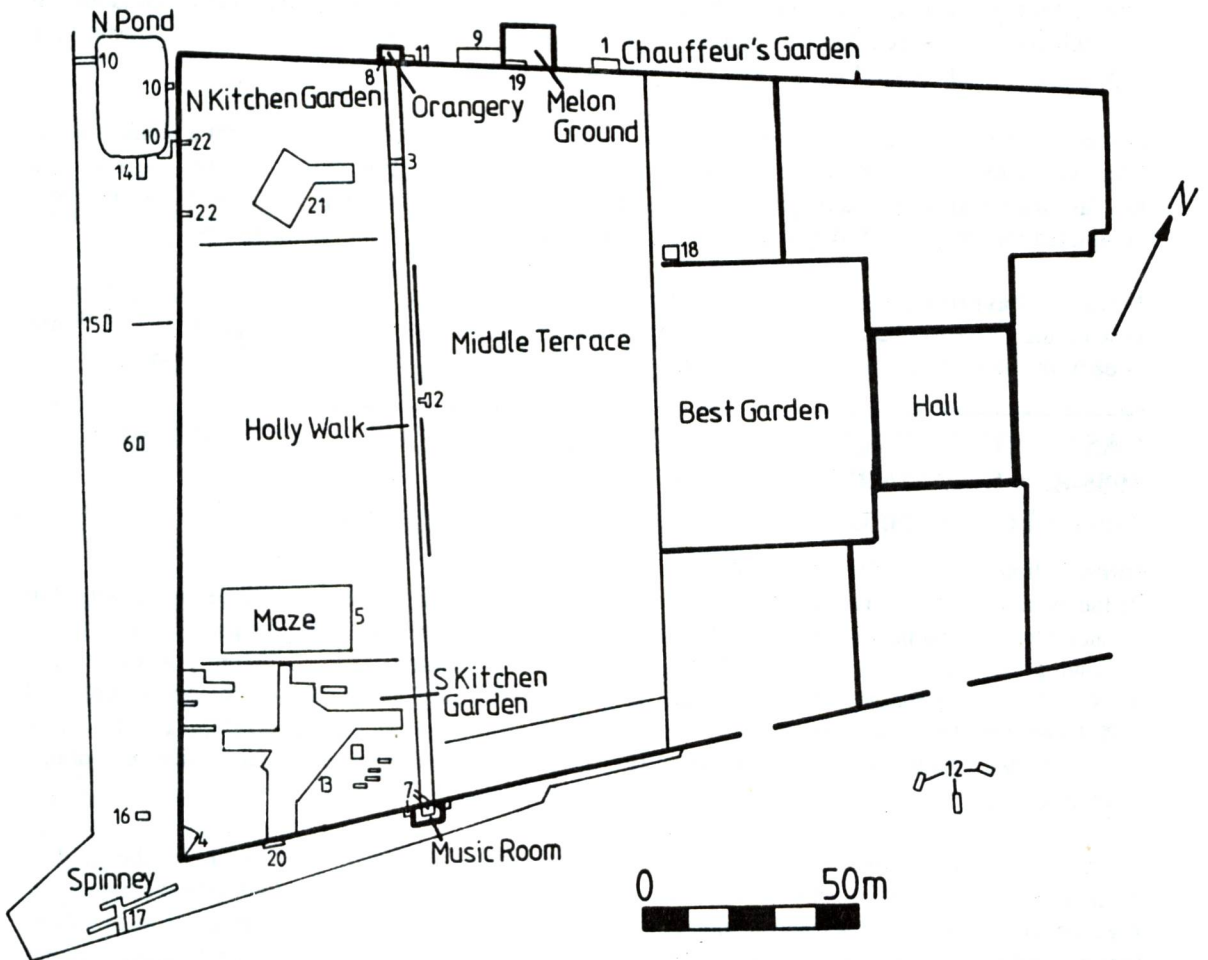


Figure 10: Castle Bromwich Hall, showing the location of excavations 1985-8

Excavation 1

Three trenches were dug in the Chauffeur's Garden area to the N of the main garden; the main trench was 5m x 3m, orientated EW. The excavations revealed a substantial (1m) build-up, perhaps dumping, of soil (I-II) predating the construction of the N Wall (III). A gravel path was laid leading to the clairvoie (IV); this was later relaid and the whole area covered with cobbles (V).

Excavation 2

A T-shaped trench was excavated on the Middle Terrace on the main western vista of the garden, in order to search for evidence of steps leading down to the Holly Walk. A dump of brick rubble and mortar was found, possibly the result of demolition of steps or a wall across the vista (from III); this was covered by 0.5m of sandy loam, forming the present glacis slope (IV).

Excavation 3

A 4m x 2m trench was excavated EW across the Holly Walk path. The earliest deposit was a dump of sandy loam, on which was built a sandstone capped drain running across the site to the W (III). Subsequently, more sand was dumped to form the foundation for a gravel path (the present Holly Walk); at the same time a system of horseshoe-tile land drains were installed (then ascribed to III, but now known to be IV), feeding into the sandstone drain. Evidence for a later drainage system and the limits of recent flower beds was also recovered (V).

Excavation 4

A trench, 3m x 1m, was dug through the artificial viewing mound in the SW corner of the garden. The ground surface was found to have been covered with clay, mortar and brick fragments, interpreted as debris from the construction of the S and W walls. The mound was then created in a series of three dumps, of sand, rubble, and finally topsoil (III). Some recent damage had occurred to the surface of the mound (V).

Excavation 5

The area (30m x 15m) occupied by the grown-out holly maze was excavated prior to restoration. The maze is described more fully elsewhere (Locock 1990c): it was probably planted c. 1820-1850. Evidence for gravel paths, the hedge lines, and central flower beds was recovered (IV); no pre-maze features were found.

Excavation 6

A 3m x 2m trench was dug outside the W wall. A soil profile of 0.5m depth was revealed, with no features evident.

Excavation 7

A series of three small trenches were dug to examine parts of the Music Room building, on the S side of the garden. To the E of the building, Ex. 7a revealed the foundations of a brick buttress for the Music Room wall (III), which was later demolished (IV).

To the W, Ex. 7b produced similar evidence for a buttress (III) and demolition (IV). Inside the building (Ex. 7c), two floors were found: the first was of bricks on sand bedding (III), overlying this was another floor, of limestone slabs bedded in sand. It is possible that the bricks were just a foundation layer for the limestone floor, but it seems more likely that two separate phases of floor (III and IV or V) are present.

Excavation 8

Clearance work on the Orangery building prior to consolidation and restoration revealed a brick floor (III).

Excavation 9

The area to the NE of the Orangery was also cleared, and the brick floors of gardener's sheds against the N Wall were found. They may be part of an 18th century structure, but no dating evidence was available. In their present form the sheds date to the late 19th century (V). The yard area to the N of the sheds was cobbled at this time (V).

Excavation 10

The rectangular N Pond, 29m x 15m, is fed by a spring and has artificial W and S banks; the W bank

contains a complex outflow sluice. Limited excavation took place on the banks. The main feature found was a brick-built drain running into the E side of the pond (III); this connects to that found in Ex.3. For some reason (possibly due to the poor quality of the water coming through the drain at a later date) it was then partially demolished, and a diversion built to take the water past the pond instead (III or IV, probably IV). The new drain was covered by the pond bank, in which a gravel path was laid (IV). Structural problems with the W Wall later led to the building of a buttress (V).

Excavation 11

To the E of the Orangery is a boiler pit, lined with blue bricks; the coal-fired boiler, designed to heat the Orangery, is still in place. Rubble was removed from this area to expose the structure (V).

Excavation 12

S of the main entrance to the hall, at the start of the S Avenue, an area was examined to check for the presence of a turning-circle, shown on Henry Beighton's view of Castle Bromwich Hall (1726). The excavations revealed a low brick wall, with frequent piers, forming a funnel-shaped area. This differs from the shape shown on the print, perhaps implying a later alteration (in IV). The area was disturbed by many rubbish pits (V).

Excavation 13 (Fig 11)

A large part of the S Kitchen Garden was excavated, including a central area, 20m x 10m, with smaller trenches extending to the edges of the garden. Traces of early features were found, including two post-holes and possible EW timber beam slots (I-II), interpreted as a possible building by the excavator. This is now felt to be an improbable hypothesis. The garden area was covered by 0.3 of dumped material, a cambered perimeter path was laid and a rectangular foundation trench for a structure (F102), 1.2x1.0x0.7m, was dug in the centre of the area, possibly a statue base (assigned to III, but without independent dating evidence; see Fig 11). There follows the first phase with identifiable garden features: the internal part was divided in half by a hedge-line, indicated by individual root-holes. To the west of the hedge were NS linear beds, 0.8m wide, 6m apart, perhaps for fruit bushes; to the east were a series of much smaller and more frequent beds, 5m long, also aligned NS, perhaps nursery beds. The N part of the area was filled by a single large rectangular open bed, 40m x 4.8m (Fig 11; originally assigned to III, re-interpreted as IV). The nursery beds were then replaced by larger trenches, similar to those already in existence in the W half. The structure was removed, the hole made circular, and filled with ash, perhaps as the planting hole for a tree (IV). The layout was later changed again, with the dumping of 0.3m of soil over the whole area; the hedges around the area were retained (V).

Excavation 14

This 3m x 2m NS trench was dug S of the N Pond, and revealed a further part of the diverted brick drain seen in Ex. 10 (III).

Excavations 15 and 16

These small trenches revealed no features.

Excavation 17

A number of trenches were dug in the Spinney to the SW of the garden to locate the S Pond shown on the Aston tithe map (1833). Due to the existence of numerous trees in the area, it proved impossible to define the shape of the pond precisely. The pond was built in the same manner as the W Pond, with an artificial puddled clay lining (III); it gradually filled up with organic material, perhaps leaf litter (IV).

Excavation 18

The well lies to the N of the Best Garden. The structure is of two phases: the bottom part of the shaft is built of sandstone blocks (II); the uppermost 2.5m is of brick (III). The well is connected to the start of the W-running sandstone and brick drain found in Ex. 3, 10, 14 and 21.

Excavation 19

A 5m x 1m trench examined the wall dividing the Melon Ground from the rest of the Middle Terrace. It was proved that the piers were added later than the main wall (III).

Excavation 20

A 4m x 1m trench was dug immediately S of the doorway into the spinney, and revealed two square brick foundations, flanking the doorway. These are interpreted as statue bases (III).

Excavation 21 (Fig 12)

The N Kitchen Garden revealed a complex sequence of features. The earliest were four broad, shallow, NS trenches, 2.20m centre-to-centre; to the E was a deeper and narrower feature. These are interpreted as the remains of medieval ridge-and-furrow, and the E feature as a boundary ditch (Ia). The brick-and-sandstone drain from Ex. 3 was laid on the ground surface, originally terminating in the middle of the garden, in a circular clay-lined basin, F141, 1.6m across. The drain was then extended to the N Pond and covered by dumping of 0.8m of material (III). A vegetable garden was laid out, with a system of paths giving access to areas of NS linear beds, and a central tree-hole F167 was dug (IV). The layout was altered slightly, with more NS linear beds, and the central feature was replaced by a circular gully, F130, perhaps marking the edge of a circular bed; a complex sequence of re-digging of beds and the moving of access-paths follows (IV-V).

Excavation 22

Two trenches were dug in the N Kitchen Garden against the W Wall, revealing 1m of build-up inside the wall (III) and a later gravel path running parallel to it (IV).

Discussion

The excavations yielded evidence for several phases of layout, but in few places was a complete sequence present. The only certain medieval features discovered were the possible ridge-and-furrow in Ex. 21. There are traces of ridge-and-furrow in the parkland to the N and W of the garden, and it is possible that the W part of the gardens lies over land taken into cultivation at the peak of population of medieval Castle Bromwich.

There is no trace of activity in the lower gardens contemporary with the building of the Hall (Phase II).

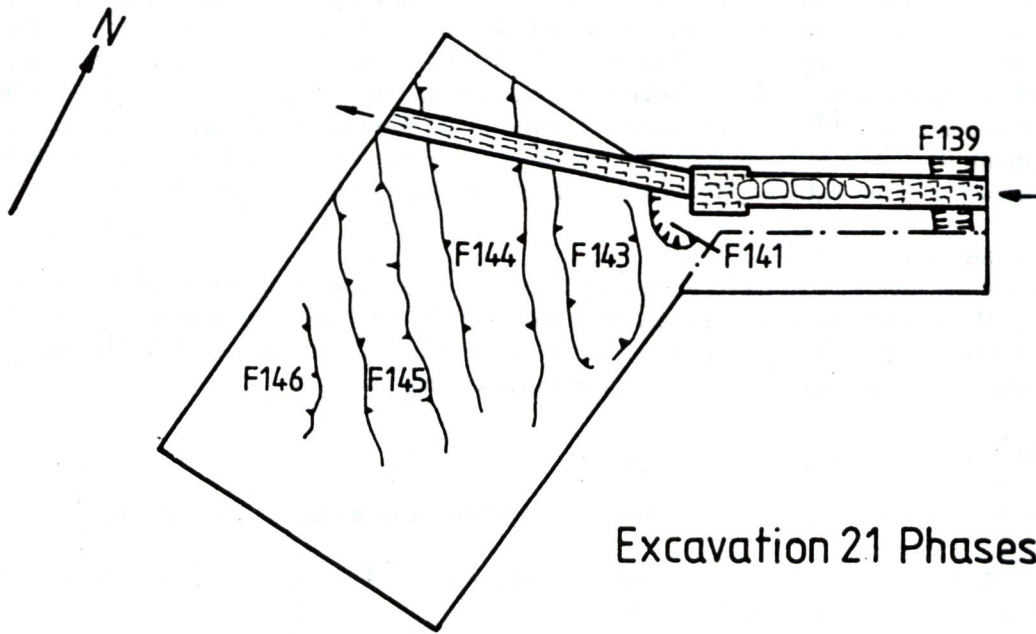
The period of the building of the walls and the landscaping of the terraces (Phase III) is well-represented, by garden buildings (the Orangery, Music Room and perhaps the Gardener's Sheds), water features (the drain, and the N and S Ponds), and the viewing mounds. There may have been other structures: the steps or wall in Ex. 2, the central statue base in Ex. 13, and the statue bases in the Spinney, Ex.20. There was also much dumping of soil to create the terraces.

Following a period of neglect, during which the S Pond partially silted up, the gardens were transformed in the early 19th century, with the smoothing of the western vista with a glacis, the planting of the Holly Walk, and the cultivation of the N and S Kitchen Gardens.

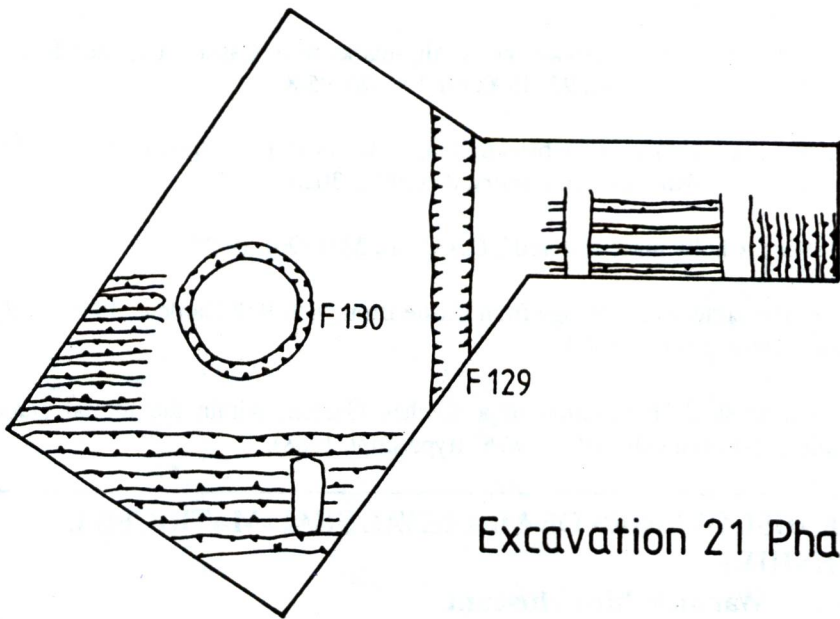
Features from the final period of the gardens include the Orangery boiler, new layouts in the N and S Kitchen Gardens, and the surfacing of the Chauffeur's Garden and Gardener's Shed areas with cobbles.

The Finds

Despite the extensive scale of the excavations, the finds recovered were disappointing. Although only the pottery has been studied in detail, it is clear that the glass, metal and bone finds belong almost exclusively to the most recent phase of garden activity.



Excavation 21 Phases I-III



Excavation 21 Phase V



Figure 12: Excavation 21; phase plans

The pottery was examined by I Soden, and a report is published elsewhere (Soden 1989); over 2,000 sherds were identified by fabric. The pottery from each excavation was analysed as a group, since disturbance of stratified material by later cultivation means that "vertical and horizontal redistribution of the material has necessarily been extensive" (Soden 1989, 7). The assemblage is remarkably poor in 17th-18th century pottery, leading Soden to suggest that the excavated areas may not have been occupied at that time (1989, 8): a conclusion confirmed by the more recent excavations. The pottery is predominantly transfer-printed ware, and is devoid of foreign imports, indicating a low-status assemblage. Not surprisingly, unglazed earthenwares (flower-pots) are the most common type.

Acknowledgements

The excavations were carried out by a Manpower Services Commission project sponsored by Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens Trust, who also provided funds for post-excavation work and pottery analysis. This report was prepared as part of research funded by Leverhulme Trust Grant F/656. The authors are grateful to P. Twigg and I. Soden for their help in discussing the excavations.

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FURTHER DISCOVERIES OF MEDIEVAL SEAL-MATRICES IN WARWICKSHIRE

Philip J. Wise, Warwickshire Museum

Until comparatively recently medieval seal-matrices were rarely found, except on excavations. The popularity of the metal detector has resulted in a steady stream of matrices being brought into the Warwickshire Museum. Preservation varies from excellent to illegible and below are given the six most interesting examples seen at the Museum this year, plus one found during excavations (Fig 13).

1. Warwick Castle Park (SP 2763)

"Pointed oval" type, flat reverse, cast in lead. No legend. Design of St. Andrew crucified against a

background containing two praying figures. 13th Century. Length 48mm by width 23mm, thickness 6mm.

This seal was unfortunately rather worn. A similar seal is in the collections of the Salisbury Museum - this has the design of a crucified saint and the legend "Andrew, Apostle of God, have mercy on me". (Cherry 1991, 32-33, no.15).

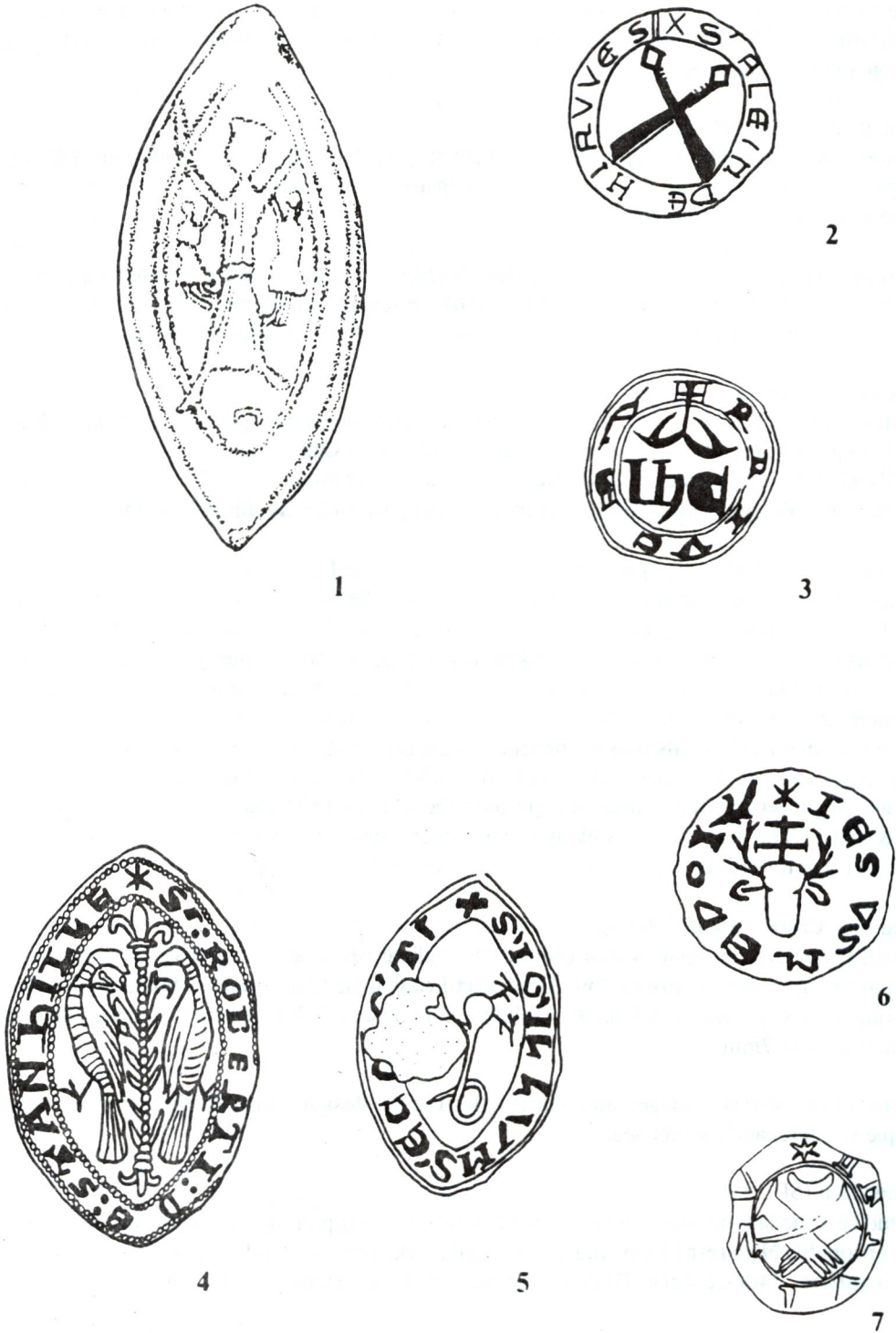


Figure 13: Warwickshire Seal-Matrices (x1.5)

2. Warwick (SP 2963)

Pyramid type, single broad neck-roll on hexagonal stem, pointed terminal with circular piercing. Legend reads "S'ALEIN DE HIRVVES" (seal of Alan de Hirvves) following a cross initial mark. Design of a pair of shears. 14th Century. Diameter of face 18mm, height 20mm.

The seal of cloth merchant whose surname is in the form of a place name. There are no obvious candidates among known medieval place names. Two possible sources are Harwich in Essex ("Herwyz" in 1238) and Harrow in Middlesex (Harrow Weald is "Waldis in Harwes" in 1303), but neither is totally satisfactory (M. Booth, pers. comm.) A similar design is recorded on the seal of Peter the sheerman (S'PIERRES LE TONDOVR) from Canterbury, although this is of 13th century date (Nelson 1936, 27, no. 41).

3. Coughton Court (SP 0860)

Pyramid type, hexagonal stem, pointed terminal with circular piercing. Legend reads "PRIVE (SVI)". Design of a cross rising from two lines within which are the letters ihc for Jesus Christ. 14th Century. Diameter of face 20mm, height 16mm.

A variant form of a seal matrix recorded from Salisbury and elsewhere which have the letter IHC in the centre and EST AMOR MEUS as the rest of the inscription (Cherry 1991, 32, no. 11). This seal was found during excavations at Coughton Court by the Warwickshire Museum.

4. Alcester (SP 0559)

"Pointed oval" type, reverse with a central longitudinal rib which incorporates a perforated lug (broken) near the upper point, cast in copper alloy. Legend reads in Lombardic lettering "S: ROBERTI : DE : STANHILLE" (or possibly STANLILLE) following a star initial mark. Design of two birds flanking a central fleur-de-lys. 13th Century. Length 37mm by width 23mm, thickness 7mm.

This seal is in exceptionally good condition and is notable for its fine engraving, with considerable detail, such as the birds' plumage and the side leaves of the fleur-de-lys, being shown. The subject of birds (or lions) flanking a central tree is relatively common in medieval metalwork, being found on both seals and harness pendants, and is taken from textile designs. (Cherry 1992, 22). A local example is the seal of Randolph de Castro, which has the design of a palm tree and two birds, known from a document at Warwick Castle (Bloom 1901, nos. 11, 37). It is possible that the design may reflect a religious theme, as the birds may be peacocks, that is a symbol of the resurrection because of their supposedly incorruptible flesh, and the fleur-de-lys is associated with the Virgin Mary. Unfortunately, the name Stanhill (or Stanley) does not appear in the 1327 or 1332 Tax Lists for Warwickshire (Carter 1926 & n.d.). The seal-holder is likely to have been however a junior member of a noble family, a burgess or a petty official.

5. Warwick Castle Park (SP 2763)

"Pointed Oval" type, reverse with a central longitudinal rib which incorporates a perforated lug near the upper point cast in copper alloy. Legend in Lombardic letter reads "S'IGILLVM S'EC(RS)TI" following a cross pattee initial mark. Unintelligible design. 13th Century. Length 28mm by width 19mm, thickness 7mm.

The face of this seal is damaged and nearly a third of the design is lost. It appears to be, however, an example of merchant's secret seal.

6. Kinwarton (SP 1051)

Pyramid type, hexagonal stem, pointed terminal with circular piercing (broken). Legend reads IESVS NA -- (probably Nazareth) following a star initial mark. Design of a double-barred cross set between a stag's antlers. 14th Century. Diameter of face 18mm (max), height 18.5mm.

An unusual design which is associated with the legend of St. Hubert, who, while out hunting, saw a stag with a cross set between his antlers. A comparable seal is in the Public Record Office, that of John de Wight, teller of the Exchequer on a document dated 1329 (Ellis 1981, 114, P2240).

7. Kinwarton (SP 1051)

Pyramid type, hexagonal stem, pointed terminal with circular piercing (broken). Legend reads "DE(V)SV following a star initial mark. Design of a crescent above a pair of clasped, gloved hands. 14th Century. Diameter of face 14mm (max.), height 15mm.

Unfortunately, this matrix is in a rather worn condition and much of the legend has been lost. Similar designs are recorded from Hanley Castle, Worcestershire and Salisbury, where a bird accompanies the clasped hands, while at Bull Wharf, London, the seal has clasped, gloved hands and a squirrel. In 1989 a further example of this type was found at Bidford in Warwickshire, which has four pellets above the clasped hands (Rigold 1977, 327, no. 6. Cherry 1991, 34, no. 23; Spencer 1984, 380, no. 11; Wise 1989, 91).

Acknowledgements: The writer is very grateful to the late Wilfred Seaby and Mark Booth (Warwickshire County Record Office) for their help in the preparation of this note. Dr. Jerry Evans (Warwickshire Museum) has kindly allowed publication of the matrix from Coughton Court in advance of the final report. The illustrations are drawn by Emma Bond and Jonathan Mycroft.

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HEREFORD AND WORCESTER

THE SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

The Record has continued to grow apace and now stands at over 12,000 sites. New sites are too numerous to mention individually, but large numbers have been added as the County Archaeology Section's extensive collection of aerial photographs are indexed and new sites are accessioned into the SMR. Parish surveys by South Worcestershire Archaeological Group of Eckington, Chris Dyer for Hanbury and the Archaeology Section's in Peterchurch have now had all their information accessioned into the record. Several dozen parishes have had their records enhanced ahead of local plans and the forthcoming Uplands Survey.

The aerial photographic collection now stands at over 6,000 photos with important donations this year from the County Council Planning Dept and the RCHM (of photographs taken for Ordnance Survey remapping), these are still being indexed.

1991 has seen the launching of the Parish Correspondent system, whereby volunteers undertake to check the SMR records for their parish and then to report annually on the condition of the sites. In addition, they will keep a weather eye open for reports of new sites or finds and threats to known sites.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

ARELEY KINGS, Roman Site (HWCM 1136)

A watching brief on the new Severn Trent "Worcester Aqueduct" revealed a Roman site in the Dunley Road area. The earliest phase consisted of 5 shallow charcoal filled pits with Roman pottery and tile fragments, suggesting an occupation site was close. An eastward aligned ditch lay 20m to the south. It was either a field boundary or an enclosure ditch to the settlement.

The ditch was subsequently backfilled, from which environmental samples were taken and revealed barley and other cereal grains in the fill. The site was then ploughed. The final (Roman) phase showed ploughing had ceased and a building, possibly a barn, was erected on post pads.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

ASHTON UNDER HILL, Carrant Brook Farm (HWCM 5503)

An evaluation in advance of gravel quarrying immediately to the south of extensive cropmarks revealed evidence of prehistoric and Roman occupation. Of particular interest were deposits relating to a probable late bronze age settlement. Artefactual evidence included organic-tempered pottery of a fabric type not previously seen in the county (Fig 14). Other prehistoric deposits were probably late iron age in date and included a sub circular structure. Fuel ash and clinker present in associated metallised deposits and features suggested that the structure had an industrial function. Evidence of Roman occupation was also recovered including soil layers, postholes, pits and gullies. These were associated with a large artefactual assemblage.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

ASTLEY, Longmore Hill (HWCM 11093)

A watching brief on the line of the "Worcester Aqueduct" revealed a late neolithic occupation site. It consisted of two postholes and an oval pit 2m long with 0.3m vertical sides. The pit had 3 fills. Beaker pottery and charcoal flecks were found in the lower fills. Beaker pottery, burnt stone, tiny flint flakes and a hammer stone in a charcoal matrix constituted the upper fill. Environmental samples shows evidence of *emmer*, burnt bones and hazel shells. One of the postholes cut the pit fill. Although the purpose of the

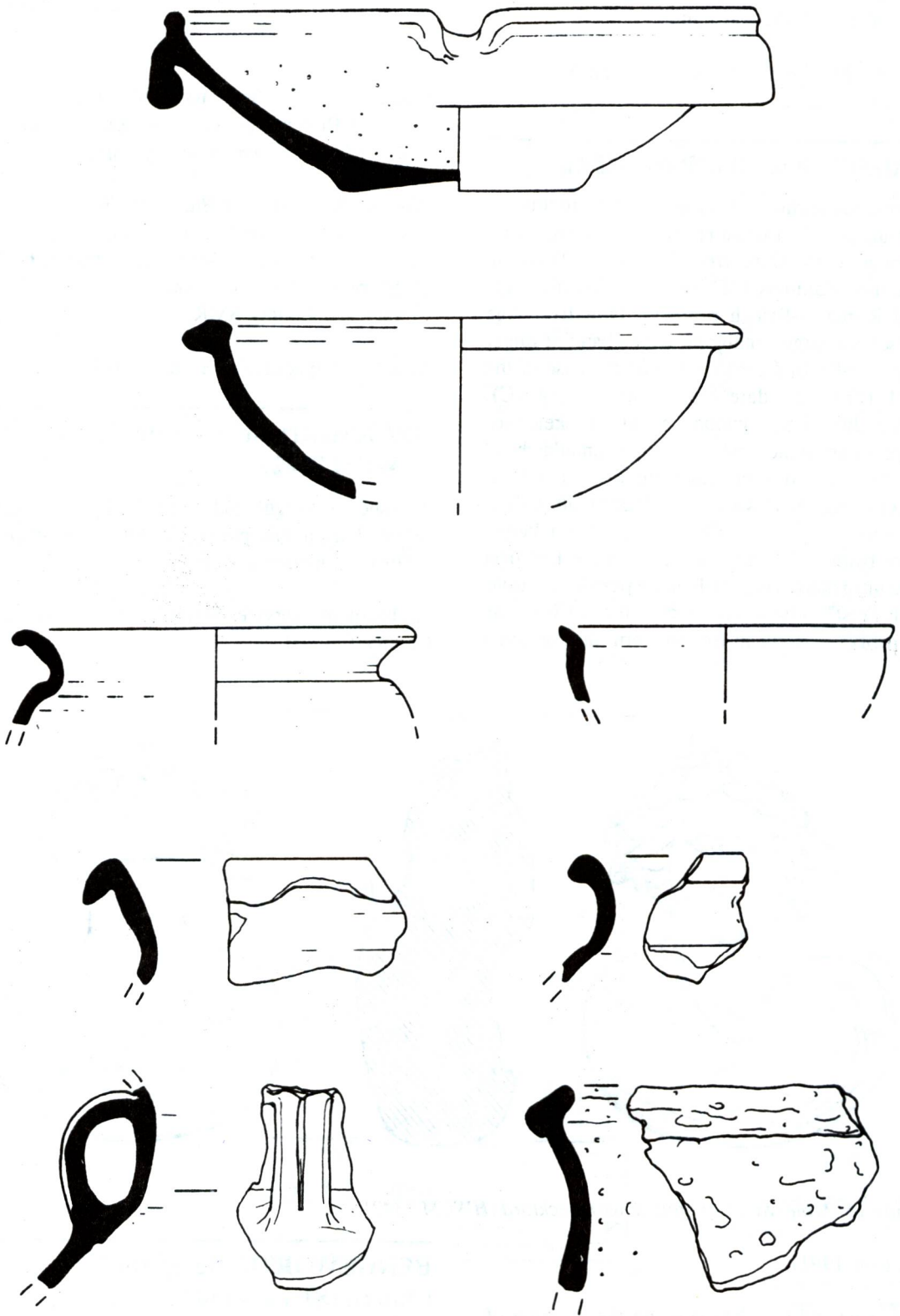


Figure 14: Pottery from Carrant Brook Farm, Ashton-Under-Hill (HWCM 5503)

pit is unknown, the fill seems to be domestic rubbish of people engaged in a mixed economy of arable farming and hunting gathering.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

BADSEY, Foxhill (SP 08384298)

Numerous surface finds are known from this site including an uninscribed Dobunnic coin, Roman coins dating from Vitellius (AD 69) to Magnus Maximus (AD 383-88), plus Iron Age and Romano-British pottery. One Iron Age vessel is a large annular jar with a band of finger impressed raised cordons around the base of the neck (probable date 8th to 5th century BC). Other discoveries include about 11 skeletons, three stone spindle whorls and an annular bead of translucent blue glass decorated with a broken marvered wave of indeterminate colour (Guido 1978, 63-64, Group 5a). Such beads were being made and in use from the late Iron Age until the early post-Roman period. A stone built "cist", discovered during the 1920's was probably a Romano-British corn drying oven

appears to have been occupied continuously until the late 4th century AD.

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John D. Shepherd and Bruce Watson.

BECKFORD, Romano-British site (HWCM 7342)

A minerva weight and other finds have been reported from this previously known Romano-British occupation site (Fig 15).

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

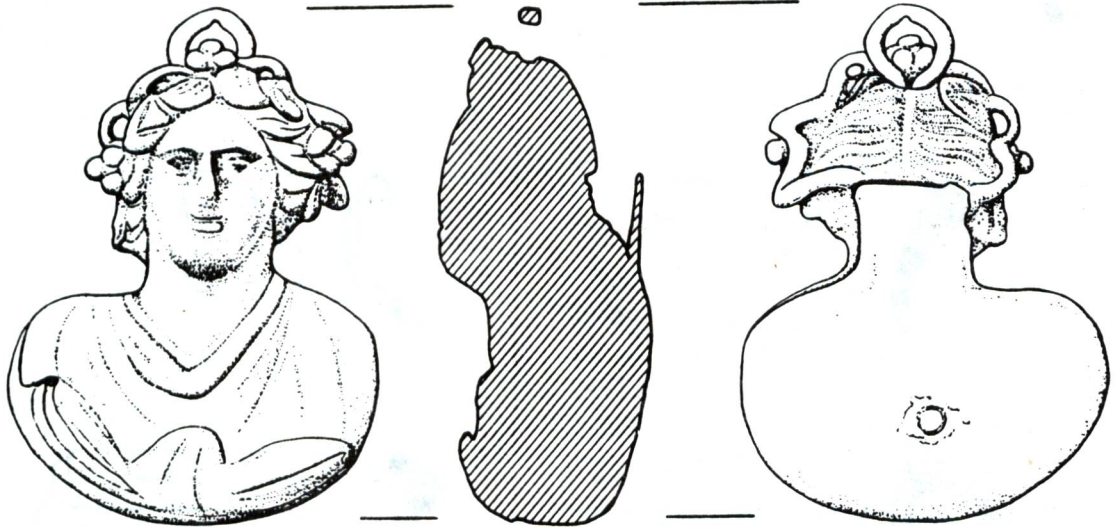


Figure 15: Minerva weight found near Beckford (HWCM 7342)

(Watson 1991).

The exact status of the site and the duration of occupation is uncertain, but it was probably a farmstead, established during the Iron Age and

BENGWORTH, Bengeworth Church (SP 04344346)

The medieval church of St. Peter's, Bengeworth, was one of the chapels of the rural deanery of Evesham Abbey. The establishment of the

church is not documented, but the parish was in existence by 1291 (Cox 1975, 34). According to 16th century wills the church was dedicated to the Holy Trinity (Shawcross 1927, 12).

During the 19th century, despite repairs in 1810 and 1832 the church became very dilapidated and was demolished during 1870-71, except for the ground storey of the tower and a new church was built nearby (Shawcross 1927, 19-31).

The ground plan of the church (except for part of the vestry) can be reconstructed from the surviving portion and a survey of 1847 (HWCRO BA 2978). This survey was undertaken when the interior of the church was modernised, the floor and box pews were replaced. The pulpit and font were relocated (Fig 16).

The church consisted of a west tower and spire, an undivided nave and chancel with north and south aisles - which were clearly later additions. Adjoining the north aisle was a chapel (dedicated to St. Catherine) which was used as a vestry during the 19th century. The western gallery and organ were added during 1832.

From descriptions and illustrations of the church (May 1845, 218; Shawcross 1927; Trenholme and Peers 1906, 420) approximate dates can be assigned to its various elements, with the exception of the nave. May (1845, 220) described the chancel arcades as "obtusely pointed arches" of 13th century date. By the 19th century the north aisle of the nave had no arcading, probably it was removed during the 18th century when the box pews were installed. Such alterations doubtless contributed to the church's structural problems (Shawcross 1927, 19). Structural defects may have been the reason for the replacement of the east window of the chancel in 1810 (Rudge, 1820 94). The previous window contained painted glass depicting the heraldry of several patrons (Amphlett, 1895 215). The north aisle - which ran the full length of the church - may have been of Decorated date, (c 1301-1377). The windows of the south aisle show it was a Perpendicular (c 1378-1547) addition to the church. The east window of the south aisle bears a striking resemblance to the Perpendicular window which was salvaged during the demolition and reset in Norton church (SAP 042477). The painted glass of the east window included a reference to Abbot William

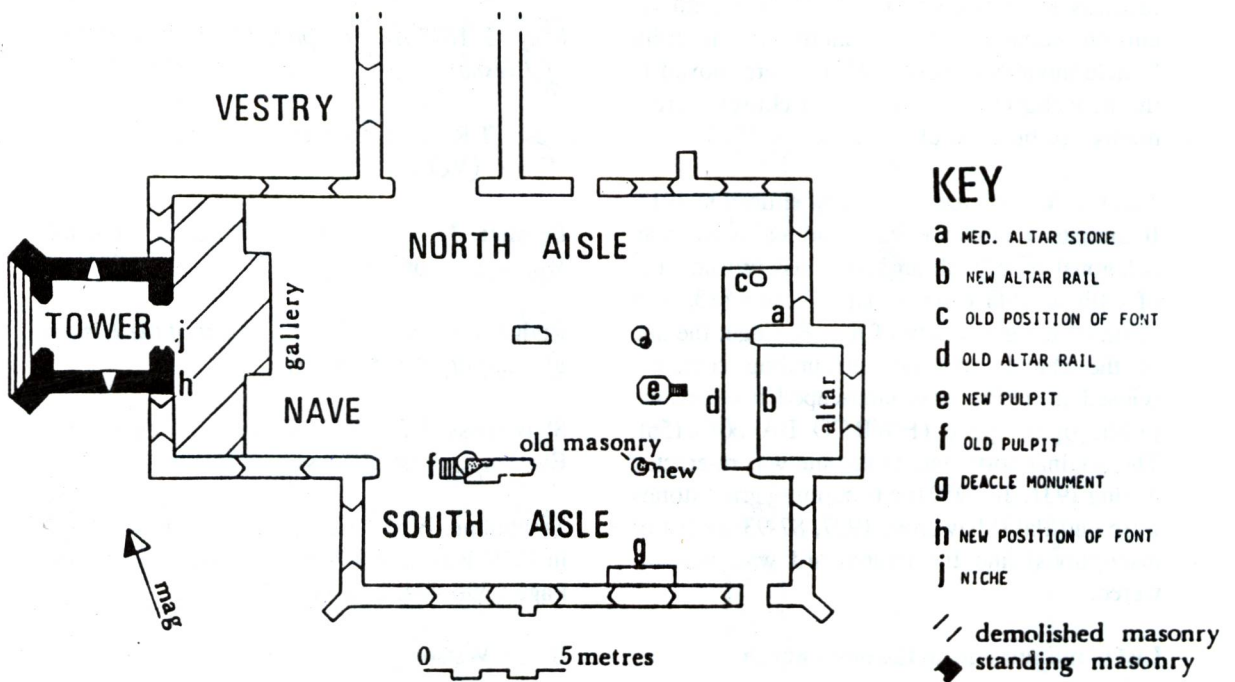


Figure 16: Plan of Bengeworth church based on a survey of 1847

Chyryton (1316-44) as a benefactor (Amphlett 1895, 215). Other fragments of painted glass depicting the heraldry of patrons existed in the west window of the south aisle (Green 1935, 43).

The belfry openings appear to have been of Decorated date, while the surviving portion of the tower has been dated to the early 15th century (Trenholme and Peers 1906, 402). The tower (height 40 feet/12.2m) contained a peal of five bells, dated from 1619-20 (Rudge 1820, 98). The tower was surmounted by a spire (height 30 feet/9.2m), which was a later addition. In conclusion it appears that most of the church was of Perpendicular date, built around an earlier nave/chancel, probably of Early English date (1211-1300).

During the medieval period the church possessed three side altars. At the east end of the north aisle was a fragment of stone altar, plus a piscina in the adjoining south wall. Originally the font stood nearby (Fig 16). Traces of other altars existed at the east end of the south aisle and in the chapel adjoining the north aisle (May 1845, 220-221). A second piscina existed in the south wall of the chancel (Rudge 1820, 94).

May (1845, 449-451), Nash (1781, 60-61) and Rudge (1820, 94-96), described a number of funerary monuments and grave slabs within the church, some of which - including the John Deacle monument (Cox 1971) - were moved to the new church. Under the old church were a number of burial vaults (Shawcross 1927).

The font was moved to the new church in 1917. It consists of a plain oolite cylindrical bowl on an octagonal base, with an hour glass profile. It is of 14th or 15th century date. From 1883, as a result of the generosity of Mr. B. Edge, the site of the church and the surrounding cemetery (closed in 1856), was landscaped and became public open space (HWRCO BA 6088/156). The original north gate to the site was re-erected during 1931. In 1950 the remaining gravestones were laid flat (Shawcross 1927, 87-93 for list of inscriptions) and the churchyard wall was lowered.

List of monuments in the new church:

Thomas Watson (1491-1561) - fine mural tablet (Pevsner, 1968 : 79).

Frances (1647-1727) and Thomazin Watson (1656-1737).

John Deacle (1660-1709) - marble monument with reclining effigy.

William Acton (1737-1787) and family.

Rev Thomas Beale (1733-1805).

All except the Deacle monument were installed during 1922.

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Bruce Watson

BENGWORTH, Bengeworth Manor, 32/34 Church Street (SP 04324347)

Both wings of this Lias rubble and partly timber-framed building are of medieval origin and were restored in 1972.

The north wing (No. 32) was originally a medieval Hall with open arch cruck truss of 14th or 15th century date, which is partly visible on the first floor. The oldest feature of this wings is a semi-circular arched door in the west wall, of Norman date. During the late 16th or early 17th century a first floor was inserted and an open hearth fireplace added to the north wing.

The south wing (No. 34) was mostly rebuilt during the 18th century but the western part of this wing is of medieval origin and there are traces of a cruck truss in the west gable. A description of the building has been added to the county SMR.

Bruce Watson

BEWDLEY, Bridge (HWCM 11174)

After the reporting of timbers from works by Severn Trent plc beside the river, a watching brief was undertaken. This indicated that the present bridge built by Telford in 1798 utilised deep sandstone footings. The upper course was offset from the lower 2 courses. Although the lower footings may have originated as part of Telford's bridge it is possible that they represent the site of an earlier stone bridge. This may call into question the postulated positioning of the original 1447 bridge. It is recorded that Telford built his bridge a little upstream from the original, an action that required the demolition of several houses at the bottom of Load Street. The location of the present bridge, very much to the north side of Load Street and the earlier sandstone footings noted above, suggests that Telford erected the new bridge alongside the site of the earlier bridge using the pre-existing abutments.

Horizontal timber beams noted by contractors in their trench c130m SE of the present bridge probably represent river bank revetting or possibly quaysides for the mooring of river barges. The proximity of this to the 17th-18th century

houses fronting Severn Side South suggests that it predates these.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

BROADHEATH DROUGHT MAIN PIPELINE

The route of this Severn Trent plc pipeline between Wichenford and Moseley village, Grimley was watched during construction work. Over most of the length of the pipeline no more than a thin scatter of artefacts was found, including a selection of flints (Fig 17). The Roman material indicated the presence of an unlocated Roman site close to the pipeline.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

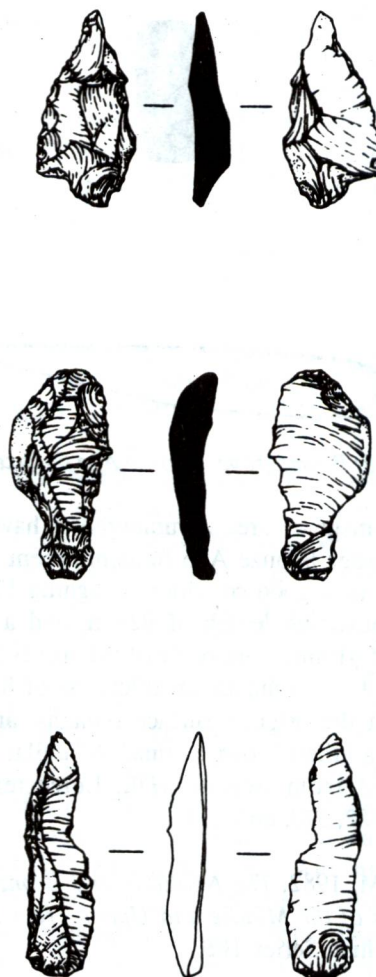


Figure 17: Flint scatter from the pipeline route

BROMSGROVE, Bronze Age Flat Axe (SP 970707)

An Early Bronze Age flat axe with a plain, flared blade was found to the east of Bromsgrove by Mr. M. Taylor whilst using a metal detector in August 1991 (Fig 18).

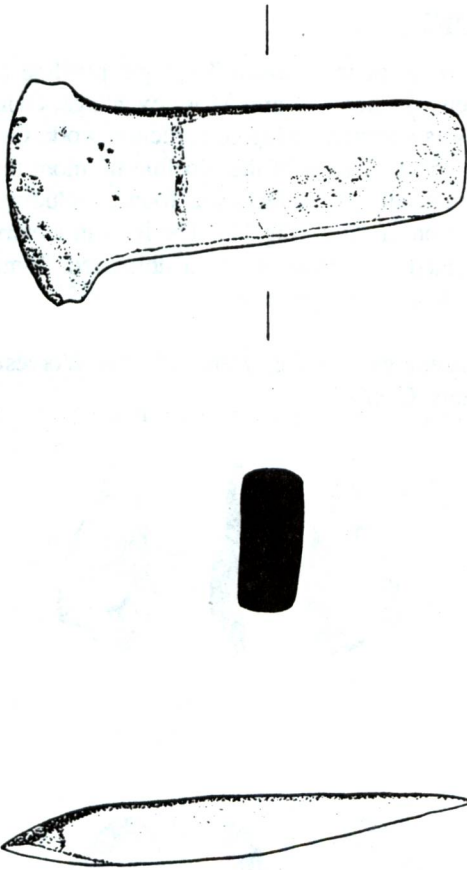


Figure 18: Bromsgrove, Bronze Age flat axe

The Bromsgrove area is rumoured to have produced other Bronze Age finds in recent years. The axe is in good condition, weighing 170g; it has a maximum length of 92mm, and a blade width of 41mm. The body of the axe is 21mm wide and has a maximum thickness of 8.3mm. Much of the original surface remains, and the axe has a green-brown patina. A similar axe is recorded from Beacon Hill, Leicestershire (Vine 1982, 370, no. 679).

Vine P.M. 1982, *The Neolithic and Bronze Age Cultures of the Middle and Upper Trent Basin*, BAR British Series 105.

Emma Bond, Warwickshire Museum

CANON PYON, St Lawrence's Church (SO 449493)

During drainage works the north and east walls of the demolished north vestry of St. Lawrence's church, Canon Pyon, were uncovered. The Parochial Church Council commissioned the Hereford Archaeology Unit to carry out salvage recording and a watching brief, under the direction of Richard Stone. The buried footings of the demolished vestry included a re-used fragment of Romanesque worked stone. The earliest datable features of the present church are of the 13th century and the discovery of earlier masonry suggests the existence of an earlier church.

Richard K Morriss, City of Hereford Archaeology Unit

DODDERHILL, St Augustine's Church (HWCM 606)

An evaluation was undertaken within the area of the scheduled Roman fort in response to the proposed construction of a church hall adjacent to the medieval church. No deposits of Roman date were recovered at the depth at which excavation ceased. No deposits earlier than the 17th century were excavated. The nave wall (destroyed in the civil war) was identified as surviving structural remains beneath a robber trench close to its expected location.

Medieval finds from the trenches included a group of whitewashed stone mouldings, some of which were recovered from the wall core of the medieval nave, suggesting a multiphase construction for the fabric of the church. Refurbishments are indicated by two types of roof tile manufacture and a group of diverse decorative medieval floor tiles.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

DODFORD WITH GRAFTON, Earthworks (HWCM 11077)

Following speculation in the local press that earthworks to the E of the manor house were the remains of a Roman villa, a survey and documentary research were undertaken. These in-

dicates that the earthworks are the remains of a park pale. There is a medieval park associated with the estate. There was also a later landscape and deer park. After the battle of Bosworth in 1485 the manor was forfeited by the Stafford family. It passed to the Talbots who undertook major restorations of the house. It is suggested that a larger park (in a slightly different location to the original park) was established then, if it were not already in existence. The earthworks are likely therefore to be late medieval in date.

Metal detecting in this general area has also taken place. Finds reported included a medieval bookclasp and an early Roman coin.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

DROITWICH, 97 Friar St (HWCM 9553)

An evaluation identified a series of truncated Roman deposits close to the site of the Old Bowling Green excavation. In addition, a Roman inhumation burial, later than the 2nd century, was discovered. In addition, evidence of a 12th century or earlier road running slightly to the N of the present Friar St was identified. This was sealed by a charcoal packed layer of the late 13th century, which may be linked to a documented conflagration which started close to this site in 1290. A 14th century building was constructed above this level, this was demolished in the 19th century, although the yard area preserved surviving floor levels largely intact.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

FLADBURY, Medieval gold finger ring (SO 9846)

The discovery of a gold finger-ring has been reported to the Warwickshire Museum by Mr. R. Evans of Hall Green, Birmingham. Mr. Evans found the ring in October 1991 while metal detecting on farmland to the west of the village of Fladbury.

The ring has an internal diameter of 17mm, a depth of 4mm and a thickness of 1mm. It weighs

2.61 gm. The small size of this ring indicates that it may have belonged to a woman. The gold is of good quality, although it has not been possible to assess its specific density. The interior of the hoop displays many scratches indicating that the ring was worn for some time. There is also evidence for damage after the ring had been lost - the hoop has been distorted at one point producing pressure cracks. The exterior of the hoop is decorated with the inscription "AS IN GOD", each word being separated from the next by a floral motif. This consists of a five-petalled flower set within radiating lines. The words are accompanied also by punctuation marks in the form of small crosses. The inscription is in Gothic or "black letter" script which was used in England from the mid-14th to the early 16th centuries. The use of English indicates that the ring was probably made in England.

The Fladbury ring may be compared with a ring found at Godstow Nunnery, near Oxford and now in the Franks Collection of the British Museum (AF 1075). This ring is engraved internally with a "black letter" inscription in English: "MOST IN MYND AND YN MYN HERT/LOTHEST FROM YOU FERTO DEPART". The form of the word "in" is very close to that of the Fladbury ring, although the letter "I" lacks a tail. The Godstow ring is dated to the 15th century (Cherry 1981, 84, cat. no. 196). The design of the Fladbury ring, with its combination of flowers and words, is similar to that of a ring found at Bartlow, Essex which is of 15th century date (Oman 1930, 101, cat. no. 626).

During the Middle ages rings were worn for a variety of reasons and today it is often difficult to determine the precise function of a particular ring. The Fladbury ring because of the reference to God might be interpreted as a sign of religious devotion. This suggestion is supported by an unprovenanced gold ring engraved externally in "black letter": "JASPER (*sic*) MELCHIOR BALTASAR (*sic*) IN GOD IS AR" (BM Londesborough Coll. AF 1017). The latter part of this inscription may be the beginning of a phrase such as "in God is our salvation" (Cherry 1981, 84, cat. no. 199). Alternatively it might be a posy ring, the inscription then being seen as a message between lovers. During the 14th and 15th centuries many of these messages have a religious character, such as "IN DEO SALUS" (Dalton 1907, 177-8). The Fladbury

inscription might thus be part of a longer phrase referring to the donor's love being pure as that of God or alternatively a pledge of marriage made in the name of God.

Acknowledgements : the writer wishes to express his thanks to the late Wilfred A. Seaby and Iain Soden (Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry) for their comments on this object.

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Philip J. Wise, Warwickshire Museum

FOWNHOPE, Rudge Farm (HWCM 8337)

Salvage recording on the site of a reported flint scatter site in advance of exploratory oil drilling revealed no evidence of prehistoric evidence. Deposits relating to charcoal burning were however revealed. Evidence included dumps of charcoal and fired clay; a fence line rebuilt on several occasions and possible evidence of a charcoal burner's cabin. Deposits dated from the 18th-19th centuries.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

GRIMLEY, Retreat Farm (HWCM 4503)

Salvage recording was undertaken along the line of a proposed conveyor belt, part of an expansion of Church Farm Quarry. This crossed an area of cropmarks, the largest of which proved to be a Roman ditch, probably a field boundary. One corresponded to the possible entrance of a prehistoric enclosure. A number of other features including ditches, pits, postholes were excavated. Artefactual evidence was limited, but together with the features suggested agricultural

boundaries, enclosures and low level associated activity dating from the bronze age onwards.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

HAMPTON, Hampton Manor (SP 034428)

The two and a half storey, brick built, manor house (c 1700-1725), is an excellent example of a small, early Georgian, country house, complete with original windows in the facade. A description of the property has been added to the county SMR.

Bruce Watson

HANLEY CASTLE SURVEY

As part of a wider study of the medieval pottery industry in this area, fieldwalking was undertaken. This project is being led by Derek Hurst who has been granted a Leverhulme Award to undertake the work.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

HEREFORD, Canal Road (HWCM 3983)

An evaluation was undertaken adjacent to the Blackfriars ruins in an area expected to fall within the friary precincts. Early, though undated, medieval activity was represented by two land boundaries, one of them subsequently sealed by a multi-phase road surface. Walls of the friary buildings, possibly the E end of the friary church, were located. Three phases of construction of this on the same alignment and location were recognised, the latter possibly that documented in 1424.

A ditch c 8m wide and c 1.5m deep lay some 25m E of the wall-footings. Provided with reinforced and revetted sides it served as a water channel, or possibly the precinct boundary. It contained tanning waste and crop processing residues.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

HEREFORD, Excavations in Hereford

The Hereford Unit has carried out several excavations within the city, as well as watching briefs and work connected with PPG16. In February the Hereford Archaeology Unit excavated an area to the north of a mid-14th century timber-framed hall that they had previously surveyed, 20 Church Street (SO 511398). The excavation was financed by the owners, Elgar Estates Ltd., and directed by Alan Thomas. The work exposed the tops of medieval layers and a significant wall footing to the north of the main house. This wall ran parallel with the side wall of the main medieval block and was probably the south wall of a structure demolished sometime in the 17th century. It may have been associated with a demolished medieval kitchen or service range. These well-preserved deposits have been protected by the design of the footings of a modern extension to the medieval hall range. To the south-east of the Vicars Choral (SO 511397) small-scale excavations directed by Richard Stone demonstrated the existence of another building, either associated with the college or pre-dating it.

Prior to redevelopment of an industrial site just off Canal Road (SO 513404), an evaluation excavation was carried out by the Unit under the direction of Richard Stone. The area was known to be within the precincts of the Dominican friary that moved to this site after 1319. Part of the friary's claustral range still stands but the exact site and extent of the church and other buildings is not known. Amongst the finds were several decorated encaustic floor tiles, almost certainly associated with the friary church, as were the fragments of painted glass, a copper alloy jetton, pieces of worked stone and many tilestones. The robbed footings of a substantial stone wall were also uncovered, on the presumed line of the chancel, but the limited extent of the trenches make any firm conclusions impossible.

Richard K Morriss, City of Hereford Archaeology Unit

HEREFORD, The Vicars Choral (SO 511397)

The City of Hereford Archaeology Unit has been surveying the late-15th century quadrangle of the Vicars' Choral for several years (Fig 19). The latest areas to be surveyed have been the west range, the western part of the south range, the College Hall (off the south range), and the Chapter Room (off the east range).

The quadrangular college was built of the local sandstone, ashlar on the external elevations but with only partially dressed coursed rubble to the cloister. The west range is at an odd angle to the rest of the college, possibly related to the adjacent boundary wall of the Bishop's Palace. The survey work in the south-western corner of the complex indicated that this odd alignment of the west range was planned *ab initio* and was not a late infill. Sufficient room was left between the palace's precinct wall and the west range of the college to allow direct access from the main entrance to the Hall attached to the south range.

The college was divided by full-height timber-framed partitions into individual lodgings for each of the vicars. Each lodging consisted of a two-bay first floor hall over a single ground floor room, both chambers heated by fireplaces in an external stack. The ground floor rooms were narrower than those above, because the claustral walk was incorporated within the ground floor, separated from the lodgings by close-studded partitions. This original pattern was altered after the Reformation with many lodgings being amalgamated to form larger dwellings and attics inserted into the originally open roof-spaces above the first floor halls. The work also indicated that more of the medieval roof structure in the south range had survived the fire of 1828 than had previously been thought.

The college also had a communal Hall off the south range and a library and chapel off the east range, as well as a later porch added to its northern entrance. The present College Hall replaced a medieval hall in the mid-17th century, shortly after the Restoration. The earlier hall was probably the re-used hall of a timber-framed canonical house known to have existed on the site before the college migrated here in 1475. The new Hall was built of ashlar stone and was a fine example of its period. In its

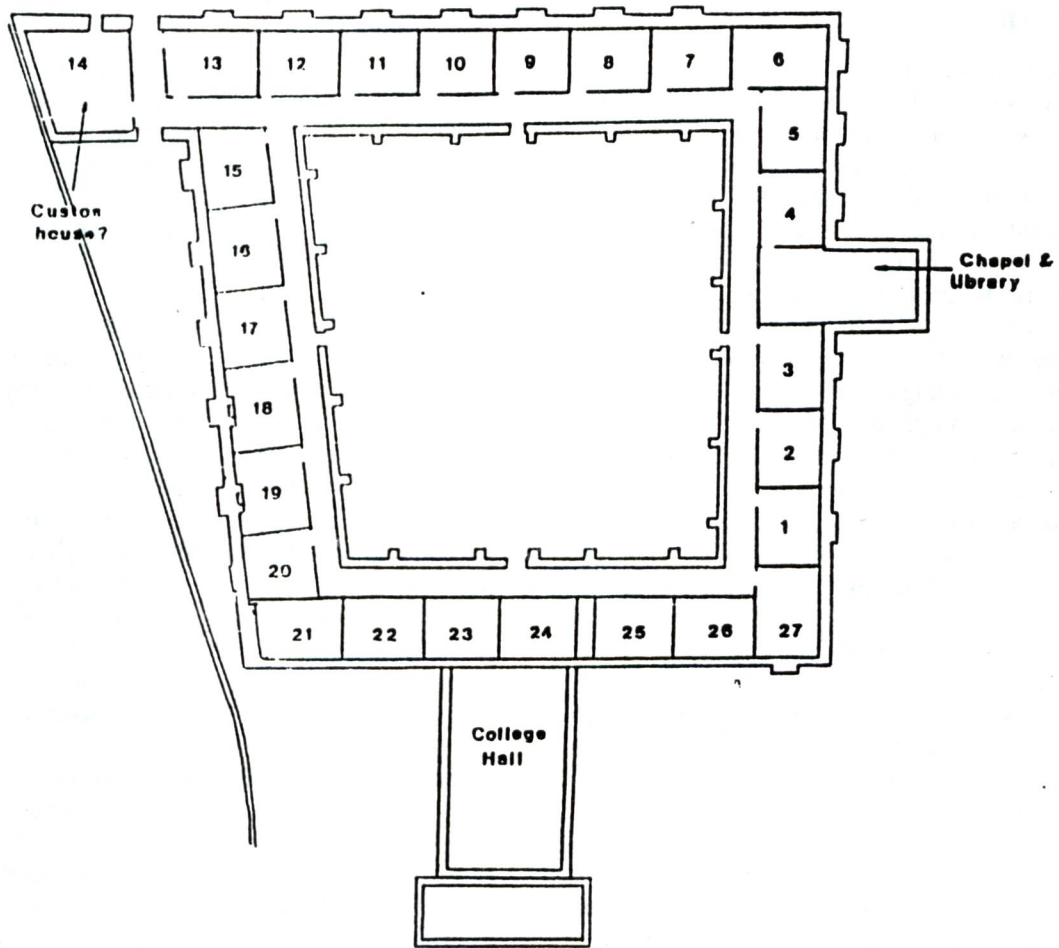


Figure 19: Probable medieval layout of the Vicars Choral, Hereford

original phase it probably consisted of a ceiled three bay main hall, with a central fireplace in the west wall, and a service area to the north that probably extended into older medieval lodgings in the south range of the college. In the mid-18th century the hall was extended northwards through to the claustral walk, re-ceiled, and re-windowed - sashes replacing the original mullions and transoms. To keep the symmetrical layout, the old fireplace was blocked and replaced by a new one further to the north. In 20th century improvements the old fireplace was uncovered and now the hall has two fireplaces, side by side.

The present Chapter Room off the east range had been considered to be the result of an early 17th century re-modelling but the survey suggests that it was, in fact, altered in the early-mid

19th century instead. Originally it had consisted of two storeys, one containing a college library on the first floor above a ground floor chapel and extended further to the east than it does at present. There is some structural and design evidence to suggest that the original medieval design was altered during, or very shortly after, construction. Structurally, the bay pattern and roof design in the portion within the east range proper is identical to the general pattern seen, with variations, throughout the college. The roof of the east range simply continues over the west end of the first floor and has closed trusses at either end. These are typical of others in the college, with three queen struts rising from tie-beam to collar. In between is an intermediate open truss, arch-braced with the usual trefoiled pattern above its collar formed by the cusping of

the top of the collar and the upper principal rafters.

Access to both ground and first floors appears to have been through doorways in the north frame. If there was a separate lobby containing a stair to the first floor and the door to the ground floor, this would have encroached into the adjacent lodging. Such a situation may provide further evidence that there was a change in the plans during construction. Direct access from that lodging would have been extremely unlikely unless it was not in use as a lodging. A lobby cut into it would have allowed continuous access to the chapel and library but would also have impinged on the lodging, and cut down the size of this floor spaces considerably. There is, however, no visible signs remaining of a partition between such a lobby and stair and the rest of the lodging.

The Unit also undertook excavation work, directed by Richard Stone, to the south-east of the college, an area presumed to have contained the service ranges. This demonstrated the existence of another building, either associated with the college or pre-dating it.

Richard K Morriss, City of Hereford Archaeology Unit

KEMPSEY, The Nash (SO 859474)

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit at The Nash, Kempsey in order to assess the archaeological implications of proposals for a large-scale hotel and leisure complex development. The site lies in the valley of the River Severn, in an area where aerial photography has revealed cropmarks of field systems and a probable small barrow cemetery.

The evaluation was carried out by means of fieldwalking, geophysical survey and trial excavation. The geophysical survey located another possible ring-ditch which may be a further element of the probable barrow cemetery. The trial excavations revealed enclosures and ditches of a Roman field system, but no evidence of an associated settlement was uncovered.

Simon Buteux 1991 *The Nash, Kempsey, Hereford and Worcester: An Archaeological Evaluation* BUFAU Report No. 144

Simon Buteux, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

KEMPSEY, Evidence of the course of the Roman road between Kempsey and Tewkesbury

Crop marks seen on aerial photographs taken in 1990 of the area south of Earls Croome and Baughton, led to a search in the fields between Baughton and Green Street (map OS 1:25000, SO 84/94). In the field marked "Smithmoor" at Grid Ref. SO 87664100, there was a line of stone scattered about 5 metres wide running north-south through the whole field. This field had recently been ploughed and rolled, and the straight line of stones (limestone) showed very clearly. Stone size varied, a few were as long as 30cm and some showed evidence of recent breakage.

One rim sherd of Severn Valley ware was found; no other pottery or artefacts were seen in the area of the road. A local farmer claimed that the field had not been ploughed until the 1940's.

The line continued northwards into the adjacent field of harvested beans; here the stones tended to be smaller. Visits to the fields north and south of Smithmoor have shown more limestone on field boundaries, under hedges and in ditch banks.

June Hebden and Marjorie Lloyd, South Worcs. Arch. Group

LEINTWARDINE, 12-14 Watling St (HWCM 10863)

A watching brief failed to find evidence for the outer eastern defensive ditch within 10m to the W of the present road line of Watling Street.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

LEINTWARDINE, Community Centre (HWCM 8247)

Excavations within the scheduled Roman settlement in advance of development identified further features of the late 2nd and early 3rd century domestic occupation. An environmental sampling programme produced quantities of charred plant remains, which represent the first such evidence for Roman Herefordshire. Important finds included sherds of a Rhenish ware beaker with applied figures of Hercules and a satyr seducing a nymph (Fig 20).

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

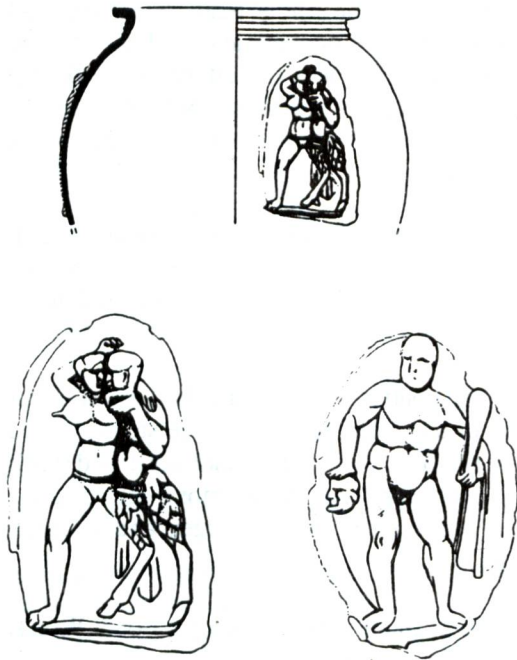


Figure 20: Applied figures of Hercules and a satyr seducing a nymph from a Rhenish ware beaker discovered at Leintwardine

LEOMINSTER, Buttercross (HWCM 7044)

This site in the centre of medieval urban Leominster was evaluated in 1990 revealing the presence of well preserved medieval deposits. Rescue excavation of part of the development site was undertaken in 1991. Dry stone wall foundations of several medieval buildings on the High Street were recorded. Associated structures included tile built internal hearths, a stone

built oven, clay floors, cellars and cess/latrines pits. Two distinct medieval phases were identified. Particularly noteworthy was the excellent surviving environmental samples (of at least regional importance), which included good mineralised remains from the cess pits and charred remains from the site generally.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

LITTLE MALVERN, Priory (HWCM 720)

A watching brief was undertaken when new drainage was put in to the South of the Priory Church. Foundations of the cloister (?) walls were located. A number of medieval floor tiles, not in situ (most 14th century), were recovered.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

LONGTOWN, Penbailey, (HWCM 1036)

A watching brief indicated further evidence for medieval occupation within the enclosure to the N of the castle.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

MADRESFIELD, North End Farm (HWCM 4072)

Evaluation was undertaken on the site of a suggested Roman pottery waster scatter. This confirmed the presence of a settlement dating from the 2nd to 4th centuries AD. Evidence of timber structures of both post and sill beam construction were recovered along with a series of boundary ditches.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

MARCHES UPLAND SURVEY

This major survey, largely funded by English Heritage has recently started. Running for two years the project will use and build on established methodologies in its assessment of the

threatened archaeology in the survey areas. An extensive examination of the uplands will be followed by intensive fieldwork in sample areas. As well as the discovery of new archaeological sites, it is intended that a quantifiable increase in the understanding of the nature (quantity and quality) of the archaeological resource in these areas will result. There will be feedback into the planning process (through the SMRs) as well as into the Monuments Protection Programme.

The uplands will be defined as areas where a significant proportion of the land surface is above 250m. Seven separate areas have been identified: 1) Black Mountains and foothills, 2) Wyre/Arrow watershed, 3) Ludlow anticline and the Silurian hills of Herefordshire, 4) Clun Forest, 5) Caer Caradoc, Long Mynd Stiperstones, Stapeley Hill, 6) Long Mountain, 7) Se-lattyn.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

MORDIFORD, Bridge (HWCM 915)

Following reports by a member of the public that unauthorised works were likely to be undertaken on this scheduled bridge, a watching brief was undertaken of a gas pipe trench passing across the bridge. A bridge is said to have stood on this site in 1352 and part of the fabric is said to date from this period. Documented repairs to the bridge occurred early in the 15th and 16th centuries. In the 18th century the bridge was widened to the S. In 1955 the causeway and flood relief arches were widened and the road resurfaced.

Observations revealed that the 1955 resurfacing is likely to have caused significant truncation to earlier road surfaces on both bridge and causeway. Little evidence of the internal bridge structure was revealed. Evidence for strengthening of the top of the western arch of the bridge was revealed in the form of an iron reinforcing rod. Evidence for the original position of the southern parapet was revealed. From evidence found within the structure of the eastern flood arch, the bridge may at one time have been of three arches, each supported by three ribs. Since modifications are known from the 15th and 16th centuries, such dates may be inferred for the

conversion of the small western arch to the first of a pair of flood arches.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

NORTH CLAINES, Finds (HWCM 11973-4)

Metal detecting finds reported from this parish included a fine copper flat axe and part a Saxon strap-end decorated with animal head interlace.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

OVERBURY, Mammoth (HWCM 10949)

The tusk of a mammoth was reported from gravel quarrying on this scheduled site. It is suggested that it came from river terrace deposits that can be dated to c30,000bc (Fig 21).

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

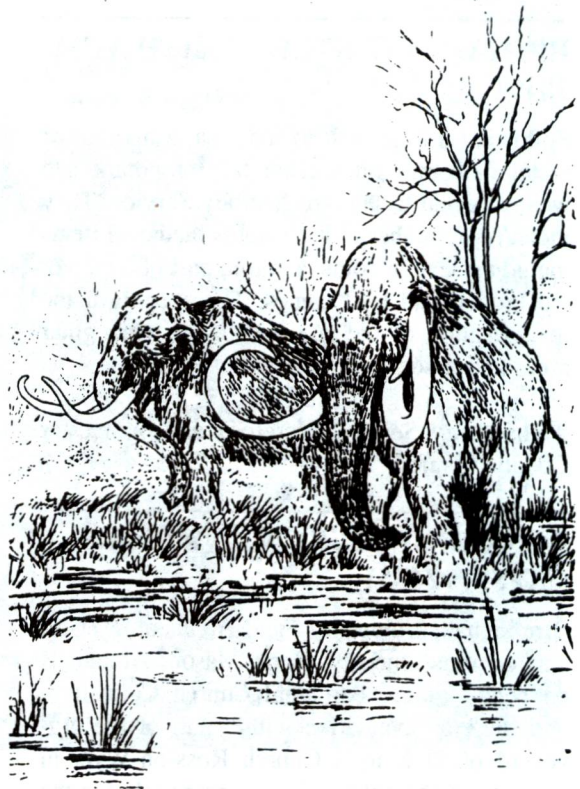


Figure 21: Mammoths (HWCM 10949)

PERSHORE, Bridge (HWCM 5574)

Recording of the scheduled bridge in advance of renovation was undertaken. First documented in 1290, it consists of five small and one large arch spanning the river and a number of flood relief arches (Fig 22). Photogrammetric survey of the main elevations was used as the basis for recording stone types.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

PRESTON WYNNE, Various

Examination of the Ministry of Agriculture aerial photographs held by the Preston Wynne experimental station was undertaken as part of SMR enhancement. In a small area around the station (in Preston Wynne and adjoining parishes) over 30 new sites were identified. These included enclosures, rings ditches, a possible marching camp and a possible motte and bailey castle.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

RICHARDS CASTLE, Moat (HWCM 7017)

Following a field visit to the area, a number of metal detecting finds from this cropmark site were reported to the Archaeology Service. They included a number of high status medieval items including several coins, a jetton, part of a medieval brooch and lead comes. These confirm the identification of the site as a large rectangular moat and associated fishponds.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

ROSS-ON-WYE, St. Mary's Church (SO 59792405)

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit was commissioned by Hook Mason, Architects on behalf of the Parochial Church Council to undertake an evaluation within part of the graveyard of St Mary's Church Ross-on-Wye, in advance of the submission of proposals for the construction of a new church hall and toilets. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the

significance of buried archaeological deposits, and investigate the constructional sequence at the base of the church's West Tower. It is probable that the footings of the West Tower exposed by trenching belonged to two distinct builds. The earliest build may pre-date the 14th-century tower, while the re-use of tufa possibly from the 12th-century church may provide an approximate terminus post quem for this event.

Five in-situ inhumations were encountered within three separate graves, cut into the subsoil in Trench II. The dating evidence is unclear, but indicates a terminus in the wide range between the 15th-18th centuries. Despite the truncation of the grave cuts, this closely-packed and possibly contemporary group of inhumations may have been afforded some protection from further disturbance by a levelling-up deposit above. A later burial episode is represented by two further inhumations. The last event recorded was the excavation of a narrow trench which contained a quantity of dis-articulated bone, which probably represents an attempt at cemetery clearance and management, possibly in the 18th-century.

Jones, A.E. 1991. *St. Mary's Church, Ross-on-Wye, Hereford and Worcester: An Archaeological Evaluation 1991* BUFAU Report No. 173

A.E. Jones, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

ROUS LENCH, Church (HWCM 2700)

A visit by Service staff accompanied by Professor Zarnecki, led to the re-examination and later photographic recording of the loose medieval sculptures in the church. In addition to the famous peacock sculpture, which it is now suggested dates to the 11th century (function unknown), it has been noted that there are the remains of three 11th century window heads, one of which has been recut on the reverse with (unfinished) dog tooth decoration; part of a dog tooth arch fragment recut in the 14th century; a decorated window head that it is suggested is an (unfinished) outlier of the Herefordshire school and a tympanum with incised decoration cut down to make a 14th-15th century window frame.



Figure 22: Pershore Bridge (HWCM 5574) - detail from an engraving by Thomas Sanders, 1779

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

SOUTH LITTLETON, St. Michael's Church (SP 07574625)

A description and plan of the church was published in the CBA Churches Bulletin (No. 27), page 17-21. Study of the church fabric supports the suggestion that the 1204 dedication is a re-dedication, perhaps associated with the inauguration of a new living

Bruce Watson

STRENSHAM, Strensham-Mythe water pipeline

Archaeological recording during construction of the 6km-long Strensham (Hereford and Worcester) to Mythe (Gloucestershire) water pipeline was undertaken by Gloucestershire County Council's Archaeology Section between June-October 1991. The work was commissioned by Severn-Trent Water Ltd. Two previously unknown Romano-British sites within Hereford and Worcester were located.

Ordnance Survey land parcel No. 4360

Along some 70m of the 16m-wide working strip, centred on SO 9133038530, were numerous ditches interpretable as elements of a land boundary system dating to the late Romano-British period. The features were sampled and recorded in detail in advance of their destruction by the pipe-trench. The site lies south-west of an undated cropmark complex (HWCM 10015).

Ordnance Survey land parcel no. 6157

A single ditch-like feature was exposed in a section of the pipe-trench at SO 9154839566. The fill contained large quantities of Severn Valley ware, which may indicate the presence of Romano-British occupation in the vicinity.

Charles Parry, Archaeology Section, Gloucestershire County Council

SUTTON, 'Magnate's Residence' (HWCM 10000)

Following the discovery of a substantial stone building by aerial photography in 1990, that it was suggested might the site of a palace of the Kings of Mercia, over 7.5 kilos of metal detecting finds were reported to the County Archaeology Service for identification. These pointed to a high status site, with finds including book fittings?, a decorative iron lock, window comes, a pair of bronze buckles and a bronze pendant. With the exception of a small fragment that may be the foot of a Roman brooch, none of the finds could be dated earlier than the late 13th century.

This site and adjacent monuments have now been scheduled.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

WARDON, Church (HWCM 388)

Recording of the building has taken place as part of the major renovation project now under-

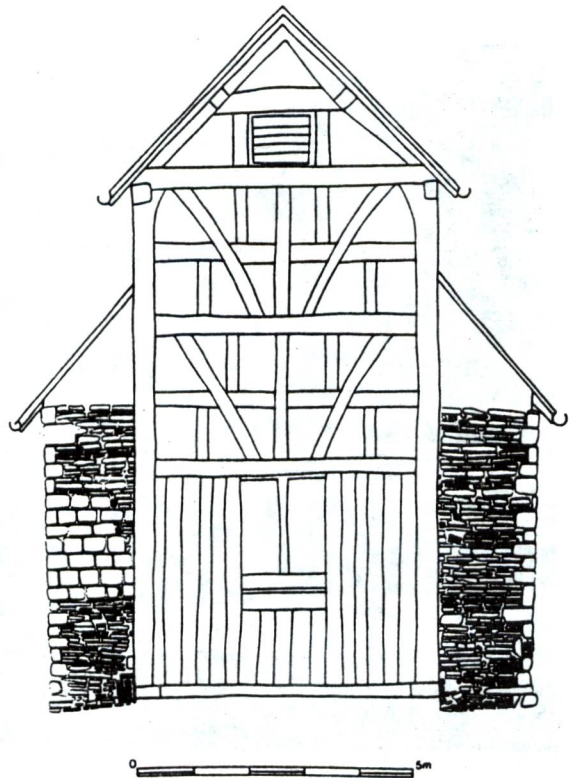


Figure 23: West wall and 16th century tower of Warndon Church (HWCM 388)

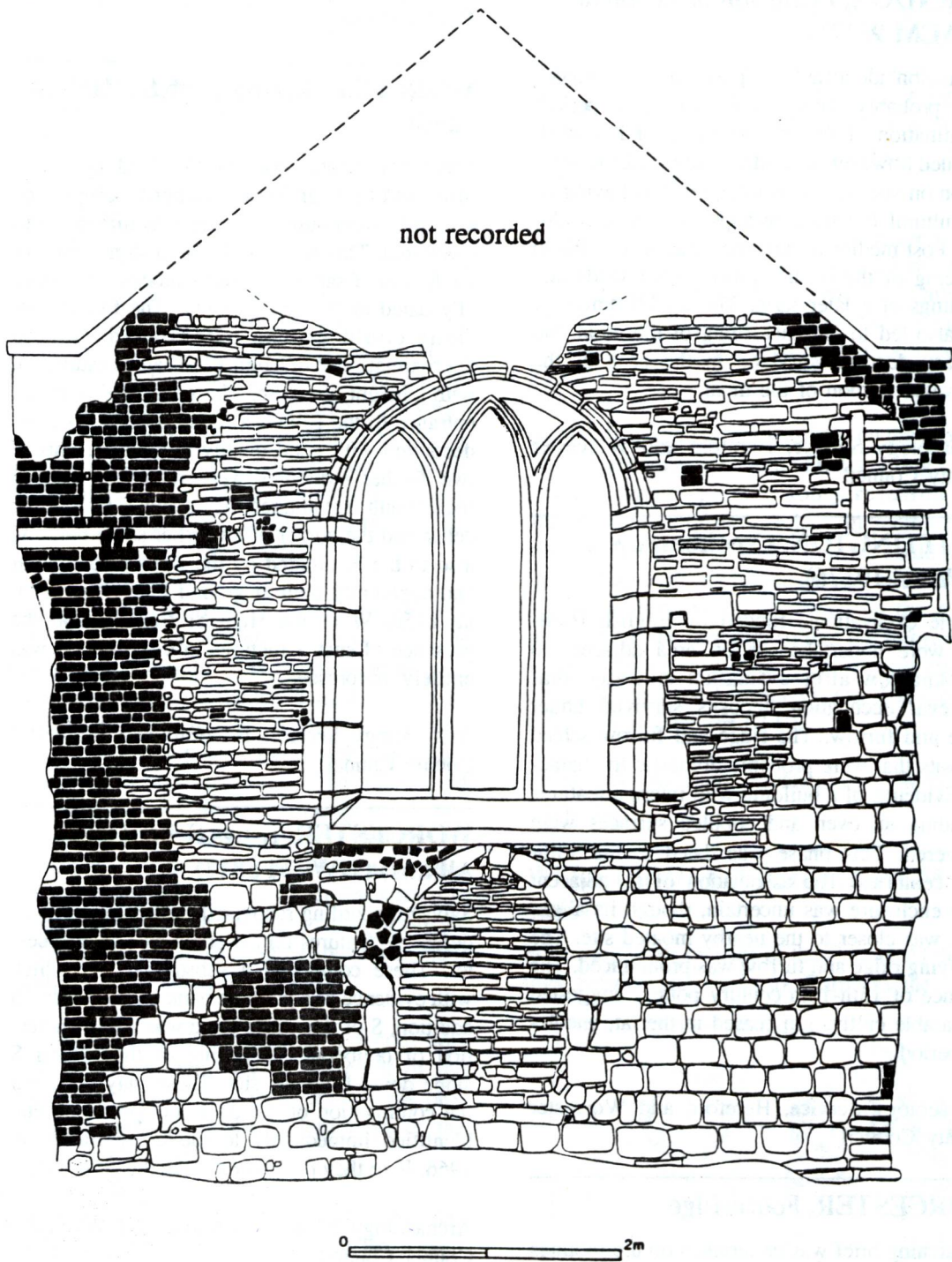


Figure 24: East wall of St. Nicholas' Church, Warndon (HWCM 388). Brick shown in black

way (Figs 23 & 24). A stone by stone recording was undertaken indicating 3 main medieval phases of building. An opportunity arose to record the belfry (predating the current tower) built into the roof structure. Newly discovered

floor levels, wall paintings and a large collection of medieval floor tiles have also been recorded.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

**WARNDON, Little Tolladine Farm
(HWCM 9617)**

Evaluation identified the presence of a moated area, probably dating to the medieval period. Examination of the enclosed area and beyond, revealed however no evidence of medieval occupation on site. It is thus interpreted as having an agricultural function, perhaps as a stock enclosure. Post medieval truncation was severe due to terracing of the natural hillslope for yards and buildings of a later farm. The establishment of this also led to the backfilling of the moat. No primary deposits survived in the base of the excavated portion of the moat.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

**WHITTINGTON, Crookbarrow
(HWCM 10176)**

Rescue excavations, funded by English Heritage, were undertaken in an area adjacent to Crookbarrow after evaluation indicated that medieval occupation deposits survived under ridge and furrow. The ridge and furrow sealed deposits that were probably domestic in character. Evidence of a building with internal features including an oven and cobbled surfaces were recovered. This phase was dated to the 13th-14th centuries. The association of an adjacent large enclosure was uncertain, though its alignment was closer to the nearby moated site. The surviving ridge and furrow was pronounced. The absence of 15th-16th century pottery suggested that arable cultivation ceased in the late medieval period.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

WORCESTER, Footbridge

A watching brief was undertaken on the footings for a new footbridge across the River Severn at Worcester. There was mainly environmental examination of the Flandrian deposits. But on the west bank deposits underlying the foundations of an 18th century building, covered the remains of a late medieval (?) waterfront structure.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

WORCESTER, 84-5 High St (HWCM 1296)

Salvage recording took place on land to the rear of 84 and 85 High Street, formerly occupied by a carpet warehouse. A stone structure was encountered. This was a substantial stone cellar or vault built of sandstone ashlar blocks, provisionally dated to the 13th century. The full dimensions could not be established, but an approximate size of c10m x 7m can be estimated, with a height of c2.5m. The cellar had a rebuilt entrance to the E with a round headed doorway decorated with good quality mouldings. Part of two further structures were recorded, a stone barrel vault that abutted the outside E wall of the cellar and the corner of an earlier stone building also to the E, abutted by the walls of the cellar and apparently built at ground level. The cellar lay c15m W of the High St frontage and the presence of such structures in this location was entirely unforeseen.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

WORCESTER, Kings School (St Albans) (HWCM 8817)

Salvage recording recovered further evidence of defensive features on the south side of Worcester. These comprised a substantial E-W ditch with evidence of a possible bank on its N side. In addition, S of this ditch, there was some suggestion of deliberate steepening of the natural S slope down from the site. These may represent the continuation of the ditch and possible bank identified immediately to the E by Barker in 1966. If so they probably date to the civil war.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

**WORCESTER, St Oswald's
Almshouses (HWCM 9931)**

Salvage recording in 1991 indicated further evidence for the existence and extent of a substantial 15th century stone structure, reusing stonework of the 11th or 12th century. This may

represent part of St Oswald's Hospital. No further evidence was recorded for the graveyard predating this building, first identified in 1990.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council

WORCESTER, Worcester Cathedral (SO 850545)

During 1991 the detailed photographic record of the restoration work has continued. The main areas of activity have been the SE pinnacle of the tower, the stair turret at the NW corner of the north aisle of the nave and the roof of the SW transept. Inside the Cathedral the piers which support the tower were strengthened by the insertion of stainless steel rods and liquid cement. The capitals of the western crossing piers were photographed and the masons' marks on the piers and vaulting were recorded.

The work on the crossing piers also revealed part of a Norman column still in place in the north choir triforium. It is a massive semicircular respond with a capital identical in form to the abaci of the crypt pillars. Above the capital is the springing of a plain semicircular arch with a roll-moulding on its north side. The column had been enclosed in masonry, probably in the late 12th or early 13th century, and had been hidden ever since. The discovery of this column shows that Worcester, the crypt of which was started in 1084, was the source for the architectural style of Gloucester, Hereford, Shrewsbury and other buildings in the south and west.

To the north of the Cathedral, a record was made of the western bay of the crypt of the charnel chapel, while a radar survey has provided information on the eastern bays of the charnel chapel crypt.

Damp in the north-west corner of the crypt has caused the deterioration of much of the plaster on the north wall and adjoining vault. The removal of the decayed plaster has revealed evidence of the blocking off of the destroyed northern crypt chapel, as well as suggesting that some of the stonework in the crypt has been reused from an earlier building.

Excavation of the area to the north of the crypt has revealed part of a wall, possibly that of the

staircase of the Sacrist's house. The oriel window which can be seen in the north aisle of the choir is all that is left of this house, which was built in the 15th century and demolished in 1712. The earliest deposits excavated so far have contained stained glass and stonework from the 13th century windows of the choir, which were replaced in the 15th century.

A large proportion of time has been spent writing detailed reports on the excavations which were carried out in and around the Cathedral during the 1980s. This is in the preparation for the publication of the final excavation report in 1992.

In March, a Symposium was held on the precinct of the Cathedral. The aim of the meeting was to bring together people doing research into various aspects of the precinct, including historians and archaeologists, so that we could all be brought up to date with the current situation. A report has been produced, based on the papers presented at the meeting, so that the information is more widely available. The report can be obtained from the Chapter Office, 10a College Green, Worcester for £2.50.

Chris Guy, Assistant Archaeologist, Worcester Cathedral

WYRE PIDDLE, Church (HWCM 4546)

Following visits by staff of the County Archaeology Service and Professor Zarnecki the loose

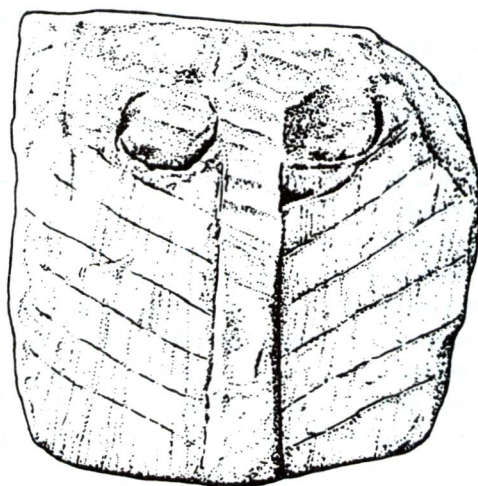


Figure 25: Beasts head from Wyre Piddle (HWCM 2546)

sculptures within this church have been reassessed and photographed. The two large pieces carved as beasts heads have been dated to the 9th century and have suggested parallels at Deerhurst church (Fig 25).

The pillar capitals have been dated to the late 11th century and it has been suggested that they are the same as pieces from the Abbey church at Evesham.

Archaeology Service, Hereford and Worcester
County Council

SHROPSHIRE

ALVELEY, A Group of Twelfth Century Sculptures

In 1989 the existence of a group of sculptures in Alveley was brought to the attention of Rowley's House Museum, Shrewsbury. These were subsequently examined and recorded by Mike Stokes and John Hunt with a view to publication.

The sculptures represent a "rediscovery" rather than a hitherto unknown collection and consist of figural scenes, zoomorphic interlace and other interlace.

The sculpture is thought to derive from a twelfth century church in Alveley, substantially rebuilt during the thirteenth century and later. The style of the work is unmistakably that of the Herefordshire School and as such represents the most northerly location so far identified for the work of this School. The pieces are indicative of a lavish decorative scheme at Alveley, in a style that was vigorous, striking and readily associated with the needs of seigneurial patronage. Parallels to this group have been observed at Stretton Sugwas, Leominster, Brinsop, Chaddeley Corbett and Stottesdon in both a general and a detailed sense; the group may be dated to c.1160 and the possibility that it includes the work of a previously unrecognised hand in the School is being assessed.

The scheme at Alveley is a particularly accomplished one suggesting that the church would have stood comparison with such as Kilpeck and Shobdon and apparently can be associated with the patronage of the Lestrange family, prominent in twelfth and thirteenth century Shropshire.

A full description of the sculptures, assessment of their importance and discussion of their patronage context is included in the forthcoming publication.

John Hunt

ASTON BOTTERELL, watching brief

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit was commissioned by Severn Trent Water PLC to monitor the excavation of a 70m long stretch of new water main to the east of Aston Botterell in south Shropshire. The new main was routed in the centre of Aston Lane which adjoins a medieval moated site (Shropshire SMR No. 1200). No archaeological features or deposits were observed during monitoring.

A.E. Jones, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

BOSCOBEL, White Ladies Priory (SJ 826076)

Following a request by Whiteladies Farm to investigate ploughing obstructions in the field adjacent to the Guardianship area, a programme of field walking, ground survey and trial excavation was carried out from October 1989 to October 1991.

Ground probing and re-evaluation of earlier archaeological evidence placed the Priory Gate House to be nearer to the present Priory Chapel ruins. A trial trench not only proved this to be correct but, when extended, revealed 16/17th century building foundations close to the surface which, on further investigation, revealed them to be built on, and about a medieval building.

A section cut across inside the medieval building revealed extensive burning with 13/14th century pottery within the burnt layers. Investigation into a further area of surface rubble revealed the continuation of the medieval foundations to the south with the 16/17th century layers containing a quantity of bronze pieces and burnt slag suggesting on-site smelting of medieval bronzes following the Dissolution of the Priory.

A later intrusion within the medieval building by a metal detector user, revealed a heavily burnt

area and a large amount of bronze slag. On cleaning the slag was revealed to be on top of the medieval burnt layers and a further small bronze vessel lid was found within the burnt material from the metal detecting activities.

A medieval bronze spout from the 16/17th century layer was sent to Coventry Polytechnic for analysis to compare with material from the bronze oven/hearth at Shackerly Mound, excavated by the Group in 1978.

Research and a survey of the present Priory Chapel ruins enabled a suggested re-construction of the medieval Chapel to be drawn. This work indicated that the cloisters, originally thought to be on the northern side of the medieval chapel, were in fact on the south side with the medieval building to the west forming one side of the cloisters.

Although further examination of earlier aerial photographs and extensive field walking pointed to the possibility of the Priory Precincts being to the south of the present ruins, the oblique angle of the aerial photographs from the north makes it impossible to determine the nature and extent of the possible priory precincts. A further aerial photographic survey of the area is planned.

Following discussions with the English Heritage concerning the possibility of increasing the present scheduled area at White Ladies Priory, a geophysical survey of the surrounding area is to be carried out by the Ancient Monuments Laboratory in 1992 and discussions are proceeding with the possibility of including the area to the west of the ruins with the present Guardianship site.

Alan Wharton - Tong Archaeological Group

BRIDGNORTH, St. Mary's Rectory (SO 725933)

Prior to the construction of a new parish centre with car park in the grounds of St. Mary's Rectory, High Town, Bridgnorth, an archaeological evaluation was commissioned by Hook Mason Architects and Surveyors (11 Castle Street, Hereford) on behalf of the Bridgnorth Team Ministry (5/6 Waterloo Terrace, Bridgnorth).

The evaluation site, currently used as a garden, is located at the southern end of East Castle Street, 50m north of the Castle ruins and adjacent to the parish church of St. Mary's. A substantial ditch feature was uncovered running east-west across the site. The ditch was deepest under the southern section of the trial trench, but is estimated as 4m wide and 3m deep. The ditch fills represented a single operation as there was no indication of natural silting or infilling with rubbish accumulations.

The ditch represent a defensive feature - separating the inner and outer baileys of the twelfth century castle, founded by Robert de Belleme in 1101 - or related to the earlier tenth century Anglo Saxon *burh* constructed by Aethelflaed of Mercia.

The ditch had been re-cut back to natural deposits, probably during the mid-seventeenth century when Royalists held the Castle Keep. After the Civil War it is likely that the ditch was filled and levelled.

Few finds were recovered. The lower ditch fill produced only one sherd of residual medieval green-glazed pottery whilst the later deposits produced post-medieval pottery (black/brown glazed ware, stoneware and slipware), clay pipe, three copper alloy pins, two iron nails and two glass fragments.

The site archive will be deposited with the Shropshire Museums Service after the Bridgnorth Team Ministry have selected finds for a display on the site.

Gifford and Partners

BROMFIELD, Bromfield quarry (SO 485775)

The excavation by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit of two ring-ditches and part of a Roman marching camp was the latest episode of a long-term process of archaeological monitoring and excavation in advance of gravel extraction begun in 1965 (Stanford 1968, 1982 and 1985 and Leach 1989).

The larger of the two excavated ring-ditches (B9) was thought to be of Bronze Age date, consistent with previously excavated examples

at the site. An unusual feature within the ring-ditch was a large, 'boat-shaped' pit approximately 14m long and 4m wide. The fine silt fill suggested that it remained an open feature for a considerable period of time making the former presence of a central barrow mound unlikely. A small cremation pit, a more characteristic feature of this form of monument, was located to the north-east of the central feature.

The smaller ring-ditch (B10) was 10m in diameter and surrounded a sub-rectangular grave pit containing a dark brown stain suggesting the former presence of an extended inhumation burial. Three metal artefacts were recovered from the central area of the burial; a small copper alloy object, an iron bracelet and an iron brooch identified by Don Mackreth as La Tene I. This appears to be the first Iron Age burial of its kind to be identified in the West Midlands.

The ditch of the Roman marching camp clearly cut the larger of the two ring-ditches. A stretch 47m long was examined and found to have an inverted bell-shaped profile up to 0.55m deep. There was evidence to suggest that part of the original turf revetted bank had been deliberately pushed back into the ditch following the abandonment of the camp. Four figure-of-eight ovens close to the inner edge of the ditch were identified and excavated. It seems likely that these were originally cut into the rear of the rampart. All contained substantial quantities of charcoal and would appear to have been associated with baking.

Hughes, E G, 1992 *Excavations at Bromfield, Shropshire 1991: an interim report* BUFAU Report No.193

Leach, P J, 1989 *Bromfield: the excavation of Ring-Ditch B8, 1989: an interim report* BUFAU Report No.93

Stanford, S.C, 1968 The Roman marching camp at Bromfield, *TSAS* 58, 195-6

Stanford, S, 1982 Bromfield, Shropshire - Neolithic, Beaker and Bronze Age Sites, 1966-1979, *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 48, 279-320

Stanford, S.C, 1985 Bromfield - From Neolithic to Saxon times, *TSAS* 64, 1-7

Gwilym Hughes, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

CHETWYND ASTON, near Newport, Pavé Lane Triple Ditched Enclosure (SJ 756164).

This project was a small scale archaeological evaluation following a request for Scheduled Monument Consent for a change of use of part of the site. The work was supervised by Ms Fran Blore for the Central Archaeology Service (formerly Central Excavation Unit) of English Heritage.

The site was discovered by aerial reconnaissance during the drought of 1976. In form it is one of a class of monument well known from aerial survey in the Welsh Marches and upper Severn basin. These are small enclosures of sub-circular to rectangular form, defined by single, double or triple ditches and assumed to be small farming settlements of Iron Age to Roman date. The particular interest of the (previously unexcavated) Pavé Lane site was that because of its low lying situation and proximity to peaty wetlands there was a possibility of waterlogging and of good artefactual and botanical preservation.

The work was carried out in two stages: survey then excavation. The results of a preliminary contour survey and geophysical survey in March 1990 were combined with a plot of an aerial photograph of the site. This facilitated the excavation research design. No surface collection was made because observations during survey showed a complete lack of artefacts in the ploughsoil.

The excavation took place from September to October, 1990. Eight trenches were opened of which one was to sample the three enclosure ditches, one was to sample the entrance and the rest to sample the interior of the enclosure (Fig 26). The position of the inner ditch terminal by the entrance was confirmed. Some cobbling survived on the sides of the ditch adjacent to the causeway but otherwise it was clear that here and over the whole site there was no preserva-

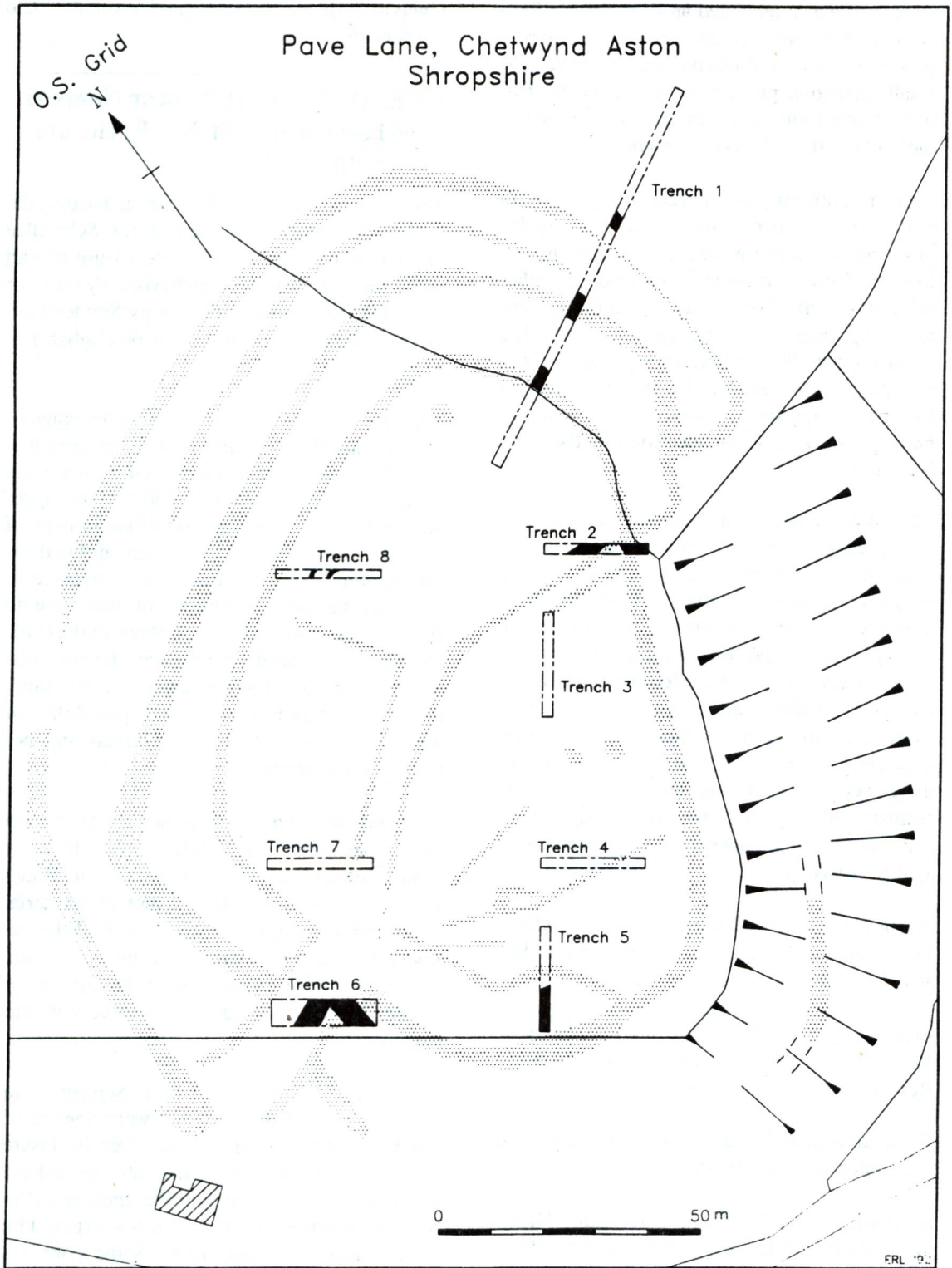


Figure 26: Pave Lane, Chetwynd Aston

tion of old land surfaces or buried soils in the immediate sub-plough horizon. The lack of preservation can now be seen to extend also to the adjacent field to the east formerly thought to preserve earthworks. A massive 'bank' was shown to be most probably a natural glacial feature incorporated into the design of the enclosure. However, there may still be preserved some structural remains of the settlement as one of the trenches on the west side of the interior revealed two parallel, curving gulleys which might be the drainage gulleys of a round-house. Waterlogging in the lower half of the main enclosure ditches preserved a wide range of botanical material but so far only a preliminary assessment has been made of this as it lacked any artefactual or other dating evidence. In fact the site produced not a single artefact relating to its occupation, presumed to be within the first millennium BC. This problem may be resolved by a forthcoming radiocarbon date on wood from the basal fill of one of the enclosure ditches.

George Smith, Central Archaeology Service, English Heritage

CHURCH ASTON, near Newport (SJ 4741752)

An archaeological evaluation of a linear bank earthwork (Shropshire SMR No. 803) was commissioned by the Highways and Transport Department of Shropshire County Council, in advance of a road construction scheme. The bank has been interpreted as a manmade earthwork defining an estate boundary described in a 10th-century Anglo-Saxon charter. Two machine-dug trenches, excavated perpendicular to its line, revealed the bank to be an esker, composed of sands and gravels, deposited during the retreat of the ice-front during the last glaciation. A shallow layer of silt-clay, confined to the top of the scarp, may represent a relict overall subsoil level beneath the topsoil. Alternatively this layer may be the heavily truncated and root-disturbed base of a manmade bank positioned over the natural scarp. No datable artefacts were recovered from this layer.

Jones, A.E. 1991. *Newport Bypass, Shropshire: An Archaeological Evaluation*. BUFAU Report No. 151.

A.E. Jones, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

CRAVEN ARMS, Evaluation at cropmark sites SA 2045, SA 2046

Evaluation of two large parcels of land proposed for development on the fringes of Craven Arms, consisted of geophysical survey and trial trenching. The line of Watling Street formed the northern boundary of the development zone while two cropmark sites, one a rectangular enclosure with internal features (SA 2045; interpreted as a possible Romano-British temple) and the other a double-ditched rectangular enclosure (SA 2046; interpreted as a possible villa or farm compound) lay within.

The evaluation demonstrated that the two cropmark sites were indeed Romano-British in date and that there was a low potential for the existence of other contemporary sites within the development zone. Site SA 2045 yielded no evidence, either from its plan and layout or from recovered artefacts, to support the previous identification of the site as a Roman-Celtic temple. Indeed the internal features excavated here, that is a large pit and ?posthole associated with metalworking and a number of postholes possibly belonging to an associated structure divided off from the rest of the enclosure by an internal linear trench, point to an altogether different interpretation, as a single-ditched, square enclosure of a common regional type. Site SA 2046 still remains somewhat of an enigma; the geophysical survey located the south-west, double-ditched corner of the enclosure and possible part of the northern boundary though here showing as only a single ditch.

The rest of the plan of the enclosure was not recovered due to the presence of two massive linear disturbances running through the centre of SA 2046. Trial trenching showed that many archaeological features here were badly truncated or disturbed, but that internal features could nevertheless be demonstrated to be present; a number of the ditches excavated had escaped damage. However, the limited scale of the trenching means that no coherent plan of the Roman activity can yet be produced. Such rectilinear, double-ditched enclosures are relatively rare in the Marches, there being only 43 examples at present on record and as few of

these have been examined by excavation, even on a limited scale, it is not possible at present to further contextualise the results from the trial trenching of SA 2046.

Ferris, I. with Trafford, N. 1991 *An Archaeological Evaluation at Craven Arms, Shropshire 1991* BUFAU Report No.157

I. Ferris and N. Trafford, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

LUDLOW, Barnaby House, Mill Street (SO512744)

Barnaby House was, until recently, the gymnasium of Ludlow College (formerly the Grammar School) and had been since the early 20th century when several small cottages were converted to this purpose. Early in 1991 plans were being made to convert the building into a mathematics and computer centre and Shropshire County Council's Education Department commissioned the Hereford Archaeology Unit to undertake an outline survey.



Figure 27: Wall painting from Barnaby House, Ludlow

The rubble-stone built structure had a long and confusing structural history, possibly dating back to the early 14th century. It seems to have always been of two storeys until its conversion into a gymnasium, and had at least one external

stack. Two original windows, one two-centred and one with a shouldered lintel, survived, as did a door surround with a shouldered lintel head that appeared to have been turned around. The local tradition that this was a pilgrims' hostel could not simply be dismissed. It is certain that this long narrow building, just inside the town wall near to Mill Street gate, was even longer, and possible that there could have been more external stacks and windows. A domestic or military use seems unlikely, all the known religious houses are accounted for, and the lost chapel of St. Mary in the Vale is thought to have been nearby.

At a later date its original roof was removed and replaced by one made up of good-quality re-used timbers, possibly from just two roofs and probably by the early 16th century. It is just possible that this reconstruction was connected with the sack of Ludlow by the victorious Lancastrian army after the farcical "battle" of Ludford in 1459, especially as it was then owned by Thomas Barnaby, an important Yorkist official later killed at Towton. The original function of the building may have changed by the early 15th century. By the early 16th century it was almost certainly a dwelling of some status and had been considerably altered. Amongst the more remarkable survivals of this period are the rapidly deteriorating remains of unique domestic early 16th century wall paintings (Fig 27). Subsequently the building was altered several times and shortened. In the 17th century it was eventually converted into small cottages and was finally converted into a gymnasium between 1908-13, at which time most of the internal partitions and floors were removed and the fenestration completely altered.

Richard K Morriss, City of Hereford Archaeology Unit

LUDLOW, Ludlow Castle (SO 508745)

The owners of Ludlow Castle, the Powis Castle Estate, are, with financial help from English Heritage, renovating and repairing the fabric of this famous border fortress. It was one of the few Norman castles to be built of stone from the beginning, was later an important royal residence after the accession of the Yorkist Edward IV in 1461, and, later still, the headquarters

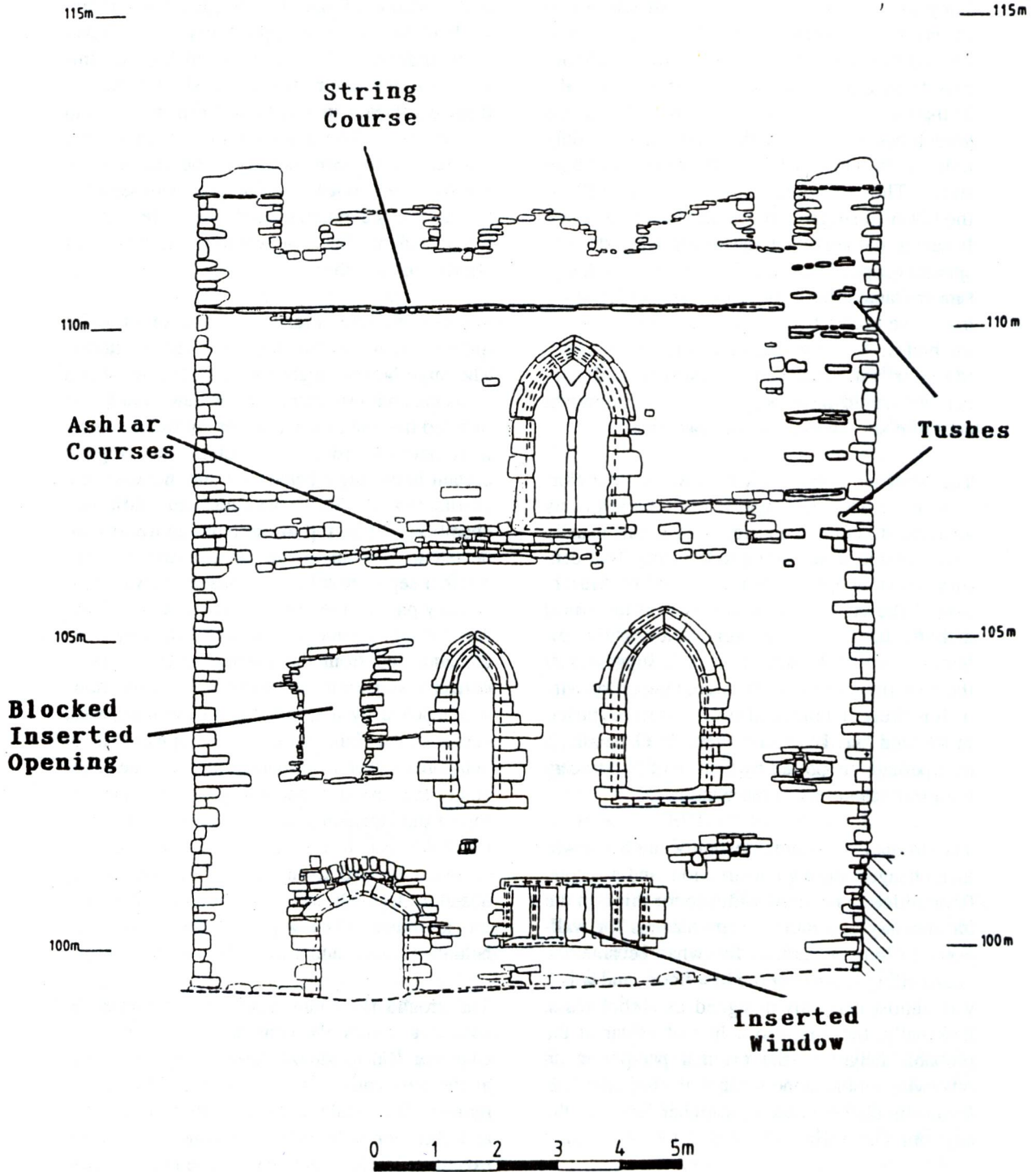


Figure 28: External elevation of the south wall of the Solar Block, Ludlow Castle

of the Council of the Welsh Marches. The most recent phase of this work involves the former Solar block to the west of the Great Hall and the Hereford Unit was commissioned to check and add details to outline photogrammetric plots provided by the IAAS, York, to survey other

parts of the complex, and to provide an architectural and structural analysis of the building.

The Solar Block was built against one of the original open-backed towers in the curtain wall of the late-11th century castle, founded by the de

Lacy family (Fig 28). The earlier masonry also included a complex system of stepped tunnel-vaulted mural passages and vices to provide access from ground to first floor level - and the wall-walks. The existence of two high status garderobes accessed by these passages possibly indicates the close proximity of a building of high status. There is evidence in the internal walls of the tower to suggest an original first floor level. It seems unlikely that the tower was, strictly-speaking, open-backed at all. It may have had a timber-framed back or, more probably, there may have been a building projecting from it into the bailey. It is suggested that such a structure, together with the mural passages and garderobes, could have been part of an important domestic suite within the original castle.

The medieval Solar block built against the Norman tower and, presumably, on the site of any adjacent structure connected with it, has usually been considered to belong to the early-14th century, when Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, owned the castle. However, the architectural and structural evidence suggests a slightly earlier date, and at the same time, also suggests that the first-floor Great Hall is contemporary with it. It is likely that the Hall and Solar were started in the mid-late 1280's by Piers de Geneville, a date perhaps supported by the use of "Y" tracery with sunk-chamfers in the windows.

The original two-storey design of the Solar was then changed, during construction, and a second floor added. The main evidence for this is in the unnecessary and rather deep channels for wall-posts to support braces for what became the main ceiling beam over the first floor - and which was almost certainly designed as a roof truss. Externally, there is also a line of ashlar at the probable height of the original parapet in an otherwise rubble-stone south wall (Fig 28). This feature is also echoed, at a higher level, in the adjacent Great Hall.

A proposed porch over the steps leading up to the Great Hall, in the angle between Hall and Solar, was part of the new design. The tushes for its side walls were built into the masonry of both Solar and Great Hall. In the former, they rise from the line of ashlar already mentioned and are quite distinct. In the wall of the Great Hall they have been cut-back, but also start high up in the masonry. Although the string course on

both sections of masonry respected the return walls of the porch, it appears that it was never built. Indeed, it seems as if the redesigned complex was left unfinished for a short time and then completed in something of a hurry - and not very well. The quality of the masonry deteriorates and the embrasures for the second floor windows were finished off in quite poor segmental arches, the internal jambs were left unfinished, and, in the west window, the tracery is poorly put together.

When complete, there was a suite of good quality rooms on the first and second floors. The large heated single rooms in the new-build connected with smaller rooms in new floor levels inserted into the Norman tower, and with closets in a new extension built outside the original curtain in the angle between it and the west wall of the tower. There was also an additional chamber built on top of the Norman tower connected to a room in the closet tower to form another separate suite. The basement was presumably part of the services of the Great Hall. The first floor suite was accessed directly from the Hall and from the landing of the external entrance steps into the Hall. The second floor was reached by a spiral stair in the north-west corner of the Hall, that continued upwards in an octagonal tower to provide access to the leads and to the passage leading to the room added on top of the Norman tower. The second floor of the Solar also had an eastern doorway clearly designed to lead to an upper floor within the abandoned porch and subsequently converted into a window. The low-pitched roof was hidden behind a coped and embattled parapet.

The ground floor may have been converted to service use after the construction of the Great Chamber Block, almost certainly by Mortimer, at the east end of the Great Hall. Mortimer returned from exile in 1327, deposed Edward II and then virtually ruled the country until his execution in 1330, and a build date in this period for the Great Chamber Block would certainly tie in with the use of ogee arches in its windows - a feature also seen at his main base, Wigmore Castle. Later alterations include the insertion of new windows and door openings, at least one of which has subsequently been blocked.

Richard K Morriss, City of Hereford Archaeology Unit

OSWESTRY, St. Martin's Church (SJ 323363)

Gifford and Partners were commissioned by Wood, Goldstraw and Yorath Architects (Churchill House, Regent Road, Hanley, Stoke on Trent) to carry out an evaluation on behalf of St. Martin's Parish Church where it is proposed to erect a new meeting-room immediately north of the church. This was carried out in accordance with the brief prepared by Shropshire County Council's Senior Archaeologist which called for the excavation of two trenches, one 5 x 1m and the other 2 x 2m. Although the church is known to have a history going back to at least the beginning of the eleventh century no features of an archaeological nature were encountered other than the outlines of eighteenth and nineteenth century graves, most of the tombstones and sepulchral monuments associated with which were removed during clearance work at the end of the last century. The graves will not be disturbed by the construction of the meeting-room as this is to be set on a raft foundation.

The work was directed by Dr. D. Mason and the archive will be lodged with Shropshire Museums Service.

Gifford and Partners

OVERLEY, The Overley Hoard (SJ 6010)

A report on the supposed dispersed hoard of coins reported to Rowleys House by Telford Coroner, November 12th 1990. The group were described as having been found by a metal detector user (Mr. Nicholls) from Stafford "at a position on the line of the Watling Street, south of Lea Cottages, near to Overley Hill, and three fields to the left". The topsoil had already been scraped away (depth quoted was 14") and the user had to dig a further 8" to retrieve the coins, which were spread over an area approx 2 feet wide and 14 feet long.

Contents of Hoard: 1 aureus (gold) and 13 denarii (silver). The hoard has recently (Feb 1992) been purchased with the aid of a grant from the Victoria and Albert Museum by Shropshire County Museums Service (contact Janet Bell for details).

THE COINS:

1. Gold Aureus. Nero 64 - 66AD. obv: laureate bust facing r. legend: NERO CAESAR AUGUSTUS. rev. Jupiter seated l. legend: IUPITER CUSTOS.R.I.C. 46. Condition: G/VF. Value: c.£2000-250,.
2. Silver Denarius. Augustus BC14-12. obv: Augustus facing r. Countermark on neck + in circle. legend DIVIF. rev: bull butting r. legend: IMP in ex. R.I.C. 327. Condition: F. Value: c.£100-150.
3. Silver Denarius. Republican BC54 obv: Head of Libertas r. legend. LIBERTAS. rev. Consul L. Junius Brutus walking l. between 2 lictors, preceded by an accensus. legend: in ec. BRUTUS. (Carson 192) GR 433. Condition: Fair. Value: £20
4. Silver Denarius. Tiberius 15-37AD. (The Tribute penny of the Bible). obv. wreathed bust r. legend. TI CAESAR DI AUG F AUGUSTUS. rev. Pax or Livia r. legend; PONTIF MAXIM. R.I.C. 3. Condition: G/VF. Value: c.£50-75.
5. Silver Denarius. Claudius 41AD. obv: laureate bust r. legend: TI CLAUD CAESAR AUG PM TR P. rev: Praetorian camp. legend: IMPER RECEPT. on fort wall. R.I.C. 22. Condition: F/VF. Value: c £500.
6. Silver Denarius. Galba 69AD. obv. laureate bust r. legend: IMP SER GALBA AUG PM. rev. standing figure l. legend: DIVA AUGUSTA. R.I.C. 80. Condition: GF. Value: c.£150-200.
7. Silver Denarius. Vitellius early 69AD. obv. laureate bust r. legend: A VITELLIUS GERMAN IMP TRP. rev. Tripod with dolphin. legend: XV VIR SACRA FAC. R.I.C. 24. Condition: obv.VF rev. GF. Value: £100-200.
8. Silver Denarius. Vespasian 70-72AD. obv. Laureate bust r. legend: IMP CAES VESP AUG PM. rev: seated figure l. legend: TRI POT [II COS] III PP. R.I.C. 39 (cf). Condition: Fair (Encrustation). Value: c.£5.
9. Silver Denarius. Vespasian 69-71AD. obv. laureate bust r. legend. IMP CAESAR (VES-

PASIANUS AUG)...rev.seated figure 1. legend: [PON] MAX TRP COS [II]. R.I.C. 20, Condition: Fair. Value: £5.

10. Silver Denarius. Vespasian 73AD. obv. laureate bust r. legend: IMP CAES VESP AUG CENS. rev. Pax r. legend: PONTIF MAXIM. R.I.C. 64. Condition: G/F. Value: £25 (Encrustation).

11. Silver Denarius. Vespasian 75-79 AD. obv. laureate bust r. legend: IMP CAESAR VESPA-SIANUS AUG. rev. Jove st. 1. holding patten and standard. legend: IOVIS [CUS]TOS. R.I.C. 124. Condition: obv. VF rev. F. Value: c.£20.

12. Silver Denarius. Vespasian 70AD. obv. laureate bust r. legend: IMP CAESAR VESPA-SIANUS AUG. rev. Aequitas 1. legend: COS ITER TR POT. R.I.C. 5. Condition: VF. Value: £25.

13. Silver Denarius. Vespasian 68-71AD. obv. laureate bust r. legend: IMP CAESAR VESPA-SIANUS AUG. rev. Mars 1 adv. with trophy and spear. legend: o .R.I.C. 7. Condition: GF. Value: £20.

14. Silver Denarius. Domitian. 79AD. obv. laureate bust l. legend: CAESAR AUG DOMI-TIANUS COS VI. rev. Salus leaning on alter. legend: PRINCEPS IUVENTUTIS. R.I.C. 243. Condition: GF/VF. Value: £30.

These identifications have been checked by Dr. Stanley Ireland of Dept., Classics, University of Warwick and by Dr. Roger White, English Heritage.

Abbreviations used:

c = approximately

r = facing right.

l = facing left

obv = obverse (the head side)

rev = reverse

G = Good

F = Fine

VF = Very Fine

EF = Extremely fine

R.I.C.= Roman Imperial Coinage by Mattingly and Sydenham. Pub. Spink and Sons 1923 & 1926

Carson = Principal Coins of the Romans. Pub. British Museum 1978.

Hoard of first century coins are comparatively rare in this country nor are hoards widely found in Shropshire. Andrew Burnett of the British Museum has commented on the loose similarity of the group to a larger hoard from Howe in Norfolk and it should be stressed that due to the activities of the earthmovers on site, it was not possible to ascertain whether Mr. Nicholls was able to recover all or only a fraction of the Overley Hoard.

Mike Stokes, Shrewsbury Museum Service

REDHILL, Telford (SJ 725111)

Evaluation by geophysical survey and trial trenching, and a subsequent development watching brief during the laying of a water pipe, produced no evidence whatsoever for the expected Romano-British activity in this zone within the identified boundaries of the Roman settlement of Uxacona.

Buteux, S. & Ferris I. 1991 *An Archaeological Evaluation at Redhill, Telford, Shropshire 1991* BUFAU Report No. 188

S. Buteux and I. Ferris, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

RUYTON-XI-TOWNS, A Medieval Reliquary To St. Thecla (SJ 400224)

This sandstone object was recovered whilst digging a vegetable plot in a garden less than 50 metres from the church and castle at the village centre and within the area of medieval burghage plots by Mr. A. Pugh. It was subsequently donated to Shrewsbury Borough Museums where it is held under accession code A/89/001.

Maximum dimensions are 18cms in length, 11cms in depth and 14cms in height. The object is hollowed to within 2cms of each surface and a damaged lid-seat is present on the upper edges, with a shelf depth of 1cm.

The four vertical faces are decorated as follows:- Sides are demarcated by a second line 1cm from all edges, filled with an approximately symmetrical lozenge, also inscribed. The rear (pres-

umed) is similar but with 2 rather than 1 lozenges. The frontal face is the more intriguing and elaborate although the technical quality of the carving is rustic to say the least. This face bears an image of a standing figure with arms held horizontally from the shoulders, terminating in exaggeratedly large hands with fingers in fan-shaped profile. The head has lost any features it may once have had but was correspondingly oversized. Beneath the out-stretched arms and hands are two seated or crouching "creatures" of faintly leonine type.

Identification of the motif was made by Dr. Stephen Hill of Warwick University, who recognised in this coarse item a version of the attempted martyrdom of St. Thecla, an apocryphal saint popular in the region of Meriamlik and Iconium (modern Konya) in Turkey. She was variously exposed to beasts in the theatre and stoned but miraculously survived - in this case by calling on God and persuading the beasts to sit at her feet. A much finer Coptic example is preserved in the Boston Museum in America.

Perhaps of more interest is speculation as to how the item or perhaps just the motif found its way to Shropshire? Thecla's "territory" was at the heart of the later Crusader kingdom and may have been brought back as a result. However, her cult was popular at a much earlier date and it is also possible that it came across during either the Anglo-Saxon or Norman periods through Church contacts. It may (or may not) be of interest to note that a church near Llandrindod is dedicated to St. Tecla and St. Tecla's Isle is near to Chepstow - the spelling is fractionally different. Further information on the cult in Britain would be much appreciated.

Mike Stokes, Shrewsbury Borough Museums Service

TANKERVILLE, Lead mine (SO 335995)

In 1991 the Hereford Archaeology Unit undertook a survey of the remains of the Tankerville Mine, once one of the most productive mines in the Shropshire lead field. The mine, on the northern slopes of the Stiperstones, has always been in the shadow of its more famous neighbour at Snailbeach. Little studied previously,

Tankerville proved to be remarkably intact. It only really had two main phases of operation, both crammed into a very short period of time - between the late 1850's and the early 1880's. Because of this, its remains represent an extremely good example of the surface features of a lead mine of the third quarter of the 19th century.

Although the original engine house and its chimney survived near the old, or Oven Pipe, shaft, the most significant remains were connected with a new shaft nearby. These included a Cornish engine house, remains of winding engine and boiler houses, a fine octagonal chimney, ore hoppers, crushing floor, workshops, the mine office, reservoirs and spoil tips. Tankerville is undoubtedly the best preserved of all the Shropshire lead mines and worthy of protection, interpretation and appreciation.

Richard K Morriss, City of Hereford Archaeology Unit

TITTERSTONE CLEE, Bitterley (SO 595779)

An archaeological evaluation within the interior of Titterstone Clee hillfort (Shropshire A.M. No. 25, O'Neil 1934) was commissioned by the Meteorological Office in advance of the construction of a new weather radar installation. A total of six trenches were hand excavated on the crest of the hilltop with the aim of locating a suitable area for the development without damaging significant archaeological deposits.

Definition of stony archaeological features against the natural subsoil which contained naturally fissured basalt blocks proved to be difficult. A collapsed drystone wall was located in Trenches II and III, built over the contemporary ground surface a layer of turf. This wall may have formed part of a stock enclosure which followed the natural contours of the hilltop, or a hut. In Trench V the northernmost extent of a regular surface of laid basalt blocks was possibly defined by a kerb formed of angular stones, standing above the level of the laid surface. A second possible laid surface was exposed in the south of the trench. Both surfaces appeared to continue beyond the limits of the evaluation trench. Although the structures tentatively identified cannot be artefactually dated, it is

possible to find parallels for them at other excavated hillforts in the Welsh Marches. It was recommended that the development be sited in an area devoid of archaeological deposits, and recommendations were made to safeguard the buried archaeology in the surrounding areas during construction groundworks.

O'Neill, B.H. St. J. 1934 'Excavations at Titterstone Clee Hill Camp, Shropshire 1932' *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 89, 83-111.

Jones, A.E. *Titterstone Clee Hillfort, Bitterley, Shropshire: An Archaeological Evaluation 1991*. BUFAU Report No. 165.

A.E. Jones, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

WHITCHURCH, Heritage Survey (SJ 545415)

A project has commenced to provide the first systematic and professional archaeological evaluation of the town of Whitchurch on the initiative of the Gifford Archaeology Service. Support, sometimes financial, comes from Shropshire County Council (Property and Planning Services, as well as Leisure Services), North Shropshire District Council, Whitchurch Town Council, English Heritage and the Whitchurch Area Archaeological Group.

Limited excavation in Whitchurch indicated the existence of a mid-first century Roman fort which was apparently succeeded by a civilian settlement - *MEDIOLANUM*. Documentary evidence suggests that Whitchurch was a place of some importance in the Saxon period (*WESTTUNE*), whilst the present street layout and property divisions of the town core appear to be essentially those of the medieval town. Despite little excavation much information has been collected over the years by individuals and groups - especially the members of the Whitchurch Area Archaeological Group as a result of observing building operations. This information is extremely valuable and its incorporation into a single work of reference is long overdue.

The aim of the Whitchurch Heritage Survey therefore is to provide a reference work that is the result of analysis of all archaeological and historical information on Whitchurch. By hav-

ing the extent and nature of Whitchurch's archaeological heritage better defined the necessary measures for its protection and/or investigation in the planning control process can be ensured.

Initial work undertaken in late 1991 entailed the collation of all existing information on the archaeology and history of Whitchurch together with their preparation for the production of an archaeological implications survey map.

Archive currently with Gifford and Partners, to be deposited on completion of the project with the Shropshire Museums Service.

Gifford and Partners

WROXETER, A Roman Silver Bust (SJ No withheld)

Found by Mr. Michael Peele just outside the scheduled area of the Roman city whilst using a metal detector, this small, silver bust of Venus (?) is of exceptional importance to students of metalwork in the Roman province.

The bust depicts a winged figure of somewhat indeterminate sex, though slight emphasis on the breasts implies a female figure rather than the more common cupid. It is broken in the waist region. A small pointed lobe curves away at the back of the head suggesting that it was a seat for a further element of the complete item. The head has curly hair and is diademed and wings replace arms directly from the shoulders.

The bust is clearly part of a larger, silver vessel and has broad parallels on jug handles and tripod legs but in this case, Catherine Johns of the British Museum has pointed out a direct, inescapable parallel in the famous *Boscoteale* treasure. This is a circular dish or stand raised on three small feet. This item is a dish (not a flat disc) with a floral wreath on its horizontal rim. The supports are in the form of lions' feet each surmounted by a winged, armless bust with a childlike, male head, evidently intended as sphinxes. Although the *Wroxeter* piece is clearly female, the treatment of the wings, hair and diadem are so close as to be identical.

This parallel is important as it demonstrates a date within the earlier years of the first century

AD. No other example of such a silver stand is known from Roman Britain. Indeed first century silver is scarce in any form in the province (excepting in coinage) unlike late antique items which are fairly abundant.

However, it may well be that we should not postulate the complete stand as having been present at Wroxeter since the bust would have made a suitable amulet or could have been part of a scrap hoard destined for reuse. A radar, resistivity and magnetometer survey by English Heritage did in fact reveal that the slope from which the object came also had a scatter of other non-ferrous or cuprous metal across it. This area has since been taken into Guardianship.

Whatever the circumstances, this is one of the most important discoveries of Roman silver in recent years and it can now be seen in Rowley's House Museum, Baker Street, Shrewsbury thanks to the assistance of the Victoria and Albert Museum's Grant fund.

Dimensions: Height 2cms. Width 2.7cms: Weight 7.84gms.

Metal Composition (semi-quantitative XRF analysis): Silver 92% copper 4%; gold 1%; lead 3%.

Mikes Stokes, Shrewsbury Borough Museums Service

WROXETER, north-eastern defences (SJ 568093)

Excavations were undertaken in summer 1991 by Dr. A.S. Esmonde Cleary for the Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, University of Birmingham with Birmingham University Archaeological Field Unit. Scheduled Monument Consent was granted by English Heritage and access by the landowners, the National Trust, with the co-operation of the farmer Mr. Walker. The aim of the excavation was two-fold: (i) the examination of the north-eastern corner of the defences where aerial photography by Arnold Baker suggested a gap in the presumed course of the city wall, a street approaching from the interior of the city and a narrowing of the ditch; (ii) evaluation of the nature and condition of the archaeological deposits in a poorly-known area

of the city, where considerable agricultural activity has taken place.

The bank of the earthen rampart was located. At its front there was no trace of a construction - or robber - trench for the presumed city wall. At its rear there was a considerable build-up of occupation deposits over the back of the bank. These now survive up to the present crest of the rampart suggesting that either: (a) the rampart was never significantly higher than it is now and thus was more of a demarcating than a defensive feature, or (b) that if the rampart had originally been significantly higher than now, it had at some stage been deliberately slighted - perhaps by being pushed into the ditch. The stripping of the topsoil showed that agricultural damage to the archaeological deposits has been less severe than expected, even post-WW II ploughing having added little to the disturbance. Features up to 1.50m deep were excavated; examination of their sides showed structural and other deposits surviving to this depth and greater.

Simon Esmonde Cleary, Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, University of Birmingham.

WROXETER, Wroxeter Hotel (SJ 563082)

Trial excavations were carried out in advance of the construction of an extension to Wroxeter Hotel. The hotel is situated in the village of Wroxeter, close to the Anglo-Saxon Church of St. Andrew, which lies at a crossroads in the southern part of the Roman City of Viriconium. Despite the promising location, evidence suggested that the area was not intensively occupied in the Roman period. Pits, gullies and cultivation soils, accompanied by a modest assemblage of pottery spanning the 1st-4th centuries, were suggestive of "backyard" and "garden" areas. A group of medieval pottery, predominantly dating from the 12th century onwards, was recovered from later cultivation soils.

Buteux S. and Leach P. 1992 *Wroxeter Hotel, Wroxeter: An Archaeological Evaluation 1991* BUFAU. Report No.192

Simon Buteux, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

STAFFORDSHIRE

BARTON-UNDER-NEEDWOOD, Newbold gravel pit (SK 198200)

The evaluation of approximately 53 hectares of farmland was begun by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit on behalf of Douglas Concrete and Aggregates Limited, prior to the submission of an application for gravel extraction. Cropmarks on aerial photographs suggested the presence of numerous sub-surface archaeological features including evidence for several pre-enclosure field systems. A geophysical survey was undertaken by Geophysical Surveys of Bradford and 16, 2m-wide trial trenches of various lengths were excavated. The trial trenches suggested that many of the identified cropmark features were of recent date and that others had been eradicated by modern ploughing. However, numerous features were recorded which clearly belong to the former ridge-and-furrow cultivation and others may relate to earlier, possibly prehistoric or Roman field boundaries. Only one contained a small quantity of Romano-British pottery.

Hughes, E.G, 1992 *An Archaeological Evaluation at Newbold gravel Pit, Barton Under Needwood, Staffordshire, 1991-92* BUFAU Report No.197

Gwilym Hughes, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

BURTON-ON-TRENT, Anson Court, Horninglow Street

Evaluation by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit ahead of redevelopment, and following the identification by Staffordshire County Council of important timber-framed buildings at 185-186a Horninglow Street, encountered a number of medieval/early-post-medieval negative features to the rear of these properties, and features of similar date towards the frontage of No.186.

Dingwall, L. 1991 *Anson Court, Burton-on-Trent: An archaeological evaluation* BUFAU Report No. 152

Simon Buteux, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

MILWICH, A Burnt Mound (SJ97563153)

A burnt mound was exposed by the collapse of a length of the bank of the Gayton Brook at Milwich. In view of the medium term threat from continuing stream erosion an evaluation was carried out on the site by the County Council. The work was funded by English Heritage and was carried out in January 1990. Samples were taken for C14 analysis from the base and from the top of the deposit of broken stone and charcoal. The sample from the base gave a radiocarbon age of 3290 +/- 100 BP (cal BP 3680 - 3399 at 1 sigma) and that from the top gave an age of 3080 +/- 60 (cal BP 3373 - 3218 at 1 sigma). In common with other English sites, the mound appears to have been in use in the later Bronze Age, and the difference between the two dates could suggest a long period of intermittent use. It is hoped to carry out further work on the environmental samples retrieved during the evaluation.

Chris Welch, Staffordshire County Council

STAFFORD, Casual find from the town (grid ref. not known)

A ceramic zoomorphic roof finial from Stafford has recently been recognised in the archaeological collections of Stoke-on-Trent City Museum and Art Gallery (Accession Number K1.1.1992). It forms part of a small group of material labelled 'Unstratified. Found on or before 21st May, 1985'. It is crudely modelled in a coarse, iron-rich sandy fabric and takes the form of the head and long neck of a dragon or a snake - the mouth is damaged, but what remains looks like

an open fish's mouth. There are two raised ring and dot eyes. The finial is coated in an even dark mottled green glaze. It is formed from two pieces of clay - a solid cylinder from the neck has been pierced longitudinally with a rod of circular cross-section, the head is a separate hollow clay piece applied over the end of the neck.

The finial would have had a decorative function, attached to a ridge tile of one of Stafford's townhouses. The date range given for such finials is late 13th - early 14th centuries. Length: 75mm. Diameter: c.22mm.

Moorhouse, S. 1988 Documentary Evidence from Medieval Ceramic Roofing Materials and its Archaeological Implications *Medieval Ceramics* 12 33-55 (summarises all relevant published work; excellent bibliography)

Deborah Ford, City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

STAFFORD, Excavation at Stafford Castle (SJ 903220)

The area to the south of Stafford Castle has been the subject of four seasons of archaeological excavation and survey. The site (Area E), which lay immediately outside the defended area, was excavated in advance of the construction of visitor facilities.

Evidence dating prior to the 12th century included a series of field drains and agricultural features, which preceded the first signs of domestic activity. During the 12th century a road was constructed leading to the postern gate of the castle's outer bailey and off it a series of pebble spreads extended into the area. Alongside the pebble spreads a variety of timber structures formed part of a small agricultural processing and industrial "suburb". Corn drying and iron smithing represented the main activities, possibly servicing the needs of the castle rather than its associated settlement. By the 14th century the area was in decline, the pebble surfaces were scoured for gravel, the buildings demolished and the industrial waste dumped into abandoned features. Eventually the area reverted to an arable land use and the ridges and furrows of a field system were superimposed over the earlier remains.

John Darlington, Stafford Borough Council Archaeology Section

STAFFORD, Geophysical survey at Stafford Castle (SJ 901223)

A geophysical survey was carried out at Stafford Castle during 1990 and 1991 in order to evaluate the archaeological potential of the inner bailey (Area B), the outer bailey (C), the two settlement site fields (D: I and II), the postulated industrial area (E) and a further field located to the north of the castle which had been identified as of interest through field walking (Fig 29). The survey was carried out by Steven Dyer of Surrey County Council with the help of the Archaeology Section.

The equipment used comprised a Geoscan RM4/DL10 configuration fitted to a mobile twin probe frame. The data was transferred in the field to an Epson HX20 computer using Geoplot 3, and subsequently input to an Opus 386SX PC and processed using Geoplot 1.2.

The inner bailey (Fig 30)

An entire survey of the inner bailey was conducted, with the exception of those areas covered by the redoubt (created from excavation spoil), the spoil heaps of the current excavation and a post-medieval quarry. In all these cases no worthwhile results would have been obtained if they had been surveyed.

The hollow-way running through to the inner bailey from the settlement field and the outer bailey could not be clearly identified. However at either side of the entrance to the inner bailey was a distinct area of high resistance, probably representing the revetting of the earthen rampart and the sites of structures associated with a gatehouse. The full extent of these features could not be ascertained due to their overlying the rampart, but each is in excess of 4 metres square. A twin-towered gateway would be typical of many Norman castle entrance developments of the 13th and 14th centuries.

Other structures are visible round the line of the rampart. Three areas of high resistance appear to mark the position of possible mural towers, one to the east of the gatehouse area, a second further around to the west and the third on the north-east side of the rampart. The evidence for

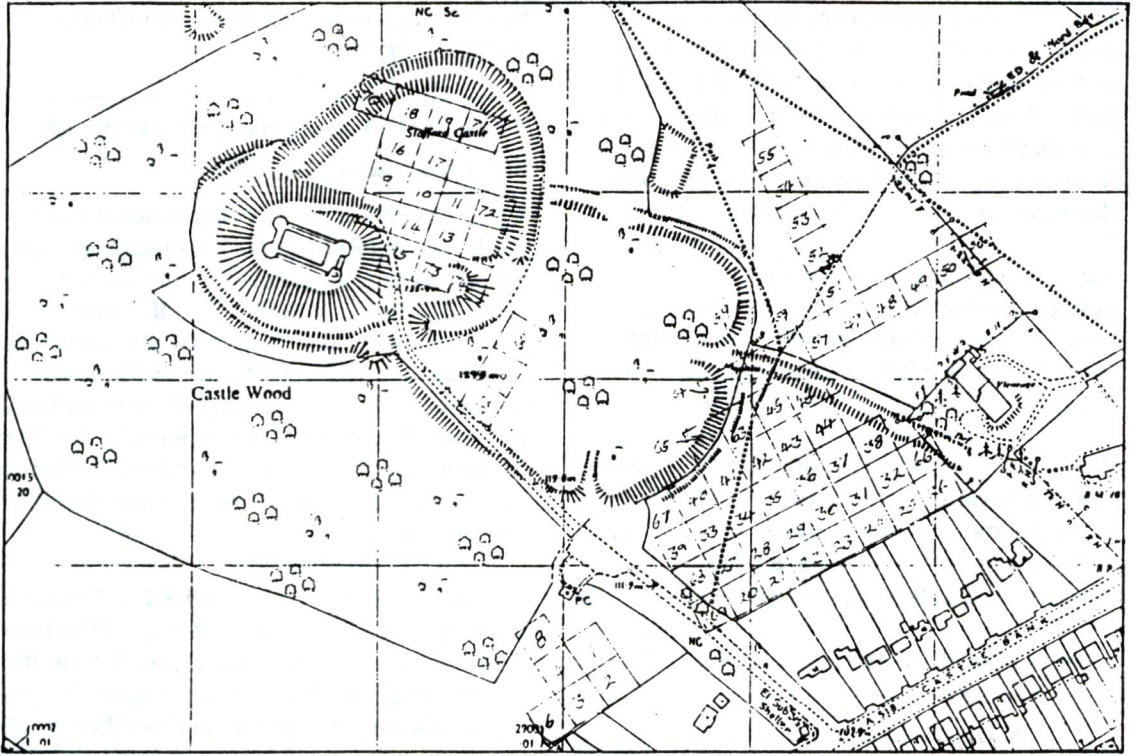


Figure 29: Stafford Castle - location of survey grids

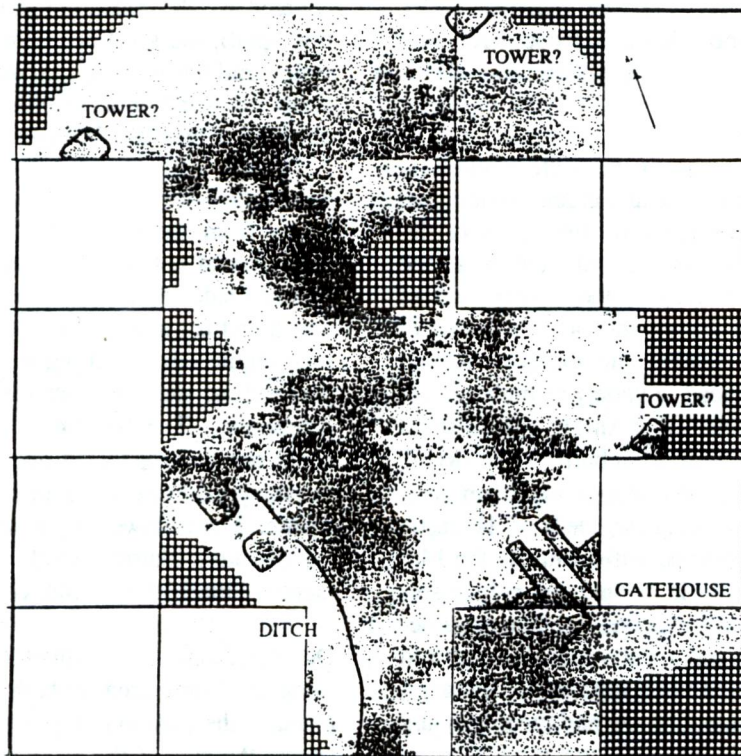


Figure 30: Interpretation of resistivity data for the inner bailey, Stafford Castle

the mural towers might equally be interpreted as showing the existence of stone foundations, or of heavily trampled floor levels. The apparently square plan suggests a date later than the 13th century, but further investigation is required to establish proper dating, bearing in mind that square mural towers do appear in a few earlier cases, such as Hadleigh Castle, Essex.

Internally, various areas of the inner bailey show broad outlines of apparent stone foundations, or areas of heavy tramping, marking large buildings.

Alongside the modern road to the keep a band of low resistance indicates the presence of a filled-in ditch surrounding the motte. There is no evidence for a continuous defence of the rampart, but if there was such a feature in the form of timber palisading, very little evidence would be picked up using the survey methods employed.

Settlement site; Field I (Fig 31)

The entire field containing the earthworks of the

deserted medieval settlement was surveyed as far as the hollow-way.

A strong trending of the results can be seen running in a north-west/south-east direction, parallel to the main hollow-way; to a lesser degree features can be seen running at right angles to this. These lines seem to represent the formal laying-out of settlement plots within the village, each plot being approximately 23 by 30 metres, bounded by an upcast bank. Within these plots little of interest can be seen, but given the construction techniques and building materials likely to have been employed, evidence for structures is unlikely to be acquired through the surveying system used. However, one settlement plot shows an area of high resistance in the centre and a second on its frontage with the lane; this may indicate the moving of the building from a central position, as is quite often seen in similar settlements. Some areas of pitting are, however, quite clearly marked.

Where sampled, the main hollow-way was marked by strong resistance to the east of the

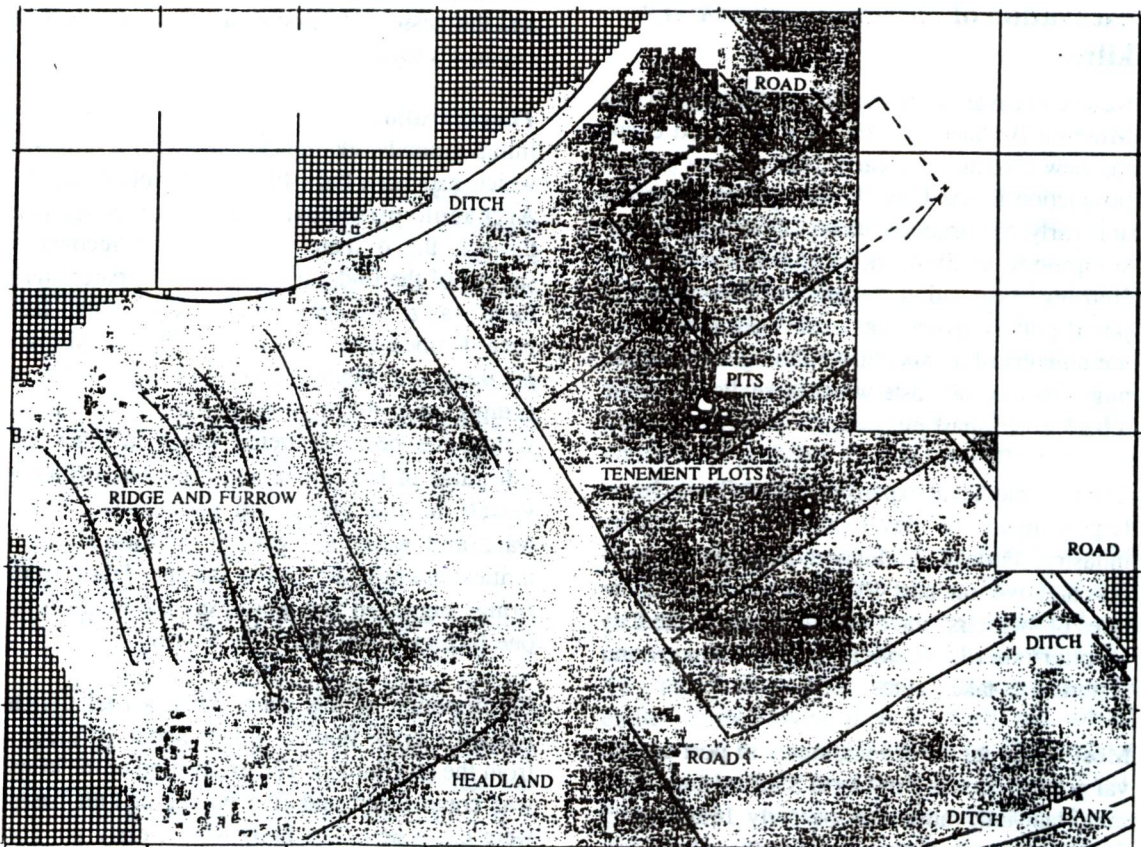


Figure 31: Interpretation of the resistivity data for village field 1, Stafford Castle

area shown in the print-out. In contrast, a line of low resistance parallel to the hollow-way marked the course of a back lane within the settlement - such inconsistency may be explained by the silting up of the latter hollow-way through early disuse, compared with the repeated remetalling and long period of use of the main hollow-way.

The western area of the settlement was marked by faint traces of cultivation in the form of ridge and furrow, running parallel to the settlement pattern. A ditch was clearly evident to the north of the field, dividing the outer bailey from the settlement, and probably also acting as a further line of defence.

Despite the overlying modern activity within the field it is clearly demonstrated that evidence for the village is present and that the settlement was laid out formally within a defined area.

John Darlington, Stafford Borough Council Archaeology Section

STOKE-ON-TRENT, Rescue excavation of post-medieval pottery kilns

Rescue excavation by the City of Stoke-on-Trent Museum Archaeology Unit has produced exciting new evidence for early 18th century pottery production in the City. Working during the pre and early construction phases of a housing development in Shelton by the Beth Johnson Housing Association, a series of five superimposed pottery ovens was excavated, along with the remains of an ancillary building. In addition, huge amounts of waste wares were discovered in a back-filled marl pit.

The post-medieval expansion of the City is based largely upon the development of the pottery industry. Pottery production is a wasteful process and over the past 400 years enormous quantities of "wasters" have been dumped in the City - pottery sherds routinely turn up when ground disturbance takes place.

Most of the major developments in post-medieval pottery occurred in North Staffordshire. Two important innovations of the early 18th century were the introduction of fine red earthenwares

and white salt glazed stonewares. These wares were the domestic market's response to the practice of tea, coffee and chocolate drinking which had become fashionable by the end of the 17th century. The domestic wares at this time such as slipwares, mottled wares and blackwares were no match in fineness for imported Chinese porcelain and so the race was on to provide tea, coffee and chocolate wares which could rival the quality of the oriental wares. Potters in this country did not master porcelain, first soft paste and only later hard paste, until the middle of the 18th century. However, the new white salt-glazed stonewares and red earthenwares were introduced about 1720, salt-glaze wares using white ball clay from Devon to mimic porcelain, and the new red earthenwares providing an entirely new type of pottery of a quality hitherto unavailable to anybody but the wealthy.

The wares were an immediate success and were produced in large quantities to satisfy the rapidly expanding market. To achieve the fine finish of the bodies the pots were turned down on a lathe after being wheel thrown. The beauty of the vessels is enhanced by their small size; the new imported drinks were expensive at this time and the vessels are to our minds reminiscent of children's toys.

The excavation

Initial groundworks quickly revealed a large pit which had been back-filled with pottery waste. Archaeologists moved in to cut a section through the 4 metre deep pit and recover a sample of the finds. It was at once apparent that there was a vast amount of pottery which had been dumped into what was clearly an old marl pit along with ash and debris from kiln firing. A sample of pottery approaching 2 tonnes in weight has been recovered which includes the full range of tea, coffee and chocolate drinking vessels in lead-glazed red earthenware, agate ware and white salt-glazed stoneware. Similarities amongst the wares and the debris from firings suggested that these were the products of one factory which had to be nearby.

Confirmation of this came when a trial trench located a brick floor of a kiln about 10 metres from the pit (Fig 32). The excavation of the kilns was commenced and five phases of kiln bases were excavated. The kilns were clearly not for glaze or salt glaze firings as these operations

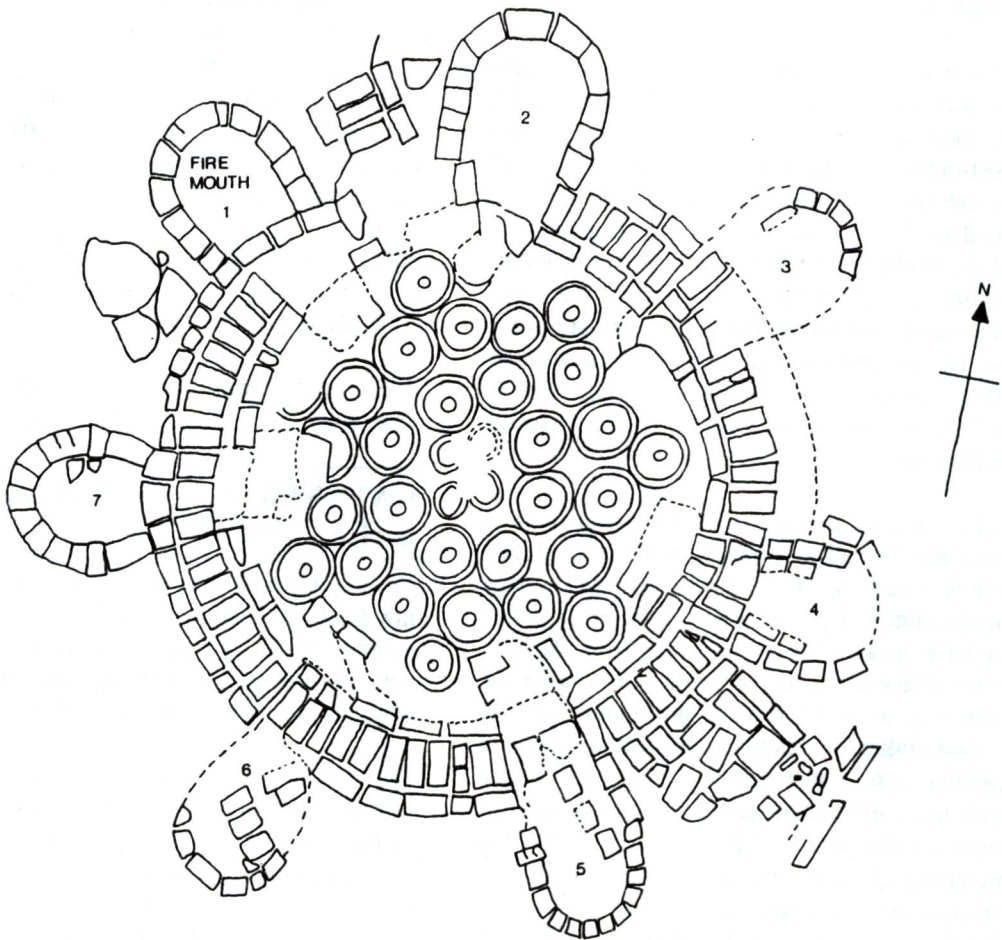


Figure 32: Shelton Farm kiln

leave tell-tale deposits. Rather, it was soon clear that this group of kilns had been used for biscuit firing fine red and other earthenwares as part of a double firing process introduced in the early 18th century.

All the kiln bases were made of un-mortared bricks laid in a circular pattern, with horseshoe shaped fire mouths arranged at regular intervals around the circumference. They increase in size from about 3.2 metres diameter for the phase 1 earliest kiln, to about 3.6 metres for the phase 3 kiln, to about 4 metres for the phase 5 latest kiln. The earliest kiln had seven firemouths, the latest at least eight. This is perhaps partly due to the success of the factory, with the wares quickly gaining a large market, and partly due to technological improvements which made possible the construction of larger kilns. No evidence was found of hovels surrounding the ovens; it is thought that they must have existed but were

completely removed when the kilns were rebuilt. The foundation structure of the phase 4, 3 and 1 ovens was largely complete. Phase 4 was six courses of bricks deep at the load bearing edges, but only 1 or 2 courses deep in the middle. Phase 3 was up to five courses of bricks deep and had been incorporated into phase 4. Phase 1 contained broken saggars fused to the oven floor which were probably used to even up the uneven underlying brick floor.

Good initial dating has been possible from the wares overlying each oven base. The latest kiln (phase 5), was overlain by engine turned red earthenwares typical of the period around 1780. The four earlier kilns are all associated with earlier earthenwares, predominantly red, wheel thrown and turned down on a lathe. The earliest oven is certainly of the period around 1730. Documentary sources indicate a number of candidates for the factory owner, the most promi-

ment of whom are John Astbury and Joshua Twyford.

This exciting discovery in Stoke-on-Trent adds another chapter to our understanding of the development of the pottery industry. Earlier post-medieval sites have been discovered, such as the Old Hall Street and the Albion kilns in Hanley. At these sites the immediate precursors of the Shelton Farm ovens were located producing single fired black wares, mottled wares, yellow wares, slipwares, and coarse earthenwares - but no red earthenwares. The only comparable site is that of Samuel Bell's lower street factory in Newcastle-under-Lyme operating between 1725-1744.

Excavation of this site revealed a similar kiln base and a small assemblage of similar earthenwares. Examples of the wares recovered survive in museum and private collections but it is rare to have any information concerning date or place of manufacture. Archaeology is usually the only way in which reliable information can be gained, linking wares to manufacturing sites and yielding information about technology. Using techniques more commonly used in the study of more ancient groups of pottery, such as detailed recording of form and decoration, archaeologists can recover considerable details about the development of post medieval pottery. This site will eventually give the most detailed and comprehensive insight yet into the developments in early 18th century pottery making.

Bill Klemperer, City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

STOURBRIDGE, Tack Lane (SO 882857)

Trial excavations, commissioned by Charles Haswell and Partners, were carried out in advance of the construction of a new water-main across the lower part of a steep north-facing bluff, on the southern bank of the Stourbridge canal. The pipeline was routed near to the recorded find-spot of a surface scatter of Roman pottery, interpreted as suggesting the location of small Romano-British farmstead nearby. The only feature identified was a shallow drainage gully, located at the northern edge of a possibly man-made platform, slightly terraced into the natural scarp, and perhaps datable to the Roman or

post-medieval period. A scatter of heat-shattered stones recovered from hillwash may derive from a burnt mound, possibly located near to an old stream-bed, visible in the modern ground surface. A watching brief was maintained during the pipeline groundworks, but no archaeological features or deposits were seen within the pipeline corridor.

Jones, A.E. 1991. *Tack Lane, Stourbridge, Staffordshire: An Archaeological Evaluation*. BUFAU Report No. 169.

A.E. Jones, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

SWYNNERTON, Finds from the parish (SJ 8435)

Mr. Roy Owen of the North Staffs Metal Detecting Club has recovered a large collection of metalwork dating from the Roman to the post-medieval periods. Something in the order of 100 artefacts were found in one field.

The Roman finds include three bow brooches, a headstud brooch, a cosmetic spoon (?), a strap end and two late Roman copper alloy coin fragments, one of which is silvered.

Four copper alloy artefacts have been donated by the finder to Stoke-on-Trent City Museum and Art Gallery. (Accession number K6. 1990). These include two Saxon finds and one find of the Saxon-Norman period (S. Youngs, pers. comm.). A fragment of a late seventh to eighth century copper alloy mount or pendant, with part of the border surviving. The front of the piece has ribbon enamel decoration, with traces of powdery yellow enamel. Red enamel may have been present in the design. There are traces of silvering. This mount or pendant is in the Insular style and was probably made in Ireland or Northumbria. It is a curious piece, incomplete, so that its form is not known, and with a dished, plain back. There are some similarities to an eighth century hanging bowl mount from Whitby (Youngs 1989, no. 49). In general, little is known about ribbon enamel work, and so far pieces that are known have not been recovered from datable contexts. The Swynnerton piece is to be included in an article on this important class of decorated Anglo-Saxon metalwork

(Youngs, forthcoming). Length: 30mm. Width: 17.5 mm max.

A late sixth to seventh century solid copper alloy die, broken at each end. It contains within a billeted border a design of intertwining zoomorphs in Style II. The die was used to produce decorative foils for attachment to, for example, drinking cups (Webster and Backhouse 1991, 56-7) and shields (Bruce-Mitford 1975, fig. 64). The Swynnerton die is about 5mm wider than its closest parallel - from Icklingham, Suffolk (Speake 1980, Plate 14 g) - and would have produced large foils. Length: 28mm max (broken). Width: 34mm max

A tenth to eleventh century triangular copper alloy stirrup mount, with three very worn projections decorated with animal heads (?) at each corner, each with a rivet hole set in from it. The Swynnerton mount has no trace of iron staining from the rivets, but it had been overcleaned and coated with nail varnish by the finder. The base (which is the narrowest side) has an inturned flange.

The Swynnerton example is interesting in that, unlike most published examples, the flat central part of the mount appears to be undecorated (Biddle et al. 1990, no. 4270; Margeson 1986; Robinson, forthcoming). Saxon-Norman stirrup mounts are a recently recognised class of finds (Robinson, op.cit.). Each stirrup would have had one such mount, permanently attached to the stirrup leather, the inturned flange at the base passing into the threading loop at the top of the stirrup. Length: 49mm (56 mm including basal projections), Width: 35.5 mm max (at base)

Other finds from Swynnerton are of medieval and post-medieval date and include copper alloy buckles, belt fittings, vessel fragments and sheet, a shield shaped heraldic pendant (horse furniture), a purse (?) fitting, a pipe tamper, several unidentified copper alloy fittings (?), a decorated lead spindle whorl and a finely decorated pewter hawking whistle, various iron objects including nails, a bracket, a hook, buckles or fittings. Thirteen iron finds have been x-rayed, one, a D-shaped buckle may be tinned.

Three of the donated finds have been described above, the fourth is a medieval gilded copper

alloy hook with two small iron rivets for attachment to a belt. It is decorated with a series of deep grooves across the belt attachment. Length: 45 mm.

References:

Biddle, M. et al. 1990 Object and Economy in Medieval Winchester *Winchester Studies* Vol. VII part 2 (Clarendon Press, Oxford)

Bruce-Mitford, R.L.S. 1975 *The Sutton Hoo Ship-Burial* Volume 1 (London)

Margeson, S 1986 A Group of Late Saxon Mounts from Norfolk *Norfolk Archaeology* 39, part 3, 323 - 327

Robinson, P. forthcoming (1992) Some Late Saxon Mounts from Wiltshire *Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine* Speake, G. 1980 Anglo-Saxon Animal Art and its Germanic Background (Oxford)

Webster, L. and Backhouse, J. (eds) 1991 *The Making of England: Anglo-Saxon Art and Culture AD 600-900* (London)

Youngs, S.M. (ed) 1989 *The Work of Angels: Masterpieces of Celtic Metalwork, 6th-9th centuries AD* (London)

Youngs, S.M. forthcoming *Recent British Finds of Early Medieval Celtic Enamelwork, with Special Reference to Interlace and Buckles*

Deborah Ford, City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

WHITGREAVE, Geophysical survey at Whitgreave, near Stafford (SJ 899282)

The hamlet of Whitgreave lies 5km north-west of Stafford between the M6 motorway and A34 trunk road. Whilst checking on the site of a proposed new car-park in Whitgreave staff from Stafford Borough Council Archaeology Section came across a series of unrecorded earthworks. The earthworks appeared to represent the holloways, house platforms and boundaries of an abandoned element of the village. As a part of the Sections continuing programme of research

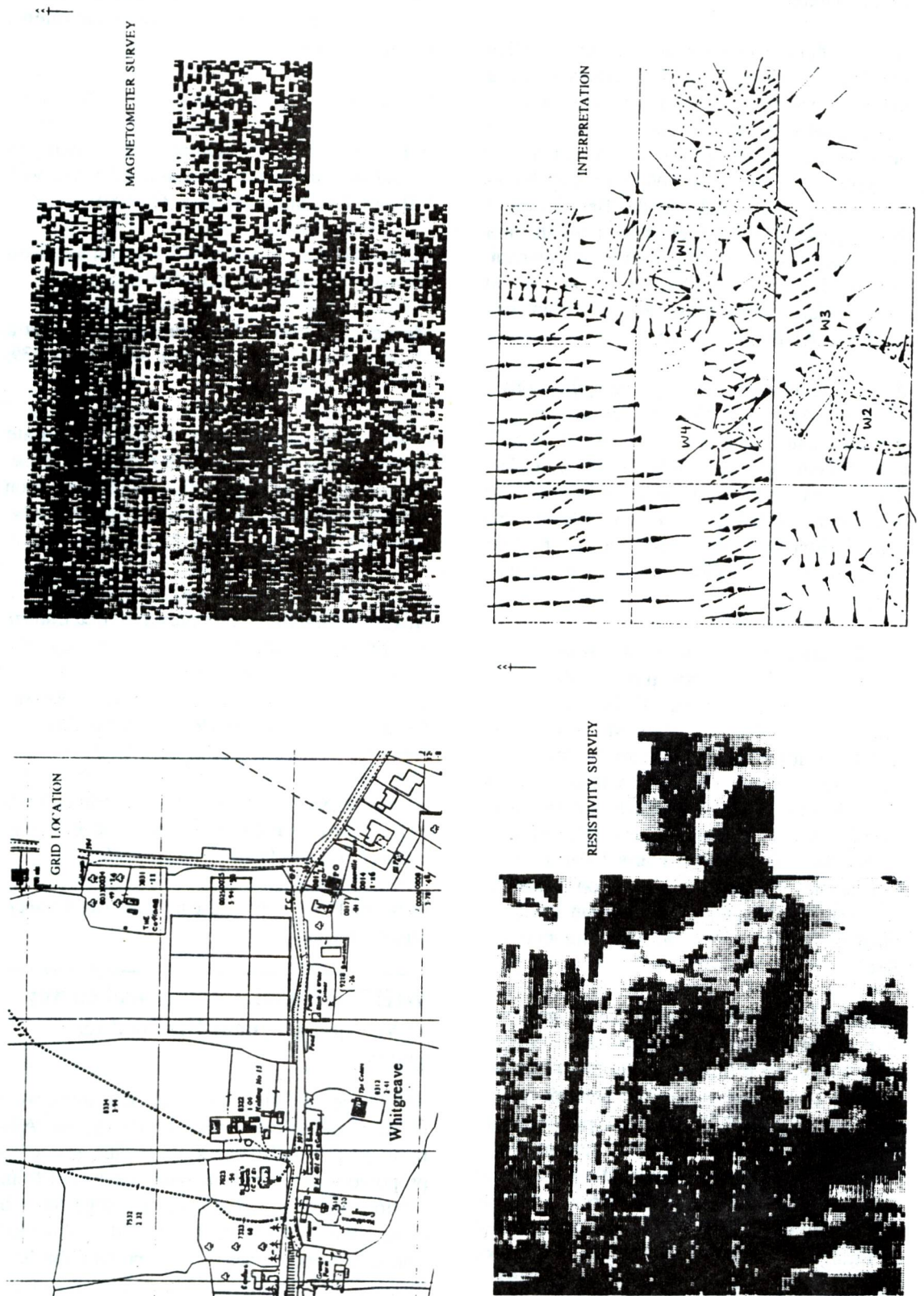


Figure 33: Whitgrave - survey location and interpretation

and enhancement of the Sites and Monuments Record a geophysical survey was carried out by Stratascan in the hope that it might throw more light on the buried remains.

Two types of geophysical survey were employed: resistivity and magnetometer survey. The magnetic survey was carried out using an FM36 Fluxgate Gradiometer. The resistivity meter used was an RM15 incorporating a mobile Twin Probe Array. At Whitgreave a grid was laid out over the site, divided into 10 blocks of 20 square metres. The site was surveyed over two days and the data downloaded onto a computer, which was then used to generate and subsequently plot out the results. Both the resistivity and magnetometer survey showed up several interesting features. They can be divided into three areas (Fig 33).

The first, to the north east of the site is an area of strong mixed magnetic readings (W1). The edge of this feature is quite sharply defined by a north-south line which then turns almost a right angle to follow a hollow way running south east. Within this boundary the majority of the readings are strongly mixed but there are also "pockets" which are at normal background levels. There is also one section of high resistivity on the south side of this area which is approximately triangular in shape. One explanation for this complex of features is that this is the site of a demolished set of buildings. The mixed magnetic readings perhaps result from metal rubbish or waste of variable magnetic readings. The pockets may have been produced either by obstructions covering those parts such as structures or piles of materials or by excavation and subsequent backfilling with cleaner material. This would also account for the areas of lower resistivity. Interpretation of the feature as the remains of a demolished building is strengthened by its alignment with a property boundary further to the north.

Secondly, feature W2 on the south side of the site is seen clearly in both the resistivity and magnetometer data. Broadly it is a circle some 20 metres in diameter. A "partition" runs across the middle from north east to south west. As with W1, the feature is interpreted as the remains of a demolished building. To the north east of this feature a ridge runs north west to south east (W3). This ridge is reflected by both a line of

low resistivity readings and by a line of higher positive magnetic readings. The line of lower resistivity continues north west into a circular hollow (W4). The magnetic feature, however, stops some 10 metres short of the hollow but a line of higher magnetic readings is seen running north east to south west on the south side of the hollow.

Thirdly, the rest of the surveyed area has little of magnetic interest apart from two small areas (one positive, one negative) in the south west corner which may well be the effect of the nearby fence. The resistivity survey of the rest of the site broadly reflects the topography, particularly the ridge and furrow on the north side. As one would expect, the higher resistance readings reflect the crests of the ridges.

Future work on the site will include a thorough contour survey to detail the exact form of the shrunken settlement and a brief document survey in order to attempt to place the village in its historic context.

John Darlington, Stafford Borough Council Archaeology Section

WOLSELEY, Glass Furnaces at Wolseley, Near Rugeley (SK008189)

A glassmaking site has been excavated in advance of gravel extraction at Little Birches, Wolseley.

There are two furnaces on the site. The better preserved of the two is a rectangular six pot furnace with a separate annealing/fritting kiln. It used silica from broken white pebbles and cullet (scrap glass), and potash from the ashes of burnt bracken to produce white crown window glass. There are three large heaps of ash, waste glass and broken glass pots associated with the furnace, which appears from documentary and ceramic evidence to have been in use in the late fifteenth century.

The second furnace has an adjacent spread of ash and debris. Pottery from this spread suggests a date no later than the mid-fourteenth century.

The site has been excavated by members of staff of the County Council and the work has been

jointly funded by English Heritage and Western
Aggregates. The finds and the archive will be
deposited at Stoke-on-Trent City Museum and
Art Gallery, Hanley.

Chris Welch, Staffordshire County Council

WARWICKSHIRE

Stray finds (principally from Metal detection) from Warwickshire reported in 1991.

All were enquiries to Coventry Museums Archaeology Unit. Thanks to Stanley Ireland of Warwick Univ. and the late W.A. Seaby of Warwick Museum for the identification of the coins.

1. Walsgrave, Coventry (Warks) (SP 389822)
Ae Sestertius of M. Aurelius Commodus (177-192)

Obv:M.COMMOD.ANT.P.FELIX.AUG.BR
ITT.P.P.(Laureate, R. Facing)
Rev:Illegible. (? Liberty holding purse and rod)

Wear suggests circulation well into the 3rd century.

N.B. Other coins have been attested to have come from this immediate area, of 3rd-4th century date. As yet the museum has seen none of them. Emergency fieldwalking as development took place recently did point to the presence of a site of unknown size or status.

2. Southam/Stockton, (Warks) (SP 424627) Ae Antoninianus of ?Probus (276-282)

Obv:IMP [PRO]BUS.AUG. (Radiate, R. Facing)
Rev:FELICITAS.AUG. (Happiness, standing with cornucopia).

3. Southam/Stockton (Warks) (SP 424627)
Ae Antoninianus of Claudius Gothicus (268-270) Posthumous issue.

Obv:[DIVO CL]AUDIO. (Radiate, R. Facing)
Rev:CONS[ECRATIO]. (Altar, divided into quarters, each bearing a dot).

N.B. Greywares have been recovered in small quantities from ploughsoil by metal detectorists at this location.

4. Exhall, Coventry (Warks) (SP 340852)
Ag coin (denom. unknown) of Ferdinand V of Arragon and Isabella I of Castile (1474-1504).

5. Exhall, Coventry (Warks) (SP 335853)
Circular Lead seal matrix (29mm diam) bearing arms of unknown origin: Lamb hanging in strap on shield below 3 mullets in chief. Whole enclosed by ?olive branches.

6. Brookhampton, Kineton, (Warks) (SP 319507) Au Finger ring of Posy type (15th century). of British Museum Catalogue 1924, p152-3. Very slightly squashed - 16.5mm x 15mm x 4mm wide. Legend in Gothic script: + BE...MY...TREU. interspersed with repeating floral decoration (All incised).

7. Brookhampton, Kineton (Warks) (SP 319507) Ar Denarius of Julia Maesa (218-222)

Obv:IULIA MAESA AUG. (Bust R. Facing)
Rev:PIETAS AUG. (Piety, standing L. Facing)

8. Exhall, Coventry (Warks) (SP 34158505)
Possible 13th Century (?) Pewter token, possibly for use in a tavern. Diam. 12mm.

Obv: Stylised design of cross with three pellets in each quarter.

Rev: Stylised design of raised linear type with pellets, possibly representing the Paschal Lamb and Flag.

9. Exhall, Coventry (Warks) (SP 341851)
Ae Dupondius of Clodius Albinus (193-196)

Obv: Radiate Bust of Albinus R.Facing.
Rev: Fortuna, seated holding cornucopia in left hand, rudder resting on globe in right hand. No inscription legible. Weight 11g.

10. Exhall, Coventry (Warks) (SP 329851)
Aes of Valentinian (364-375)

Obv:[D.N.] VALENT[]; Bust R.Facing
Rev:Illegible

11. Exhall, Coventry (Warks) (SP 326850)
Aes of Valentinian (364-375)

Obv: Illegible legend; Bus R. Facing
Rev: SEC[URITAS] REI[PUBLICAE] CA;
Victory advancing R.

12. Exhall, Coventry (Warks) (SP 331856).
Minimissimus of late 3rd - 4th century. No leg-ends visible but centrally struck.

Margaret Rylatt and Iain Soden, Coventry Museums Archaeology Unit

ALCESTER, Eclipse Trading Estate (SP 085578)

Following a proposal to develop the site for housing, Tarmac Homes commissioned the Warwickshire Museum to undertake an archaeological evaluation. It seemed likely that the Roman Road Ryknild Street would be found and roadside settlement and cemeteries were also a possibility. However, the work failed to reveal anything of archaeological significance. This may be because:

1. Ryknild Street deviates west of the expected line, or
2. There were no roadside ditches at this point and the road itself was ploughed out, or
3. The identification of the road at 7 Station Road is wrong. Paul Booth, who conducted the salvage recording of the foundation trenches of a garage there, emphasized the tentative nature of his conclusions (*Trans Birmingham and Warks Archaeol Soc*, 93, 138).

John Hodgson, Warwickshire museum

ALCESTER, The Rectory, Butter Street (SP 08975750)

Evaluation work in advance of a proposed housing development revealed possible traces of the town defences, a clay and gravel bank at a depth of 500mm, but the results were not conclusive. A full report on the evaluation is stored in the Warwickshire SMR.

Stephen Cracknell, Warwickshire Museum

ALCESTER, 52 Stratford Road (SP 09055725)

An evaluation of the site of Alcester Archaeology Office (Old Fire Station) was conducted for Warwickshire County Council. The site lies some 60m to the south of the 4th century town defences. A single inhumation was revealed (albeit in a poor state of preservation and heavily truncated by modern construction) which, although not directly datable, implies that the site lies in an area of Roman cemetery, outside the town.

Stuart Palmer, Warwickshire Museum

BAGINTON, The Lunt Roman Fort (SP 344752)

Research excavations continued over the summer on the Western defences of the 1st century fort. The main features exposed in preceding seasons, the defensive ditches, were partly emptied. A number of features were located within of the fills which suggest the presence of a later palisade or timber wall line. Vestiges of later occupation outside the defences, first seen in 1984, were relocated in ideal weather conditions. These consisted of two or possibly three phases of a timber building with a pebbled hard-standing. As yet these have not been securely dated. This work was carried out with the help of Warwick University, Dept of Classics and Archaeology.

Excavations on an adjacent area, carried out by the University of British Columbia, Dept of Classics, under the auspices of Coventry Museums Archaeology Unit, continue to uncover the line of the Western defences as they meet the NW corner of the fort. The edge of the old 1960's excavation has been located and a number of features from then re-excavated. Traces have been found of what has been tentatively interpreted as the Intervallum Road.

The archive has been updated and an interim report is in preparation. Excavated material is stored at Coventry Museums Archaeology Unit, Whitefriars Museum; site code LRF 91. The work is funded by Coventry Museums Archaeology Unit, Warwick University and University of British Columbia.

Margaret Rylatt and Iain Soden, Coventry Museums Archaeology Unit

BIDFORD-ON-AVON, An Anglo-Saxon gold mount and Eadwald/Eadnoth penny (SP 1052)

During the months of April and May 1991 a small gold mount and an Eadwald/Eadnoth penny were found by Mr. Robert Laight while using a metal detector on a known Middle Saxon site to the east of Bidford-on-Avon (Fig 34).

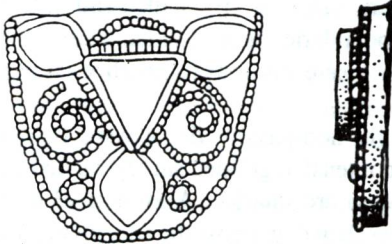


Figure 34: Bidford, Anglo-Saxon gold mount (x2)

The mount is of "D" shape, measuring 17.5mm across the straight edge or top and 15.0mm from top to bottom (Fig 34). It is approximately 3.5mm thick and weighs 2.46 grammes. Analysis of the gold by X-ray Fluorescence Spectrometry at the British Museum Research laboratory indicates that it is 68% pure (Hook pers. comm.). The mount is constructed of a flat backplate on to which are fixed a number of vertical strips with plain and filigree edges. Those vertical strips with plain edges form cells, while the filigree strips are used for spirals and to form the edge of the mount. The overall design appears to be a calf's head - with the ears, forehead and snout formed of cells, all probably originally with red glass settings, although only the triangular piece in the forehead still survives. The eyes and nostrils are formed by filigree strips which surround granules. The reverse of the backplate reveals impressions indicating the position of the cells and spirals.

Undoubtedly, the most interesting aspect of the Bidford mount is the form of the filigree, which consists of a beaded wire soldered onto a plain ribbon set on edge. This method is transitional in an Anglo-Saxon context - later than the beaded wire set directly on a repousse or flat

base which characterises the 7th century and earlier jewellery, but earlier than the flattened beaded wire or filigree of late 9th and 10th century metalwork which, set edge on, gives a notched ribbon effect (Webster per. comm.). The Bidford mount, therefore, relates most closely to the small number of Anglo-Saxon 8th century filigree items known from England. In particular, as well as its filigree type, its shape, its use of filigree in a sketchy, open design and the presence of red glass (copying garnet) inlay on gold, are directly comparable with the inserted mounts on the (lost) early 8th century River Witham hanging bowl, the Ormside bowl and the Kirkoswald trefoil brooch (Wilson 1964, pl.28; 139-40, no. 28; Webster & Backhouse 1991, 173, no. 134).

It is very hard to determine the exact function of the Bidford mount, but clearly it originally must have formed part of a prestigious composite object. The lack of any attachment fitting is significant and the mount cannot be therefore a belt-fitting or other metalwork item which required to be rivetted in place. Instead there are a number of possibilities including a hanging bowl or an ecclesiastical object such as a book cover or shrine. Hanging bowls are known from Warwickshire, such as the Baginton bowl from the cemetery site near Coventry or the escutcheons found at Lighthorn (Warwickshire Museum A238-242). The alternative of an ecclesiastical object is also feasible. The calf's head design of the mount may be linked to the traditional symbol of the evangelist St. Luke.

The silver penny is a rare coin of King Eadwald of East Anglia (c. 796-8) struck by the moneyer Eadnoth. Only sixteen coins of Eadwald are known (Chick & Seaby 1991, 221) and this latest find is notable in having an obverse of circumscriptio type, that is with letters forming the king's name around the edge of the coin rather than running across the coin. A similar coin with apparently a die duplicate obverse, but not the same reverse (although close) was found near Brandon in 1989 (Bonser pers. comm.). This is the second coin of Eadwald known from Bidford (Chick & Seaby, op.cit.). It is now in the British Museum.

Acknowledgements : The writers are very grateful to Leslie Webster and Duncan Hook (British Museum) and Mike Stokes (Shrewsbury Mu-

seum) for their help in the preparation of this note. The drawings are by Emma Bond and Philip Wise.

References :

Chick, D. & Seaby, W.A. 1991 A New Variant for Eadwald/Eadnoth (?) *Spink's Circular* 99(7), September.

Webster, L. & Backhouse, J. (eds.) 1991 *The Making of England - Anglo-Saxon Art and Culture AD 600-900*, British Museum.

Wilson, D.M. 1964 *Anglo-Saxon Ornamental Metalwork 700-1100*, British Museum.

Philip J. Wise and the late Wilfred A. Seaby, Warwickshire Museum.

BIDFORD-ON-AVON, Bidford Grange (SP 112519)

Rescue excavation, in advance of golf course construction, on an indistinct cropmark site revealed an extensive Romano-British farmstead, consisting of curvilinear enclosures, covering c.1.3ha. Occupation began in the late 1st century AD and reached a peak during the 2nd century, continuing at a lower level in the 3rd and 4th centuries. Postholes, postbases and beam slots suggested the presence of timber buildings. A good assemblage of pottery and other finds was recovered.

P. Hart, Warwickshire Museum

BIDFORD-ON-AVON, 21 and 23 Icknield Street (SP 10205190)

An evaluation was undertaken by Warwickshire Museum for Mr. David Baxter, on a site fronting the Roman road (Ryknild Street) close to its intersection with the River Avon. Trial trenches revealed evidence of Romano-British settlement, comprising timber buildings and associated features dated to the 4th century AD, spread over an area of some 1800 sq m. Residual 1st and 2nd century pottery scattered in the overlying plough soil indicates an earlier Romano-British presence on the site. After the Roman period the site was deserted until the

17th century when the street frontage was developed.

Stuart Palmer, Warwickshire Museum

BOURTON AND DRAYCOTE, Broomhill Farm Bourton Heath (SP 443717)

An area of 10 fields, totalling 44ha, at Broomhill Farm, Bourton Heath was evaluated on behalf of Greenham Construction Materials Ltd. The site lay in an area where extensive later prehistoric linear boundaries, field systems and settlements are visible as cropmarks, and one of these linear boundaries with a small attached rectilinear enclosure ran into its south west part.

The eight non-pasture fields were fieldwalked, with an intensive gridded survey carried out over the known cropmarks. A total of 93 trial trenches was then dug across the site, giving a sample of 1% of the evaluation area.

To the south west the linear boundary was found to date to the later Bronze Age/early Iron Age and to consist, partly of a series of subcircular pits, some of which were subsequently recut, and partly of lengths of ditch. Appended to the boundary there was at least one enclosure, which may have been used either for settlement or for stock control.

To the south a small rectangular enclosure, which did not appear as a cropmark, was located. This was of Middle Iron Age date.

John Hodgson, Warwickshire Museum

BURTON DASSETT, Knightcote (SP 39905450 and SP 400154540)

Observation of earthmoving for a housing development, adjacent to Hall Farm, on the south side of the shrunken medieval settlement at Knightcote revealed nothing of significance. However, drain digging on a property to the east turned up 13th-15th century pottery, animal bone and roof tile.

Gavin Lines and Nicholas Palmer, Warwickshire Museum

BURTON DASSETT, Southend D.M.V. (SP 388521)

Most of Chapel Ground, the field covering the north west part of the deserted medieval settlement of Burton Dasset Southend, was field-walked after being ploughed for the first time in very many years. Spreads of building rubble, pottery, animal bone and tile concentrated over the settlement earthworks, to the east, over tenements fronting a north-south road, and to the south, over the tenement excavated in 1986-7 (*WMA* 30 (1987), 44; 31 (1988), 28-32), fronting an east-west road. Two slag concentrations turned out to be probably post-medieval and unconnected with the settlement. The pottery was mostly 13th-15th century but there was also a concentration of post-medieval material in the south east corner.

Nicholas Palmer, Warwickshire Museum

CHURCH LAWFORD, Ling Hall Quarry (SP 448733)

The first phase of observation and excavation prior to gravel extraction was undertaken for Ideal Aggregates Limited on Lawfield airfield. Evaluation (see *WMA* 32 (1989), B7) had identified individual zones of archaeological importance, which would require differing levels of archaeological recording prior to gravel extraction. The required 'watching brief' identified an early modern field system and a new length of later prehistoric pit alignment, which was protected from further disturbance while a programme of excavation and recording could be formulated; this is to begin in 1992.

Stuart Palmer, Warwickshire Museum

COMBE ABBEY (SP 40347980)

Evaluation was carried out following approaches for outline planning permission to Rugby Borough Council for redevelopment of the Grade 1 listed buildings and the surrounding area into a Hotel complex. The existing buildings consist of a number of phases of post medieval stately home around a Cistercian Abbey of the 12th-16th century. The landscaped park attached includes other buildings and areas of National archaeological interest and importance.

Nine trenches were dug around the N and E sides of the remaining stately home buildings. These produced evidence for the 18th and 19th century kitchens, the 17th and 19th century wings of the stately home, designed by first William Winde and then William Nesfield. Also uncovered were remains of the monastic Dorter and ?Frater, their foundations incorporated into later buildings. On the East side of the complex however, evidence for the monastic Chapterhouse was not forthcoming, giving rise to the supposition that it did not project out from the east range at all as might be expected (Fountains, Kirkstall, Rievaulx etc) but was contained entirely within it as at Jervaulx, Hailes or Roche Abbeys. On this side considerable evidence was found for the survival of William Miller's alterations to the Elizabeth Great Garden (principally part of his drainage arrangements).

Post medieval and modern drainage provided the biggest bar to interpretation, resulting in very varied levels of survival within the space of a few metres in a number of areas. A sampling programme hinted that any future interpretations would benefit strongly from environmental analysis, the drains being a rich source of organic material. Finds were few and badly damaged, reflecting the constant and intensive use of a very small area, subject to repeated demolition and rebuilding.

Two further trenches were dug, one by hand, a second by machine, in the immediate vicinity of a possible round barrow, just south of the Abbey. This followed a geophysical survey of the area (BUFAU). No features of any certain date were located and the area close to the 'barrow', always so-called without real reason, was clean.

Following the excavations, outline planning permissions were granted with provisos. All work was funded by the developers SS and D. Thanks to Warwick Rodwell for his help in interpreting the findings. Excavated material is stored at Coventry Museums Archaeology Unit, Whitefriars Museum; site code CA 91. A full archive report has been completed, including specialist reports.

Margaret Rylatt and Iain Soden, Coventry Museums Archaeology Unit

COMPTON VERNEY, Compton Murdak D.M.V. (SP 313530)

In advance of the proposed building of an opera house adjacent to Compton Verney House, an evaluation was carried out on the probable site of the deserted medieval settlement of Compton Murdak. The evaluation area coincided with parts of two fields called "Old Town" on a map dated 1736.

A total of 23 trenches were dug over a 4ha area, producing evidence of occupation from the 12th to the 15th centuries. At the south end of the site there were traces of one or more post-built, timber buildings dating from the 12th/13th centuries. To the north, four trenches contained stone footings for buildings dating from the 13th and 14th centuries. The less substantial of these may have supported houses or outbuildings with timber framed superstructures, while the thicker ones probably supported stone built houses. Rubble yard surfaces, of a kind often associated with buildings, suggested that further buildings survived in the vicinity of other trenches. A possible rubble road or street across the centre of the site was also located.

The medieval deposits were well preserved and sealed beneath a protecting layer of hill wash and redeposited topsoil laid down during post-medieval landscaping.

P. Hart Warwickshire Museum

COUGHTON, Coughton Court (SP 083606)

Three seasons of excavation, assessment and salvage recording have been conducted at Coughton Court by Warwickshire Museum in 1992 in advance of sewerage works and a landscape gardening scheme. Evidence has been recovered to suggest that the construction and primary occupation of the manor house platform took place in the 12th/13th century. The site may then have been abandoned in the 14th century but renewed activity seems to have taken place in the 15th century. Evidence of the plan of the demolished 16th century east range has been recovered, and this, like the south range, seems to have been widened, encroaching into the courtyard, in the later 16th century. The east range seems to have been destroyed by fire in the

late 17th century. Some features of Roman and early neolithic date were also recorded.

Jeremy Evans, Warwickshire Museum

CUBBINGTON, Roman Gold Finger Ring (SP 3269)

A Roman gold finger ring was found by Mr. R. Baldock while using a metal detector on farmland near Cubbington in March 1991. The ring consists of a hoop of square-sectioned wire which tapers towards a union formed by the ends twisted into a knot. The hoop is slightly distorted and varies in diameter from 19-22mm, with a maximum thickness of 2mm. The ring weighs 2.28gm. This knot design is also found in late Roman bronze bracelets (BM 1958, fig.7, no. 10) and the ring is thus of 3rd or 4th century date.

BM 1958 *Guide to the Antiquities of Roman Britain*, British Museum.

Philip J. Wise, Warwickshire Museum.

DUNCHURCH, Bronze Age Palstave Axe

A middle bronze age unlooped copper alloy palstave axe was found using a metal detector by member of the Coventry Heritage Detector Society, in July 1991. The first prehistoric find from the Dunchurch area: it is in good condition, weighing 280g, has a maximum length of 134mm, and a blade width of 47mm (Fig 35). The stop ridge has a width of 20mm and is 20mm thick. Some original surface remains, especially on one side where the midrib is just visible. Unlike other examples of its kind the blade is longer than the socket - it measures 83mm from the stop ridge to the blade, and 51mm from the stop ridge to the butt. The blade is also less flared than other axes of this type. A similar palstave is recorded from Stechford, Birmingham (vine 1982, 382, no. 763).

Vine, P.M. 1982 *The Neolithic and Bronze Age Cultures of the Middle and Upper Trent Basin*, BAR British Series 105.

Emma Bond, Warwickshire Museum.

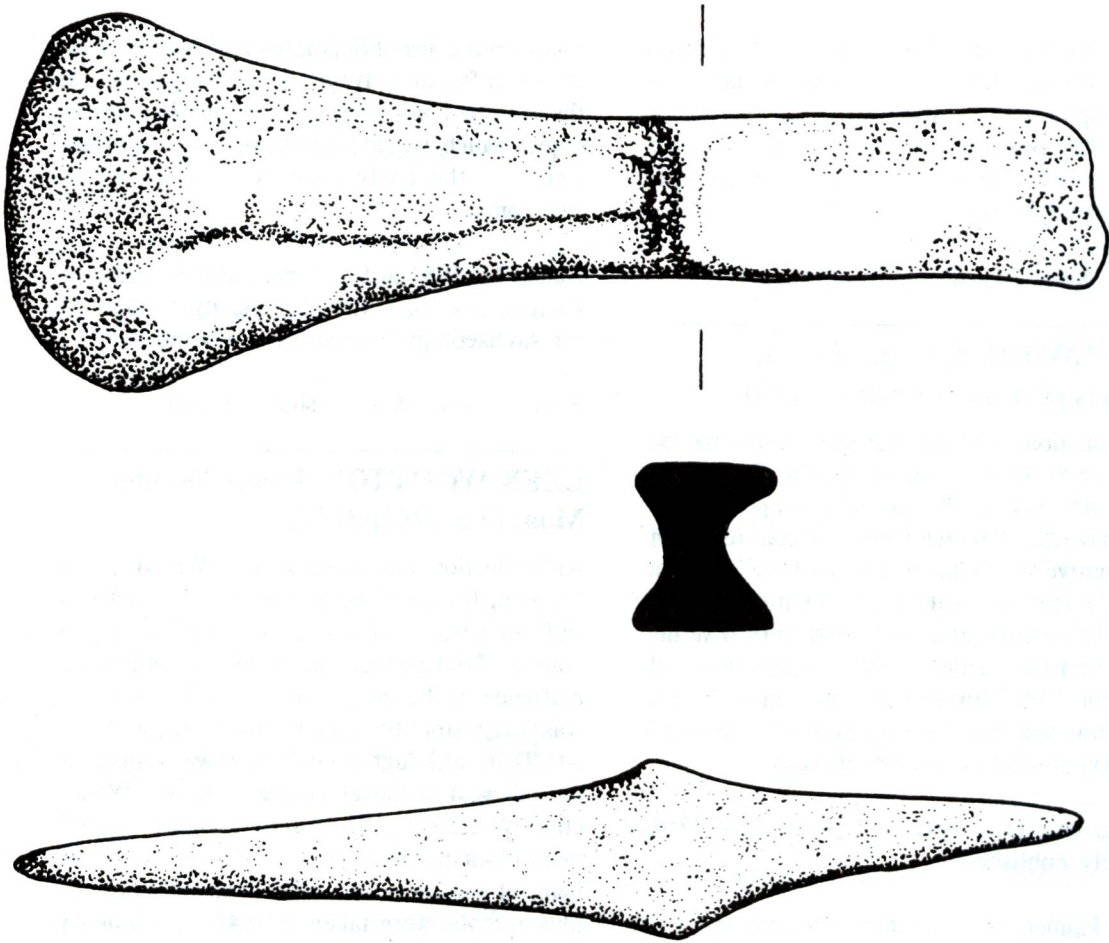


Figure 35: Dunchurch, Bronze Age palstave axe (x1)

HANBOROUGH MAGNA, Cnut Penny (SP 5079)

A Short Cross penny of Cnut (1029-35) by Wulnoth of Leicester was found in October 1991 by Mr. D.J. Sabin while metal detecting near Churchover (although within the parish of Hanborough Magna). The coin was recognised by the late Bill Seaby as being somewhat unusual because of the incorrect spelling of the moneyer's name Wulnoth. On this recent find it appears as PVENOD rather than the correct spelling of PVLNOD as given in BMC (p.276/268 and pl.xviii.13).

BMC 1893 *A Catalogue of English Coins in the British Museum* ii.

North, J.J. 1963 *English Hammered Coinage I*, P.119/790.

Philip J. Wise, Warwickshire Museum

KENILWORTH, Kenilworth Castle (SP 27823)

A series of small excavations and watching briefs inside the castle, carried out on behalf of English Heritage, revealed traces of defensive curtain on either side of Leicester's Gatehouse and to the north east of Mortimer's Tower. Part of the stone approach across the Tiltyard was cleaned, showing signs of considerable wear.

Inside the defences, the northern face of the causeway to the inner ward was located and

details obtained of an area outside the entrance to the Great Hall. More complex medieval stratigraphy was recorded in the kitchen range beside the Norman keep, and to the west of Leicester's Gatehouse where 15th century pottery was recovered.

Martin Jones, Warwickshire Museum

KENILWORTH, Church of St. Francis of Assisi (SP 28977128)

An evaluation by Warwickshire Museum for the Parish of St. Francis and St. Austin, Kenilworth was conducted on the site of a proposed new church on the Warwick Road. Recent research (Wallsgrave 1991) has revealed the site to be in an area laid out with building plots in the 12th/13th century, after the founding of both the priory and the castle. Trial trenches revealed little but 13th-14th century cultivation layers, suggesting that this plot was never fully exploited on a commercial or residential basis.

Wallsgrave, S.G., 1991 *Kenilworth 1086-1756*, Privately published

Stuart Palmer, Warwickshire Museum

KINWARTON, Roman Gold Finger Ring (SP 1058)

In January 1991 a gold finger ring was found by Mr. Robert Laight while using a metal detector on a known Roman site at Kinwarton. The ring has a weight of 2.275gm and, although now distorted, an original external diameter of 17.5mm. The narrow flattened hoop tapers in width from 4.4mm to 1.4mm. The thickness of the hoop also varies slightly from 1.2mm to 1.0mm and it has an oval section. The oval bezel is engraved with a well executed palm frond. The frond has seven pinnae to the left and six to the right of the central rib. At the base of the frond the central rib bifurcates and is terminated by a crescent line. The condition of the ring indicates that it suffered little wear before it was lost.

The palm device is emblematic of Victory and is known from a very large number of Roman gold rings. An example from Verulamium is dated to the late second or early third century, while several rings decorated with a palm frond were

found with coins of Septimius Severus (AD 193-211) in a female grave at Lyon (Henig 1984, 19, fig. 4). The Kinwarton gold ring is a high status object which would have belonged to a public figure in the early third century (M.Henig pers.comm.).

Henig, M, 1984 in S.S. Frere (ed.) *Verulamium Excavations III*, Oxford University Committee for Archaeology Monograph I, Oxford.

Philip J. Wise, Warwickshire Museum

LEEK WOOTTON, Lower Woodcote Moat (SP 279569135)

An evaluation was undertaken by Warwickshire Museum for the Colin Snape Golf Consultancy PLC in advance of the construction of a golf course. Trial trenches were able to confirm the existence of the moated site (WA 2567) which was suggested by aerial photography (RAF 541/215), although no evidence was found for the deserted medieval village of Lower Woodcote (WA 2571). Earthwork survey indicated that substantial parts of the platform and outer bank of the moat had been denuded since the photographs were taken in 1948. Preliminary resistivity survey revealed little, although magnetometer survey suggested a building range on the north side of the enclosed platform (Bartlett and Turton 1991).

Excavation revealed the moat ditch to survive, over 10m wide and 1.30m deep, cut through sandstone bedrock. The internal building range comprised 14th century sandstone footings at the north end of the moat platform. Possible fish ponds were located to the south-west of the moat and trenching to the north of the moat produced evidence for 11th-12th century smithing.

The area of the moat complex has since been excluded from landscaping proposals (originally proposed as a sunken marsh feature) and now survives as an island with its pre-evaluation contours and levels.

Bartlett, A.D.H. and Turton, B.Y, *Report on the Geophysical survey at Leek Wootton, Warwickshire*. 1991.

Stuart Palmer and Russell Trimble, Warwickshire Museum

LITTLE WOLFORD, Three Medieval Pilgrim Ampullae (SP 2636)

Early in 1991 three medieval pilgrim ampullae were found by metal detectorists near Little Wolford, two by Mr. R. Evans and one by Mr. M.G. Williams. The first has one side decorated with a large crown below the letter "M" and on the reverse a scallop-shell motif (Fig 36).

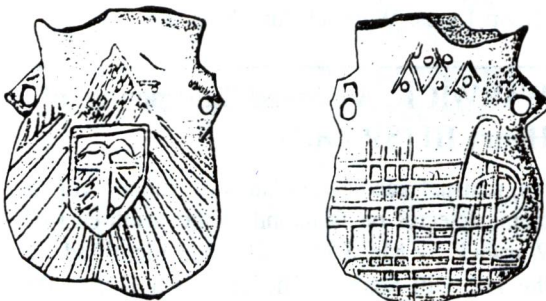
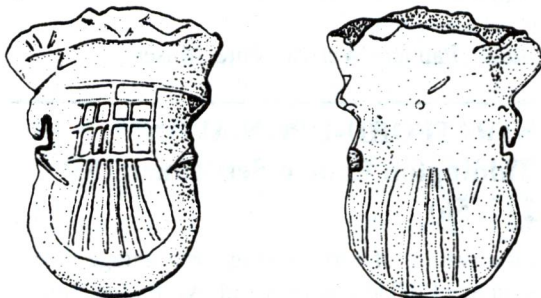
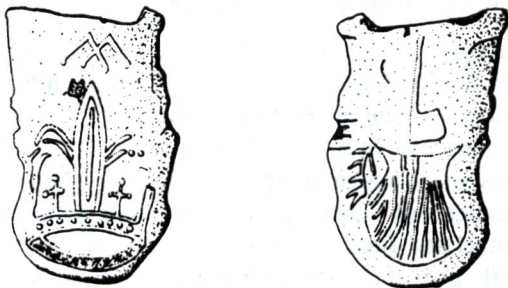


Figure 36: Little Wolford, three medieval pilgrims ampullae (x0.75)

It was probably bought at the Shrine of Our Lady at Walshingham in Norfolk. The second is decorated on both sides with a scallop-shell design. The third is the most unusual, with one side a double-headed bird or eagle on a shield set against a hatched ground and on the other a geometric ornament of two types of criss-cross pattern. It now in the collections of the Warwickshire Museum (A7380).

The double-headed or imperial eagle is a rare motif, although it is also found on an ampulla from Upper Halling in Kent. There seems little doubt however that it was a stock decorative design rather than being directly associated with a noble family. During the late medieval period the imperial eagle was used in a purely decorative way on a variety of everyday objects, including floor-tiles, personal seals and even the pewter feeding troughs made for 15th century birdcages (B. Spencer pers.comm.).

Philip J. Wise, Warwickshire Museum

NUNEATON, Priory of St. Mary, Manor Court House (SP 354921)

Six evaluation trenches were dug to the rear of Manor Court House on a potential development site lying within the priory precinct, c.80m to the west of the church and cloister.

Over the east part of the site the trenches produced evidence, in the form of walls, occupation layers and other features, for a number of buildings, presumably belonging to the ranges of the outer court of the priory. The associated pottery dated from the 13th to the 15th centuries. To the west there was probably a medieval mill or fish pond.

Martin Jones, Warwickshire Museum

NUNEATON, Priory of St. Mary, Manor Hospital (SP 35509222)

An evaluation was conducted by Warwickshire Museum for the North Warwickshire Health Authority at the Manor Hospital, Manor Court Road. The site lies in the outer court of the priory, some 180m north-west of the priory church and cloisters (Andrews et al., 1984). A trench adjacent to the physiotherapy block con-

tained a 13th century cobbled surface overlaid by a succession of layers, including 13th century building demolition material. This was presumably from a domestic structure belonging to the outer ranges of the priory.

Andrews, D. et al., 1984 *The Archaeology and Topography of Nuneaton Priory*, *Trans Birmingham Warwickshire Archaeol Soc* 91, 1981, 55-82

Stuart Palmer, Warwickshire Museum

SALFORD PRIORS, Marsh Farm Quarry (SP 07885222)

The first phase of evaluation and excavation of a cropmark site (WA 1499) threatened by gravel quarrying was undertaken by Warwickshire Museum for Western Aggregates Ltd. The cropmark suggested trackways associated with a Roman settlement (SAM Warwicks. 162) situated immediately to the south on the west bank of the River Arrow. Trial trenches were unable to clarify their status and open area excavation revealed them to be parts of overlapping field systems of uncertain dates. After the removal of the ploughsoil part of a late Iron Age settlement was revealed at the east end of the site. A single house structure was represented by a penannular gully, while several lengths of 'banana' gully, containing many heat cracked stones, could be other houses or merely sheltered cooking places. A small Iron Age ring ditch protruded under the eastern edge of the excavation and was cut by a ditch which presumably enclosed further settlement to the south-east.

Post excavation on the project continues and further evaluation and excavation is programmed for the next decade.

Stuart Palmer, Warwickshire Museum

STRATFORD UPON AVON, Guyvers Garage, (SP 19945507)

An evaluation was undertaken by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit ahead of redevelopment proposals for the Guyvers Garage site on the north side of the medieval site of the Rother Market. No finds or structures of the medieval period were encountered. In some areas cellaring had occurred, while elsewhere

there was evidence of post-medieval yard surfacing still intact. A possible post-medieval property boundary was encountered but excavation did not extend to the south of this boundary, towards the Market frontage.

Dingwall, L. & Litherland, S. *Guyver's Garage, Stratford-on-Avon: An Archaeological Evaluation* BUFAU Report No. 138

Simon Buteux, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON, 8/8 Henley Street (SP 20125505)

Salvage excavation by Warwickshire Museum for Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council during redevelopment, revealed an undated well, heavily truncated by modern development. The shaft was over 5.50m deep and had an internal diameter of 1.20m. It was cut through 3.80m of gravel and finally 1.70m of clay and was lined with irregular limestone blocks with internal dressed faces, laid in very regular courses. The well has since been filled with loose stone and capped with concrete.

Stuart Palmer, Warwickshire Museum

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON, Tiddington Roman Settlement (SP 217556)

Observation of earthmoving for a garage extension at 112, Tiddington Road, within the Roman settlement, revealed pits and postholes containing 2nd-4th century material.

Gavin Lines, Warwickshire Museum

WARWICK, A clipped 'half penny' of Henry III (SP 2963)

An unusual medieval coin was found with a metal detector on farmland to the south-east of Warwick by Mr. S.D. Taylor and identified by the late Bill Seaby. The coin is a Henry III Shortcross Penny by John of Bury St. Edmunds clipped to the size of a halfpenny instead of being cut in half along the cross arms. It appears to be of class 8b(c) at the very end of the Shortcross period and therefore dates to about 1247.

The reverse probably reads : IO[HAN.ON.SANT]JED. The coin may be compared to North 1963 I, 982, although reference should be made also to North 1988, pp.38-9 and pl.11, no. 51 which shows a very similar portrait on a coin of Johan. This is a most interesting find, especially in this condition, after the banning of cutting pennies into halves and quarters during the reign of Edward I.

North, J.J. 1963 *English Hammered Coinage I*

North J.J. 1988 Short Cross Classes 7 and 8 in *BNJ 58*.

Philip J. Wise, Warwickshire Museum

WARWICK, Bowling Green Street (SP 280647)

Construction of new almshouses south of 4 Bowling Green Street enabled the recording of a section across the town defences just to the north of the Westgate. Immediately in front of the standing town wall there was a ragged, rock cut ditch, c.8m wide and over 2.5m deep. The western lip of the ditch was c.6.5m below the level of the top of the wall and there was a berm 14m wide to the west. A group of clay pipes dated to c.1680, the first large group from Warwick of this date, from a building foundation trench confirms the evidence of early maps that the east side of Bowling Green Street was built up between 1610 and 1711, after the disuse of the defences.

Nicholas Palmer, Warwickshire Museum

Negative evaluations and/or salvage recording also took place at the following sites; in each case nothing of archaeological significance was observed;

ALCESTER, adjacent Eclipse Trading Estate (SP 085578), evaluation of site for proposed housing.

ALCESTER, Malt Mill Lane (SP 09155735), site of reconstructed malting kiln.

ALCESTER, Springfield Nurseries (SP 088584), evaluation of development site.

BIDFORD-ON-AVON, Tower Hill (SP 099520), evaluation of site of proposed library.

CORLEY, Rock Lane (SP 43288495), site of proposed gas pumping station.

LUDDINGTON, Experimental Horticulture Station (SP 158526), evaluation of site of proposed MAFF Central Science Laboratory.

MARTON, Marton Bridge (SP 407691), Scheduled Ancient Monument Works 30, observation of cable and pipe trench.

Warwickshire Museum

WEST MIDLANDS

BIRMINGHAM, Lifford (SP 056797)

An evaluation of a mill leat, located to the west of Lifford Lane, Birmingham, was commissioned by the Patrick Collection in advance of a landscaping scheme. This watercourse was originally dug to provide a head of water to drive a watermill, probably Lifford Mill II (Hannaford 1989), located east of Lifford Lane. The earliest feature identified was the northern edge of an early mill leat, dug into the natural sands and gravels, and aligned west-east. This feature was truncated by a later watercourse, measuring a maximum of 4m in width and 1.5m in depth, and partially lined with clay. The latter feature corresponded with the position and alignment of the shallow waterlogged channel visible in the modern ground surface. No datable artefacts were recovered from either feature.

Hannaford, H.R. 1989. *Excavations at Lifford Mill, Kings Norton*. BUFAU Report No. 85.

Jones, A.E. 1991. *Lifford, Birmingham. An Archaeological Evaluation 1991*. BUFAU Report No. 176.

A.E. Jones, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

COVENTRY, The Cheylesmore (SP 33437857)

Desktop evaluation based on the findings of excavations on the adjacent Friars Road site (WMA 33) was followed by extensive excavation on this site to survey and record the remains of the 14th century town wall prior to their being reburied under new DSS offices. Piling plans necessitated an accurate plot of both plan and levels of all features earmarked for preservation in situ.

45 metres of the town wall were uncovered, planned and surveyed, together with, for the first time, a forward projecting interval tower and rear external stair base (Fig 37). Only the wall foundation survived (2.6m wide), one faced

stone block remaining to attest to the wall proper at approx 2m wide. The tower foundation was 8m square externally with an inner room, the leading (south) corners of which were rounded off to give extra strength and stability to the structure against battery and bombardment. Traces of mortar suggest that the tower itself was 7.4m EW x 7.8m NS.

Foundations to both wall and tower were c.1.0m deep, cut into the natural clay, entirely filling the construction trenches. Large flat sandstone blocks had been placed around a core of sandstone rubble, all clay packed. Lower foundation layers included whole courses of such flat stones laid on edge for extra stability.

Two butt joints were noted within the length of wall uncovered, denoting annual builds, curtailed for winter weather. This section is known to have been built between 1385 and 1391. It was systematically demolished in 1662 on the orders of Charles II by troops under the Earl of Northampton. There were comparatively few finds from such a large urban site, but what there was was mainly of immediately post-civil war date and the wall's demolition (69% of pottery, 90% of animal bone).

No unthreatened levels were excavated and in the end only 4m of wall had to be removed for intrusive pile-caps. Care was taken in auguring pile holes where they were on or near the recovered wall before any driving was carried out to minimise disruption. The wall remains had themselves been re-covered by a layer of sand and ICI 'Terram' fibre.

A full Archive report has been completed, including historical background, pottery and animal bone reports. Excavated material is stored at Coventry Museums Archaeology Unit, Whitefriars Museum; site code DSS91.

The excavations were entirely funded by the developers and their contractors: Property holdings, DoE, PSA Services, Birmingham; Allied Demolition and Dismantling, Leicester.

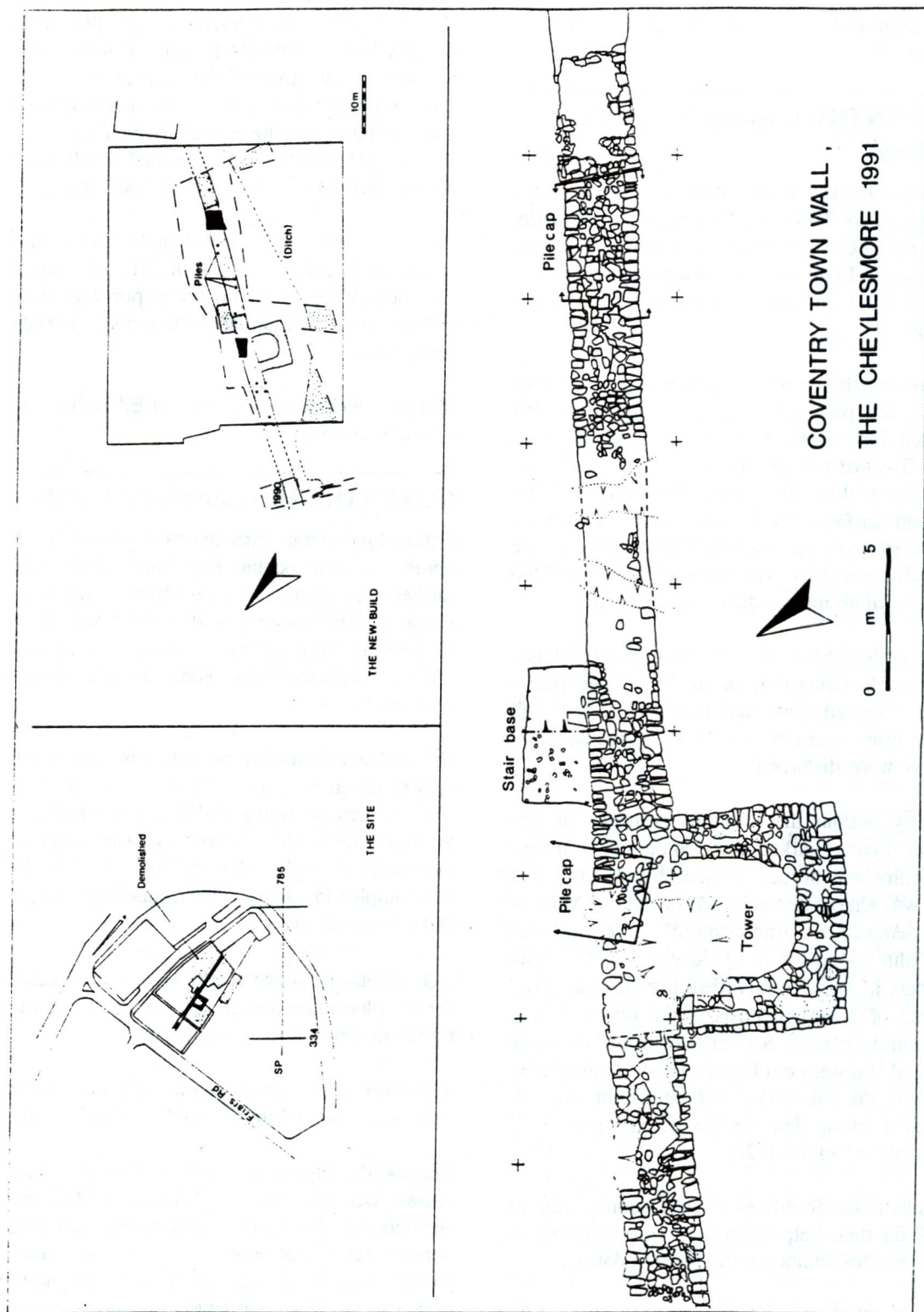


Figure 37: Coventry town wall, the Cheylesmore 1991

The Figure (Fig 37) shows the wall, tower and stair at the Cheylesmore.

Margaret Rylatt and Iain Soden, City of Coventry

COVENTRY, Gosford Street (SP 341788)

Evaluation was carried out to plot the line of the 15th century Town wall where it crossed under nos. 63-69 Gosford Street, also known as Bridge buildings. Plans to build new premises for National Tyres and Autocare involved destructive piling.

Three trenches were dug which traced the wall along the plot for 40m, including an angled stretch, built at 90 degrees to meet Gosford Gate and Gosford Bridge. In one area the wall survived to within a few centimetres of the modern ground surface, there being three courses of faced stone extent over the foundations. Here the wall was 2.1m wide over a foundation 2.5m wide with an intermediate step at 2.2m.

A pit at the rear of the wall was excavated which suggested occupation in the civil war period when Gosford Gate and this part of the wall were given extra fortifications. No medieval layers were disturbed.

Nearby, within the previous premises of National Tyres, marked for demolition, a timber structure was noted. Research indicated that this was almost certainly part of the rear wing of the demolished "Anchorsmith" Tavern, shown on John Speed's map of Coventry, 1610. Nine timbers in all were recorded and removed, consisting of 3 upright posts, 3 top plates, 1 wall plate and 2 braces. All were of oak and were oak pegged. Subsequent Dendrochronological analysis by the University of Nottingham has produced a felling date for the primary upright of the structure of 1410-20.

Thanks to the Buildings Conversation section of EDP for their help in recording the structure in situ, and for financing the Dendro-dating.

As a result of the evaluation, entirely funded by National Tyres and Autocare, one pile was moved in the new-build design, the SE corner of the building being cantilevered over the wall

remains to avoid damage. Piling for the building itself is calculated to have damaged about 5% of the buried remains inside the wall. The floor slab and pile caps went no deeper than 19th century levels. New drains have caused some damage in the area of the old frontage (the forecourt of the new building) but it is calculated that excluding the town wall (which has been entirely preserved) 90% of buried levels have been preserved over 95% of the total area.

Excavated material is stored at Coventry Museums Archaeology Unit, Whitefriars Museum: site code GS 91. A full archive report including pottery report and animal bone report has been completed.

Margaret Rylatt, Iain Soden and Ed Dickinson, City of Coventry

COVENTRY, Hay Lane (SP 335790)

Following previous excavations prior to redevelopment of land behind Hay Lane (WMA 33), further excavation was needed by the final landscaping of the site around the new-build. Tree planting necessitated two trenches being dug within which the trees would be placed and contained.

One trench cut straight into a rubbish/cess pit of c.1500 which produced 72 shreds of pottery (68% Cistercian wares - 9/10 vessels) and 277 animal bones, split almost equally between mammal and bird, with very little fish. The fill was sampled (5 L) producing a small assemblage of fruit stones and seeds.

Documentation suggests a relatively high status for the plot/house holder at this date, borne out by the make-up of the assemblages.

The other trench uncovered a sandstone rubble wall of unknown date (Probably late medieval).

Excavated material is stored at Coventry Museums Archaeology Unit, Whitefriars Museum: site code HL 91. A full archive report including pottery and animal bone reports has been completed. All archive material has been appended to that of the Hay Lane 1990 excavations.

The Excavation was funded entirely by the developers, Inner City Enterprises of London.

Margaret Rylatt, Iain Soden and George Luke,
City of Coventry

COVENTRY, Stray finds (principally from metal detection) from Coventry reported in 1991.

All were enquiries to Coventry Museums Archaeology Unit. Thanks to Stanley Ireland of Warwick Univ. and the late W.A. Seaby of Warwick Museum for the identification of the coins.

1. Roland Avenue, Holbrooks, Coventry, (SP 330833) Ae Antoninianus of Victorinus, usurper in the West (268-270)

Obv.IMP.C.VICTORINUS.P.F.AUG
(Radiate, R. Facing)
Rev.PIETAS AUG(Piety, standing).

2. Allesley, Coventry SP 30 81 (No closer provenance) Ae Antoninianus of Claudius Gothicus (268-270)

Ov.IMP. CLAUDIUS. AUG(Radiate, R. Facing)
Rev:AEQUITAS AUG(Equity, standing)

Margaret Rylatt and Iain Soden, City of Coventry

CRADLEY, Chainshop, Ladysmith Road SMR 1824 (SO 94418489)

A chainshop, identified as being of exceptional importance for industrial archaeology in the Ironbridge Institutes 1988 survey of Cradley and Cradley Heath (see *WMA* 32) was recently threatened with demolition due to its unsafe condition. The chainshop had been found to be one of only two surviving in Cradley, a town which, in the 19th century, hosted a nationally important chainmaking industry.

Due to the building's undoubted historical significance and its potential value as an educational resource negotiations were entered into which resulted in the owners agreeing to donate the building to the Local Authority. It is now intended that the building should be fully restored and subsequently fitted out with interpretive material, allowing its use both as an

educational facility and as a base for the exploration of Cradley's industrial archaeology.

Pete Boland, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

CRADLEY HEATH, Congreaves Works (SO 954848)

Brick and stone walls and channels representing the remains of a 19th century spade mill and iron works adjacent to the River Stour were surveyed by the Ironbridge Institute of Industrial Archaeology. The visible features will be consolidated and an interpretation panel provided.

Mike Hodder, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

DUDLEY, Dudley Castle archaeological project (SO 946907)

Excavations have continued to the north of the Keep, the intention being to expose the Motte side and examine its construction methods and also to investigate the history of the Moat which once separated the Motte from the Bailey within the Castle (Fig 38).

The major deposit presently being excavated consists of limestone rubble and fragmented mortar. This deposit had been purposefully dumped within the moat in order to level it and so increase the ground surface within the Bailey. Associated finds suggest that this dumping occurred in the mid-16th century and must be connected with the construction of the Sharrington Range for John Dudley, the Duke of Northumberland, which would have necessitated the demolition of the medieval ranges.

Beneath this intentional backfill the Moat profile has been revealed as a fairly shallow depression (c.2m deep). It would appear that the Moat had long been neglected and that by 1500 it afforded little in the way of defence.

To the north of the Moat (the Bailey side) a pair of parallel walls have been uncovered. Their position set into the side of the Moat would suggest their purpose as a bridge abutment. Stratigraphically they seem to have become redundant by c.1500 (possibly coinciding with the

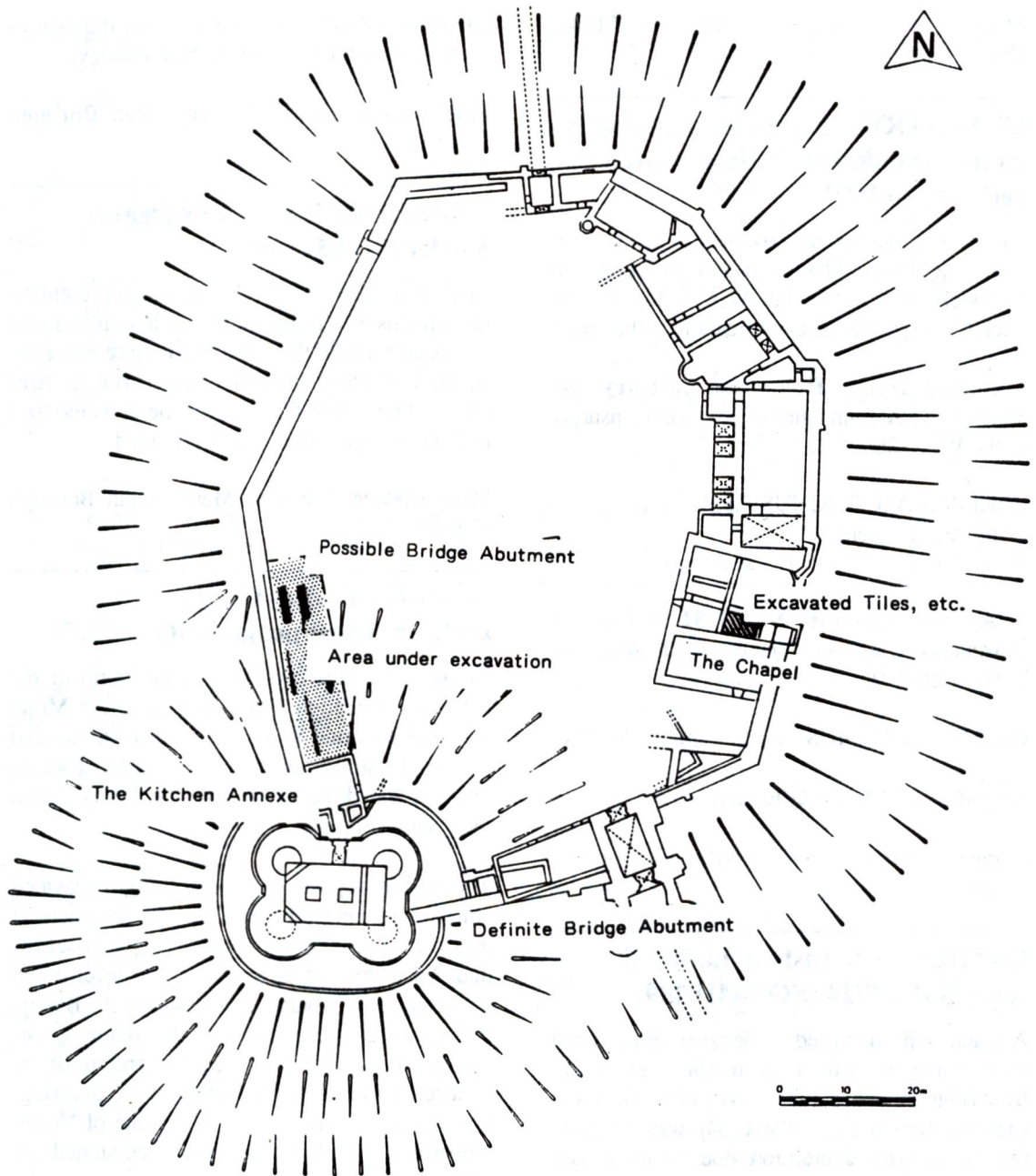


Figure 38: Dudley Castle excavations

construction of the Kitchen Annexe), although their period of construction has not yet been investigated. Previous work has shown the approach to the Motte top to lie to the east between the Triple Gate and the Motte, the need for a second access point seems unlikely and the obvious interpretation may have to be re-evaluated in the light of further information.

On the Motte side excavation has continued through the earliest layers of debris discarded from the Kitchen Annexe shortly after its construction c.1500. A foundation offset has been revealed to the northern wall which cuts the Motte side. Hopefully next season we will be able to investigate the construction methods of the Motte itself.

Excavations will continue in 1992 with the much appreciated assistance of The Friends of Dudley Castle and of student members of Birmingham University Archaeological Society.

S.J. Linnane, Dudley Castle Archaeologist

DUDLEY, Dudley Castle (SO 946907): A note on some excavated window glass

In the process of excavating the 16th century backfill within the Moat (see previous), a large quantity of stained and painted window glass has been recovered. Although badly shattered and unstable, a total drawn record has been compiled by Mrs. J. Tyson (a member of The Friends of Dudley Castle).

In the process of this work a number of fragments have been identified which when reassembled (if only partially) have revealed extremely close parallels with an heraldic glass panel which now forms a part of the Burrell Collection situated near Glasgow (Fig 39). This panel (measuring 51cms by 44cms) depicts the

Arms of the De Somery family who were Lords of Dudley Castle between 1194 and 1322 - 'Or two lions passant azure' which is 'Gold two blue lions pacing'.

So striking are the similarities in both design and technique that one must assume that the panel belonging to the Burrell Collection started its life at Dudley Castle, presumably as part of the decor of the Chapel Window. Archaeological excavation has already shown that the refurbishment undertaken by John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, in the mid-16th century involved the removal of the decorated tile floor. The tiles were discarded nearby along with fragments of a stone effigy which once must have occupied a place in the Chapel.

It seems that in this "refurbishment" we are looking at the attempts of a man who greatly benefited from Henry VIII's religious reforms and who consequently strongly supported them, to cleanse his private Chapel of 'Popish' symbolism and to create a more acceptable place of Protestant worship.

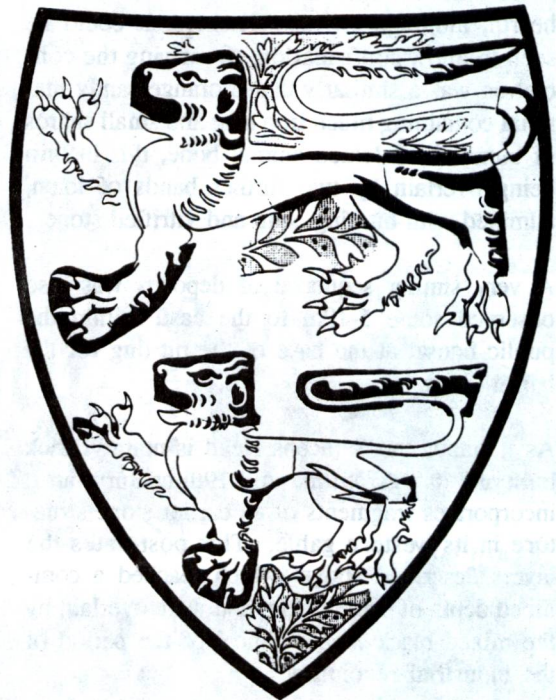


Figure 39: Dudley Castle window glass

How the Burrell Collection panel survived and ultimately found a new home in Glasgow is somewhat more of a mystery.

Apart from the fragments described above many other designs have been recorded, even a few details of human figures. The window must have been a remarkable decorative feature within the dour surrounds of Dudley Castle in the early 14th century.

S.J. Linnane, Dudley Castle Archaeologist

DUDLEY, The Saracens Head, Stone Street (SO 94399039)

A watching brief, during the construction of an extension to the side of the public house and excavation for a new barrel drop in its cellar, revealed well-stratified deposits apparently related to metal working in the post medieval period.

In the southernmost construction trench of the extension, fronting on to Stone Street, was a thin layer of black very fine grained sandy material which had formed an extremely hard concretion directly over the natural clay, some 2m below modern ground level. In one area this sat in a hollow in the natural reminiscent of a bowl hearth, although an insufficient area could be seen to allow confirmation. Overlying the concretion was a similarly dense orange sandy material containing much iron slag and small shards of burnt and calcined animal bone, this in turn being overlain by two further bands of loam, admixed with burning, slag and vitrified stone.

A very similar sequence of deposits was also observed some 5-10m to the east, within the public house, at the base of the pit dug for the barrel drop.

As it stands the Saracens Head is mainly brick built and dates from the mid 19th century but it incorporates fragments of an earlier stone structure in its western gable. This post-dates the layers described above, which reached a combined depth of some 0.75m and were overlain by the mixed black loams typical of the period of the industrial revolution.

Visual analysis by Stephanie Ratkai of pottery from the stratified layers suggests a 16th century

date for the black and orange base layers, with overlying layers ranging into the 17th century. The tentative identification of both a possible waster of 17th century date and a fragment of saggar raises the intriguing possibility of pottery production in the area.

It is obviously unwise to attempt a detailed interpretation of the evidence from such a small area. Nevertheless, it is apparent that quite intensive industrial activity is taking place here in the post medieval period and it seems not unreasonable to speculate that this represents an early stage in the expansion of the town away from the medieval core, which lies just to the west.

Pete Boland, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

DUDLEY, The Inhedge (SO 94159012)

A watching brief during construction of an office block on land to the rear of High Street produced evidence of extensive clearance and disturbance due to coal mining activity, a brick-lined shaft having to be capped before work could proceed. Such activity is certainly not recorded on early plans of the area and appears likely to date at least to the 18th century.

One "island" of stratigraphy did however survive the mining disturbance and comprised tightly banded layers of coal, ash, clay and charcoal with much iron slag and some associated stonework, perhaps suggestive of a hearth or furnace.

At the base of these layers, over the natural clay, was one sherd of pottery which has been identified by Stephanie Ratkai as a white ware, possibly from the Chilvers Coton kiln, with a date range from the 13th to 15th centuries.

This watching brief seems to confirm quite intensive industrial activity, perhaps surprisingly close to the medieval core of the town.

Pete Boland, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

DUDLEY, St. James's Priory SMR 999 (SO 94329086)

A watching brief was undertaken as a condition of scheduled monument consent for improvements to landscaping in Priory Park. During creation of a shrub bed a substantial wall was uncovered, running from north to south parallel to the eastern range of the Priory and some 10m from it. The wall ran the whole length of the eastern range and no doubt continued beyond the area under observation.

The wall had been constructed using an eclectic mixture of coursed sandstone and limestone of varying sizes and had been patched with brick in several places. Whilst it was only some 0.5m in thickness it was obviously deeply founded, some 0.75m depth being recorded on its eastern side, where it was associated with dense black silts which appeared to have accumulated against it. To avoid unnecessary disturbance no attempt was made to locate the base wall here, or to excavate further into the deposits to its west.

Given the constraints on observation and recording imposed by the structure of the watching brief any interpretation of the walls purpose must be highly provisional. However, it is known from documentary and map evidence that the priory was, before the nineteenth century, surrounded by fish ponds/a moat which, on the evidence of 18th century engravings (Fig 40), had their sides revetted with stone walls. The position of the wall would sit well with it having acted as a revetment to the near side of the easternmost priory pond. Such an interpretation is supported by the presence of silts to its west and by the absence of any evidence for return walls, which might have been expected had that wall formed part of a building range.

The wall has now been protected and lies beneath the intended planting scheme. Thanks are due to "The Friends of Dudley Castle" for their help in excavation and recording.

Pete Boland, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

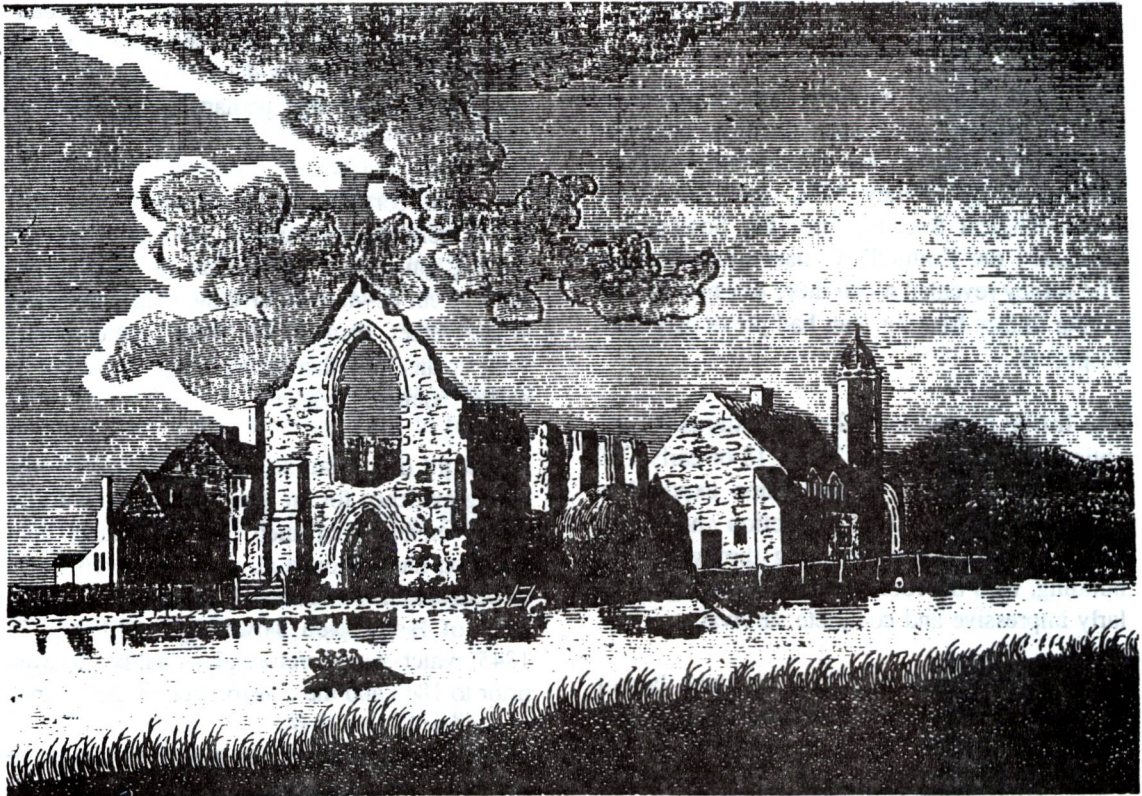


Figure 40: St James's Priory, Dudley in the late 18th century

DUDLEY, St. Thomas's Church, High Street SMR 963 (SO 94219008)

The Church of St. Thomas is first mentioned in 1182 in a confirmation charter relating to Dudley Priory. However, the medieval church having become "very ancient and much decayed" was demolished in 1815 and replaced by the present edifice.

Recent observations suggest, however, that not all of the earlier church was swept away. Two below-ground chambers located beneath the east end of the present church and currently used as a boiler room clearly pre-date the structure above. They are stone built using well dressed and coursed sandstone and in the easternmost chamber there is evidence of a springing line, suggesting an original stone vault.

The chambers are currently being recorded with the assistance of "The Friends of Dudley Castle", to whom much thanks.

Pete Boland, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

HALESOWEN, No. 30 High Street SMR 864 (SO 96688351)

This grade 2 listed building, now occupied by Dixons Estate Agents, has recently been the subject of a drawn and photographic survey, undertaken by Dudley MBC and Halesowen Archaeological Society, after the Society had contacted the Council's Conservation Section. The survey revealed much more extensively surviving timber framing than had previously been suspected.

The listing description relies on external observation only and refers to "late C18 or early C19 refronting to earlier timber frame exposed at side and rear". Internal inspection and survey reveals well preserved framing throughout the building, with the roof structure being a particularly impressive and complete survival.

The original, probably 15th century, layout seems to have consisted of an open hall and shop arrangement. This was later altered by the insertion centrally of a massive stone chimney breast, and it seems likely this was accompanied by the insertion of upper floors. Final alter-

ations involving extensive rebuilding in brick and a subsequent slight increase in the width of the shop front, to take in a former arched entry, brought the building to its current form.

On the basis of this new evidence it is hoped that the grading of the building will be revised upwards. The assistance given by the owners and staff of Dixons Estate Agents is greatly appreciated.

Pete Boland, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

HALESOWEN, Stourbridge Road, Zion Methodist Chapel SMR 879 (SO 96458366)

During stripping of the interior of this grade two listed building, leading to conversion to offices, it was noted that the mainly brick built structure, dated 1843, had been raised on earlier sandstone foundations and recording work was therefore undertaken. The stone elements of the footings underlay all four walls of the brick structure and consisted of large well-coursed ashlar blocks in the local red sandstone. This may represent an earlier structure but the coincidence of ground plan perhaps suggests that the sandstone elements represent simply the first stage of Chapel construction, although perhaps using reclaimed stone.

However, certainly in the back (south) wall, which delimits the building plot, the sandstone walling gave every appearance of having been crudely cut down to receive the overlying brickwork, rather than having been contemporary with it, this may therefore perhaps represent an earlier boundary wall.

A test pit dug in an attempt to recover some dating evidence for the sandstone walls unfortunately merely confirmed that the chapel construction had removed all previous levels down to bedrock. No structure is shown on the title Map of Halesowen Township, published in 1845, which was therefore presumably surveyed prior to 1843 and the construction of the Chapel.

Pete Boland, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

WALSALL, Castle Old Fort (SK 062033)

A small excavation and watching brief were undertaken by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit prior to the construction of a private swimming pool and implement store within this small hillfort to the northeast of Walsall. The work was commissioned by Mr. K.D. Jones.

No archaeological features could be identified in the area of the swimming pool. However, the sections created during the construction of the implement store suggested that traces of the original earthworks might have survived in this area.

Hughes, E. G. 1991 *An Excavation and Watching Brief at Castle Old Fort, Stonnall, Walsall, 1991*. BUFAU. Report No.150

Gwilym Hughes, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

WEST BROMWICH, Oak House (SO 998908)

Evaluation by the Gardens Archaeology Project showed that up to 1.2m of levelling deposits for a late 19th century bowling green behind the building sealed a small formal garden of probable 17th century date. The garden consisted of four grass plots defined by cambered paths, and there was a stone foundation, probably for a summer house, on its eastern side. Further excavation by the Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit in Advance of works around the adjoining barns revealed a stone wall, which may have been the base for a timber-framed building joining the surviving barns to form an enclosed courtyard.

Mike Hodder, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

WEST BROMWICH, Sandwell Priory (SP 025914)

The report on the excavations of 1982-88 was published in October, 1991, as a volume of the *Transactions of the South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society*. Following con-

solidation of the exposed masonry, interpretation panels have been erected on the site. Resistivity and magnetometer surveys have been undertaken in a field to the east of the Priory by Geophysical Surveys of Bradford, to test for the presence of ancillary agricultural buildings and other features within a ditched enclosure located in earlier work.

Mike Hodder, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

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