

## Eccleswall Court, Linton Herefordshire: archaeological monitoring

Clementine Lovell  
2004



## archenfield archaeology ltd

Principal Archaeologist: Huw Sherlock BA, Diparch, MIFA

Archenfield Archaeology Ltd is a multidisciplinary archaeological consultancy, offering a complete range of archaeological advice and services to the public and private sector. We specialise in giving archaeological advice to developers, housing associations and private individuals. We also undertake archaeological intervention, from monitoring to full-scale excavation; building survey; landscape and geophysical surveys and community-based historical and archaeological projects.

*Eccleswall Court, Linton, Herefordshire: archaeological monitoring  
2001*

Client: Mr P Scudamore, Eccleswall Court owner

Text: Clementine Lovell

Project Manager: Huw Sherlock

Cover Photograph: Black and white photocopy of 1839 tithe map featuring the area  
of Eccleswall Court Farm



## Contents

Summary.....	2
1.0 Introduction .....	3
1.0 Introduction .....	3
2.0 Geological, historical and archaeological background .....	5
2.1 Geological background and land use .....	5
2.2 Historical background.....	5
3.0 Project aims and objectives.....	8
4.0 Methodology.....	8
5.0 Results .....	9
5.1 Stratigraphy.....	9
5.2 Finds .....	9
6.0 Conclusions.....	9
7.0 Archive deposition.....	9
8.0 Publication and dissemination proposals .....	10
General bibliography .....	10

## Figures

Figure 1: Site location plan.....	3
Figure 2: Trench location plan.....	4
Figure 3: Composite map showing the holdings of Eccleswall court in 1839 .....	6
Figure 4: Eccleswall castle in the Royal Commission of Historic Monuments.....	7

## **Summary**

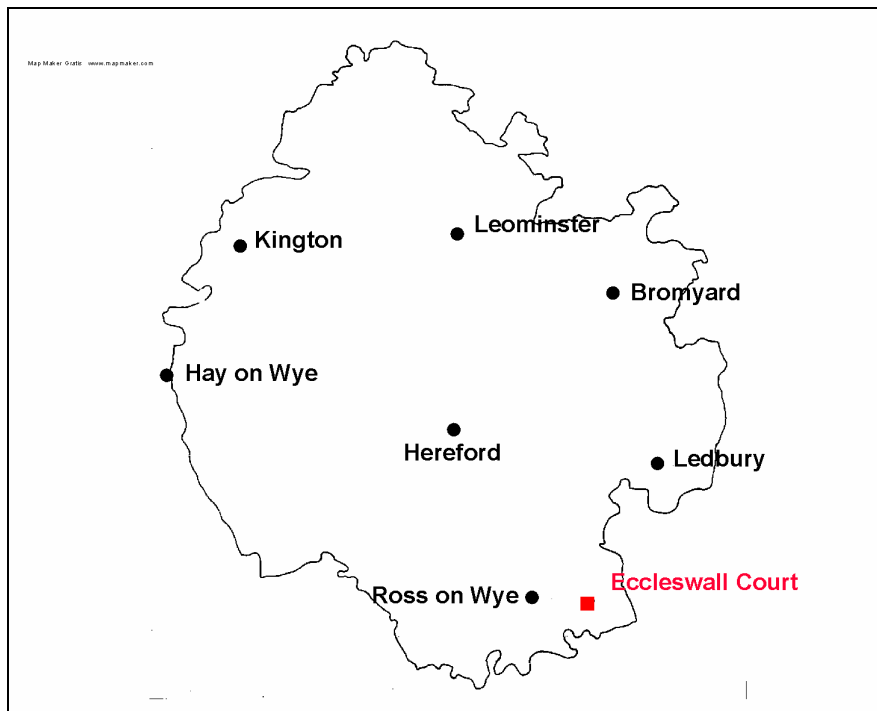
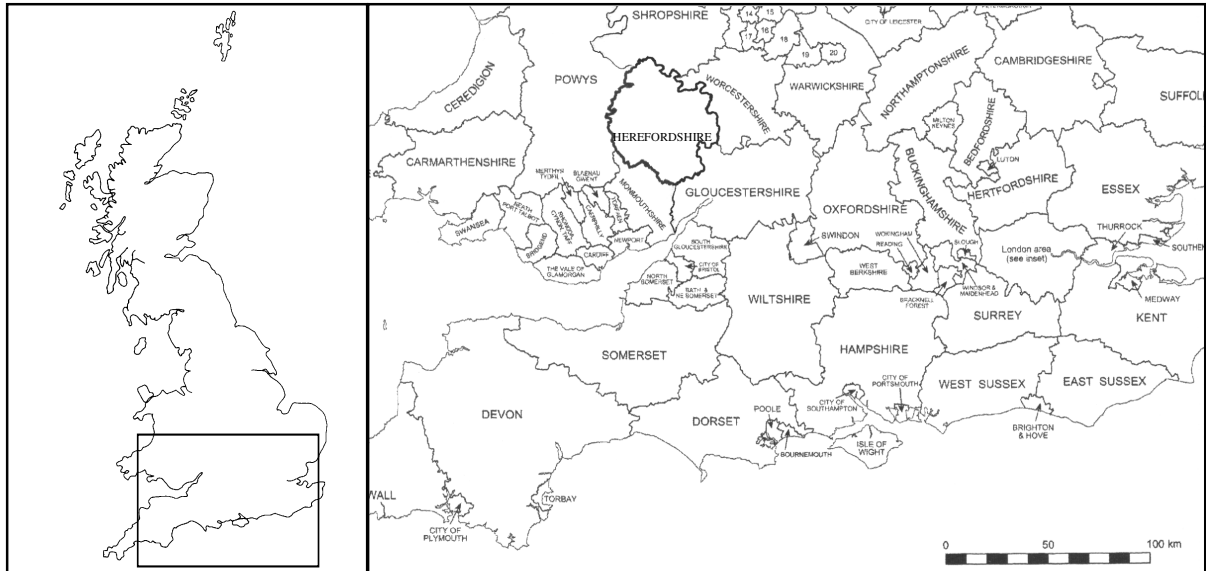
*Archenfield Archaeology conducted a program of archaeological monitoring during the construction of new gallops adjacent to Eccleswall Court, Bromsash, Herefordshire. The area stripped consisted of 560 metres by 3 metres, excavated by machine to an average depth of about 300mm.*

*Despite the relative proximity of the Roman site of Ariconium, no features of any date earlier than the medieval period were found. Apparently regular undulations in the subsoil may represent medieval ridge and furrow.*

*A small quantity of iron slag and two sherds of pottery were the only finds recovered from the excavation.*

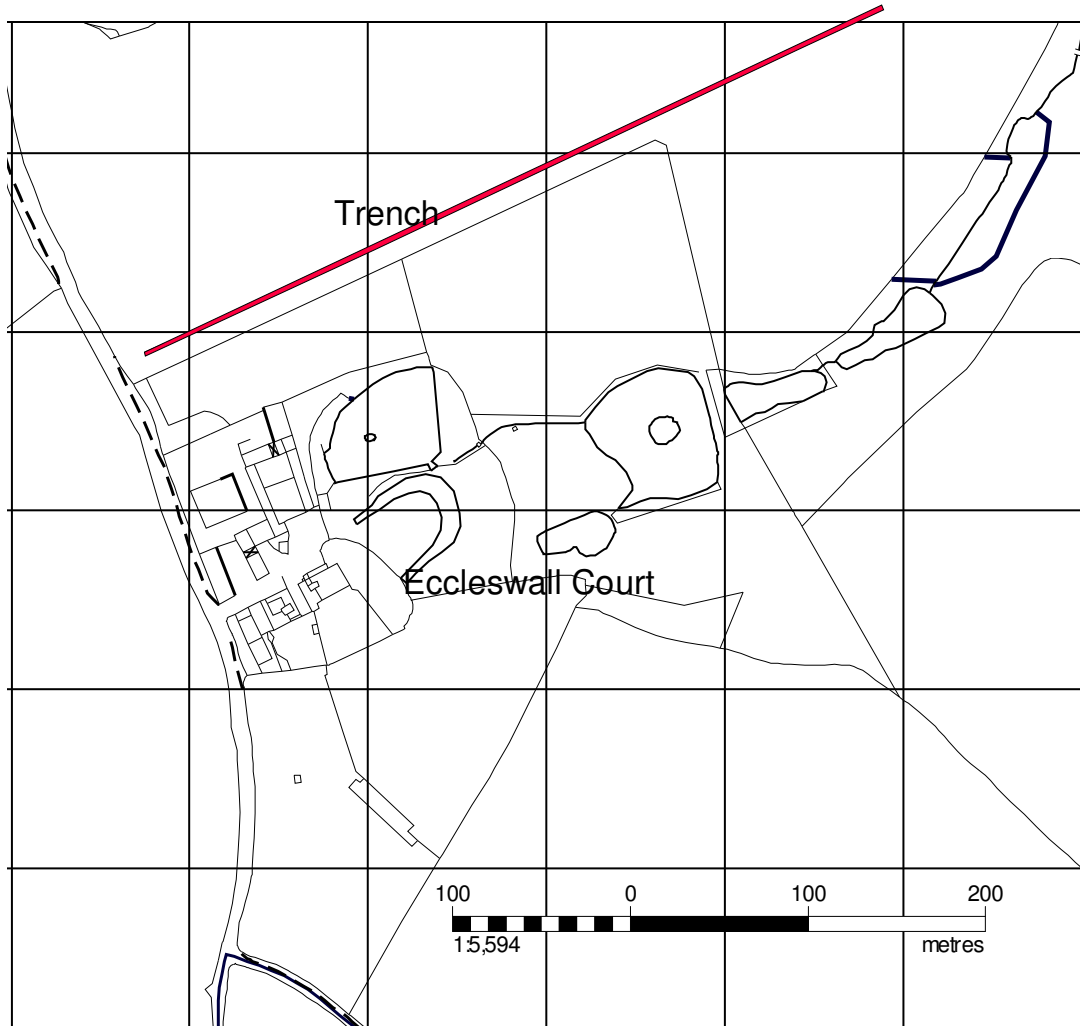
# 1.0 Introduction

NGR SO 653233



**Figure 1: Site location plan**

Mr P Scudamore (the client) commissioned a programme of archaeological work in accordance with the brief issued by Herefordshire Council (ref SE2003/2010/F). This was issued in response to planning application ref SE2003/2010/F, for permission to construct an equine unit at Eccleswall Court. This document gives details of how the archaeological project was conducted, as stipulated in the brief.



**Figure 2: Trench location plan. Ordnance Survey superplan data reproduced under licence, drawing reference HEMC 00003359**

A trench measuring 560 metres by 3 metres (marked in red on figure 2) was excavated by machine to an average depth of about 300mm, to the north-west of Eccleswall Court.

## **2.0 Geological, historical and archaeological background**

### **2.1 Geological background and land use**

The solid geology of the area consists of the Lower Old Red Sandstone (OS Geological Survey 10 mile map, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 1979). The site is currently occupied by the house, gardens and farm buildings of Eccleswall Court.

### **2.2 Historical background**

The site of Eccleswall Court lies within the parish of Linton, near the villages of Bromsash and Weston-under-Penyard, and south-west of the core of the centre of the Roman settlement of Ariconium.

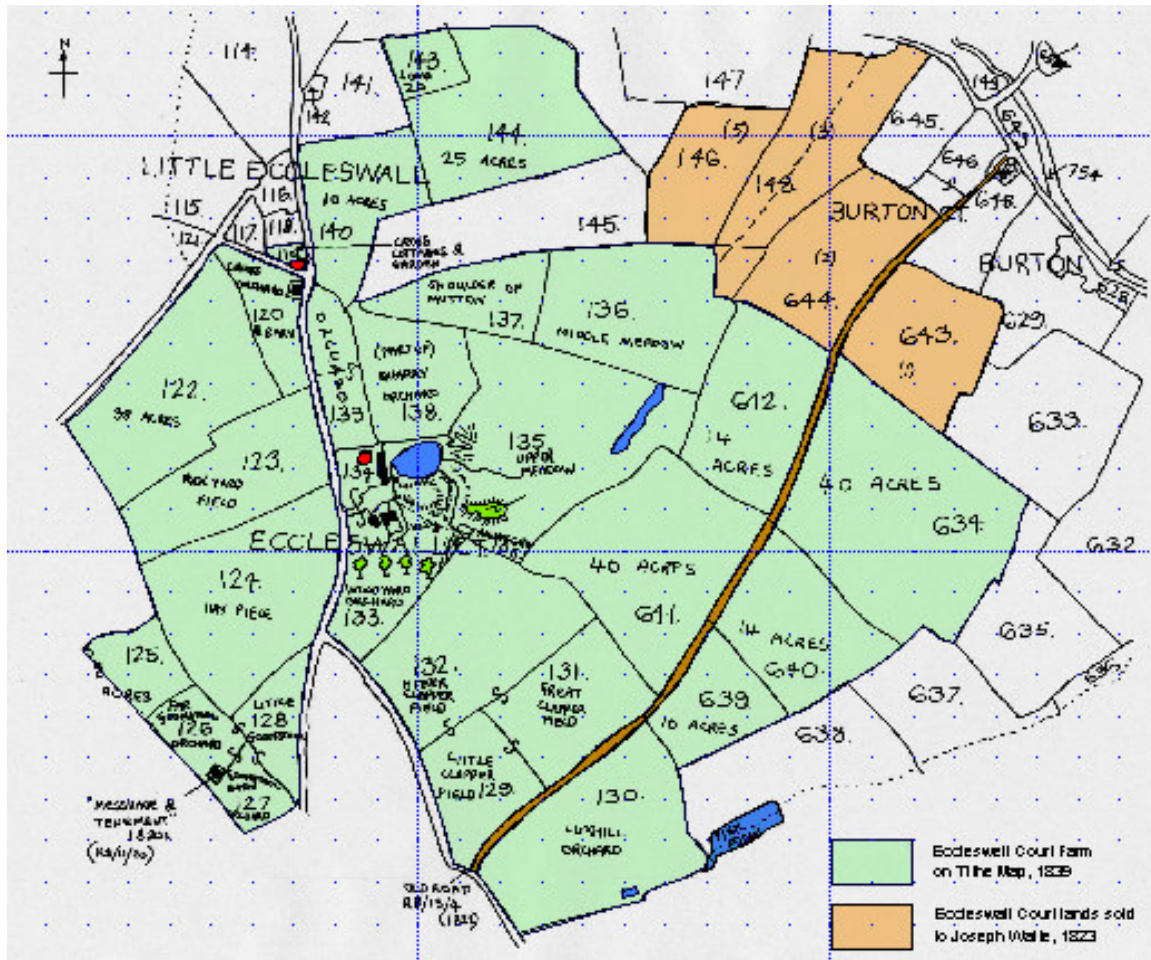
Linton is recorded in the Domesday Survey as property of King William. It consisted of five hides and paid the fourth part of 'one night's revenue' (a night's revenue supported the king and his household for one night). Linton was inhabited by ten villagers and five smallholders with twelve ploughs (Thorn & Thorn 1983). The place-name Linton is thought to have meant 'flax enclosure' (Copleston Crowe 1989).

The place-name 'Eccleswall' is indicative of first millennium Christian settlement. The name recorded for Eccleswall in 1274 is 'Egleswalle', or 'Spring at a Celtic Christian centre' (Copleston Crowe 1989).

King Henry II granted lordship of the Manor of Eccleswall to Richard De Talbot, who is thought to have built Eccleswall castle. Talbot's descendant, also named Richard, signed himself "Dominus de Eccleswall" in a letter to the Pope in which the Barons asserted the right of King Edward to superior power over Scotland. The Talbots remained at Eccleswall until 1342, when the family seat transferred to the larger and grander castle of Goodrich.

Eccleswall Court was owned by the Talbots until 1616, when Gilbert Talbot, 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Shrewsbury, died without a male heir and the estate passed to his second daughter Lady Elizabeth, wife of Henry Grey the 8<sup>th</sup> Earl of Kent. In 1718 the estates of the earl of Kent were sold to George Bonner. Joseph Waite (Burton) purchased the land from Bonner in 1823 (Robinson 1869).

Figure 3 (below) shows Burton Court with the land purchased from Eccleswall (shown in orange). The estate of Eccleswall Court (shown in green) consisted of extensive fields and orchards, as marked on the tithe map of 1839.



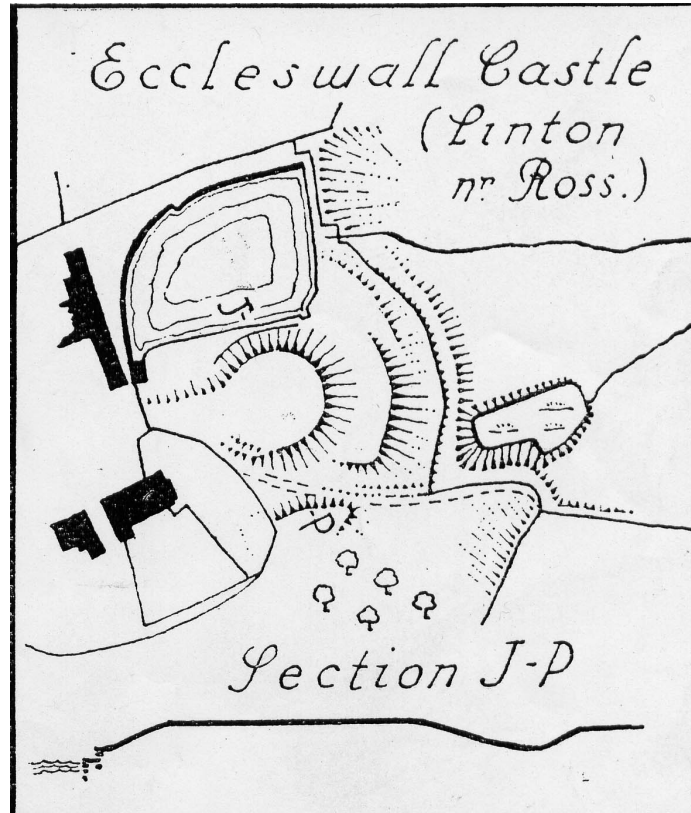
**Figure 3: Composite map showing the holdings of Eccleswall court in 1839 (in green) and additional land holdings sold in 1823 (in orange) Archaeological Background**

The site lies very near to the Roman industrial settlement at Ariconium. This settlement was the subject of a survey in 1996, as part of the Central Marches Historic Towns Project (Dalwood, 1996). Ariconium will also be the subject of a forthcoming English Heritage desk-based survey. In the interim, the late Elizabeth Taylor, produced a fieldwork summary which was published in the Herefordshire Archaeological Newsletter (Taylor, 1998).

Ariconium has produced large quantities of ancient finds including pre-Roman coins, 13 of which were recovered from an excavation in the 1920s (Hayter, 1923).

Eccleswall Court is also the recorded site of a now lost medieval castle (ref. HSM 802) and a chapel (HSM 800). The original layout of Eccleswall castle is shown below (figure 3), but all that remains today is a grass grown moat and a low mound of earth. The castle was extant during the reign of Henry II, but was allowed to fall into decay after 1342. Some fragments of masonry built into the farmhouse now occupying the site are thought to have come from the castle, as well as some stones present in the garden wall.





**Figure 4: Eccleswall castle in the Royal Commission of Historic Monuments**

The remains of the chapel consist of single tower of indeterminate date incorporated into an outbuilding at Eccleswall Court. It was formerly a chapel in Eccleswall Castle, to which the last presentation was made in March 1541. The chapel was dedicated to Thomas the Martyr, and remained in service until the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1</sup>

A series of medieval fishponds (HSM 801) exist to the east of the main – largely post-medieval – building complex (HSM 803).

<sup>1</sup> Herefordshire Sites and Monuments Record website: [www.smr.herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.smr.herefordshire.gov.uk)

### **3.0 Project aims and objectives**

The aims of the project were: -

- to monitor the stripping of the topsoil in the trench by the use of a JCB.
- to manually excavate and record any archaeological deposits within the development area. This work was to be carried out following standard Institute of Field Archaeologists guidelines for archaeological excavation, and the methodology laid out in the Archenfield Archaeology Site Recording Manual.
- to record the presence of sensitive archaeological material within the trench and in the spoil removed during the excavation, and to retrieve any potential dating evidence.
- to make a record of all finds and any environmental material recovered.
- to ensure that if any environmental evidence was preserved, that a sufficient sample be retained to allow for further analysis (normally at least a 10L sample was to be taken and stored in a thick gauge polythene bag, labelled both inside and outside with a permanent marker using a waterproof label).
- to ensure that the location and of the area excavated was accurately recorded on a suitably scaled plan.
- to record negative evidence and to consider its implications.
- to ensure that where important archaeological remains existed, plans for the preservation in-situ of such remains was discussed with the Archaeological Advisor for Herefordshire Council and the client.
- to ensure that a recording strategy was adopted that allowed for the production of a stratigraphic record of the deposits encountered, and a record of the extent and depth of the excavations.

### **4.0 Methodology**

The following methodology was employed: -

- suitably qualified archaeologists monitored all activity that involved disturbance of the ground surface.
- an assessment of the archaeological significance of finds, structures and deposits was made and appropriate action taken.
- structures and stratigraphic sequences observed were recorded on scaled drawings and the position of all work disturbing the ground, and any archaeological features, was located on them.
- the presence of artefacts and was recorded with a description of their type, quantity and original location. The spoil was scanned for significant finds but in fact none were observed.
- all descriptions of structures and deposits, photographic records and drawing numbers were recorded on the relevant data capture documents in accordance with Archenfield Archaeology's standard site recording procedures.
- significant features were, where possible, photographed next to an appropriate scale rule, and a board displaying a unique context number. Each photographic exposure was recorded in the photographic log.

- staff carrying out the evaluation excavation followed the guidelines laid down in the Archenfield Archaeology Health and Safety Policy
- Archenfield Archaeology conforms to the Institute of Field Archaeologists' Code of Conduct and code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual arrangements in Field Archaeology. All projects are, where applicable, carried out in accordance with IFA Standards and Guidance or Draft Standards and Guidance.

## **5.0 Results**

### **5.1 Stratigraphy**

The topsoil consisted of a typically reddish-brown silty loam. The subsoil was a pinkish-brown silty clay with occasional green and dark brown sandstone pigments. Undulations in the subsoil appear to be regular and may therefore represent ridge and furrow remnants.

### **5.2 Finds**

Finds from the trench and spoil heap amounted to nothing more than two sherds of pottery and small quantities of iron slag.

## **6.0 Conclusions**

There was a general scarcity of archaeological material and the only feature of interest was the regular undulation of the subsoil. This would be of great significance if indeed representative of ridge and furrow.

## **7.0 Archive deposition**

The primary project archive, consisting of the excavated material and any original paper records, will be prepared and stored in accordance with the guidelines laid down in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' guidelines for the preparation and storage of archives. The primary archive will be stored with Hereford City Museum.

A copy of the digital archive, stored on CD and consisting of context, artefact and ecofact data, together with the site plan and selected photographs, will accompany the primary archive.

The client, in consultation with the project manager, will make provision for the deposition of all finds from the excavation with the Hereford City Museum. On completion of the fieldwork and the processing, collation, recording and analysis of the finds from the excavation all finds will be handed over to the museum staff, along with the project archive. Arrangements will be made with the museum for the transfer of title.

## 8.0 Publication and dissemination proposals

Paper copies of this report will be lodged with the Archaeological Adviser to Herefordshire Council, Herefordshire Sites and Monuments Record and Hereford Library. A short note on the project will be prepared for publication in the Transactions of the Woolhope Club.

CDs of this report, together with the supporting archival material will be available from Archenfield Archaeology.

The complete photographic record, including the negatives, will be retained by Archenfield Archaeology.

### General bibliography

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| British Geological Survey 1979     | Geological survey 10 mile map, south sheet, 3 <sup>rd</sup> edition (solid) 1979 1:625000  |
| Copleston-Crow, Bruce, 1989        | <i>Herefordshire Place-Names</i> , British Archaeological Reports, British Series No <b>214</b>  |
| Dalwood, Hal, 1996                 | <i>Central Marches Historic Towns Survey: Archaeological Assessment of Weston-under-Penyard Roman Settlement, Hereford and Worcester</i> . Hereford and Worcester County Council |
| Hayter, A G K, 1923                | <i>The Coins and the Pottery</i> in Jack, 1923   |
| Robinson, Rev C J, 1869            | <i>A history of the castles of Herefordshire and their lords</i> . Longman & Co.   |
| Taylor, Elizabeth, 1998            | Ariconium: a fieldwork summary by Elizabeth Taylor. <i>Herefordshire Archaeological Newsletter</i> <b>69</b> . pp19-22   |
| Thorn, Frank & Caroline, eds, 1983 | <i>Domesday Book, Herefordshire</i> . Phillimore   |

### Copyright

Archenfield Archaeology will retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents, under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act* 1998 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provide an exclusive licence to the client for use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project.