

Sycamore, Bodenham, Herefordshire:
archaeological monitoring and recording

Clementine Lovell and P J Pikes
2002



archenfield archaeology ltd

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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.

*Sycamore, Bodenham, Herefordshire: archaeological monitoring and recording
2002*

Client: Mr S Galvin, property owner

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Cover Photograph: 2nd edition 1904 OS map of Bodenham



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Summary

Archenfield Archaeology was commissioned by Mr Galvin to carry out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording at Sycamore, Bodenham, Herefordshire during May 2002. Despite excavation of a large number of trenches, up to 1.5 metres deep in places, the only features observed were the footings of modern bungalows, and a modern cesspit. There were a small number of finds, mostly dating to the 20th century. Extensive landscaping of the area prior to the construction of the bungalows that previously occupied the site seems likely to have removed any traces of previous occupation.

1.0 Introduction

NGR SO 54448 50531

Herefordshire Sites and Monuments Record - Event No 32132

Hereford City Museum Accession No HFDMG 2002-44

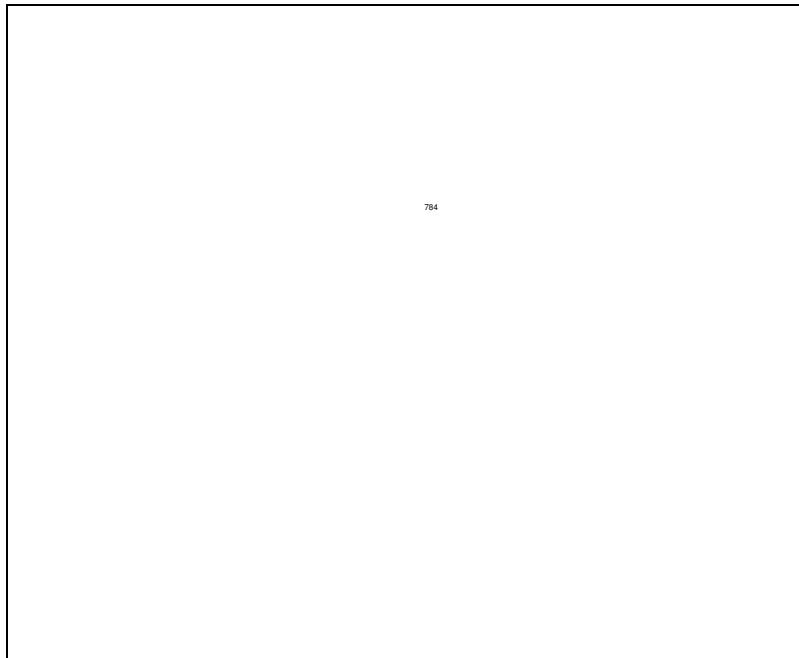
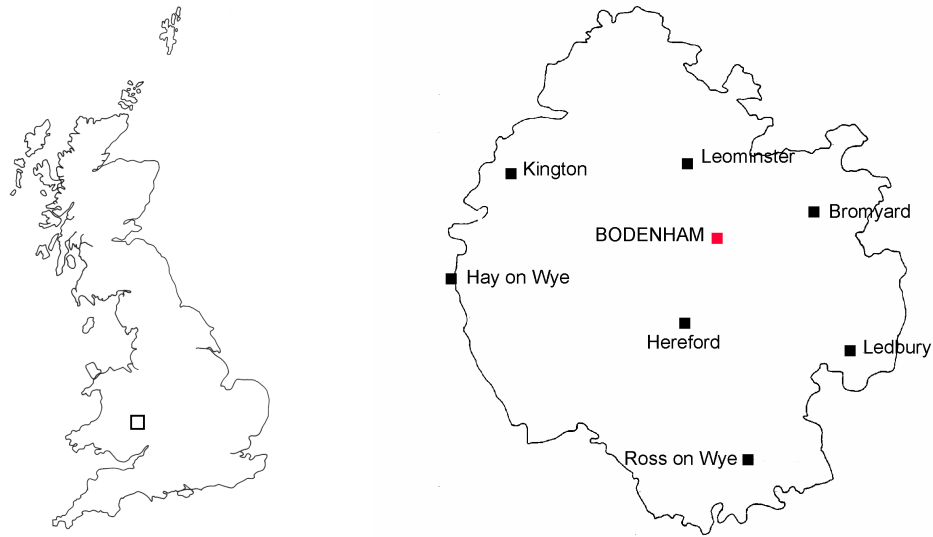


Figure 1: Location plan. OS superplan data reproduced under licence, drawing ref 26106187

Mr Galvin (the client) commissioned a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording in accordance with a brief issued by the Herefordshire Council Archaeology Service. This was issued in response to planning application NC2001/1611/0 for a new residential development.

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 1979).

2.2 Historical background

A standard English derivation of the place-name might be '*Boda's HĀM*' with Boda as a personal name, meaning the village of a man named Boda (Ekwall, 1960). But Bruce Coplestone-Crow (1989) points out that HAMM is always likelier than HĀM in Herefordshire and the rendering should be '*Boda's land in a river-bend.*' Bodenham's situation in a bend of the River Lugg suits this interpretation.

At Domesday Bodenham Moor was a part of the extensive holdings of Roger de Lacy. Herbert de Furchis held it from Roger. There were 1½ hides which paid tax and there were 2 ploughs in lordship. The recorded population consisted of six villeins, three bordars, a smith, a beadle and six cottars with six ploughs. There were also six slaves. A mill there was worth 16 shillings and 30 sticks of eels. There was 'meadow only for the oxen.'

At the time of Domesday there were ten or eleven estates within the area of the present parish of Bodenham. Bodenham Moor was at the time the largest of the settlements.

The various estates had experienced mixed fortunes since 1066, some having declined in value and some increased. Bodenham Moor was among those with an increased value – from 50 shillings to 60 shillings and had overtaken Bodenham itself as the most valuable of the manors.¹

Bodenham Moor or Bodenham Furchis remained in the Furchis Family until the later 13th century when it passed to the Lucy family who held it until 1583. By 1243 one third of this manor had become a separate holding of Roger de Bodenham, who held it in turn of Walter de Baskerville of Eardisley. This part was then known as Bodenham Roger.²

In about 1240 Purnell, daughter of Roger Furchis, married Sir William Lucy of Charlecote. Roger Furchis died without male heirs and this manor remained with the descendants of Purnell and William until its sale in 1583 by Sir Thomas Lucy – Shakespeare's "*Justice Shallow*" – to Sir Thomas Coningsby. From that date it became a part of Hampton Court estate' (Robinson, 1872, p30).

The property seems to have been originally part of an open field of the settlement, known as Dun Field. Parts of this field had already been enclosed by 1813 when the enclosure map was drawn.³ The road running south from Saffron's Cross clearly cuts across some of the field boundaries on the map. Continuous boundaries, interrupted only by this road, run down from the road to Litmarsh towards the stream and demonstrate that this road is relatively recent.

Immediately to the south of the Y junction was a field known as Little Field in 1813. The property itself was 'allotment' at the time.

¹ Information from an undated typescript by Bruce Coplestone-Crow in Herefordshire Record Office – page 1

² *Ibid*, p 13

³ Inclosure Award map – Herefordshire Record Office

In 1910 the Inland Revenue Duties on Land Value recorded the property as cottage and garden occupied by Thomas Watkins and owned by John Stanhope Arkwright as part of his extensive Hampton Court estate.

2.3 Archaeological background

The earliest archaeological evidence from Bodenham consists of Neolithic flint finds¹ and a square-shaped prehistoric enclosure, identified on an aerial photograph.² A number of other enclosures and ring ditches have been identified in the area, but these are undated.

Two early medieval / Dark Age settlements, Bowley and Broadfield, are recorded in Domesday within the parish of Bodenham.³ There are five known deserted medieval villages (DMVs) in the area: house platforms were recorded at all but one of these; sunken ways and field systems have also been found associated with some of the DMVs.⁴

The church of St Michael at Bodenham also dates from the medieval period: the west tower was built in the late 13th century; parts of the building suggest there may have been a 12th century church.⁵

Documents from the 17th century mention an ancient ford over the river beside the Vern. The footbridge that crossed the river near the Vern above the ford is marked on the 1904 OS map (see figure 2 below).⁶ Another important crossing point, where five footpaths from parts of Bodenham parish, south of the river, meet and cross into the churchyard, church, and village beyond, was first recorded in 1722 and is known as 'Byfield Bridge'. The remains of a ford were identified in the river below. The ford was replaced by the bridge to improve the river for boats between 1697 and 1722.⁷

¹ Herefordshire SMR number 24354

² Herefordshire SMR number 36611

³ Herefordshire SMR numbers 24345 & 24354

⁴ Herefordshire SMR numbers 1693, 2451, 11145, 11148 & 20642

⁵ Herefordshire SMR number 5288

⁶ Herefordshire SMR number 23302

⁷ Herefordshire SMR number 23303

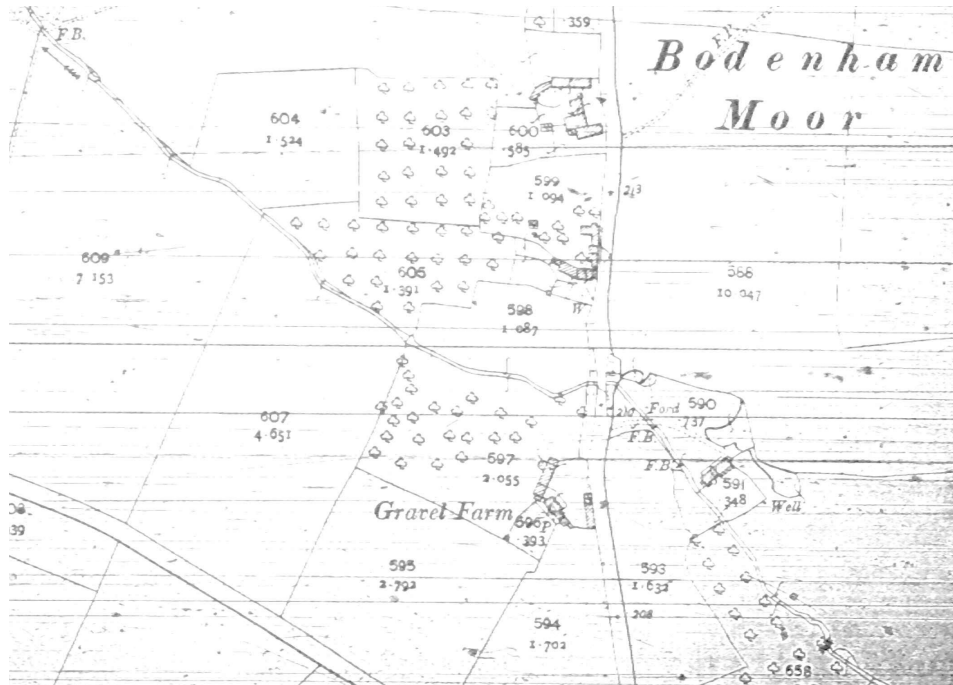


Figure 2: 1904 2nd edition OS map

3.0 Project aims and objectives

The aims of the project were: -

- to monitor all groundwork undertaken by the contractor.
- to make a record of the extent and depth of all such groundwork.
- to make a record of any archaeological features or deposits exposed.
- to record the presence of archaeological material within the trenches and in the spoil removed during 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.
- 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.

4.0 Methodology

4.1 Field 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 monitoring of the groundwork 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.

4.2 Processing methodology

- All retained artefacts and ecofacts were subjected to further analysis.
- All data were entered into a Microsoft ©Access relational database

5.0 Results

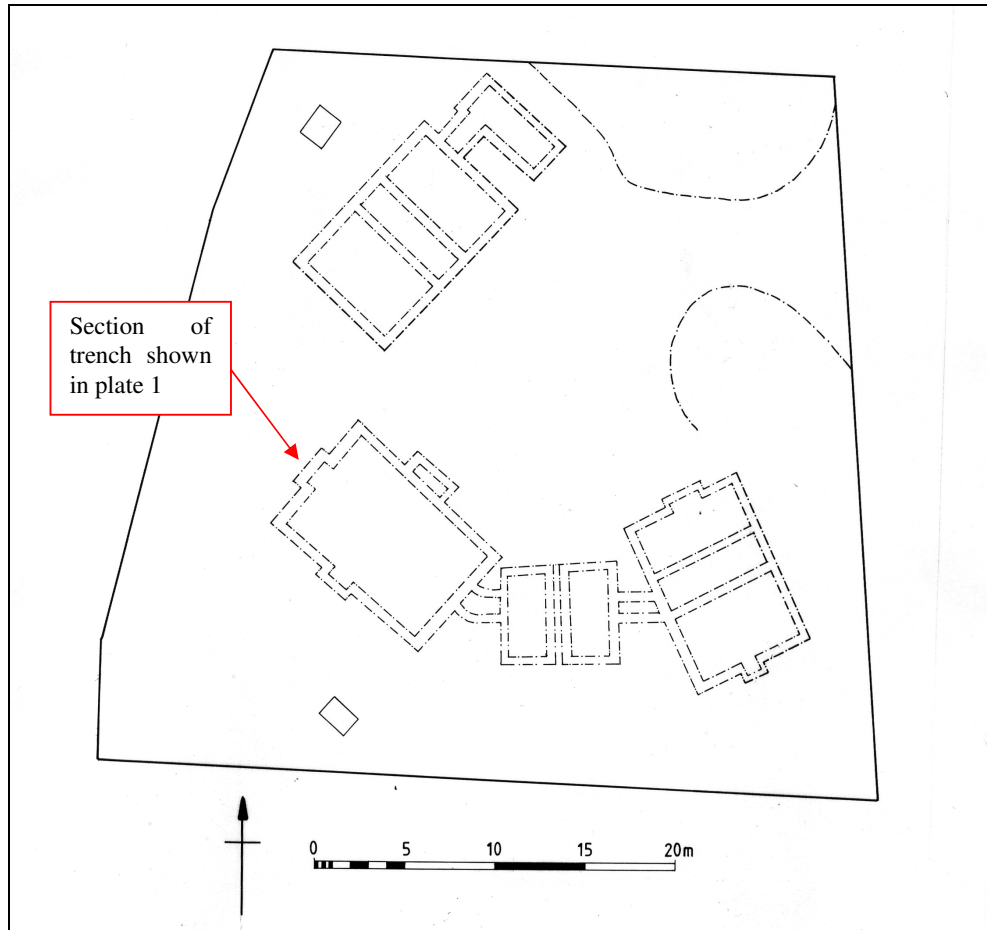


Figure 3: Trench location plan

Excavation of the footings for 3 new dwellings, using a 360° excavator with a wide-toothed bucket, was observed and recorded. A total of 32 trenches were excavated, all 1 metre in width. Excavation started at the eastern extreme of the site. Footings were excavated to a total depth of 0.9m, apart from where tree-root disturbance necessitated a deeper foundation – up to 1.5 metres deep.

Footings of bungalows previously on site were observed in trenches 4 and 6, and a modern cesspit was seen in section in trench 19, but there were no visible differences in stratigraphy in any of the other trenches. Occasional pieces of animal bone and 20th century pot were found in trenches 7-18. Trenches 29 and 32 cut through a dump of modern metal work, ash and pottery in a pit 0.5 metres deep x 1.5 metres wide.



Plate 1: Photograph showing the stratigraphy in the trench

6.0 Conclusions

Despite excavation of a large number of trenches, up to 1.5 metres deep in places, the only features observed were the footings of modern bungalows, and a modern cesspit. There were a small number of finds, mostly dating to the 20th century. Extensive landscaping of the area prior to the construction of the bungalows that previously occupied the site seems likely to have removed any traces of previous occupation.

7.0 Archive deposition

The primary project archive, consisting of any original paper records, 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.

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 City Library. A short note on the project will be prepared for publication in Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists Field 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.

Appendix: Domesday Estates in Bodenham (after Bruce Coplestone-Crow)

Manor	Number of hides	Number of ploughs	People	Value in shillings		Value change
				Before 1066	1086	
Bodenham	1½	11	11	60	48	-20
Bowley	1	2(4)	2	25	20	-20
Broadfield	1	1	5	20	25	25
Lower Broadfield	2	1½	6	40	25	-37.5
Maund Bryan	1½	4	12	40	45	12.5
Rowberry	2	2(4)	5	30	25	-16.67
Bodenham Moor	1½	8	21	50	60	20
The Vern	½	3	8	10	16	60
Venn	1½	3	11	20	30	50
Dudales Hope(?)	1	-	-	waste	waste	0
Houghton	¼	1	nil	2/2	2/2	0
	13¾	36½ (40½)	81	297/2	296/2	-0.34

General bibliography

Coplestone-Crow, Bruce, undated	'Notes on Bodenham' typescript in Herefordshire Record Office – BC/94
Coplestone-Crow, Bruce, 1989	<i>Herefordshire Place-Names</i> , British Archaeological Reports, British Series No 214
Ekwall, Eilert, 1960	<i>The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names</i> . 4 th Edition. Oxford
Robinson, Charles J, 1872	<i>A History of the Mansions and Manors of Herefordshire</i> . Hereford
Thorn, Frank & Caroline, 1983 (eds)	<i>Domesday Book, Herefordshire</i> . Phillimore

Cartographic material

Ordnance Survey, 1904	2 nd edition 1:2500 plan. County Series, Herefordshire Sheet XXVII.1
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