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WEST MIDLANDS
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
NEWS SHEET

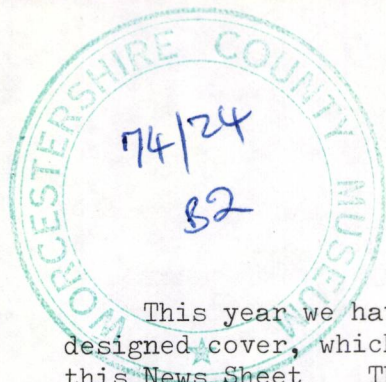
Number 12 . 1969

edited by Philip Rahtz

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THE DEPARTMENT OF EXTRA-MURAL STUDIES UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM



EDITORIAL

This year we have a new format, different type-face, and a specially-designed cover, which we hope will sugar the pill of having to pay for this News Sheet. The cover will be changed from year to year; this year's is not meant to be any particular site, still less a record of West Midlands Archaeology in 1969. It is an amalgam of the archaeological landscape seen from the air or in plan; it includes idealised examples of many kinds of site, some of them excavators' dreams; no prizes are offered for their identification. Designs or ideas for next year's news sheet are invited.

We have also included two items of general interest by Barbara Noddle and Susan Barker. I would like to include more short articles of this nature in future issues, which may help to make the News sheet more than just a catalogue of the year's archaeological events. Barbara's contribution is on a familiar subject, though her dynamic approach will stir up a few consciences, including mine! Susan's reminds us of the new archaeological world we are moving into, whether we like it or not. This has for a long time been more evident in prehistory than in other periods - the Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society has steadily become more unreadable in recent years. The peak of non-comprehension has been reached for most of us in 'Analytical Archaeology' - even the reviews of this use unfamiliar language. The least painful way of understanding new approaches is perhaps by reading 'World Archaeology' a new publication, with an editorial board who are all under 40 (the board of 'Antiquity' are all over 40).

The contents of the News sheet reflect another year of achievement in the West Midlands. A fine summer when little time was lost in the field because of rain, and also a good season for aerial photography. Evidence continues to accumulate for the Neolithic settlement in Warwickshire. Ford's fine excavation at Charlecote is one of the more dramatic expressions of Neolithic, and with the nearby henge at Barford, shows that the Warwick area can be seen as the West Midland equivalent of the classic Wiltshire sites. Bateman and Howard at Ryton, and Jenks at Sharpstones Hill, are examples of what can be achieved on prehistoric settlement sites with negligible financial resources. The Ipsley boat is perhaps the largest prehistoric object ever to be found in our area. News of its discovery hit the summer headlines, and the news of a second boat, which turned out to be a tree, gave rise to much romantic speculation about fleets of Mesolithic war canoes skimming up and down the Arrow. Is it really a boat, or the outrigger of a vessel of different type, or even one half of a catamaran?

Roman excavations have again been on a variety of sites: towns, forts, villas, roads, kilns are all represented. Especially interesting is Toms' work on the Llanymynech Ogof cave/mine. Rural settlement, though, is only represented by Jenks' work at Sharpstones Hill and Mrs. Miles' work at Kings Bromley. The Lunt becomes more complex and unexpected with each season, and it's gratifying to note that there is now close collaboration here between the Coventry museum and the Coventry and District Archaeological Society; Hobley is to be congratulated on bringing this about. Metchley is now completed, or as much as Rowley's resources allowed him to do. He comments on the irony that the destruction of this fort was not due to the forces of agriculture,

industry, motorways, or other agents of mass destruction, but to provide car-parking space for the University of Birmingham. The failure to preserve this fort within the campus has been a scandal of many years' standing and few voices have been heard in protest. Not only was the fort a site of primary importance, but its remains were of a complexity which only long and patient excavation could have unravelled. Rowley has done his best, and his work has led to a new understanding of the fort's development; but he would be the first to admit that understanding of the internal buildings was very slight, because of the lack of resources to excavate them completely. The site could have provided excellent training for several generations of Birmingham archaeological students right on their doorstep. The University authorities were evidently not impressed sufficiently by the changes of textures and soil-colours to consider changing their plans. If Rowley had discovered something dramatic but less historically important, like a mosaic pavement, it might have been a different story.

In the migration period, Ford's successful completion of the Stretton cemetery is of outstanding importance. The finds themselves are remarkable, and this is one of the few cemeteries in the Midlands which has been excavated properly; but more significantly it is the first one to be excavated totally, and provides one of the few complete cemetery plans in Britain, in which the method of layout could be demonstrated, and important conclusions made possible about the dating of finds and also about grouping of burials. The identification of a francisca, an early Saxon throwing axe from Ipsley, has only been made as we go to press, and the implications have not had time to foment; have we really got a late fifth century Saxon in Worcestershire (and dare we say it, a building for him to live in, conveniently close to the Roman road?)

Another possible migration period building comes from Hen Domen of similar size to that postulated at Ipsley. Here Barker devoted a whole season to stripping the rampart and defining the pre-conquest ridge and furrow with such precision and finality as to silence all sceptics. Incidentally Wroxeter and Hen Domen, may now be called world-famous, since they figure in World Archaeology II! There is nothing very spectacular from pre-conquest Midland towns in 1969, compared with the finds of recent years, but Shrewsbury is now yielding pre-1066 material, and Stafford is a welcome addition to the towns where work is now being organised.

The latest victim to 'developers' is Stratford-on-Avon, which one might have thought inviolable. The destruction of an important part of its medieval centre was planned with minimal opposition by the townspeople, and little finance is available to record the levels which will be destroyed; more may be possible here in 1970.

Much more encouraging is the generous grant of £5,000 given by the City Council of Birmingham to finance excavation of Birmingham's only Motte and Bailey at Castle Bromwich. The motte and a remnant of the bailey will be preserved in an inaccessible island between two motorways but most of the bailey and adjacent settlement will be destroyed. But here it is gratifying that the sum made available is ample to enable Ford to do a complete excavation, which Ministry resources could not have provided.

Redditch U.D.C. are carrying out an equally enlightened policy in financing, out of a much smaller rate-aggregate than Birmingham, a long-term programme of excavation and consolidation of the remains of Bordesley Abbey (see news sheet 11, p.23), which is now being used for training students from the University of Birmingham.

In News Sheet 11, Barker asked what was happening in Industrial Archaeology in Birmingham. In this issue Jennifer Tann announces the foundation of an Industrial Archaeology Research Group within the Birmingham Archaeological Society, from which we hope for important results.

Year by year, we record excavations, some large, some small, but most inadequate to cope with the increasing rate of destruction. Will there be a news sheet recording West Midland excavation in A.D. 2001? Will there be anything left to dig? There will be perhaps the 37th season at Bordesley Abbey, the 67th at Wroxeter (if its not built on by then) and other of the few sites which will have been preserved. But there may be little else; even the ridge and furrow of the Midland landscape may be swept away. Can this destruction be halted or slowed down? What will the archaeologists of the next century consider that we did in the seventies? Did we make enough protest, were our efforts constructive, or was it a lost cause. Can it be said that we tried? Some of us believe that we've not tried hard enough. By the time this issue appears, a three-day conference will have been held at Barford to discuss what if anything can be done. The list of those who have agreed to come is impressive, and includes most of the professional archaeologists who are associated with rescue excavation. This group will make constructive proposals about preservation and/or adequate excavation and publication. If it does succeed, and if the archaeologists of 2001 look back to Barford as the place of the great protest, we may be mildly gratified that it originated in the West Midlands.

Philip Rahtz

DATES FOR 1970 AND 71

Summer Excavations - 1970

Hen Domen, Montgomeryshire	4th - 25th July
Wroxeter	8th August - 5th September
Midsummer Hill (The Malverns)	10th August - 5th September
Bordesley Abbey	8th July - 29th July

Summer Courses

Excavation Techniques at Wroxeter - Course "C"	29th August - 12th September
Canals and Waterways - Course "E"	29th August - 5th September

Winter Courses - 1970/71

The Extramural Department will again be offering a series of weekend courses and it is hoped to cover the following topics:-

The Botanical Background for Archaeologists - A residential weekend, November 6th, 7th and 8th at the University of Birmingham.

In addition to this there will be a weekend course on Bones and on February 12th-14th a weekend course at Attingham Park, probably on some aspect of Iron Age Archaeology.

We hope that on March 5th, 6th and 7th there will be a course for Local Historians and Archaeologists at Pendrall Hall, The Staffordshire College of Adult Education.

INTRODUCTION

As forecast in the Introduction to the last News Sheet (No. 11 1968) this issue has a new format, is printed and we are making a charge for it; the charge is not because of the change in format but because the cost of the free circulation became too great. We are grateful to Mr. Philip Rahtz for guiding the News Sheet through its transformation and for again editing it.

This number is again produced by the Extra Mural Department of the University of Birmingham, which is also, jointly with C.B.A. Group 8, undertaking its distribution. Our thanks are due to all concerned and to all contributors.

The News Sheet has always been valued, especially by local archaeologists and we feel that its less ephemeral looking format will be welcomed. It is still, of course, not a substitute for full publication but a means of keeping up-to-date with current local work.

We should like to use this Introduction to explain that there has been some difficulty with the running of C.B.A. Group 8 during the summer, now happily resolved with the appointment of Mr. Hugh Cameron as the Group Secretary. Miss Pearce who was appointed at the last A.G.M. had to resign when she took up a new post outside the West Midlands. Because of the gap between secretaries, which occurred during the digging season, some postponement of meetings has been inevitable. Arrangements are now in hand, however, and we look forward to the support of all members at the quarterly meetings. Circulars about these meetings and a copy of the News Sheet will be sent to all contributing members of Group 8, whether individuals or societies, etc.

JULIE SANDERS

Chairman of C.B.A. Group 8

PERSONAL NOTES

Miss S.A. Cronne is now married and all correspondence for her to be addressed to:

Mrs. S. Foulkes,
Department of Extramural Studies,
The University of Birmingham,
P.O. Box 363,
Edgbaston,
Birmingham, B15 2TT.

BURSARIES

Foyle Bursaries

The Foyle Trust has kindly offered 2 bursaries of £10 each for 2 adult students from the West Midlands, to enable them to attend an archaeological summer school. Details and application forms are available from the Department. We should be grateful if organisers of local excavations would encourage likely candidates to apply.

Marie Grutter Memorial Scholarships

"Marie Grutter Memorial Scholarships." Scholarships totalling approximately £60 will be available to assist West Midlands adult students to attend foreign study tours in 1970 organised by the Extramural Department or by the Joint Committee of the University and the Workers' Educational Association. Enquiries should be sent to the Department of Extramural Studies, University of Birmingham, P.O. Box 363, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT.

SCIENTIFIC EQUIPMENT C.B.A. GROUP 8

A.A. Round now has charge of the Proton Gradiometer and Resistivity meter belonging to C.B.A. Group 8; all enquiries for loan should now be addressed to him at 95 Darnick Road, Sutton Coldfield.

NEW GROUPS

The Solihull Archaeological Group was started in the Summer of 1969 with the object of promoting active Field Research in the area of West Warwickshire. Two major projects have been undertaken, firstly to carry out a field survey of archaeological features in the district round Solihull, and secondly to continue the excavation near Blunt's Green, Henley-in-Arden, where Mr. Brian Hutty has been investigating several linear earthworks.

The Field Survey aims to record all surviving archaeological remains, such as trackways, sites which local historical research has shown to be of interest, enclosures and houses and buildings of varying periods of construction. Those undertaking this work can, in their own time, cover a given area and report and record their findings. The work at Blunt's Green will be directed by Mr. Hutty and will appeal to members able to give regular help to an interesting project which may throw some light on the unknown and unrecorded history of this part of the Midlands.

The Group meets at Archbishop Ilsley School, Acocks Green, Birmingham on the third Tuesday of each month - except in the summer holiday period - at 8 p.m. The entrance is behind the shops facing the Library in Shirley Road. The annual subscription is £1 per year, family membership £1 10s. Od. A Newsletter will be issued from time to time, No. 1 (Oct. 1969) is now available. Enquiries should be addressed to the Secretary, Mr. L. Smith, 30, Oaklands Avenue, Harborne, Birmingham, 17.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK ON ANIMALS

Archaeology and Geography are the two main subjects which bridge the yawning gap between the sciences and humanities. Nevertheless there are still many archaeologists who share the general opinion of the public and regard the scientist as an alarming white-coated jargon-spouting being, and adopt the sort of attitude the Victorian aristocracy had towards "trade"; to include more sciences in archaeological education would cost the universities a lot of money in this period of intense squeeze. The amateur archaeologist, with the aid of extramural courses, seems more eager to take the plunge.

Archaeology has received many valuable free gifts from the sciences. Physicists have contributed magnetometry and resistivity surveys, and above all carbon 14 dating; the Oxford department is continually engaged in these fields. Botanists study palaeobotany as

a subject in its own right, and plant breeders study wild cereals for economic reasons. The British Academy supports work on the Neolithic revolution at Cambridge. Birmingham University has been far from backward; it has established its own C 14 dating apparatus and a research fellowship for the application of scientific techniques in archaeology, and I am very happy to be the current holder of this.

My predecessor Dr. David Peacock collected a lot of valuable fundamental data for the study of ceramics, but I hold the heretical view that the study of pottery has been overemphasised, to the detriment of another very important topic, that of agriculture. The whole of civilisation, and indeed most people living since the Neolithic revolution, depend on the ability of the serf, peasant or country bumpkin to produce more food than is needed to support his own family. Lewis Carroll's White Knight asked of the aged man sitting on a gate a question which it would seem sensible to ask of a bygone community, "Pray tell me who you are and how you get your bread?" Asked by an archaeologist the question may be, "Pray tell me who you are by means of how do you decorate your pottery?"

The purely agrarian side of the problem has been taken care of by botanists, but not so that of livestock. Until very recent times animals supplied much of the clothing, all power other than that of human muscle, much of the material for which we now use plastics (bone and horn) and most of the non-carbohydrate source of the diet. Animals had considerable ritual significance; Norse and Celtic art is full of "curly beasties", and even as late as the eleventh century, the builders of Birkenhead Abbey saw fit to place a sheep in a special niche in the foundations. Livestock has been neglected, yet raw material for study, in the shape of bone, is excavated by the hundred-weight on many sites.

Alas, many bone reports are sorry things, and even when a lot of work has been put in reach few conclusions. I will compare two quotations from excavation reports: "quantities of rude pot were found", and "bones of domesticated animals and the remains of a saddle quern indicate a mixed farming economy". The first is an adequate statement of facts from the pre-Abercromby era, but the second is not even that and was written more than half a century after the publication of the detailed bone reports in Pitt-Rivers' Excavations in Cranborne Chase. Fifty years' study and comparison of pottery shapes and patterns, though meaningless in themselves, have yielded an immense corpus of knowledge. I cannot imagine how much we would know about the life of the people we study if the same amount of work had been done on bone. Every report I have done has yielded at least one item of economic information besides the routine information I expected. This is without the data I hope to obtain in the next few years from the study of modern livestock. Bone study does entail a sound knowledge of agriculture, which the Natural History Curator of a Museum or a Zoology graduate does not necessarily possess, yet these people are regarded as the natural "doers of bones" (I am casting no aspersions on the heroic efforts of many of these busy people). I have also found considerable interest in these topics amongst the staff of agricultural colleges and master butchers, who to my mind are the "naturals".

My colleagues and I divide excavators into three categories. There are those who quietly throw the bones away. There are those

who produce a scruffy mixture of dirty bone, unwanted potsherds, sticks and stones and lumps of slag with the request "please report on these", and then publish a brief summary of one's report leaving the rest to moulder in a museum, without the slightest interest in the labour that was put into it or with any reference to it in the main body of the work. There are also those paragons who invite one to inspect the dig, discuss the proposed publication, consult one about the cleaning and dispatch of the material, and appreciate the effort entailed sufficiently to offer recompense from such financial resources as they have. I might add that it takes 30 hours to report adequately on a tea-chest full of bone, even assuming one has already done the necessary homework on related sites. It is in the larger collections of bone, which can be treated statistically, that most of the new information lies, though smaller collections are always worth examining for the information that may be derived from a single fragment.

Fundamental research is required besides working on excavated material with the knowledge now available. I am still doing the latter in my "spare" time, but I have the following research programme in hand: (1) Measurement of those bones commonly excavated undamaged in animals of known weight, breeding, and body composition, (2) Histological examination of bones of animals of known nutritional status; (3) Detailed examination of skeletons of pure bred sheep. From this I hope to produce data which will enable us to determine the weight of animals in the past and their nutritional status, and to parallel Ryder's history of the development of sheep types and breeds, which he derives from studies of wool, from changes in the bones. Finally if time permits I would like to study the chemical differences in bone protein so that we can at last sort out the donkeys from the horses and the sheep from the goats.

BARBARA NODDLE

Department of Zoology, University of Birmingham

COMPUTERS IN ARCHAEOLOGY

There are a number of possible uses of computers in archaeology. The one I decided to start with is the problem of presenting the large quantity of numbers obtained from a survey of a site in a form, such as a contour graph, which would be easier to use than the original list of numbers. The survey I worked on was carried out at Wroxeter using the Maxbleep Gradiometer, but the computer programme would work equally well for any other type of survey.

Unfortunately contouring is not easy for computers and even with the package of programmes (called GHOST) we have at Birmingham the results are not always quite as a human would have produced them. This is due to the extent to which we draw graphs to "look right". If you try to imagine explaining what you want drawn to a blind man over the telephone you may get some idea of the difficulties involved. Once you have explained to the computer exactly what to do, it will plot graphs more quickly than you could and will carry on plotting much longer -

computers never get tired!

It is always possible to tell whether a graph has been plotted by computer or by hand because of the different way each goes about the task. When you draw a contour graph, you can see the contours you have already drawn and you tidy up and edit the later ones to fit in with those already drawn, so that the final result is pleasing to look at. The computer can never look at its graph. To it the last contour is treated in just the same way as the first. It calculates and draws each contour completely independently, as though the paper were blank. Consequently if the contours, as calculated, cross one another they are drawn crossing one another. Indeed with a set of data such as the following, we would get contours of different values crossing which any human would consider ridiculous and use some other rule for calculating the position of the contours in this case.

10.	5.	10.	5.
5.	10.	5.	10.

Here the contour for the value 10. would zig-zag, joining the values 10. and so would the contour for the value 5., since each is drawn independently. So we should have contours for two different values crossing in three places. In practice, this situation does not occur very often, and when it does it is usually easy to go back to the original list of values and tidy up the graph.

The example below shows one of the contour graphs from the survey at Wroxeter. The values of contour heights are listed and the contour labelled 1 corresponds to the first contour height. This is followed by a listing of the data values used to produce the graph. You will notice one place where contours 4 and 5 cross each other, making it necessary to refer back to the list of values to edit this.

This programme is now working satisfactorily and anyone interested in using it should contact me.

SUSAN BARKER (nee Laflin)
Computer Centre, University of Birmingham.

AERIAL AND SCIENTIFIC RECONNAISSANCE

Arnold Baker

Aerial survey this season was most rewarding, and many new features have been recorded in the West Midlands. From time to time a favourable combination of weather and crops reveals the rich potential in archaeological sites, for the most part elusive under average weather conditions. It is unfortunate that such opportunities arise perhaps only once in five or ten years. In the absence of detailed analysis it is difficult to summarise the results from this year's survey, but it will suffice to highlight some of the more important aspects.

CONTOUR HEIGHTS 0.9 3.9 8.9 19.9 29.9 49.9 69.9 89.9 109.9

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WROXEER MAGNETOMETER SURVEY GRID SQUARE 5

Over Viroconium, crop marks in various sectors of the town were most impressive, the defences on the north circuit under barley and wheat again strongly suggest an additional ditch of the C2 phase. An extension of the insula plan is also evident following the line of the east defences. From complex crop marks in the field NE of the Bath site, several new features have emerged. There is evidence of occupation in the large walled enclosure, and a street, hitherto unknown, cuts through the enclosure continuing east to cross the rampart, suggesting a possible entrance for the Aqueduct channel. The most significant feature in this field is a ditch on an east-west alignment extending for at least 1800 feet at right angles to the town's main street. To the east is a well defined corner which tends to confirm its continuity south under the rampart, and would be in good agreement with the military ditch revealed by Kenyon's section across the defences in this area. The new ditch is not in alignment with the two known military ditches north of the Forum, and may represent an early temporary camp on the town site.

At Kenchester the results were equally rewarding; for once the town was under a single crop; although obviously not barley or wheat the crop response was sufficient to reveal the complete street layout, and some of the more substantial building remains. Large enclosures were also observed to the east. Other areas such as Leintwardine, Bromfield and Pennocrucium were disappointing, adding little to existing knowledge. In the vicinity of Shrewsbury, and along the Severn and river Perry there is evidence for early settlement; a complex of pit alignments south of Llanymynech may lead to a better understanding of these features. A Roman temporary camp recorded east of Oswestry confirms the military activity expected in this area. At Stretton Grandison a double ditch, including a corner and gate to the west, indicates the site of a Fort which lends support for the LIMES postulated west of the Severn, evidence for which has been long awaited. Parch marks in the pasture at Barnsley Park indicate a considerable extension to the villa site, with the possibility of additional buildings. Many new features were also recorded along the Fosse Way, and in the Thames and Avon Valleys, with a fine villa under barley west of Barford.

ARNOLD BAKER

Jim Pickering

The fine summer seemed a happy augury for the production of crop marks, but the promise was not fulfilled. In retrospect not sufficient account was taken of the effect of the evenly saturated soils in late spring, at the early stages of crop growth, and cereal growth was too even before the top soils dried out. Crop marks developed at comparatively late stages of growth and their sharpness and contrast was not as good as was expected. Two days of heavy rain at the beginning of August washed them out almost completely before they had fully developed. Growth of cereals was strong and even, and there was no indications of sites from "lodged" crops after the rain, and a few reversal marks at full ripening. A good number of isolated sites were recorded before the rain, where the soil context was marginally more favourable for crop

marks and the time of sowing was late; but they do not alter the general pattern of site distribution. The addition of more sites around Church Lawford airfield emphasises that this area was fully developed into field systems by late Iron Age or early Romano-British times. The area around Wasperton produced more sites of different superimposed periods and raises the question, (as with the area south of Alrewas) of the evacuation of the area in different periods because of large scale prolonged flooding.

An interesting complex of roads and changes of road alignments was recorded along the earlier line of the Ditchedge Lane where it crosses the old Roman Road from Stratford-upon-Avon to Madmarston Camp at Sp346406 and the salient in the parish boundary at this point is possibly worth investigation. The most interesting area was south of Alrewas where continuous R.B. field systems and enclosures extend for several miles without a break and overlies an earlier settlement pattern. There are still many more sites to be recorded in this area in a year when the weather/cereal growth permutations are more favourable.

JIM PICKERING

Graham Miller

The Red Horse, Tysoe (SP 354448).

Excavations on the tip of the upper ear have shown evidence of earlier trenching at a depth of over 30". A comprehensive report is being compiled by Dr. J.S. Stanley.

Old Lodge Hill, Tysoe (SP 352441).

A resistivity survey is planned for next season. (Cf. News Sheet No. 11, 1968).

Windsway, Tysoe (SP 333444).

Circular crop marks (Cf. News Sheet No. 11, 1968) were surveyed by pupils from Tysoe C.E. Junior School.

GRAHAM MILLER
for Tysoe Group

W.E. Jenks

Aerial Survey of the Shrewsbury area.

An aerial survey undertaken in liaison with the Shropshire Aero Club on July 31st last, produced a crop of sites including 10 small enclosures (all less than $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres). These occupy commanding positions on glacial deposits and appear similar to those sites excavated at Sharpstones Hill. An Iron Age /R.B. date is probable. All lie within 5 miles north and west of Wroxeter. A barrow ring associated with linear features was observed in a field north of Stapleton (SJ 469048)

and concentric rings in the field neighbouring that of Site 'E' (see below) (SJ 491102) exposed the site of a further barrow (?) of some importance. Conditions this year were very good but it is felt that the high density of sites in the region is only just becoming apparent.

W.E. JENKS
for Shropshire Archaeological Society.

MESOLITHIC

The Council for British Archaeology Mesolithic Survey Region 7

Research has now been started on the West Midlands area, (Region 7)*, of the C.B.A. Mesolithic Survey of Britain. The main aim of this nation-wide project is to establish a complete card index inventory of Mesolithic sites in the British Isles, which can be used as a basis for a comprehensive publication and for further detailed study and general reference.

The West Midlands cannot be said to be one of the 'classic' areas of Mesolithic settlement in Britain and only a limited number of sites are known. It is hoped, however, that a comprehensive study of Region 7 will bring to light more sites and enable us to see for the first time the West Midlands Mesolithic in its overall British context.

The British Mesolithic survey is being directed by Mr. John Wymer on behalf of the C.B.A., while each region has its own organiser and individual collaborators.

Dr. L.H. Barfield has recently accepted the assignment of organiser for the West Midlands and would be grateful if notification of new Mesolithic discoveries could be communicated to him at the Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, 15.

*(Northants., Leics., Rutland, Staffs., Warwicks., Worcs.)

NEOLITHIC

Brook Street, Warwick (SP 280650)

Further small pits containing neolithic material were found, confirming intensive use of the Brook Street area in neolithic times.

MICHAEL FARR AND STEVEN TAYLOR
for School of History, University of Birmingham.
financed by MOPBW.

Baginton Ring Ditch, Coventry (SP 341755) (See News Sheet 11, pp 6 - 7)

Further consideration of this 1968 excavation has shown that some of the ring-ditch features are Neolithic; they include nine hollows, possibly for storage, associated with a few sherds of pottery similar to that from Warwick.

BRIAN HOBLEY
For Coventry Museum and
MOPBW.

Alcester

One small neolithic pit was found in excavations in the gardens of 27-33 Bleachfield Street.

STEVEN TAYLOR
for MOPBW.

Charlecote Ditched Enclosure (SP 269579)

The complete excavation of site no. 71 of the Avon-Severn Gravels Research Project revealed an elongated rectangular ditched enclosure with elliptical ends measuring 250 x 50 ft. having an eastern and western entrance. Two large post holes were sited in the ends of the ditch at the eastern entrance. The upcast indicated an interior bank or mound. Pottery of the Secondary Neolithic period was obtained from the stratified fill including some sherds of Rinyo-Clacton ware. A ring ditch to the south was also excavated and shown to be a round barrow, the central primary grave having been destroyed.

BILL FORD
For Avon-Severn Gravel Committee
and MOPBW.

BRONZE AGE/IRON AGE

Ryton, Warwicks, Upper Avon Survey site 97B (SP 371725)

Last year's successful excavation producing L.B.A. cremations and urns has been followed up with a period of consolidation. The major part of the earthwork has now been plotted. Several pits, ditches and trenches have been excavated this year. The main feature on the site is the large enclosure; this is formed by two annular 'V'-sectioned ditches which run parallel to each other some 6-8ft. apart. The entrance through these is on the south east side; the ends of both ditches coincide. The outer ditch is much the larger, being some 4ft. 6ins. deep and 10ft. across. The inner ditch is approx. 3ft. 6 ins deep and about 5ft. 6 ins. across. Both ditches are almost certainly Late Bronze Age, datable evidence coming from Early Iron Age levels in the half-silted outer ditch, and from the Iron Age pit which cut through the silted inner ditch. The entrance through the ditches is quite narrow being only 10ft. wide. There are some modifications to this area at a later period. The enclosed area is about 80 by 60ft. covering some 1/10 acre.

The area of the Iron Age palisade trench has been further extended. Most of this feature has now been plotted. No further finds or features have been found. This enclosure is about 60 by 45ft. covering approx. 1/13 acre. There are five small pits, possibly for post hole construction lying to the south west of the rectilinear enclosure and possibly associated with it: two are in or cutting the palisade trench and two are outside the area. The 'D'-shaped enclosure (cremation area) has not been investigated further this season.

JOHN BATEMAN AND TONY HOWARD,
for Coventry and District Archaeological Society.

IRON AGE

Midsummer Camp, Herefordshire (SO 760375)

Further work on the southern gateway indicates that there were two phases of stone guard-rooms very badly robbed, following the use of timber guard-rooms. The interpretation of a temporary closure before the latter has now been dropped so that there would seem at least to be seventeen phases of gate construction. An extensive excavation on the eastern hill of the camp indicates that even the gentle slopes were terraced for buildings and present indications are that these were rectangular and of both post and sleeper beam construction. This part of the excavation remains to be completed next season but it is quite clear already that there was intensive and continuous use of all the available land so that Midsummer camp may be seen to fall quite clearly into the Herefordshire pattern established at sites like Croft Ambrey and Credenhill.

STAN STANFORD,
for Malvern Hills Archaeological Committee,

IRON AGE/ROMAN

Sharpstones Hill, Shrewsbury: Sites A, D and F

The Iron Age/R.B. settlement has been shown to consist of two similar enclosures (Sites 'A'/'E') 1440yds. apart and facing east and west respectively, together with a large boundary ditch/bank (Site 'D') running north to south between them. The three features were co-existent in at least one phase late in the pre-Roman period. See also News Sheet No. 8, 9 and 11.

Site E (SJ 496104)

A ploughed out 'bi-vallate' Iron Age and Romano-British enclosure, this site was first viewed from the air by Philip Barker in 1964. The site lies at the north end of a low promontory of glacial deposit overlooking about 1000 acres of fertile Rea Valley. A 'reconnaissance in strength' undertaken mostly in severe weather produced the following results in addition to poignantly bringing home to the excavators

problems of exposure and drainage which must have confronted the early settlers.

1. The outer ditch (15ft. 3 ins. wide by 6ft. 8ins. deep and flat-bottomed) was out-turned at the entrance (west side) forming an aperture 35yds. wide (not allowing for an internal bank). The south out-turn led into a shallow gully which probably provided drainage into the nearby Moneybrook below.
2. The inner ditch (18ft. 6ins. wide by 7ft. 8 ins. deep also flat-bottomed) ends on the west leg to form a simple butt-ended entrance (not excavated). Sections at the south west corner yielded a good variety of Iron Age and Roman pottery and showed that the outer ditch was cut well after the inner had ceased to be a defensive feature (early C2).
3. The rampart was constructed after removal of turf and was faced with a trenched palisade (no berm). A vee-sectioned feature under the tail of the rampart is evidence of a possible earlier defensive ditch.
4. The main interest of the site lay in the discovery of a circular (36ft. dia) gully-bounded house superseded by one of rectangular shape (40 to 50ft. long by 18ft. wide). The earlier house had four central main support posts set on a 14ft. 6 ins. square but no 'boiling pit'. The gully bottom rose up gradually at each side of the entrance - which looked out towards the main enclosure entrance, as with Site 'A'. A further gully (5ft. 6 ins. wide and trough-shaped) led from the circular gully south of the entrance towards the inner ditch (? under/through the rampart). This superseded a local soakaway at the entrance. The gully bounding the later house was very irregular in section and traced on three sides only (the complete plan awaits future excavation). However, the entrance corresponded with the earlier one and two substantial beam slots gave evidence of support for a ridged roof. All gulleys yielded a wide variety of very fragmentary C1-C2 pottery (much V.C.P.) and a very crude stone spindle whorl was retrieved from the circular gully.
5. The space enclosed by the inner rampart was approx. 40yds square. Of this at least one half was taken up by the house and its 'forecourt' and it is likely that this was the sole dwelling (as with Site 'A').

This type of site has not previously been explored in the Wroxeter area. The threat of development has now been lifted indefinitely, thus an excellent opportunity for careful examination is provided. (See also 'Aerial Survey' above.)

Site D (SJ 503103)

Roadworks near to the intersection of the A5 (Otley Road) and Sutton Road, proved the continuity of the pre-historic boundary ditch across the A5 (much truncated by the road cutting). See News Sheet No.11. The two sections exposed were just south of the causeway and showed no sign of the recut found on the north side. There was also no sign of the causeway itself which indicates that it would only have been 20-24ft. wide.

? IRON AGE

The Ipsley Boat, Worcs (SP 406653)

The discovery was the result of a most fortuitous sequence of events. On Wednesday, 25th June, 1969 Mr. Maclannan, a mechanical equipment operator was excavating for the new works when at a depth of 4ft. 3 ins. (1.37 metres), below the surface he struck what appeared to be a log of wood. It is fortunate that Mr. Maclannan had previous archaeological experience. He realised at once that there must be some significance attaching to such a find so far below obviously undisturbed clay. Under normal circumstances it is doubtful whether he would have been able to make the careful investigation required to ascertain if the log was of any interest or not. But fate intervened, the digger broke down and was out of action for a whole day. During this time Mr. Maclannan was able to climb down into the hole and make a more detailed examination. As a result, when the digger was repaired on Friday, 27th June he carefully excavated along the line of the discovery and uncovered the regularly pointed end. It was now obvious that this was an artifact. In accordance with instructions previously given relating to finds of interest, he notified his employers, Messrs. Gallifords, who informed the Redditch Development Corporation. On Tuesday, 1st July, the boat was very carefully and skilfully removed to a place of rest and safety above ground. The boat was kept under constant wetting until it was covered with a polythene tube and removed to Ipsley Court and thence to the County Museum, Hartlebury, for preservation. The boat would almost certainly appear to be constructed from a single log of 25ft. 8 ins. (7.82 metres) long with a maximum girth (of boat) of 4ft. 11ins. (1.50 metres). It is not a dug out, but is flat topped.

The standard of craftsmanship is of a particularly high order. The boat is beautifully shaped from a gently tapering pointed prow to a 'D' shaped mid-section with a flat hydra-foil stern. Amidships there is an elongated hollow running along the main axis of the boat which has a maximum depth of 4 cm. The triangular point of a wooden spear was discovered in the silt near the boat, but unfortunately this has since been lost. The location in which the boat was found may give some idea of its age. It was immediately below 4ft. 3ins. (1.37 metres) undisturbed clay and resting upon alluvial deposits 5ft. 6ins. (1.68 metres) deep, which are almost certainly glacial wash out. A Birmingham University carbon 14 determination dated the boat at c. 800 B.C.

In my opinion the boat was in the centre of a large lake or marshy area. Indeed, the whole area around the discovery was a low lying marsh area until well on into the C13. If this is the case, we may hope to find other boats (possibly dug outs) in the vicinity and also primitive lake settlements.

GEOFF ROLLINS,
for Redditch Urban District Council.

ROMAN

Wroxeter, Shropshire

Site 68 and the Basilica area have not yet been joined up, but work is proceeding from each towards the other. The burnt levels round 68 are seen to stop at the Baths precinct wall, which must have been standing to a late date. More timber buildings were found on both sites; only the highest levels were stripped, but glimpses of many earlier (but post-Basilican) levels were seen in the sides of earlier trenches dug by stone robbers and archaeologists. It seems from the pottery that the Basilica was out of use by C.350. Finds include three C4 or later lead-weighted javelin heads. The area opened offer enormous possibilities for the understanding of the late and sub-Roman phases of Viroconium. Techniques developed this season include contouring of magnometer surveys (by the University Computer Centre), soil analysis and high-level photographic surveying.

PHILIP BARKER
for MOPBW.

Wroxeter, Shropshire (SJ 569083)

Work this season has been confined to the west side of the Finger Post cottage site situated on the most easterly part of the ramparts.

This is the third season of excavation on this site. A C1 road underlies the present road from Ironbridge at this point. It deviates to the west and is apparently aimed at Wroxeter and possibly the river. This road is 35ft. wide and much damaged by C19 rubbish pits. It is overlaid in part by the rampart, cast up on rising ground from the late C2 ditch which seems to have encircled the Civitas. It is apparent that a later wall inserted into the rampart at this point would have been insecure, and no footings were discovered. The rampart is inserted in natural sand and is en glacis with the scarp of the clay lined ditch, 35ft. wide and 9ft. deep which here was never re-cut. It ceases as a butt end near the edge of the road which at this point is drained by a small gully and soakaway.

The edge of the counterscarp was delineated by a strong clay and stone kerb. Externally there was a bank or possibly a small rampart 16ft. wide, the upper part of which had been destroyed. C4 sherds were found in the make-up, the right femur of a person aged between 20 and 21 years, who had died as the result of a sword slash in the right groin. This bank lies upon a cobbled surface in which had been roughly cut another ditch, 29ft. wide, which at this point was filled with tons of tooled and rough stones, voussoirs, roof tiles, and shingles, mortar and other rubble which spread loosely over both sides of the ditch. This seemed to be robbed material of Roman origin left behind by stone robbers at an uncertain date.

The surface of the small outer ditch, identified by Arnold Baker from the air and first excavated by Graham Webster in 1960 at the west end of the field adjacent to the present excavation has been identified 34ft. outside the counterscarp of the middle ditch. It was cleared last season on the north side of this site and was found to be about 8ft.

wide and less than 4ft. deep. It had been filled and consolidated in Roman times. Work continues as weather and the pressing needs of the farmer permits.

A. W. J. HOUGHTON.

Caves Inn, Shawell, near Rugby (Tripontium) (SP 535795)

Work during 1969 was concentrated on the bath house complex in Area 3. The mortar floors were lifted in the three rooms and corridors adjacent to the hypocaust. There are in general two floor levels dating probably into the C3; almost no structural changes are evident and there is no evidence of previous buildings on this part of the site. There are large fine pieces of painted wall plaster in the hard core fillings under the lower floors indicating demolished buildings previous to the floors. Magnetometer survey, proved by trial excavation, shows that the full extent of the area covered by buildings is considerable.

JACK LUCAS,
for Rugby Archaeological Society.

Alcester, Warks, Nos. 27-33 Bleachfield Street. (SP 088572)

Excavation of the gardens here revealed traces of a succession of Roman timber buildings, the earliest trace of which may well have been early Flavian in date. There was no trace (with the exception of one small Neolithic pit) of any definitely pre-Flavian occupation. Use of the site continued until late in Roman times. The timber buildings were aligned north - south across the site and thus, the area excavated being restricted by the width of the gardens, it was impossible to obtain any meaningful building plans. Of particular interest were the remains of a timber-framed, daub-walled building which was destroyed by fire probably early in the second century. Unfortunately much of the carbonised timbering was completely destroyed by medieval gravel digging.

By early in the C2 a street had been constructed which ran north-

south across the site; later in the century this was replaced by another street slightly to the west, which continued in use for a considerable length of time, and was subject to much patching and repair. Before the final resurfacing of the latest street, a large apparently circular timber structure was built which encroached upon the street surface. (See also medieval section).

STEVEN TAYLOR,
for Alcester Excavation Committee and MOPBW.

Worcester, St. Andrews Site (SO 848547)

This site was watched but was rather disappointing, very few early levels being found. The area looked very much like waste land lying between the areas to the South (the Cathedral) and the North (Broad Street) and only a thin Roman level was found which contained two bronze brooches. One was a segmented strip bow, type K which is pre-Flavian, the other a key pattern, type E which is normally first century A.D. A few Roman rubbish pits produced fine Roman glass and good quality pottery.

Much unstratified pottery, including several semi-complete, and one virtually complete, vessels has also been recovered from the above site. The pottery recovered includes examples of native ware of iron age type, probably a survival into Roman times. Other types include typical Severn Valley buff-burnished ware, grey ware, some colour coated ware, and a very small amount of Samian. Vessel types identified include cooking pots, storage jars and carinated bowls. Many of the jars bear rusticated decoration. This predominates on the grey ware, but is also present in lower degree on some buff-burnished jars. Bands of scored trellis work appear on cooking pots and jars in grey and buff ware. The mass of rusticated decoration, plus the steep angle of scored trellis work, and the relatively narrow mouths of cooking pots and jars compared to the girth of the vessel all suggest a fairly consistent date of about A.D. 100+ for this material. Among the Samian ware, fragments of the form 37 hemispherical bowl have been identified, this form being particularly common around A.D. 100.

HENRY SANDON,
and City Museum, Worcester.

'The Lunt' Neronian - Vespasianic fort, Baginton

The 1969 season concentrated upon two main aspects. Firstly, the completion of the fort's northern end (retentura) and secondly, extensive excavation south of the east gateway (porta principalis sinistra). The latter site was a training excavation for members of the Coventry and District Archaeological Society (Supervisor Ray Wallwork) whose work was an invaluable contribution to the 1969 results.

Altogether some 25,000sq. ft. was stripped completing the forts north side between the east and west ramparts. The buildings revealed during 1969, including three barrack blocks, thereby completing a series of three pairs, orientated north-south. Another granary (horrea) 70 x 30 ft. was also shown to be one of a group of three aligned to the north defences.

Many additional pits were found and emptied during 1969, especially on the west intervallum road. At this point an extensive area of iron working and smelting was found abutting the westernmost barrack block. This building had in its final phases a carefully laid wall footing and corridor of sandstone. Ash associated with the iron working clearly abutted these wall footings but did not extend over the building itself. Several spearheads and iron fragments were found within the ash and there is little doubt that this area was used for iron smelting by the Roman army.

This same region convincingly produced evidence of an earlier period of Roman military buildings. These foundation slots were cut by the stone corridor buildings and capped by the west rampart of phase II. The orientation of these buildings is also similar to those found outside the phase II east rampart.

The excavation south of the east gateway was extended to the modern road, to reveal a third period of defences and the fort's SE corner. Period I defences have yet to be located but period II has been shown to be of a most sinuous character north of the east gateway. The 1969 trenches showed these defences to be of 'regulation' type of a straight alignment, south of the east gateway to the SE corner.

A phase III ditch was located outside the alignment of the phase II ditch, on the east side but north of the ditch on the south side. The digging of a defensive ditch on the alignment of an earlier rampart poses many interesting questions. Firstly, why was it thought necessary to completely remove a rampart and replace it with a ditch? This could of course, indicate a break in occupation and a reoccupation of the fort. However, such total abandonment, would have on present evidence, to be placed within the twenty years of occupation, already showing three distinct phases of occupation.

Secondly, the position of this later ditch eliminates the theory that it simply represents a reconstruction or repair of the phase II defences. Thirdly, it is difficult to conceive of a Roman fort being without defences for all but the shortest possible time. The complete removal of a rampart, to dig a ditch would therefore seem to be an operation, for which there is as yet, no logical explanation.

Several interesting items of military equipment were found during 1969 including a bronze mess-tin with a keyhole shaped hole in the handle. Several pieces of iron body armour (Lorica Segmentata) with bronze fittings were discovered within pits and also bronze strap ends with the leather still attached. The latter showed remarkably fine stitching. A bronze handle of zoomorphic design was located in a good stratified context. The first enamelled object was found during 1969. This was a small circular double sided bronze terminal (?) with designs in red and yellow enamel. Each design was different. One side shows a quadrant design of opposing red and yellow enamel and the reverse a triskele, which stylistically is of Celtic type. This fitting may have been attached to an officers' staff or swagger stick (?)

Pottery in the main was of types found in previous seasons but with one exception. A pit within a barrack block produced a most unusual bowl with a finial projection on the inside. The vessel's form would

seem to be based upon a metal prototype, with also a remarkable thinness of fabric - barely 1mm at the sides. The shape would suggest a silver vessel midway between late Hellenistic form from Italy and early Roman bowls. As yet, the vessel has not been paralleled in Britain or Western Europe. Its source of manufacture would seem to be the E. Mediterranean and to have been a treasured antique when broken sometime before 80AD.

An orange cornelian intaglio, showing the goddess Fortuna was also found within a pit. This specimen has been closely paralleled by a cache of engraved gems found at Bath.

Conclusions

Limited conclusions can now be made following the results of the 1969 season. Military occupation would seem to be confirmed to the years C. A.D. 60-80 and of at least three distinct phases. Sometime after A.D. 64 the fort was reduced in size to cover an area of approximately $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres and with internal dimensions of 500ft. c 300ft.

The size would be acceptable for a cohortus quingenaria of auxiliary troops and the six barrack blocks already known would accommodate a garrison of this number. The fort was almost certainly built as a result of the Boudiccan revolt of A.D. 60 and it can therefore take its place alongside other military sites in the Midlands and East Anglia whose function was to maintain the Pax Britannica.

BRIAN HOBLEY,
for Coventry Museum.

Metchley Roman Fort, Birmingham (SP 0438636)

During the third and final season's work at Metchley a further 6,000 sq. ft. of the interior was stripped. Regular barrack like buildings belonging to the inner fort were found abutting against its rampart and two granary blocks of the first fort of indefinite length but 15 ft. wide were uncovered. The cambered Via Decumana of the inner fort was also identified. The junction of the large fort defences with those of the annexe was successfully excavated and the following chronology can be advanced.

- i) The original fort on the site was $10\frac{1}{2}$ acres with a double ditch and rampart. Large Claudian timber structures were associated with this phase.
- ii) During the second phase the original fort was extended by the addition of a 4 acre annexe to the north.
- iii) The final phase saw the abandonment and back-filling of the earlier defences and the construction of a $6\frac{1}{4}$ acre fort inside the Claudian fort in the late C1. This fort was bounded by a single ditch and rampart. Smaller regular buildings belonged to this period.

Final conclusions can be summarised as follows:-

1. There were three major phases to the defences and at least three separate phases of interior timber buildings; occupation appears to extend from the mid-40's A.D. to c. 120-130 A.D.
2. The timber buildings at Metchley do not conform to the normal pattern found on this type of site, possibly because of the extremely marshy nature of the ground and possibly because troops of a mixed nature were garrisoned here.
3. The continued Roman military presence at Metchley and at other Midland forts now indicates a protracted and unsettled period of occupation in the Midlands.
4. There was no occupation on the site before the Roman occupation or later.
5. The full understanding of such sites can only come from total excavation, which is frequently time consuming and very expensive.

It is however, a matter for some concern that a site of this complexity and interest lying partially within the campus of a major British university should be destroyed for a car park without complete excavation.

TREVOR ROWLEY,
for MOPBW.

Wall (Letocetum), Staffs. (SK 101066)

The excavation of the area referred to in the last News Sheet, in the SE quadrant of the latest fort, was completed, and an earlier phase of timber buildings underlying and on the same alignment as the three phases previously found was revealed. Two adjoining areas were opened up with the object of revealing more details of the different phases of buildings, and if possible identifying them. The buildings of the latest timber period were found to end just south of the present Market Lane, and the modern road may perpetuate the via principalis of this phase. Of the fourteen coins found on the site the latest is one of Domitian and this, together with the pottery evidence, suggests that the final fort was abandoned in the early years of the C2.

A. A. ROUND,
for South Staffordshire Archaeological
and Historical Society.

Chesterton Roman Fort, Staffs. (SJ 832489)

The Roman fort at Chesterton, Newcastle-under-Lyme has been located and sections dug across the defences. The well preserved, timber-laced rampart was 20ft. wide supported by turf walls; the inner ditch was cut 4ft. deep into sandstone bedrock. Advantage had been taken of the well drained, steeply dipping sandstone for the fort site, but just beyond the first ditch this is replaced by a clay sub-soil in which the second ditch was cut, 17ft, from the first. Pre-Flavian and early Flavian

artifacts were found, and some later sherds. The inner ditch had been deliberately filled and the front of the rampart cut away. There had also been some early C14 interference. In the 1970 season it is hoped to establish the size and shape of the fort and make an attempt to trace some of the internal buildings, now, unfortunately, largely built over.

FRANK GOODYEAR,
for Keele and Newcastle Archaeological Society.

Hales Villa Bath-House, Staffs. (SJ 722338)

Work was resumed on the Hales Bath-house in August, 1969. The foot and mouth and other restrictions have prevented access to the site since 1967. A preliminary report by F.H. Goodyear is appearing in the North Staffordshire Journal of Field Studies in December. Trenches were cut to connect the bath-house with the corridor building found by T.Pape in 1928; in the area was found a rough sandstone floor suggesting a courtyard. The drainage of the hot and cold plunges was traced to the south. Below the hypocaust floor was found another earlier floor, suggesting that the building had had another purpose before conversion to a bath-house; to continue in 1970.

J. GASK,
for Keele and Newcastle Archaeological Society.

Huntsham, Herefordshire (SO 565175)

In 1965, the southern wing of the main villa was completed. This consisted of nine rooms, and the evidence from coins and pottery suggest five periods ranging from the late C2 to the late C4. The work this season has been to examine the eastern end of the villa, and it is fairly certain that this is leading to a northern wing, which should yield the true courtyard type of villa. At the time of writing, only half the season's work has been completed. This year, also, has seen the investigation of the precinct wall, one side of which is about 200ft. long, which obviously surrounds both the main villa and the C3-C4 cottage house, excavated in 1964. This wall is a free-standing one and contains a gateway in the length examined.

NORMAN BRIDGEWATER,
for Woolhope Naturalists Field Club Arch. Res. Group.

Lea Cross, Pontesbury, Shropshire(SJ 417085)

Work on the Roman villa first discovered in the C18 and partly explored by Dr. A.W.J. Houghton in 1956-7 was restarted from August 1968. The site has been extensively robbed in the C18 and there is much evidence for the removal of opus signinum and mosaic floors as well as wall structures: building material abounds on the site and includes hypocaust pilae and box-flue tiles, painted wall-plaster of various colours, and slate roofing tiles as well as tegulae and imbrex tiles. Pottery finds have been very meagre, as if the C18 excavators had removed sherds, but unstratified material covers a range from the C2 to the C4 including samian, Severn Valley ware and hammer-headed mortaria. Work has been concentrated on total stripping of the main

structure and establishing its orientation. So far an area of 1500sq. ft. has been uncovered and six rooms identified. The existing walls standing up to 2½ft. high (the main area of Houghton's excavation) associated with thin yellow concrete floors are now seen as secondary additions to the original (?) masonry building, one of whose main walls of dressed sandstone and solid pink mortar has been traced for 40 ft. and is associated with opus signinum and concrete floors of far greater substance. Already at least three periods of construction are tentatively assumed and further excavation of the area will undoubtedly clarify problems of the plan, although it is doubtful how much stratified material remains for an accurate chronological assessment. Trial trenches in the field adjacent to the villa where topsoil has accumulated to a depth of 3ft. indicate out-buildings which may have been left undisturbed in the C18. Drainage operations 100 yds. from the main site have also revealed sherds.

GEOFFREY TOMS,
for Shropshire Archaeological Society.

Rykniel Street Roman Road, Ipsley, Worcs. (SP 068664)

Pre-road structures were found in 1968. An area c. 250 sq. ft., of the road was removed by hand, but no evidence of structures underneath the road was found. This was some 30ft. south of the 1968 cutting. Thus it appears that if there was any Iron Age occupation of this area before the road was built it was very local or ephemeral. The road itself was in a better state of preservation. It was about 30ft. wide, with ditches on both sides. It had less gravel in its foundation in the new cutting than in 1968, otherwise it was similar.

PETE FASHAM,
for Worcestershire New Towns Archaeological Committee.

Blunt's Green, Warwickshire (SP 138688)

During recent road widening operations it has been observed that the earthwork extending NW from Dean's Green is approximately 47ft. wide, with side ditches 18ft. wide, of unknown depth, but still sloping very steeply at 6ft. down.

BRIAN HUTTY,
for Solihull Archaeological Group.

Kings Bromley, Staffs. (SK 116165)

An area in which an air-photograph indicated three small oval enclosures was trial trenched. Ditches of two of the enclosures measuring about 60ft. and about 80ft. across, were found but these produced no dating evidence. The ditches appeared to have held posts. A small pit produced a sherd from a mortarium dating to c. 100 A.D.

HENRIETTA MILES,
for MOPBW.

Malvern Link Roman pottery kilns

Great Buckmans Farm (SO 789497). Excavation revealed pits and ditches but no kiln remains; kilns are probably in adjacent field. Sherds are of mid to late C2.

Grit Farm (SO 779493). This is about a mile from Great Buckmans Farm, and was disclosed after tree felling. Hasty excavation found a ditch filled with wasters, burnt clay and charcoal. The sherds were similar in fabric to those from Great Buckmans Farm, but of different forms, possibly dated to late C3 or early C4.

P. L. WATERS,
for Malvern Research Group.

Dicks Lane, Roman Tilery, Lapworth, Warks (SP 189698)

Excavation was completed during March with the partial demolition of the kiln. This provided much useful information relating to the construction. Nine individual tilers marks have been noticed on the tiles from the kiln, which may eventually allow the identification of Lapworth tiles on habitation sites. A small trial trench has revealed cross walls at kiln 'B' approximately 15yds. on the south side of kiln 'A'. These have the 3in. slot which is characteristic of the Lapworth kilns. It may be possible at a future time to mount a larger more extensive excavation of this second kiln when an attempt will be made to clear the whole of stokehole pit area.

C. J. BADDELEY.

Daniels Wood, Great Packington, Warks. (SP 243858)

Excavations investigated spreads of Roman pottery which had been discovered in arable land threatened by motorway construction. Extensive trial trenching produced what seemed to be charcoal-burning sites of uncertain date. No stratified Roman material was found, and it would appear that any Roman structures must lie outside the course of the motorway.

STEVEN TAYLOR
for MOPBW.

Birlingham, Worcs (SO 938431)

Roman sherds were found in the middle of the field adjoining the Hall Farm cider mill. (See later, post-medieval)

C. I. WALKER.

Llanymynech Ogof, Montgomeryshire (SJ 265220)

A small excavation was done in and around the "Ogof" cave to find stratified dating evidence of Roman copper-mining activity where repeated discoveries of Roman coins and pottery, some in association with skeletons, have been made since the C18 in the mining galleries leading off from the cave. The most recent discoveries have been those of a hoard of 33 denarii deposited in the latter half of the C2 (cf. News

Sheet No. 8 (1965)) and a disturbed burial in association with a Constantinian coin in the "Burial Chamber". An 8 x 4ft. trench inside the cave mouth was excavated to bed-rock at a depth of 7ft. The whole deposit was found to be completely disturbed and unstratified, containing modern objects intermixed with Roman and medieval material. Much animal and human bone was discovered, the latter presumably being of Roman date and representing six or more skeletons both of children and adults. About a dozen sherds of Roman pottery were found, the datable pieces being of the C2. Other material included a silver penny of 1358-1360 (Edward III) and pieces of C18 clay pipes. Two depressions outside the cave mouth clearly associated with mining activity were sectioned and two above the cave in close proximity to the open shaft which leads to the "Shaft Chamber" and appear to be following the same seam of rock. No dating evidence except for two possible Roman sherds has come from the filling of these features, and excavation has only served to prove that the two lower depressions were open pits refilled with "deads" after copper had been extracted, while one of the upper features was revealed as a shaft.

The find spot of the 1964 coin hoard has been examined and recorded: the coins had been concealed in the upper part of a pile of "deads" stacked against the wall of the chamber at about 6ft. above original floor level. Since the second century the stack of deads had been virtually cemented together by the process of calcification. A short inspection of the "Mandible Chamber" revealed a few disturbed human bones and three small Roman sherds of black burnished ware.

(The word "dead" refers to local mining terminology for mined limestone discarded for insufficient metallurgical content.)

GEOFFREY TOMS,
for the Offa Antiquarian Society.

MIGRATION PERIOD

Stretton-on-the-Fosse Saxon Cemetery, Warks. (SP 216383)

Following preliminary work in 1968 an area of over three acres was stripped to reveal the complete extent of the Anglo-Saxon cemetery. A total of 53 inhumations were discovered, 6 having been virtually destroyed by medieval quarrying. The linear cemetery measuring over 200ft. long by 45ft. in breadth contained 6 rows of graves, beginning in the east nearest the site of the modern village, with a further 9 graves tailing away towards the west. 21 adult males, 11 adult females and 15 children, were identifiable, each inhumation containing grave goods. The adult males were buried with spears, shields and knives, a more important grave also having a bronze bowl and the female graves produced 15 brooches including saucer, disc, cross potent, square headed and trefoil types. Many graves in the eastern part of the cemetery yielded charcoal, evidence associated with the sites of three possibly ceremonial fires placed at intervals among the first four rows. Preliminary examination of the skeletal material has revealed hereditary skull abnormalities which may indicate family relationships.

The cemetery was secondary to a series of oval pits, two of which were associated with a small rectangular structure. Stratified late Roman and Anglo-Saxon pottery together with querns, iron artifacts, a loom weight and a coin of VALENTINIAN I were obtained from these features. In the surrounding area was a large scatter of clay daub with wattle marks, fragments of which were obtained from the fill of several of the graves. Immediately to the east of the first rank of graves was a trapezoidal ditched enclosure which produced further late Roman and Anglo-Saxon pottery associated with a coin of CONSTANTINE I.

Trial trenching further to the east in Cherry Orchard produced an occupation layer from which roofing and box flue tile was obtained with large quantities of Roman pottery and evidence of a substantial robbed out wall.

BILL FORD,
for Avon-Severn Gravel Committee and MOPBW.

Ipsley, Worcs. (SP 067666)

A trial excavation on the site of the new telephone exchange at the crossroads at Ipsley located a previously unknown site adjacent to the Roman Ryknield Street. The site was stripped mechanically and about 1800sq. ft. was examined. It became apparent that the field had been ploughed in medieval times. A cart track earlier than the buried soil under the medieval plough soil ran parallel to the Roman road. This track had badly disturbed the eastern part of the site. The site was represented by a deliberate deposit of stones and pebbles on the natural Keuper Marl, and filling in the depressions in the natural. A presumably rectangular structure with internal divisions was identified; it was at least 30 x 15ft. in area. It was represented by a series of postholes and gulleys with postholes in their bases. The axial alignment was approximately at 45 degrees to the Roman road. Evidence of other structures was also recovered. Although a scatter of pottery was found, some Medieval and some Roman, none of it was directly associated with the buildings. Thus the date of the structures, definitely pre-medieval, was difficult to determine.

PETE FASHAM,
for Worcs. New Towns Archaeological Committee.

Among the finds, however, was an iron axe which is provisionally identified as a Francisca, a throwing-axe of early Saxon type, which should be earlier than c. A.D. 500. It is possibly the only one found in England which has not come from a grave. It is the earliest Saxon object from Worcestershire. Whether it dates the structures described above is another matter!

ADDENDUM
by P. A. R.

MIGRATION PERIOD AND EARLY MEDIEVAL

Hen Domen, Montgomery (SO 214981)

A sector of the castle rampart was stripped, to examine more fully

the pre-rampart levels described in News Sheet 11. The earliest feature was a rectangular building 22+ x 15ft., based on postholes in pairs, possibly representing two phases on a slightly different alignment. A curving gully outside the uphill (? gable) end may have kept water away from the wall. The building may be prehistoric, but it is more likely to be post-Roman, C5-C8. There were no finds, but in the buried soil above it were two abraded Roman sherds. The surface of the buried soil showed the configuration of ridge and furrow cultivation with a wavelength of c. 4 metres, probably of pre-conquest date. Documentary evidence (DB) suggests that the area was waste in the time of Edward the Confessor, and used by three Saxon thegns for hunting. Two holes in the surface of the buried soil filled with rampart material, may have resulted from the digging out of small bushes which had grown on the deserted fields, cleared when the castle was built.

PHILIP BARKER,
for University of Birmingham.

Shrewsbury (SJ 4912)

1. Building clearance on the site of 2A St. Alkmunds Square as part of the extension to the Prince Rupert Hotel revealed five large rubbish pits up to 6ft. deep in section 30ft. across, all cutting through two earlier thin occupation levels, one of which contained a sherd of glazed Stamford ware. The infill of the pits was generally of a damp black sludge with much disintegrated animal bone. One pit contained in the bottom level numerous sherds of undecorated Chester ware, dated to C10, together with a gilt-bronze disc brooch in an advanced state of disintegration. Bones from this pit represent cattle, ram, ewe and horse. The significance of the site lies in its position in the highest part of the town within the limits of the presumed Saxon burgh: apart from the C19 discovery of a bronze pin from the St. Chad's site and a number of unprovenanced Saxon coins, the finds from St. Alkmunds Square are the first archaeologically recorded Saxon material from the town.

GEOFFREY TOMS.

MEDIEVAL

Church Street, Tamworth, Staffs. (SK 207040)

Over a period of about two weeks in 1968 a row of shops directly opposite St. Editha's Church were demolished. During the demolition it was possible to record some features of the buildings, their plans and some elevations, then in Easter, 1969 a part of the site of these buildings was excavated to investigate the earlier development of the site.

The earliest remaining phase consisted of large (up to 3ft. diameter) post holes, cut into the natural sand and set so close together as to form a trench, running not quite parallel to the street, found in the north west corner of the site. 4 or 5ft. to the south and on the same alignment was a slot about 2ft. wide and up to 18ins.

deep. Together these evidently represent the foundations of a substantial 'palisade' type post hole building whose date should be pre-C13. Other post holes and post pits belonged to two separate buildings. The post hole building was a quadrilateral structure supported by vertical posts, mainly 2-3ft.apart. Charred wood and burnt stains in some of these post holes suggest that this building was destroyed by fire. The post pits covered a larger area than the post holes and probably supported squared timbers much more widely spaced than the post hole timbers. Later medieval structures were timber-framed buildings on stone sills. One of these timber-framed buildings appears to have contained several small shops or workshops on the ground floor street frontage, with domestic accommodation above and at the rear. The early roof structure and gable windows were almost unaltered. Close studded timbers and open-framed walls remained even though the buildings had been extensively altered. The mock timbered facade built on to the front of a shop at the turn of this century disguised another late medieval timber-framed hall and solar in which parts of the interior remained little altered. Some of the other buildings which were demolished were later brick structures.

BOB MEESON,

for Tamworth Castle Museum and S. Staffs. Arch. and Hist. Soc.

Stafford, Tenterbanks (SK 918232)

During the Autumn and early Winter we carried out a small rescue excavation in the grounds of the College at Tenterbanks, a short distance from the Doxey Bridge entrance to the town. Since at least 1600 this site, on which building work is due to begin in January 1970, has been traditionally believed to be the site of either the burh erected by Ethelfleda in 913 or of the castle built by William I in the town and a manuscript map of Stafford of c.1600 mentions 'reel walls' as having existed within memory on the site.

Two trenches were opened, size 46 x 8ft. and 36 x 8ft. but through inclement weather and illness, only the former was reasonably completed. No structures were located although a small number of roof tiles, and late C15 decorated floor tiles were found. The pottery immediately above the natural gravel subsoil was not earlier than c.1200 in date. The pottery, tiles and few other finds which include part of a late medieval balance, are in Stafford Museum.

P. H. ROBINSON,

for Stafford Museum and Stafford College of Further Education.

Worcester: Medieval City Wall (SO 853546)

Considerable portions of the medieval city wall were revealed during the earlier part of the year, exposing the magnificent sandstone plinth. The city planners hope to be able to design the new 'City Walls Road' in such a way as to show off the wall to the best advantage.

PETER REYNOLDS,

for Worcester Arch. Res. Group.

Alcester, Warks
Nos. 29-35 Bleachfield Street, (SP 088572)

There were two medieval pits (a cess pit and a gravel pit) also a well-preserved stone drying oven of medieval date. (These features are presumably to be associated with medieval buildings underlying the present C18 cottages on the street frontage.) The oven consisted of a firing pit from which a well-constructed stone flue led to a stone drying chamber of inverted conical shape.

These medieval features produced good groups of C12-C14 pottery, which is important in that very little medieval material has so far been recovered from Alcester.

STEPHEN TAYLOR,
for Alcester Excavation Committee and MOPBW.

Stratford-upon-Avon (SP 200280)

Excavations were carried out within the new central development area with the object of obtaining the site of a medieval house and burgage plot of the planned town built in circa 1195 and also to see if pre-existing occupation had taken place. It was found that rebuilding in the late C16, after the town fires, had removed any previous evidence except the bases of a number of storage pits from which was obtained pottery of C13-C14.

Trial trenching at the Vicarage site, did however, produce an undisturbed area with pits and post-holes containing pottery similar to St. Neots ware.

BILL FORD.
for Stratford-upon-Avon Society.

58-59 Spon Street, Coventry (SP 326790)

The excavation has continued throughout the summer under the direction of Don Watson. The area being excavated consists of a narrow strip lying behind 59 and is the site of a C18-19 'top shop'. The single and double stone walls exposed late last season are now thought to be C17-C19. These walls which form the foundations of the brick-built workshops, cut through and disturb most of the earlier levels. Several small pits were found; three of these are probably late medieval; two were clay lined and built as a pair. Their purpose is not clear but a white staining on the bottom of one of them may be lime. Sandstone and tiles occur frequently in all levels of the site. Cobbles form the only consistent level below the rubble; and early line of sandstone cuts diagonally under the later walls. Another similar line of stone probably passes under the back wall of 59. Large quantities of pottery

of ? C12-C19 date, with some Roman, occur throughout most levels. Work is almost finished on this part of the site. A new area has been opened behind 58 revealing a well constructed of mainly reused sandstone.

JOHN BATEMAN AND DON WATSON,
for Coventry and District Archaeological Society.

Brook Street, Warwick (SP 280650)

Excavation of the car park area to the west of Brook Street, was completed in the spring of 1969. The area underlying the C17 Pucherings Almshouses was cleared, and traces were found of the earlier timber buildings which had occupied the site. As elsewhere in Warwick, post-medieval buildings and road widening had so interfered with the medieval building plans as to render them fragmentary and largely unintelligible. At some time in the early Middle Ages the site was not used for housing, being occupied instead by a very large oven. As in previous seasons, considerable quantities of early medieval "Shelly Ware" were found in association with early types of Stamford Ware.

MICHAEL FARR AND STEVEN TAYLOR,
for MOPBW. and School of History.

Shrewsbury (SJ 4912)

1. On the site of 2A St. Alkmunds Square (see above) were also medieval pits; these contained medieval pottery including a nearly complete tripod pitcher of C12 or C13 date, sherds of another green-glazed tripod pitcher and a complete black-glazed 'tyg' of C16 type.

2. 86ft. of the C13 town wall was revealed in May 1969 on the Roushill site during building operations at Charles Clark's Garage: original walling survived up to a height of 15ft. from the foundations with up to 20 courses in situ. The site is a few yards to the east of P.A. Barker's Roushill excavation (Med. Arch. V (1961)) and confirmed with width of the wall as $4\frac{1}{2}$ ft., but revealed differences in the construction of the plinth, which changed from a double plinth in this section to a triple step of single courses. This appears to confirm separate individual sections of construction. The wall had undergone considerable repair and modification during its life; brick had been inserted in certain areas of the foundation and wall face to strengthen the fabric and there was evidence of replacement of original building stone in the upper courses. Some of this reconstruction could probably be dated both to the C15 and the time of the Civil War, while later buildings had been constructed against the wall's outer face. The area in front of the wall was not available for excavation, and despite structural attempts to preserve the wall, the fabric suffered collapse and demolition.

GEOFFREY TOMS.

Castle Bromwich, Birmingham, Motte and Bailey

One cutting revealed the bailey ditch, which appeared as a sandy fill, with charcoal and pebble tip-lines. A double series of rectangular

posts measuring approximately 75 cm. by 1 metre, parallel to the inner edge of the ditch suggests a substantial timbered structure. A further ditch extending southward showing marked silting, but without tip lines, indicating a more complicated earthwork than hitherto suspected. Stratified sherds of black, coarse ware, were obtained from the charcoal fill of the post holes. Stripping of an area 14 metres square to the immediate south of the motte, produced sandstone foundations of a Tudor building, which had disturbed earlier features. A trench 50 x 3 metres, from the Motte to the cemetery fence, indicated an inner ditch around the base of the Motte, further linear features within the bailey, and the bailey ditch itself. The area south of this ditch showed a layer of dark, disturbed gravel suggesting extra-mural occupation. An area 14 metres square was excavated to the west of the bailey. This revealed a similar occupation layer to that in Cutting No.3., closer examination of which, showing it to be the floor of a medieval timbered building. This site has yielded considerable quantities of pottery, including a large cooking pot with applied ribbon decorative work, C.13.

Examination of the topography of the area, in addition to the archaeological evidence, suggests that we may be dealing with a shrunken medieval village of linear pattern along the road descending from the church to the ford, the motte and bailey being strategically placed.

BILL FORD,
for City of Birmingham Museum,
and MOPBW.

Hen Domen, Montgomery (SO 214981)

A sector of the rampart was stripped. The lowest layers had been piled from west to east, in overlapping lenses of soil and clay. They were probably laid to level off the ground to take the framework of the first palisade and fighting platform, possibly prefabricated. Post sockets and boulder clay pad-supported trusses of 12ft. span at 12ft. intervals, with rampart material piled between them. A curving line of stakeholes, 20ft. back from the line of the palisade may represent a flimsy revetment on the back of the rampart.

PHILIP BARKER,
for University of Birmingham.

Bredwardine, Herefordshire (SO 336440)

Recent examination suggested a substantial, probably medieval site in addition to the two scheduled areas ('Bredwardine Castle', SO 335444 and 'Old Court Mound', SO 336448). It was decided to investigate this larger area in an effort to discover its function and date, and its relation to the scheduled areas. A contour survey was made of the site and a small exploratory area opened. Three main periods of occupation were found, the earliest consisting of the completely robbed foundation trench of an early stone and mortar building. The main period of occupation, which was presumably a farm complex of the C14, provided a reasonable collection of sandy red wares with varieties of green glazing, strap handles and thumb bases, and many fragments

of ridge tiles with both moulded and cut crests. After some period of disuse, a large shallow pit was cut through the debris. Its use was uncertain, but within the part excavated were the remains of two fires and a pile of crushed limestone or tufa. It is hoped that work will continue next year.

RON SHOESMITH,
for Woolhope Club Arch. Res. Group.

Hereford Castle (SO 512397)

Excavations have been done in Redcliffe Gardens and in the corporation gardens adjacent to Castle Cliff. The ditch around the keep was located; in this were stone foundations, probably of a bridge abutment. Pottery evidence suggests a C13 date consistent with Henry III's work on the Castle. Built into and across these foundations was a drystone wall along the outer edge of the ditch, probably of mid C17 date. When the Castle was destroyed in 1661, this wall was robbed and the ditch filled in. Above this filling was debris of later centuries.

PETER LEACH,
for MOPBW and Hereford Museum.

Bordesley Abbey, Redditch, Worcs. (SP 685045)

The south east transept of the church was excavated down to the latest (dirt) floor levels, which surprisingly bury the bases of the columns and piers to a depth of c. 3ft. This part of the church is well-preserved and masonry stands to a height of c. 8ft. It is of Norman, E E. and Dec. styles. Carved stone includes a sculptured head, painted pieces, and masons marks.

The boundary bank was sectioned and shown to be made of clay and gravel, probably derived from a deep excavation on its interior side. In the silting of this were laminations of leaf impressions and silt, from which it may be possible to measure rates of annual silting. Under the bank were indications of probable ridge and furrow; if the bank is primary in the abbey development, these should be dated earlier than the 1130s. Further work was done on the industrial site (SP 686050) further down the valley. A horseshoe-shaped stone structure was found to be inside a large timber building whose main timbers were set on sandstone blocks, and the studs or sill-beams on large gravel alignments. The whole complex appears to be associated with iron-smelting.

TREVOR ROWLEY AND PHILIP RAHTZ,
for Redditch U.D.C. and University of Birmingham.

Deserted, shrunken and migrated villages of Warwickshire

A programme of extensive field work has been carried out over the past three years on the deserted and shrunken settlements of Warwickshire, in an attempt to reassess Prof. Beresford's pioneer paper¹ and

1. Trans. Birm. Arch. Soc. LXVI (1945-6)

to bring to light fresh information. During the course of work a number of new deserted sites have been discovered. Sketch plans of surviving earthworks have been made on eighty sites; surviving medieval buildings, e.g. abandoned churches and chapels, have been surveyed; and collections of surface finds made on sites ploughed up. Work on air photographs and documentary research have been proceeding on parallel lines. Some field work remains to be completed, and results have not yet been thoroughly assessed; but the initial impression is of a much more long-drawn-out and complicated pattern of settlement abandonment in the county than that recognised 24 years ago.

JAMES BOND,
then at University of Birmingham.

Abdon DMV, Shropshire (SP 575864)

The site of a prominent platform was opened up some 450ft. to the south of and 30ft. below the medieval longhouse excavated in 1966. The base of a stone structure (5.75m x 9m) lying immediately below the turf level was uncovered and found to consist of three sections. A small northern room (2.25m x 4.6m interior measurements) was partially paved with sandstone slabs and contained a small square of packed stone. A central cross passage with a clay floor (5.7m x 3.2m interior) had east and west entrances each with a broad stone step. The southern room (3m x 5.7m) was paved with stone with a wide drain in the SW corner. The abundance of C17 and C18 slipware confirmed that Abdon had been re-occupied, but apart from a few sherds of medieval cooking pot there was no evidence of earlier occupation. The complete absence of any rubble and the clean, smooth nature of the structure suggested that it had been an open yard during the last phase of its life. The original building had probably been a cow shed or milking area.

TREVOR ROWLEY.

In April and May of this year Mick Aston and James Bond made a full hachured and contoured plan of the earthworks of Abdon in conjunction with Trevor Rowley's excavation there. This revealed the line of the village street, the medieval house platforms high up near the church, the more distinct later house sites lower downslope and the abrupt hollow ways bounding the site on either side.

JAMES BOND,
then at University of Birmingham.

West Midlands Water Power and Fishponds

Extensive fieldwork is being done of mill and fishpond sites in Worcestershire and Warwickshire mainly, but also in Shropshire, Herefordshire and S. Staffordshire. Detailed investigation has been in NE Worcestershire, especially in the Arrow Valley as part of the Redditch New Town Development. Documentary evidence has been examined for groups of monastic and lay estates in the parishes of Hanbury, Feckenham, Tardebigge, Chaddesley Corbett, Belbroughton and Halesowen; and in the Stonebridge-Kenilworth area.

MICK ASTON,
for Department of Geography, University of Birmingham.

Gannow Green Moat and Fishponds, Romsley, Worcs. (SO 985784)

This extensive site, investigated some years ago by the Birmingham Arch. Soc. Field Group (News Sheet No.3 (1960) p.2; No.5 (1962) p.3) and shown to be of more than usual interest, is threatened by Birmingham's overspill scheme for north-east Worcestershire. An objection was lodged at the Inquiry by the Rubery Historical Society and the Worcestershire County Museum; and an undertaking received that the moat itself would not be damaged by any development which may take place. The future of the fishponds cannot be guaranteed, but as these have been severely damaged by agricultural usage and their value is now very limited, the case for their preservation could not be pressed.

JAMES BOND,
for Worcestershire County Museum.

Lodge Farm, Chaddesley Corbett, Worcs (SO 889735)

A fine medieval pond system opposite Lodge Farm is threatened by dumping, and a full hachured survey has been made on a scale of 20ft. = 1 inch. The main pond is over 100yds. long and over 30yds. across at its widest point, and shows slight signs of having been considerably enlarged at some period. There is a subsidiary pond on the eastern side, and a very well preserved set of leats and overflow channels. Further channels and ditches in the same field appear to be unrelated to the pond system, and are not yet fully understood. Investigation is continuing.

JAMES BOND,
for Worcestershire County Museum.

Lunt Cottages, Baginton, Coventry (SP 345751)

Survey of the cottages was followed by an excavation to confirm evidence of a change in their lay-out. There was a clay floor in front of the single tenement, which showed that it had been shortened. Between the two buildings there were remains of a sandstone well and two pebbled floors bedded on clay, showing that the cottages had originally been one building. Sherds were found of C15 to early C18.

MISS G. G. WILKINS
for Coventry and District Arch.Soc.

Chilvers Coton pottery kilns, Nuneaton, Warks (SP 342897)

Two kilns were found at Harefield Lane in 1968, and three more, with other features, were excavated this year. The first two were circular, with diameters of 7ft. 8ins., and five flues (1968 diameters 9ft. 6ins. and 8ft. 6ins.). In the latest of these kilns were twelve jugs remaining in fired position, with stamped decoration. The third kiln was 7ft. in diameter, with five flues, one defined by two ridge tiles. Pottery from this was rosette decorated. Near the kilns was a cobbled and rutted road 11ft. wide with a ditch on one side. Ruts led off this across the excavation area, perhaps made by carts bringing lead and clay and returning to market with pots. There was also a

building 42 x 14ft. to which an extension 8 x 6ft. was added; this may have housed the potters and served as a workshop. Its floor sealed traces of a C13 timber building with a hearth and puddling pit.

The kiln products can be divided into two periods, the first characterised by stamped decoration, the second by rosettes (possibly two generations). Lobed cups or bowls associated with the first period suggest a C 14 date. Coiled handles and rouletting suggest a late C14 or early C15 date for the second period. The pottery is of a high standard and of varied forms which include ovoid jugs up to 3ft. high, tall decorated balusters, lobed cups and bowls, panchions, mortars, bowls of all shapes and sizes, skillets, pipkins, cooking pots, storage jars, lids, drinking mugs, cressets, costrels, and clay marbles for gaming.

KEITH SCOTT,
for Nuneaton Group.

MEDIEVAL AND LATER

Kings Cuple, Herefordshire (SO 562289)

Fieldwork has been done in the area of the 'Red Rail' ford across the River Wye close to the strong-point of Kings Cuple, signified by the motto of Cuple Tump, the 'Castle ruins', and another earthwork of unknown date. Approach to the ford from both sides is by a 20ft. wide road of cambered river boulders, traced through the meadows by an auger survey and excavation. C19 sherds on the surface suggest that the ford continued in use until the present bridge was built at Hoarworthy. The foundations of a boat-landing stage were also found near the ford at low-water mark.

MATTHEW HALE AND PAT MOORE,
for Woolhope Naturalists Field Club Arch. Res. Group.

Compilation of Archaeological Inventory of Worcestershire

An inventory of archaeological sites and buildings of architectural interest in Worcestershire is being built up, and will be kept at the Worcestershire County Museum at Hartlebury Castle in the form of a record-card index. This will be fully cross-referenced with the aid of a punched-card system, to enable ease of location of records of any particular type of site, or of sites in any particular parish or district. The record cards will also be referenced to fuller information, both published and unpublished, on each site.

JAMES BOND,
for Worcestershire County Museum.

POST-MEDIEVAL AND INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Worcester: Fort Royal (SO 855543)

A rescue excavation is being done at Fort Royal in Worcester before the site is further developed. A section has been cut across the eastern ditch establishing its limits and the position and method of backfilling. A large area has also been explored within the confines of the fort with negative results, the whole area having been cleared when the present building was erected in the late C19. Investigation is continuing on a third site across the western ditch.

PETER REYNOLDS,
for Worcester Arch. Res. Group.

Birlingham Cider Mill, Worcestershire (SO 938431)

This cider mill has been moved from Hall Farm to the Worcestershire County Museum at Hartlebury Castle and re-erected. It is a half-timbered building housing a horse-operated crushing pan and two presses. The operation provided information that may help archaeologists to interpret the remains of such a structure if it were found in excavation.

C. I. WALKER,
in co-operation with Worcestershire County Museum.

Industrial Archaeology - A Survey of Birmingham

An Industrial Archaeology Research Group has recently been formed within the Birmingham Archaeological Society with the aim of recording Birmingham during and after the Industrial Revolution. Members of the Group have a section of the 25in. Ordnance Survey sheets of the City and each building or group of buildings is numbered. The number is marked on the map and on a record card which is made out for each site. With slum clearance so rapid at the moment the accent is on industrial housing - this is one of the features of the Industrial Revolution about which much too little is known. Areas which will be completed first will be the Jewellery Quarter, the Gun Quarter, Smallheath, Ladywood and Aston.

The Group feels that the term Industrial Archaeology should mean not only the archaeology of industry but also the archaeology of housing, and the socio/welfare provisions and the communications provided for the industrial community. With this in mind, schools banks, markets, canals, railways and turnpikes and chapels are to be studied, the canal recording being done as a joint venture with the B.C.N. Society.

As areas are completed the record cards will be sent to the national Industrial Monuments Survey for copying and when returned will be lodged together with photographs and measured drawings with the Local Studies Section of the Birmingham Reference Library. The Birmingham Libraries and the City Planning Office are actively collaborating with the Birmingham Archaeological Society in this survey.

JENNIFER TANN,
for Birmingham Arch. Soc.

Industrial Archaeology in Worcestershire

The work of surveying early iron working sites of the 17th and 18th centuries in Worcestershire has continued. Worcestershire during the Civil War period was an important arms centre, and tributaries of the Severn and Teme were used to supply water power for blade mill, and the great forests north of Worcester and west of the Severn supplied charcoal for fuel.

One site is of particular interest, At Henwick, on the Laugherne Brook, a few yards north of the ruins of Henwick Mill, a quantity of iron slag, some lumps of considerable size, was discovered in the bed of the stream. There has been a good deal of dumping nearby but this slag is Roman bloomery slag, identical to that found at Sharpley Pool furnace and off Pitchcroft, where huge quantities were removed for re-use in the furnaces on Severnside in the mid-seventeenth century. There are traces upstream of sluices and a pool system, and access to the Severn would have been very convenient by way of the steep donkey path at the Dog and Duck.

Other sites investigated, and where iron slag has been found are at Oliver's Mount, Shrawley, at Wribbenhall near Sandbourne House, and at Furnace Mill in the Wye Forest. The Oliver's Mount site is very interesting. The water supply comes from the Shrawley Pools and the slag and cinder deposit is against the remains of a medieval castle that once guarded a ford that crossed the Severn at that point. A detailed survey has also been made of the considerable remains of the Blount forges on the River Ream near Cleobury Mortimer.

A most important discovery has been made on Dick Brook during the past few months. The navigational system of the brook and the iron furnace at Sharpley Pool is reputed to have been the work of the great seventeenth century pioneer, Andrew Yarranton. Recently, doubts have been expressed that the locks served only a later forge on the brook and not the furnace, a mile or so upstream. The discovery of three further locks upstream, to the nearest point of transshipment from the furnace to the brook, seems to remove the doubt that the navigational system was not made to serve the furnace, and that it is the work of Yarranton now seems to be more probable.

The survey of Worcestershire watermills continues, and documentation and photographs are building up. Anyone who could help in this interesting work would be welcome.

A considerable number of local folk songs has now been collected. These include trade songs, sporting and political songs and many social ballads. Some have been performed by Mike Garland, and we hope that they will entertain a wider audience.

H.W. GWILLIAM.

PUBLICATIONS OF WEST MIDLANDS INTEREST

- World Archaeology 1 no.2 (Oct. 1969) pp. 220-235.
P.A. Barker 'Some aspects of the Excavation of Timber Buildings' (examples drawn from Hen Domen and Wroxeter)
- Trans. Birmingham Arch. Soc 83 (1969)
Adrian Oswald 'Excavation for the Avon/Severn Research Committee at Barford, Warks.' pp. 1-64.
H. Cameron and J. Lucas 'Tripontium, First Interim Report', pp. 130-179.
Brian Hobley 'A Neronian-Vespasianic military site at The Lunt, Baginton', pp. 65-129.
- Proc. Prehist. Soc. 34 (1969)
D.P.S. Peacock 'A Petrological Study of certain Iron Age Pottery for Western England', pp. 414-427.
- Journal Roman Studies 49 (1969) pp. 104-143
J.K. St. Joseph 'Air Reconnaissance in Britain 1965-68', includes notes on Greensfarge, a Roman camp at Buslington, near Shifnal, (SJ 719109); another near Swindon (SO 856904); a fort and three camps at Brompton, Shropshire (SO 245931); a camp at Brampton Bryon near Lentwardine (SO 379723).
- Trans. of the Woolhope Naturalists Field Club. 39 pt.1 (1967)
F. Noble and R. Shoesmith 'Hereford City Excavations, 1967', pp. 44-70.
- Current Archaeology 14 (May 1969)
Graham Webster 'Wroxeter'.

J. Gould

Tamworth Excavations 1967.
offprints of this and of the paper on
the Shenstone Hoard are available
from J.H. Whiston, 58 Wednesbury Rd.
Walsall, Staffs.

THE ORIGINS OF WORCESTER

It is hoped that volume 2 of the 3rd series of the Transactions of the Worcester Archaeological Society which will be devoted to the prehistory and early history of the city of Worcester will be issued early in the New Year. The price to non-members of the Society will be 35/-. Copies can be ordered from the Hon. Editor, P.A. Barker, 4, St. Georges Square, Worcester.

REPRINTING OF THE REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS AT WROXETER (VIROGONIUM)
1923-1927 BY D. ATKINSON, M.A., F.S.A.

The report on the excavations conducted by the Birmingham Archaeological Society, of this Romano-British town with a long history of Roman occupation unobscured by any post-Roman development is a volume of major importance to the study of Roman Britain. The first limited edition went out of print almost as soon as it was published, in 1942 and this reprint is being undertaken to meet the enormous demand for copies still received by the Society.

Publication date March 1970. Price, including postage £5.5.0d.
(£4.4s.0d. if ordered before publication)

Copies may be ordered from:-

The Librarian,
Birmingham Archaeological Society,
Birmingham and Midland Institute,
Margaret Street,
Birmingham 3.

Remittances should be enclosed with orders.

RESEARCH PAPERS OF THE VALE OF EVESHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY VOL. II

We are pleased to announce the publication of Volume II of the Research Papers of this society, the contents of which are as follows:-

A rare Evesham Abbey Estate Document, by Professor R.H. Hilton.

A Bibliography of Evesham Abbey, by D. C. Cox, B.A.

Vale of Evesham secular clergy (1532, 1534, 1535, 1540) and their payments for the pardon of 1531, by C.W. Clarke.

The Seventeenth Century Token Coinage of the Vale of Evesham by
B.G. Cox.

A Short History of Commercial Horticulture in the Vale of Evesham,
by R. W. Sidwell.

Miscellany: 1. A Thirteenth Century Vessel.
2. A Bronze Age Spear Head.

Some copies of Volume I are still available, and new subscribers
may welcome this opportunity to complete their run of the Research
Papers before back numbers become scarce.

The contents of Volume I are:-

Iron Age Hut: a reconstruction, by P.J. Reynolds, M.A.

Romano-British Occupation Sites in the Vale of Evesham by B. G. Cox.

The Norman Conquest of the West Midlands, by H.B. Clarke, B.A.

Two South Littleton Documents from a Missal of Evesham Abbey, by
D.C. Cox, B.A.

Evesham Abbey: the Final Disunity, by C. W. Clarke.

E.A.B. Barnard, M.A., F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S., by K. Gill Smith.

The current price of either volume of Research Papers is 11s 6d per
copy, post free. It would be much appreciated if a remittance could
be enclosed with orders.

Both volumes may be obtained from:

The Hon. Secretary,
Vale of Evesham Historical Society,
The Almonry Museum,
Evesham,
Worcestershire.

OTHER LOCAL PUBLICATIONS

We have been pleased to receive the following publications during the year from regions, if there are any other similar ones being published, the Editor would be pleased to know about them.

Avon Severn Valleys Research Project Report

Secretary: Mr. G.S. Taylor, Wychbury, 5 Greenside Road,
Erdington, Birmingham 24.

Bulletin of the University of Birmingham Archaeological Society

Secretary: Miss A. South, Department of Archaeology, Birmingham
University.

Cake and Cockhorse, published by the Banbury Historical Society
(price 2/6d)

Editor: B.S. Trinder, 90 Bretch Hill, Banbury.

Coventry and District Archaeological Society Bulletin

Editor: Mr. Martin Elliott, 25 Brade Drive, Walsgrave, Coventry.

Newsletter of the Keele Archaeology Group, published by Keele University

Chronicle of the Kidderminster Archaeological & History Society
(price 1/-)

Secretary: Mr. J.G. Roberts, 42 Woodlands Road, Cookley, Worcs.

Rugby Archaeological Society Newsletter

Editor: Mr. J. Foster, 10 Maccaulay Road, Rugby.

Shropshire Newsletter published by the Shropshire Archaeological Society

Editor: Mr. Barrie Trinder, Flat 2 52 Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury.

Journal of West Midlands Regional Studies, published by the Wolverhampton
College of Technology.

Editor: Mr. J.E. McDonald, Wolverhampton College of Technology.

Worcestershire Archaeology Newsletter published by the Worcester City
Museum, the Worcestershire Archaeological Society and the Worcester
Archaeological Research Group.

Solihull Archaeological Group Newsletter, published by the group and
obtainable from Mr. G.L. Bishop, 15 St. Gerrards Rd. Solihull.

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