

WEST MIDLANDS

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NEWS SHEET



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LIST OF OFFICERS OF CBA GROUP 8

Chairman: Dr Graham Webster  
Secretary: Dr Lawrence Barfield  
Treasurer: Geoff Taylor  
Editor: Philip Rahtz  
Asst Editor: Susan Hirst



## EDITORIAL

The cover map is of the five counties of CBA Group 8, and shows the locality of archaeological excavations which have taken place during the past 15 years; the data is taken from WMANS nos 1-15 and probably includes most of the work done during that time. A graph of the amount of archaeology carried out would show a steady upward trend, reflected also in the size of the News Sheet from the 8 pages of no 1 to the 40 or 50 of recent issues.

The size of the dots represents the number of times the site is mentioned in the News Sheets. The largest dots are for 11-15 times, the next size 7-10, next 3-6 and smallest 1 or 2 times. Not surprisingly, prolific and famous sites like Wroxeter and Alcester figure prominently in the distribution map. There is also a fairly even spread of activity over many areas, especially of Warks and Worcs; Herefords and Staffs are decidedly thin, and in all counties there are some remarkably large areas in which there has apparently been no work at all, in many cases of a 100 sq miles or more.

Such a map underlines the slight and unrepresentative character of our understanding of the settlement pattern of the West Midland Counties, and the areas where research (and probably rescue) work needs to be stimulated.

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Since the last issue of WMANS, Group 8 have taken the important step of forming WMRAC, the West Midlands Rescue Archaeology Committee, which will act as an advisory and probably as an administrative body for the organisation of rescue archaeology in the West Midlands. Similar bodies have been or are being set up in other regions; their formation is encouraged by the DOE whose excavation organisation has recently been reorganised as part of the new broom wielded by the new Chief Inspector, Andrew Saunders. John Hurst, who is well-known to many of us, will be responsible for the overall organisation of rescue excavation, and there will be 3 regional administrators. Miss Sarnia Butcher, who is a well-known archaeologist of the Roman period, is responsible for Midland England, and we take this opportunity of welcoming her attentions to our area.

The role of WMRAC in relation to the DOE and to local societies and organisations has yet to be fully worked out; but it has been decided that it shall have a paid secretary. He or she will clearly be an important new catalyst in the rescue archaeology of our area; one of the jobs most needed is to find out about these blank areas on our cover map and try to stimulate some activity there.

The summing up of past work at the time when an important new development is about to take place is a suitable time for me to relinquish the editorship of this News Sheet. I have now edited 5 numbers and feel that a younger and more active approach is needed than I have time to give. Diana Webster has kindly agreed to become the new editor.

A few final words to contributors: don't wait to be asked to send in results of your activities, or articles, just send the new editor reports of everything you have been doing and thinking; be as concise as possible and do get your national grid references right - in plotting entries for the map we found that many of the sites described were in the wrong counties and even in Scotland or the sea! Remember - take the west edge of the grid square in which your site lies and read the large figures printed opposite this line in the north or south margin, for the 3rd number estimate how many tenths east of the line your site

## CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

The year has seen further discussions over the future organisation in the West Midlands to cope with the large scale emergency works. Delay has been caused by some societies feeling that their powers for independent action were being eroded. After further meetings it is now more widely appreciated that the situation is far too serious for anyone to take up a parochial attitude. There remains, however, the difficult problem of the local authorities who have established their own relationships with the DOE. Any scheme will have to accommodate this reality but we now await a meeting with representatives of the DOE after their reorganisation. Our meeting has been further delayed pending a national meeting on 22 February at Fortress House to thrash out the problems of organisation, relationships with bodies such as ours and the thorny problem of pay and subsistence for volunteers and full-time field workers. It is perfectly obvious that major changes are about to take place and that some of our thinking may already be out of date. In Oxfordshire some real progress has been made in the establishment of an archaeological unit for the county and the county council has already provided substantial financial aid. This may well be the pattern of the future and we may have to think in terms of units for the new local government areas. Meantime it is essential and urgent that we have a body to consider the problems of the West Midlands as a whole before the situation gets out of hand.

One of our grimmest battles has been over the Wrekin where the BBC now has permission to erect a TV mast and station and will effectively obliterate a length of defences of the Iron Age hill fort. The proposed buildings are much larger than those shown on the plans presented at the public enquiry and attempts are being made to minimise the amount of destruction. An excavation is being undertaken in April by Stan Stanford. Another site, not far away, due for total destruction this year is the Roman military station at Red Hill where the reservoir is being extended. An excavation is due to start in April under David Browne of Cambridge.

Another matter of concern is the decline of interest in training programmes. The school at Wroxeter may be in danger unless it can be made cheaper and more attractive. Efforts are being made to do this but it reflects a changing situation generally. Anyone with very little or no experience can now get a reasonable daily rate on an emergency excavation and may feel no need to learn the basic techniques. Rates of pay by DOE should be linked to training and experience. No one should be recognised as a site supervisor or director unless they had become qualified by completing in a satisfactory way a Government approved course, as in all other professional fields.

We welcome the foundation of the Friends of Wroxeter and Barnsley Park, a new organisation which by scholarships will make it possible for, every year, a few students who cannot afford the full cost, to receive training.

The year saw the departure of Bill Ford to Wiltshire. He had created a useful county service for Warwickshire and achieved notable collaboration with all the people concerned with motorways in that area.

We are sorry to lose him but welcome Mike Bishop from the Department of Archaeology, Cardiff who has replaced him in the county Museum.

We congratulate Arnold Baker in his election to a Fellowship of the Society of Antiquaries.

Best wishes for the year ahead.

GRAHAM WEBSTER

lies; next take the south edge of the square and read the figures printed opposite this line in the east or west margin, estimating tenths northwards for the 6th figure; prefix all 6 by the grid letters for the whole area.

PHILIP RAHTZ

AIR PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE WEST MIDLANDS

An index of the air photographs deposited in the Extramural Department Library has been prepared and duplicated. It consists of a list of photographs arranged according to National Grid Numbers starting with SJ/2217 and ending with SU/5994. It is on foolscap sheets, double spaced and there are 90 pages. Copies are available from the Extramural Department at 50p (post-free). Arrangements to see the photographs can be made with the librarian Mr Raymond Fisher but the collection is not yet adequately filed and care must be exercised in its use.

## GENERAL

### Sketch Planning: A Further Notice

In a short article on field work published in No 13 (1970) of this newsletter the authors attempted to explain a technique of rapid sketch-surveying that they had successfully employed on a large number of sites and which they thought could be usefully applied by other people. In that article the use of such techniques, which have received some adverse criticism as representing a drop in standards of accuracy, were justified as follows:-

1. In the context of the current necessary emphasis on rescue work rather than research, sketch planning has the supreme advantage of speed.
2. It also has the advantage of requiring little equipment (drawing-board, paper, pencils, rubber, constituting all that is necessary); this, combined with its speed, reduces cost in both materials and man-hours to negligible proportions.
3. Some classes of earthworks, Iron Age hill forts for example, are fairly easily recognisable as a class at first sight. Most, however, are not so well-defined or so easy to interpret. The fields of low, rounded, indeterminate humps and hollows which are so typical of sites in the West Midlands, may represent almost anything from a deserted medieval village to an abandoned drainage or irrigation system or group of shallow, worked-out marlpits; and without some sort of plan it is not always easy to distinguish between the various alternatives. A rapid sketch-plan will usually reveal the clues necessary for interpretation (in the same way that an air photograph will often show some pattern in a group of earthworks which seem to make no sense from a rapid ground-level inspection).
4. Apart from summarising the broad outlines of, and relationships within, any individual site, sketch surveying is an important tool in extensive field reconnaissance over a wide area, whereby a whole corpus of plans of a large number of sites can be rapidly assembled, thus providing a basis for assessment and comparison.

The basic method was outlined in the previous article, and this may be summarised as follows:-

1. A walk over all parts of the site to see how extensive it is, what features are contained within it, and which of these seem to be the most important or prominent.
2. The drawing of the major features, those large in size, particularly well-defined, or of high relief, should be completed first. The temptation to concentrate firstly in great detail on one particular part of the site must be overcome.
3. As drawing progresses, notes or sketches should continually be made relating parts of the site to their surroundings, so that the end product can readily be related to the framework of field boundaries and buildings shown on the 6" or larger scale O S maps.

4. Only when the main features have been drawn in and the relationships between them rendered as correctly as possible, should the more minor details be added.

5. A final walk over the site with the completed plan, to check and make any final corrections.

6. Drawing-up of the plan in fair copy using hachures to depict changes of slope, graded in size to show features of differing prominence.

The authors have received a number of enquiries concerning this technique, and a number of requests to elaborate further on its practice in the field. So let us take, as an example, a field of earthworks of low relief which a hypothetical field worker notes as he visits a parish church (fig 1). As far as he knows these have not been recognised previously or recorded in any way. Even if a previous survey has been made this does not matter greatly, for a more recent plan may be of considerable value, both in showing potential changes on the site, and in being compiled under different conditions which may produce fresh evidence. He may know very little of the history or archaeology of the area and have no information other than the earthworks themselves on which to base an interpretation; moreover he will probably have no information as to whether the site is likely to be ploughed up, built over, quarried away or otherwise destroyed in the near future. He may have only an hour to spare. Under these circumstances his obvious course of action is to attempt a sketch plan, even if he only has the back of an envelope on which to work.

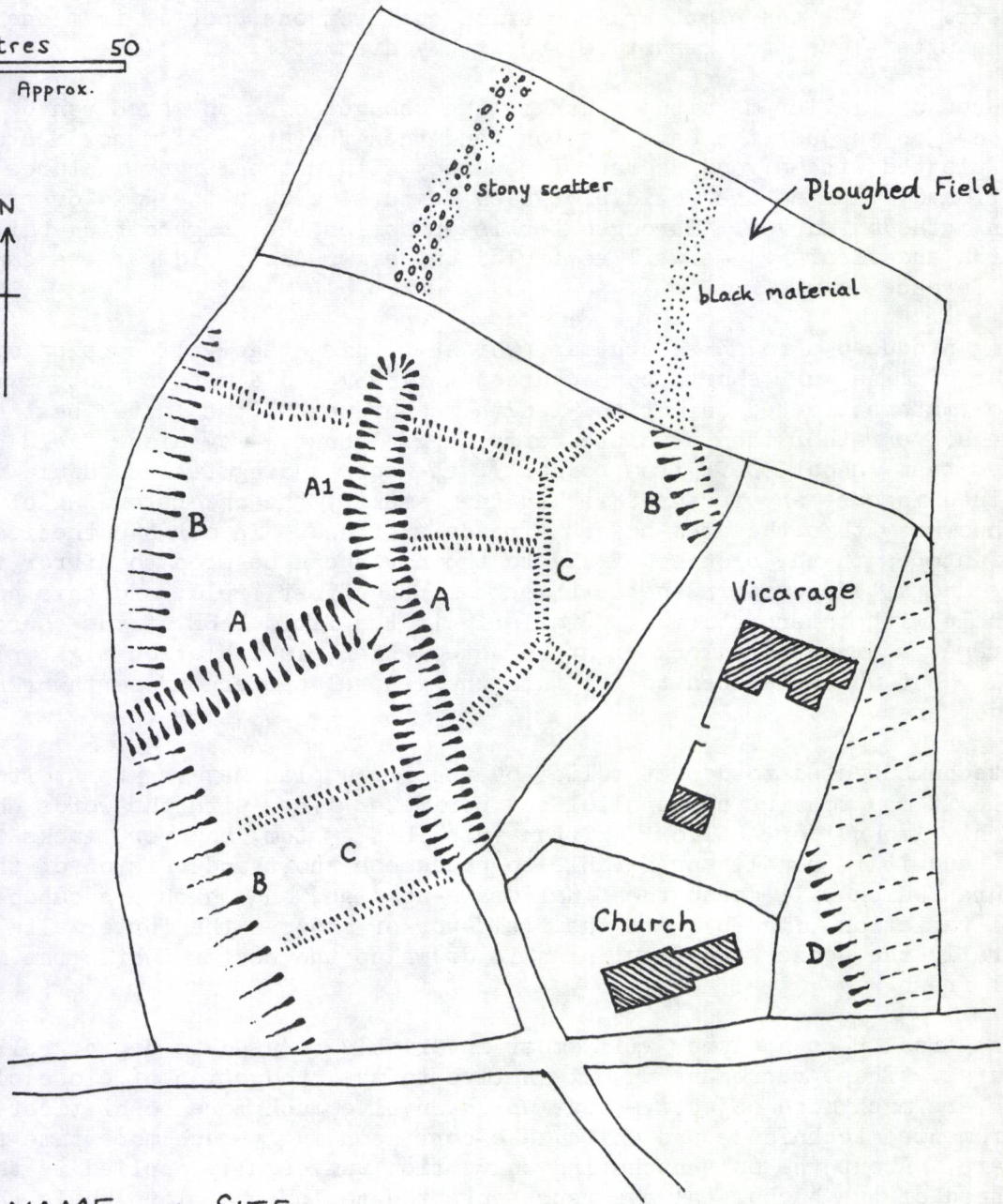
The first task, having obtained the farmer's permission, would be to walk all over the site up to the field boundaries, continually looking at it from different angles, to assess the approximate extent, shape and main features of the area. This reconnaissance should aim to determine whether the site stretches beyond the present field boundaries; in our hypothetical case (fig 1) the field to the north has been ploughed but there are surface patches of stone and black humic material whose distribution will need to be noted.

At the same time he should be giving close attention to the boundaries of the field and adjacent properties. The fact that the modern road ends abruptly on the SE side of the field, and that the field itself is a rather curious shape should be noted. Having carried out his preliminary reconnaissance, familiarised himself with the layout, and ascertained the main features, the field-worker can now begin on his sketch map.

The most prominent features are seen to be two large trenches (A) meeting near the centre of the site and reaching the field boundaries at two points. The plotting of these should be the first operation, as once they are on paper all subsequent plotting will be made much easier. It will be noted that one of the trenches runs from the present road's abrupt termination, in a direction aiming towards a point about  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the way eastwards along the northern boundary of the field, with a course apparently slightly arched rather than straight. This should be drawn. Closer examination will reveal that there is a distinct bend in the main trench at A1, and that it does not quite reach the northern field boundary; thus the arc-like feature drawn at first will have to be slightly amended. The position of the other trench can now be put in in relation to the first one, since it meets it about  $\frac{1}{2}$ -way along, and in line between the NE corner of the field and a point just over  $\frac{1}{2}$ -way down the western field boundary. The minor changes in width and depth of these features can be sketched in at this point.



0 Metres 50  
Scale Approx.



NAME OF SITE  
SKETCH PLAN

Name of Surveyor  
Date

SKETCH PLANNING  
Fig. 1

Throughout this stage the field-worker should always be moving all over the site so that each feature being examined can always be seen in its complete context. If all the plotting is carried out from one spot or from one side of the site alone, the result is inevitably distorted.

Features of smaller magnitude such as the changes of slope at B can be sketched on in just the same fashion, and then the areas of minor features (C), plotted with a good degree of accuracy within the larger features already positioned, much as one would plot such features within the grid or triangulation of an orthodox survey. Throughout this operation the neighbouring buildings (church and vicarage) as well as field boundaries and field corners can be used as reference points.

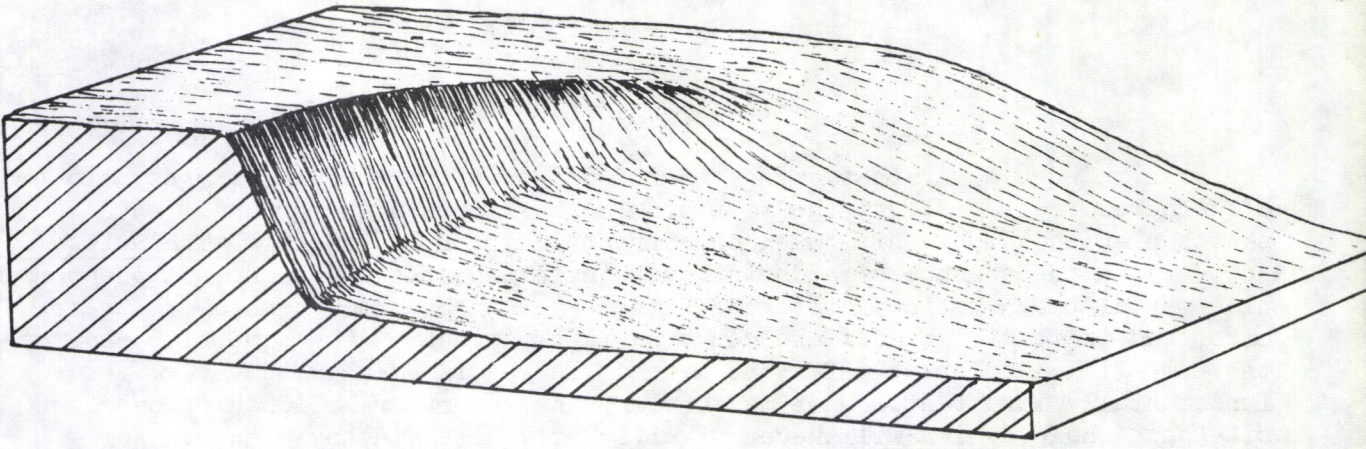
Having produced a rough sketch map, which at this stage will consist of a number of lines or 'shorthand hachures' (fig 2b) and a mass of notes with approximate estimated height and length measurements (the latter best expressed in relative rather than absolute terms, e.g. 'about  $\frac{1}{2}$ -way along field boundary' rather than 'about 30 ft from corner'), the surrounding fields should then be examined in case any features within them amplify the understanding of the earthworks within the area he has already sketched. In our hypothetical case the features in the ploughed field to the north can be seen to mirror the banks and ditches within the earthworks in the first field, and this correlation may help with interpretation. Similarly in the field D, SE of the church and vicarage, a minor earthwork might be noted which, in isolation might signify little, but which is seen to fit into the general pattern of earthworks over a wider area.

The technique used to depict relief on the field plan may vary. At its most simple it may consist of parallel and perimeter lines with the words 'bank', 'ditch', 'mound' or 'hollow' written in. This system, however, lacks flexibility, and it is usually preferable to produce a shorthand version of the hachures which will go on the final drawn-up plan, and which are capable of equal variation (fig 2b). If the field-worker chooses the former alternative, generally the sooner the final plan is drawn up the better, while the memory is still fresh.

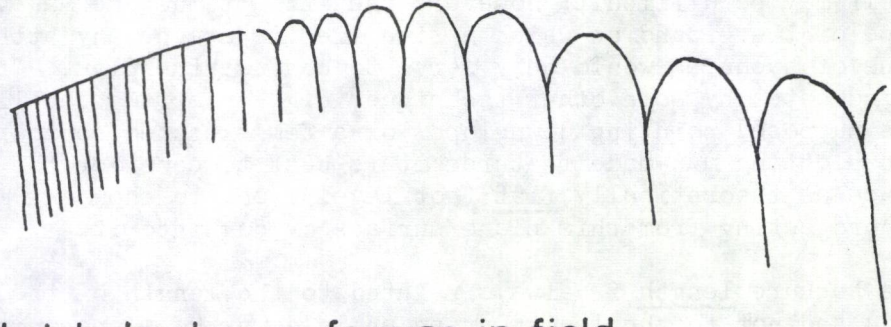
In the final plan hachures will almost invariably be used to depict relief features. These represent an alternative to the production of close contours, which are much more objective, but which involve much more sophisticated instrumental techniques and which take correspondingly much more time to prepare. About the only hachuring convention universally applied is that the head of the hachure always represents the top of the slope while the tail points downhill. However, further conventions may usefully be introduced. Variation in the shape of the head may be used to indicate variation in the abruptness of the break of slope - a rounded head ('Tadpole') showing a gradual change and an angular flat-topped head ('Tintack') representing a sharply-defined break. Hachures close together represent a steep slope, hachures further apart a more gentle one. In general the more heavily the hachures are drawn, the more impressive the feature on the ground (fig 2a-c).

A few further general points concerning sketch plans may be made:-

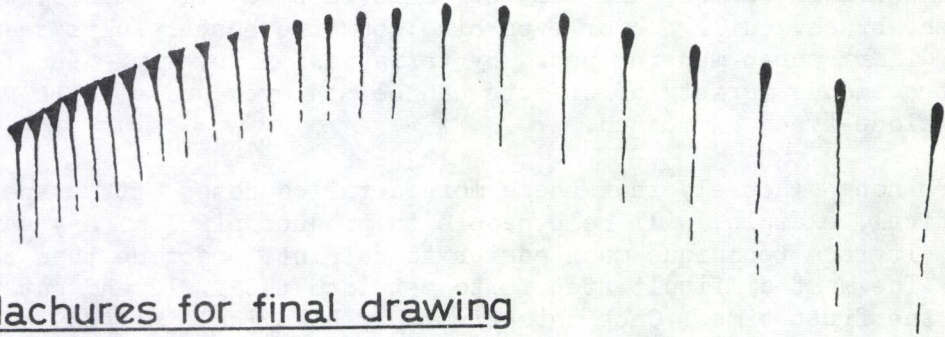
1. In contrast to full contoured surveys, sketch plans inevitably reflect a subjective appraisal by an individual field-worker of the features on the ground. The hachuring should reflect the magnitude of the various ground



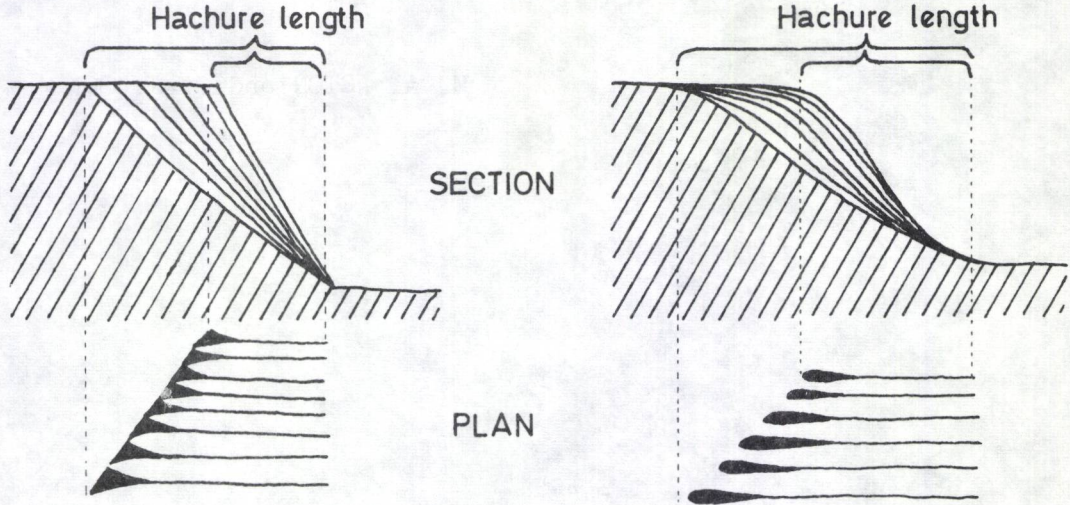
a. Feature on the ground



b. Sketch hachures for use in field



c. Hachures for final drawing



d. Length of hachure

features in such a way that on any individual plan the closest concentration of hachures should reflect the most prominent slopes on the ground. Any sketch plan should by this token be correct in its relationships within itself. However, in the absence of a definitive convention, the appearance of one person's plan may display distinct differences from another person's plan of the same site, and there will be differences even in two plans of the same site made by the same field-worker at different dates. These differences, however, are not fundamentally important. What matters are the general relationships over the site as a whole, which will never significantly alter in any plan, rather than the specific measurements of any one part of the site.

2. The most important aspect is to sort out the man-made slope features from the natural slope of the ground. Often, because of geological variations, this in itself may be difficult; however, the attempt must be made. If the general slope of the ground on which a site lies is steep, any attempt to show this by means of hachures would only serve to confuse the plan. Natural slopes are better indicated by some other technique, e.g. an arrow (labelled to indicate its purpose) pointing downslope, or a few sketched contour or form lines. When plotting man-made features it is best to consider the natural ground surface as theoretically flat (not level), and to show any man-made features as projecting from this plane surface or dug into it.

3. The hachure length is always related to the length of the slope in plan (fig 2d) and not to the length at an angle down the slope on the ground, nor in any way to the steepness of the slope.

4. The drawing of hachures may be achieved by a wide variety of instruments, rapidograph, brush, quill pen or even biro; but the best results seem to come from an ordinary cheap mapping pen. By variations in pressure and length of stroke a tremendous variety of effects can be achieved and a whole range of different slope-types expressed.

The authors hope sincerely that these more detailed notes with a specific, if theoretical, example, will help people to produce plans of any earthworks they see. It is a technique much easier to put into practice than to describe or teach. The most difficult step is to get into the field and put pencil to paper for the first time. Once this first psychological resistance is overcome, there is no reason why anyone, whether or not they think they can 'draw', should not be able with practice to produce an adequate sketch plan.

M. A. ASTON and C. J. BOND

## Bewdley Museum

A folk museum reflecting the history of Bewdley and the Wyre Forest was opened in July amidst the town's Charter Festival celebration commemorating its 500th year as a municipal borough. The museum is housed in the late XVIII Shambles or butchers' market which comprises a central thoroughfare with two arcades of 15 arches either side. With the decline of Bewdley's market in the second half of XIX the Shambles fell into disuse and three of the arches were demolished for a new police station, the rest being blocked and used as a council store. The Shambles remained in this state until the Museum Trust took over the building in November 1971 when restoration and building work to convert the Shambles into a museum were begun. A £15,000 appeal for funds was launched to start the project. Eight months later the bulk of the contractor's regular work was completed for the opening on July 1st. With the help of a regular volunteer force culled from the keenest members of the Friends of the Museum and post-examination school children and students, the galleries were painted for the exhibits which were set up during the week before opening.

The continuity of the archways has been restored through the reconstruction of the three arches at the northern end of the walkway. This area now provides a low roofed gallery c.25 x 35 ft devoted to the natural history of the Wyre Forest. One corner of the gallery contains the reconstructed workshop of a spale basket-maker. The tools were presented to the museum by Mr Alf Birch, late of Wyre Hill, the last besom and basket-maker in Bewdley, who recently retired.

Beyond the natural history gallery the arcades are once again open for almost 90 ft and provide a suitable setting for the ropemaking machinery taken from 'J. Lowe's Rope and Twine Manufactory'. The factory was established on the eastern side of the Severn at Wribbenhall in 1801 and finally closed down earlier this year. The machinery on display comprises the fixed jack and wain or traveller used in the final process of laying the strands into rope.

Closing the end of the central walkway and arcades are 3 stone-built cells and exercise yards added to the original plan in 1902. At present only one, the debtor's prison complete with stone bed and grate, is on view to the public until further restoration can be undertaken. West of the cells the museum has acquired further ground linking the museum with a disused Brass Foundry established in late XVII.

The western arcades house the three craftsmen's workshops, the craft gallery and museum office. A blacksmith and potter are already established in the museum and demonstrate their crafts at weekends; by next season a glassblower will also be in operation. Between the workshops and the craft gallery is a small covered forecourt where three late XVIII bow windows rescued from demolished properties in Kidderminster and Bewdley act as display cases for the more valuable items. One window is devoted to the growing collection of XVIII and XIX Bewdley hornware and bears the name of G.J. Humpherson and Son, the largest and best known local horn manufacturer and from whose premises in High St much of the collection is drawn.

In the Craft Gallery each panel is devoted to a particular Bewdley craft or industry. Early newspaper advertisements, examples of the tools used and selections from a fine collection of early craft photographs have been used to explain the various processes involved in hornmaking, tanning, saddlery,

capping and rope-making. Similar display panels in the Entrance Gallery beneath the Town Hall depict the origins and growth of the town of Bewdley by way of prints, early drawings and maps. A large part of the gallery is devoted to the Severn, its bridges and navigation. Bristol Museum has loaned a very fine model of Severn trows alongside a port scene which has now been identified as the waterfront at Bewdley, whilst two types of coracle depict more primitive vessels.

Work is now well under way for the 1973 season. Additions to be made to the Craft Gallery include a recently acquired collection of wheelwright's tools used in Wribbenhall and a display of local brassware. The Rope Walk is being re-sited and the area is to be converted to an Agricultural Gallery tracing the various stages of the farming year; in the Entrance Gallery the principal addition will be a display of Stanley Baldwin, Bewdley's most famous son.

During the winter a series of meetings are being held on topics relating to Bewdley, the museum's collections and its work. Although principally devised for Fellows of the Museum, newcomers are welcome. Full details are published beforehand in the local press. Anyone willing to help in a wide variety of projects in the museum over the winter months in preparation for the new season is asked to contact the curator, Stephen Price, at the Museum (Bewdley 3573).

STEPHEN PRICE

#### Worcestershire County Archaeological Inventory

The card index of archaeological sites and monuments at Worcs County Museum has now grown to the extent that it has been possible to draw up hopefully definitive lists of certain classes of monument in the county. These are being published as an interim measure in the Worcs Arch Newsletter, where comments, corrections, notices of omissions and further information are invited. Ultimately when any necessary corrections have been made it is intended to publish these in more permanent form. The following checklists have appeared to date:-

Checklist No 1	Iron Age Hill Forsts, Promontory Forts etc	WAN No 7 (1971)
Checklist No 2	Medieval Castles	WAN No 8 (1971)
Checklist No 3	Icehouses	WAN No 10 (1972)
Checklist No 4	Cruck-framed Buildings	WAN No 11 (1972)

Future checklists of certain classes of crop marks, moated sites, mills etc are in preparation and will appear in due course.

C.J. BOND

Friends of Wroxeter and Barnsley Park

A new organisation has been recently formed of students who have attended the training schools and excavations at Wroxeter and Barnsley Park.

The idea is to hold meetings and social gatherings and collect money to help to finance students to attend further courses. Most of those who are eligible have already been circulated but if, by chance, you have been missed, further details are available from the Secretary: Dr J Cole, 11 Bracebridge Road, Sutton Coldfield, Warks.

Two Scholarships will be available in 1973 up to the extent of 75% of fees and accommodation costs and the requirements are:

1. Applicant must be 18 or over
2. Applicant must be British and show evidence of keenness by having worked with a local Society or on excavations organised by the Department of the Environment or other bodies.

Those wishing to apply for a Scholarship should write to

Department of Extramural Studies  
The University of Birmingham  
P O Box 363  
Birmingham B15 2TT

for an application form.

Scholarships are available for those wishing to attend the excavations for at least two weeks.

## COMPUTER APPLICATIONS

This year I have been working on two main projects, the system for county gazetteers which I mentioned in last year's newsletter, and the design of a system for recording the results from excavations.

### 1. Gazetteer Project

Here progress has been slow but steady. Several new generic types have been added to the list and now the list of sites and finds which occur in the West Midlands should be nearly complete. Also the form of printed output has been improved and extra explanatory comments inserted so that it is easier to read. The codes for books and journals are not expanded, but each listing is preceded by a table giving the full name of book or journal and its corresponding code, e.g.

SAO1	TRANSACTIONS OF THE SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
SAO2	VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY OF SHROPSHIRE, VOLUME ONE.

I have received information from two counties in the West Midlands. The group at Shrewsbury have continued work on the Shropshire gazetteer. They have been concentrating on the area threatened by the new motorway to North Wales and now have about 200 records in their file on the KDF9 computer. In addition, Worcs County Museum have been transferring information from their card index of sites. Since the information had already been collected, this was a much faster job and they already have between 3000 and 400 entries in their computer file. This is most encouraging, but the rest of the West Midlands presents a much less happy picture. I have not yet come across anyone in Herefords who is interested and although several groups in Warks and Staffs have expressed interest, none has yet sent me any records. I hope this situation will soon be improved because a data bank with information from the whole of the West Midlands would be of much greater value than one covering two counties only.

### 2. Excavation Project

While it is obviously desirable to use both the speed of the computer and its large and accurate memory to assist in recording and interpretation of excavations, it is not at all obvious how this is to be done. I have given this problem a great deal of thought and have devised a possible scheme for recording finds and their positions and also outlines of features in both horizontal and vertical planes. I am trying, firstly, to decide what information needs to be recorded and secondly to find a convenient form of recording this. I hope to discuss this at the annual conference and would be very pleased to hear from anyone organising an excavation who is willing to help test the system.

## COMPUTER COURSE

Due to the success of the one day conference held in January 1973, it has been decided that a weekend residential course will be held on 'Computer Applications in Archaeology', on January 5-6th 1974 at the Computer Centre, University of Birmingham.

SUSAN LAFLIN, Computer Centre  
University of Birmingham



## AERIAL SURVEYS

1. In the West Midlands generally, the incidence of rain/temperature did not create permutations with crop type/time of planting/geology that were conducive to the creation of crop marks from variations in the subsoil. A number of sites were recorded, but their interest is more from the permutations that created the crop marks than from their addition to the archaeological record. Some areas peripheral to the West Midlands were prolific in unrecorded sites. In some areas it was observed that whilst Neolithic sites produced crop marks, known Romano-British sites remained invisible. Most analysis of this phenomenon provided obvious answers, but it is increasingly clear that the incidence of sites recorded by air photography in any area, even over a period, need not relate to the real distribution of sites in the area. Hundreds of sites remain to be recorded by aerial photography in the West Midlands but their appearance as crop marks depends upon factors to which little serious thought has been given by field archaeologists.

JIM PICKERING

2. Despite the lack of crop marks useful reconnaissance was achieved over extant remains and areas where continuity of site destruction is well in evidence. Without doubt the rate of land exploitation is increasing rapidly. Where overburden is removed it does not necessarily imply that all features of archaeological interest are revealed. On the contrary where ground is dried out it may well prove impossible to differentiate between an exposed ditch infill and the surrounding subsoil. After the surface has been washed by rain the effects of differential drying out can be quite dramatic in revealing changes in the composition of the subsoil, the optimum conditions may be critical to within a few days. Damping an exposed site is a well known technique in excavation, nevertheless this is a piecemeal method and aerial photography under the right conditions would considerably simplify the task of the excavation team, particularly where time on site is at a premium. The removal of overburden inevitably creates undesirable variation in the form of hollows and ruts leading to difficulties in identification and interpretation under conditions of differential drying out, and to be able to read across from any previously recorded crop marks is to advantage.

ARNOLD BAKER

PREHISTORIC

Thorn, Inkberrow, Worcs (SP/007561)

A fine late Neolithic flint arrowhead, some 30mm long x 20mm broad, found in a field called Upper Holloway Ground some 500m WNW of Thorn in 1945, apparently unpublished at the time, was recently brought to notice by Miss E.R.C. Jackson. The arrowhead itself remains in private hands, but drawings and photographs have been deposited in Worcs County Museum at Hartlebury.

C.J. BOND

Hanbury/Feckenham, Worcs

During the construction of the Hanbury-Shrewley Gas Pipeline flints were recovered at several points along the line: mostly isolated and indeterminate flakes, but slightly greater concentrations at a couple of points were noted: at Fishpool Hill, Hanbury (SO/963621), and east of the Brandon Brook in Feckenham (SP/018601).

C.J. BOND

Blackstone, nr Bewdley, Worcs (SO/79273)

Rescue excavations were carried out ahead of gravel quarrying, between July and October 1972. The site consists of a quasi-rectilinear enclosure, defended on the north and west sides by river cliffs, and on the other two sides by double ditches, visible on air photographs as crop-marks. One entrance is visible, on the east side. The area enclosed is about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres. Cuttings through the defences showed a marked difference in character between the inner and outer ditches. The inner ditch (which had, on the east side, been recut once and cleaned out several times) was of irregular V-shaped profile with a rounded bottom. The outer ditch was somewhat shallower, more regularly cut, and featured an 'ankle-breaker' or drainage gully at the bottom. There had been a bank, built up of pebbly gravel and soil, inside the line of the inner ditch, but this had been completely ploughed away. No sequence of ditch construction could be established stratigraphically because of this heavy plough disturbance. Two Iron Age sherds came from the inner ditch; there was no pottery from the outer ditch. Part of the entrance was stripped, and a simple gate structure was revealed immediately behind the line of the inner ditch. Near the entrance was a group of pits containing ash, some scraps of slag and several probable whetstones: this might be a metal-working area. A number of shallow pits were found in this area which apparently pre-dated the ditched

enclosure. Of the two areas opened in the interior, one (in the SE corner) showed evidence of a succession of rectangular timber buildings. One distinct phase was aligned with the defences, and a later phase was laid out at about 45° to the first. This later phase could be sub-divided, but is likely to be better understood when a larger area is opened. There were few artefacts in association with this group of structures. A further area was stripped towards the north side of the enclosure. Here again there was distinct structural evidence, but a wider area would have to be examined before building plans could be drawn confidently. A shallow ash-filled hollow contained the lower half of a rotary quern. Nearby, two intersecting pits contained occupation debris, including a considerable amount of Iron Age type sherds, and several iron artefacts, of which a fibula (late pre-Roman Iron Age date) was perhaps the most interesting. This excavation, which opened a total of about 450 sq m showed that, in spite of heavy plough damage, there is a great deal of structural evidence surviving at this site. It is hoped in 1973 to strip a large continuous area, looking in more detail at the sequence of structures, and continuing the programme of environmental work begun this year. Meanwhile, it seems safe to sum up the site as a late Iron Age/early RB farmstead enclosure: finds of later RB pottery in the topsoil suggest that a possibility of reoccupation exists also.

ALAN HUNT for Avon-Severn Valleys  
Research Project

ROMAN

Dymock, Glos (SO/705311)

Excavation continued with a section across the road adjacent to the occupation area. The road surfaces consisted of hard packed gravel laid directly on the ground with no foundation stones. The total width of the road was c. 6m with a total thickness of metalling of 30 cm. Occupation was confined to one side of the road only, the boundary between the road and the occupation site being marked by the remains of a stone wall set in the edge of the road gravel. No dating material was found in the road metalling but material from the occupation area indicated dates between mid II and mid III.

P.L. WATERS for Malvern Research  
Group

Wroxeter Training School 1972

This year there was only one school owing to lack of applications but this meant that it was a large one, 27 students and with a strong international flavour. The quality of the students was much better than usual and although they were a strange amalgam of the singleminded professional and the complete amateur, the course rapidly integrated into a hard working but happy group. An attempt was made this year to raise the quality of recording. Whilst we seem to be succeeding with the book-work, the efforts at surveying were a dismal failure and our teaching methods clearly need a critical reassessment. It would not have been possible to have made any progress at all in the archaeological front had it not been possible for Geoffrey Toms to direct the prisoners for the preceding week clearing the site. We were able to start useful work immediately. This was concentrated on the market hall, the south corridor and the praefernum dump. The last of these is always used as an exercise in vertical stratification and drawing, so progress here was modest. The area of south corridor has now begun to take shape with the removal of a RAF pipe trench and large rubbish pit, XIX excavation trenches and the results of stone robbing. There is a late street level south of the corridor in which a large quantity of animal bones, mainly pigs' jaws had been dumped. The removal of a late trench has shown the existence of earlier streets and a robbed out drain against the south wall of the corridor. The problem now is that we need to deal with this on a larger scale and our own buildings are in the way. Work of the Market Hall now shows just how much has surprisingly been left by the XIX excavators and the construction of the building which later became the custodian's house. Already problems appear. There are two periods, the earlier walls of which have been incorporated in the later structure. This may give us the long awaited chance to study the first stone building on the site and perhaps consider its function. The Market Hall was a massive structure and its floor levels show a marked divergence from the main street and those of the bath-house. The archaeological potentialities of this area and that to the west fronting on the street are very great. There will, therefore, be no lack of interest for future schools. Also the structure offers fine opportunities for teaching surveying and in drawing details.

GRAHAM WEBSTER

N.B. A cullet is a piece of broken glass, and 'string' refers to straight rods of glass varying in thickness from a thread of cotton to 1/8 in or more. The packed layer on which the glass furnaces were found lay on a firm stone surface probably associated with one of the lowest road levels. Into this layer the post-holes of the glass works had been cut but there was a separate system of post-holes associated with this surface. No glass artefacts were found on it.

A.W.G. HOUGHTON for the Shropshire  
Roman Research Group

Hales, Staffs (SJ/722338)

The Keele and Newcastle Arch Soc have now closed down their excavations on the Villa site at Hales. Since the publication of the Interim Report (NSJFC 9 (1969), 104-117) and completion of the bath-house investigations work has been concentrated on the second well and that part of the villa itself which was previously partly excavated in 1928. Very little new information accrued concerning the final phase, but slight evidence existed for an earlier stone building and considerable evidence of 3 round huts of wattle-and-daub construction, ranging from about 22-35 ft maximum diam. But the most fascinating discovery was a much earlier, though undatable, burial chamber situated at a depth of from 4-6 ft below the latest Roman levels beneath the villa. Two periods of use can be distinguished, and the corbelled chamber had been destroyed in antiquity, though several stones of the 'passage' remained in situ. The second well was excavated to a depth of c. 24 ft before it became unsafe. It yielded a considerable amount of pottery datable to mid IV, associated with a coin of Constans, and a small stone column and base. Elsewhere on the site were found fragments of a turned sandstone capital. The final report will be published in NSJFS.

FRANK H. GOODYEAR for Keele and  
Newcastle Arch Soc

Wall (LETOCETUM), Staffs (SK/101066)

Excavations in the SE area of the latest fort (the only part of it available) have been concluded, extending plans of this and the earlier forts on the same site. Seven more stratified coins found fall within the previous range i.e. Julius Caesar to Domitian, and an interesting find is the first Durotrigean coin to be recorded from Staffs. Apart from a single coin found at Nottingham, none have been previously recorded north of Oxfordshire. A trench intended to section the via principalis of the latest fort showed no trace of it in the expected position, and was largely taken up by a XVII ditch and associated animal burial, although it also revealed beam-slots of two periods on the fort alignment.

BERT ROUND for South Staffs Arch  
and Hist Soc

Wall (LETOCETUM), Staffs (SK/098066)

Further work on the Wall Bath House site has revealed the previously unsuspected but severely robbed outer wall of the adjacent 'Villa', most of which was planned in 1912, and suggests that the so-called buttresses on this SW side are actually basement walls dividing internal rooms. In the course of emptying rubbish from a hollow of unknown but recent date within the 'Villa' area substantial walls, identifiable on the original excavator's plan, were found. The precise position of the 'Villa' is therefore now known, and the condition of the remains so far found encourages further investigation.

Excavation of the area between the baths and the 'Villa', still continuing, has so far revealed a small non-military ditch and palisade of early date, but no substantial buildings, and suggests that this area was unoccupied when the adjacent buildings were in use.

BERT ROUND for DOE

Birch Abbey, Alcester, Warks (SP/087571)

Excavations were undertaken on a site adjacent to the northern edge of the 1964-6 excavations, where 12 cottages were to be demolished for redevelopment. It was not possible to strip the entire area, but the gardens of 6 of the cottages, covering an area of some 800 sq ft, were cleared, and smaller trial areas were excavated elsewhere on the site. Earliest remains found were two brooches and a coin of the Claudian period lying on the natural subsoil and sealed by a solid layer of cobbling. Above this cobbled layer and extending across the whole excavated area were a further 6 layers of cobbling. No edges to this material were found, none of the layers contained any dateable material and apart from a small rubbish pit and three post-holes of uncertain date, there was no sign of any structure. Above the cobbling at the eastern side of the site was a layer of silt up to 6 in in depth into which was cut a narrow gully; again no conclusive dating was possible. Both silt and upper cobbling to the west of the site were scored by plough marks, above which lay the disturbed loam of former cultivation. Smaller areas excavated elsewhere on the site showed a similar sequence, with up to 12 superimposed layers of cobbling overlying the subsoil, no structures, and no dating material. Parts of the site had been badly disturbed by modern service trenches; also in XIX some sort of industrial activity had taken place, which entailed at least two large barrels being set in the ground to their full depth, adjacent to a well. It would seem that the site excavated was, throughout the Roman period, part of a large open cobbled area of uncertain extent. With the ending of urban life in that part of Alcester the area became covered in silt and humus, and eventually came under the plough. The plough marks may well date from medieval times; 3 drying ovens of early medieval date have been found in the Birch Abbey area.

STEVEN J. TAYLOR for Alcester  
Excavation Committee and DOE

A section in field 509 (OS25", 1927) located part of the road leading to the timber bridge across the Severn at Viroconium, the position of which was determined with the help of aquadivers in 1964. Farm buildings shown on an 1842 tithe map but not in evidence 30 years later had disturbed the upper levels of the road, and a pit with finds of XVIII and XIX had been cut through all the road levels and into the ditch. Fourteen layers of pitching were identified, separated by layers of mud of differing thickness. The 2 lowest levels were associated with shallow ditches roughly lined with grey clay. Silting rapidly occurred and on the north edge this was dug away and a soakaway, 1m+ wide was inserted. As the road levels became worn or dirty fresh sand, pebble and clay mix was rammed down to make a new hard surface. The soakaway was also built up on the north edge and a revetting bank of stone and clay built up externally to maintain it, until finally the soakaway consisted of a stack of massive stones c.  $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{3}{4}$ m extending to a depth of  $2\frac{1}{2}$ m, divided by layers of stone and clay into 3 distinct levels each associated with road reconstruction, the 2nd layer being overrun by a road surface beneath which lay an imitation of an as of Claudius. The direction of the multiple rutting at once indicated the line of the road, the varying loads which it bore and the differing quality of construction. The uppermost layers were of looser build and a ragged kerb of large water-worn stones marked the south boundary, though across the road, modern intrusion had destroyed the verge. In the latest layers of all, medieval sherds were discovered along with residual material of Roman date. An average width of 11m or more was noted, though offsetting was usual to the north whereas on the opposite side the great drain set a regular boundary to all but the latest levels. The fact that the lowest level of the drain at this point contained cut sandstone blocks in direct association with Flavian pottery across the way is of interest as showing that at this period cut stone or off cuts were easily to be had and that stone building must have been going on at Wroxeter at this time. The ditch, however, was of earlier date.

The ditch on the north side of the earliest levels was filled with clean silver sand for a length of 9m. Moreover an area of 90 sq m adjoining the 3rd road level was covered with similar sand. This was laid on compact sandy clay and complete stripping was carried out to determine its limits. Open furnaces were superimposed on each other two or three times and these consisted of glassy slag often with iron pan lying on burnt clay or fragments of tile and brick. That there had been disturbance was shown by the scattered chunks of glass slag. In this small area quantities of cullets, originating chiefly from Alexandria and Syria were collected together with melted glass blobs which are certain evidence of glass blowing and Glass 'string' from the finest to quite thick grades had been set aside for the decoration of vessels. Three large post-holes, one cut into the edge of a road, were found together with over 100 nails indicating the presence of some kind of shelter. These remains represent the largest glassworks so far found in the province. The wood used to produce the potash required for the 'melt' was oak.

Associated pottery was abundant and indicated a period of activity from early Flavian times to the Antonine times after which work came to a halt. In parts the furnaces were deliberately sealed over with creamy clay and the whole of the works was levelled off. There followed a lengthy period in which weeds grew freely and then, as the road levels were successively laid down the levelling continued. An attempt at a road ditch was cut on that side around the end of III.

The most interesting cullet was the shoulder of a common bluish green bottle on which had been engraved straight marks at nearly equidistant intervals. It could be a tally or a rule but Dr D. Harden and his colleagues know of no parallel in the Empire.

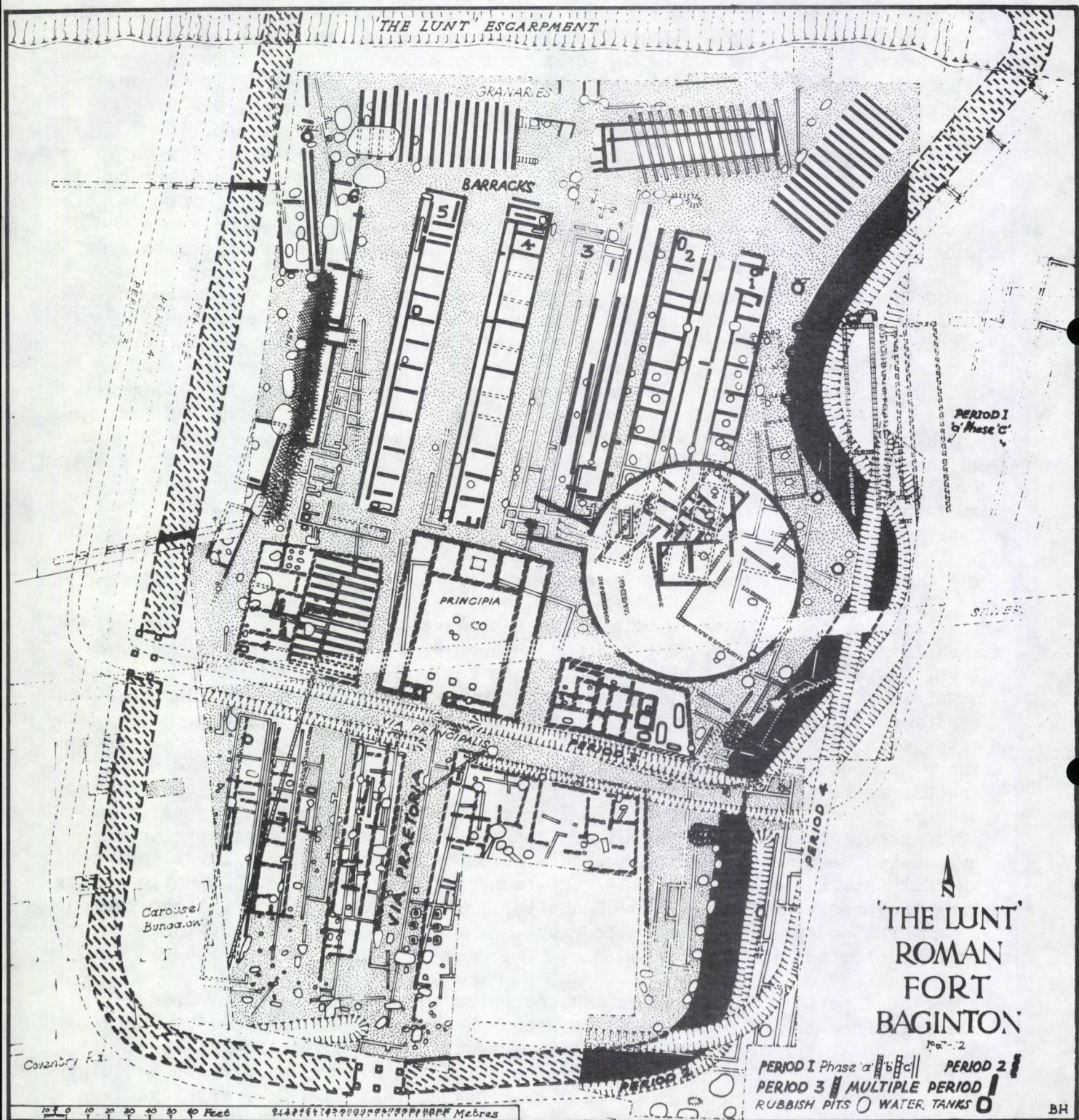


fig 3

BH

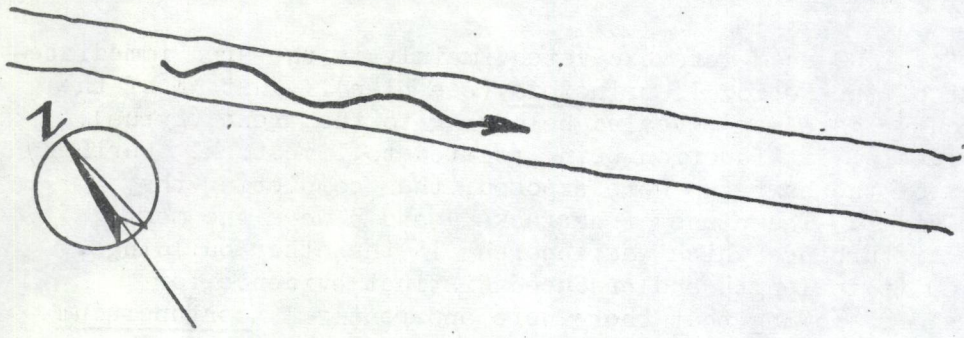


During the 1972 season, c. 2100 sq m were excavated, mainly in the area immediately north, south and west of the Period II principia (see plan). Just NE of the principia a second and outer gate was revealed belonging to the arena (gyrus), thereby supporting the idea of its function being related to livestock. Further west the southern limits of the barracks were exposed, thus completing the excavation of these buildings. The plans of barracks 4 and 5 were the most complete due to lack of disturbance which was apparent in the other buildings. Barracks 4 and 5 were 160 ft in length and produced distinct evidence for partition walling, therefore showing that there were apparently 11 contubernium and not the 10 barrack rooms as is commonly expected.

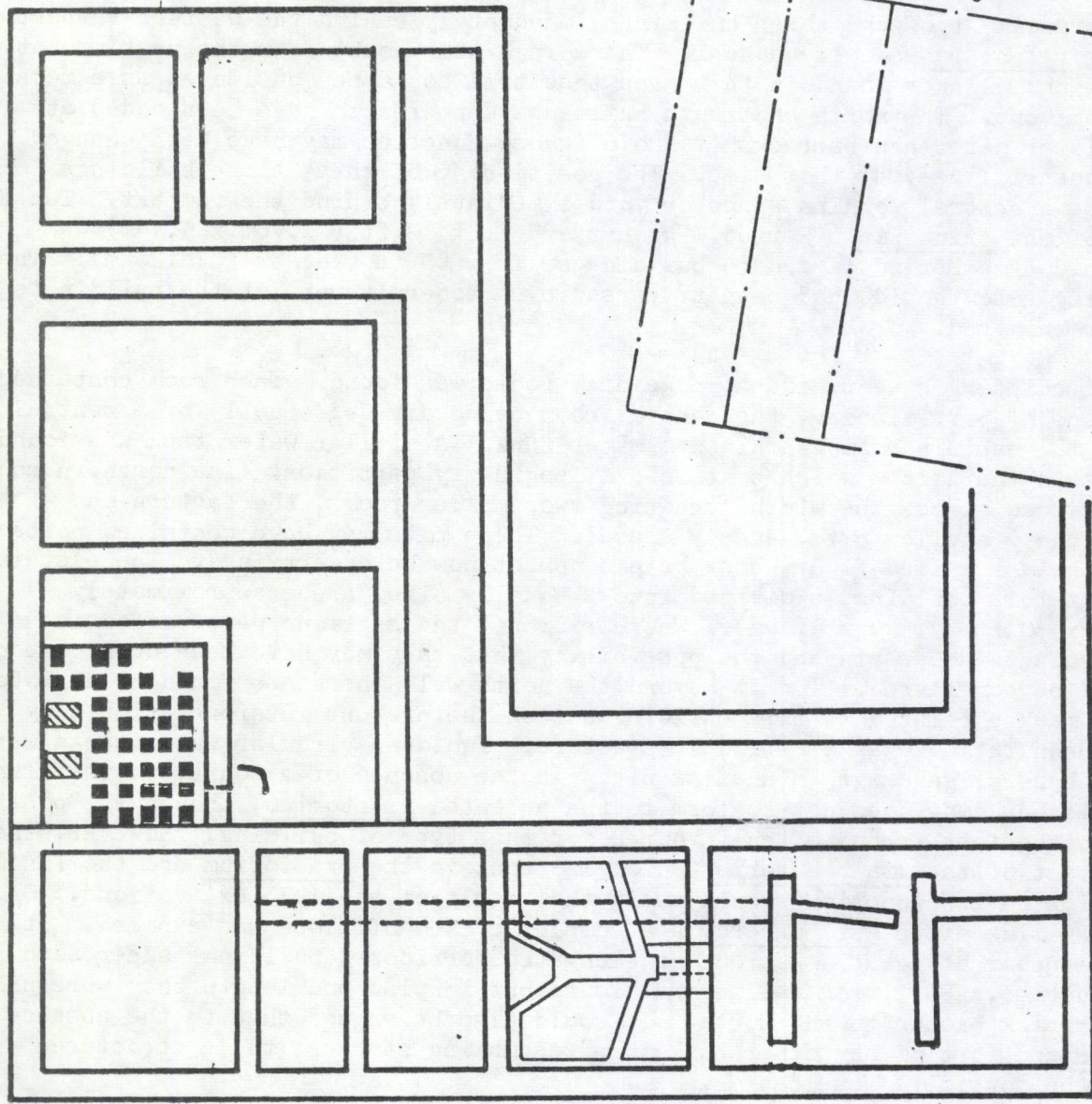
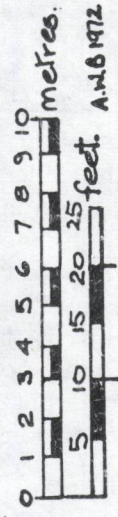
The arrangement of the three buildings immediately behind the western rampart in the retentura is most unusual. There is little doubt from the vast amount of ash and clinker found in this area that this could be considered as a metal working zone. The north and south buildings appeared to have been added at some later date than barracks (?) No 6, whose function may have been changed to an industrial use, at this time. The positioning of these three buildings creates a central working space or yard immediately behind the rampart. Ten ft west of the principia a Period I granary 55 ft x 30 ft (16.76m x 9.14m) was overlaid by a Period II square building 60 ft x 60 ft (18.28m x 18.28 m). The building's south side had been traversed by a modern sewer but the building's SE corner survived.

On the building's west side a range of 5 rooms was found. Each room contained evidence of partitioning, the central room being divided equally by a central wall, the eastern room contained a water tank. A similar water tank was found in the southern room which contained a length-way partition. The northern room was divided across the width, creating two smaller rooms, the eastern one contained 6 shallow pits, evenly spaced. These pits may have contained posts which held a raised floor whose height cannot now be ascertained. The eastern half of this building is divided into 2 equally sized areas approximately 30 ft x 30 ft (9.14m x 9.14m). Whether or not the sections were roofed is difficult to ascertain and the possibility that they may have been open compounds should be considered. Ten ft beyond the north wall there are foundation slots which may be related to this building but on the present interpretation they have been included as a Period I structure. Two deep circular water tanks were found here aligned with a shallow pit. In the absence of a courtyard the plan of this building does not conform to the accepted praetorium, though its position within the fort is one often favoured for this type of building. However, the area east of the via praetoria could also contain the praetorium and the final decision on its function should await the result of the 1973 excavations. On the western side of the via praetoria a complex system of slots was exposed. It would appear at least 2 periods of elongated corridor buildings superceded one another. Partition walling was found but in plan and length they were unlike the barrack blocks to the north. It could also be argued that in the absence within the fort of any other buildings resembling stables, these structures could be considered as stables.

On the eastern side of the via praetoria the evidence for a 6 posted 10 ft (3.04m) wide single portalled timber gateway was discovered. A contemporary defensive ditch to the SW showed the gateway to be part of a pronounced interned entrance, to the Period IV fort, which has been tentatively dated to early II. See plan fig 5.

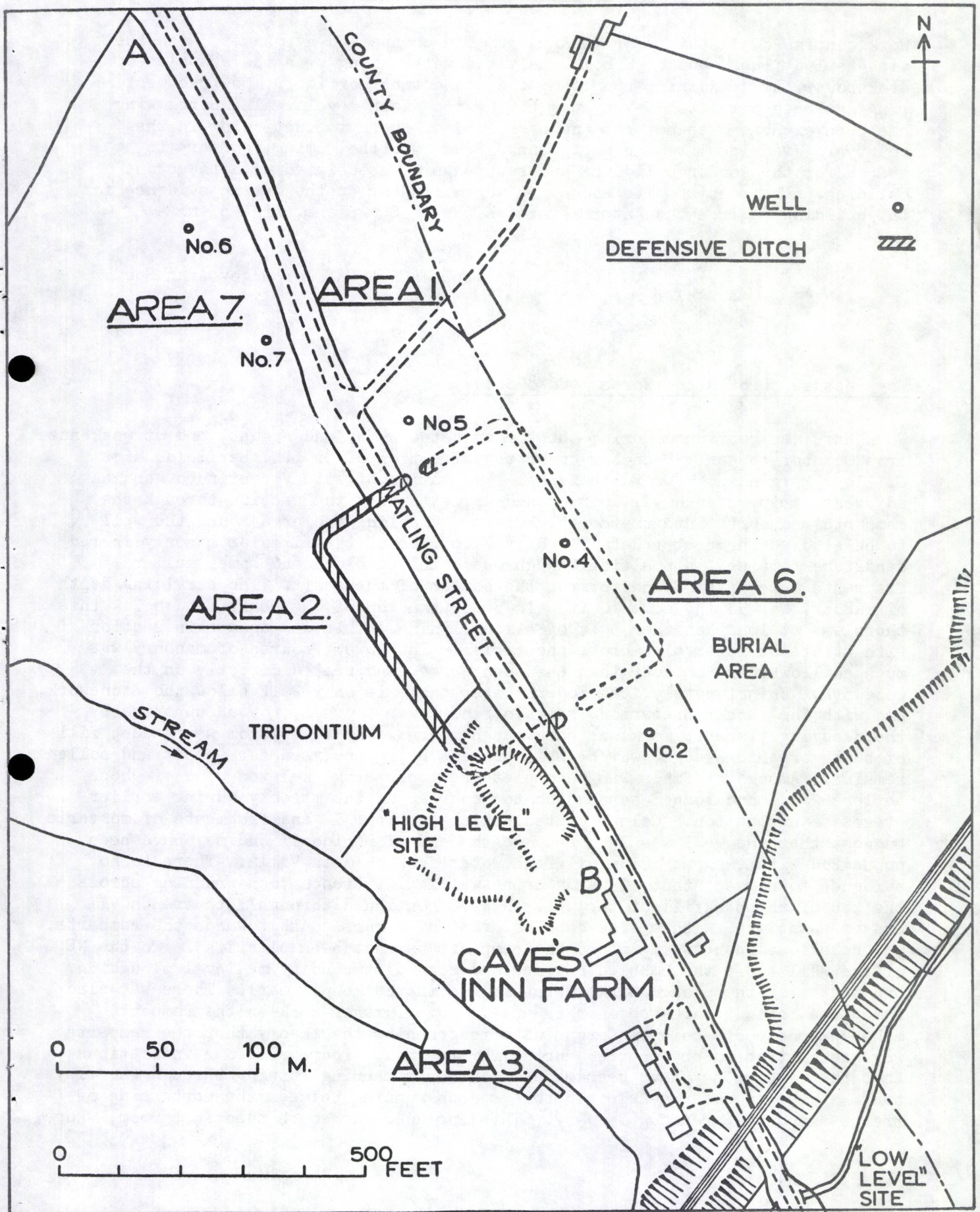


SP 535 794.



# Caves Inn-Tripontium. Area 3.

fig 4



TRIPONTIUM, CAVE'S INN, WARWICKS, 534797.

fig 5

Tripontium, Cave's Inn, Churchover, Warks (SP/535795)

Work continued all this year in Area 3. The channelled hypocaust, with the fish-tailed flues, has been completely excavated along with the associated stokehouse, two adjoining rooms and the connecting corridor. Now the west wing has been completely excavated to the top floor levels. The north wing has been excavated to natural and back filled. Work is continuing in the courtyard area local to the west wing. Plans for the coming year are to search for the wooden buildings and rubbish pits associated with the stone building. The rubbish pits should be worth finding as the dating evidence for the building is from the Antonine through to V. See plans, figs 3 and 4.

JACK LUCAS for Rugby Arch Soc

Bays Meadow, Droitwich, Worcs (SO/898639)

Work here was continued during the summer between May and August, and at weekends from October to early December under the direction of Dr L.H. Barfield, Miss G. Lloyd-Morgan and Miss Edith Evans. Excavation of site V continued, and an adjacent strip, trench VII, was opened up, extending the section through the ramparts and north into the courtyard area, enabling the area round the well to be studied in greater detail. Only 7 courses of the circular masonry in red sandstone remained in position though one complete block and some smaller fragments were later found towards the bottom of the shaft. The surviving depth of masonry was 58 in, some 10 ft 6 in below the top of the shaft, and below this there was at least another 3 ft of timber lining. This was square in section with struts at intervals across the angles. The lowest course of masonry was much shallower and broader than the ones above, and rested directly on the woodwork. Unfortunately, the modern water table is only 2 ft below the stonework, and with the rather precarious state of the lower courses, now unsupported by the decaying timbers, work was somewhat hampered. At the bottom was a deep fill of black organic sludge, which is at present being analysed for insect and pollen remains. Among the finds was a complete red deer stag skeleton, one of whose antlers was found lodged across the top courses of the masonry during earlier stages of excavation. Colour coated pottery of late IV and fragments of mortaria suggest that the well was in use up to the end of Period II and may have been connected with the provision of fresh water for the main Villa. There is no evidence to suggest that it was a brine well. The trench found running across the top of the backfill of the well in 1971 continued through into trench VII and is associated with a fine cobbled area which runs south towards the ramparts. The relationship between it and the ramparts has not been clarified. To the NE of the well shaft the cobbled surface had been disturbed by medieval ploughing, and traces of the plough marks were visible in the keuper marl. There was also some tree root disturbance in this area. Some further work on the rampart make-up produced a coin of Carausius strengthening the theory that the ramparts were reconstructed or repaired during this period. There are some indications that the rampart may have been made of timber strapping running through the clay bank. A second area was cleared this season running between the north side of trench V and the area dug in 1967. This includes the south hypocaust room, whose

Excavations on the Site of the Baths Basilica at Wroxeter 1972

The continuing excavations on the site of the Baths Basilica showed that the city centre at this point had been completely redeveloped in the last period between c400 and c500. There had been a series of large timber-framed buildings, one of them a great rectangular porticoed 'hall', 38.5m x 16.0m with a western extension at least 20m long. There was also a series of smaller buildings apparently leaning-to against the still standing south wall of the basilica. The area of the baths precinct east of the basilica was taken down to its penultimate layers, revealing a rectangular post-hole building which had probably leant-to against the eastern precinct wall.

Finds included another martio-barbulus or lead-weighted javelin head, a further fragment of the Romano-Saxon pot found in 1971 and quantities of calcite gritted pottery which seem to be late in the pottery sequence on the site.

A fuller interim report is being published for the Department of the Environment and will be available shortly.

PHILIP BARKER for the DOE

## SAXON

### Cantilupe Street, Hereford

Excavations during and after Easter 1972 in the back garden of number 5 Cantilupe St exposed the remains of what is, without any doubt, the best surviving example of Saxon town defensive works so far discovered in this country. When completely excavated, the rampart was found to be surviving to a height of some 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ m above the natural undisturbed soil of the site. The rampart was built using a clayey soil and possibly some turf, and was consolidated with horizontal branches laid throughout its thickness. In the primary construction, the front of the rampart was retained by a timber wall consisting of vertical round posts 15-20 cm in diam and about 1m apart. Between the verticals and the rampart, horizontal timbers, split from the round into rough planks up to 25 cm in width had been laid on top of each other. The timber wall stood long enough for the pressure of the rampart to cause the top of the timbers to slope forward. To strengthen the defences, and support the existing timbers, a stone wall was built on the berm and acted as a massive rivetment against the timber work. The wall, when excavated, was found to be standing to a maximum height of 2m against the timber work and was about 2m thick with many traces of a pink lime mortar. It was constructed mainly of quarried slabs up to 10 cm thick with little attempt at coursing. A smaller wall, about 80 cm thick, was built on the rear crest of the rampart, some 4m behind the front wall, and presumably helped to preserve the flat rampart top. No signs of a ditch could be found within the limits of the excavation, so the berm must have been at least 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ m in front of the timber wall. Indications of at least two re-building phases of the timber works at the front of the rampart and above the wall could be seen and presumably are the remains of the breast works. Eventually the whole defensive structure was partially demolished or fell into disuse and the faces of both walls collapsed so that the whole defensive feature became a relatively smooth bank. A timber post-trench suggested a late re-fortification using this bank as a defence. The whole of the rampart was covered, and preserved by a large amount of relatively clean gravel which was presumably the upcast from a large new ditch and may well indicate the new works necessitated by the extension of the town. This gravel may have been a defensive work in its own right before it was eventually faced, some 6m in front of the Saxon wall, by the medieval wall. No dating evidence was discovered during the course of the excavation but evidence from the 1968 excavation on the western side of the town suggests that the overlying gravel rampart and the town extension are of the same period and may well be the work of Harold Godwinson who re-fortified the town after it was sacked by the Welsh in 1055. The original clay bank may have been built by Aethelfleda about 914 to withstand the attacks by the Danes. Earlier defensive features discovered on the western side of the town presumably relate to a smaller fortified area and could be part of the defences built by Offa against the Welsh. A proposal has been put forward to modify the scheme for repairing the medieval wall so as to expose the front Saxon wall and make a permanent feature of the whole sequence of the defences.

RON SHOESMITH for DOE

Berrington Street, Hereford

Excavations during November and December 1972 on the site of the recently demolished St Vincent's Convent, Berrington St, Hereford, exposed pre-Conquest occupational levels. The excavations, which were restricted to a small area to be occupied by a new office building, were on and behind the various tails of the Saxon defences at the western side of the town. The defences followed the same sequence of ramparts as those exposed further north during excavations by Philip Rahtz in 1968, and immediately south of the site by Ron Shoesmith in 1971. The present excavations concentrated on the occupation levels behind the rampart. Over half of the area, most of the post-Conquest levels had been removed by the floor and foundation walls of the recently demolished semi-basement building. The remainder of this half of the area contained over 20 pits of XI-XVI, many of which interconnected and produced a very useful series of pottery types for the city. The other half of the area had much less disturbance and produced occupation levels associated with Chester ware and earlier levels without pottery. A coin, provisionally dated to the later years of the reign of Alfred, was found under the Chester ware level. It is hoped that further excavations on the remainder of the site will be possible.

RON SHOESMITH for DOE

Pride Hill, Shrewsbury

Sealed beneath the XIV levels on this site (described in the Medieval section) was a Saxon cess-pit with a fill of a whole series of superimposed layers of alternating rubbish and sterile coverings of pebbles, gravel and sand. The whole pit was ringed around its immediate edge with 18 stake-holes 7 cm in diam and 34 cm apart. This must represent either a low fence or perhaps a framework on which a wooden cover was laid. The pit was conclusively dated to X by the neck and rim of a pot of Chester Ware lying on the bottom of the pit and 5 other sherds of Chester Ware with one green glazed sherd of Stamford Ware in the upper levels. Both these wares were found also at St Alkmund's Place in 1968 in the other attested Saxon site in the town. The paucity of pottery in a pit full of other refuse, especially with a large number of animal bones, calls for comment and seems to confirm Mr P.A.Barker's thesis that Shropshire was aceramic from the end of IV up to XII, and the only pottery in use was imported specially from elsewhere.

GEOFFREY TOMS for DOE

Fladbury, Worcs (SO/99484610)

A skeleton was encountered while trenching for building foundations some 280m SSW of the late Roman or Saxon cemetery investigated by David Peacock in 1967. The grave was sealed under about 30 cm of ploughsoil, and was aligned roughly N-S, with the head to the north. There were no grave goods and no dating evidence of any kind in the fill. The bones are being examined at time of writing, but have been provisionally identified as a male of 'almost certainly Saxon' date. Some 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ m south of the burial a ditch was observed in the trench side running in an E-W direction; and, presumably crossing it about 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ m to the east, a N-S ditch curving away to the east. Neither had any dateable material or anything to suggest their function in the observable part of the fill; both were sealed under the same depth of ploughsoil as the burial.

C.J. BOND



## MEDIEVAL

### Bredwardine, Herefords

Plans for further excavation on the medieval farm buildings during August had to be changed when it was discovered that the Moccas estate intended to bring back into use one of the medieval fish ponds close to the site, as a trout pool. This involved some re-scarping of the banks and raising the height of the dam. Excavation was concentrated on the surrounds to the pond and details of construction of the associated dam and water system. A full contour survey was made of the area before the reconstruction work commenced.

J.S.R. HOOD

### Redundant Churches, Herefords

National and local interest was aroused in September 1971 when six redundant churches were offered for sale by the Church Commissioners. Details of the churches and possible conversions to private use are being supplied to the CBA Churches Committee and it is hoped that proposals will come forward for any necessary excavations.

The following churches are for sale or have been sold:

#### St Gile's, Mansell Gamage (SO/394445)

Situated on the southern slope of Garnons Hill about 9 miles west of Hereford and  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile north of the A438. The church is built of local stone with a stone tile roof and comprises chancel, nave, north and south transepts, south porch and tower. The nave and south door are of XIX and the south transept and timber south porch are of XIV-XV. The west tower was built in 1824. The building has been sold and planning permission has been agreed to convert it to a house.

#### St Mary Magdelene's, Brobury (SO/346443)

Situated about 11 miles west of Hereford and approached by a narrow lane leading south from the A438. The building has been abandoned for over 12 years. It is built of local stone with a stone tiled roof and bellcote. Only the chancel remains, the nave having been demolished during the XIX. The building is probably of XIII or earlier. Plans have been submitted to the County Planning Department for conversion to a house but details have not yet been completed.

#### St Mary Magdelene's, Willersley (SO/312474)

Situated about  $13\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of Hereford on the A438, this church is also built of local stone with a stone tiled roof. It consists of a nave and chancel without

division and a timber framed south porch surrounding a Norman south door with a decorated lintel. There is the remains of a Norman window in the north wall of the nave, and a XIII lancet in the north wall of the chancel. The building is in the process of being sold for conversion to a house.

St Peter's, Lucton (SO/437643)

This church, which is about 5 miles NW of Leominster, was built of local stone with a slate roof in 1850 on the foundations of an older church. The building is still for sale and no detailed plans have been submitted.

Chapel of Ease - St Mary, Avenbury (SO/663532)

The building, 1 mile SE of Bromyard is in ruins and only 3 sides of the tower remain. Some walling is standing at the east end of the former chancel which contains Norman windows. Otherwise it appears to be of XIII. It has been sold as a 'garden of rest'.

St James's, Tedstone Wafre (SO/677591)

The church was built in 1873 in a Gothic style and is about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles north of Bromyard. Due to a lack of vehicular access, it is unlikely that planning permission for conversion to a house will be agreed.

Although other churches in the County have recently, or are about to be, declared redundant, it is hoped that the Redundant Churches Commission will take responsibility for any of great historic interest, although one or two others may be sold.

RON SHOESMITH

DMVs, Herefords

Site condition and documentary evidence available locally are being checked for sites shown on Dr St Joseph's photographs acquired by the DMVRG in 1970 and 71. In addition two new sites have been found on the ground. One in the Parish of Brockhampton by Bromyard was reported by members of the Bromyard Historical Society near The Grove (SO/696556). A clearly marked hollow way and house platforms cut in the shallow valley sides; some house sites disturbed by subsequent excavations for material to repair the dam of Grove Pool (memory of local inhabitant). The site lies on the edge of the parish by Bringsty Common. No documentary evidence available locally. The second is north of Lower Lyde Court in the Parish of Pipe and Lyde due north of Hereford (SO/520440). Two deep hollow ways with vague bumps associated can be seen in one field and a XVII timber framed cottage is still standing though unoccupied. Lower Lyde Court and Lower Lyde Farm both have moated sites adjacent - that at the Court has nearly

been obliterated by farm buildings and tipped material. Lude Priors had 42 taxpayers in 1377 Poll Tax. Mr Shoesmith reported in November 1973 that the farmer at Castleton, Ocle Pychard intended to bulldoze the moated site associated with the clearly marked croft boundaries on St Joseph's photograph (142/595453).

ROSAMUND E. HICKLING

Hen Domen, Montgomery (SO/214980)

It is now clear that the new area opened in 1970, the NE sector of the bailey, had been underdug then and in 1971. This accounts for our previous inability to distinguish the buildings of the last period in this new area, though paradoxically, buildings of earlier phases had been discovered in the lee of the rampart.

It seems probable that there were two Phase Z buildings in this new area. One was an extension of the pebble surface (discovered in 1961) which lay in front of the motte bridges. It appeared to be approached from the centre of the bailey by a rough flight of steps consisting of large pebbles and small boulders laid in concentric arcs. It is difficult at this point to decide if the pebble surface is internal or external, though the former seems more probable. There were no real indications of the nature of any superstructure, but the pebble surface was bounded for a short length of one side by a series of stake-holes.

East of this structure lay a rectangular area of small pebbles. This was shown almost certainly to be an internal floor by two slight but discernible lines of pebbles which divided the area into three, and therefore probably marked the lines of partitions. The nature of this evidence, and the method of construction, were paralleled in Phase Z of the earlier excavation.

Behind the rampart an entirely different method of construction, with large pebble-packed post-holes, parallels some of the buildings of Phase Y elsewhere and since these post-holes were the latest structural evidence at that point but appear to run under the late buildings described above, it is possible that some areas of the bailey were without buildings in the last phase but were simply grassed or covered with earth. It was this, coupled with the fact that there had apparently been a drift of small stones down the gentle slope from the higher part of the bailey, which caused the underdigging and resultant interpretive confusion of 1970-71.

Damp marks in the western end of the excavation, together with the deep timber slots excavated in 1961-64, seem to adumbrate the existence of a very large, and probably two-storey, guardhouse or forebuilding standing at the foot of the earliest motte bridges. Excavation of this building must await the excavation of the later phases, but this clear hint coupled with the great depth of the post-holes of period Y are beginning to suggest much more massive buildings than had previously been envisaged. The picture which is emerging is of a claustrophobically small area clear of buildings with palisades and internal buildings

of considerable height towering over the occupants. This is difficult to imagine when one stands now in the bailey looking out over the Welsh hills through the trees which grow on the ramparts, but the evidence is unavoidable.

PHILIP BARKER for RAI and Department  
of Extramural Studies,  
University of Birmingham

Pride Hill, Shrewsbury

Dismantling of Pride Hill Chambers revealed the substantial stone walls of a XIV stone house built against the XIII town wall, with a series of steps leading down beside the house to a sally port in the town wall. The preliminary work was done by Mr E. Jenks and this was followed by excavation of the courtyard for the DOE. The courtyard had never been built on and there was a continuous series of rubbish deposits and occupation debris from XIV-XIX. The most interesting finds from the earliest of these levels included stone and ceramic roof tiles, plain and decorated floor tiles, window tracery, most of a stoup with embossed shield decorations and a bread or kitchen oven. Two coins in the XIV levels, the first found stratified in Shrewsbury, were a Roman bronze coin of Valens and a long-cross silver penny of Alexander II of Scotland of 1280-1286. The Roman coin is presumed to be a souvenir. See also Saxon section.

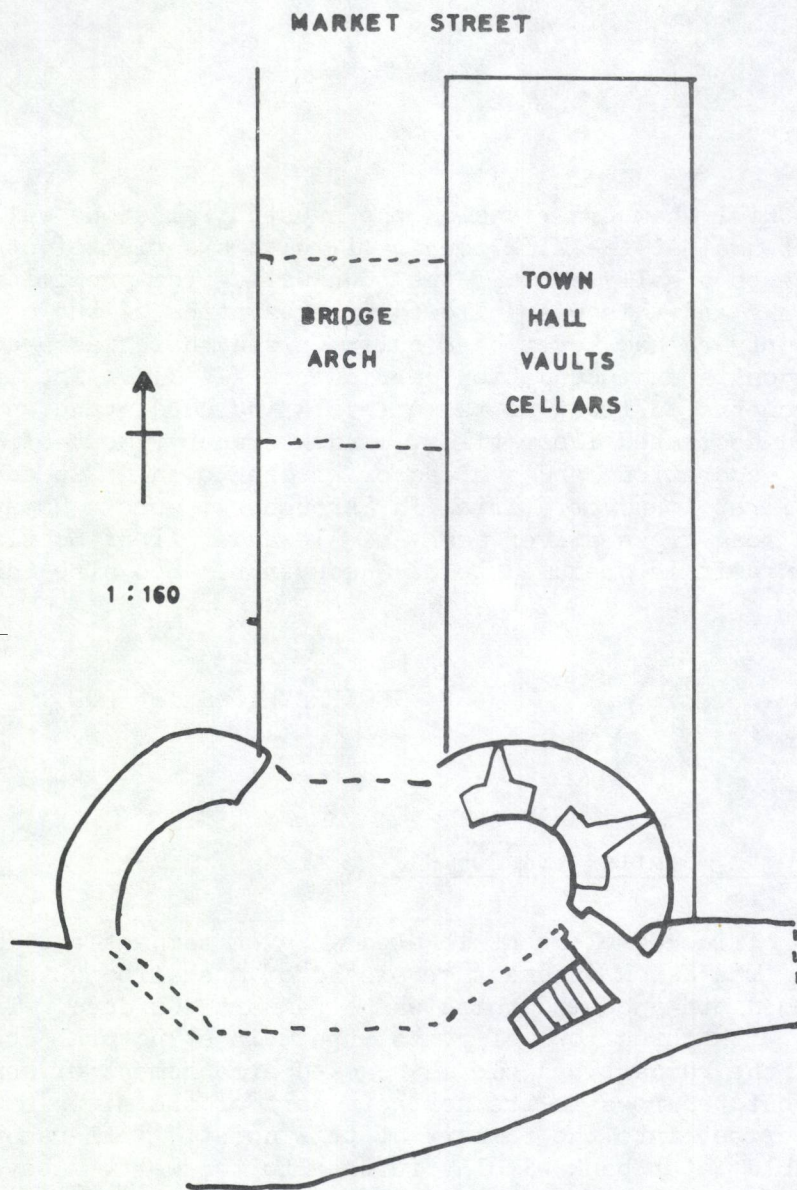
GEOFFREY TOMS for DOE

Orchard Street, Tamworth, Staffs (SK/205041)

Excavations prior to office development located a Saxon rampart and ditch and medieval structures. The Saxon defences consisted of a shallow ditch 2.2m wide by 0.8m deep immediately behind which was a rampart 10m deep. This was of turf construction with three rows of posts, the main structural posts being 4m from the front of the rampart. A closely packed arrangement of shallow post-holes between the front two rows in the northern part of the site is tentatively interpreted as a tower set into the rampart at this point. This rampart was succeeded by a possible later bank of clay further to the west. Above these defences were XII-XIII barn-like structures with associated cobbled surfaces. Finds include sherds of coarse Saxon pottery, some grass-tempered and quantities of medieval sherds and metalwork, including an early XIII prick spur.

K.W. SHERIDAN for Tamworth Arch &  
Hist Committee

FIG. 6 TAMWORTH CASTLE



## Tamworth Castle, Staffs

The site, covering the eastern third of the Castle bailey, an area of some 1200 sq m, was excavated in advance of redevelopment. The whole of the area within the bailey was found to have been swept clean, down to the natural surface, probably in late XVII, leaving no traces of the Castle buildings or defences or of the burh beneath. In XIX, perhaps at the time of the building of the gate lodge in 1819, some 2-3m depth of clay was dumped on the site. After the discovery of this destruction, excavation was perforce concentrated on the entrance area at the NW corner of the site, where the remains were of 5 periods. The earliest involved the construction of the gatehouse itself, and bonded with it, the surviving 2m length of curtain wall to the east. From the rear wall and eastern third, beside the entrance passage, with the remains of the western side still standing, its plan can be reconstructed with fair confidence: that of a single tower pierced by an entrance passage. The eastern basement was reached by a stair in the thickness of the rear wall; the doorway at the foot was found substantially complete, probably missing only the lintel, with the lower hinge and bar-holes preserved in the jambs. It was lit by two fish tailed slits, probably originally c. 1.50m high, facing into the ditch, the whole, walls, stairs, windows and external plinths, being marked by a high standard of masonry. The gatehouse was probably built around 1300. At the same time the ditch seems to have been re-dug; its lowest silt ran up to the outside of the tower, whose foundations ran down into its flat bottom. Because excavation was limited by problems of safety and water to the North, it is difficult to say much about the ditch, but it would seem, in its shape of c. 1300, to have had a flat bottom, c. 6.50-7.00m below medieval ground level, for half its width of c. 14.00m in front of the gate before rising to an outer lip sited probably on the building line of Market St. No traces of the earlier ditch or entrance arrangements were found. Shortly after the completion of the gatehouse, as shown by the straight joint between them and the accumulation of some 50 cm of silt in the ditch, a fine ashlar-faced causeway was built out into the ditch, where it still carries the road into the castle area. Midway across the ditch is the arch of a bridge, 4.00m wide and 3.00m high, the line of the causeway being then carried on to Market St. This arch and the northern causeway were probably added to the first in lat XV, the voussoirs do not fit well into the ashlar coursing of the southern part, but do into the contrasting rubble work to the north. The foundations of the southern part were covered by brown silted earth containing XIV-XV finds: the foundations of the bridge and northern causeway cut what was probably the same deposit. It would appear that the XIV arrangement probably involved a break in the causeway half-way across the ditch, presumably spanned by a draw-bridge of timber, which was later replaced by a stone arch and causeway, but in inferior workmanship. The later filling of the ditch, to the level of the start of the excavation took place in three stages. In the early XVI a dump of cobbler's reject leather was put into it from near the gatehouse while at the same time, marked by the prevalence of Tudor green pottery, rubbish pits were dug in the northern part where the causeway foundations had been covered with clay. This filling brought the depth of silt to a depth of about 2.00m above the ditch bottom, approx the level of the water table, whereupon it appears to have been sealed, across the whole width of the ditch by a dump of red clay. The ditch probably remained like this for more than 100 years when, in the late XVII the gatetower was demolished, most of the stone being robbed, the rest filling the basement interior, and only a trickle of mortar going into the ditch. This last was filled with miscellaneous dumps to nearly its final level. The ditch had by then been divided into the present building plots, for the destruction of the curtain wall which was presumably contemporary

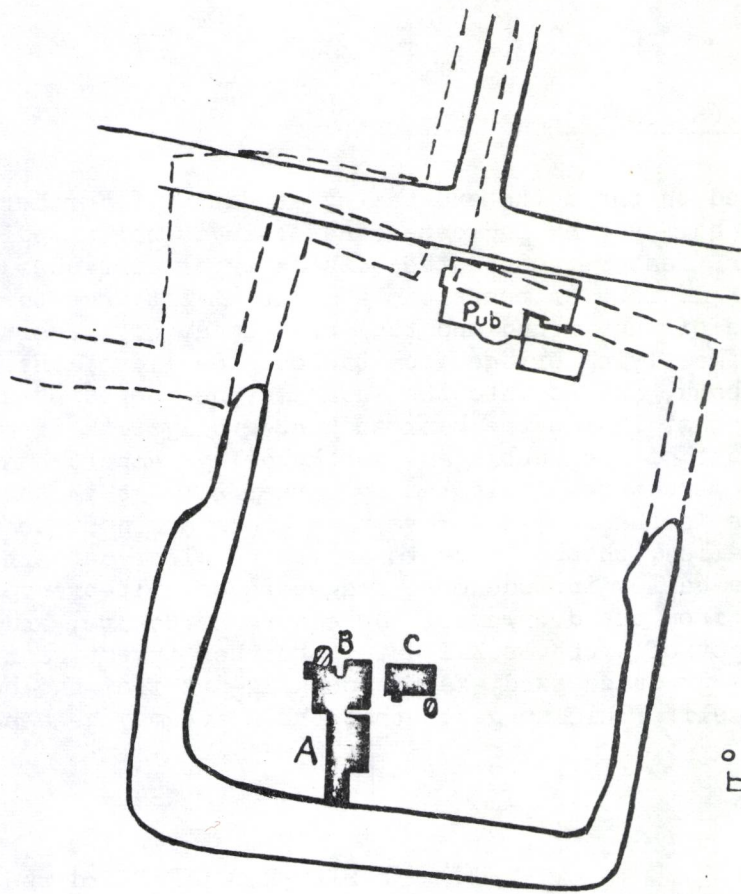
ended at a property boundary. The destruction of the gatehouse was also governed by the design of the building to be erected: those parts within its later bounds were robbed to a lower level than the back wall. There was, however, a short pause during which the ditch was used as a surface on which slight timber structures, one a coal-store, were built. Soon after the cellar walls were erected for the Bull Inn, as it was known in 1727, or the Town Hall Vaults as it was at its demolition in 1972. The date of this building, and that of the final ditch filling is given by a coin of William and Mary found in the haunch of one of the vaults. It is also presumably, in the absence of firm dating other than a clay pipe stem, that of the general destruction of the castle already noted. The finds from the excavation came almost entirely from the ditch. There were several noteworthy finds apart from the general pottery series of c. 1300-1700, and the usual metal finds of keys, knives, etc. From the XIV-XV silt came part of a silver reliquary, of an openwork design with figures in architectural frames, and a knife sheath, decorated with an impressed fleur-de-lys and other motifs. The XVI leather dump included, as well as many scraps, portions of belts and some 75 shoes. See plan fig 6.

T.E. McNEILL for DOE and Tamworth  
Arch & Hist Committee

Walsall Manor, Staffs (SP/001985)

Documentary evidence supports the identification of the site as Walsall Manor and provides some useful details of the house in XIV. Excavations in advance of development took place in September. Fig 7 shows the extent of the site, position of cuttings and plan of features. Drainage gulleys with pottery of XIV were found and the bank was sectioned. A line of closely-set post-holes in the front of the bank may represent a perimeter fence. No dating material was found in the bank or post-holes. The structural remains found were apparently part of a kitchen range of XIV with floors, robbed out walls and an oven. Fragments of tile re-used in floors etc had random stabbing on one side and may suggest there was a tile kiln on the site, as very similar ones were found in the walls of a XIII tile kiln near Meaux Abbey in Yorkshire. It is hoped to continue the excavation this summer.

S. CLAXTON & S. WRATHMELL for  
Walsall Local Hist Soc



General plan shewing area of excavation.

AREAS 'A' & 'B' AFTER EXCAVATION.

**KEY:**

- A - MORTAR FLOOR FOUNDATION.
- B - VICTORIAN GARDEN TRENCH.
- C - STONE FOUNDATION OF TIMBER FRAMED WALL.
- D - BURNT CLAY : HEARTH.
- E - OVEN CUT THROUGH BY TRIAL HOLE.
- F - RAKE-BACK OF OVEN
- G - PIT/SUMP
- H - PIT (MEDIÆVAL)
- J - DRAINAGE GULLY COMPLEX.

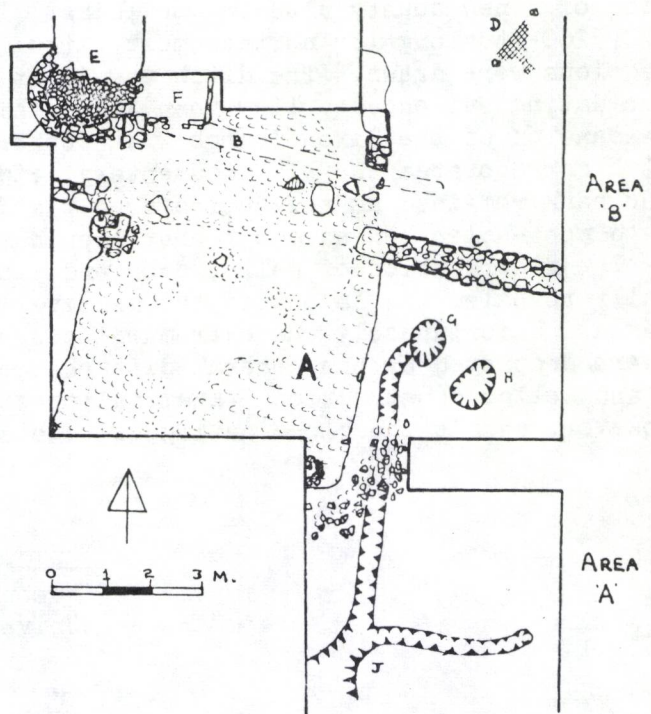


FIG. 7 WALSALL MANOR



Ratley and Upton, Warks (SP/381473)

Excavations have continued on the motte and bailey at Ratley. Further investigation of the gap in the bailey bank indicates that this is not a medieval entrance but a more recent feature, since the bank material continues under the turf across the gap. If however there was a medieval entrance there (as seems likely from the lie of the ground and the arrangement of the site) it could have been by way of a flying bridge from the outside lip of the bailey ditch to the top of the bank, and so into the square stone-footed structure (?tower) which was built just inside the bank and integrally with it at this point. Examination of part of the rubble and earth bailey rampart has revealed a probable timber-lacing structure, indicated by darker streaks in the earth and regular lines of cavities in the rubble. More beam slots and post-holes have been discovered in the bailey, though there is as yet no clear pattern of structures. Finds in the bailey include more fragments of gilt-bronze strip, a barrel-padlock and key from the doorway of the square structure, and pottery, mainly unglazed cooking-pot of probable XII date. Further investigation of the edge of the motte has produced sandy-fabric cooking-pot from the build-up material of the motte itself. This suggests that the motte may be a secondary feature.

FABIAN RADCLIFFE and the Bishop  
Bright School Arch Club

Barrack Street, Warwick (SP/280651)

Rescue excavation and observation took place on a 2-acre site in advance of construction of a new county planning building. The line of the town ditch was followed for 200 ft along its northernmost circuit. Its fill was examined and several sections were drawn. The ditch was 25 ft wide and 15 ft deep, and revealed no dating evidence earlier than XII. This fits in with the idea of a Norman expansion of the Saxon 'burgh'. A robber trench along the inside lip of the ditch corroborates the XIV documentary evidence for Warwick town wall. Although no bank remained as the entire area was disturbed to a depth of 3-5 ft; several deep post-holes behind the robber trench may be the remains of an earlier palisade. The distribution of wells, cess and rubbish pits outside the ditch has partially revealed the layout of the medieval suburban settlement over a one acre area. Unfortunately the extramural house plans and intramural occupation evidence were destroyed by the general disturbance of the site and by extensive quarrying and cellar construction. Examination of the sealed groups of pottery should, however, permit the close dating of this suburban settlement.

ERIC KLINGELHOFER for DOE, Warwick  
Museum and School of History,  
University of Birmingham

Medieval Town Wall (Godiva Street), Coventry, 1970 & 1972 (SP/340791)

Excavations, running east to west, were carried out on a 110m section of the Town Wall. The object was to establish the method of construction, provide dating evidence and reveal masonry for restoration. Excavation on both sides of the wall revealed dateable material from both the pre-wall and post-wall periods, ranging from XII-XVII. The first defences were a ditch and earth rampart dated to XII. Cess pits contemporary to both the early earth rampart and later stone wall, lined the rear of the wall, indicating the proximity of dwellings. Trenching on the north side revealed a substantial town ditch, close to the River Sherbourne.

W. FORD & B. HOBLEY for DOE and  
Herbert Art Gallery & Museum

Fishpond Site, Kenilworth, Warks (SP/283719)

This low lying area to the south of the Abbey Fields in Kenilworth is shown on the 1:2500 map as the 'Castle Fish Ponds', the approximate outline of the ponds being shown. As there was a possibility of the site being levelled and used as a recreation ground it was decided to first survey the area and then to carry out some excavations if the ground conditions allowed. A plan of the area at 1:500 is over half complete, contours being plotted at 0.2m centres. Later it is hoped to examine the site of the mill in the adjacent field to the south.

MICK COOPER for Kenilworth Hist Soc

St Mary's Abbey, Kenilworth, Warks (SP/285724)

This site has been excavated several times, the last being in 1922. The material from this excavation has been stored in the 'Barn', one of the only two extant buildings of the Abbey. This material is now being re-examined and catalogued. In addition to a considerable amount of stonework, it comprises several hundred patterned floor tiles of some 70 types, some 2200 pieces of painted and stained window glass, pottery and bones (the majority of which are certainly animal). Unfortunately the documentary evidence relating to the exact origin of the finds is somewhat sparse.

H. SUNLEY for Kenilworth Hist Soc

THELSFORD 72

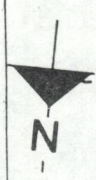
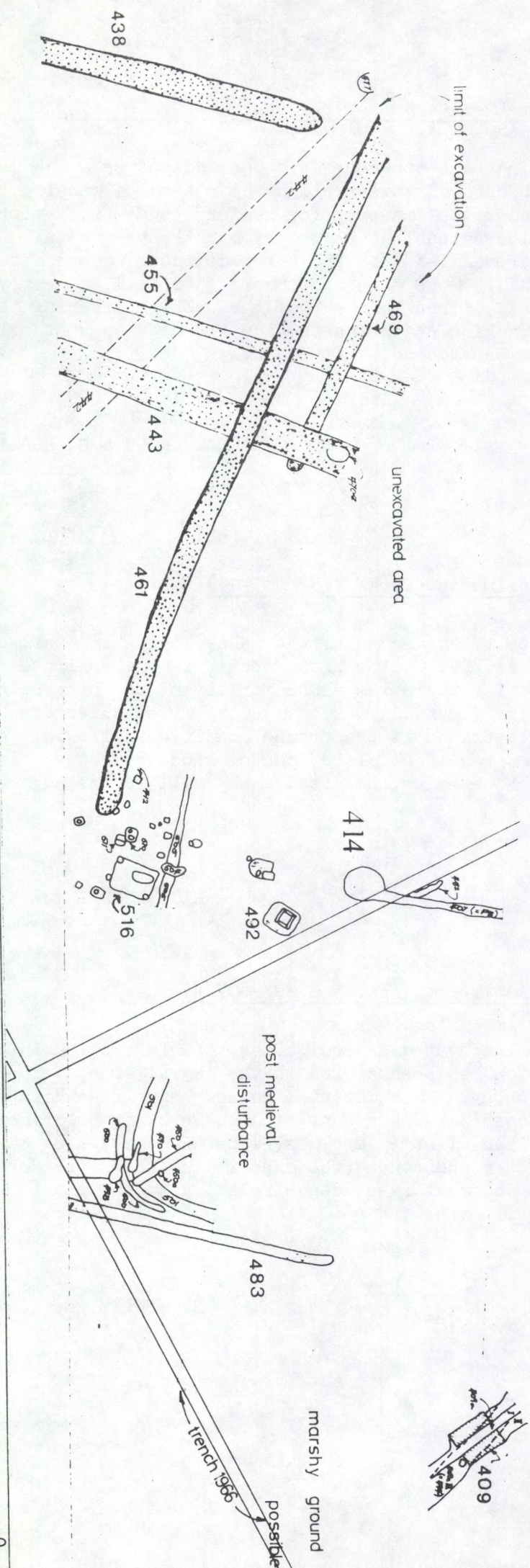


FIG 8

approximate  
0



Thelsford Priory, Warks (SP/271583)

Road re-alignment necessitated the excavation of an area to the west of the Trinitarian Priory, whose limits were defined by a small scale excavation undertaken by the Avon-Severn Valleys Research Committee in 1966. The Priory is thought to have been founded for Augustinian Canons of the Holy Sepulchre 1200-12 AD but was transferred to the Trinitarians, with an endowment of 13 acres of land from Sir William Lucy of Charlecote in 1214, but the Trinitarians did not found their house there until c. 1224. The buildings were later extended and the church enlarged, resulting in its reconsecration in 1258. It survived until the Dissolution, when it passed back again into the hands of the Lucy family. The 1966 excavation showed that the church was adjacent to the present A429 Barford-Wellesbourne road and the conventual buildings were on the west side of it. During April and May 1972, the Avon-Severn Valleys Research Committee investigated the area which was to be destroyed by the new road. At the southern end of the site (see plan) there was a sequence of 5 ditches. Ditch 455 was aceramic and may be prehistoric, but the others showed a chronology consistent with the life of the Priory. They were on higher ground than the buildings and may have been either for boundaries or for the collection of storm-water, as there was a considerable accumulation of hill-wash over them, which must have accumulated in the post-Dissolution periods. Crossing under these ditches was a very regular geological feature (?old river bed) - 422. Beneath the destruction debris of the Priory, which extended an average of 15m into the excavated area, there were many post-holes and pits, confirming the opinion, arrived at in 1966, that the majority of the ancillary structures at the Priory were of timber construction; 3 definite structures were encountered: 516 was a small hut with a collapsed wall and post-holes at three corners; 492 was a sunken area, lined with clay; 414 was a deep hollow filled with ceramic roof tiles (?collapsed roof) with a drain running from it towards the fishponds. In this was an iron fish harpoon. Further north there was a well-constructed stone drain, with removable cover-slabs which led from the conventual buildings into a marshy area to the west (483). A stone sluice (409) connected an area of marshy ground, possibly at one time a fishpond, with a known fishpond to the west of the site and outside the area of the excavation. Beneath the parallel lines of dressed stone walling were posts, with the wood surviving, of an earlier structure of the same type. Near the stream there was evidence (401) that the water had been channelled from the brook to feed the fishponds. In the centre of the site there was an area of post-Dissolution disturbance, with many pits and gullies and drains. See plan fig 8.

MARGARET GRAY for Avon-Severn Valleys  
Research Committee and DOE

DMVS, Worcs

Sporadic field work in Worcestershire continues to locate further deserted village sites, in a county where they were once regarded as very sparse. This year a beginning has been made on the problems of the difficult area west of the Severn, particularly in the Teme valley, and in the extreme SW of

the county. Here, generally speaking, nucleated medieval settlements seem to be more sparsely distributed and smaller in size than in central and SE Worcs. Several of the promising-looking isolated parish churches, e.g. Stoke Bliss, Bockleton, Kyre Magna, have failed to produce any positive field evidence of village sites in their immediate vicinity. However, a scatter of new earthwork sites has been discovered, and most of these have received a preliminary record in the form of a sketch survey:- Bickley in Knighton-on-Teme (SO/641710); Sodington in Mamble (SO/693709); Hanley William (SO/674661); Dowles (SO/780762); Rock (SO/733712); Shelsley Walsh (SO/723628); Eastington in Longdon (SO/832382); Suthley in Ripple (SO/888392). Work is continuing.

C.J. BOND

Bewdley, Worcs (SO/773747)

An iron spearhead was found in the garden of 1 Whartons Cottage, Bewdley, on the south side of the A456 (Cleobury Mortimer & Tenbury road), by David Butcher of Bewdley C.E. School. Dr Alan Borg of the Tower of London comments that it is rather unusual as the blade is tanged and the socket wrapped around it - suggesting that originally it may have been a dagger or short sword blade converted into a spear. Unless found in an archaeologically dated context, the dates of spears are practically impossible to ascertain; if the blade is from a dagger it may be of XIV or XV. The open form of the socket may indicate that it is of English manufacture.

C.J. BOND

Bordesley Abbey, Redditch, Worcs (SP/045688)

The excavation was made more efficient this year by the acquisition of a hut 40 x 15 ft; this enabled tuition in finished drawings to be given, and the preparation of publication drawings. The cost of £800 was generously met by the Faculty of Arts and the Redditch Development Corporation. The south transept is now completely excavated to natural, and is ready for consolidation. An area within the early XIII night stair block was removed, revealing a timber slot and post-holes of the Norman night-stair, which was of timber, and was burnt down. The north and south side-chapels produced no surprises; the central one, however had a much more complex history, which included the interment, apparently simultaneously of three burials, symmetrically placed within the western half. All three showed evidence of rodent or other disturbance. In the east exterior, the most interesting features were a large ditch draining east and several burials which were stratigraphically attributed to the period 1140-1200. They all shared the same ritual of burial; branches were laid across the corpse, and on top of these a large plank was laid length-wise. The planks were clearly

from some disused timber buildings, possibly those of the early years of the monastery which were abandoned when they were rebuilt in stone. The planks and branches were well-preserved and are the first positive evidence of early Cistercian timber buildings to be found in the country, and possibly anywhere in Europe. No parallels are known for this early burial ritual, which was superseded in XIII-XIV by coffins; two of these nailed oak and chestnut planks were found well-preserved inside the transept. In the SE exterior, in the angle between the SE corner of the transept and the E-W exterior wall of the ?chapter-house, was an interesting area comprising foundations of four periods, a drain, and the richest rubbish group so far found on the church site; it included two XIV coins, an almost complete glazed jug, iron and bronze objects, and two medieval writing implements, a bone dip-pen, and an ivory stylus with iron point. The major earth-moving took place in a new area; the whole of the choir, church, north transept, and the NE exterior were stripped in one operation. Earlier excavation trenches were emptied; they included that of 1863 which located a massive stone coffin, thought to be that of the Earl of Warwick, the 'Black dog of Arden'. This was still in situ, close to the NE tower pier. The Choir was cleared down to its latest floor level, a series of tile impressions, which confirmed the pre-Dissolution date of the latest degenerate phase of building. A trench was cut through a depression east of the church believed by some to be a fishpond, by others the undercroft of a large building, possibly the infirmary. The problem was not solved by this trench, most of which was occupied by a massive E-W wall of uncertain purpose, but of XIV-XV. 1972 marks the end of four major seasons of excavation; the 1973 excavations will be on a small scale to enable most of the time to be devoted to the preparation of our first monograph on the site, which will sketch the background of the present series of excavations and describe the south transept.

PHILIP RAHTZ for Redditch UDC and  
School of History, University  
of Birmingham

Moons Moat, Beoley, Worcs (SP/069682)

In last summer's two week excavation work was concentrated on the north arm of the moat, the gateway/bridge area and SE corner of the island. The moat is c. 7m wide. Remains of an inner wall around the island have now been located on all sides and building material incorporated in it suggests it was built not before the early part of XVI. Though early pottery has been found on the island nothing of pre-XVI has yet been found in the moat. Hence when the perimeter wall was built either the moat was recut or the moat is also XVI in origin. The perimeter wall is keyed into the rectangular abutment of the bridge/causeway structure of which three courses of ashlar remain. The pier protrudes 3m into the moat and is 4.5m wide. The sections across the moat and bridge area show two major destruction levels, one a short time after the rebuilding in XVI and the other in early XIX when the wall was robbed. There was a later levelling of the site as part of the possible agricultural occupation. A trial section dug from the inside of the wall, near the bridge, revealed at a depth of 2m discarded timbers with mortice and tenon joints. This level may hold the key to the development of the bridge/gateway. Work at the SE corner of the site revealed a complex stratigraphy, including 2 massive post-holes at the bottom of the bank. These may represent a pre-moat occupation and it may

be possible to correlate them with the pre-moat ditch in the adjacent field and the occupation level at 2m+ on the south side of the mere. Excavation showed that the east side of the island had been extended by the building of a revetment wall and then backfilling behind it. Next year's excavation will concentrate on the eastern half of the island, the east bank of the moat, the SE corner and the gateway area.

MICHAEL WISE & CHRIS MEDLEY for DOE  
and Redditch New Town Arch Committee

## POST-MEDIEVAL

### Halesowen, Old Jail House (SO/96588369)

Due to the impending demolition of the old lock-up at Church St, behind the site of the Townsend Inn, drawings and a photographic record were made. This was a small rectangular building 6.3m long x 5.5m broad; it was of two storeys, the top of the gable being 7.2m above floor level. The lower part was built of red sandstone blocks, the gables having been later refashioned in blue brick. The building had been much altered and repaired, and had been derelict for many years. The east wall was blank. Original cell windows remained at the north and south (gable) ends. The west wall had two doorways, one of which showed signs of drastic alterations. Further windows in the north and west walls may be later insertions. There was a fireplace and chimney in the SE corner. A stone arch, now bricked up, at the foot of the south wall, is difficult to interpret unless it represents some kind of sanitary arrangement. The roof had been re-tiled in XIX.

There was no evidence to confirm a press report that the jail-house dated back to the XII. The only dateable architectural feature was a course of moulding at the top of the stone walls which was of XVIII character. It seems most likely that the construction of the jailhouse can be dated to around 1730, when Sir Thomas Lyttleton built the workhouse which formerly stood on the adjoining site.

Thanks must be expressed to Mr R.G. Brown, Borough Engineer and Surveyor, for his help.

C.J. BOND

### Buildings in Herefords 1971

The principal work of the Recording Group has been in the recording of the houses of the Ewyas Lacy Hundred. This is not reported below as it is hoped to publish a detailed account of the work at a later date. The group has been given a grant by the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust to help with the cost of maps and some materials.

In the notes below information in the RCHM Inventory has not been repeated, though often the two need to be read together.

### House between Commercial Street and Union Street, Hereford (SO/512400)

This timber-framed house was demolished in August. From the mouldings of the beams it appears to have dated from the first half of XVI.



Covenhope, Aymestrey (SO/402640)

A stone, two-room plan house probably of the early XIX. It has heavy glazing-bars, quite well-cut window lintels and boarded ceilings.

Cottage at Yatton (SO/431667)

A two-room plan house probably of XVII, refronted in brick and given a stone western gable in late XVIII or XIX. It seems to have been the house of an enclosure smallholdings.

Tremorthic, Bacton (SO/358315) (RCHM6)

Unusual construction in north wall of vertical stone slabs pinned in place in the timber-framing by big nails. This is then weather-boarded. In one of the outbuildings was a completely wooden, cider-press. In the XVIII rear part of the house are traces of a lath and plaster, hopper-type, hop kiln.

Paunton Mill, Bishops Frome (SO/670500)

Stone building of XVIII, with three storeys and attics with upper-base-cruck roof and king-post above the collar.

Old Court, Bosbury (SO/694435) (RCHM4)

An opportunity was given by the farmer to examine the roof closely. The double wall-plate is almost intact on both sides. The roof over both ends appears to have been open with a closed-bay between the two two-bay rooms. These rooms were heated by lateral fire-places and the northern with its deep arch-braces may have been a first-floor hall, although this would seem unlikely in XV. The south gable above the tie-beam was of close-set timber-framing most of which is still in situ though hidden from outside.

The Dog, Bosbury (SO/695434) (RCHM18)

In the hall a deeply-moulded beam seems to have been a canopy above the high seat. The north wing has an upper-base-cruck roof and in the first floor just inside the present, main entrance is a hop-treading hole. The wing no doubt contained a kiln.

Upleadon (SO/670427) (RCHM39)

During renovations the mortices for the high seat were found in the hall. Beneath the mural of c. 1700 was found an earlier much simpler mural of probably a hundred years earlier.

Cottages on West of the Green, Brampton Bryan (SO/368725) (RCHM5)

These and the adjoining work-shop are of four builds of timber-framing. The two northern cottages were probably built as a three-room plan house in later XVII. The southern cottage was probably added in early XVIII. The work-shop was added in two stages in later XVIII and early XIX.

Brampton Bryan Hall (SO/370726)

At the rear of the present seven-bay house of 1748 are some additions of c. 1890 but at the NW corner is a two-room block probably built in 1663. This has a bolection-moulded fire-place and a stairway with turned balusters.

Below this is a vaulted undercroft with heavy stone walls and a four-centred doorway, apparently of early XVI.

Thus it would appear that there is some part of the earlier castle here with part of a XVII house above it.

1, Barton Cottages, Colwall Green (SO/748412) (RCHM28)

A two-room plan house only about 17 ft 6 in by 14 ft. The stairs are of elm.

Dovecote, Croft Rectory (SO/447657)

Brick with stone-tiled roof and lead upper roof. It has 123 nest-holes and is probably of XVIII.

Foresters' Hall, Docklow (SO/564574)

House basically of early XVII, re-roofed about 100 years ago when it was raised and enlarged. There was an open-hall in the centre section.

The Forge, Eardisley (SO/311495) (RCHM14)

There is evidence of a screen in the cruck-truss at the south end of the hall. The wind-braces are interesting in running from just above the wall-plate to the upper purlin passing behind the lower purlin and being halved into it.

Ford Farm (SO/512552)

An XVIII brick house with a stone wing at the back with a two-centred arched doorway. Adjoining on the north is a timber-framed building which may have been the earlier house.

Cottage at Arrow Green, Kingsland (SO/437587)

An interesting timber-framed cottage of c. 1600 on a two-room plan. Only the unheated room seems to have had a room above originally. In late XVIII a timber-framed byre was added at the west end. This had direct access from the unheated room converting the building into a type of long-house.

Arrow Mill (SO/436587) (RCHM40)

The earliest part of the mill may well be of XVI; some of the stonework could be even earlier. The mill and adjoining barn have not only three sets of grindstones, but a clover-bossing apparatus, a cider-mill and press and remains of a hop-kiln.

Cottage near Becknell (SO/450635)

This started as a single-cell house built in brick probably c. 1800. A room was added on the south in XIX and there were later additions to the north. It is a typical cottage of the period and is now derelict.

Old Plaistow, Ledbury Rural (SO/692397) (RCHM34)

During renovation murals have been found on the west and north walls of the hall. The mortices for a high seat and a blocked doorway were found in the west wall and above the former were shields and an inscription taking the place of a canopy. See also report for 1970.

Cottage, Leinthall Starkes (SO/435696)

A two-room plan house timber-framed later encased in brick. It was quite a superior house of its type with deeply chamfered beams and a late timber-framed lean-to at each end. Now demolished.

Old Vicarage, Watling Street, Leintwardine (SO/405739)

A three-room plan house which may have started as a two-room c. 1600. The timber-framing has been encased in stone on the front, probably c. 1800. The original framing has long carpenters' assembly marks. There is a timber-framed addition at the back, probably of XVIII.

Forbury Chapel, Leominster (SO/497593) (RCHM3)

A fine and important roof was uncovered during restoration as well as some features of the medieval chapel. See p

Museum, Etnam Street, Leominster (SO/497589)

When the floor of the Mission Room, built in 1855, was taken up two circular brick structures about 2 ft 9 in in diam and the remains of a third were found. They had clearly been used for fires and it is thought that they were the bases of old kilns. This was the site of a malt house before the Mission Room was built.

Wharton Court, Leominster Out (SO/511558) (RCHM4)

This is a major house. It is of four storeys, attics and cellars not three as stated in the RCHM. An examination of the roof shows that originally it was a three-gabled roof with close-set timber-framing in the gables. From the evidence of the cellars it seems possible that there was originally a central stack. It seems quite likely that the roof was altered, the stairs inserted in their present position, the corner fire-places built and the new porch added in 1659.

Wilsdon, Little Hereford (SO/567691)

A quite big T-shaped house. The front part of brick has quite thick walls and may well be an earlier timber-framed three-room plan house encased in the 18th century. The rear west wing is of ashlar and probably dates from the later 17th century. There is a fine original staircase with heavy turned balusters in this part.

Penrhos, Lyonshall (SO/317561) (RCHM18)

This building is a four-bay cruck building with contemporary cross-wing. To this was added c. 1600 a timber-framed entrance hall and additional cross-wing with a cellar beneath it. The cruck bays have long, curved wind-braces from just above the wall-plate passing behind all three side-purlins until they meet above the top one. They are halved into each purlin. The collars are halved and notched into the crucks and the construction looks early.

Hillside, Wellington Heath (SO/712402)

A very small, two-room plan house about 16 ft x 11 ft. The timber-framing is quite slight and the house is almost certainly an XVIII enclosure building.

Chamberwell, Weobley (SO/402515) (RCHM51)

The central truss is medieval and apparently still in situ. The cambered collar has peg-holes for an arch-brace and the blades are slotted for wind-braces. Apart from this the house seems to have been gutted and virtually rebuilt in later XVII.

Dovecote, Home Farm Bircher, Yarpole (SO/477655) (RCHM27)

Brick, probably of XVIII; there are 445 nest-holes in 18 rows. Entrance is at wooden lantern. The walls are peculiar in that the bonding of bricks is in rows of headers.

During the year members of the Listed Buildings Sub-committee have looked at 35 buildings most of which were for minor changes. Of these 4 were possible demolitions. Protests were made about the proposed demolitions at 30,31,32 High St, Kington, and about the state into which Drybridge House had been allowed to decay. As far as is known the following listed building was demolished during 1971. Cruck at Middleton House, Sollers Dilwyn. (House had long since collapsed.)

In addition to the cruck buildings mentioned above other previously unrecorded cruck buildings were found at Blaenau, Cusop; The Wern, Llanveynoe; Horner's Mill, Tedstone Delamere and Upper Goytre, Walterstone. These four together with Penrhos can be added to the previously published lists of cruck buildings.

Thanks are due to Miss R Hickling, Mesdames J McCulloch and P Williams, Messrs P Berrett and I Homes, Mr & Mrs R C Perry, Mr & Mrs J Sims and to my wife for reports on buildings and to Mr G W Thomas for his record of the previously unrecorded dovecotes.

J.W. TONKIN for Hereford Recording  
Group

Buildings in Herefords 1972

1972 has been an active year in the houses field. The Recording Group has met regularly, its principal work having been in the Broxash Hundred. This is not reported below as it is hoped to publish a full account of the work at a later date. As in previous years we feel we owe a great debt to the University of Birmingham and the WEA for their active encouragement of this work.

In April a University extramural weekend course on recording was held at the College of Education, Hereford. It was well attended and was directed by the writer with help from the president, Mr C.H.I. Homes and from Mr R.C. Perry and my wife. A second University extramural weekend course was held in Ludlow

with the writer as tutor and this spend a day in North Herefordshire.

In the notes below information in the RCHM Inventory has not been repeated, though often the two need to be read together.

Acton Mill, Acton Beauchamp (SO/711504)

Small water-mill dated 1813. Interesting in its use of a jointed-cruck construction.

Randall's Cottage, Peytoe, Adforton (SO/412714)

Two-bay timber-framed house probably of the second half of the 17th century, raised about a hundred years later and refronted in stone in mid XIX. A lean-to, stone kitchen and dairy were added possibly at the same time as the house was raised. A four-centred doorway is still in situ.

Cheyney Court Mill, Bishops Frome (SO/664478)

Water-mill with undershot wheel, cider-mill and press and clover winnowing machine. Has a light, upper-cruck roof probably of mid-XIX.

Paunton Mill, Bishops Frome (SO/670500)

Water-mill of four storeys with jointed-cruck roof with king-post above collar. Probably XVIII.

Cwmma, Brilley (SO/277512) (RCHM3)

The cattle shed adjoining the house is of four bays. The NE one is an addition, probably of XVII. The other three are apparently of early XVI with big beams and closely-spaced joists. The bay nearest the house has been altered in being converted into a bathroom. The next bay has an open roof in the loft and the beams and joists are painted with a chevron design. The mortices for a post and panel screen are in situ between this and the next bay which has a much more brightly painted ceiling and again an open roof above.

Fromey Mill, Castle Frome (SO/655456) (RCHM8)

Present semi-ruinous state of building has revealed heavy, cambered tie-beams probably of the 16th century and a four-centred doorhead.

Cradley Mill, Cradley (SO/731488)

Small XVII timber-framed house with cross-wing and hall adjoining old mill. New stone mill of five storeys bears the date 1834 with cast-iron windows.

Court House, Dorstone (SO/316418)

At first sight a house of late XVIII or early XIX the basic fabric is apparently of XVII. A cellar under the parlour has chamfered beams and joists with long, scratched carpenters' marks. At the other end of the house the doorway into the kitchen has a shaped head of the Black Mountains-Monmouthshire type. The original stair ran from cellar to attics and it would seem that this is a XVII stone house very much altered.

The Nest, Eye, Moreton and Ashton (SO/502639) (RCHM5)

This building is about to be restored to one house. The heavy, cambered tie-beams and short, curved braces look XVI rather than XVII and the floor of at least one of the hall-block bays has been inserted. It seems likely that this was a house of the first half of XVI with parlour, hall, cross-passage and service-end heavily restored in the third or fourth decade of XVII when the cross-wing was rebuilt and floors inserted in the hall.

Vicarage Farm, Eye, Moreton and Ashton (SO/502642) (RCHM10)

This house has been recently restored. From the carpenters' marks and general construction it appears to be of mid-XVII with a crog-loft at one end and open at the fire-place end. A single-storey timber-framed extension westwards was built in XVIII and a stone lean-to kitchen and dairy added on the north perhaps at the same time, perhaps later. The timber-framed upper storey was added to the westward extension about 70 or 80 years ago.

17 High Street, Ledbury (SO/712376) (RCHM18)

The first-floor window has little sidelights not normally found in Herefordshire, but frequently found in Ledbury. This building behind the shop runs parallel to the street. Its roof is of post and pad construction and this and the geared timber winch in the attic presumably mean that this was used for storage.

The Selda, Leintwardine (SO/405739)

A stone, two-storey hall and cross-wing of early XVII much altered and added to at various times since. The adjoining bake-house built in 1930 has a king-post roof with carpenters' marks virtually indistinguishable from that of the loft over the stable built probably about 1840. A complete set of documents from 1612 enables a documentary history to be traced.

Cholstrey Court Barn, Leominster (SO/466595) (RCHM21)

A four-bay cruck barn. Four trusses are probably of XVI and the fifth of XVII. The original barn was apparently thatched and hipped for both end trusses stopped at the collar as did also the added truss. The XVI trusses are very heavy and of poplar. This has been removed to Avoncroft Museum of Buildings.

Hall Court, Much Marole (SO/644353) (RCHM6)

A careful examination shows that the original screens-passage was at the north end of the hall, but soon after the house was built it was moved to the south and a porch was added. Presumably this was to give the occupier direct access to the parlour without having to come through the hall. The late XVIII hop-kilns west of the house have heavy, upper-cruck trusses.

Orleton Manor, Orleton (SO/491669) (RCHM2)

During restoration an examination of this house showed that the ovolo mullioned windows, the bay window and the porch were added in XVII to the XVI house. The ash-pits of the hall and service-end fire-places have been found in the excavations.

Kitchen Hill, Orleton (SO/489669)

A puzzling house. The stone, rubble ground-floor with straight chamfered mullioned windows and doorway supports a deeply jettied, timber-framed upper storey and attic. There is some medieval cut stone in the garden. The house requires a thorough examination.

Bollitree Castle, Weston-under-Penyard (SO/637240) (RCHM6)

A very interesting building. Alterations this year revealed that behind the five-bay, red sandstone house of c. 1700 the apparently Gothic building of c. 1775 actually encased a much earlier timber-framed L-shaped house. The main block of this has heavy pyramid stops and may well be early XVI, especially as the wing appears to have had an open roof which was given new purlins in XVIII.

Cottage, Castle Street, Wigmore (SO/411690)

A small, three-part plan house. The centre bay seems to have been open. The timber-framing is of early XVII type, but has been underpinned in stone at the back and both gables. Excavations revealed the floor and foundations of a two-part plan house below the present building.

Cottage, Church Street, Wigmore (SO/413690)

Building work revealed that this brick house, apparently of XIX was built around an earlier timber-framed structure. The original house of heavy framing was apparently a single cell with an attic above. This was extended and raised to give a two-room plan on two storeys probably well on in XVIII and the whole encased in brick in XIX.

Danvers, Wigmore (SO/411691)

Now a ruin, only the lower walls remaining. The house collapsed during the second world war. It appears to have been a two-part plan, late, timber-framed house with an added brick kitchen and dairy. The timber-framing had been cased in stone to first floor level on three sides and brick on the fourth. The outbuildings were of brick with XVIII timber-framed upper floor.

During the year members of the listed buildings sub-committee have looked at 35 buildings, most of which were for minor changes. Of these 6 were demolitions or part demolitions. As a result Cholstrey Court Barn, a four-bay, XVI cruck building was saved and is being re-erected at Avoncroft Museum of Buildings. The president represented the club at the enquiry at Kington into the proposed demolition of 30, 31 and 32 High St. Objections were raised in July 1971, against this proposal.

As far as is known the following listed building was demolished during 1972: St Vincent's Orphanage, Berrington Street, Hereford.

Thanks are due to Mesdames J McCulloch and P Williams, Mr C H I Homes and my wife for reports on buildings.

J.W. TONKIN for Hereford Recording  
Group

PUBLICATIONS OF WEST MIDLANDS INTEREST

Antiq J

51 (1971)

K. S. Painter

An Iron Age gold-alloy torc from  
Glascote, Tamworth, Staffs (307 - 311)

K. S. Painter

A Roman silver spoon from Biddulph,  
Staffs (323 - 324)

K. S. Painter

A Roman gold ex-voto from Wroxeter,  
Shrops (329 - 331)

52 (1972)

N. W. Alcock and M. S. Barley

Medieval Roofs with Base-Crucks and Short  
Principals (132 - 168) (includes  
West Midland examples)

Archaeol J

128 (1972)

Summer meeting at Warwick 1971, short  
papers which include Prehistoric Warks  
by Richard Hartley, Roman Warks by  
Graham Webster, The 18th Century Country  
houses at Warks by G. C. Tyack and  
notes on sites, monuments and houses  
visited

Trans Shropshire  
Archaeol Soc

59 for 1969 - 70 (1972)

Lily Chitty

Stone Axe from Weston Park, near  
Shifnal and the Shropshire-Staffordshire  
border (8 - 14)

Graham Webster and  
Charles Daniels

A Street section at Wroxeter in 1962  
(15 - 23)

Arnold Baker

Aerial Reconnaissance over Viriconium  
and Military sites in the area in 1969  
(24 - 31)

G. S. G. Toms

St Alkmundis Place - A late Saxon  
and Medieval Site in Shrewsbury  
(32 - 42)

S Staffs Archaeol and  
Hist Soc

12 for 1970 - 71

R. A. Meeson

Fourth Report of Excavations at Tamworth,  
Staffs 1968 - Some timber-framed and  
other buildings at Church Street

P. V. Bate and D. M. Pallison

Suspected lost village sites in  
Staffs (31 - 36)



F. W. B. Charles                      A Medieval Timber-framed building  
in High Street, Burton-Upon-Trent, Staffs

Post-Medieval Archaeology                      6 (1972)

Dr J. Tann and L. W. Smith                      Early Fireproof Housing in a  
Staffordshire Factory Village  
(Fazeley) (191 - 197)

Current Archaeology                      No 31 (1972)

K. Hartley                      Mortaria note on the Mancetter factory  
(206 - 207)  
No 33 (1972)

R. Shoesmith                      Hereford (256 - 258)

Medieval Village Research Group                      Report No 19, 1971, Edited by Philip Rahtz  
The Medieval Village Research Group,  
67 Gloucester Crescent, London NW1

ADDRESSES OF CONTRIBUTORS

M Aston  
Oxford City & County Museum  
Woodstock  
Oxon

A Baker  
Latchmere House  
10 Bulford Road  
Durrington  
Salisbury  
Wiltshire

Dr L Barfield  
Dept of Anc Hist & Arch  
University of Birmingham  
Birmingham B15 2TT

P A Barker  
4 St George's Square  
Worcester WR1 1HX

C J Bond  
Worcs County Museum  
Hartlebury Castle  
Kidderminster  
Worcs

M J Cooper  
6 Dugard Place  
Barford  
Warks

Mrs K C Fenton  
'Hillcrest'  
80 Heath Lane  
Stourbridge  
Worcs

W Ford  
Wiltshire Arch Officer  
County Offices  
Trowbridge  
Wiltshire

F H Goodyear,  
95 Lincoln Avenue  
Newcastle  
Staffs

Mrs M Gray  
22 Woods Hill  
Limpley Stoke  
Nr Bath

Miss R Hickling  
85 Beaufort Avenue  
Hereford HR2 7QE

B Hobley  
Herbert Art Gallery & Museum  
Jordan Well  
Coventry

Dr A W J Houghton  
Oak Wood  
Pulverbatch  
Nr Shrewsbury

A Hunt  
7 High Street  
Amblecote  
Stourbridge  
Worcs

E Klingelhofer  
School of History  
University of Birmingham  
Birmingham B15 2TT

Miss S Laflin  
Computer Centre  
University of Birmingham  
Birmingham B15 2TT

Miss G Lloyd Morgan  
Dept of Anc Hist & Arch  
University of Birmingham  
Birmingham B15 2TT

J Lucas  
7 Rugby Road  
Calthorpe  
Rugby

T E McNeill  
Dept of Archaeology  
Queens University  
Belfast

J Pickering  
Elmtree Drive  
The Outwoods  
Hinckley  
Leicestershire

S Price  
The Museum  
Bewdley  
Worcs

Rev F Radcliffe  
Bishop Bright Grammar School  
Guys Cliff Avenue  
Leamington Spa  
Warks

M Wise  
113 Forge Mill Road  
Redditch  
Worcs

P A Rahtz  
School of History  
University of Birmingham  
Birmingham B15 2TT

A A Round  
95 Darnick Road  
Sutton Coldfield  
Warks

K W Sheridan  
Castle Museum  
Tamworth  
Staffs

R Shoosmith  
Youth Hostel  
Staunton-on-Wye  
Hereford

H L G Sunley  
57 Highland Road  
Kenilworth  
Warks

G S Taylor  
Wychbury  
Greenside Road  
Birmingham B24

S J Taylor  
Hinton Manor  
Woodford Halse  
Daventry  
Northants

J W Tonkin  
Chy an Whyloryon  
Wigmore  
Leominster  
Herefords

P L Waters  
2 Westwood Road  
Malvern Link  
Worcs

Dr G Webster  
The Old School House  
Chesterton  
Harbury  
Nr Leamington Spa  
Warks

USEFUL ADDRESSES

ATHERSTONE ARCH SOC  
Mrs R J Phillips (Sec)  
75 Marston Lane  
Bedruth  
Warks

BIRMINGHAM & WARKS ARCH SOC  
Mrs Ruth Taylor (Sec)  
C/o City Museum & Art Gallery  
Birmingham

BORDESLEY SOCIETY  
Miss D M Arnold (Sec)  
29 Salop Road  
Redditch  
Worcs

CHEADLE HIST SOC  
Mr H A Chester (Sec)  
71 Froghall Road  
Cheadle  
Staffs

COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY  
Miss B de Cardi  
CBA  
8 St Andrews Place  
London NW 1

COVENTRY & DIST ARCH SOC  
Mrs V A Howard (Sec)  
30 Ivybridge Road  
Styvechale  
Coventry

COVENTRY MUSEUM  
Mr C J Scott (Director)  
Herbert Art Gallery & Museum  
Jordan Well  
Coventry

DUDLEY COLLEGE ARCH SOC  
Miss L Faulkes (Sec)  
Dudley College of Education  
Castle View  
Dudley  
Worcs

HEREFORD MUSEUM  
Mr J F W Sharwood (Curator)  
City Museum & Art Gallery  
Hereford

KEELE & NEWCASTLE ARCH SOC  
Mr Ivor Newcomb (Sec)  
175 Basford Park Road  
Newcastle  
Staffs

KENILWORTH ARCH SOC  
Mrs I Potter (Sec)  
2B Bertie Road  
Kenilworth  
Warks

KIDDERMINSTER ARCH SOC  
Mr D Wright (Sec)  
Borough Library  
Kidderminster  
Worcs

LANDOR SOC  
Mr A W Neal (Sec)  
Eireen  
38 Fortescue Lane  
Rugeley  
Staffs

LEEK & DIST FIELD CLUB  
Miss D Hill (Sec)  
6 Newcastle Road  
Leek  
Staffs

OFFA ANTIQUARIAN SOC  
Mr Martin Beck (Sec)  
Keepers Cottage  
Aston  
Oswestry  
Salop

RUGBY ARCH SOC  
Mr G B Beevor (Sec)  
269 Lower Hillmorton Road  
Rugby

SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTHPLACE TRUST  
Mr Levi Fox  
SBT Shakespeare Centre  
Stratford-upon-Avon

SHREWSBURY MUSEUM  
Mr R E James  
Public Library & Museum  
Castle Gates  
Shrewsbury

SHROPSHIRE ARCH SOC  
Mr H Beaumont (Sec)  
Silverdale  
Severnbank  
Shrewsbury

SOLIHULL ARCH GROUP  
Mr J G Perry (Sec)  
215 Lyndon Road  
Solihull  
Warks

SOUTH STAFFS ARCH SOC  
Mr J Gould (Sec)  
307 Erdington Road  
Aldridge  
Staffs

STAFFORD HIST & CIVIC SOC  
C/o J S Horne  
24 St Johns Road  
Rowley Park  
Stafford

STAFFORD & MID-STAFFS ARCH SOC  
Mr G F Reinli  
The Cottage  
Oulton  
Stone  
Staffs

STAFFS LOCAL HIST COUNCIL  
Mr L N A Davies  
Pendrell Hall Residential  
College of Adult Education  
Codsall Wood  
Nr Wolverhampton  
Staffs

STOUR & SMESTOW ARCH RESEARCH GROUP  
Mrs K C Fenton (Sec)  
Hillcrest  
80 Heath Lane  
Stourbridge  
Worcs

TAMWORTH MUSEUM  
Miss Tarjan (Curator)  
Castle Museum  
Tamworth

WARWICK COUNTY MUSEUM  
Miss J M Morris (Curator)  
County Museum  
Market Place  
Warwick

WOOLHOPE FIELD CLUB  
Mr V H Coleman (Sec)  
Strommiss  
Hereford Road  
Weobley  
Hereford

WORCS ARCH SOC  
Mr R F Panton (Sec)  
4 Orchard Road  
Malvern  
Worcs

WORCESTER CITY MUSEUM  
Mr C Phipps  
Worcester Museum  
Foregate Street  
Worcester

WORCESTER COUNTY MUSEUM  
Mr C J Bond  
Hartlebury Castle  
Kidderminster  
Worcs