

WEST MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY

(Formerly West Midlands Annual Archaeological News Sheet)

NO. 23 1980



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WEST MIDLANDS ARCHÆOLOGY

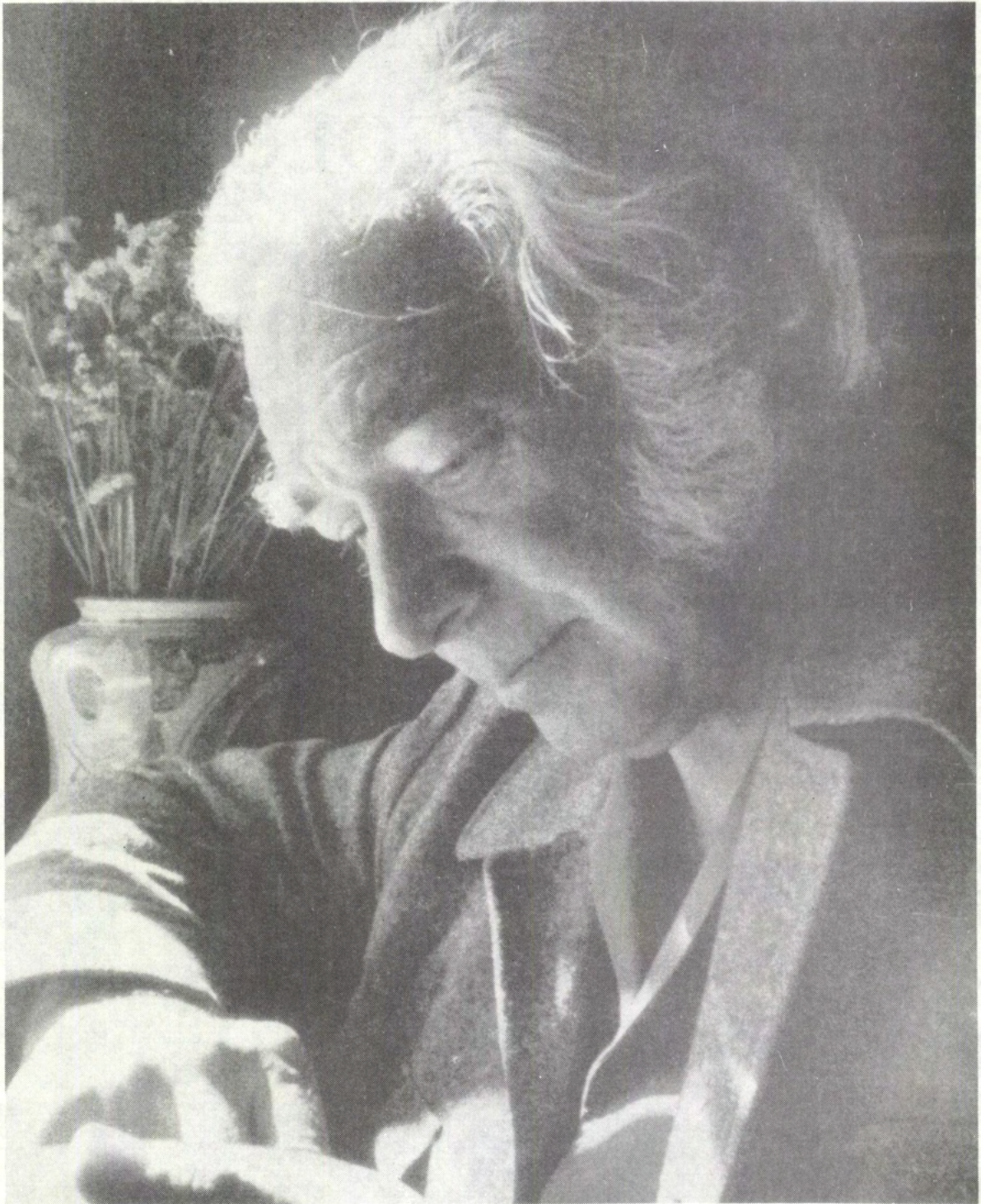
(Formerly West Midlands Annual
Archæological News Sheet)

NO. 23 1980

Edited by M.O.H. Carver

Council for British Archæology Group 8

(ii)



Graham Webster, MA, PhD, FSA

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

It was reported in NewsSheet 22 in 1979 that the committee of the Council for British Archaeology Group 8 was subject to a number of changes and the future was by no means certain. At the end of 1980 it is possible to forecast a more promising future for CBA 8 than was thought likely a year ago. It has been an extremely busy year for an augmented, exceptionally hard-working committee and a number of significant improvements have been instigated.

Anyone who claims an interest in the archaeology of the region must feel a need to be kept up to date on recent research and excavations. The ONLY publication which makes this possible has been the 'News Sheet'. However, 'News Sheet' is now something of a misnomer since the publication almost invariably extends to about 100 pages. Necessary changes in the production of this publication have occasioned a new style and a slightly stricter editorial policy. This is explained in more detail below by the new editor - Martin Carver - to whom we owe our gratitude for accepting that responsible position. The name changes to 'West Midlands Archaeology', though for the moment at least the old name will be retained as a sub-title. It is not only the name and format which are changing. You will be able to guarantee a copy of future issues of 'West Midlands Archaeology' by subscribing as an affiliate of CBA 8, which currently costs £2.50 each year. If you have not already affiliated, please do so now to receive full benefits of membership.

Individual and society affiliates to CBA 8 have already received their first copy of a 'Newsletter'. This is a new service which is offered to affiliates, keeping them in touch with group news and notifying them of forthcoming CBA 8 meetings and services.

CBA 8 will continue to organise day schools upon topical aspects of archaeology. Leading authorities offer informative yet extremely enjoyable illustrated talks, with something for the experienced archaeologist and for the general public.

During the past year a fund has been established, from which interest can be drawn at the discretion of the Committee to grant-aid a limited number of publications in the archaeological journals of the West Midlands. This is another new service offered to affiliates by CBA 8 - a particularly valuable one at a time of escalating printing costs. Affiliates will be given full details of this facility in the next (Spring) 'Newsletter'.

Limited assistance may also be available to suitable applicants for field research projects. Applications can be made to the committee via the secretary.

Affiliated societies retain the right to apply for the loan of a resistivity meter or proton-magnetometer.

The Committee will continue to represent West Midlands archaeology - professional and amateur - at national level.

CBA 8 has an improved and positive role in West Midlands archaeology. It publishes the only regional account of excavations, organises day schools, offers grant aid for publication and research, regular information for affiliates, representation at national level, loan of equipment and other services. A highly competent and active committee has worked very hard this year and the members are to be congratulated for the results. Now will you, the reader, please help CBA 8 to help West Midlands archaeology by affiliating to the group?

Bob Meeson,
Chairman

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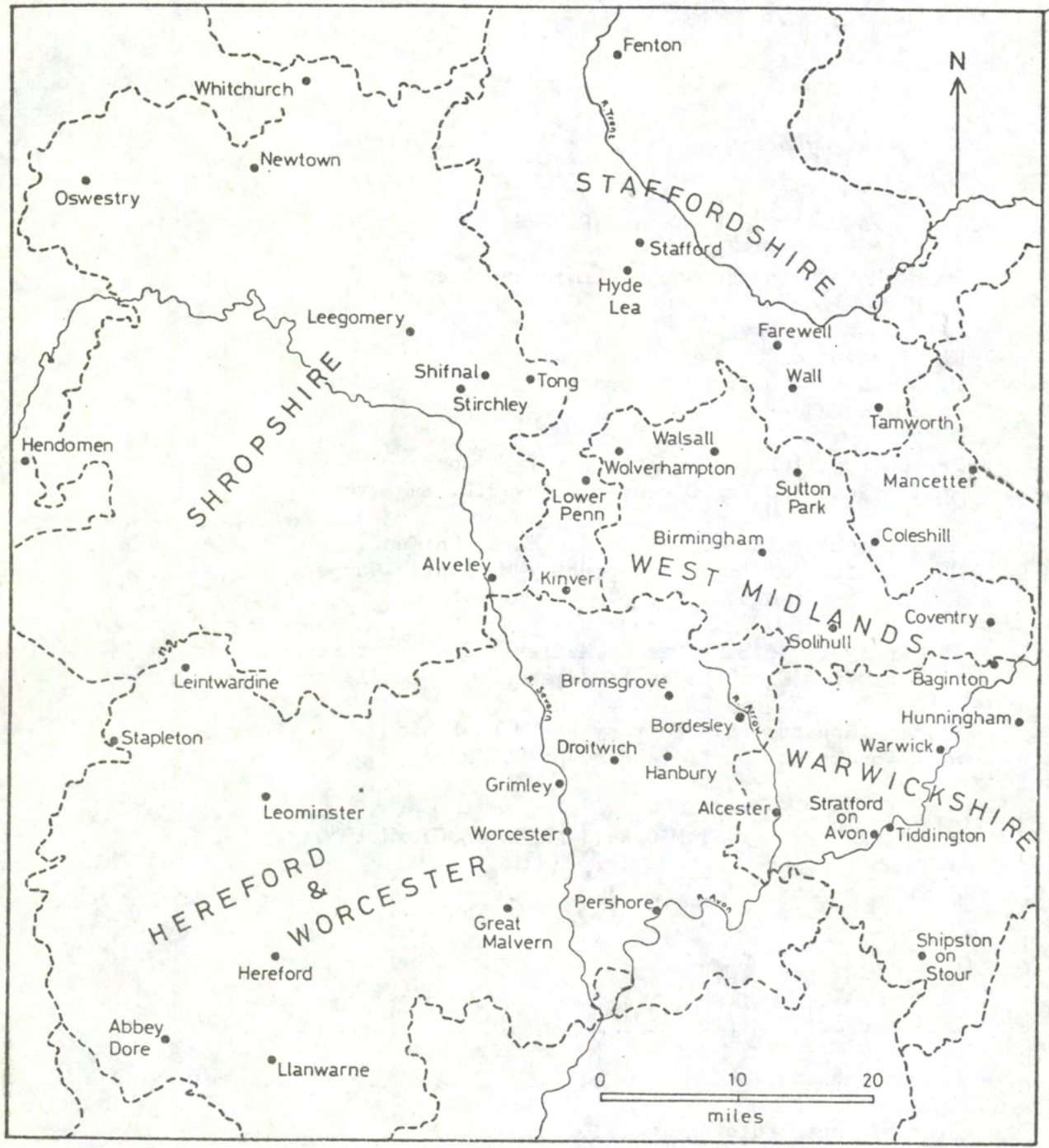


Fig. 1: WEST MIDLANDS REGION: Position of sites reported (Hooper)

Editorial Synopsis

Dr. Graham Webster, who retired last year as Staff Tutor in the Extra-Mural Department of Birmingham University, edited and produced the West Midlands Annual Archaeological NewsSheet from 1975 to 1980, this being only one of the many ways in which he has led and served the archaeology of this region. Many of the contributors are his students, be they representative of the local research groups which were his creation, or professional fieldworkers to whose careers he has acted as counsellor. In wishing him a long and happy retirement, we trust that he will remain, as he has always been, an active source of inspiration, practical advice, support and encouragement.

The new format of the "News Sheet", which is this journal, is intended to build on the foundations which have been established, - the tradition of participation by all, for the information of all. The great advances in archaeological method, and in the dissemination of information, of recent years, are complicated by the reduced circumstances in which all public scholarship finds itself. But it is the policy of the CBA Group 8, under its new Chairman, and of this journal, to protect through change and so to keep the public interested and in a state of concern for archaeological research and rescue in our region.

* * * * *

The work of the County Sites and Monuments Records is currently revolutionising the way in which archaeological work is recorded and published. All the counties in the West Midlands now have them, including, from December 1980, West Midlands Metropolitan County. To a great degree, the SMR's are destined to become research centres for local and national archaeologists alike, and it is to be hoped that the appropriate facilities will soon be developed for their easy accessibility and use, as well as for the proper storage of survey and excavation records. This must, of course, include availability at week-ends.

As the SMR's become effective, so the way in which archaeological work is publicly presented will change. Periodicals such as this should attempt to announce, rather than retail, the new discoveries, new data and new interpretations that emerge. The detail will be stored in the SMR's, and in future years, it is hoped that all entries will be provided with an SMR number as well as a national grid reference.

Nevertheless, each year brings new work which may be of immediate regional significance, and which merits explanatory reports such as are given in PART 1. These will generally be concerned with new approaches or types of site, or regional syntheses, but reports of recently completed major excavations, or accounts of the purpose and programme of newly-begun long-term research projects are also welcome in this section.

* * * * *

Archaeological investigations reported from the region during 1980 are summarised in PART 2, through the good offices of a large number of contributors. Fig. 1 (opposite p. 1) and the Tables which follow attempt to give a guide to this work and illustrate, to some extent, the distribution of the preferences and opportunities open to West Midlands archaeologists.

The prehistoric West Midlands is still under-represented. Only 14 sites, out of 58 reported, had any claim to prehistoric activity, and these are mainly from chance finds or undefined settlement. Mesolithic flint continued to be found at SUTTON CHASE and KINVER EDGE, while for the neolithic period there is a leaf-shaped arrowhead from HUNNINGHAM and a possible henge discovered from air photography at Berrysfield, WEST MIDLANDS COUNTY. The burnt mounds of south BIRMINGHAM, brought to attention as a result of thirty years field work by Mike Nixon, offer a new pattern of activity for the Bronze Age, whose significance is not confined to the Birmingham area. The excavators of an example in Bournville, are by no means convinced that the mounds are simply rejected pot-boilers. Steam baths are an alternative interpretation, and work continues. The log boat discovered in the River Anker at TAMWORTH is not yet dated, but may be prehistoric. At SHIFNAL, the excavation of a double-ditched enclosure cropmark showed it to be a lowland fort with a dump rampart, probably of iron age date. The defensive inner ditch was quarried in short lengths and briquetage was present.

Beaker material was recovered at COLESHILL where there was also a domestic predecessor beneath the Roman temple, whose precinct is now fully excavated. Further features were brought to light in the Roman forts at BAGINTON (The Lunt), LEINTWARDINE and MANCETTER. Two new Roman roads, of gravel and pebbling were seen at ALCESTER. A possible industrial settlement was evaluated at TIDDINGTON and major excavation has commenced. Roman activity was contacted in the salt-producing town of DROITWICH. A new Roman settlement was contacted near MALVERN, and elsewhere others

are becoming sufficiently well mapped to give attention to local or regional landscapes. The long-term survey at HANBURY is showing promising results here, with seven new settlement sites from fieldwalking.

For the Early Medieval period (4th - 10th C) routeways have been plotted from documentation at GRIMLEY, and a timber roadway probably 10th century in date, was discovered laid above marsh beneath King Street, HEREFORD. The urban site evaluation at WOLVERHAMPTON has produced a putative contour plan of this 10th century foundation. Sherds of Stafford-type late Saxon pottery ("Chester ware") were recovered at LEINTWARDINE. In STAFFORD TOWN, work began in November on a row of artisanal tenements in the predicted centre of the late Saxon burh. As with prehistoric, early medieval features are difficult to find and to excavate. Indications from pollen analysis such as that of reafforestation at COOKLEY and of cultivation at STAFFORD are especially valuable. But archaeological research remains a priority, perhaps particularly in rural areas. Here, prehistoric and Romano-British landscapes need careful dissection if early medieval sites are not to go by default, and current analysis of the BECKFORD excavations promises exciting results in this field.

48% of the sites reported are concerned with the Medieval period (11th - 15th C), or later. Churches and other ecclesiastical structures were recorded or studied at ABBEY DORE, BORDESLEY ABBEY, FAREWELL, LEOMINSTER, LLAWARNE and STIRCHLEY. Moated sites were examined at HUNNINGHAM, HYDE LEA, WALSALL, SUTTON CHASE and SYDENHAM'S MOAT, and a county survey is in progress in SHROPSHIRE. Amongst Castles, long-term research projects continue at HEN DOMEN and STAFFORD CASTLE. Rescue work has revealed a sequence of five medieval and later castles at TONG, while survey demonstrated at least three at APLEY. Work in WARWICK Castle was confined to the area of the medieval town beneath the post-17th century estate. Town defences were explored in COVENTRY, OSWESTRY and WORCESTER, and town plans studied in PERSHORE, SHIPSTON-on-STOUR, STRATFORD-upon-AVON and WOLVERHAMPTON. Deserted rural settlements were located and investigated at Whitchurch in the AVON VALLEY, MYTON, SHIFNAL, STAFFORD CASTLE and SUTTON CHASE, and a field system recorded at STAPLETON. At SPERNALL, a detailed documentation and field survey has explored the settlement pattern from the middle ages to modern times. Water mills and fishponds have been located by survey in the ARROW VALLEY, and parks, waste and marsh land at SUTTON CHASE. From BORDESLEY ABBEY, work is reported on medieval industry, a topic in which archaeology has much to contribute in this region.

With so many types of medieval feature apparently so accessible by documentation, fieldwork and excavation, the sum of knowledge ought to be increasing rapidly; but it may be time to inquire whether survey and excavation might not be co-ordinated a little more. They appear rarely to coincide, even in towns, and whereas excavations are often proscribed in their choice by "Rescue" factors, documentary survey is often more flexible. Perhaps consideration could be given to coaxing survey effort into more immediately useable forms. These might be county or regional accounts of a type site (such as M. Watson's Moated Site Survey in SHROPSHIRE), or intensive surveys of threatened areas be they under plough or on gravel, or both. In any case, it would be hard to imagine a research zone of less practical value than the parish, whose boundaries are so arbitrary and content so small with respect to the settlement pattern of any period; but this will no doubt be debated. It is also noticeable that amongst a wealth of medieval sites available, there is no long-term excavation project in progress at a parish church, a village or, perhaps more understandably, a town. The lack of work reported on Medieval timber-framed houses is also arresting, and cannot be truly representative.

A great deal of work is in train for the post-medieval (16th - 18th century) and modern (18th - 20th century) periods. Here industry is more widely under examination, evidence for potting coming from FENTON, quarrying from ALVELEY, and ironworking from ARROW VALLEY and LOWER PENN, in both cases associated with water mills. Houses were recorded at BAGINTON, BROMSGROVE, and WHITCHURCH, and a gatehouse at WALSALL. The excavation of part of a tenement at WOLVERHAMPTON proved a useful addition to the history of commercially distributed pottery. Lastly, at SHIFNAL and attempt was made to record a recently abandoned farm for experimental purposes.

* * * * *

It is interesting to observe the balance of effort applied during the year. Over half the work reported consisted of surveys, and most of these were predominantly documentary surveys of rural areas. Fieldwork, or at least successful fieldwork in the form of fieldwalking, remains a comparative rarity (HANBURY, KINVER, SUTTON CHASE, SPERNALL) and yet a large proportion of the region is under the plough. Urban surveys were also rare, but the work of DoE's Urban Survey Fellow at Birmingham University promises comprehensive assessment in due course. Architectural records are reported from four churches and one medieval gatehouse, but this cannot represent the real burden of work in progress. The

same is presumably true of aerial photography, and earthwork surveys of which there are no reports. Geophysical surveys were commissioned at TIDDINGTON and SHIFNAL and emphasise the value of this underemployed technique. If the energy expended by metal-detector enthusiasts could be channelled into this equally exciting type of electronic prospecting, the region would be the richer for it.

Of 34 reported excavations, 6 were salvage, 2 were site evaluations and another 15 were controlled investigations carried out in advance of destruction. Excavations strictly for research purposes were carried out at BORDESLEY ABBEY, William Greatbatch's 18th century pottery at FENTON, the motte at HEN DOMEN, the post-medieval mill-race at LOWER PENN, the medieval town wall at OSWESTRY, the medieval castle and deserted village at STAFFORD CASTLE, and in the Roman city at WROXETER. Clearly, such a short list cannot expect to represent a balanced or co-ordinated programme, but the absence of any prehistoric site is nevertheless alarming. When considering priorities for research effort, attention might also be drawn to the east Shropshire plain, the corrosive and illegible nature of whose deposits is demonstrated again at LEEGOMERY and SHIFNAL. The area is responsive to aerial photography and geophysical survey, and Shropshire SMR already holds a large repertoire of cropmarks, but it may be that sustained and lengthy research is required to characterise them; future rescue strategies (for example in advance of the M54) will need to take account of this.

* * * * *

The year has seen a welcome and admirable increase in the attention given by Local Authorities to rescue excavation. The initiatives of North Warwickshire Borough Council (Coleshill) and Stafford Borough Council (Stafford Town) are well-known, but particular credit should perhaps be given to Telford Development Corporation, which has commissioned or supported medieval and earlier rescue work at APLEY, LEEGOMERY, STIRCHLEY, SHIFNAL and TONG, (with previously reported excavations at MADELEY and WOMBRIDGE), in addition to the support given over a number of years to industrial archaeology, centred on Ironbridge Gorge. Here a new Institute of Industrial Archaeology has been established as a joint project of Ironbridge Gorge Museum and Birmingham University. We look forward to their reports in future years.

* * * * *

In PART 3, we invite letters and other contributions to a FORUM which is intended to provide a platform for new ideas and the exchange of views. A REVIEW section continues the tradition of the News Sheet, but material eligible for review is extended to include articles in journals. In RECENT PUBLICATIONS notice is given of the contents of journals issued by the County Societies, and other publications of interest to West Midland readers. Information on new publications is requested annually, together with the address whence they may be purchased. The USEFUL ADDRESSES section has been discontinued, but the names and addresses of contributing individuals and groups are listed. A list of members of CBA Group 8 will be published in due course, this representing too the list of subscribers to this journal and the readership it is intended to serve. Criticism, comment and proposals on the presentation and scope of West Midlands Archaeology, whether intended for publication or not, will always be welcome.

M.O.H. Carver

1st January, 1981

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Ann Humphries and Liz Hooper of BUFAU for preparing the text and drawings of this edition for the press, and to Diana Bonakis for permission to publish her portrait of her husband, Graham Webster.

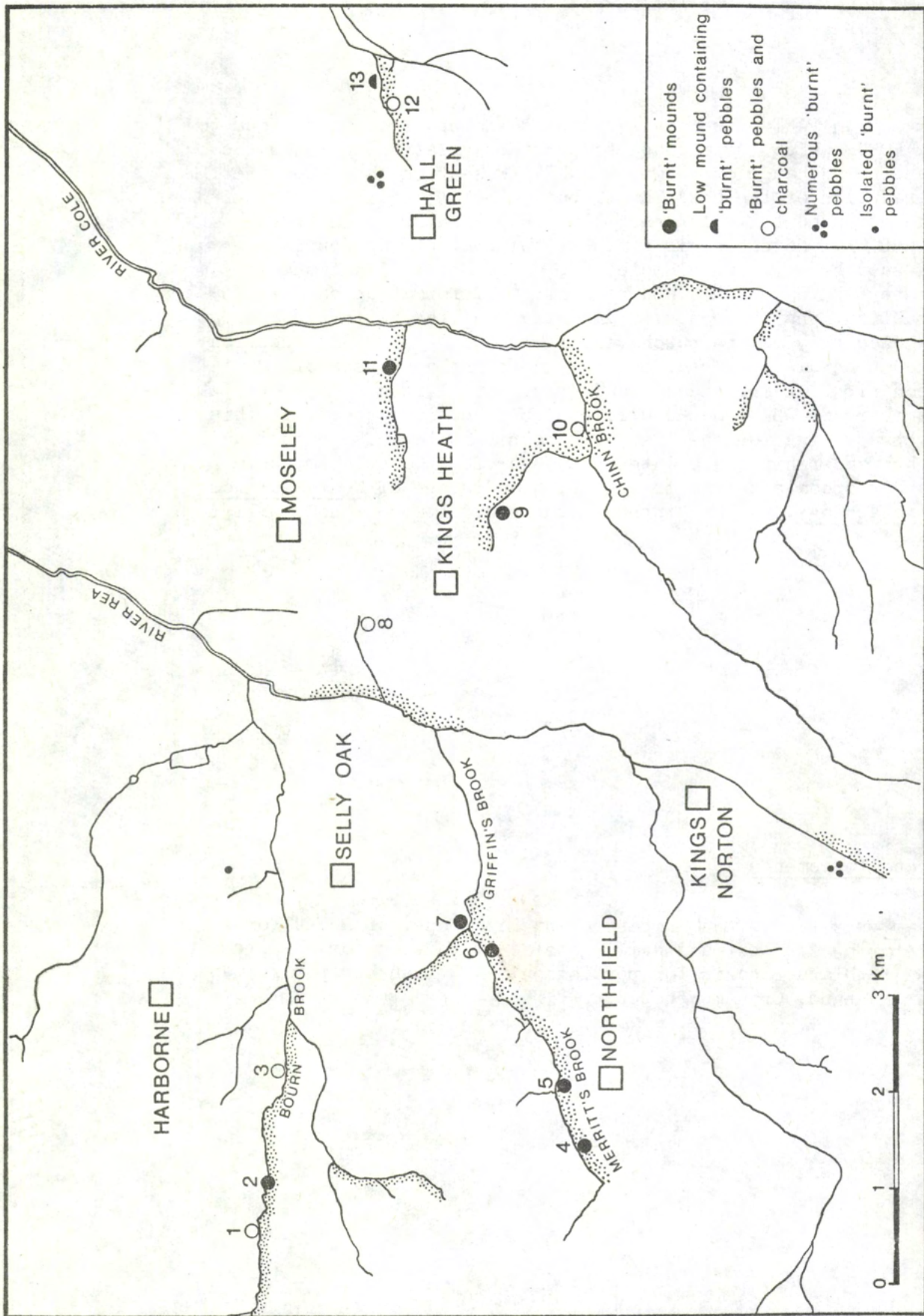


Fig. 2: SOUTH BIRMINGHAM: Survey of 'burnt mounds'. The area searched is stippled (Nixon)

Burnt Mounds in the South Birmingham Area

by M.J. Nixon

(Survey of mounds of burnt pebbles in South Birmingham area)

On 1st July, 1950, whilst engaged in fieldwork along Griffin's Brook in Bournville, the writer discovered a thick layer of fragmented, and apparently burnt, quartzite pebbles exposed in the bank of the stream. The majority of the pebble fragments were characterised by irregular fractures and a network of fine irregular surface cracks. Intermixed with these pebbles was a black deposit which was found to contain charcoal (Nixon, 1950; Gazeteer, Site 6). The site was immediately recognised as similar to one excavated in Sutton Park by W.J. Bullows in 1923, and there interpreted as a prehistoric cooking site, with 'potboiling' hearths and mounds, of a type known in South Wales and Ireland (Bullows, 1930).

In the Summer of 1952, a second site was discovered in the sides of a contractor's temporary stream channel near Hollie Lucas Road, King's Heath (Site 9). Exploratory excavation was immediately undertaken with the help of some friends, to determine the content and extent of the deposit, but this was curtailed by infilling and trenching by the contractors. These two sites were reported at the Birmingham Archaeological Society open meeting in January 1953 (Nixon, 1953), and later in the same year a further site was discovered at Bournville (Site 7).

So began a survey of 'burnt mounds' in the Birmingham area which has continued intermittently for three decades. More than fourteen sites have so far been located (see fig. 2 and Gazeteer, below), of which three have been dated by radio carbon determinations to the Neolithic-Bronze Age period. In 1980 systematic excavation began at two sites on Griffin's Brook, including Site 6, the first to be discovered.

The function, date and distribution of the 'burnt mounds' is not yet resolved. The interpretation generally given to the fractured pebbles is that they have been employed as 'potboilers', that is stones heated by fire and cracked by dropping into water. Water in a suitable container may be heated to boiling by this method, as has been demonstrated experimentally. None of the Birmingham sites has yet produced additional evidence for this theory, or any bone or artifacts which would assist in their

interpretation. Only rarely are complete pebbles found in the deposits, which consist mostly of large-sized fragments; suggesting continual re-use of the pebbles until unusably fractured.

The radio-carbon determinations from charcoal found in association has given dates around 1000 B.C. at two sites (Sites 4 and 7) and around 2000 B.C. at another (Site 2). However the use of potboilers may not be confined to the Neolithic-Bronze Age period. They have been found unstratified at Metchley Roman Fort (SP 043 836), in profusion in the first phase ditch of the Roman temple at Coleshill (Magilton, 1980), and on the villa field at Shenstone, Staffordshire.

From field work it does appear that potboilers are generally found in concentrated compact mounds or in stream beds near them. The mounds themselves are occasionally found in open country, as at ploughed-out examples in the Wythall and Meriden areas, but the majority seem to occur beside small streams (see fig. 2); it is, indeed, destructive erosion by the streams which often leads to their discovery. Most of the sites listed in the gazeteer are thus already damaged.

In 1977, however, a successful attempt was made to find an intact mound. It was located at Earlswood (Site 14) in a piece of woodland crossed by small streams. The mound, with a diameter of about 10 m, survived to a height of 0.5 m, and was surrounded by marshy ground. There was practically no capping turf, and pot-boilers and black soil had been exposed in many places by burrowing animals. It may be that the excavation of a number of such sites, where waterlogged preservation is possible (cf Barfield and Hodder 1980), will provide the solution to many of the problems presented by the burnt mounds of the Birmingham area. The research project continues.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Professor F.W. Shotton and the Geology Department of Birmingham University for determination of the C_{14} dates; to Professor Shotton and Dr. L.H. Barfield for their advice and encouragement, and to Martin Carver for editing the report for publication.

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Gazeteer

BOURN BROOK

1. Harborne, Ridgacre near Moor Farm (SP.004 834)
Small accumulation of large 'potboilers' with traces of charcoal (and lump of burnt sandstone with smooth concave faces), near base of North bank of stream at depth of about 1 m. Discovered August 1964. Site now destroyed.
2. Harborne, Ridgacre, between Moor End Farm and Nonsuch Farm (SP 011 834)
'Potboilers' in black deposit with charcoal (15-20 cm thick, under 30-50 cm of reddish alluvium and loam) extending for more than three metres along South bank of stream. Discovered August 1964. C₁₄ date: BIRM-799: 3970 ± 100 bp (2020 b.c.)
3. Harborne, near Northfield Road (SP 022 832)
Small exposure of 'potboilers' with charcoal, in North bank of stream. Discovered April 1959. Site now buried.

MERRITTS BROOK

4. Northfield, near Ley Hill (Merritts Brook 2) (SP 0137 8012)
Deposit of 'potboilers' with charcoal (30 cm thick, under 25 cm of loam) exposed in both banks of stream extending 16 m along North bank and 7 m along South Bank. Almost rectangular natural slab of gritstone or coarse quartzite (24 x 9.5 x 3 cm) roughly flat on one face recovered from top of potboiler layer. Discovered May 1964. C₁₄ date: BIRM-800: 3070 ± 100 bp (1120 b.c.)
5. Northfield, near Bell Hill (Merritts Brook 1) (SP 0200 8036)
Deposit of 'potboilers' with charcoal (30 cm thick, under 23 cm of loam), extending for 6 m along South bank of stream. Discovered May 1964.

GRIFFINS BROOK

6. Bournville, near Cob Lane (Griffins Brook 1) (SP 033 811)
Deposit of 'potboilers' with charcoal (30-40 cm thick under 30 cm loam) exposed for approximately 2 m along East bank of stream. Two quartzite pebble flakes, possibly worked, recovered from trenches nearby. Discovered July 1950, considerably eroded. Excavated June 1980 (Barfield and Hodder 1980).
7. Bournville, near Yachting Pool (Griffins Brook 2) (SP 0368 8120)
Buried mound of 'potboilers' with charcoal, exposed for 6 m along North bank of stream. Maximum thickness of the deposit in section was approximately 50 cm. Discovered 1953 but stream bank since much eroded. Nearby, a black layer (approximately 15 cm thick, under reddish loam) was visible in May 1964 along North bank of Griffins Brook about 5-10 metres North-west of junction with tributary stream. Two quartzite pebbles, possibly worked, and a piece of weathered haematite were recovered from this section. Excavation of site began June 1980 (Barfield and Hodder, 1980). C₁₄ date: BIRM-697: 2960 ± 140 bp (1010 b.c.); Williams and Johnson, 1976.

TRIBUTARY OF RIVER REA

8. Moseley, Highbury Park (SP 068 824)
Small exposure of scattered 'potboilers' and charcoal, beneath drainage pipe issuing into South bank of stream. Discovered April 1980.

SWEEL BROOK (Tributary of Chinn Brook)

9. Kings Heath, near Hollie Lucas Road (SP 081 809)
Buried low mound of 'potboilers' with charcoal, exposed in contractors trenches. Exploratory excavations made during Summer 1952 revealed 'potboiler' deposit (average thickness 20 cm, rising to 35 cm) with dimensions: 13 m x about 10 m. Two thin lenses of clean whitish sand were found in the 'potboiler' deposit. A contractor's trench revealed, on North West of site, a thick deposit of blackish soil filling and overlying hollows in underlying boulder clay.

CHINN BROOK

10. Yardley Wood, on parkway (SP 089 800)
Small exposure of 'potboilers' and charcoal in side of short drainage channel issuing into North side of stream. Discovered April 1964.

COLDBATH BROOK

11. Moseley, Wake Green, "Moseley Bog" (SP 094 820)
Deposit of 'potboilers' c. 30 cm thick extending for about 8 m along stream, exposed in both banks. Discovered 16th November, 1980 by L.H. Barfield.

BROOMHALL BROOK

12. Acocks Green, Fox Hollies Park (SP 122 821)
Tiny exposure of 'potboilers' and charcoal on edge of high bank overlooking concreted stream channel. Discovered July 1964.
13. Acocks Green, Fox Hollies Park (SP 102 740)
Low firm mound, parched in very dry weather, 20-30 cm high with approximate dimensions: 14 m x 9m. Occasional erosion holes have shown only gritty black soil with small 'potboilers' (first found August 1965).

TRIBUTARY OF RIVER BLYTHE

14. Earlswood, New Fallings Coppice (SP 102 740)
Well preserved low mound of 'potboilers' in black deposit, 30-50 cm high, with approximate dimensions: 13 m x 10 m, surrounded by marshy ground. Off Southern edge of map, fig. 2.

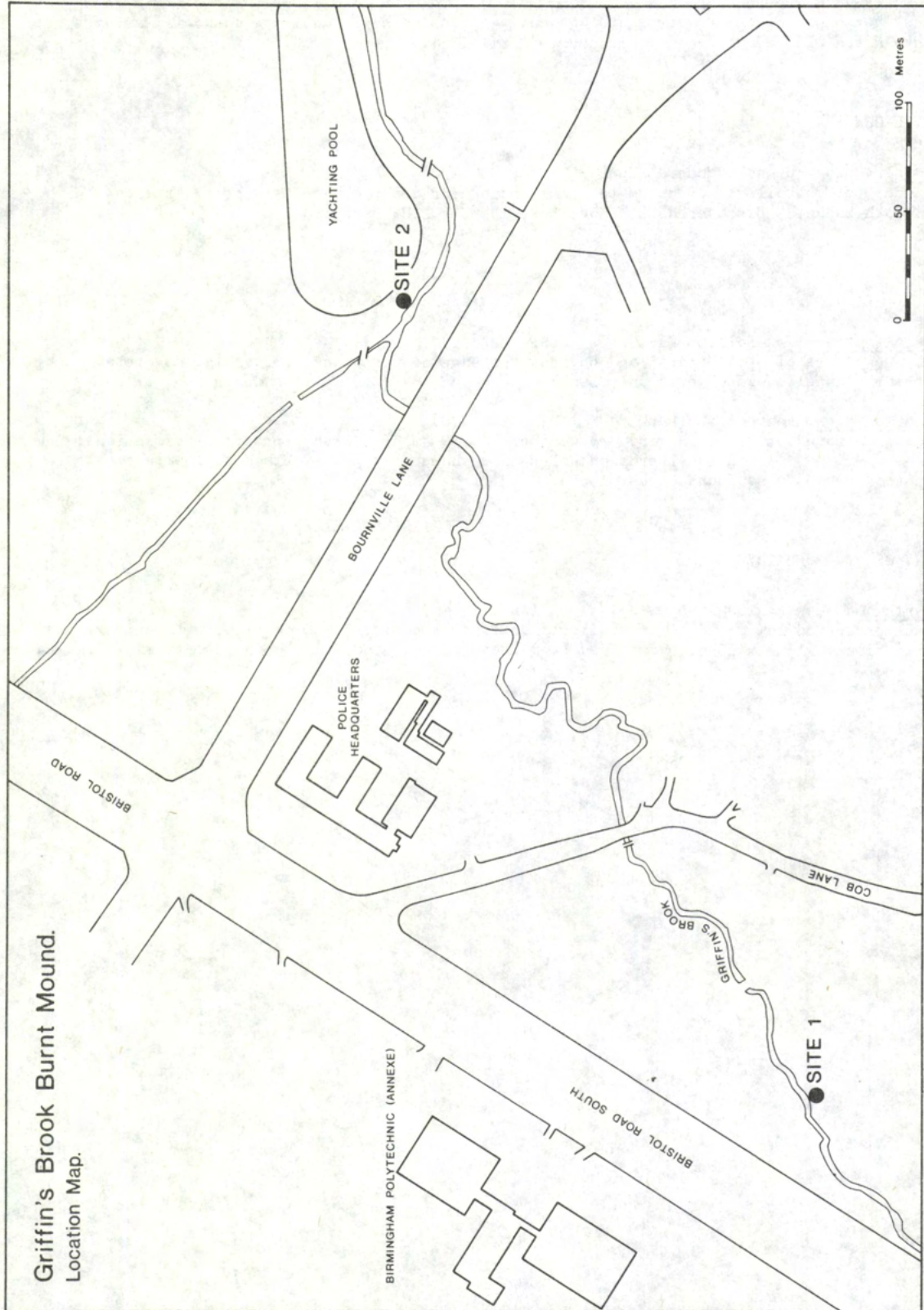


Fig. 3: BIRMINGHAM, Griffin's Brook: Location of 'burnt mounds' excavated in 1980 (Barfield and Hodder)

The Excavation of Two Burnt Mounds in South Birmingham: an Interim Report

by L.H. Barfield and M.A. Hodder, University of Birmingham

(Bronze Age potboiler mounds at Bournville SP 034 810)

Introduction

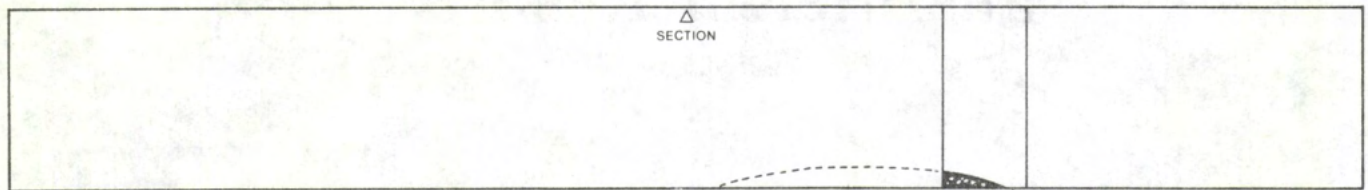
Observation of stream banks in the south Birmingham area by M.J. Nixon has led to the discovery of several exposures of mounds of burnt pebbles and charcoal (Nixon 1980). These features are similar to the 'burnt mounds' known elsewhere in the British Isles, which have usually been interpreted as the debris from a method of cooking using heated stones ('pot boilers') to boil water contained in a pit or trough below or adjacent to the mound. Excavation and C14 dating has shown that a large number of these sites are associated with settlements of Middle Bronze Age date (Hedges 1977).

Burnt mounds are numerous in the West Midlands (e.g. Cantrill 1913; Hodder forthcoming) but only three sites have been partially excavated, at Sutton Park (Bullows 1930), Sharmer Farm (Ellis and Shotton 1973) and Syerscote (Gould 1977). None of these produced any finds, but a Middle Bronze Age date is indicated by radiocarbon dates of 1000 ± 100 b.c. and 1040 ± 100 b.c. from Sharmer Farm, 1010 ± 140 b.c. for charcoal taken from the exposed section of a site on Griffin's Brook near the Yachting Pool, Bournville Lane, Birmingham (Williams and Johnson 1976, 265) and 1120 ± 100 b.c. for Merrits Brook, Ley Hill; while a Late Neolithic date is suggested by the date of 2020 ± 100 b.c. for Bournbrook Ridgacre (Nixon 1980).

Apart from a settlement site at Fisherwick (Smith 1976) and chance finds of metal objects, burnt mounds are the only features attributable to the Middle Bronze Age in the West Midlands. Because of the imminent destruction of some of the south Birmingham sites by stream erosion, it was decided to excavate one of the sites to confirm their date and to obtain information on their form and function. Two sites on Griffin's Brook, Bournville, Birmingham (Fig. 3) were investigated as a training excavation for undergraduate students in the Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, University of Birmingham, for three weeks from 11th June to 5th July, 1980. The site at Cob Lane (Griffin's Brook Site 1), SP 034 810, was selected for excavation, and at the Yachting Pool (Griffin's Brook Site 2), SP 036 812, the exposed section was cleaned and recorded. The work was financed by the City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, and was directed by Dr. L.H. Barfield and M.A. Hodder.

Cob Lane 1980. (Griffin's Brook, Site 1).
General Plan.

Trench B



Trench A

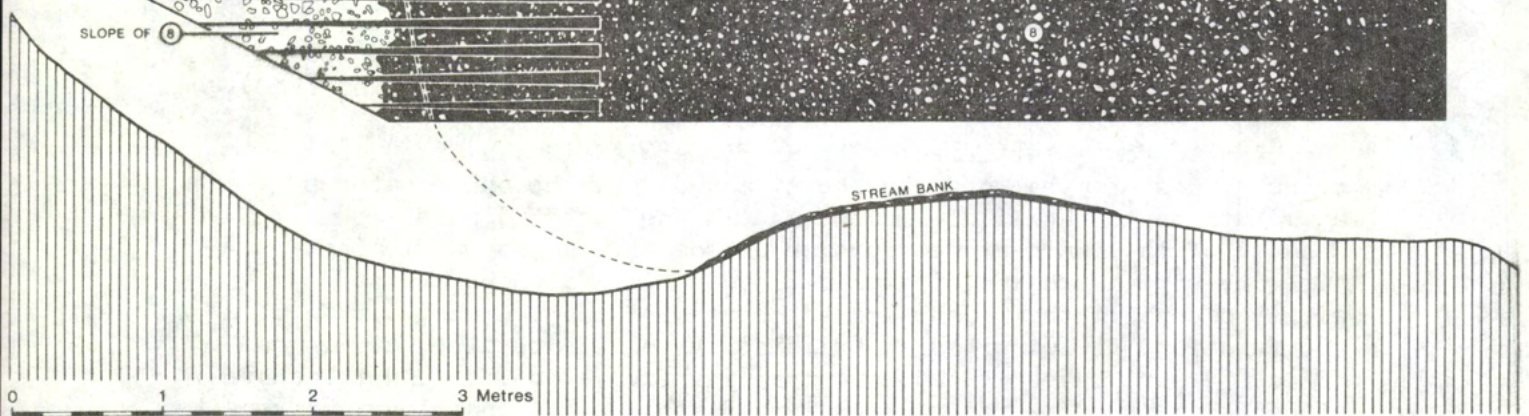
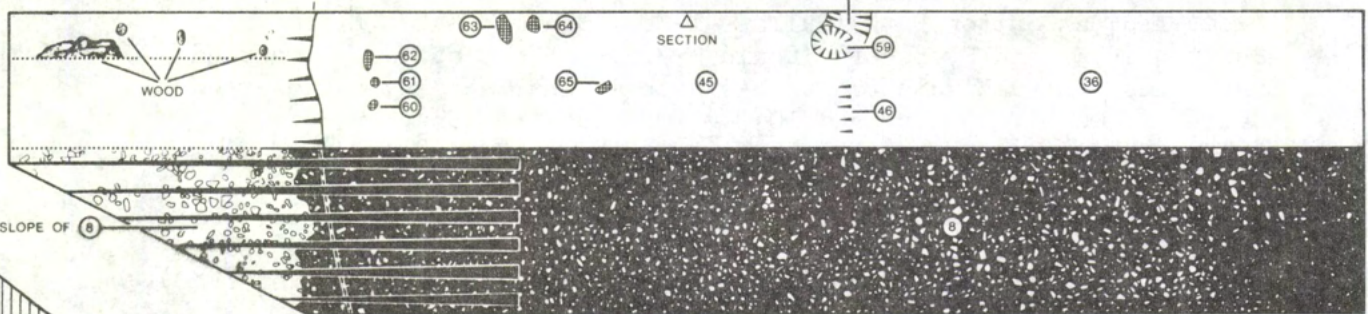


Fig. 4: BIRMINGHAM, Cob Lane (Griffin's Brook Site 1): Plan
(Barfield and Hodder)

Site 1 - Cob Lane

Two trenches were exposed, A, running parallel to the stream to investigate the mound and its northern edge, and B, 4.50 m to the east to determine the limit of the mound on this side. A total of 26 m² was exposed, but not fully excavated (Fig. 4 ; Plate I). The edges of the mound were located along parts of its northern and eastern sides, but it was not possible to define its full extent. If the mound is roughly circular, then it would be at least 10 m in diameter. The maximum thickness of the mound deposit in trench A was only 0.50 m but its level surface strongly suggested that it had been truncated by erosion and/or quarrying (Fig. 5). In trench B only the edge of the mound was located.

The main body of the mound in trench A consisted entirely of burnt and shattered pebbles in a matrix of black soil and charcoal (Fig. 4; Plates I and II). No stratification could be observed within the mound except for a more clayey matrix in the lowest 15 cm near the northern end of trench A (Fig. 5). The mound overlay an alluvial deposit of orange clayey silt into which had been cut a pit, visible in the stream section, 25 cm deep and 50 cm wide. Under the mound in trench A the excavated features consisted of a single post hole and several stake holes, three of which were aligned parallel to the northern edge of the mound and probably formed part of a revetment to it (Fig. 5). A narrow trench or pit had been dug from the top of the mound, and probably postdates its abandonment (Fig. 5 , no. 29). The orange silty clay on which the mound rested (Figs. 4 and 5 , Nos. 36 and 45) was found to seal a silty waterlogged deposit containing organic remains.

The edge of the mound in trenches A and B corresponded to the bank of a former stream channel and the mound probably originally occupied a meander loop. The lower deposits of the stream channel, which were contemporary with the use of the mound, were partially investigated in trench A but it was not possible in the time available to reach the bottom of this deposit. Dumps of burnt stones and charcoal had been tipped or slipped down the bank during the life of the mound and successive layers of this black deposit alternated with layers of clean clayey silt, stream washed burnt pebbles and gravel. It was here, rather than in the mound, that a clearly stratified succession could be recorded.

The old stream channel at the northern end of trench A was approximately at right angles to the present course of Griffin's Brook. The lowest levels reached in the excavation were 62 cm below the stream level of 4th July, 1980. Of particular interest is the fact that below a depth of 1.30 m from the ground surface the deposit was totally waterlogged and both wooden structural remains relating to the revetment of the bank (Figs. 4 and 5) and organic material in the stream bed was well preserved. In the 1980 season only a very small part of these lowest deposits was excavated.

The stream channel stratification thus revealed a sequence of development in which artificial and water-laid deposits were interleaved, and which can provisionally be interpreted as follows (Fig. 6):

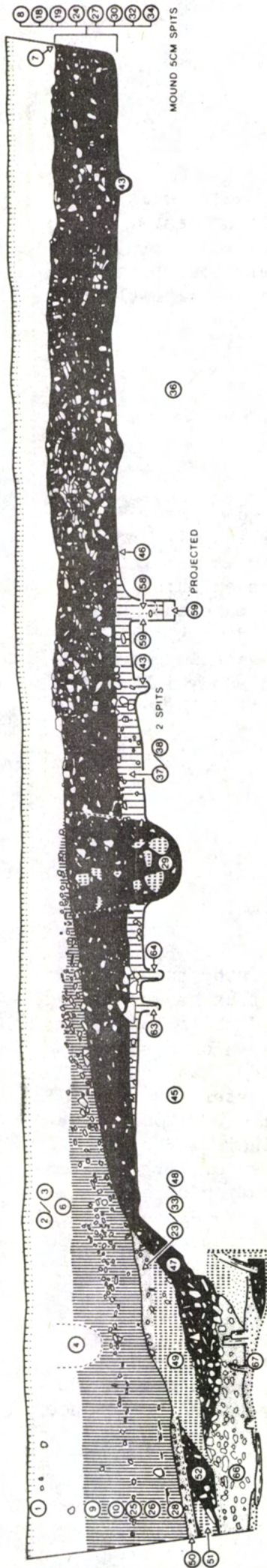
1. The mound and the stream bank are revetted with stakes.
2. Following the decay of the mound revetment, mound debris accumulates in the stream bed. These deposits, which contained abundant organic debris, including twigs, large pieces of wood and hazel-nut shells, are then covered by stream-washed burnt pebbles.
3. The stream bank subsequently slumped over the earlier deposits and was later revetted by an outer line of piles.
4. Following the decay of the second revetment a burnt mound deposit is tipped in a continuous line from the mound down the bank forming a thick deposit in the stream bed.
5. A subsequent deposit of burnt mound material is separated from phase 4 by a layer of clean yellow silty clay, perhaps an intentional dump. This seems to be the final phase of active use of the mound.
6. The upper parts of both the burnt stone and clay deposits of phase 5 are heavily eroded by stream action.
7. The stream bed in the excavated area ceases to be part of the active stream channel since the sequence now consists of thick clay deposits laid down in standing water. This process is interrupted at one point when a thin scatter of burnt and unburnt pebbles (Fig. 5 , No. 25) cover the area. This level may relate to the erosion or more probably the active quarrying of the mound deposit. An iron object was found in this horizon, possibly part of a horseshoe.

The deposition of clay continues up to the modern humus. Victorian debris was found in the upper part of the clay and on the surface of the adjacent truncated burnt mound. In the northern end of trench B (Fig. 5) only the upper clay deposits of the old stream channel were excavated, down to a level corresponding to phase 6 in trench A.

During the excavation the entire burnt mound deposit was wet-sieved through a 5 mm sieve and some through a 1 mm sieve, but apart from burnt stones and fragments of charcoal not a single artifact or

Cob Lane 1980. (Griffin's Brook, Site 1).

Trench A. Section N - S.



Trench B. Section N - S.

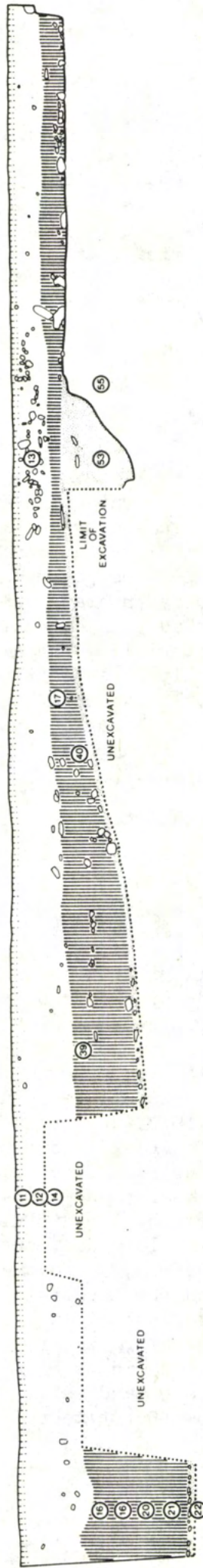


Fig. 5: BIRMINGHAM, Cob Lane (Griffin's Brook Site 1): Sections (Barfield and Hodder)

bone fragment was found. The 2.8 m³ of burnt mound deposit excavated contained an estimated 1.9 tonnes of burnt stones, mostly weighing between 0.2 and 1.0 kg. The stones were predominantly quartzite, with some sandstone. Their source was not located but they may have been collected from a local boulder clay deposit.

Site 2 - Yachting Pool

A 12 m length of burnt mound deposit was exposed in section in the stream bank, sealed by modern dumping associated with pool cleaning. The burnt mound deposit was composed, as at Cob Lane, of burnt quartzite pebbles, charcoal, and some lumps of burnt sandstone, and overlay an orange alluvium. At its base one, and possibly two, pits had been cut into the alluvium and were filled with burnt mound material. The alluvium sealed a waterlogged deposit in a grey silty clay matrix which contained wood, including a stake, and charcoal fragments, but no burnt stones. This deposit overlay a gravel surface below the present stream level, which may be an old stream bed. The whole section was cleaned, drawn, and photographed.

Discussion

The possible interpretations of the function of the burnt mounds of the West Midlands are based on their characteristics as determined by excavation and fieldwork, which may be summarised as follows. The sites consist of mounds of charcoal and pebbles which have been heated and rapidly cooled, causing them to be cracked, but contain no other material. The mound is up to 20 m in diameter (as e.g. Middleton; Hodder 1977) and frequently covers a pit (e.g. Cob Lane, Yachting Pool, Sutton Park) whose presence may be indicated by a depression on the surface of the mound before excavation (e.g. Sutton Park, Middleton, Pelsall; New 1914). The distribution of sites is determined largely by the distribution of deliberate archaeological fieldwork and present land use, but there is an apparent concentration around stream headwaters, above the 400' (122 m) contour in both the south Birmingham and the Lichfield areas (Hodder forthcoming). One site is known to have existed near the Tame at Middleton (Hodder 1977), and for both this, the south Birmingham sites and Sharmer Farm, the geological solid is Keuper Marl, while the Lichfield area sites are on sandstones and Pebble Beds. In the Lichfield area the distribution of known burnt mounds is complementary to that of chance

Suggested sequence at North section of Trench A

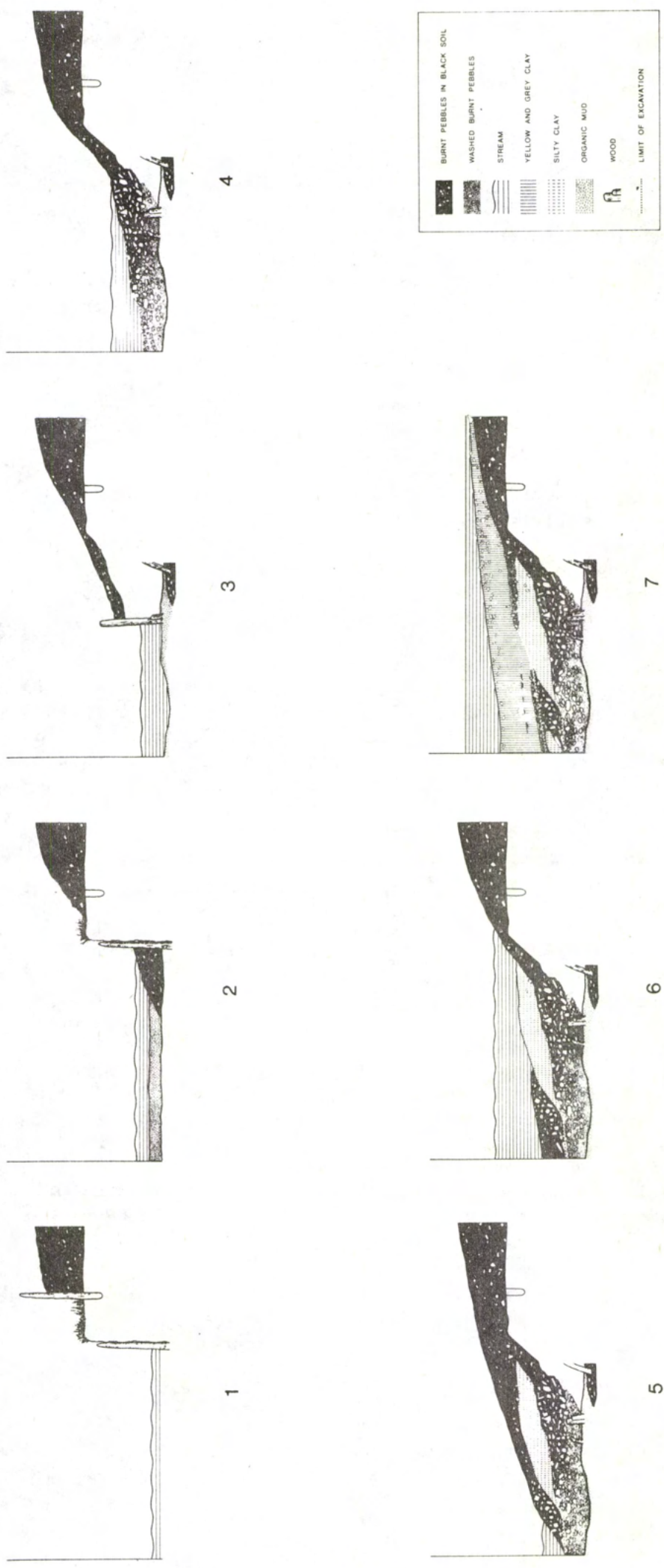


Fig. 6: BIRMINGHAM, Cob Lane (Griffin's Brook Site 1): Reconstruction of sequence at north end of Trench A (Barfield and Hodder)

finds of Middle Bronze Age metalwork (Hodder forthcoming, Fig. 3), which suggests that, assuming both are contemporary, the burnt mounds are situated away from the main settlement areas and may reflect a cultural poverty.

A number of interpretations can be and have been put forward for the function of these sites, none of which can be regarded as entirely satisfactory.

1. The sites are the debris from a cooking process. This is generally accepted interpretation of such sites, based on ethnographic parallels for the use of heated stones for either boiling water or producing steam (e.g. Catlin 1842: 54), and modern experiments to test the process (e.g. O'Kelly 1954). However it would be expected that if this was the correct interpretation the mounds would contain bones and artifacts; at Cob Lane nothing was found despite sieving the entire excavated deposit. The pH of the Cob Lane burnt deposit was c. 6.25 and thus bone should have been preserved had it ever been present.
2. Hot water or steam may have been produced for washing; if steam, a sauna-type arrangement may be envisaged, with the adjacent stream forming the cold plunge. The plan of Liddle, Orkney, where a central stone-lined trough is surrounded by cubicles (Hedges 1977) can be interpreted as a sauna arrangement.
3. The quantity of stones and the number of sites suggests that they may be debris from an industrial activity. Briggs (1976, 278) has suggested that some of the burnt mounds in Caernarvonshire (Gwynedd) are associated with metalworking and are copper-smelting sites. However it would be expected that some slag or other debris would be incorporated in the mound, and it is difficult to envisage the possible use of heated stones in a smelting process. Alternatively the industry may have been concerned with the stones themselves. They may have been shattered through quenching to produce sharp edges, but this seems unlikely since any new break on a quartzite pebble is relatively sharp if it is split when cold. The quenching may have been intended to break up the stones into fragments, possibly for use as metalling; the Middleton mound material was used for road repairs after its destruction (Hodder 1977).

Burnt and cracked pebbles have been found in quantities, but not as mounds, on sites of Iron Age and Roman date in the West Midlands. At Fisherwick on the Tame, each of two Iron Age enclosures had a pit full of burnt pebbles near its entrance (Smith 1979: 42, 146, 156): these were possibly the remains of a ploughed-out burnt mound (Hodder, forthcoming). At Bromfield, Salop, an Iron Age enclosure contained large quantities of burnt stones (Stanford 1979), and at Bays Meadow, Droitwich, burnt pebbles are associated with Roman briquetage in shallow scoops (unpublished).

It is intended to continue the excavation of the Cob Lane site in 1981 and carry out a systematic survey of burnt mound sites in the West Midlands with a view to a better understanding of their date and function.

The discovery of these sites along the streams in the Birmingham area has implications for field walking survey in this and other areas in three ways. Firstly, that burnt stones either in isolation or concentrations should not be overlooked in a survey project and secondly that stream sections and beds should be carefully examined for the presence of such sites, and thirdly that such sites can still be found in urban areas.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery for financial and operational help in this project, also H. Buglass for the preparation of the drawings, and M. Nixon and students of the Department of Ancient History and Archaeology for their assistance on the excavations.



Plate 1: BIRMINGHAM, Cob Lane (Griffins Brook Site 1)
Trench A, general view from north. Scale 1 m.



Plate 2: BIRMINGHAM, Cob Lane (Griffins Brook Site 1)
Trench A, upper surface of burnt mound; details of
burnt stones. Scale 20 cm divisions.

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The Coleshill Romano-Celtic Temple: Some Reflections and New Discoveries

by J.R. Magilton, Warwickshire County Council

(Romano-Celtic temple at SP 195 906)

The circumstances of the discovery and excavation of the Roman site at Coleshill, Warwickshire (NGR SP 195 906) have been described in previous issues of the West Midlands Annual Archaeological News-sheet (Carver 1978; Magilton 1979). Since the last account was written, in November 1979, a further four months of excavation has taken place and a start has been made on the preparation of a final report. The most interesting results to emerge concern the area of the temple enclosure and the earliest occupation of the site which later formed the temple temenos; this is now almost certainly to be seen as domestic rather than religious. The aim of this note is to bring up to date accounts of the site and discuss some of the problems of interpretation.

The location of the site

The site lies on an east-facing slope overlooking the former floodplain of the River Cole, on the side of Chattle Hill to the north and Grimstock Hill to the south. The nearest known Roman road is Watling Street, which lies over 9 km (6 miles) to the north, and the nearest settlement is at Mancetter, 16 km (10 miles) to the north-east. All the known Roman finds from Coleshill parish lie in this area, to the north of the present town, and extend over half a mile (1 km) from the mid fourth-century coin hoard, found in 1939, in the south, to the Romano-Celtic temple to the north. The recently finished excavations have been concerned with the northern half of this area.

The existence of a field system and settlement here in the first and second centuries, the latter replaced by a temple and presumably moved elsewhere before the middle of the second century, poses interesting problems about the geography of the area in Roman times. It has been remarked that the Coleshill site is almost equidistant between Mancetter and Metchley, and that any route between the two,

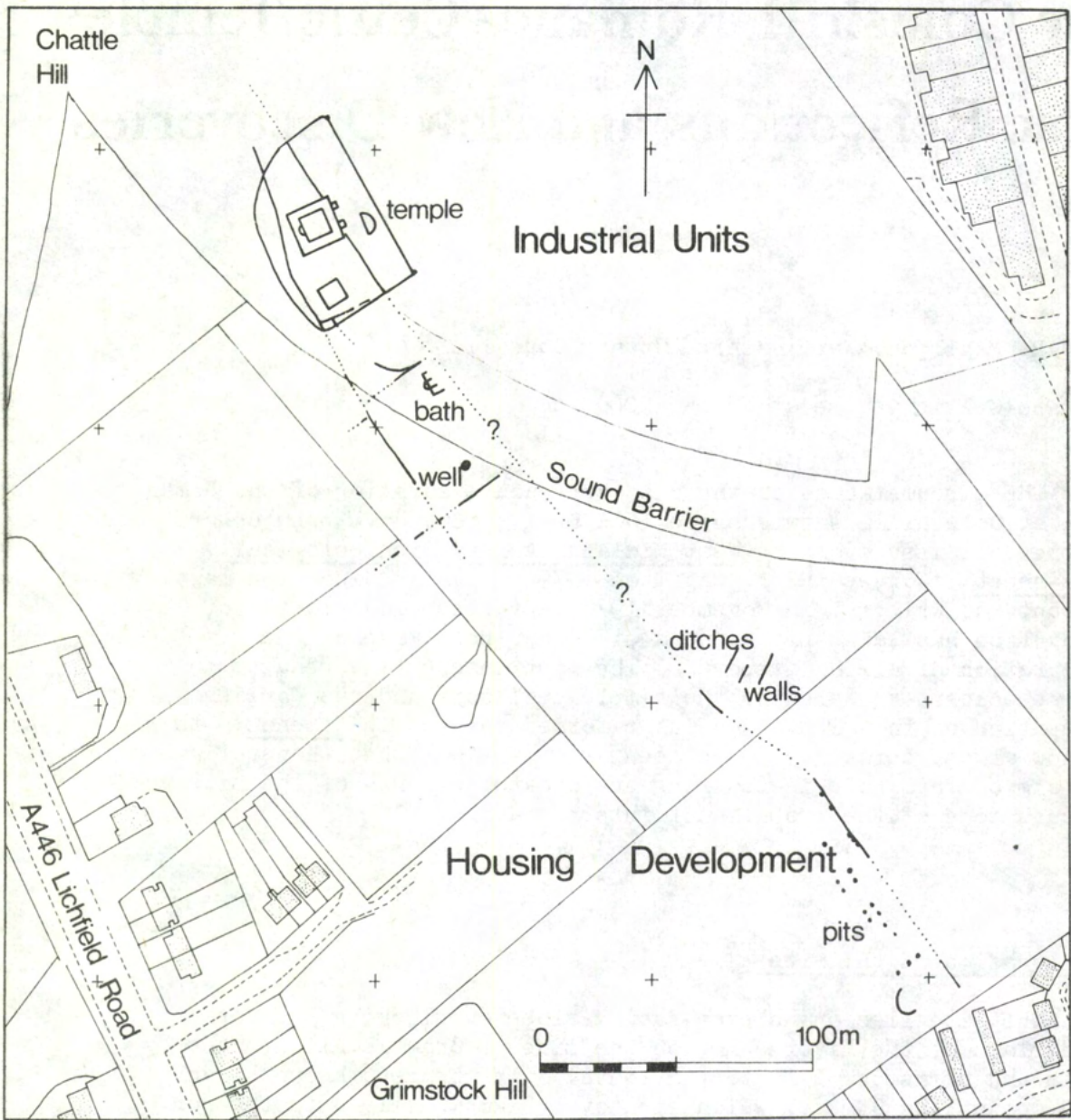


Fig. 7: COLESHILL: Position of Romano-Celtic temple and underlying field system (Magilton)

perhaps continuing the line of the known Roman road from Leicester to Mancetter in a south-westerly direction, would probably pass just north of the excavations where the rivers Cole and Blythe unite. Any other route would involve two river crossings. There is no evidence for such a road; none can be seen, for example, reflected in parish boundaries between Coleshill and Mancetter, but it is perhaps hardly surprising since the countryside is hilly and no road is likely to have run across in a straight line.

Another factor in the location of the site may be the civitas boundary between the Coritani and Cornovii. It has been noted in France, where medieval bishoprics are said to reflect the boundaries of civitates, that Romano-Celtic temples are frequently found on the periphery (Rivet, 1964, 134), and the same phenomenon is claimed at two or three British sites (Stevens, 1940). The hypothesis is that the temples were sited on 'neutral territory' where hostile neighbouring tribes could meet to conduct business and carry out trade, and that these boundaries became fossilised under the Pax Romana. There is some support for the association of religious activities and annual fairs in Ireland, where the famous fair at Telltown, for example, had a considerable religious element. Whether the practices of Celtic Ireland are applicable to the Roman Midlands is debatable, and in the case of Coleshill it must be emphasised that the temple overlies a domestic site and, unless the temple itself has moved from an adjacent religious site, it has no Iron Age precursors. Whether or not the temple is relevant, however, the possibility remains that the River Cole marks a civitas boundary.

A further, more general point, raised by the discovery of the temple and its underlying agricultural settlement, is the question of 'dense primeval forests'. Popular misunderstandings about this area of the West Midlands have sprung from the medieval Forest of Arden, which is seen as a thickly wooded area which survived from the remotest periods of prehistory down into historic times. This idea is groundless. The apparent restriction of Warwickshire Roman sites to known Roman roads quoted in support of this hypothesis does not mean that these were carved through impenetrable woodland, but simply that, in an area where soils are not conducive to aerial photography, archaeological fieldwork, specifically field-walking, is still needed to locate sites and fill these apparent gaps in our distribution maps. Although the few huts and fragments of field system from Coleshill cannot demonstrate it, there can be little doubt that in the West Midlands, as elsewhere in lowland Roman Britain, those areas of woodland which existed were carefully maintained for economic reasons (Buckland, 1979, 146).

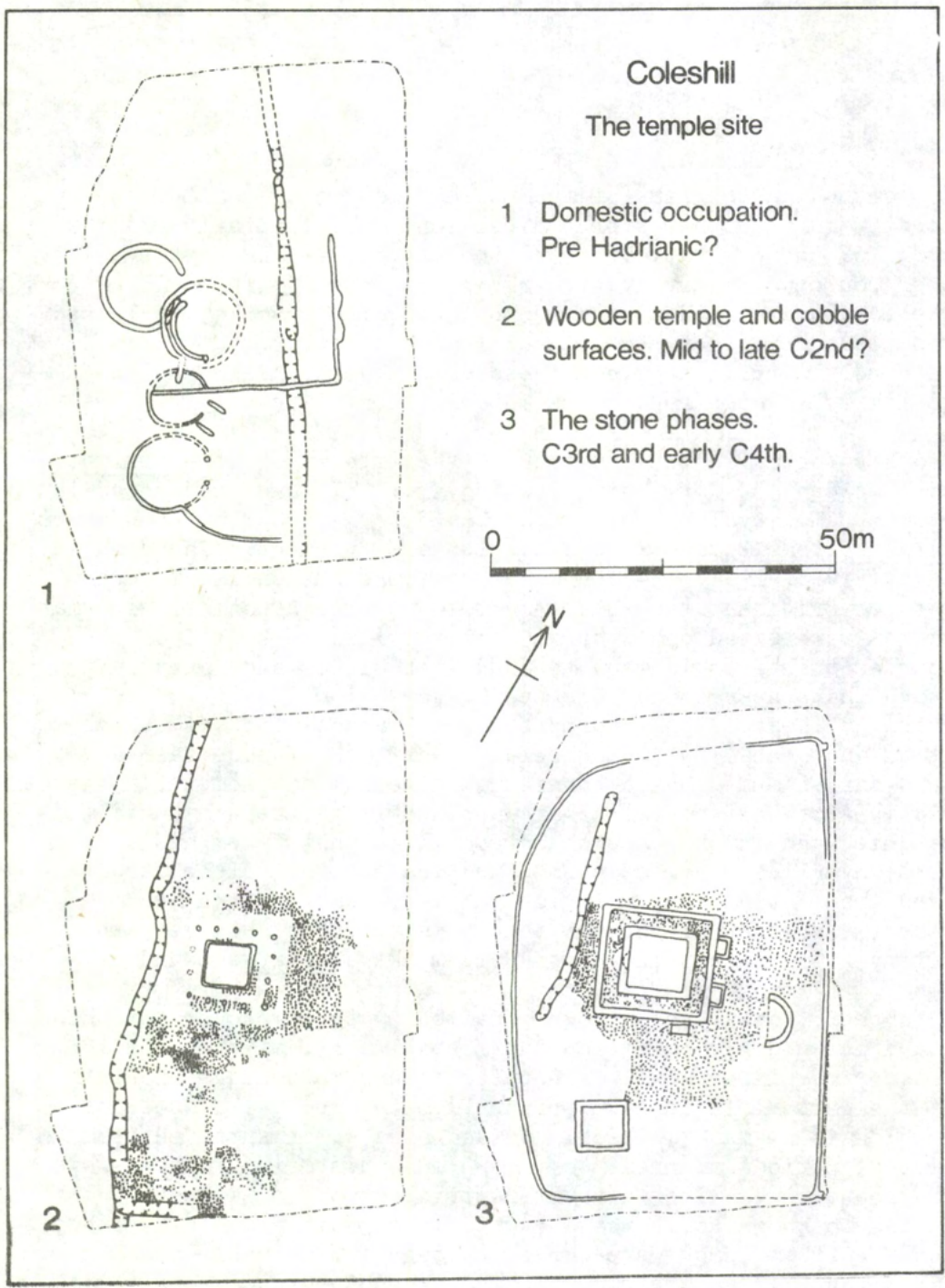


Fig. 8: COLESHILL: Possible development of the temple enclosure area (Magilton)

The Temple Site

Domestic occupation and field system (Figs. 7 and 8)

A year ago only one circular building had been identified within the temple enclosure and it was tentatively suggested in the last News-sheet that this might have been a precursor of the first (wooden) Romano-Celtic temple. Since then a further four round buildings have been identified and the artefacts associated with them - clay loom-weights, querns, hand-made pottery - combine to suggest a domestic rather than religious function. Of the same general phase was a ditch north-east of the later temple, and an L-shaped palisade trench post-dating the ditch but earlier than the first recognisable Romano-Celtic temple. The date of these features is uncertain as work on the pottery from these levels is still in progress, but they are unlikely to continue later than the early second century. The beginning of occupation is more of a problem. The earliest Samian ware is Flavian, but the quantities of hand-made pottery associated with these levels could well be earlier, although not necessarily pre-Roman.

Of the five circular buildings, no more than three could be contemporary, and the structure identified in 1979 pre-dates two of them. The remainder roughly follow a common north-south line on the west side perpetuated by a later field boundary ditch. The gullies marking the site of these structures, which are fragmentary except in the case of the building west of the later temples, may be interpreted as eaves-drip gullies for structures which had turf walls (Lambrick and Robinson, 1979, 138). This interpretation rests largely on the absence of post-holes or beams inside the gullies, which were usually circular rather than the irregular polygons which might be expected from a beam-slot method of construction, and the absence also of circular arrangements of post-holes circumscribed by the gullies. Where the gullies are incomplete they are usually missing on the eastern, downhill, side, which suggests that one of their functions was to deflect surface water from the bases of the walls. Two of the buildings may have been provided with external porches, and the entrances to four of them lie broadly within the south-east quadrant of the compass. The most southerly structure has its gully extended towards the field boundary ditch and it may define the southern edge of a yard on its eastern side. The L-shaped palisade trench, with traces of an entrance in the centre of its north-eastern side, may also define a yard to one of the structures if it is of this phase.

The field system to the south, which seems to have its origins in this period, is not properly understood despite the excavation of considerable stretches of it. An early element in the system is the ditch within the later temple enclosure east of the circular

buildings. This may be the same feature as the ditch discovered during salvage recording in 1978 at the southern end of the site, but it must be emphasised that a gap of about 150 m exists between the excavated lengths. These ditches, whether or not they are the same feature, occur at a point where the slope in the hillside becomes sharper as it dips towards the floodplain of the Cole. Both were re-cut at least one and, after finally silting up, were replaced by a series of substantial post holes. Of the same period, on the grounds of pottery, is the ditch on a south-west/north-east alignment south of the later well. This is the only one of three known ditches on this alignment which continues beyond the later ditch to the west of the temple.

The interpretation of the huts and fragments of field system poses interesting questions about agricultural practices, most of which cannot be answered. The huts themselves need not be contemporary, and what we may be seeing is a series of farmhouses, perhaps rebuilt by successive generations on a slightly different site. Even if three of the buildings were in use simultaneously, they would have accommodated perhaps no more than a couple of extended families with the third hut used for storage. There can be no proof that the buildings were continuously occupied. Only one has a hearth, although other examples may have been ploughed away. It is possible that occupation was seasonal, perhaps restricted to the summer months when the meadowlands at the base of the hillside along the River Cole could be exploited as pasture, either through direct grazing or cropped for hay. This need not imply that the economy was predominantly pastoral; the numerous fragments of quern-stones found would suggest cereal production played some part, and the discovery of loom-weights and spingle-whorls points to domestic cloth production as an aspect of the economy, suggesting that at least a few sheep were kept. It will be interesting to see the results of animal bone studies currently in progress as far as these early levels are concerned.

The wooden temple (Figs. 8 and 9)

There is little to add to the description of the wooden temple and its stone successors which were discussed in Magilton, 1979. At some time, perhaps early in the second century, the circular buildings were abandoned, the eastern ditch backfilled and a new ditch dug to the west which was cut through one of the circular buildings. It is probable that this ditch was intended as a diversion of the original ditch and was designed to encompass the newly established religious site. Other ditches of the field system may belong to this period. Since the last account of the site was written over a year ago, excavation of layers beneath the wooden temple has suggested that it had at least one precursor. The evidence includes an east-west beam

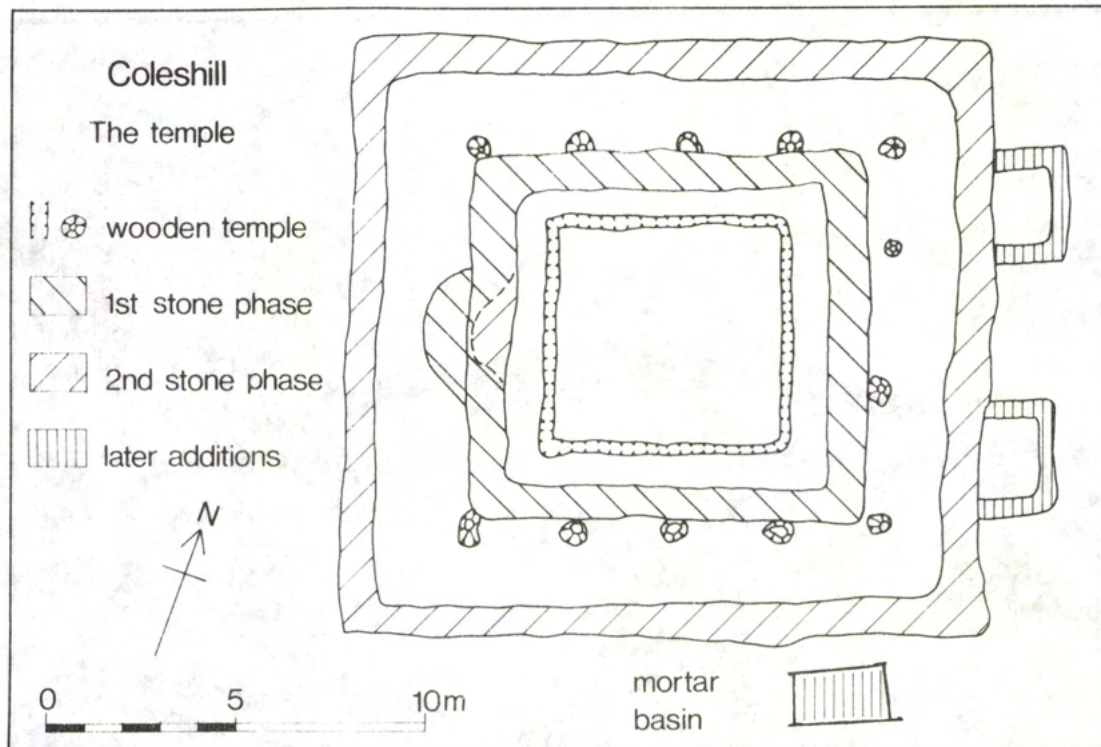


Fig. 9: COLESHILL: Development of the Temple building (Magilton)

slot parallel to, but within, the south wall of the cella, a deep pit and fragments of a cobbled floor within, but pre-dating, the timber cella. There is no proof that these are the remains of a structure. Evidence from elsewhere indicates that Romano-Celtic temples were essentially adjuncts to Celtic religious sites rather than essential elements, and the focal point at Coleshill need not have been a building. The L-shaped palisade trench, if it is of this period rather than earlier, may have defined the religious area on the south and east sides.

The construction of the wooden temple, the earliest recognisable religious structure, was followed by the creation of a vast cobbled area which included burnt pebbles and charcoal. This sealed all the ditches within the later enclosure and extended towards the south-east almost as far as the bath-house (Fig. 7), where recent machine disturbance may have removed it. The purpose of the cobbles is uncertain. They may simply indicate the extent of the temenos attached to the wooden temple, which lay at the north-western end of the 70 m long cobble spread, and have provided an area in which religious rites could be carried out. If Irish parallels are valid, the possibility that seasonal markets or fairs were held here under the protection of the temple cannot be ruled out, although the remarkable paucity of coins recovered argues against it.

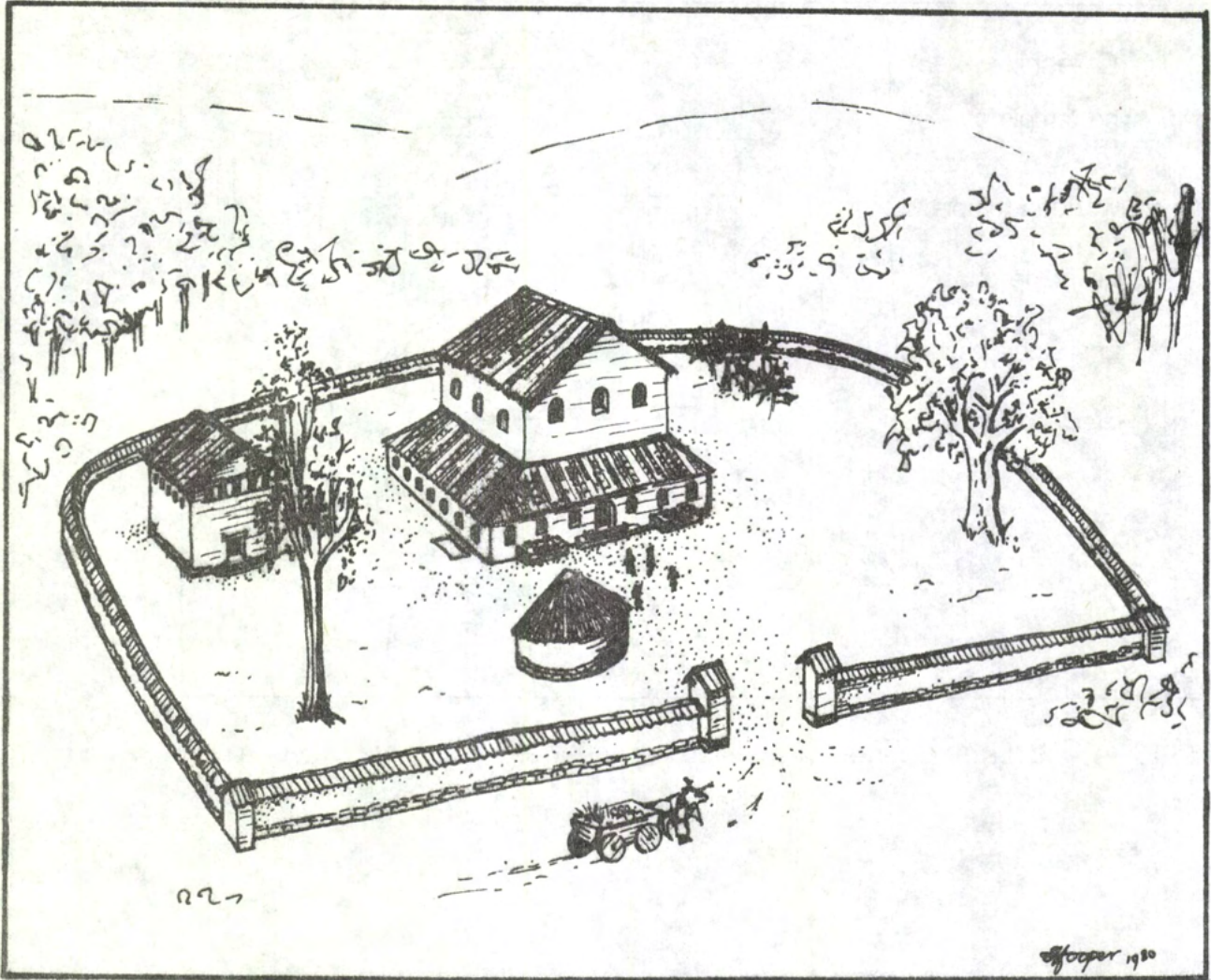


Fig. 10: COLESHILL: Reconstruction of Romano-Celtic temple and enclosure (Hooper)

The stone temples (Figs. 8 and 9)

The replacement of the wooden temple by a rectangular stone building with an apse in its western wall may have taken place late in the second century or early in the third. The date of the addition of the ambulatory, and the later 'porches' on the east side and mortar basin near the south-east corner is not certain. One of the problems of interpretation is the relative dates of the temples, enclosure wall, apse and square building in the south-west corner of the temenos. On pottery grounds, the square building is late, perhaps late third or even fourth century, and it may be the latest stone building within the enclosure. There is a very slight indication that the gravel spread associated with the temple in its final form was cut through when the square building was erected. If, as seems likely, the narrow ditch or gully defining the western extent of the gravel spread was intended to prevent surface water from the hillside from flooding the temple foundations, it is probable that the stone enclosure wall, which would have fulfilled the same function, was not then built. The apsidal structure east of the temple seems to have been built before the gravel spread was laid down. The sequence of events may be, then: (i) first stone temple with western apse but no ambulatory and apsidal structure to the east, (ii) removal of temple apse, addition of ambulatory, deposition of gravel surface and digging of ditch to the west (iii) construction of square building, enclosure wall and final additions (porches, mortar basin) to main temple. Work on the stratification and pottery from within the temple enclosure is still in progress, and this must be regarded as a provisional interpretation only. One fact which has recently emerged from the study of pottery distributions is that late Oxfordshire wares occur predominantly within and around the square building, and Northamptonshire calcite-gritted fabrics, usually assigned to the second half of the fourth century, occur exclusively within debris from the collapse of the main temple. The apparent collapse or, less likely, demolition of the temple in the later fourth century need not, of course, imply that the building still had a religious function at that time.

The evaluation of small finds from the temple area is still in progress, but one notable aspect is the large quantity of brooches, tweezers and other toilet items which occur in greater numbers than would be expected from casual losses. These, and the miniature pottery vessels sometimes called 'votive cups' (which may in fact be cosmetics containers), may, if they are present as votive offerings, indicate that the cult was concerned particularly with women.

The Bath Building (Fig. 11)

The excavation of the bath-house was started in 1978 and the results of that season have been fully described in a previous News-sheet (Booth, 1978). Early in 1980 a third room, to the north of those uncovered in 1978, was excavated. This was slightly wider than the room containing the hypocaust, and its west wall continued the line of the wall across the chord of the apse in the central room. No floor levels survived, and only the base of the wall foundations, of sandstone rubble bonded with clay, was found. Destruction was in part due to recent disturbance by mechanical excavators.

The bath suite, the eastern part of which, including the hypocaust flue, lies beneath the earthen sound barrier separating the new housing development from industrial units, must be one of the least impressive in Roman Britain. It is unclear whether its function was purely secular, serving a largely agricultural community in the vicinity which had elected to provide itself, albeit on a very humble scale, with one of the essential trappings of the Roman way of life, or if it had some connection with the temple complex. Bath buildings are not uncommonly found in association with Romano-Celtic temples elsewhere in the western Roman Empire, and they may well have served a ritual, purificatory function. In the case of Coleshill, the absence of evidence for a settlement which could have enjoyed the limited amenities of the bath-house suggests that it formed part of the temple complex.

The Well

A Roman well was discovered 30 m south of the bath-house in the last days of the 1980 excavations. It had a shaft 0.6 m square lined with sandstone slabs bonded with clay which had been constructed within a pit 2.8 m in diameter at the top. The area between the shaft and the side of the construction pit was filled with clay, which had been tipped in as the shaft was gradually built up from the bottom of the well. The fill of the shaft was excavated to a depth of 5 m during July, 1980, and an auger was used to probe a further 1.5 m. The fill was entirely uniform to this depth, consisting of topsoil containing fourth-century pottery. It had been hoped that environmental samples from waterlogged layers at the base of the well would have been obtained, but the excavation had to be abandoned for safety reasons.

The arguments over function which apply to the bath-house are equally applicable to the well. Its known depth of 6.5 m is excessive as the well was dug just below the spring-line in the hillside, from which a natural spring flowed for over half of the year. The association of wells, including the so-called 'ritual shafts', with Celtic religious sites is widely known (Ross, 1968; for a local example, VCH Warwickshire I, 249), and the possibility that the well played some part in the religious observances at the temple cannot be dismissed. It is particularly unfortunate that the basal fill was not reached since any artefacts recovered might have helped to resolve the question.

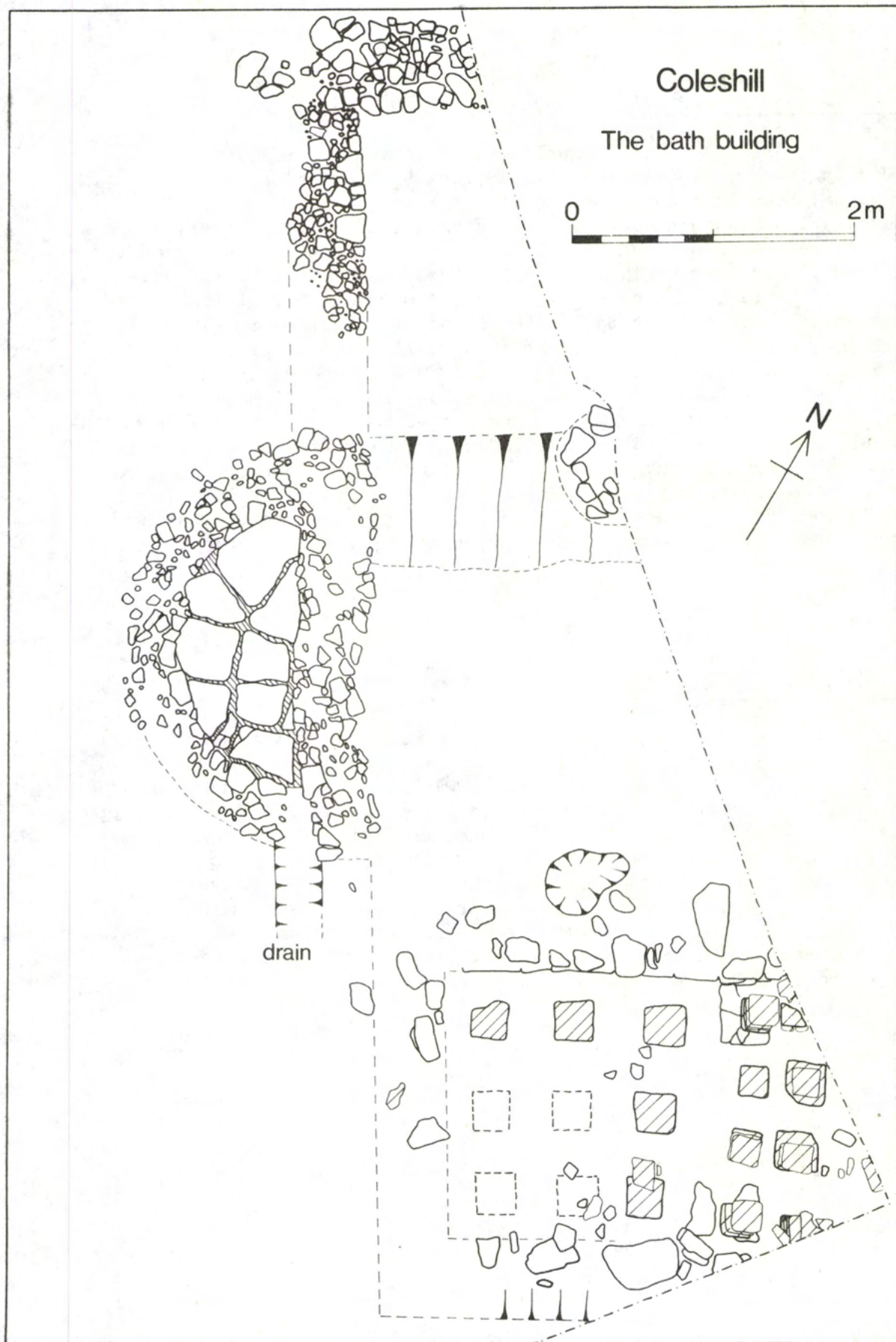


Fig. 11: COLESHILL: The bath building (Magilton)

The Salvage Recording (Fig. 7)

The area south of the well was investigated in 1978 by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit and local volunteers, and had been lost under new housing before the main season of excavation began in March 1979. Examination of the pottery from this area has now begun, and it may be significant that most of the material may be roughly ascribed to the earlier part of the second century or later. The hand-made vessels which characterised the pre-temple activity at the northern end of the site are virtually absent, and it may be that, chronologically, the material from these areas carries on the sequence from the pre-temple layers. The discovery in modern house foundation trenches of walls and ditches at an oblique angle to the projected line of the early north-south field boundary ditch may indicate a migration of settlement from the northern end of the site when the first temple was built, a process, which may have continued into the fourth century if the 1939 coin hoard is seen as peripheral to the settlement area in the mid 350s A.D. This must, however, remain pure speculation.

* * * * *

Acknowledgements

Funding for the Coleshill project since the end of March 1980 has come largely from North Warwickshire Borough Council, the Department of the Environment and Warwickshire County Council. Archive and publication drawings are being prepared by Mrs. E. Hooper of Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit. Mr. Paul Booth (Warwickshire County Council) is preparing the pottery report for publication, Dr. Glenys Lloyd-Morgan (Grosvenor Museum, Chester) is reporting on the metalwork, and Mr. W. Seaby has examined the coins. Other specialist reports are in preparation. The assistance of Mr. Paul Booth in discussing some of the ideas tentatively put forward in this note is gratefully acknowledged.

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Plate 3: CASTLE FARM, Shifnal, Shropshire.

Excavation and Survey at Castle Farm, Shifnal, Shropshire: an Interim Report

by M. Ashton-Cooper, M.O.H. Carver and A. Roe, Birmingham University
Field Archaeology Unit

(Prehistoric and medieval settlements at SJ 7244 0951; SMR no. SA 281)

Introduction

A season of archaeological investigations was undertaken over some 35 hectares of lowland Shropshire in advance of reservoir construction (fig.12, 13). The work was commissioned by Telford Development Corporation and the Severn Trent Water Authority, and carried out by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit, together with staff and students on the University's training excavation.

The search area (Plate 3) comprised a recently abandoned farm, its outbuildings and fishponds, which were set in a small valley at about 121 m OD, surrounded by agricultural land largely under plough. Following a preliminary survey and site evaluation, (consisting of aerial reconnaissance, field walking and test excavation), the investigations concentrated on three principal objectives:-

- 1) Definition of a double-ditched enclosure located by aerial photography (Fig. 13, 14),
- 2) Location of medieval settlement (Fig. 13, 14),
- and 3) Record of the extant farm (Fig. 15),

Despite brutally obstructive weather conditions and poor preservation of strata and finds, these objectives were mostly achieved. The results will be fully researched and prepared for publication in 1981/82.

The Site (Fig. 12)

The valley under examination lies 6 miles due east of the Wrekin in east Shropshire. The surface geology is predominantly boulder clay, capped by eroded glacial sands and gravels.

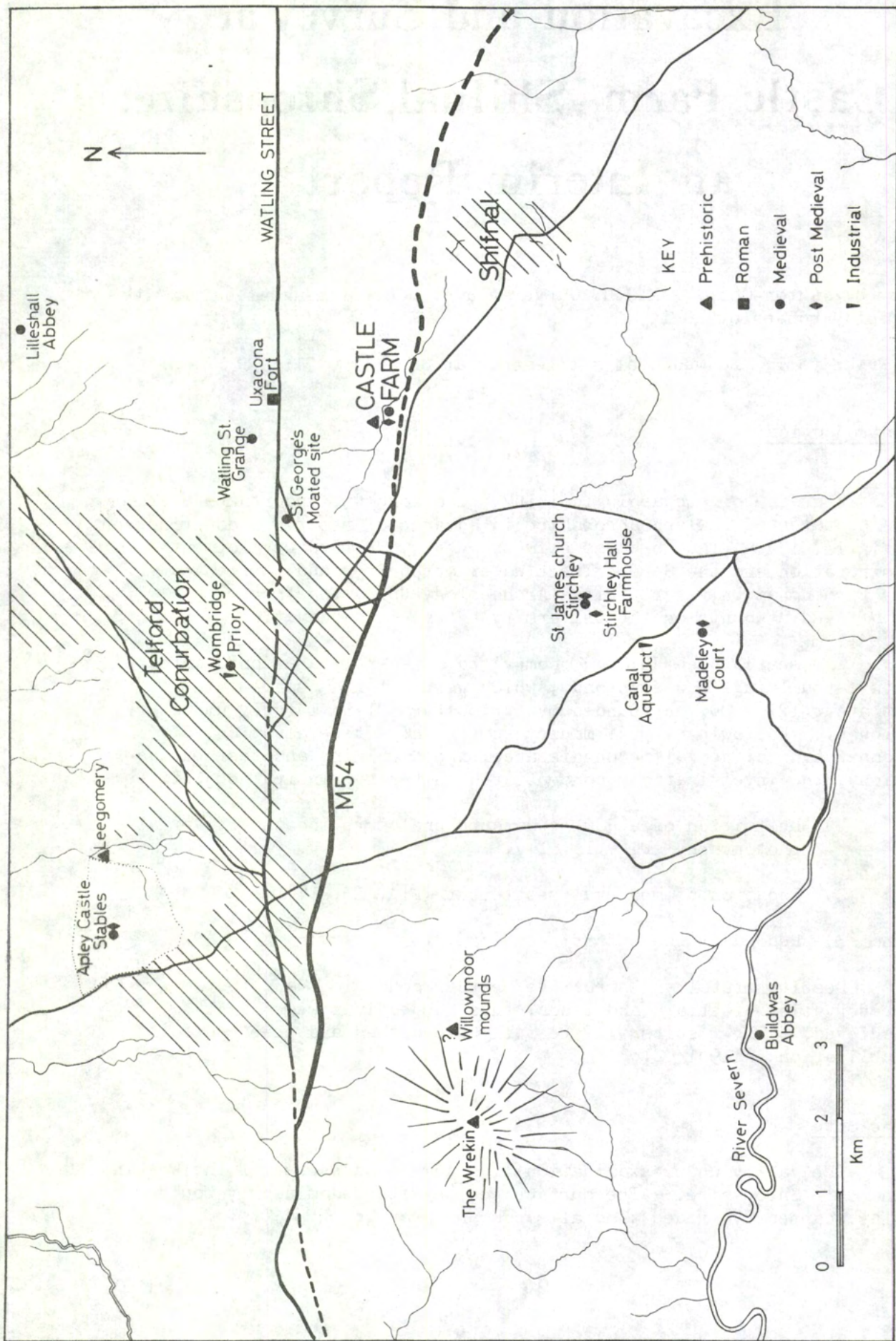


Fig. 12: CASTLE FARM: Archaeological Sites in the Telford Area. The dotted line (above, left) shows the position of the estate surveyed at APLEY (Hooper)

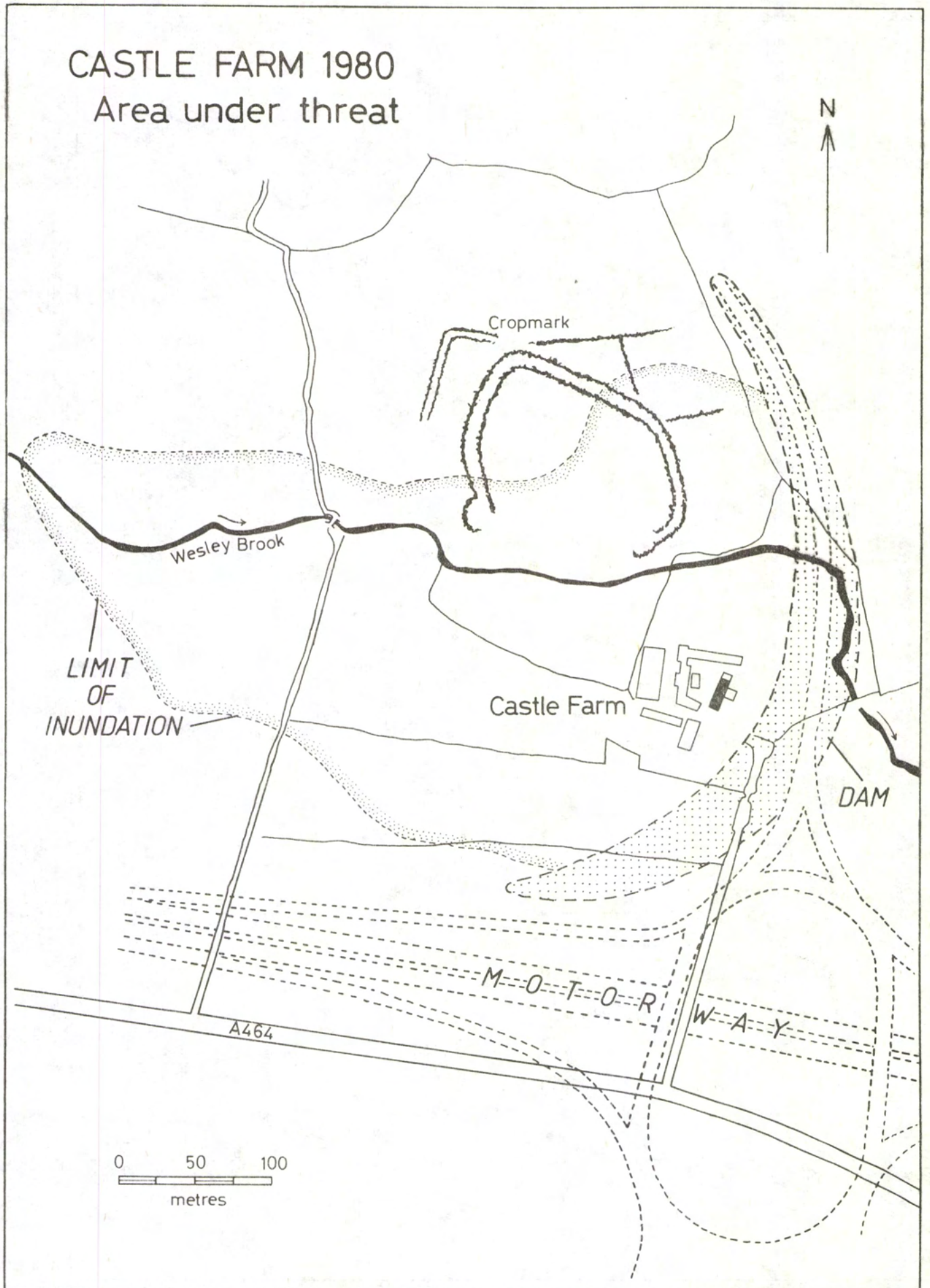


Fig. 13: CASTLE FARM: Position of modern farm and cropmark, showing extent of threat (Carver, after Burrow and TDC)

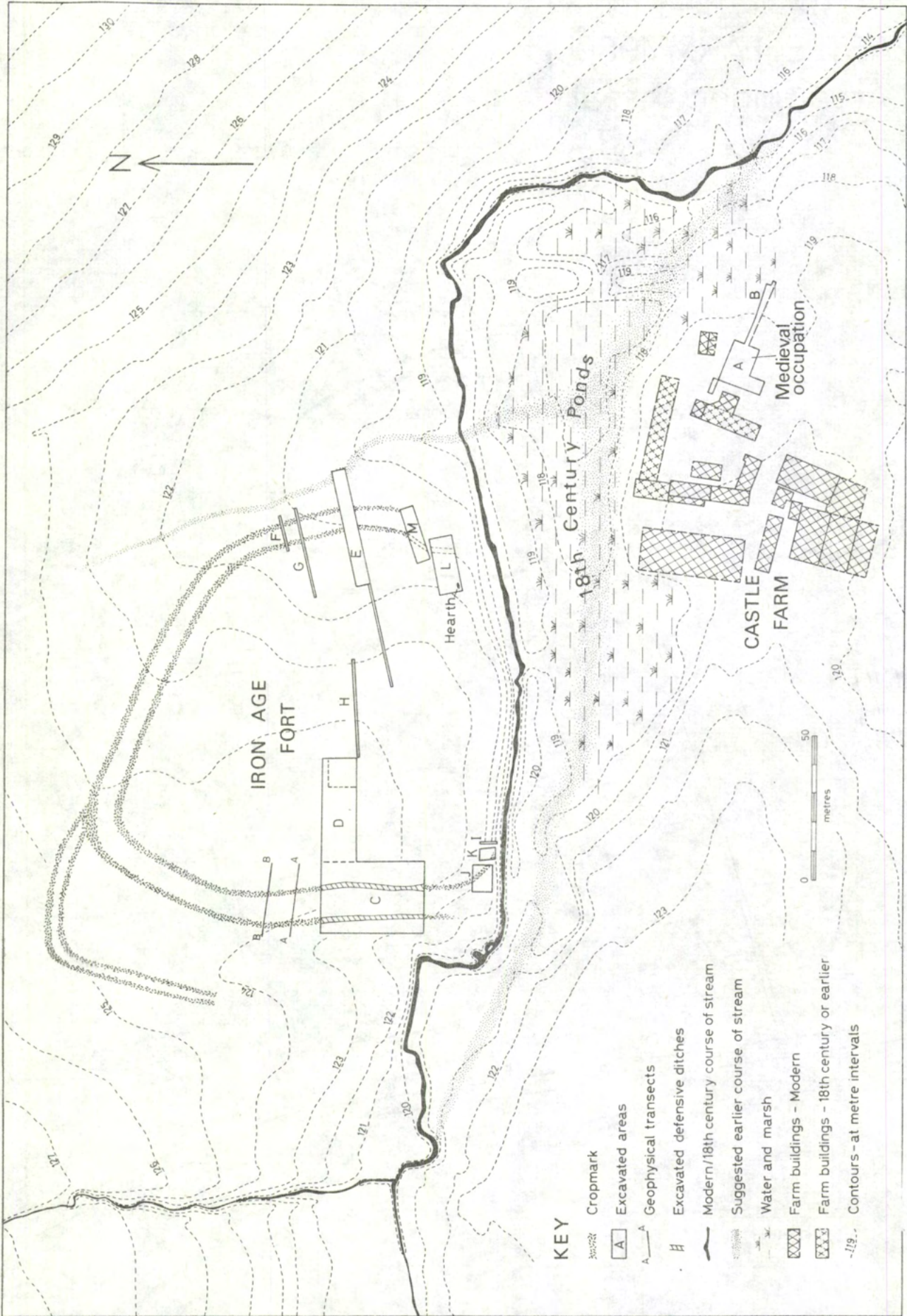


Fig. 14: CASTLE FARM: Prehistoric enclosure (Site C), showing position of ditches, excavated areas and earlier streams (Carver)

The subsoil in the excavated areas was much disturbed by cryoturbation, and at least two buried stream beds (containing organic debris) were contacted (fig. 14). Evidence for prehistoric settlement was not previously attested in the immediate area. The Roman road to Wroxeter, with a fort at Red Hill runs to the north. Medieval moated sites are known at Manor Park and Stafford Park in Shifnal. Castle Farm itself is apparently indicated in the 13th century by-name Richard de Castello and is mentioned again in 1788 by Sherriff on his Jerningham estate map. By the mid-19th century, the area was being farmed by the Kellsall family, whose descendants returned during the excavation to supply information on the extant topography.

Results

Prehistoric Settlement (Fig. 14; Plates 3, 4, 5)

The evidence for prehistoric settlement was confined to the area of a copmark discovered from the air by Arnold Baker in 1959. Test excavation showed the ditches of the cropmark enclosure to have survived to a depth of up to 3 m from extant ground level, but evidence for occupation was rare. A 55 metre length of the enclosure defences was excavated on the west side (Area C) and found to consist of an inner ditch 3 m deep, dug in straight contiguous sections probably indicating gang-work, and an outer ditch which carried water streamwards. The two ditches were parallel, although not certainly contemporary.

Patches of redeposited clay marked the position of ploughed-out ramparts most clearly between the two ditches, but there was no extant trace of sub-rampart timbers or stone revetment. The lips of the inner ditch had been consolidated with redeposited clay. No entrance was visible on the aerial photograph, and none was located. Investigation showed that the Wesley Brook had destroyed the southern run of the enclosure, through deliberate diversion and the enclosure had probably been once sub-circular and complete.

Evidence for occupation revealed by careful examination of the interior was extremely sparse. It is evident that ploughing from (at least) the 18th century had removed any pre-existing shallow features, but the cleaned natural surface was largely unmarked by the plough and it can reasonably be reported that no features cutting deeper than about 50 cms had ever been present within the main area, D. An area of 100 square metres of topsoil was sampled by hand within area D, without recovery of occupation debris. No prehistoric material was recovered from intensive field-walking of the field containing the crop-mark. Final salvage operations in the south-east corner of the enclosure (Areas L and M) led to the discovery of a scoop terraced into natural deposits, together with pits, one large post-hole 1.20 m in diameter, and a hearth of burnt clay, associated with spreads of charcoal and fragments of very coarsely-tempered orange pottery. The pottery has been identified as briquetage from salt containers, probably traded from the north during the Iron Age (E. Morris per comm).

Other finds were few and preservation poor. There was no bone, and all pottery was partially decomposed. Sherds from disturbed contexts beside the ditches, (i.e. coincident with the supposed rampart positions) are provisionally ascribed to the Bronze Age. The secondary silting of the ditches contained Roman and Medieval pottery. A podsol had developed over the south-eastern quadrant, apparently after the desertion of the enclosure. Samples containing potential evidence for the environment were collected from all primary ditch fills. Dating will rely heavily on radio-carbon measurements on the charcoal samples which were recovered from all principal features.

A limited geophysical survey was undertaken by Dr. Roy King and his students from the Department of Geological Sciences at the University of Birmingham, which may prove useful for comparison with other sites on soil of this nature (Fig. 14).

It is hoped that post-excavation analysis will clarify the date and function of the enclosure, similar examples of which are known in the area (e.g. Leegomery; Stewart 1980). Of the original suggestions made in the research design, an early medieval enclosure (e.g. St. Joseph 1978; Hope Taylor 1977) has been eliminated: the ditches did not contain palisades, and the circular terminals originally observed in the air photograph, (Fig. 13) did not exist in the ground. An earlier prehistoric interrupted-ditch enclosure or henge (cf. Palmer 1976: type 42 Fig. 20; St. Joseph 1969: 58; St. Joseph 1976: 239) is unlikely, but still possible. In spite of its weak position, the enclosure will most probably be identified as a later prehistoric lowland fort perhaps of the Salmonsbury type (Dunning, 1976), which made use of a now buried or damaged system of small streams. A simultaneous, or alternative, ceremonial function remains possible, even in the later period (Collis 1977: 62), and the fuller excavation of an example in more favourable terrain is clearly desirable. It is also possible that the earthwork was unfinished (cf. Feachem, 1971) an idea which the paucity of deep-structures and occupation debris endorses, while it does not confirm it.

The earthwork survived to influence field boundaries in the 18th century (Sherriff 1788), after which time the site was under the plough. The earthwork may have given "Castle Farm" its name.

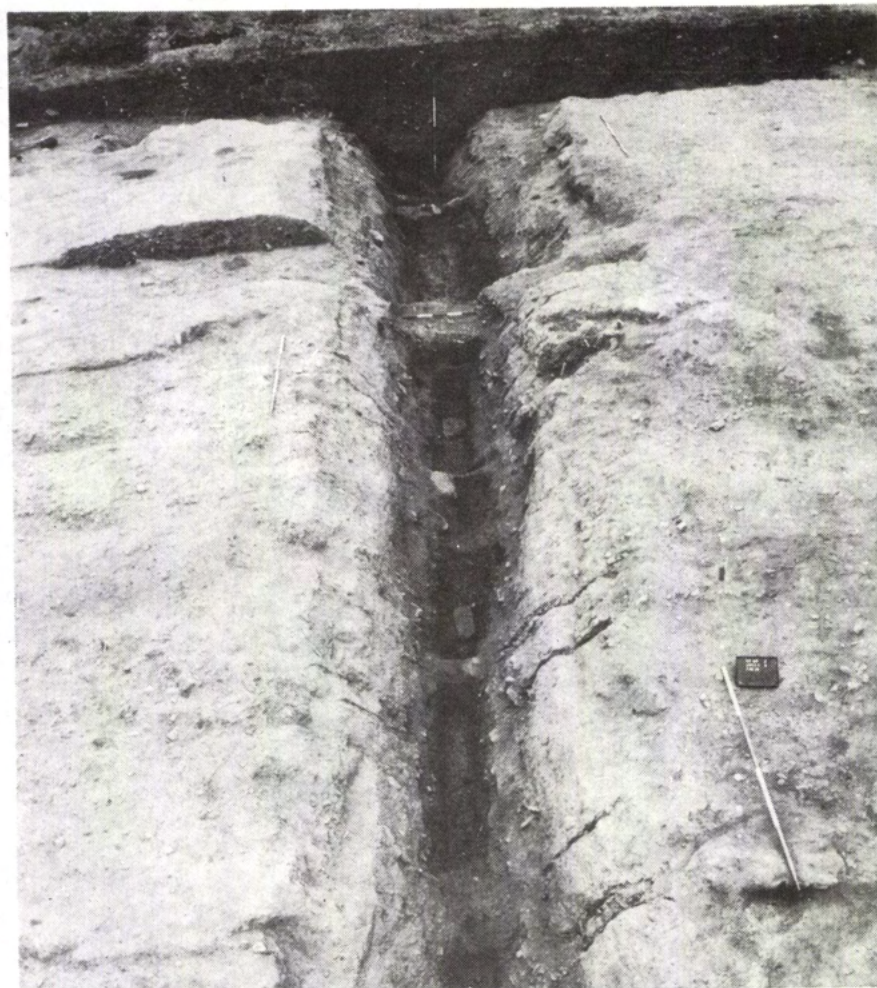


Plate 4: CASTLE FARM, Shifnal, Shropshire. Inner quarry ditch of prehistoric enclosure from south (Site C). Interior of enclosure is to the right.



Plate 5: CASTLE FARM, Shifnal, Shropshire. Medieval features beneath clay tread to the east of Castle Farm (Site A).

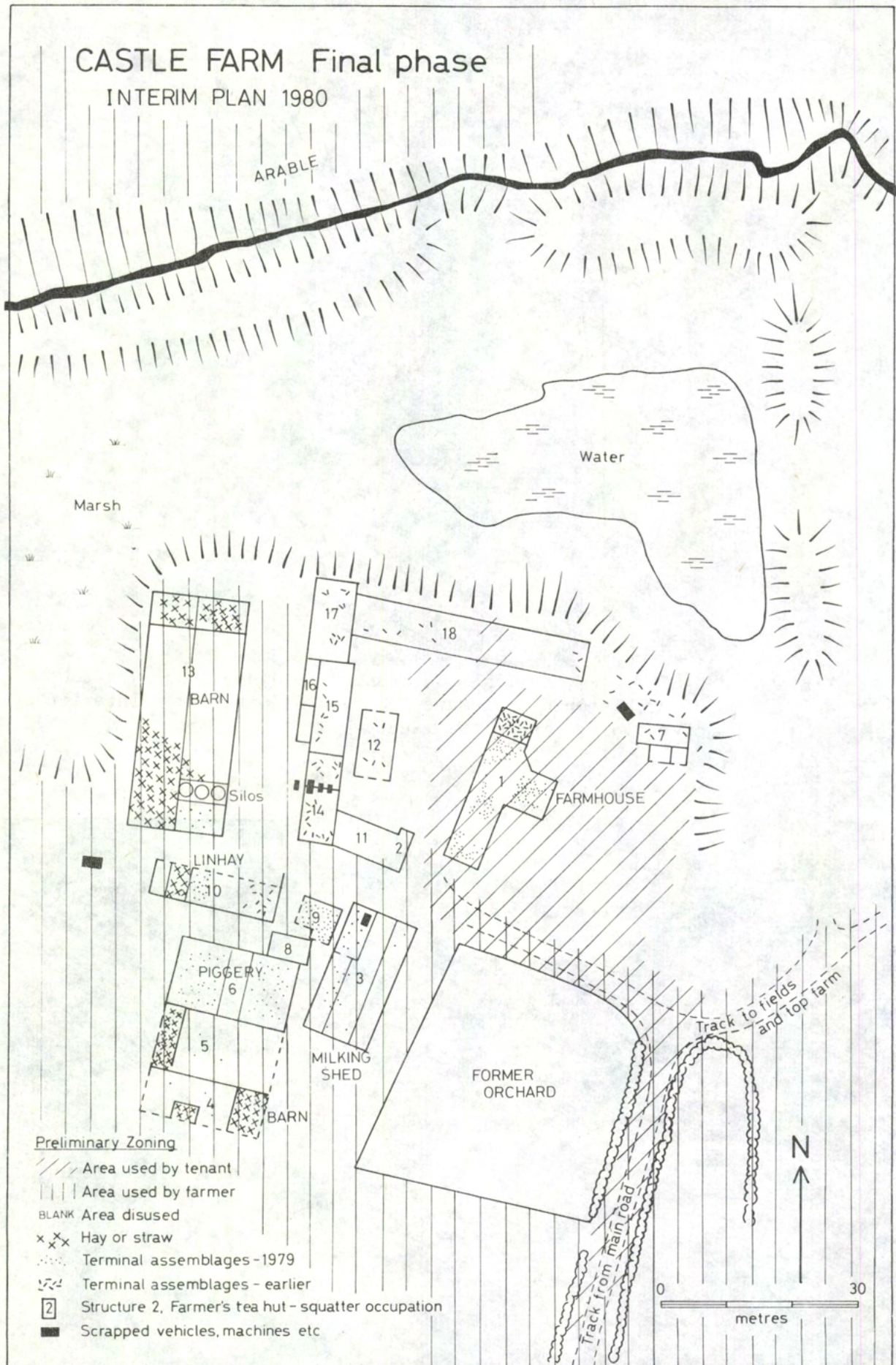


Fig. 15: CASTLE FARM: Farm buildings and survey of ultimate phase of occupation (Carver)

Medieval Settlement (Fig. 14)

The modern farm stands on a platform limited to the west and north by a string of ponds and to the east by a shallow re-entrant. The eastern perimeter of this platform was tested for medieval occupation on the hypothesis that it had been a moated site (Area A).

The sequence began in the 12th century, with a pebble yard bounded on the west by a timber-revetted drain (Area A2). Building stone was brought to this area to be masoned, and a wall using rejected stone was erected to the east. A stone-lined culvert ended the sequence, probably within the 13th century, and the site was levelled in the 18th century. The re-entrant (Area B) was examined and proved to be not a moat, but a pond constructed not earlier than the 17th century, probably an integral part of the system to the north.

Preliminary dating has been given by the pottery which was present in small consistent groups. Animal bone and environmental samples were recovered. The extant farmhouse proved to contain a timber-frame, typologically of the 16th century, but no residual material was found in the excavation to suggest occupation between the 13th and 17th centuries.

Pending further documentary and archaeological analysis, it seems probable that the site was established as a residential farm in the 12th century, deserted in the 13th and redeveloped in the 18th century. The 19th century pattern is analogous, since the family farming the area lived alternately at Castle Farm and Woodhouse to the north.

The Modern Farm (Fig. 15)

The investigation of the modern farm was undertaken partly as a contribution to archaeological methodology, and partly to contribute directly to the history of the valley as a whole. The buildings were recorded photographically (with assistance from Carole Ryan of Shropshire County Council and David Jackson of Telford Development Corporation) and will be further examined during demolition. Structural types ranging from the 16th to the 20th century were observed, without certain dating.

On arrival at the site, the Unit found it to have been largely undisturbed since abandonment. All extant assemblages were recorded as found, and will be tested against routine post-excavation analyses and artificially screened through a number of pre-ordained survival levels, to test the validity of certain archaeological interpretations. The evidence of the Kelsall and Hamer families (who last used the farm) will be used as a control.

Interim Comments

With isolated exceptions (such as the Roman city of Wroxeter), with their own preserved micro-environments, rural lowland Shropshire is difficult to read archaeologically, but its exploration is vital to the understanding of the prehistory and history of the British mid-west. Perhaps the greatest problem in the excavation of rural sites, is a soil which appears to dissolve, or to have attacked, all pre-medieval occupation debris. Strata are also notoriously difficult to distinguish in these soils. With the examples of The Breidden and Moel y Gaer before us (Musson 1971; Guilbert 1976), it was apparent that a ploughed-out site could never answer the more sophisticated questions of "function, population size or indeed the whole dynamics of the economy" (Cunliffe, 1977) and it was intended to use the short time available to define (from pits, and other deep features) the genus' of the enclosure before its destruction. However the vulnerability of the post-deposition assemblage as a whole was an additional inhibiting factor, and one not only relevant to the Iron Age. This problem needs to be faced in order to characterise correctly the very large number of undated ploughed sites which have been discovered in the last few decades from the air. The Castle Farm excavations made some progress in this field and were instructive technically, but both prospection and feature-definition are insufficiently developed as yet.

The Castle Farm investigations gave a sequence of activity in a single valley that may be unexceptional for the rural area being covered by Telford New Town. This sequence - prehistoric enclosure - 12th century farm - 18th century farm - cannot yet be seen in context, due to the inevitably low level of sampling within the valley under examination and within the surrounding plain. However, the Shropshire Sites and Monuments Record created at the County Council has provided the information base, which, coupled with Spartan rescue excavation campaigns, can eventually characterise the way in which this part of Shropshire has been exploited over the past 4-5000 years.

* * * * *

Acknowledgements

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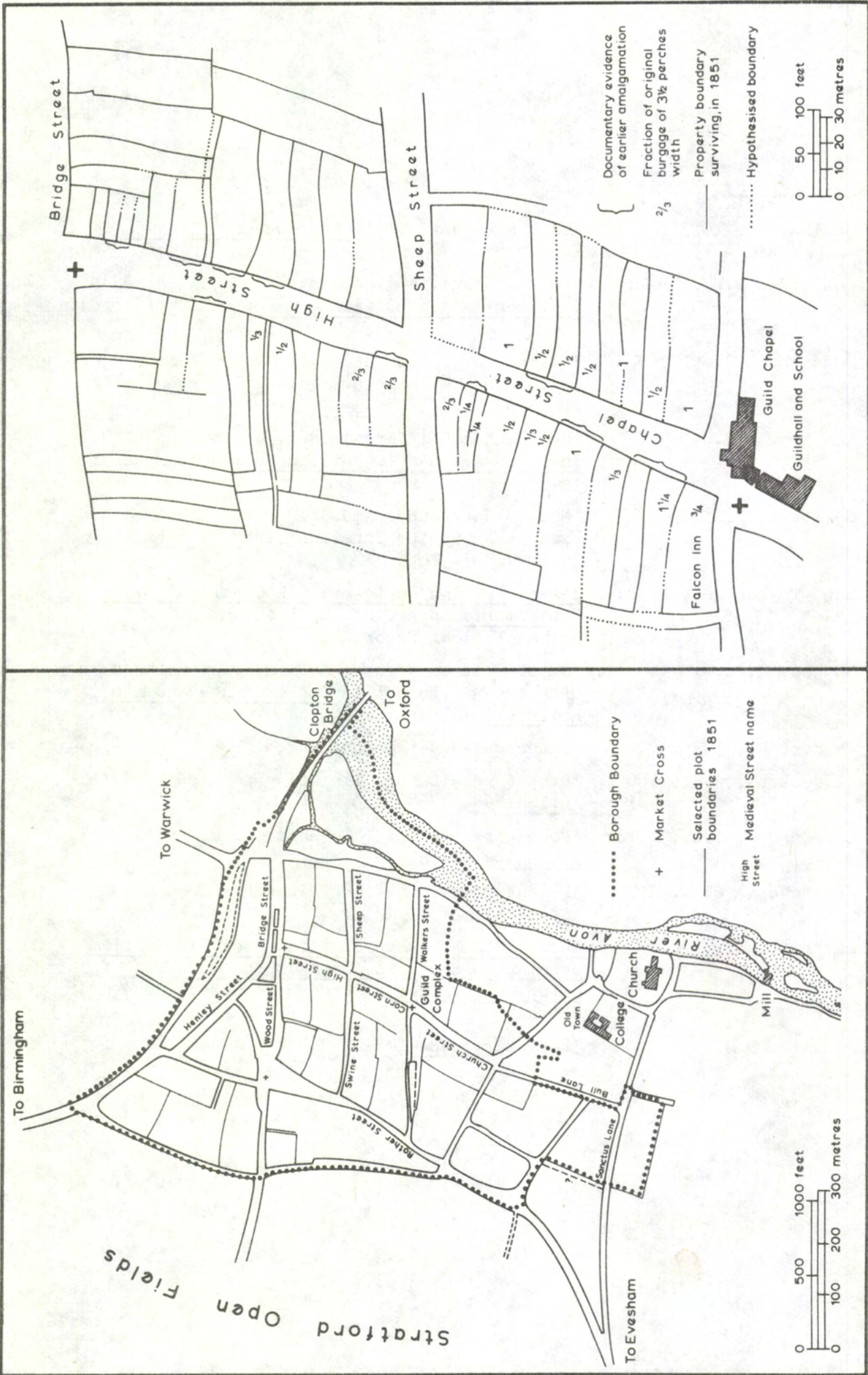


Fig. 16: STRATFORD-upon-AVON: Town plan and plot pattern (Slater)

The Analysis of Burgages in Medieval Towns: three case studies from the West Midlands

by T.R. Slater Department of Geography, University of Birmingham

The techniques of town-plan analysis developed by Conzen, described in his monograph on the Northumbrian town of Alnwick¹ and tested in a subsequent study of Newcastle-upon-Tyne², have been further developed by other researchers interested in the morphology of towns. The concept of the fringe-belt has been one of the most fruitful of these developments through the work of Whitehand and others³. There have been a few studies which have used the techniques of plan analysis to throw light on the origins and development of particular towns, notably Conzen's own paper on the town plans of Ludlow and Conway⁴, and, more recently that by Whittington and Brooks on the development of St. Andrews⁵. This application of town plan analysis, however, has lagged behind other applications relevant to the nineteenth and twentieth century city. There have been no attempts by historical geographers to provide wide-ranging comparative studies of medieval town-plan elements since Conzen's work, while the awakening of interest in early towns consequent upon the extensive archaeological excavation of historic town centres in the past decade has produced little work of this kind⁶, though there are notable monographs on individual towns⁷. This paper seeks to initiate some interest in the comparative analysis of the elements of historic town plans by presenting some preliminary findings on the analysis of plot patterns in selected medieval towns.

BURGAGES

Burgage plots are the basic 'cells' in any analysis of medieval town plans. They are characteristically long and narrow and are arranged in series along the streets. Conzen classified them into deep burgages, where the ratio of depth to width was generally greater than 6:1 and shallow burgages where the ratio was generally less than 3:1⁸. The intervening ratios might be characterised as standard burgages. Once laid out, the boundaries of burgages were often subject to division, both lengthways and, if there was access to the rear, widthways. Amalgamation of plots was also possible. In the majority of towns, however, the initial plot pattern was remarkably stable until the early nineteenth century. Recent archaeological excavations have confirmed the long-term perpetuation of plot boundaries in cities as historically diverse as Winchester and York, in the latter case surviving unchanged from the tenth century⁹.

In part this is because of the inherent difficulty of moving boundaries in the close-built urban environment, but it is also a function of the legal attributes of burgage plots in many towns. The essence of a medieval borough was that labour and other services due to the lord had been commuted to an annual fixed money rent. This was levied upon particular townspeople - the burgesses. A man became a burgess by gaining the freehold of a burgage; and with the burgage, therefore, there subsequently went rights of political representation in corporate boroughs.

In some towns burgage rights were vested in all plots within the borough boundary, but in others they were limited to a set number of plots defined at the establishment of the borough¹⁰, or by a particular rent level. In boroughs such as these, local government tended towards self-perpetuating oligarchies, and burgage boundaries were firmly fixed.

There has been only one attempt to gather material on medieval burgage rights and rents, that by the historian M.W. Hemmeon, in 1914¹¹. Hemmeon's work on the legal basis of burgage tenure demonstrated the great variety of rents levied on plots as their contribution to the firma burgi, or annual borough render. However, it also demonstrated that ten pence and twelve pence was by far the most frequently occurring rent. Subsequent work on the establishment of medieval new towns has demonstrated that this sum was looked upon as the norm in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries by town-founding lords¹².

The size of plot received for such a rent varied enormously but was often substantial. The Bishop of Worcester's new town at Stratford-upon-Avon, for example, was laid out with burgages $3\frac{1}{2} \times 12$ perches (18 x 60m), an area of roughly a quarter acre (10ha)¹³, and it is not surprising to find that within fifty years of the foundation of the borough, many of these plots had been divided lengthways into halves or thirds and the burgage rents similarly divided from the initial twelve pence¹⁴. In medieval new towns it is to be expected that the initial planned layout of plots might still be reflected in the modern townscape, though there have been few attempts to demonstrate that this is so. Similarly, in towns with a more complex developmental history, it might be expected that new burgage series extending a town would reflect their planned, unitary nature in the modern plan.

Buildings on the burgage were generally concentrated on the plot head and, until the nineteenth century in smaller towns, the remainder of the plot was occupied with garden ground. Barns would characterize the plot tail in those burgage series with rear access ways. At the plot head, buildings were usually arranged crossways, and fronted directly onto the street, a narrow passage providing access to the rear of the plot¹⁵. In the majority of cases such passages were to the side of the building but another vernacular tradition placed the passage centrally. On some plots it might be sufficiently wide to admit a cart or waggon¹⁶. In some larger towns the fragmentation of plots was sufficient to make the construction of buildings with their gable end to the street a necessity¹⁷, while in a few areas where this was the rural vernacular tradition, similar patterns were perpetuated in towns.

There have been relatively few attempts at the difficult task of reconstructing medieval plot patterns in large towns by using contemporary documentation - here the work of Urry at Canterbury¹⁸ and Keane at Winchester¹⁹ stand out - while Conzen's basic statistical analysis of burgage dimensions using a large scale, late eighteenth century town plan stands alone²⁰. These measurements at Alwicks demonstrated that even in an essentially unplanned town there was a considerable similarity in the width of plots. This Conzen related to the width of a two bay medieval building. In Alwicks this produced a 'standard' burgage width of 28-32 feet (8.5-9.8m), represented in the town plan not only by this 'standard' but also by fractional divisions and multiples of it. It is this last technique that this paper seeks to develop.

PLOT MEASUREMENT

Conzen's technique of plot measurement was to use the earliest large scale plan of Alnwick, dating from 1774, to measure plot frontages allowing a margin of error of one foot in either direction. He noted that the more accurate 1:528 Ordnance Plan of 1851 was less useful because development between 1774 and 1851 had already interfered too much with the frontages, though the burgage boundaries behind the plot-head buildings were still unchanged. With this margin of error, five-sixths of the plots in the oldest part of the borough were related to his 'standard'. The difficulties of measurement on an eighteenth century plan are acknowledged by Conzen and his technique is difficult to replicate over many towns because relatively few have plans of a sufficiently large scale for this early period. Indeed, for most smaller towns, the 1:500 Ordnance Plan of the mid- or late- nineteenth century is the earliest plan of sufficient accuracy for such measurement. However, even with these plans the possibility of measuring frontages to a margin of error of only one foot must be considered dubious since one foot is represented by .024 of an inch on the plan. Comparative work on medieval burgage patterns would seem to depend, therefore, on demonstrating the usefulness of measurements of modern plot frontages taken in the field.

Three case studies involving such measurements are presented. They consist of towns in the Avon - Stour valleys of Warwickshire - Worcestershire. The plan of Stratford-upon-Avon is analysed to demonstrate the essential long-term continuity of medieval burgage boundaries through to the present. The plan of Shipston-on-Stour is discussed to demonstrate some of the difficulties that can be encountered even in a 'simple' medieval planned town. And the plan of Pershore is analysed to show how burgage analysis can throw light upon the development of the town plan. In each town, modern plot head buildings were measured in series and related to the plot pattern. Each building was measured individually, though in those few instances where a single building, constructed as an entity and standing at the head of an undivided plot, was used as two dwellings/shops, it was measured as one. Measurement was to the nearest foot.

THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN PLAN

Stratford-upon-Avon, founded in 1196 by the Bishop of Worcester, was laid out on an ambitious grid plan on the north bank of the Warwickshire Avon²¹. It was located beside an important river crossing which derived from a Roman road. Routes from Birmingham, Alcester, Evesham, Warwick, Oxford and Banbury converged on the site, and the new town was laid out over part of the open field land of an earlier rural community, between the village and the old Roman road. The village church continued to serve the borough through the medieval period and in 1331 it acquired collegiate status²². The gravel terraces of the Avon approach close to the river at this point and in order to 'fit' the town onto the gravels and keep it off the floodplain, the grid plan is distorted to parallelogram form. It is clear, therefore, that the 3½ x 12 perch plots of the early charter were not simple rectangles. They were distorted by both the underlying ridge and furrow of the open fields, so that aratral curves are clearly recognisable, and by the parallelogram nature of the street grid²³ (Fig.16). Even in a planned new town therefore, modern burgage

measurement will reflect the fact that medieval 'standardization' did not necessarily attain modern precision.

By 1252, a survey of the Bishop's estates records the equivalent of some 240 occupied burgages, many of which had been divided into two or three tenements, as well as a substantial area which remained undeveloped with buildings and which was let at a lower rent²⁴. Most of this land was probably in the south and west parts of the borough, areas which remained field land until the early nineteenth century. However, it is noteworthy that the borough boundary here runs exactly 12 perches from Sanctus Lane, and that the distance between Bull Lane and the modern Broad Street is equivalent to 24 perches. It is clear that these peripheral parts of the borough were therefore initially intended for burgages. Indeed, there is a probability that they were at least partly so occupied in the early medieval period, but that during the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the town contracted somewhat and these peripheral plots were abandoned to garden ground and pasture closes.

The standard plot depth of c.200 feet (60m) is clearly apparent in all other parts of the town, both in the central 3 x 3 grid of streets and in the peripheral burgage series such as those lining the north side of Bridge Street or the south side of Chapel Lane, the medieval Walkers Street (Fig 16). As to plot widths, it is a truism of Stratford's topographical historians that the modern plot pattern still clearly reflects the original burgage width of 3½ perches²⁵. Certainly the 1:528 Board of Health plan of 1851 shows a remarkably regular pattern of continuous plot boundaries running from street frontage back to a similarly continuous property divide some 200 feet from that frontage²⁶.

Further information is available from the fine series of medieval rentals and deeds in the borough archives, and recent work in linking these deeds through to those of the nineteenth century enables the sub-division or amalgamation of particular plot series to be followed through in some detail²⁷. In High Street, this work even enables the complex of plots at the intersection with Bridge Street - the prime economic site in the town - to be unravelled so that the way in which the two initial quarter acre plots were sub-divided becomes clear (Fig. 16).

Three street frontages in Stratford were measured and of the 35 plots in Chapel Street and the west side of High Street only ten did not fit a fractional division of the original 57¾ foot frontages (using a margin of error of one foot each way). Even more conclusively, the west series of Chapel Street burgages could be completely arranged within this 3½ perch 'standard' excepting only the corner plot, the Falcon Hotel, where the margin of error was two feet in excess of ¾ of the 'standard', an excess explainable in terms of encroachment on to the road width. It is quite clear, therefore, that in Stratford, original plot dimensions laid down in c.1196 survived almost in their entirety until the mid-nineteenth century and that subsequent development has still been insufficient in many parts of the town to make this pattern indiscernable. Having established this important premise for a medieval new town in which plot dimensions are documented from the establishment of the plan, one may now turn to others in which this information is lacking.

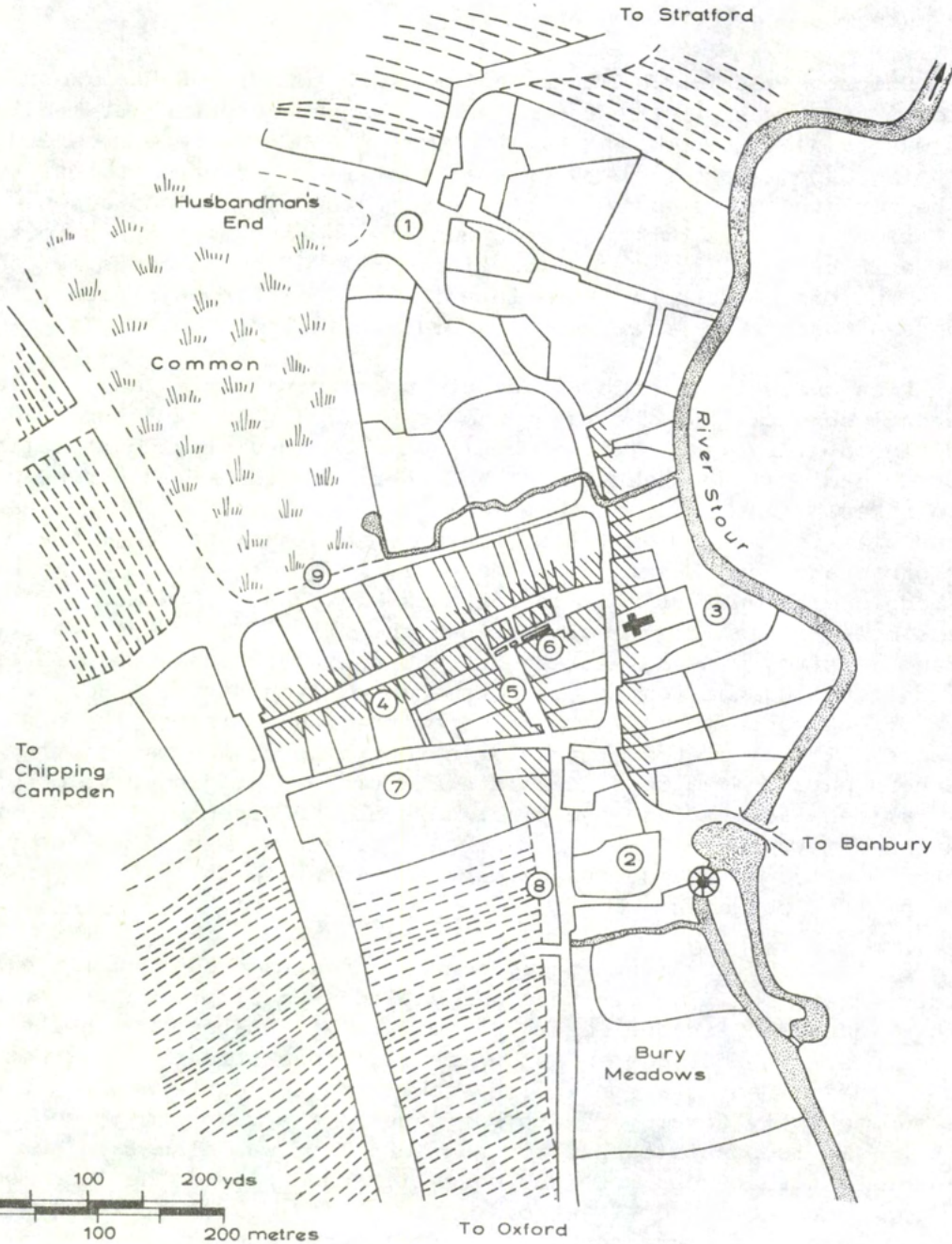
THE SHIPSTON-ON-STOUR TOWN PLAN

Shipston was founded as a medieval new town in 1268 by Worcester Priory²⁸. It was part of the extensive manor and parish of Tredington and was laid out beside the River Stour at a point where the road between Chipping Campden and Banbury crossed that from Stratford to Oxford. There were the customary disputes between townspeople and a conservative ecclesiastical lord over manorial customs and services in the early fifteenth century, but there was little relaxation in monastic control until the Dissolution of the Priory in 1540. The town passed to the Dean and Chapter of Worcester Cathedral in 1542²⁹.

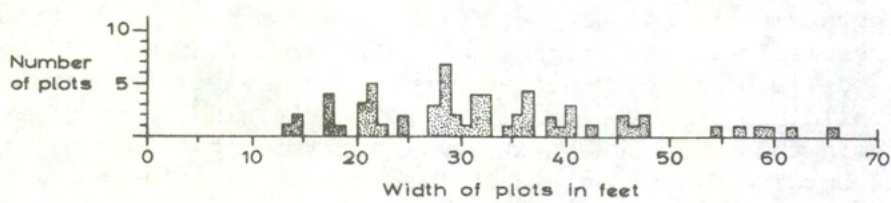
Plan analysis is made easier by the survival of a large scale pre-enclosure plan of the manor and town (1793), an enclosure plan (1812) and a good, large scale Tithe Map (1841)³⁰. Surviving court rolls provide medieval documentation³¹ and there is a detailed survey of the town taken by the Parliamentary Commissioners in 1642³². There are six plan-units in this essentially simple medieval new town. Two are pre-urban and together make up the early medieval village of Shipston: the agglomeration of farms and cottages known as Husbandman's End and the similar irregular grouping around the mill. The chapel of St. Edmund is sited mid-way between the two and the village perhaps originally straggled along the length of what became Church Street. However, this part of the settlement was modified by the foundation of the new borough. The elongated triangular street block which constitutes the southern part of the town is a late addition. Building development here was taking place through the first half of the seventeenth century³³ and continued into the eighteenth. North of the town was an extensive common pasture whilst to the south and east the open fields of the township adjoined the burgages (Fig. 17).

Stripped of its later accretions and its antecedent village, the Priory's new town plan is thereby revealed as a simple east-west street, with an unusual L-shaped market place partially blocked with later accretions. The burgage series which line this street and market place are circumscribed by a continuous back lane, the eastern part of which was subsequently developed with burgages as the town prospered (Church Street). It is possible that the southern lane was also laid out for burgages and that they were subsequently abandoned in the late medieval or Tudor decline, as at Stratford, since a field boundary runs parallel to this lane at a distance equivalent to a burgage (Fig. 17). Compared with the planned towns of the Avon valley, the scale of development is small, but unlike many market centres in Feldon, Shipston maintained its urban status and layout through the economically lean years of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The surviving continuous property bounds suggest that the plan contained perhaps forty burgages of c.60 x 200 feet (18 x 60m), many of them were subsequently sub-divided, but the original layout and orientation can be clearly discerned. Despite development in the post-medieval period, relatively few plots had been sub-divided crossways by the mid-nineteenth century so that back lane development of plot tails had not progressed far³⁴. The primacy of Sheep Street and High Street in the plot layout is still very evident and measurements were taken of all plot-head buildings in these two streets. Surprisingly, no clear pattern emerged in this example and it remains difficult to be certain of the original burgage dimensions in the medieval town. The estimate



- ① Pre-urban village
- ② Mill settlement
- ③ Chapel and later burgages
- ④ Sheep street
- ⑤ High street
- ⑥ Market place accretions
- ⑦ Undeveloped back lane, possible former burgages
- ⑧ Hillmare Green, the Lord's waste
- ⑨ Horn Lane, possible cattle market
- M Manor House
- Selected property bounds
- ▨ Plot head buildings



given above is based on the plot dimensions of the manor house in Sheep Street³⁵ (Fig. 17). If correct, it might represent original dimensions of $3\frac{1}{2} \times 12$ perches, exactly the same as the Bishop of Worcester's new town at Stratford founded nearly eighty years earlier.

What is of interest in the Shipston series is that of the sixty eight plots measured, one third fall into the 28-33 feet (8.5-9.8m) category, and all but one sixth of the properties have a clear relationship with this width category (Fig. 17). The Shipston plot frontages therefore conform closely to Conzen's findings in the essentially unplanned medieval borough at Alnwick. Conzen equates this width that of a standard two-bay medieval house placed crossways upon the street frontage. In Shipston, the majority of the houses are so placed and there are no signs that pressure on space was ever sufficiently great to encourage the further sub-division of plots and the erection of buildings with their gable end to the street. This hypothesis of a 'standard' building width implies that two such medieval houses could be erected on a burgage $3\frac{1}{2}$ perches wide, and helps to explain both the initial choice of these dimensions and the subsequent mediation of burgages. The continuous back lane meant that it was unnecessary to provide space for front access passages, though a number do exist on the north side of Sheep Street.

In view of the lack of modern development, the good cartographic sources, the small size of the town, and its simplicity of plan, it is perplexing to find that reconstruction of the original burgage dimensions is more difficult than in the large, flourishing borough of Stratford. An explanation might be found in its relative decline, which was especially notable in the sixteenth century, when, for example, only thirty householders were paying poor rates and were trying to support some 140 households seeking relief³⁶. It has been shown that plots abandoned as burgages tend to be amalgamated into pasture closes and that there are indications that this happened on the southern fringe of Shipston. It is possible that it happened even in the central streets and that existing buildings, many of which date from the early eighteenth century, stand at the head of plots newly sub-divided from larger closes. If this was so, then the mixture of medieval and eighteenth century dimensions would probably be sufficient to obscure the medieval 'standard'. That such replanning of larger areas did take place can be demonstrated in the example of Pershore.

THE PERSHORE TOWN PLAN

Pershore has a complex plan containing a number of planned elements of different periods. The town developed about a triangular market green on the north side of an important Anglo-Saxon monastery³⁷. In the eleventh century, two-thirds of the Pershore estates was granted to Edward the Confessor's new abbey of Westminster with permission to make a borough there³⁸. Soon after, a planned town was laid out east of Pershore Abbey along a high street leading to the bridge over the River Avon. It had a cul-de-sac rectangular market place mid-way along the west side (Fig. 18). The market place and burgage series were divided between the administrations of the two abbeys. There is no indication in the early documentation of the town of the initial burgage dimensions and the town plan suggest a division, not between the burgages of the two manors, but between burgages laid out to the west of the main street

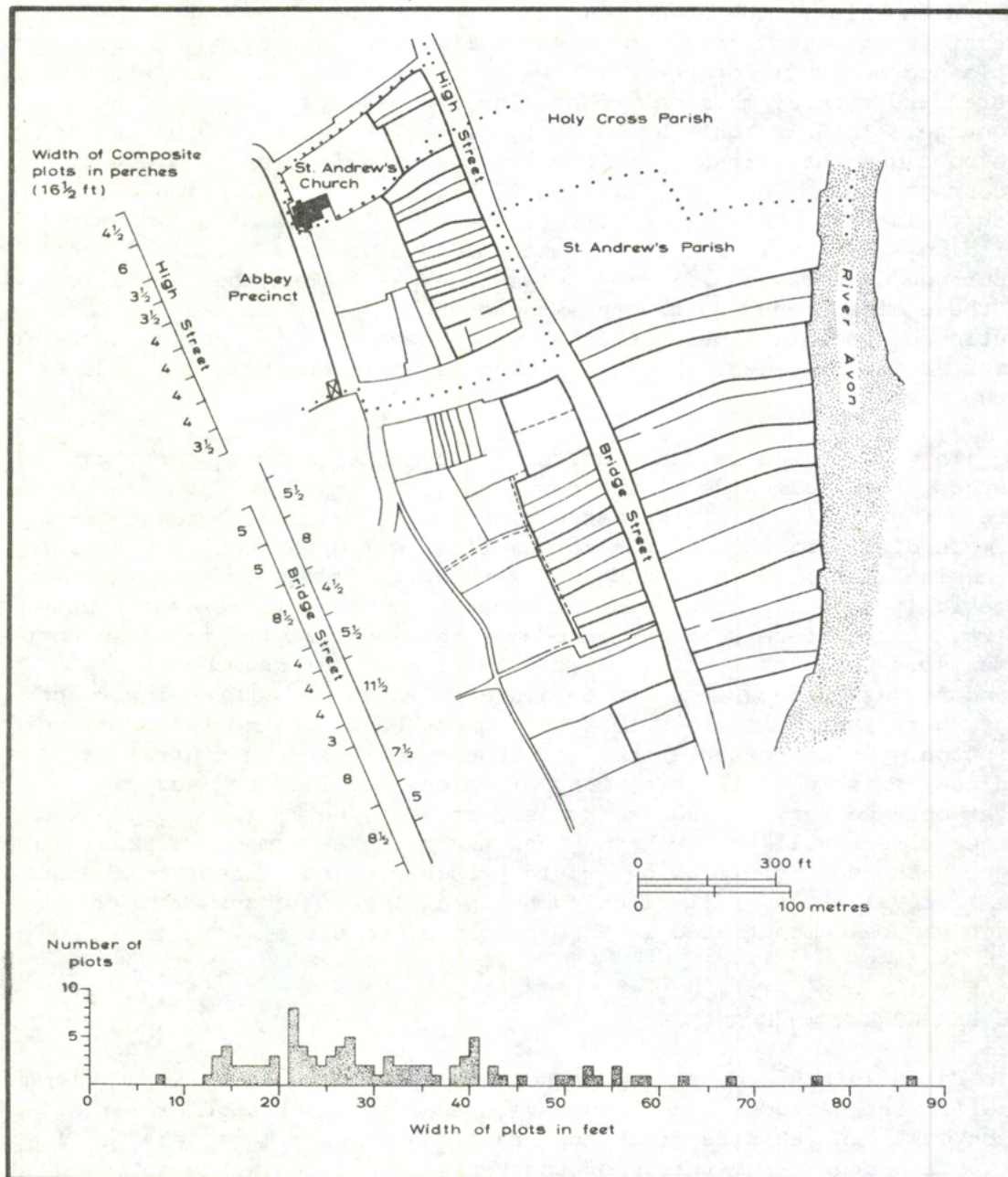


Fig. 18: PERSHORE: Analysis of the burgage pattern (Slater)

and those laid out to the east. These latter are much deeper, stretching back to the river bank, and appear generally wider, such that even today the eighteenth century brick houses that line the street are more substantial on this east side of the street. On the west side, the plots are short, rectangular, and have a discontinuous back footpath which the early editions of the Ordnance Survey show to have been originally continuous. Beyond the path, larger blocks of garden or pasture ground stretch back to another footway which survives in the present town plan. A few plots have continuous boundaries across the intermediate path suggesting that garden ground and burgages were probably tenurially linked in earlier times, after the arrangement of toft and croft in rural settlements (Fig. 18).

The full series of plots on both sides of Bridge Street, together with those on the west side of High Street north of the market place, were measured. The dispersion of building widths ranged over a broad spectrum from less than 10 feet (3m), to more than 80 feet (24m). There is little evidence in the frequency graph either of a single 'standard' relating to the obviously planned layout, as in Stratford, or of the measure of consistency found in Alnwick and Shipston. The most frequent building width was 22 feet (6.7m) with eight occurrences out of 94 plots measured (Fig. 18).

A much clearer pattern emerges, however, when the measurements are linked to their position in the town plan and related to the sequence of continuous plot boundaries, notably in the two burgage series west of Bridge Street and High Street. Here plots group together, within outer plot boundaries which are continuous from street front to back path, into larger blocks with frontages of 66 feet (20m), or exactly 4 perches, to use the form of measurement in the Stratford foundation charter. The depth of these two burgage series is also consistent throughout at 10 perches (57.75m) though the west Bridge Street series has been slightly distorted through the absorption of the rear footpath. The implication is that these two burgage series, though in different manorial jurisdictions, were laid out to a common standard of 4 x 10 perches, the Bridge Street series having linked garden crofts. Sub-division of some of these initial standard plots into thirds has given the most frequently occurring building width of 22 feet. The pattern is not completely regular, but all the plots in these two burgage series which have continuous bounds, can be accommodated in a system of measurement based on the standard 16½ foot perch (Fig. 18).

The burgage series on the west side of Bridge Street is less regular, but seven plots or combinations of plots have a width equivalent to 2½ perches (41.25 feet, 12.5m). One third of plot head buildings in this series are thereby accommodated but it is not possible to combine remaining plots on this base. The implication is, therefore, that the opposite sides of Bridge Street, both part of the Abbey of Westminster's borough founded in 1065, seem to have been laid out on different planning principles and possibly, therefore, at different times. The east series, being the most altered from an assumed initial regularity is probably the older. The possible 'standard' width of 2½ perches is of interest here, because the seven frontages on the corner of Bridge Street and the market place combine into two blocks each of 5 perches (Fig. 18). This suggests that the burgage series on the west side of Bridge Street/High Street represents a subsequent replanning of an older pattern preserved in the east Bridge Street series. The replanning

provided for shorter, narrower plots - and therefore more could be accommodated on the valued main street frontage. The historical record of the town provides a suitable context in a fire in 1233 which destroyed the abbey and much of the town³⁹ and which, under the impetus of a powerful monastic lord, would have allowed such replanning to be implemented. Accurate field measurement of three plot series in Pershore has therefore raised new questions about the development of the town in the medieval period and confirmed that much of the plan was laid out on a carefully planned system of equal-sized burgages.

CONCLUSIONS

These three case studies of West Midland towns have yielded sufficient information on medieval burgage series to indicate that further work in this direction would be fruitful, both in providing a fuller understanding of the individual history of particular towns, and in assembling a corpus of comparative data on burgage dimensions and their subsequent sub-division and amalgamation. In this paper, measurement has been limited to examples taken from planned medieval new towns, with the aim of both showing the utility of such measurement in reconstructing original layouts in some detail, and of confirming the extended survival rate of plot boundaries in all towns. The results from Stratford and Pershore have amply fulfilled those aims, whilst the case of Shipston has pointed to possible problems with the technique in very small towns where subsequent redivision of plots has complicated the pattern in an irregular way. The monastic lordship of all three towns is a possible source of bias, in that such towns were subject to close control. However, it seems probable that for the majority of planned towns, or for planned elements in larger, more complex towns, plot measurement and reconstruction is an effective way of establishing an outline pattern of development which could only be established otherwise where comprehensive documentation of changes in ownership and dimensions can be traced back to the later medieval period, or by extensive archaeological excavation. In addition, in older, essentially unplanned towns, the method will enable Conzen's hypothesis of a 'standard' burgage width to be tested in towns whose archives lack the very large scale early maps with which he worked. In this way any differentiation between towns can be established, as well as regional or cultural variations in this 'standard'. It is notable that in the three examples used, the dimensions of reconstituted burgage series all relate to the perch of $16\frac{1}{2}$ feet. In some regions, customary perches, especially in the early medieval period, were in use which were both longer and shorter than this statute perch,⁴⁰ and this base measure therefore need not be replicated in other areas. Work is now proceeding on a comparative sample set of towns in South Devon.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Plate 5: "The Prodigal Son in Excess" by William Greatbach

William Greatbatch's Pottery Works at Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire

by D. Barker, Stoke-on-Trent Museum

(Excavation of waster tips of post-medieval pottery at SJ 892 446)

Over the last 14 months the City of Stoke-on-Trent Museum Archaeological Society has been involved in excavations on the site of an 18th century creamware pottery dump which, it was hoped, could be attributed to the Fenton potter William Greatbatch. The work is now drawing to a close, and the ware recovered from the site has exceeded all expectations, both in quantity and variety. The results of the excavation have yet to be fully analysed but it is already apparent that the site will prove to be one of the most important of this period excavated in the area. The attribution to William Greatbatch is now proven and although we are dealing with only the waste products of a single potter, the excavation has shown that we need to rethink drastically our hypotheses on the ceramic industry at this time (c. 1760 - 1788), not only in Stoke-on-Trent but in England generally. Research on the finds will doubtless continue for several years.

The site excavated seems never to have been built upon, either before the dump was started nor afterwards, although there are the remains of walling to the west of the plot acting as a sort of revetment, which may date to the early 19th century or even the late 18th century. This need not surprise us, however, as the adjacent piece of land has been the site of a pottery factory since at least the early 19th century until the 1970s. Although the Greatbatch pottery dump is of quite modest size, at least by 19th and 20th century standards, its size certainly surprised the excavators and caused countless problems during the excavation, not least of which were the frequent collapses of the extremely loose ash and kiln waste.

The excavation showed that the tip is now over two metres in height, although possibly as much again had been removed when the plot was levelled to accommodate a tennis court. The lines of tipping could be seen very clearly in the sections, often at an angle of 45 degrees and the different coloured ashes present made the stratigraphy very clear indeed. Hundreds of individual tipplings were represented in the sections and it was sometimes possible to isolate the pottery from these to show the types of ware present in the kiln during a bad firing. The individual dumpings of pottery

and other kiln waste seem, more often than not, to have been on a small scale, the waste possibly being transported to the site in wheelbarrows or small carts. This, together with historical and cartographic evidence, suggests that the site of the Greatbatch factory (his kiln and workshops) are in the immediate vicinity of the dump. Two possible sites present themselves, the further of these being no more than 200 m away on the opposite side (north) of the main Stoke to Longton road, and the closer being directly opposite the dump on the other side of this same road, a site still occupied by early factory buildings.

An enormous quantity of pottery wasters was recovered from the site together with an interesting range of kiln furniture (saggars of various types, stilts used to support the pots during firing and thousands of pieces of fired clay which had served different functions within the kiln). The saggars are of local clay and are for the most part grogged (i.e. have various pieces of previously fired clay - pottery, saggars and brick - included in their body to prevent shrinkage). Many of the taller saggars have vertical rows of circular holes down the sides for the insertion of horizontal stilts on which plates could be supported.

The pottery is for the most part creamware, a large percentage being biscuit, and can be plain or decorated in a variety of ways. Much of the creamware has blue-painted Chinese-inspired designs, while a smaller quantity is decorated with different coloured enamel paints forming floral or Chinese designs. Also common is the brown, grey and green mottled or tortoiseshell wares which are well-known amongst the wares of the slightly earlier Fenton potter Thomas Whieldon from whom Greatbatch seems to have gained much of his inspiration. Wares with moulded decoration figure prominently amongst the finds, the favourites being the fruit wares which were so common at this time - basket-trellis-and-fruit ware, cauliflower, pineapple and melon wares, all of which were made at Fenton Vivian by Thomas Whieldon. Several of the moulds used in the manufacture of these wares have been recovered, as have a large number of plate moulds.

Many of the teapots found on the site have transfer printed designs upon them, sometimes in the transfer black colour only, and sometimes elaborately over-painted in different colours. A list of the prints associated with Greatbatch was published by Towner (1957) and examples of every one of these have been recovered from the site together with other, hitherto unknown prints. The best known of these prints is the Prodigal Son series, depicting "The Prodigal Son Receives His Patrimony", "The Prodigal Son Taking Leave", "The Prodigal Son in Excess", "The Prodigal Son in Misery", "The Prodigal Son Returns Reclaimed" and "The Prodigal Son Feasted on his Return". It is the evidence of these printed pieces

which allows us to confirm the attribution to Greatbatch, since fragments of the XII Houses of Heaven print have been found which were fortunately signed: "Published as the Act directs Jany 4 1778 by W. Greatbatch". If the WG monogram which was used as a backstamp on many of the plates found was not conclusive evidence, then this certainly is.

Other types of pottery were found on the site, the most common being red stoneware and glazed red earthenware with either engine-turned or sprigged (i.e. separately applied moulded) decoration. A surprise find on the site was a small quantity of black basalt, previously attributed to Josiah Wedgwood. There can be no doubt that the red wares and the basalt were made by Greatbatch but other wares from the site cannot be attributed to him with certainty. Indeed they need be no more than domestic refuse or pottery used by the factory workmen. These include fragments of press-moulded slip-decorated dishes (of the combed and trailed variety), brown manganese glazed wares and, of course, the common black iron-glazed peasant wares which were in use throughout the 18th century. None of these need have been made by Greatbatch but the finds are important in that they show typologically early wares in a much later context - perhaps the manganese-glazed wares and the slipwares had a much longer life than has hitherto been imagined. It must be noted also, that there is a tradition that Greatbatch produced salt-glazed stoneware. No more than three or four fragments of this ware have been found on the site, but several fragments of salt-glazed saggars were recovered.

The site was excavated to bedrock (sandstone) and we were very interested to find that the Greatbatch dump had been sited on land previously associated with the manufacture of creamware. There seems to have been no pre-18th century activity on the site and the first evidence of human activity we have is in the form of the dumping of considerable quantities of local red clay and white china clay onto an area of sloping land which may have been marshland or a pond, to judge by the rate at which the site became waterlogged at this depth (between 3 and 4 m). There was, in these lowest deposits, a fair quantity of organic material which included roots, weeds, twigs and a few pieces of leather. Immediately above the dumped clay were red and black ashy layers (this time horizontal) containing a quantity of pottery. These layers certainly do not represent a dump, but are most probably associated with a nearby kiln or pottery workshop area.

At most these earlier layers can pre-date the Greatbatch dump by 20 years (creamware proper was not introduced until c. 1750) and the timespan involved may be much less (1760 - 1765). The percentages of glazed to biscuit wares, are much higher than in the dump above. These have yet to be worked out but will be

approximately 45% glazed to 55% unglazed in contrast to something approaching a mere 10 or 15% of glazed ware in the dump. Very common, too, in these pre-dump layers is salt-glazed stoneware which we might have expected to find in greater quantity in the dump. This is the light grey coloured ware which is so common on the Whieldon site at Fenton Vivian and many of the pots are identical to those which, at the same time, are to be found as creamware. Whieldon's influence is again apparent in the black iron-glazed wares, the so-called "Jackfield-type wares", which are common in these layers, and in the red stonewares. Finds of manganese-glazed wares and slipwares are also more common than in the Greatbatch dump.

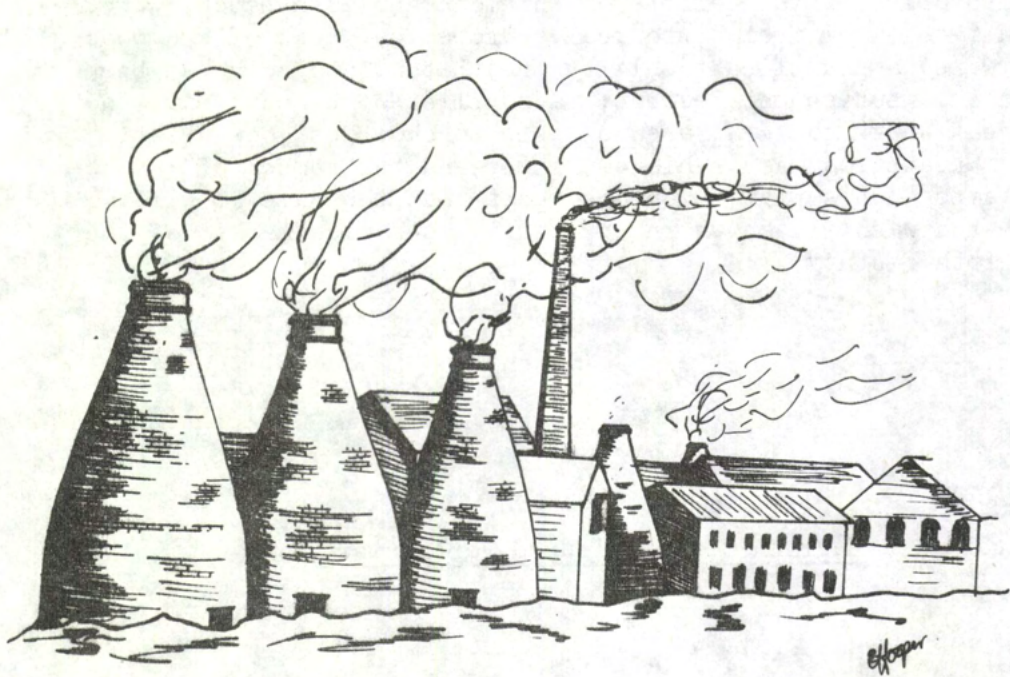
The earlier creamware of the pre-dump layers shows a noticeable difference in style to the later wares. It does, indeed, appear somewhat more 'primitive': the moulded plate edges are more clearly defined and feather-edges are more 'hooked'; the plates tend not to have a footring, which is generally regarded as an early characteristic in creamware vessels; and there appears to be much less subtlety in the shapes and bodies of the pots - they tend to be heavier in body and much less refined in their general appearance. Indeed these earlier wares are much closer to the wares of Thomas Whieldon than are the later Greatbatch wares. There is a great variation of often intricate moulded designs, although the basket-trellis-and-fruit, cauliflower, pineapple and melon wares are still represented. The kiln furniture, too, is slightly different. Salt-glazes saggars are much more common and the earthenware saggars have triangular holes in the sides for supports, in contrast to the later circular holes, and ring stilts are more numerous. However, despite these differences, there is probably some connection between the pre-dump layers and the dump itself. We would, of course, like to be able to prove that the pre-dump pottery is the early produce of Greatbatch's Lane Delph factory which came into existence in 1764, but it is extremely unlikely that we will be able to do so. Indeed, we are very unlikely to be able to attribute this early pottery to any known potter as backstamps are but rarely used, and even then they are geometric designs and not initials, and no pieces of printed ware have been recovered. We would like very much to learn more about the early wares of Greatbatch, but this may only be possible once we are able to locate the site of his earlier factory at Lower Lane, Fenton (c. (?)1759 - 1764).

We are now, of course, in a position to identify with some degree of certainty the wares of William Greatbatch. The importance of this lies in the fact that a great many of the wares of Greatbatch have been attributed, because of their style, to other centres of the ceramic industry throughout the country, especially to Leeds, thus detracting from the achievements of the

Staffordshire potters at this period. It is only in the light of the results of this excavation that we are able, for the first time, to realize just how wrong our ideas of the period and its ceramic industry are, and to recognize the great achievements of our own potters. It is perhaps wrong to consider Wedgwood as the father of English ceramics when he had predecessors and contemporaries of the calibre of Whieldon and Greatbatch. We do, in fact, know from historical sources that much of Wedgwood's early ware was supplied to him by Greatbatch, and such has been his role in subsequent records: a supplier of biscuit ware to the great Wedgwood. We are now able to show just how great a potter Greatbatch was in his own right and the number of WG backstamps on his plates would suggest that the name of William Greatbatch was well known in the English ceramics market of the later 18th century.

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West Midlands Archæology

in 1980

ABBEYDORE, Hereford and Worcester

Architectural recording at Church of St. Mary SO 387 304

The City of Hereford Archaeology Committee was commissioned by the Department of the Environment to make an archaeological survey of the surviving pier and arch of the southern nave arcade. The survey was in advance of major repair works which were required because of a recent fall of masonry which had been caused partly by the elements and partly by deep-rooted shrubs.

The Abbey, for Cistercian monks, was founded about 1147 but none of the surviving masonry appears to be of that date. The building of the abbey was apparently continuous from about the middle of the 12th century until about 1200-1210. It is suggested that at least two bays of the nave were begun about 1180 (RCHM, I, 1931: 1-9). The abbey was suppressed in 1536, and in 1633 John, Viscount Scudamore restored the eastern arm and transepts for use as a parish church. A restoration was carried out between 1895 and 1904 under the direction of R.W. Paul who also excavated parts of the site.

The nave as finally completed was ten bays long. It has been entirely destroyed except for the East respond and first column of the North arcade, the East respond and first column of the South arcade with the arch between them.

The survey comprised the following:

A site plan showing the relationship of the two surviving columns to the existing West wall of the church and the disposition of known graves in the immediate area; measured elevations of the North and South side of the single remaining bay showing each stone and a measured elevation of the present West wall of the church showing the relationship of the existing South arcade to the filled nave and aisle arches.

The survey has indicated the extent of the buttressing work and has raised some doubt about the positioning of the springing-stones for the aisle-vault. It has also indicated that the opening above the arch of which fragments only remain may not be a clearstorey but could have led directly from the nave into the upper part of the aisle.

R. Shoosmith

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Roman Road at Ryknild Street

SP 085 582

An aerial photograph taken by Arnold Baker in 1957 appeared to show two divergent sets of roadside ditches in the playing field of Alcester Grammar School, to the north of the town, and the laying of a new gas main along the south side of the field in August 1980 provided an opportunity to investigate. Part of the trench for the pipe was excavated by hand, and the line of Ryknild Street was located at about SP 0849 5810. Part of the earliest cobbled surface of a road survived in good condition at its western edge. Beyond this was a shallow ditch. The surface itself had been cut by a second ditch belonging to a later surface, about 8 m wide, which was poorly preserved. Ditches on the east side of the road were not located. They may not have existed here (the photograph is unclear on this point), or they may have been removed by a field drain which badly disturbed this part of the trench.

A second road was found at the eastern end of the trench at about SP 0858 5812. This was 10 m wide between roadside ditches, and had only one thin gravel surface resting on clay subsoil (Ryknild Street lay over sands and gravels). This road heads towards the River Arrow at the point where it is crossed by the former Alcester-Stratford railway line. Its route thereafter is unknown. There was no dating evidence for either of the roads, though both are assumed to be Roman.

In the course of observation during building extensions at 30 Birmingham Road (c. SP 0853 5780) in July, a pit containing a small amount of second-century pottery and building material was found. This was considered to lie just east of the line of Ryknild Street, and may suggest ribbon development along the road north of the nucleus of the Roman town.

Paul Booth

ALVELEY, Shropshire

Former Quarry at SO 763 858

A quarry discovered by Mr. Jim Childs some years ago was visited. It is situated high on one of the ridge sides of a deep "V" shaped valley, which embraces a stream at its base, the stream joining the River Severn at HAMPTON LOADE. The ground is afforested and overgrown with fern and suchlike at this time of year. The site yielded at least six large circular stones with a diameter of 69-70 inches, and were of variable thickness, 9-14 inches. The flat surfaces bore tool marks, the sides were smooth. Of interest was a line of nine rock marks arising from the splitting of the stone from the rock face. All the marks were 12 inches in length, 12 inches apart, and one inch in width. The area has a history of stone working over a considerable period, a quarry working as late as 1920.

The stone appears to have been in demand early in the last century for hearths for blast furnaces as it is capable of resisting much heat. Sir. R. Murchison mentions it in 1839 as being quarried for grindstones for polishing BIRMINGHAM gun barrels and that grindstones from a few pounds to over three tons were made. It was also employed in the construction of churches, bridges and the dressing of similar buildings.

E.W. Tipler

Reference: VCH (Shropshire) I: 449APLEY CASTLE, Shropshire

Documentary and Field Survey

SJ 6513

A survey comprising the study of photographic, cartographic and documentary evidence and a topographic survey was commissioned by Telford Development Corporation in advance of a building programme and possible renovation of the 14th century castle building. Fig. 19 summarises the archaeological remains.

Val E. Turner

Birmingham University Field
Archaeology Unit

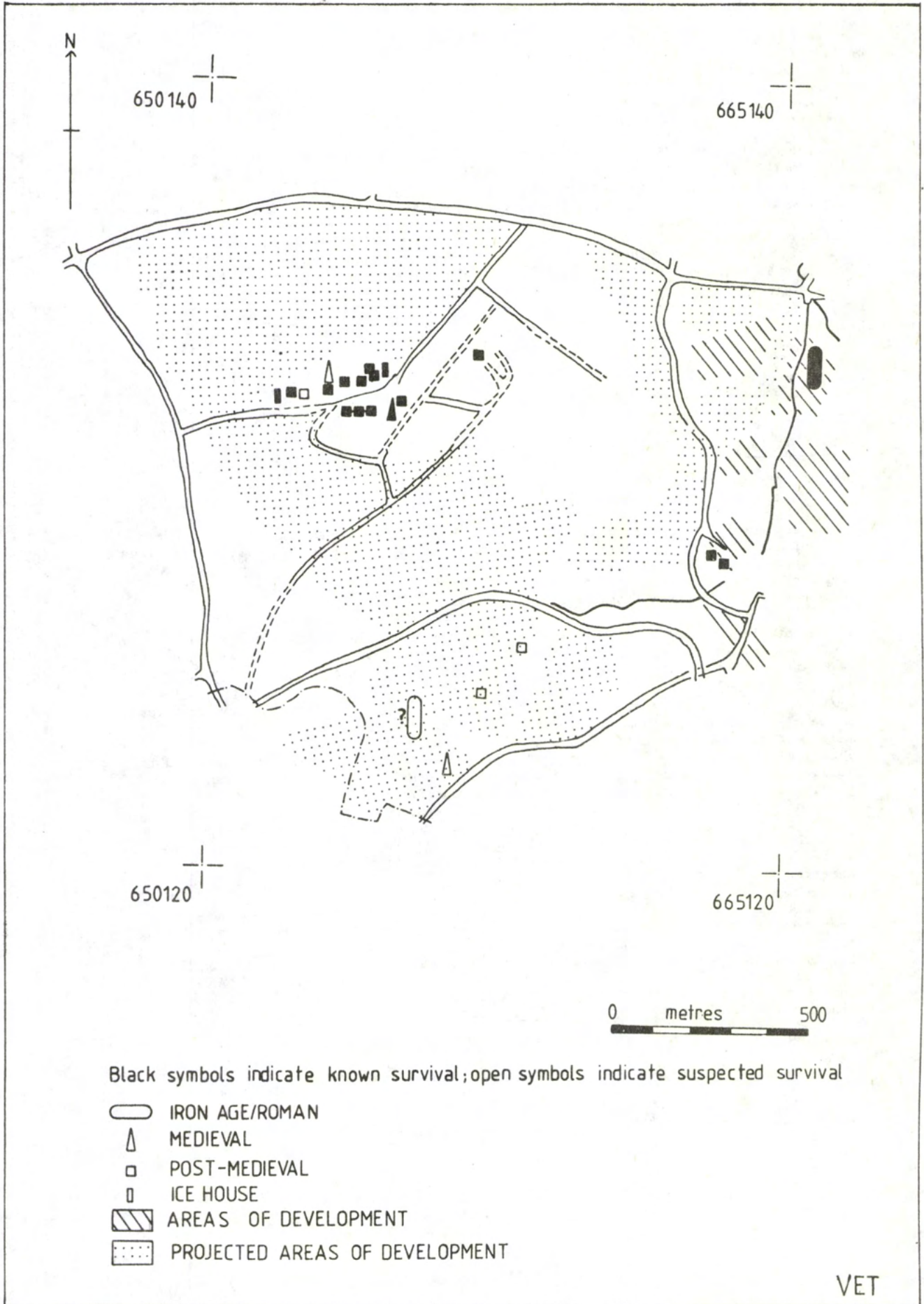


Fig. 19: APLEY: Archaeological Remains. For location, see Fig. 12 (Turner)

AVON VALLEY, Warwickshire

Documentary and Field Survey

SP 15

Work with University of Birmingham Extramural-class students continues, with further field work being carried out this session in the parish of Ettington. A measured plan has been produced for the deserted medieval village site of Whitchurch. Although the examination in the field of suspected deserted village sites is only a small part of the work carried out with this group, detailed measured surveys have now been produced for five such sites and a sixth is in progress. Emphasis is placed, however, upon analysing the role of each site within a wider parish setting and the majority of parishes in this area have been found to contain a number of early-established and subsidiary settlements.

Della Hooke

ARROW VALLEY, Warwickshire

Documentary and Field Survey

SP 0862

Field survey work carried out on behalf of Warwick County Museum has again formed part of a study of the Arrow Valley. In addition to those parishes noted in previous reports, a detailed survey has now been completed for the parish of Spernall (p. 108) and work is continuing in the parishes of Coughton and Sambourne, again involving University of Birmingham Extramural class students.

A notable feature of the area is the evidence for the large-scale use of water resources and water-power up to the 19th century (see fig. 20). No fewer than seven separate water-mill sites have been noted along the River Arrow in the four-mile stretch through Studley, Spernall, Sambourne and Coughton, with a number of additional sites known on tributary streams. Substantial field evidence only survives, however, for those mills which continued in use into relatively recent times. All of the mills were used originally to grind corn and 'three water corn mills' are recorded at the Priory Mills in Studley in the 19th century. The mill at Spernall was converted to fulling in 1675 and many of the others, too, were converted to industrial usage, particularly to providing power for needle manufacture in the 18th century and especially for needle-scouring. An iron-working site noted by Henry Beighton (Beighton, 1725) near Manor Farm in Morton Bagot in the early 18th century appears to have been similar to that located at Ipsley Forge, where pig iron was being converted into wrought iron bar. A number of rectangular ponds and several leats survive.

Although fishing was carried out in the River Arrow, three major fishpond complexes are known to have existed in the study area, all lying adjacent to the river. A series of rectangular ponds lay to the south of Studley Priory, a similar series to the north-east of Washford Mill may have been constructed by the Knights Templars and a third series lay to the south of Spernall church. All incorporated a number of interconnected ponds and leats. Other fishponds were associated with the manorial site at Oldberrow.

Della Hooke

Beighton, H. 1725: A Mapp of Warwick-shire (2nd edn.)

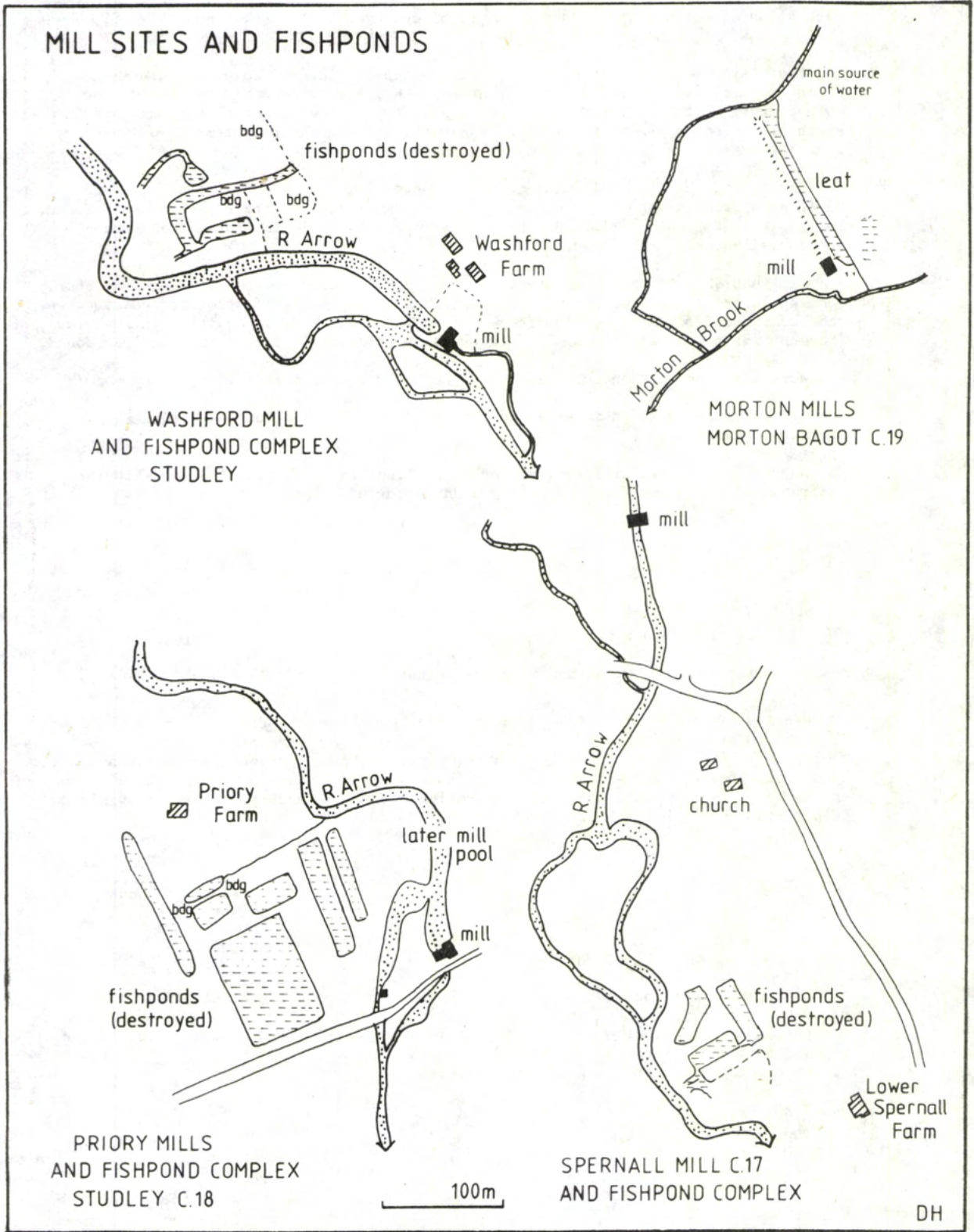


Fig. 20: ARROW VALLEY: Mills and fishponds (Hooke)

BAGINTON, West Midlands County

Excavation of Roman occupation and record of medieval house at The Row SP347 746

Excavation commenced in April 1979, under the auspices of Coventry Museum's Field Archaeology Section, in advance of a new housing complex at the rear of the late 19th century cottages (fig. 2). The site, 550 m south-east of the Lunt and 50 m south of the Saxon cemetery, is being excavated with the help of members of Coventry and District Archaeological Society on Sundays only.

The aim of the excavation was to try to establish the extent of the Roman and Saxon occupation of the Baginton plateau. Of the latter no trace has yet been found, but positive evidence of 1st and 2nd century occupation, in the form of a ditched enclosure, has been recovered.

Six rubbish pits have been excavated inside the enclosure, one of which was nearly 3 m in diameter. All of the pits contained vast quantities of decorated coarse ware, some Samian and mortaria. The large pit in T.3 contained, in addition, nine large fragments of brick and tile. In T.2 evidence of a small, timber building was found.

Work will continue on this site until building work commences.

All finds and related material are stored in the Herbert Museum, Jordan Well, Coventry: ACC/No. 82/28.

Number 12 The Row, Baginton, an early 17th century, single cell house with large external gable chimney has been surveyed and recorded by Dr. N. Alcock.

Margaret Rylatt

BECKFORD, Hereford and Worcester

Analysis of extensive excavation on gravel site SO 984 364 HWCW 359

Results of excavations 1975-79 on the Iron Age and Romano-British settlement site at Beckford are now being prepared for publication. Work undertaken during 1979-80 has included the analysis of the site stratigraphy (by David Cranstone), examination of the late Iron Age and Romano-British pottery (Helen Rees and Roberta Tomber), work on the Iron Age pottery (Deborah Ford) and the preparation of archive and publication drawings (Wendy Riddich and Deborah Ford).

J. Wills

Hereford and Worcester County Museum

Biological Analysis, BECKFORD

Work has been continuing with the identification of charred cereals from the round-house which was found in the last season of excavation. Also work progresses on the pollen diagram from the samples of peat in an adjacent field. The dates for the top and bottom of this profile are 940 A.D. and 1800 B.C. respectively. This should give a clear picture of changing vegetation while the site was occupied.

S. Colledge

Birmingham Archaeological Laboratory

BAGINTON - THE ROW 1979-1980.

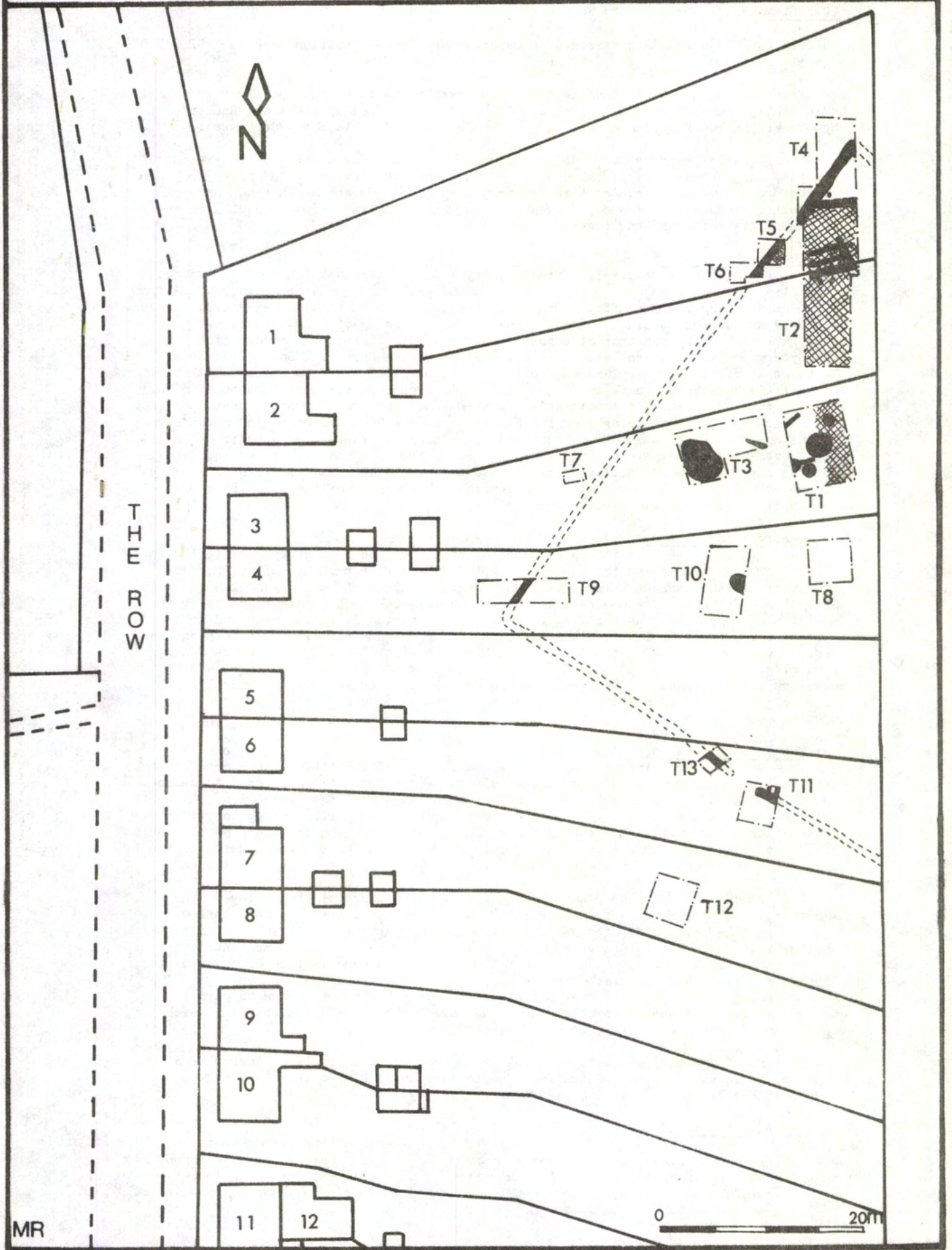


Fig. 21: BAGINTON, The Row: Site of Excavations 1979-1980 (Rylatt)

BORDESLEY ABBEY, Hereford and Worcester

Interim report on the 12th season of excavation and post-excavation work SP 045 686

This was the most ambitious season yet undertaken, with over 50 people taking part, principally students and staff from the Universities of Reading, York and Rochester New York; the work extended over five weeks from late July to early September.

Considerable progress was made on the preparation for publication of the second monograph on the east end of the church. The remaining levels of the Presbytery and further graves of the north-eastern cemetery were excavated and a start was made on the Valley Transept. The major excavation was however, the resumption of work on the Industrial Site and the lower end of the Valley.

The Presbytery

The lowest builders' levels of the primary phase of the east end were excavated, consisting of thin layers of redeposited clay and pebbles, the latter partly waste from those used in the cobble rafts. The pre-monastic ground surface was examined. There was evidence of the burning of scrub prior to the beginning of church building. A remarkable discovery was that of a cobble raft extending across the middle of the Presbytery in line with the east wall foundations of the North and South Transepts. This was absolutely primary and was sealed by the earliest builders levels. Although of full width (1.7 m) and depth (0.3 m) the raft never supported any structure or wall, and was in other words not load-bearing or even functional. It must be envisaged that the entire N-S raft extending from the NE corner of the North Transept to the SE corner of the South Transept was set out and laid down in one operation, as a major N-S axial line, even though it was known that only its outer sections would carry walls. While such an energy-consuming operation might have been regarded as a desirable first step in the establishment of the plan of the church, in the sense of a massive base plan, a symbolic interpretation cannot be ruled out.

The eastern cemetery

More graves were excavated outside the NE corner of the Presbytery principally in the angle between this and the North Transept. These were probably all of period 2 or later; further graves below, still unexcavated, may be of earlier date. Several new features were observed in these graves. One with wooden boards over the skeleton - a type previously believed to be only of period 1, sealed tile and is therefore of c.1200 A.D. or later; it also had a red sandstone 'pillow'. The others had respectively an iron and a copper alloy buckle, the first 'grave goods' to be found at Bordesley. Arm positions included one in the 'praying' position and there was evidence of disturbance of one grave by another while limbs were still articulated by sinew or flesh. For the first time, the skeletons were seen in situ by 'bone specialists'.

The Valley Transept

This was the beginning of a systematic examination of the 'three landscapes' of the Arrow Valley, the pre-monastic, monastic, and post-monastic. It is hoped to define the changes in the environment and morphology associated with the Cistercians, and with the post-medieval abandonment; and the extent to which the surface morphology is of medieval or later date. A trench 7 x 1 m was dug, beginning on the steep south edge of the valley. One aim was to locate any leat which might have carried water to the great mill pond for the postulated water mill associated with the Industrial Site.

The trench revealed a deep water course close to the edge of the valley, which was carrying a stream (presumably the Red Ditch) in medieval times, since there was water-worn tile, slag and pottery among the water-laid gravels. It is uncertain whether this was a natural riverbed which remained open in medieval times until the stream was diverted elsewhere, or whether it represents a canalisation of the Red Ditch similar to that postulated for the Arrow on the north side of the valley. At some point in the late medieval period (or possibly later) it ceased to carry water and silted up and was overlaid by a bank of clay of uncertain function, which forms a prominent surface feature.

Members of the Environmental Archaeology Unit of the University of York paid a short visit to examine exposed sections and to take samples from the old dried-up course of the River Arrow in the middle of the valley.

The Industrial Site

Excavation was resumed here to investigate the earthworks interpreted as the water-mill, the wheel pit and associated sluices, as well as the industrial workshops of the monastery indicated by earlier excavation. As the first stage of a long-term programme work continued on the 10 m square abandoned 10 years ago (Area A), and in addition an adjacent area of similar size to the west was started.

Area A

In 1970 excavation here had stopped at a laid cobble surface which was associated with an industrial workshop. This surface was removed this season and two phases of apparently pre-industrial occupation were found. In the southern half of the area evidence for a massive timber building included post holes containing at the base extremely well preserved squared posts, one measuring 30 cm x 20 cm in section. This building was associated with a pebble surface and a 2m wide ditch running diagonally across the site with a thick organic fill.

The character of this pre-industrial, but still monastic occupation is at present problematic; it may be necessary to revive old hypotheses of an eastern gateway to the precinct, with for example, stables.

A post-medieval land drain had cut through the area and showed that there was at least 50 cm of silt below this occupation. This silt contained roof tile suggesting that the level had accumulated since c.1200.

Area B

The adjacent Area B, is within 8 m of the wheel-pit of the mill. The turf and top-soil was removed by hand to reveal a series of silt layers deposited during flooding of the valley and by erosion of the valley and by erosion of the mill pond earthworks.

A pebble path had been laid on top of these silts; this included a sherd of Cistercian ware, the latest pottery to come from the site.

In the souther half of the site the silt had accumulated around the remains of part of a large building, interpreted as the latest mill on the site. This building was supported on sandstone pads, the corner stone a chamfered block 52 cm square. To judge from differential wear patterns in the latest floor surface (of laid cobbles), some internal stone blocks may have supported machinery rather than part of the structure.

The juxtaposition of the large triangular mill pond and the industrial site has always predisposed us to interpret the mill as providing power to operate machinery such as trip hammers and bellows for the monastic workshops. However, the incorporation of two pieces of shaped millstone grit, one certainly part of a millstone, into a pebble surface adjacent to the building suggests that this mill, or a predecessor, may also have ground corn.

Dating evidence for this mill building can only come from excavation of the associated floor levels in the 1981 season. Next year it is planned to open the three adjacent 10 m squares in order to expose and excavate the entire building.

Display

There have been important steps towards the creation of a museum in the valley. A Trust has been formed, and a study has been made by Robin Wade Associates. The intention is to integrate the Abbey and the Forge Mill into a scheme of museum display and explication. Already the Forge Mill mill-wheel has been rebuilt, and should be in running order before the end of the year. It is hoped that the Industrial Site will provide the link between medieval Redditch and its modern industry. This new interest in the whole Arrow Valley historic complex should ensure the future of the Abbey and its archaeology.

P.A. Rahtz
S.M. Hirst
G.G. Astill
D. Walsh

University of York

BROMSGROVE, Hereford and Worcester

Excavation in Sugarbrook Manor

SO 9575 6818

The reflooring of an outer room at Sugarbrook Manor (listed building 3894) was preceded by a limited excavation. The purpose was to tie in any archaeological information gained with a survey of the 16th century timber-framed building, carried out by Richard Harris. Despite the limited area involved, excavation exposed an early occupation area concerned with metalworking activity and at least one abandonment phase due to flooding prior to the present building.

M. Ashton-Cooper

COOKLEY, Hereford and Worcester

Pollen Diagram from deposit at SO 838 799

In 1978 a large trench was dug across the valley of the river Stour at Cookley, near Kidderminster, Worcestershire for the laying of a water main. The 2.5 m section exposed peaty sediments which are being studied for plant and insect remains (the latter by P.J. Osborne). The pollen results so far show a post-glacial sequence of vegetational development, and, of more archaeological significance, clearance.

The pre-Neolithic woodland of this area appears to have consisted of a mosaic of different types of forest on the uplands, according to aspect and soil. This would have included some of the most westerly lime woods, together with oak and elm. The valley floor seems to have been thick with alder and perhaps oak.

Forest clearance seems to have proceeded in a number of stages, as also found from other sites. First there is the apparent Neolithic "Elm Decline" clearance, although the small amounts of elm do not themselves decline very much in this example. Cereal pollen appears at this level, showing that there was probably arable farming at this early stage, perhaps favoured by the light sandy soils of the area which would have been easy to work.

There is an apparent resurgence of some woodland at around the level dated to about 700 a.d., which might correspond with Dark Age or Saxon lack of settlement. Further clearance after this is followed by the beginning of a curve of cornflower pollen, which may be a sign that this level represents part of the medieval period.

This pollen diagram is the first one from Worcestershire, for the Midlands generally has few sites where there are successions of suitable sediments for pollen analysis. It therefore has great potential for showing the sequence of land use over the years in this area. Further results from pollen, insects, seeds and radiocarbon will add more detail to this outline picture.

James Greig

Birmingham Archaeological Laboratory

COVENTRY, West Midlands County

Excavation of medieval defensive ditch at New Law Courts, Earl Street SP 336 787

Excavations commenced in February 1980, under the auspices of Coventry Museums' Field Archaeology Section, in advance of the new city law-courts complex.

The primary aim of the project was to locate and examine a short length of the 'Red Ditch', a medieval defence work, in its southern course, (Rylatt 1977). Initial machine stripping of the overburden revealed considerable post-medieval destruction, particularly by sewers and successive brick and pile structures. Subsequent excavation has been carried out by hand with the help of members of Coventry and District Archaeological Society on Sundays.

At a depth of 4 metres below the modern ground surface, the ditch has been located and is under examination (fig. 22). It is approximately 6 metres in width but the full depth has yet to be ascertained. On present evidence, the Ditch was infilled by c.1350 and two substantial sandstone structures were then erected on and partly in the fill (A and B). Both buildings suffered from subsidence and were partly rebuilt on a number of occasions. A is stratigraphically a little earlier than B. Despite the filling of the Ditch, the name and line were not lost, as a culvert one metre wide was left to allow free flow of water - this is evidenced in many documents as late as the 1970's. The land and buildings probably formed part of the property of the Schipleys, a wealthy family living at the front of the site in Earl Street, in the early 1400's, but their exact function remains obscure.

A full documentary study of the site and the Red Ditch is being prepared for the report by Mrs. E. and Dr. A. Gooder.

All finds and related material are deposited in the Herbert Museum, Jordan Well, Coventry: ACC/No.80/265.

Michael A. Stokes

Rylatt, M. 1977: Coventry: Archaeology and Development (Coventry Museums)

COVENTRY, West Midlands County

Salvage recording of medieval defensive ditch at Kirby House SP 335 787

During construction work immediately north of Kirby House, Little Park Street, Coventry, four pile holes produced eight sections through the Red Ditch. There was also a suggestion of a second ditch running Northwards towards Hay Lane. Nearer to Salt Lane the Red Ditch was c. 8 m deep and up to c. 8 m wide at the surface, while nearer to Little Park Street, the Ditch was considerably shallower, being only c. 4 m deep but up to c. 8 m wide. The change came abruptly between two pile holes only 0.5 m apart. Pottery recovered from the primary silt dated to the 13th/14th centuries. All finds are in the Herbert Museum.

Margaret Rylatt,
Coventry Museums

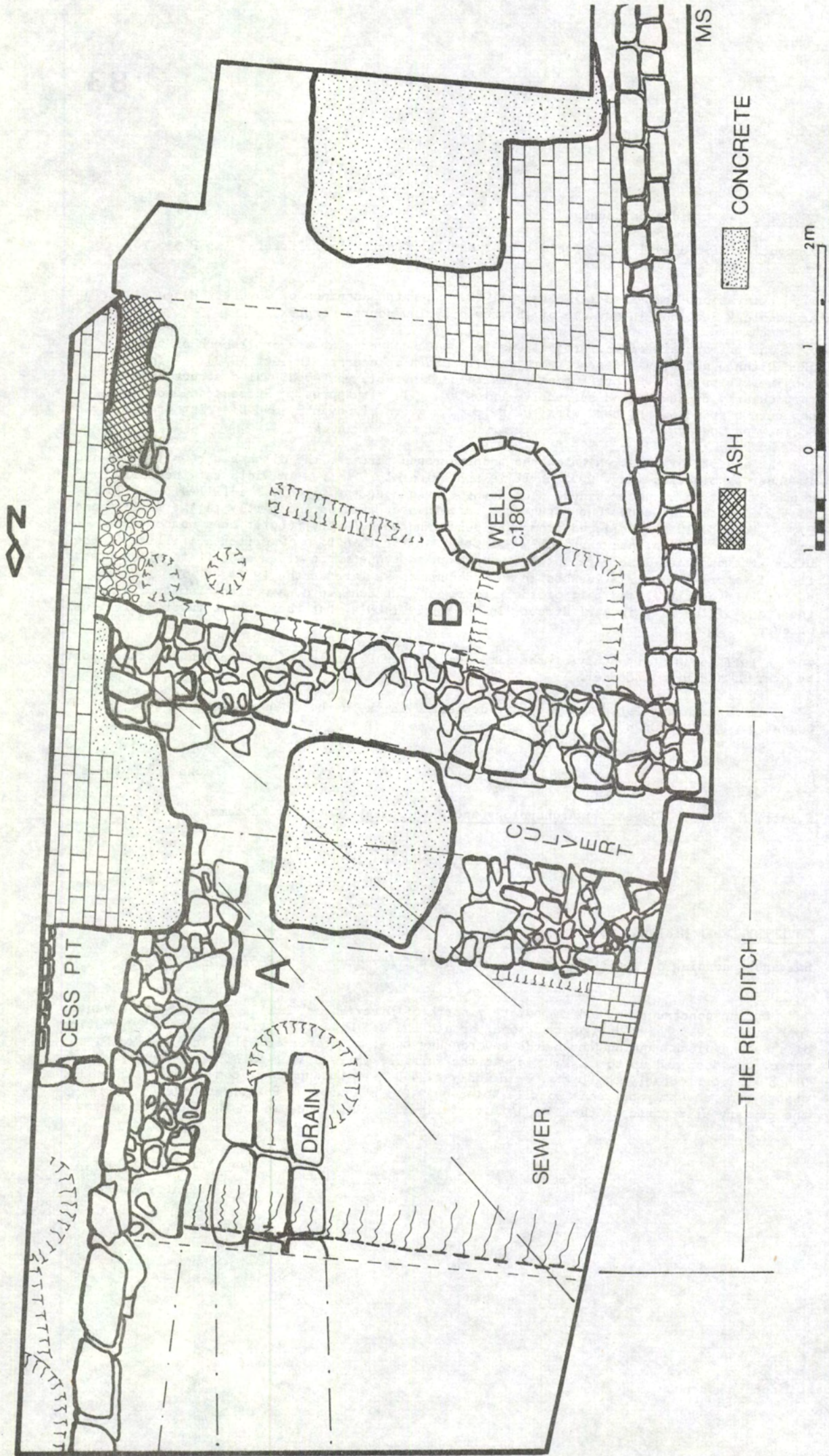


Fig. 22: COVENTRY, Law Courts: Medieval defensive ditch ("The Red Ditch") and later structures (Stokes)

DROITWICH, Hereford and Worcester

Excavation of Iron-Age to Medieval Sequence at Hanbury Street SO 9025 6341 HWCW 681

Proposals to develop a large area within the grounds of the Royal George Buildings, prompted trial excavations funded by Hereford and Worcester County Council, the site owner. Subsequent work, carried out on behalf of Wychavon District Council, Droitwich Town Council and the Department of the Environment has been limited to the examination of a 60 sq. metre area on the Hanbury Street frontage.

The earliest levels of the site remain to be investigated. However, possible Iron Age activity is suggested by a residual sherd of Malvernian pottery.

There are two tentative phases of Roman activity, which from a preliminary analysis of the pottery date to the late 2nd or early 3rd Century. The first phase consisted of deposits which had accumulated in an artificial terrace cut into the natural (Keuper Marl) slope. A series of soil dumps were sealed by worn cobbled areas possibly forming backyards.

In a second phase, an extensive deposit of carbonized grain and chaff was encountered, the interpretation of which will rest upon analysis by Susan Colledge. The deposit has no clear association with a structure. Fragments of millstone would indicate that milling was being carried out in the vicinity.

The finds comprise a wide range of pottery including continental imports of Samian, white ware flagons, mortaria and amphorae. A complete profile of a castor ware(?) cup decorated with an appliqué hunting scene was also recovered; severn valley ware and grey ware dominates the locally produced pottery.

Two items of great interest were found in residual contexts. An intaglio with an incised figure of Hercules(?) and a complete beaten bronze bowl of possible Roman workmanship.

A series of Post-Roman cobbled surfaces was investigated, the earliest of which appears to be associated with features dating to the 13th century. The latest surface probably formed a courtyard area adjacent to the Royal Hotel which occupied the site during the 19th Century.

D. Freezer

DROITWICH, Hereford and Worcester

Salvage recording at Vines Park SO 8989 6357 HWCW 3880

Observation of a north-south sewer trench excavated adjacent to the River Salwarpe, revealed 3rd - 4th Century Roman pottery associated with large wooden stakes driven through river gravels and silt, encountered at a depth of 4 metres below present ground level. The Roman level was sealed by alluvium $1\frac{1}{2}$ metres in depth. This deposit, examined by Professor F.W. Shotton, contained large quantities of shells.

This site, when related to other areas in the town where similar sequences have been observed (e.g. Evesons Yard, HWCW 680/SO 8957 6372) will have important implications for consideration of the topographical development of the Roman settlement.

D. Freezer

FAREWELL, Staffordshire

Documentary and architectural survey at Church of St. Bartholomew SK 083 116

Farewell is not mentioned in Domesday but sometime shortly after 1086 there existed a religious establishment of canons regular or hermits there. At the request of three of the brethren of Farewell, (Roger, Jeffry, and Robert), with the consent of the Chapter of Lichfield Cathedral, in 1140 A.D., their chapel was granted by Roger de Clinton, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, to a Priory of Benedictine Nuns, and dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin, the Bishop endowing it with a mill and various lands. His action was confirmed by Henry II, who gave them 40 acres of his Assarts in the forest of CANK. Henry III further enriched the Priory with the gift of more lands in Kings Bromley and elsewhere.

In 1527, at the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the Priory lands came into the possession of the See of Lichfield.

During the next two centuries, the Priory was allowed to fall into disrepair, and an etching by Perry made in 1744 A.D. (fig. 23) shows the chapel in a ruinous condition, with damaged roof, etc. It was built in stone, and had a wooden porch and bell-cote.

In 1747 A.D. an attempt was made to repair the chapel, and in doing so some coarse earthenware vessels were found in the south wall. The builders were able to repair and save the chancel end of the church, which retains its original stone construction, but the nave end of the chapel had to be re-built completely in brick, with the addition of a brick built square tower.

The new church was re-dedicated to St. Bartholomew. The church is an early example of the use of brick for church buildings, and the bond of the brickwork is unusual in having three, sometimes four stretchers to one header, not always laid in a recognisable pattern. The dimensions of the brick are $9\frac{1}{2}$ x $2\frac{1}{2}$ x $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The ground plan is about 22 ft. x 60 ft., which is about the same as the original Norman chapel.

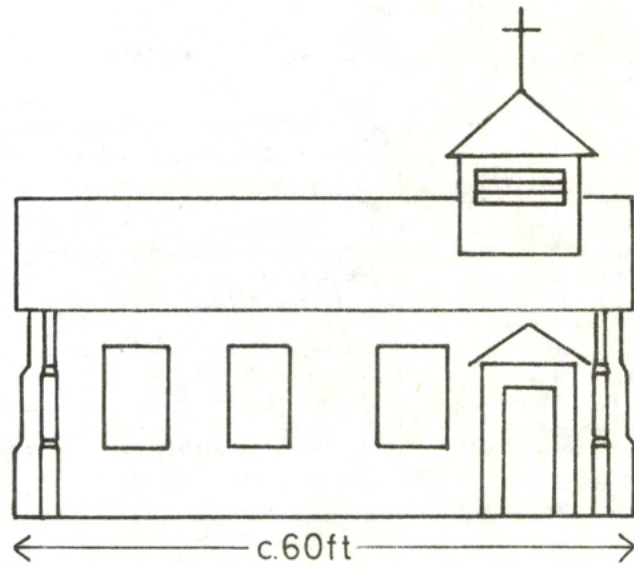
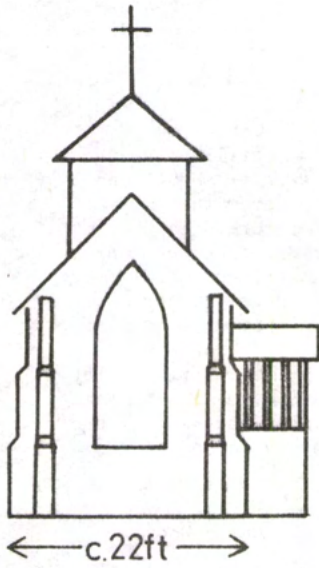
The chancel, little altered, contains on each side five stall seats, carved underneath, having on two of them the letters EH or R (in old flourished characters) perhaps the initials of Elizabeth Hilshawe, the last Prioress.

FAREWELL, according to Ekwall (1960) means "beautiful stream", and a stream still runs past the east end of the church. Just outside the south-west corner of the church-yard there is a muddied, silted up small pool, covered with slime and decaying vegetation, which may have been the site of a well, or the Priory fish-pond.

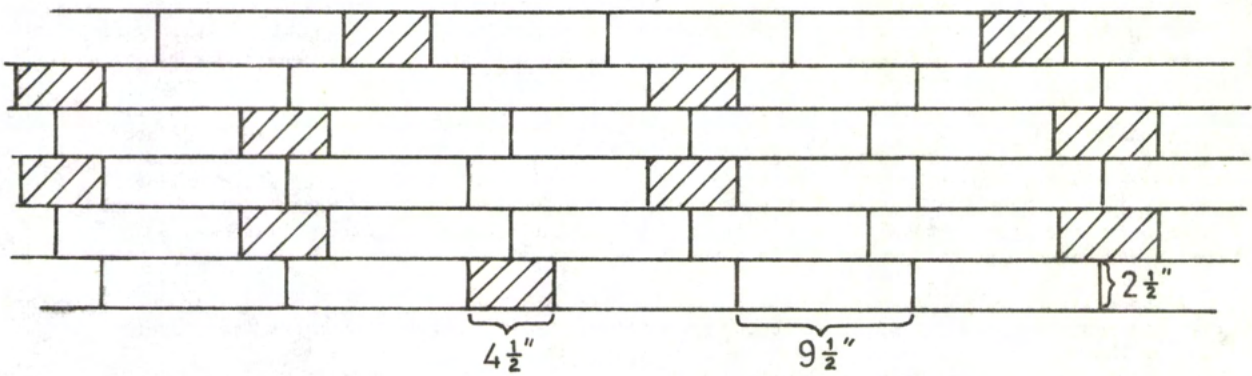
J.E.P. Metcalfe

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A



B

Fig. 23: FAREWELL, Church of St. Bartholomew. A: Sketch of etching by Perry made in 1744. B: Brick coursing of c.1747 (Metcalfe)

GRIMLEY, Hereford and Worcester

Early Medieval trackways in area SO 8461

A number of trackways in the west of Grimley parish are referred to in Charters (Birch, 1899: nos. 219, 1242; Robertson, 1956: 120). These features may still be identified in the field. Gerd wege may take its name from OE gerd 'a twig or shoot' and may have been 'a road made with faggots'. It approached Ockeridge wood from the direction of Sinton in Grimley parish where the field-name 'Yardway' was recorded in the 19th century (Tithe Award). Where it climbed up to heafucrycg - 'the ridge frequented by hawks', it became deeply hollowed, partly due to the action of running water, and still forms a wide hollow way in part followed by a public footpath. At the north-western corner of Grimley parish it joined the fif acana weg 'the five oaks way', which ran from east to west on the southern side of Ockeridge Wood. Linear banks and ditches beside this route may represent former parallel tracks. Further west, on the southern boundary of Little Witley parish, this road seems to have been known as the sylwecg or syllweg, 'the way made with logs', and it may be speculated whether these trackways were reinforced with timber and twigs where they crossed particularly muddy terrain in what appears to have been heavily wooded countryside.

Della Hooke

Charters:

W. de Gray Birch, Cartularium Saxonum (1885-1899) No. 219, No. 1242;A.J. Robertson, Anglo-Saxon Charters (2nd edn. 1956) 120.HANBURY, Hereford and Worcester

Documentary and Field Survey SO 9664

The first stage of a long-term investigation of the settlement and landscape history of a north Worcestershire parish was reported in last years' News Sheet. Work continued in the winter and spring of 1979-80. A detailed plan was made of the earthworks around the summit of Church Hill. This confirmed the site's identification as a hillfort, even though its plan still poses some problems. Earthmoving was observed at the Coach House site, which is near the church and immediately adjacent to the probable hillfort entrance. Part of an extensive depression seen in section had a lowest fill of apparently waterborne material which was overlain by loam with a RB sherd near its base. The feature seemed to be an occasional watercourse which had later been used as the main entry route into the hillfort. Other RB and medieval sherds were found in disturbed soil over much of the same site.

The hillfort is presumably the 'high fortification' of Hanbury's placename. For more than a century much RB material, including many coins, has been found within and immediately outside the hillfort, suggesting a Romano-British site of importance. The location of the 7th century minster within the hillfort points to a direct relationship, presumably a functional one, between these successive uses of the hilltop site.

Fieldwalking was done in the autumn and spring in several areas. This confirmed the RB date of a cropmark site in the west of the parish and located three new RB sites elsewhere. Some prehistoric flints were also found, as well as medieval and later material.

In the summer of 1980 some aerial observations were made (and photographs taken) which helped to clarify such problems as the course of the west-east Roman road. Two previously unknown cropmark sites were also seen.

The extramural students were able to bring the first stage of their documentary research to a conclusion, which allowed the compilation of a map of placenames, field names, etc. recorded in the medieval documents. Although only a small proportion of the topographical names mentioned in the records could be located on the modern map, a framework of the medieval topography has been reconstructed, including the location of the main open fields and some sites of houses.

Dr. M. Gelling examined the list of placenames compiled by the extramural students and was able to make a number of identifications and suggestions. For example, she confirmed that the name of Walmer Farm contains the OE element wahl (implying Welsh or British settlement); and she was able to add the identification of Dowle as a British name. She

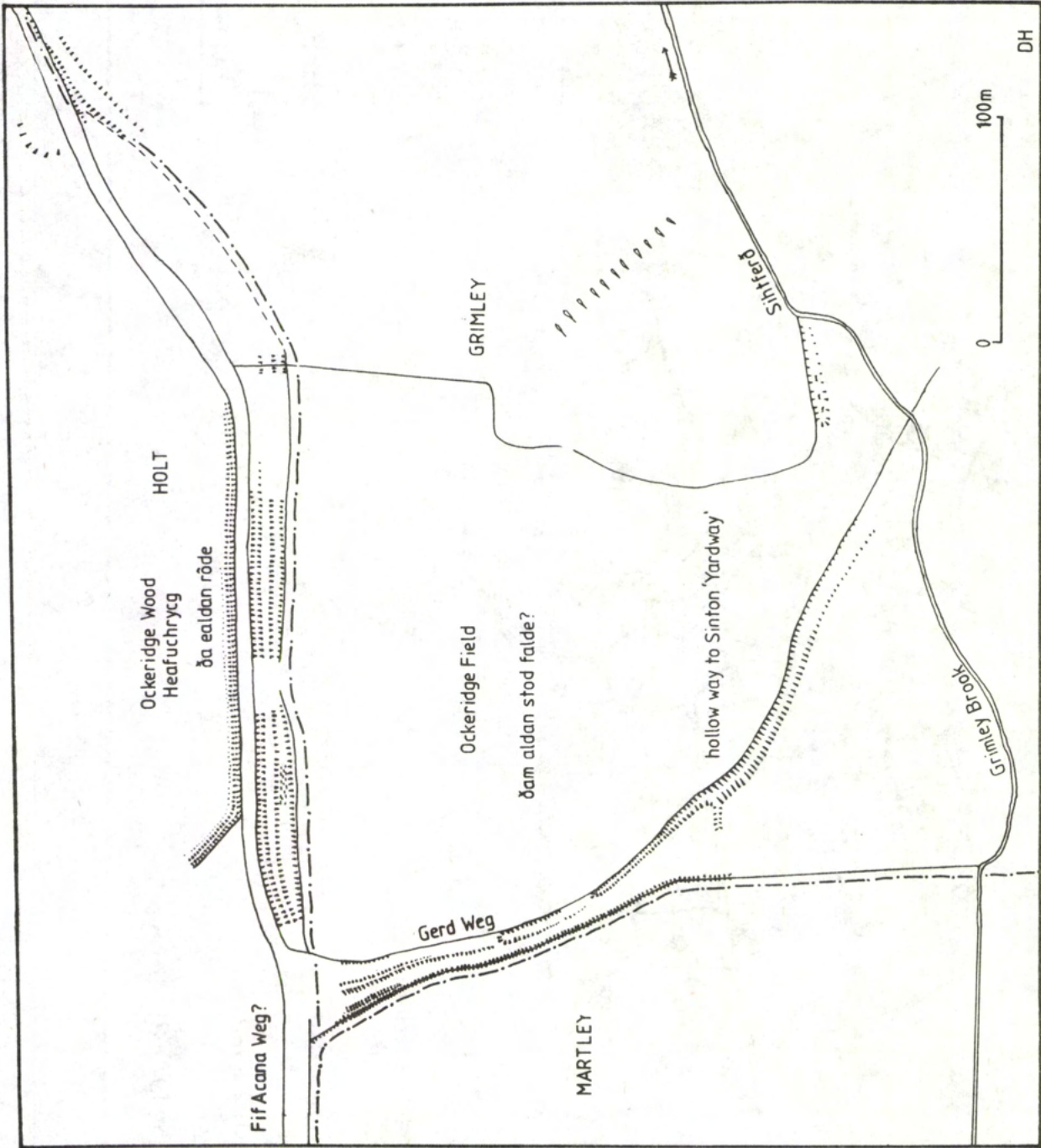


Fig. 24: GRIMLEY: Early Medieval trackways (Hooke)

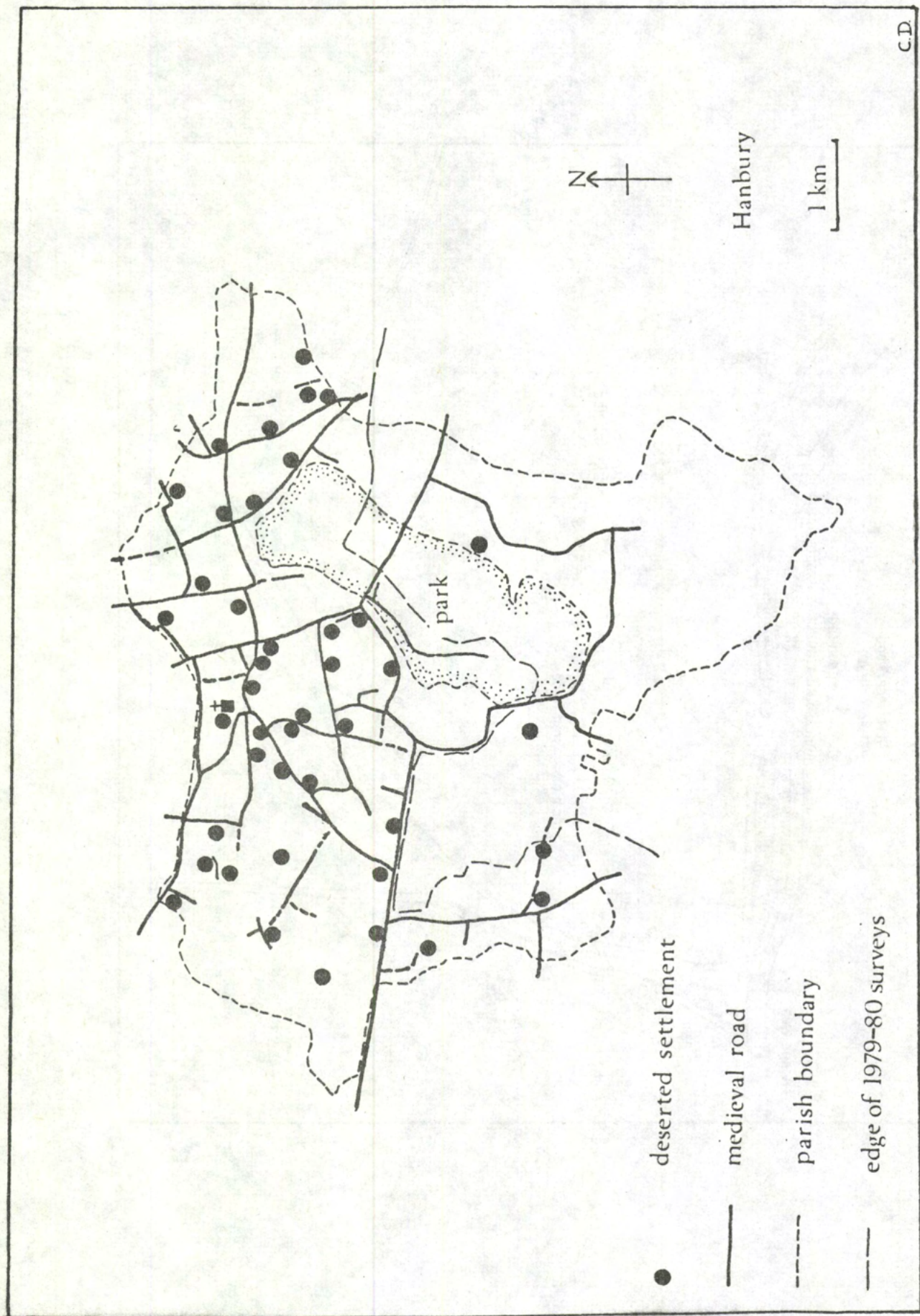


Fig. 25: HANBURY: Field survey (Dyer)

also pointed out the problem of identifying the Beanhall names of the area in relation to the endorsement of the Hanbury Charter of 836. The students again worked in small groups surveying the parish field by field, for two weeks. The work continued from the points reached in 1979, and the survey of the northern half of the parish was completed, i.e. north of the main Droitwich-Goosehill area and in the royal park.

The number of sites with evidence of settlement (mainly house platforms) has now been doubled, bringing the total to 30 such sites located in Hanbury so far. Most of these are dispersed settlements, but another concentration of house sites was found near Astwood Lane and further platforms near the Ditchford Bank hamlet. Two moated sites were investigated in detail, and a further two settlement sites seemed to be surrounded by major ditches which are now eroded or partially infilled.

Once again extensive systems of ridge and furrow were located in all parts of the area surveyed; but a new feature was the number of substantial lynchets found, as for example at Valley Farm, where at least three lie parallel to each other, and near to the church. It is possible that these features represent pre-medieval cultivation. A particularly complex system of fishponds was explored near Forest Lane, and another located near Skirgens Farm. More of the parish's network of holloways has been plotted, and traces of the Droitwich-Alcester Roman road, where it is no longer followed by the modern road, have been identified from the air and on the ground. Pottery scatters were found on two sites in the survey area. One near the Hall produced both RB and medieval sherds, and a great deal of RB pottery came from another site.

General problems:

1. The number of Romano-British sites now known in Hanbury is much greater than would previously have been expected. Two years ago only three sites were known in the parish; but now RB material has been found in 18 fields, representing perhaps 10 separate settlements. At present these settlements are known only from the western half of the parish, and it is tempting to relate them to an area of concentrated rural settlement around the town of Droitwich, possibly within a dependent territory. This and the later pattern of boundaries suggest that the eastern boundary of any such territory may have run through the area of the later parish of Hanbury. Moreover there may be a significant relationship between this territory, which we now know to have been occupied by a British population into the post-Roman period, and the area of the Anglo-Saxon royal estate of Feckenham the western limits of which intruded into Hanbury parish in the 11th century.
2. In eventually tracing the settlement history of Hanbury from the Roman to the later medieval period we are faced with a very real problem of identifying and dating settlement of the 4th-11th centuries. At present no pottery has been found in the area which seems to be any earlier than the 11th century; and in the whole west midlands region middle Saxon pottery is scarce or even non-existent. This makes studies of the Chalton-Wharram Percy type difficult to carry out. Placenames will be useful, but they are not likely to provide a substitute for sites clearly dated by pottery. Some deductions may be possible from identifying the old-settled areas from the documentary evidence of the 12th and later centuries. The features of the medieval parish which are likely to date from the pre-Conquest periods, such as developed areas of open field, demesne land, glebe land, etc., seem to be concentrated in the north west and centre of the parish, while the indications of late assarting are mainly in the south and east. More intensive fieldwalking than has been possible so far may of course completely alter this initial picture.
3. Last year we were not surprised to find many traces of ridge and furrow in Hanbury, suggesting that the former arable areas were very extensive. We were interested this year to find ridge and furrow in places where its presence might not have been expected, such as the area of common pasture in the north of the parish, the 'greens' associated with Goosehill and Mere Hall, and the royal park. In the case of the pastures and greens this may mean that the areas of common pasture recorded on the 1733 map had previously been used at least partly as arable. The royal park in existence by 1086 and still surviving as a park in 1591, may have been ploughed in ridges after it was broken up for agriculture in the early modern period; but it is possible that the park was not strictly reserved for non-agricultural purposes in the middle ages.

S.R. Bassett and C.C. Dyer
 School of History,
 University of Birmingham

HEN DOMEN, Montgomery

Excavation of Norman motte-and-bailey at SO 214 981

Since completion of the first excavation report (now in the press) work has proceeded at a number of points in the bailey.

The entrance

The cobbled surface and post positions which were bisected by the edge of the excavation have been removed. They probably represented the inner part of a gatehouse. A pebble surface lay underneath, filling a long narrow depression in the boulder clay subsoil. At the foot of the adjacent rampart slope, two lines of stones lay parallel to the pebble surface, and on the slope above were the remains of two truncated timber slots. These features again seem to represent the inner part of a gatehouse, but an overall plan cannot be recovered until the excavation is extended to include the whole of the entrance.

The defences

More post-holes and pits belonging to an earlier phase of the defences on the rampart were excavated. Like those previously discovered, they consisted of a palisade, a tower overlooking the entrance, and small rooms beneath the fighting platform. A further stretch of palisade trench was discovered, narrow and shallow, belonging to the defences excavated previously. Several of the pits excavated in 1980 suggest a rebuilding of the defences while the existing timbers remained in situ.

Further post-holes behind the defences on the east suggest some physical connection with the hall which lay adjacent, either for access from the hall to the rampart, or perhaps a covered alley between the two. This area must have had a planked floor, since it was occupied by a gully (see below).

A second gully behind the northern defences drained into a water cistern. This cistern had a complex history which is not yet fully understood. In its original form it appears to have been cut into the boulder clay subsoil, and at a later date was lined with a thick layer of clay.

Domestic buildings

a. The final traces of a clay wall building behind the northern rampart were removed. Darker occupation layers lay beneath, running southwards into the centre of the bailey. Examination of these layers did not proceed far, since they run underneath the rampart.

b. The large building immediately in front of the motte bridges had cut through a pebble surface. Removal of the latter revealed a shallow gully and a series of post-holes aligned obliquely to the later, overlying, large building. The edge of the pebble surface itself following this oblique line. These features belong to the earliest castle, perhaps being contemporary with the concentric stake fences behind the rampart, reflecting temporary structures which were soon succeeded by the impressive building in front of the bridges. This building was later rebuilt with a series of posts some three metres in front of its eastern wall, forming a portico or perhaps supporting a jettied upper storey. The massiveness of its foundations strongly suggests that it carried a first floor hall above an undercroft throughout its life.

c. The area to the east of this building contained a large number of small post and stake-holes, perhaps the support for planking (this is the steepest slope in the bailey), or perhaps the site of frequently replaced drying racks adjacent to the granary.

d. Four of the post-pits of the twelve post (or two six post?) granary were emptied. All were dug into the boulder clay subsoil. The remaining pits are still sealed by layers built up at the back of the rampart. Since these pits become visible only when the boulder clay subsoil is exposed, they are likely to have been dug very early in the life of the castle.

e. Dissection of the clay platform behind the eastern rampart has revealed a complex situation. It served to level the site where it sloped steeply, and was laid on top of the late pre-Conquest ploughsoil. The platform itself had sunk in places and been levelled up. Further features belonging to the hall which eventually occupied this site were revealed, including a small rectangular pit (a fire-pit?), a fragmentary pebble surface close to the hearth, and a line of stones parallel to the western wall which may mark the edge of a bench along it.

f. This last building had a narrower northern extension, with a gully to its east behind the rampart (see also The Defences, above). The northern part of this gully was a level trough which stopped short of an eight-foot-deep pit cut through the rampart into the boulder clay subsoil. This pit, which had no internal features, would have made an effective cold cellar, and it is tempting to see this area as the service end of the hall.

Dating

Some of the features examined are very early (see paragraphs b and d above), but the others date roughly from the first half of the twelfth century. It must be emphasised, however, that there is very little independent dating evidence, archaeological or historical, for the succession of structural phases on the site.

Progress of Excavation

Almost half of the area under examination has been reduced either to the boulder clay subsoil or to the late pre-Conquest ploughsoil which the Norman builders did not always remove from the site. The remaining archaeological deposits comprise a wide arc behind the rampart, the rampart itself, and the pre-castle features which earlier excavation has shown to lie under the rampart. At the present rate of progress, with a four week season each year, there is a minimum of five years work remaining in the area at present under examination.

P.A. Barker, University of Birmingham

R.A. Higham, University of Exeter

HEREFORD, Hereford and Worcester

Marsh and 10th century road in King Street

SO 5085 3980

A trench, some 2.4 m deep, was dug by workmen during October 1980 along King Street from a point in Broad Street, on the edge of the cathedral close, to the junction with Bridge Street. The trench, which averaged 0.7 m wide, and was in the southern part of the highway, was for telephone ducts. The total distance involved was about 110 m and as the excavation progressed along King Street the trench was rapidly shored, the ducts were installed and the trench refilled with clean gravel. Opportunities to observe the excavations were limited by the speed of the operation and consisted solely of the examination of the faces of the trench after the shoring had been put in place. A measured sketch was prepared of a length of 16 m of the south face of the trench.

King Street has a pronounced 'dip' between the cathedral and the northern end of Bridge Street with the lowest point close to the junction with Aubrey Street. The 'dip', which is of the order of 1.2 m, has been considered to reflect the line of the 'King's Ditch' first noted by Alfred Watkins (WATKINS 1920: 249-58) and examined by Heys and Norwood in 1958 (HEYS and NORWOOD 1958: 117-25). It was thought that the ditch may have separated the Bishop's fee from the King's fee or that it was an early defensive boundary for the city.

Excavations in the Bishop's Palace gardens in 1979 (SHOESMITH 1979: 61-2) indicated that the area near the junction of the two tennis courts was marshland at least until the 15th century. A similar result was obtained by Heys and Norwood when they dug behind the Bridge Street Methodist Chapel in 1958.

The trench along King Street confirmed these earlier observations and demonstrated that the marshy area was at least 50 m wide and that the total depth was greater than the 2.4 m excavated. The lowest 0.7 m consisted of a heavy, waterlogged, black silt which was covered by a series of large branches and small tree trunks laid at right angles to the line of King Street. The wood was still in a good state of preservation and is considered to represent the earliest road surface so far discovered in Hereford. It may date to the 10th century or earlier and should represent the earliest attempt to cross the marshy area to the west of the cathedral by a road. The surviving street plan of Hereford indicates that King Street, with its continuation of St. Nicholas Street to the west, and possible continuation to the east as Castle Street, is one of the earliest roads in the city.

Above the timber roadway were lenses of silt and several layers of large stone and gravel which apparently represent the further consolidation of the surface of the road across this marshy area throughout the historic period.

Scraps of leather shoes were found in the black silt layers but apart from them there was no dateable material. Samples of the silts were taken together with examples of the timbers. It is hoped that arrangements can be made to obtain radiocarbon dating and possibly dendrochronological dating. The waterlogged silts may contain seeds and shells which could give an indication of the vegetation cover of the area before the road was laid.

R. Shoesmith

City of Hereford Archaeology Committee

References:

- Heys, F.G. and Norwood, J.F.L., 1958 Excavations on the supposed line of King's Ditch, Hereford, Trans Woolhope Natur Fld Club, XXXVI, 117-25
- Shoosmith, R., 1979 Trial Excavations in the Bishop's Palace Gardens, Hereford, West Midlands Annual Archaeological Newsheet, 22, 61-2
- Watkins, A., 1920 The King's Ditch of the City of Hereford, Trans Woolhope Natur Fld Club, XXIII, 249-58

HUNNINGHAM, Warwickshire

Moated site at SP 371 680

Excavation on the moated site has continued (cf. WMANS 21 (1978) 95; WMANS 22 (1979) 77), but neither the plan nor character of the building on the moated platform is yet clear. The evidence so far suggests a Dutch barn, the walls consisting simply of timber uprights resting on red sandstone blocks, and the roof of timber and clay tiles. The building must have been carefully dismantled, leaving behind only broken tile, stone fragments and some nails. Dating is given by the pottery, broadly 13th century. It remains a question why (or whether) the moat was constructed for such a building; in any case when the remaining third of the platform has been excavated this interpretation may need to be revised.

A small area of the buried topsoil under the platform is being examined. It is a grey clayey soil, and has so far yielded one grey Roman sherd, one neolithic leaf-shaped arrow head and another struck flake, but so far nothing post-Roman.

On the NE side of the platform, facing the church and village, there is a possible entrance. A line of large red sandstone blocks form a disturbed revetment along the edge of the moat; but waterlogging has temporarily prevented further work in that area.

Documentary research on the parish, as well as a house-to-house enquiry in the village, are progressing. A comprehensive field-walking programme is also planned.

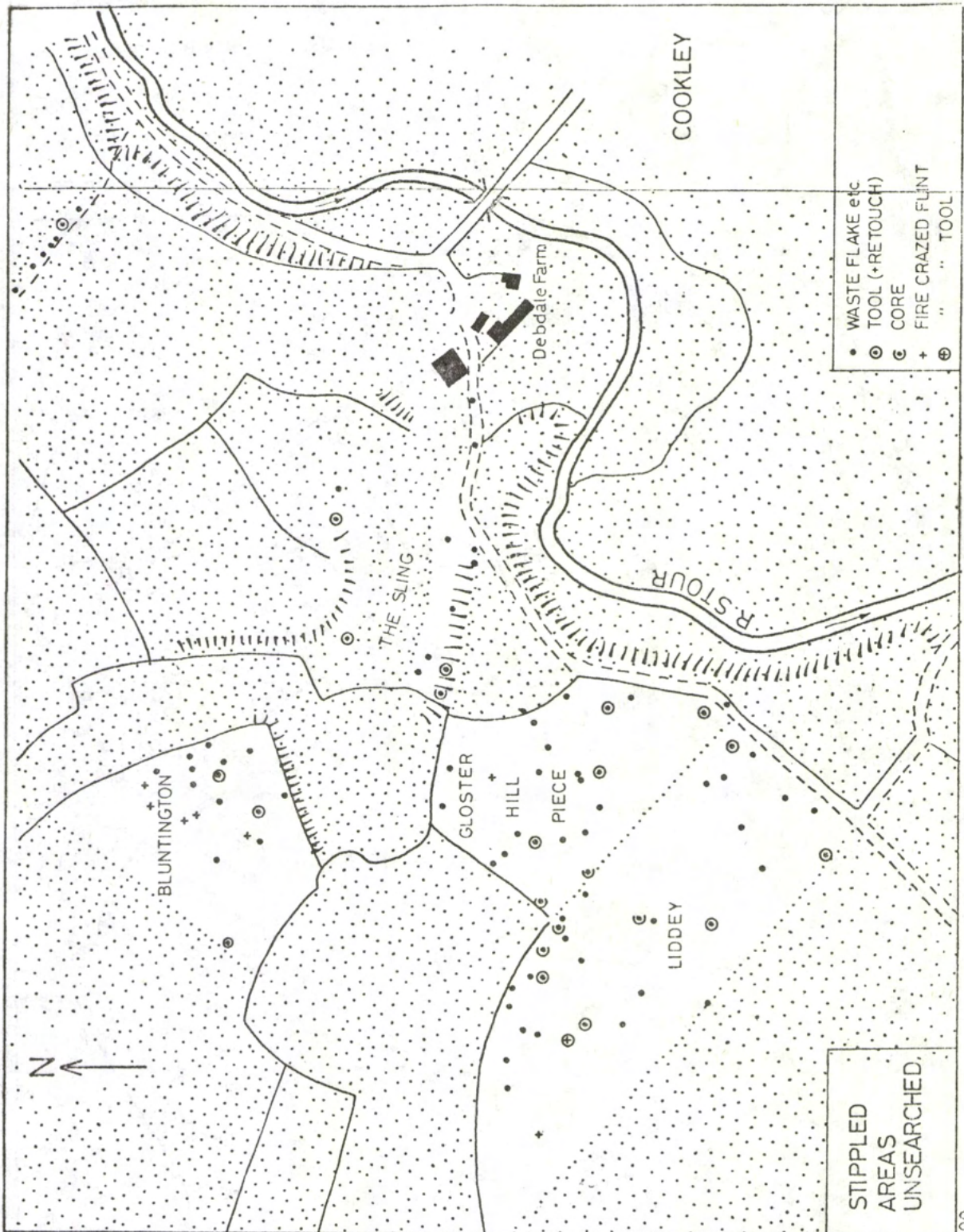
Fabian Radcliffe

The Trinity School Archaeologists
and the Leamington Archaeology Group

HYDE LEA, Staffordshire

Moated site at SJ 9057 2030

In the spring of 1980 rescue excavations were carried out at this extensive medieval moated site. The area comprises a large two-level island, surrounded by a wide wet moat, two fishponds, mill leats, a mill dam and mill site. Medieval road systems, which follow the perimeter of the medieval manor are also present. In order to lower the water table and drain the fields, the farmer decided to deepen and widen the moat surrounding the island. This entailed the complete removal of the waterlogged medieval deposits and the wealth of environmental material contained within them. Large timbers were recovered which probably formed part of the medieval bridge. Metal objects survived exceptionally well and included axes, fetterlocks, a large chain and arrowheads. Leather shoes and scabbards were also recovered.



5084'00

FIG. 26 SURFACE FINDS OF FLINTS 1978-79 NEAR COOKLEY

5083'00

000805

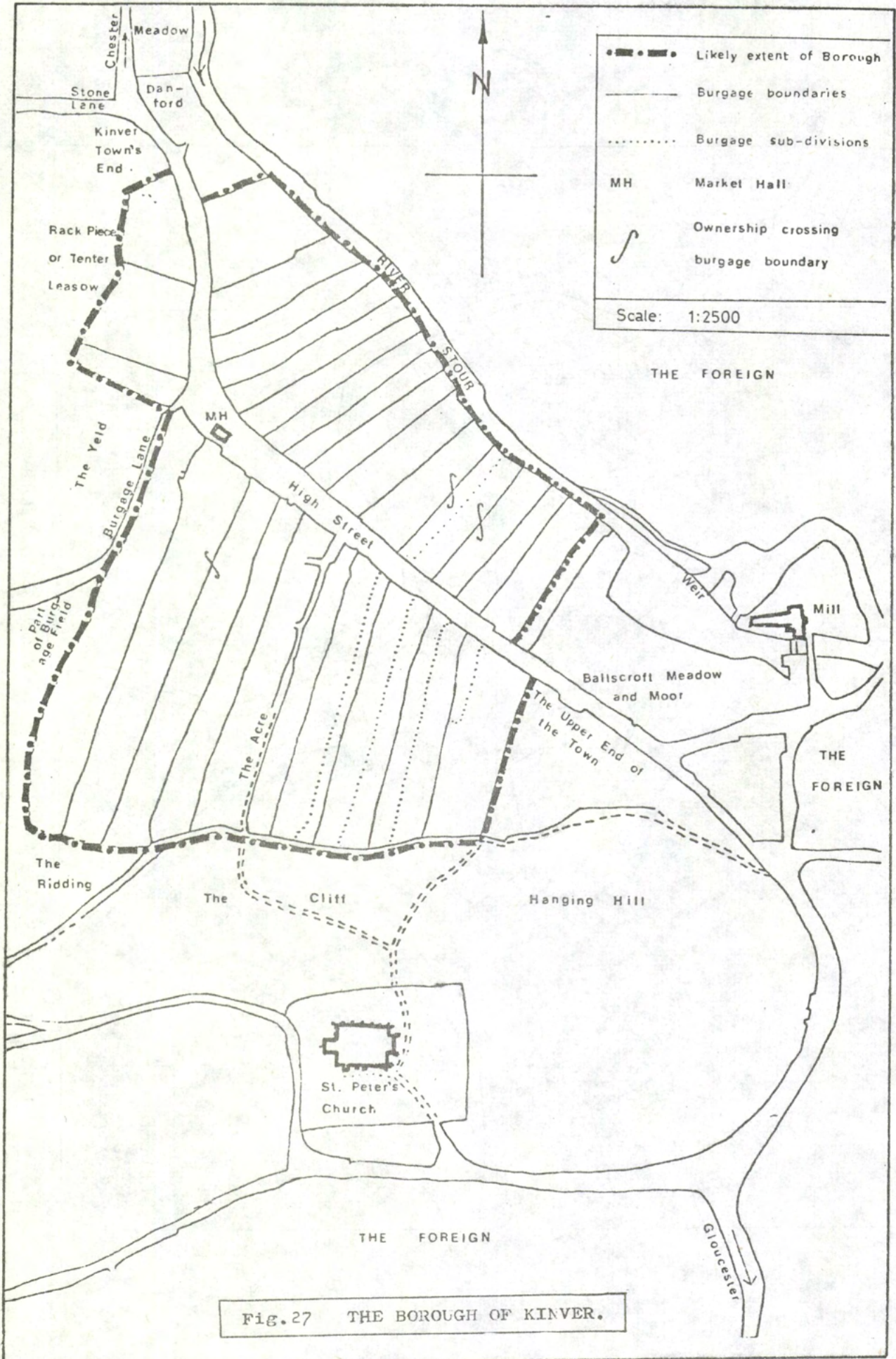


Fig.27 THE BOROUGH OF KINVER.

Although hurried, the excavations have already shown that the site is extremely complex, comprising at least two main periods before abandonment, probably in the fifteenth or sixteenth century. A report is now in preparation.

Charles Hill
Stafford Borough Council

KINVER EDGE AREA

Seventh Interim Report of Survey Work at SO 80 80 and vicinity

Work continues on the survey of the Kinver-Wolverley area. Systematic searching of ploughed fields continues to produce small flint-scatters, mostly apparently Mesolithic, as shown on last year's map (WMAANS 22 (1979): 40). Fig.26 shows a typical scatter from the area of Cookley. To date, of the fields examined, at least half have produced flints. Experience has shown that scatters more frequently occur within two to three hundred yards or so of streams and brooks (sometimes now dried up), and so work recently has tended to concentrate in such areas. Finds of other prehistoric periods remain elusive.

Manuring-scatters of Romano-British pottery (always extremely sparse) have proved even harder to find in fields recently examined. One small new scatter of a few Severn-Valley-ware sherds has been found at SO 809 805 (Horseleyhills Farm, Wolverley). There may perhaps be a tendency for these pottery-scatters to occur within the later medieval open fields; there are exceptions, and the tendency may possibly be only due to the distribution of land still under the plough.

Work by the historical members has progressed well. Examination of Manor Court Rolls and other documents including deeds in private hands for properties in Kinver High Street has enabled the approximate limits of the former Borough to be determined (see Fig. 27). The Borough was a seigneurial one, founded probably about 1221 when a market-charter was granted.

The tracing of land-holdings in both parishes over long periods of time is helping to establish the location of most (not quite all) of the open-field systems belonging to each of the townships, of which Kinver had 6, Wolverley 10.

L.E. King
J.W. King
P.W. King
R. Fisher

LEEGOMERY, Telford, Shropshire

Excavation of a Cropmark at Linden Coppice SJ 6655 1328 SA 2000

A multi-ditched trapezoidal enclosure c.120 x 100 m, (1.2Ha) known from an aerial photograph (Telford Archaeological Record T001), was investigated during redevelopment as a housing estate in 1979. The site was bounded to E. by the Hurleybrook (now canalised) and to the W. by an unnamed stream now dry, which originally joined the Hurleybrook immediately to N. To the W. the enclosure was overlooked by a ridge some 5 m higher, the land continuing to climb to W. To S. is a low plateau. The area must have been marshy in antiquity and local information is that seasonal flooding continued until recent times. The site apparently occupied a low gravel mound in the marshy area.

The site was plotted on a base plan at 1/500, from a photocopy of a low-level oblique aerial photograph, but there was distortion of position due to an unknown error. A 3 x 25 m trench was laid out on a N-S axis, and the top soil (a heavy black plough) removed by mechanical excavator. The trench was then cleared and further excavation carried out by hand, including extensions to the NW corner and to the N. end. But the presence of a large stack of bricks meant that the trench fell short of the plotted position of the enclosure ditches. Observation and recording was also carried out on a gas main trench in the E. margin of the feeder road to W., and on drain excavation to E. of the trench. A possible ditch on the N. slope of the low plateau to S., reported by the excavator driver, was investigated. A rapid check of early maps confirmed this as a C19 field boundary.

The latest feature excavated was a post-trench, some 8 m of which was seen. It ran SE-NW across the trench and was cut into the northernmost of two large patches of what appeared to be ironslag. It was also cut into, but was approximately aligned with, an intermittent cobble feature which exhibited a firm edge on its NE side where it crossed what had obviously been a slight hollow. The positions of surviving post-packing suggested a double row of posts on alternate sides of the post-trench, except at a point about mid-way along the exposed length, where a larger post and an apparent gap in the posts is suggestive of a narrow entrance c 2 m wide, perhaps a secondary feature. The positioning of the posts in the trench is perhaps indicative of an interwoven fence, and the depth suggests a possible height of c 2 m, a not inconsiderable obstacle. There were no small finds from the post-trench, and no surviving timber, but soil samples were taken. Three sherds of Midlands purple pottery, a piece of baked clay and tile sherds, which could be late Medieval, were recovered from the plough soil.

Several sites of this nature are known in Shropshire, one example being within the TDC area at Castle Farm (SJ 7244 0951).

This type of enclosure is usually taken to be of Iron Age date, but initial research has revealed no excavated and published examples.

The cobble feature seen in the excavation may be the remains of a causeway, there being indications on some prints of the AP's extant, of an entrance on this side. One print shows a possible 3 round huts inside with possibly a larger building immediately inside the putative entrance. However, the relationship of the later fence to the enclosure must remain obscure, as must, lacking finds, the date and purpose of all features revealed.

The excavation records and finds, together with a preliminary report on archaeology in Telford are deposited in Telford Development Corporation Planning Department.

D.S. Stewart

LEINTWARDINE, Hereford and Worcester

Excavations at site of Roman Fort rear of 22 High Street SO 4035 7406 HWCN 1061

A three month season of work, directed by John Sawle and financed by Hereford and Worcester County Council and the Department of the Environment, has just been completed (January 1981) and therefore only a brief report can be made here. The site lay within the Roman enclosure, c. 30 m to the west of High Street, which is presumed to be on the alignment of the Roman Watling Street (west). Because of its location near the centre of the enclosure, it was thought that the site might contain the principia of the fort, and also, at its southern end, the via principalis, as located by Dr. S.C. Stanford in 1959 (T.W.N.F.C. XXIX pt.ii (1968) p.276).

An area of c. 500 sq. m was investigated in advance of the construction of new abattoir buildings, behind the butcher's shop in the northern part of the site, where it was thought that the principia might be located. A series of shallow gullies running north-south were found to be post-medieval in date, and a 3 m deep cess pit was found to contain, amongst other finds, one sherd of "Chester" Ware (another sherd of this late Saxon Ware was recovered elsewhere on the site). Roman features were more numerous at the southern end, and the north-west corner of a substantial posthole and beamslot building of Roman date was recorded. It was located directly on the postulated alignment of the via principalis, of which there was no evidence.

A more detailed report will be circulated once a fuller analysis of the evidence has been made.

John Sawle

Hereford and Worcester County Museum

LEOMINSTER, Hereford and Worcester

Recording of medieval fabric in Old Priory SO 4988 5935 HWCW 721

The Priory House, an east-west range on the northern side of the former cloisters of Leominster Priory, has been the subject of reconstruction and refurbishment by Hereford and Worcester County Council since 1979. In association with the Department of the Environment, the County Council has funded a temporary archaeological post, to supervise the archaeological aspects of the work, and to make a detailed record of the building, especially as old plaster is removed and the stonework revealed. Duncan Wilson of Oxford University, was commissioned to carry out this work, and most of the recording has now been completed. A detailed report will be prepared during the summer of 1981.

John Sawle
Hereford and Worcester County Museum

LITTLE BUCKMAN'S FARM, Malvern, Hereford and Worcester

Roman Site at SO 7924 4997 HWCW 3700

In the course of laying a new gas pipeline from Alfrick to Malvern, two West Midlands Gas Board officials noted the presence of a dense scatter of Roman pottery, to the south of Leigh Sinton, c. 0.5 km to the west of the Great Buckman's Farm site (HWCW 3701/1315, TWAS 3rd ser. vol. 5 1976). They informed the County Museum and John Sawle (County Museum) and Nicholas Molyneux (Malvern Museum) visited the site at the beginning of September 1980. The pottery was almost exclusively Severn Valley ware of 2nd and 3rd century forms. Most of the large unabraded sherds were found to belong to the fill of a U-shaped ditch c. 2.2 m wide and c. 0.5 m deep, cut obliquely by the pipeline. The pottery scatter extended over c. 75 m, either side of this ditch, on the north west facing slope of a small hill.

John Sawle
Hereford and Worcester County Museum

LLANWARNE, Hereford and Worcester

Architectural recording at Old Church SO 506 282

A complete photographic survey, accurate plan and measured elevations and cross-sections of several parts of the building took place early in 1978, preceding consolidation works (Shoesmith, 1978: 25-35). These works were completed, apart from the north wall of the chancel, which had a precarious lean outwards. Part of this wall collapsed in the winter of 1979-80 before any attempt to stabilize it could be undertaken.

The north wall of the chancel is in two parts, separated by a chamfer on the external face. To the east of the chamfer the wall consists of large blocks, reasonably well coursed, but to the west, between the chamfer and the north chapel, the wall is of small, poorly-coursed rubble. Internally the wall is entirely of small rubble, poorly coursed, which changes gradually to the east to a slightly better coursed wall near the eastern corner of the chancel. In the 1978 survey the western part of the wall was dated to the early 14th century and the eastern part, including the chamfer to the 16th century.

The repair work planned for 1980 was in two parts. It was decided to attempt to winch the eastern part of the wall back to a vertical line. This work required new concrete foundations to be inserted below the ground level. The second part of the work was to rebuild the western part of the wall, where the collapse had occurred, on new foundations.

Before any reconstruction work started the Department of the Environment decided that a full archaeological survey of the walls should be prepared, that the remainder of the wall which had fallen should be removed to a suitable level by archaeologists and that any foundation trenches required should be archaeologically excavated. The initial survey, demolition and excavation works were directed by M.G. Boulton and the work was completed by R. Shoesmith.

The internal and external faces of the chancel wall were drawn to a scale of 1:20, some additions being made from the 1978 drawings. As excavations progressed these drawings were continued below the present ground level.

The western part of the wall was carefully dismantled to about 0.5 m above the present ground level and mortar samples kept. Photographs were taken of all stages of the above works.

The Department of the Environment agreed that the necessary foundation trench excavations could be extended beyond the area required for structural purposes by not more than 2 m in any direction in order to obtain a coherent archaeological record. The presence of stone-line graves and the shoring for the chancel wall made extensions impractical except for the internal area close to the eastern part of the north chapel arch where the foundation trench was extended a small area.

The maximum depth excavated was 1.7 m below the present ground level, at which point at least four mortar floor levels had been encountered, two of which had involved major reconstruction works. Finds were very limited and dating evidence poor but the available evidence suggests that the earliest floor level found was probably of 13th century date. Further floor levels may remain buried but it was considered that these would not be disturbed during the reconstruction works and that they could not be properly examined in the limited area available. Layers of fine silt on top of two of the floor levels probably indicate flooding - samples have been taken for analysis.

One skeleton was completely removed - it was close to the eastern end of the chancel and was in very poor condition. A second stone-lined grave was examined to establish the date of deposition. The elaborate early 19th century coffin was left in situ.

R. Shoesmith

City of Hereford Archaeology Committee

Reference:

Shoesmith, R., 1978: A survey of the old church of St. John the Baptist, Llanwarne, Herefordshire, Research Bulletin 1978; Institute for the Study of Worship and Religious Architecture, University of Birmingham

LOWER PENN, Staffordshire

Excavations in 17th Century mill-race

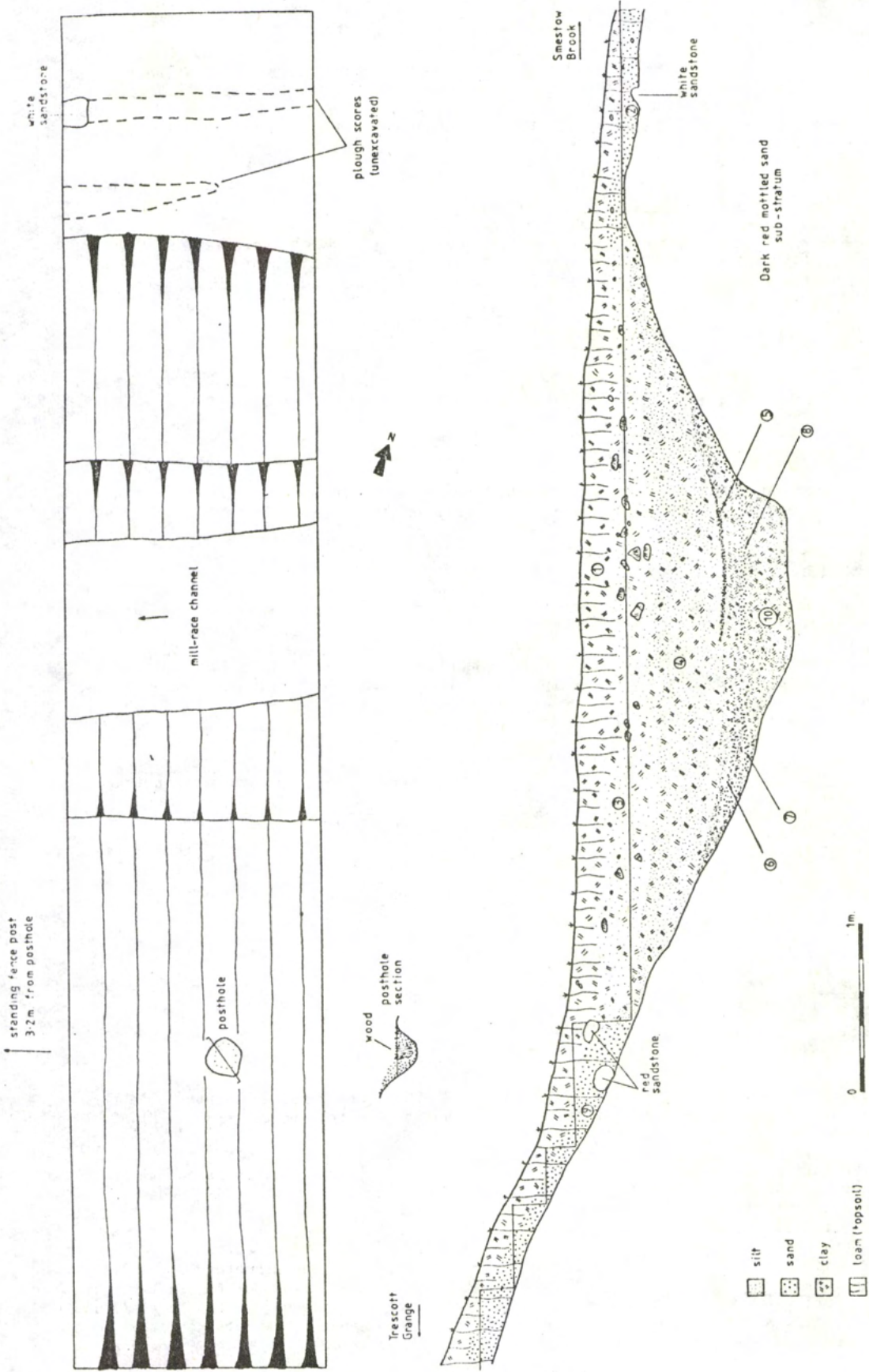
SO 844 965

Lower Penn is three miles SW of Wolverhampton in SW Staffordshire. Five small excavations have taken place in the parish, along the course of a backfilled mill-race and its mill-stream. The race originates from and runs adjacent to the Smeaton Brook for about one mile, within the northern parish boundary, serving mills at Trescott and Furnace Granges. A 12th century race is thought to have flowed to a mill at Trescott Grange, and the present race probably dates from the early- to mid-17th century. Four excavations were by Derek M. Thom of Wolverhampton, and one by the writer.

1. Thom, August 1973 (SO 8441 9651)

An extension to Mill Cottage at Furnace Grange, revealed a circular vitrified hearth and a cast-iron sow. The hearth was 3 feet in diameter and belled-out below the surviving circumference. Its base is recorded as being "five feet down". To the NW of the hearth was a 12 ft. by 9 in iron sow, resting on two shaped sandstone blocks. The sow was D-shaped in section, and between it and the hearth were coursed sandstone blocks, whose extent could not be determined. A brick- and stone-built wall appeared to the SE of the hearth.

Following salvage recording, the construction of the cottage extension continued, with the hearth and sow left in situ.



27th 12/72

Fig. 28: LOWER PENN: Plan and section of mill race at Trescott Grange (Malan)

These features lie at the western terminus of the Lower Penn race, and their identification as belonging to the Midland ironmaster Richard Foley's iron furnace is considered indisputable. The Grange furnace was one of the first to be established in the West Midlands, and it existed from at least 1636. Following the demise of this charcoal-fired furnace in the 18th century, the race was redirected slightly north to a corn mill which still stands.

2. Thom, April/June 1974 (SO 8442 9653)

Excavation of part of the mill-stream immediately outside the corn mill at Furnace Grange. The cutting for the stream was lined on both sides with coursed brickwork above sandstone blocks, to a depth of 5 ft. 3 in. above the gravel sub-stratum.

3. Thom, July/August 1978 (SO 8438 9652)

Section cut across the mill-stream, 70 yards NW of the corn mill at Furnace Grange. The stream cutting was unlined and was 3 feet deep to the underlying gravel.

4. Thom, August 1978 (SO 8470 9665)

Section cut across the mill-race between Trescott and Furnace Granges. The race was unlined and was 3 feet deep, and had silted up at this point.

5. Malam, October 1979 (SO 8503 9683) Fig. 28

Section cut across the mill-race at Trescott Grange. The race was unlined and was 1.20 m deep. Prior to backfilling in the 1960's, the race has silted up to a depth of 0.4 m above the sand sub-stratum. The race had been recut once, and was subject to periodic scouring, as evidenced by fresh-water mollusc shells amongst the backfill. The shells had been contained in a slurry deposit dumped along the bank of the race, and eventually used as backfill.

Fuller descriptions of these excavations are contained in "An archaeological survey of the parish of Lower Penn", prepared for and deposited in the Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, University of Birmingham.

John Malam

LOWER PENN, Staffordshire

Late medieval mortar found at SO 8731 9769

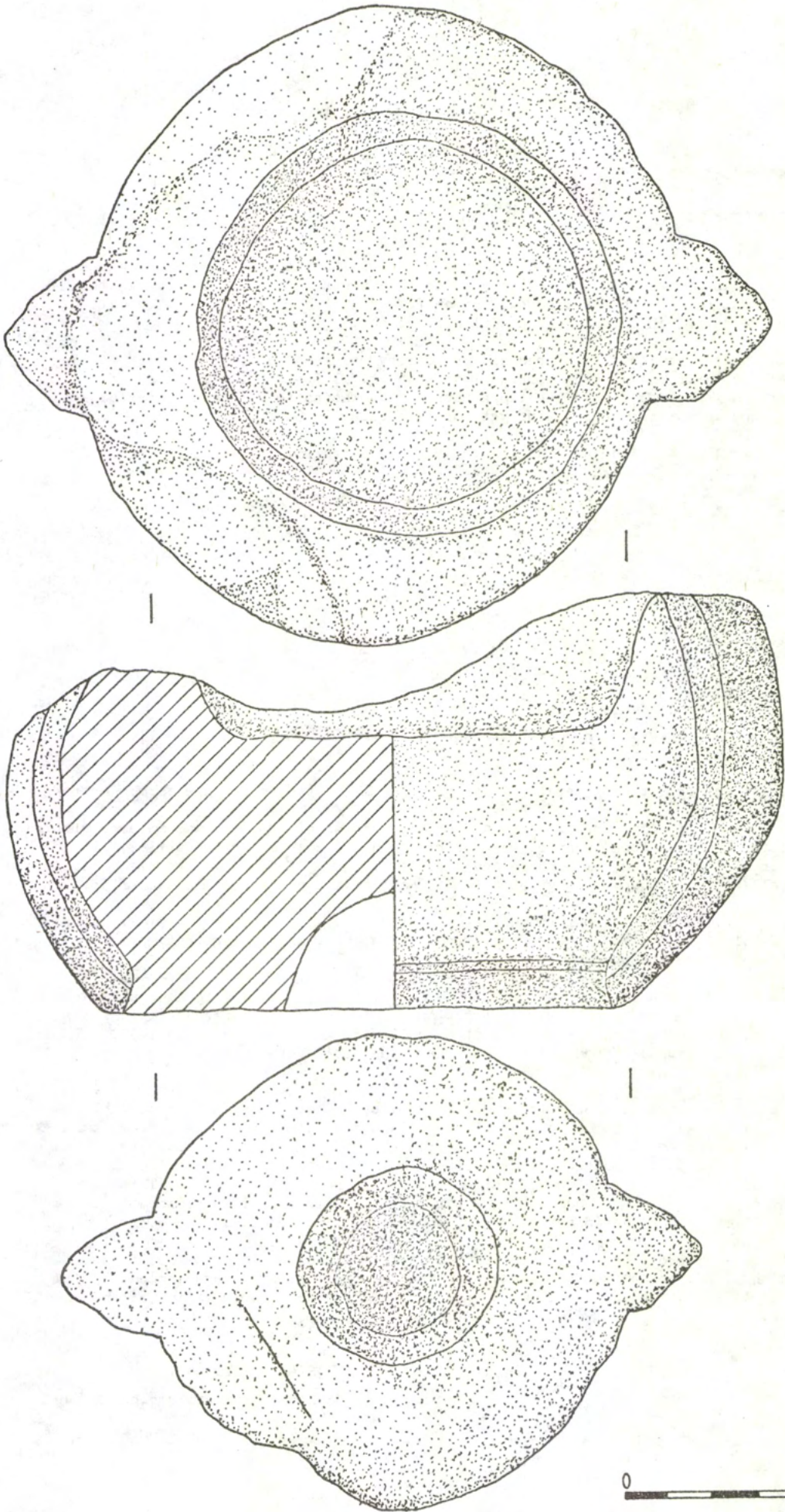
In the garden of Walnut Tree cottage, Lower Penn SW Staffordshire, there is a near-intact late-medieval sandstone mortar (fig. 29), identified from photographs by Mr. C. Dyer (School of History, University of Birmingham).

The mortar was found in 1933 or 1970 (accounts are at variance), in the garden of 201 Castlecroft Road (SO 8731 9769) under about 3 feet of clay during extensive landscaping. The find-spot is just within the northern parish boundary of Lower Penn, half a mile west of a moated site in the adjacent Wolverhampton suburb of Finchfield.

The circular red sandstone mortar is 17 cm high with an upper diameter of 32 cm, reducing to 21.5 across the base. Two quadrilateral handles extend for the full height of the body, which is finely tooled. The circumference is battered, and no lugs are visible. The internal depression is very shallow (6 cm) in relation to the bulk of the vessel. A conical hole cut into the base is thought to be a later addition.

A similar mortar excavated at Northalt Manor, Middlesex, though with a much deeper depression is dated to c 1300 (J.G. Hurst, Med. Arch. 5 (1961), 55 (fig. 74).

John Malam



JM 12/79

Fig. 29: LOWER PENN: Late medieval sandstone mortar, now at Walnut Tree Cottage (Malam)

MANCETTER, Warwickshire

Excavations in Roman Fort at SP 3184 9649

In 1978 machine dug trenches proved ditches on the western side of the Romano-British fort. Since the field was destined to be allotments in the North Warwickshire Borough District plan, a more detailed excavation funded by Atherstone Archaeological Society was undertaken, in advance of subsoil disturbance.

An area 120 ft x 20 ft was stripped of top soil by machine, and the remainder was dug by hand to give as much detail as possible of archaeological features. These consisted mainly of three ditches and a possible thorn barrier. The pottery recovered includes samian which should give the best dating yet for this site. c 50-65.

In September 1980 a research excavation started on a central area of the scheduled fort is to continue on a week-end basis.

Keith Scott

Atherstone Archaeological Society

MYTON, Warwickshire

Documentary and Field Survey at Medieval Village SP 302 652

The site of the deserted medieval village of Myton lies at Myton Grange farm, Warwick.

The name 'Myton' is first recorded in a boundary charter of 1033 and was a large village according to the Domesday Book, when it was described under three separate entries, with a total of 4 serfs, 13 villeins, 21 bordars and 1 bondswoman. Four mills are also listed while a chapel is recorded as being granted to St. Mary's Church between 1123 and 1153.

The villa survived until the 15th century when John Rous included it in his list of depopulated settlements while 9 'tofts' were recorded in 1482, indicating that they were only the sites of former messuages.

The site of the village was clearly recorded on estate maps of 1690 to 1806 and the Inclosure Award of 1773 confirms the identification. The site was subsequently affected by a railway and landscaping of the grounds of Myton House, which was built in 1857. This included the construction of Myton Grange Farm where the site of the village has been ploughed since the 1930's.

The site is now being developed for housing purposes and it has only been possible, therefore, to keep a watching brief on the site. Finds can only be collected from those parts where work has been undertaken, namely the roads, dredgings from the boundary stream, and a few house plots on the south side of this stream. However, one of the roads crosses both the site of the village and the adjoining 'old inclosures' to the east. This boundary had not been completely ploughed out and this part of the 'village' site remained at a slightly higher level than the 'old inclosures' and the village roadway.

None of the soil profiles cut by construction trenches showed any evidence of the village, but the finds collected from these trenches and from the dredgings include 17 sherds (out of 113 finds collected) of 12th or 13th century date. Observation of the site is continuing.

S.G. Wallsgrove

Leamington Archaeology Group

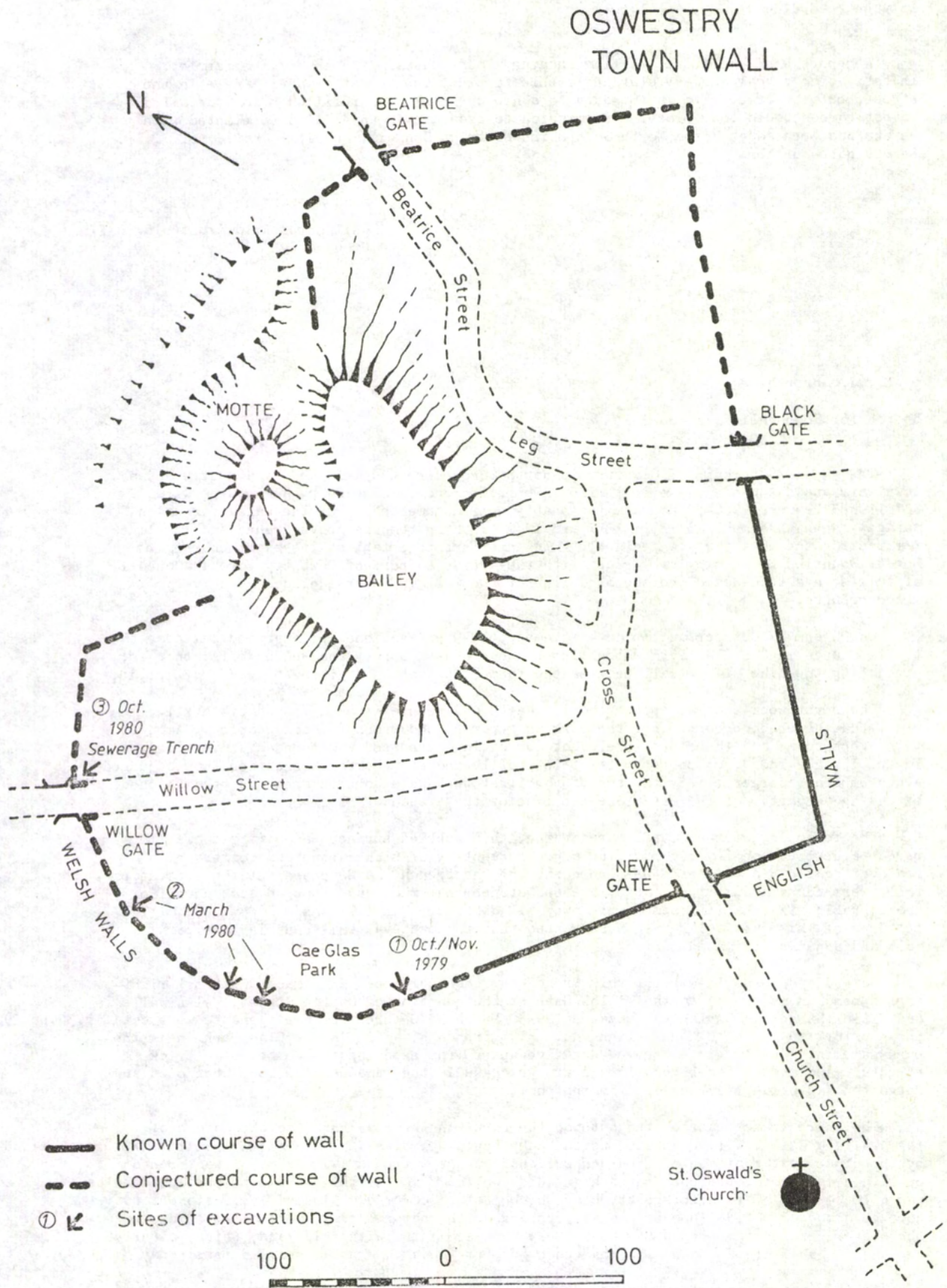


Fig. 30: OSWESTRY: Sites of excavations in search of the town wall (Pratt)

NEWTOWN, Shropshire

Salvage recording at SJ 5395 4145

A report was received of walling running almost parallel to the present street. Investigation revealed heavy clay and cobble footings running at an acute angle to the street, but the trench (for a boundary to a new car park) was refilled before detailed investigation could take place. Permission to excavate in an area to be planted with shrubs has been sought from North Shropshire District Council, and it is hoped to investigate further.

D.S. Stewart

Whitchurch Area Archaeological
GroupOSWESTRY, Shropshire

Search for Town Wall SJ 2929

The medieval borough of Oswestry in north Shropshire was defended by a castle and a town wall and ditch of just over a mile in circumference. The four gate-houses were demolished between 1766-82 and are reasonably well documented. Of the wall, for which murage grants were made in 1257, 1277 and 1282, nothing remains above ground and its line remains for the most part conjectural. In an effort to establish its exact course, the Border Counties Archaeological Group, with the active support of Oswestry Borough Council officials, has transected the supposed line of the wall in several places, with very mixed results.

On 26 and 27 October and 3 and 4 November, 1979 excavations were carried out near the tennis courts in Cae Glas Park which lies between Church Street and Welsh Walls, that is, straddling the line of the wall between the former New Gate and Willow Gate (fig.30,no.1).

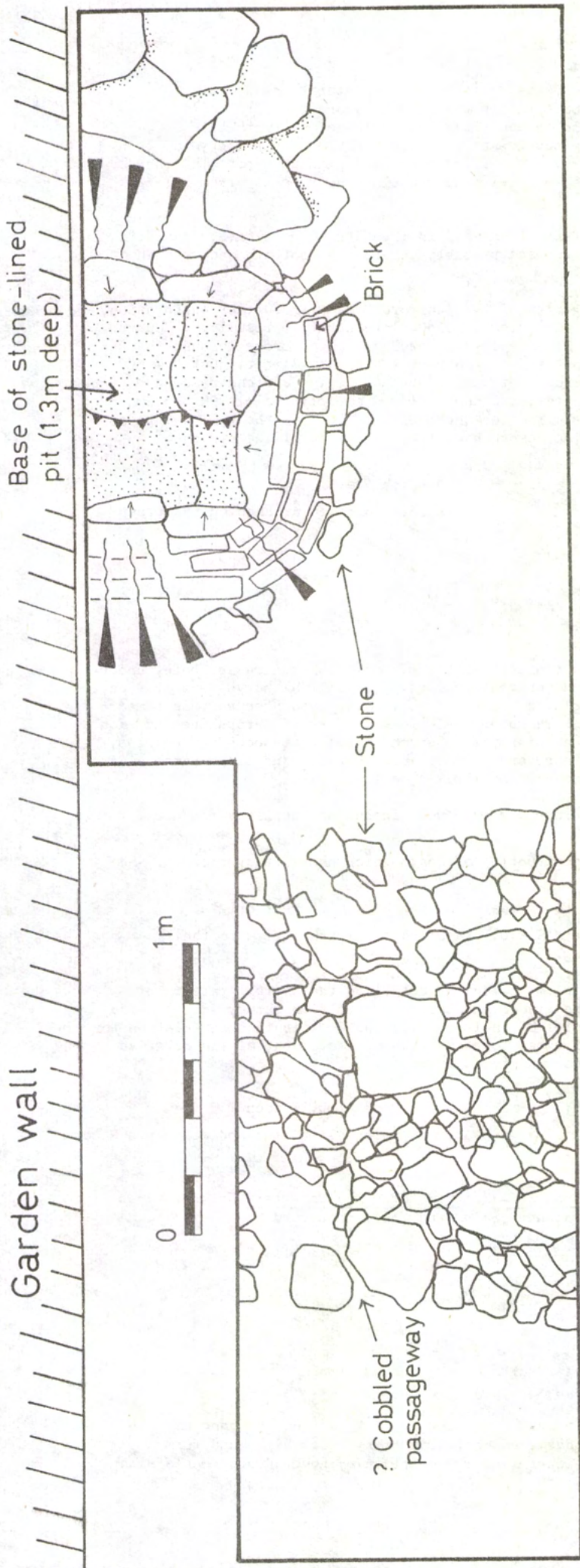
The first week-end was spent removing earth and rubble (from a trench 8.5 m x 1.5 m wide) that had been brought into the park on separate occasions for landscaping. Amongst this overburden, and therefore irrelevant for dating purposes, was found a silver coin of Edward I (1272-1307), which, from its thin profile and poor surface condition, was adjudged a contemporary forgery. By the end of the first weekend a cobbled area had been reached, extending a quarter of the way along the line of the trench.

The following week-end, after recording, this cobbled surface was stripped away to reveal a destruction layer containing a great quantity of stone, bone and pottery of a medieval date. In the north-western corner of the trench, hard up against the present park wall, were found a number of large, dressed stones that must have tumbled from a wall of considerable size. (A fragment of town wall discovered in 1973 was 2.5 m wide). The features of this particular trench suggested that the medieval wall underlay the park wall and adjacent tarmaced surface.

Some distance north-west of this trench the town wall must have made an almost right-angled bend as it ran on to the Willow Gate at the junction of Castle Street, Welsh Walls and Willow Street. During the week-end 29/30 March 1980 three further trenches were cut (fig.30,no.2) in an effort to trace this new alignment. Two trenches, again in Cae Glas Park, near the park superintendent's house, proved negative apart from exposing the corner of a brick structure and associated brick-lined drainage channel, the remains of a long abandoned and forgotten Victorian paddling or swimming pool!

The third trench was located outside the park, in the rear entry to the garden of the 'Walford Cafe', Willow Street, which backed onto Welsh Walls (fig.30,no.3) within the area limited by the close juxtaposition of a garden wall and garage a trench 1.2 m x 5.5 m was opened up within 1 m of the present footpath in Welsh Walls. Immediately below the surface cobbles was a 10 cm band of reddish, gritty clay which in turn covered a line of large stones and cobbles almost 2 m wide, un-mortared and resting on the natural clay, which stretched across the western end of the trench. No pottery was associated with this find, which, clearly not the footings of the town wall, has been interpreted as a crudely cobbled passageway (fig.31).

At the eastern end of the trench a semi-circular line of hand-made bricks were traced down to their base, revealing a funnel-shaped structure lined with red clay which led into a stone-lined and -bottomed pit, 72 cms below the level of the cobbled way and full of ash and burnt debris. The massive stone blocks were traced down and discovered to be the end



The Search for Oswestry
Town Walls (March 1980)

Trench 3: Rear Garden of the "Walford Cafe"

Fig. 31: OSWESTRY: Excavations at the rear of Walford Cafe (Pratt)

of a building constructed from large stones and resting on the natural boulder clay. This is the first medieval building to come to light in Oswestry and the pit described above appears to belong to a second phase in construction. Associated with this structure were a small number of pottery sherds and a little bone. The pottery has been identified as late medieval (15th century) dark green/brown lead glazed ware. The sherds, which are of coarse ware, seem to relate to wheel-made vessels, one possibly from a long-necked jug.

The failure to locate the course of the town wall in these trenches suggests that its line is to be found running much closer to, and probably under, the footpath and road in Welsh Walls.

There was still some scope in the garden of the 'Walford Cafe' for further exploration, which duly took place on 26/27 July and 20 September 1980, with negative results. However, on 30 October 1980, the contractors for Oswestry's new sewerage scheme broke through the footings of the town wall at the junction of Castle Street and Willow Street, just 0.4 m inside the white line running down the middle of Castle Street. The JCB had removed large quantities of dressed stone and mortar, but the wall was clearly visible in section in the Castle Street end of the trench, but not on the opposite side, as the wall had been removed during the laying of the Victorian sewer which lies alongside of the new one.

Derrick Pratt

Border Counties Archaeological Group

SHROPSHIRE, County

Moated Sites Survey

A comprehensive field survey of the medieval moated sites in Shropshire is being undertaken as part of the Shropshire sites and monuments record. An initial survey was started in 1978 by I. Burrow, but was never completed (Burrow 1978). The present survey is aimed at extending and completing this work. There are 120+ moated sites in Shropshire and each one is being visited in the field together with the research of relevant secondary sources, including the investigation of possible unrecorded sites through place and field name elements. The main aims of the survey can be summarised as follows:-

1. To produce an interim record of the surface evidence, including ancillary features, e.g. fishponds
2. To assess the extent of damage or destruction of moats which has already occurred, and to evaluate future threats.
3. To eliminate features once thought to be moats which are of different origin.
4. To grade the sites according to the M.S.R.G. classification with a view to their possible scheduling or de-scheduling.

At this stage it is not yet possible to comment in detail on the overall pattern of moated sites in Shropshire. It is hoped, however, that the completed survey will provide a sound basis for further intensive studies of their density and distribution in relation to parish boundaries, settlements, and soil type, together with an assessment of the relative frequency of occurrence of different types, and local variants.

Michael D. Watson

Shropshire Sites and Monuments Record

Reference:

Burrow, I. (1978): Moated Sites in Shropshire - Interim Notes and Gazetteer Unpubd. typescript in possession of Shropshire Sites and Monument Record

SPERNALL, Warwickshire

Documentary and Field Survey: Summary of results SP 06

Spernall parish (fig. 32) lies in the valley of the River Arrow and the land rises eastwards to 462 ft. on the eastern boundary, which follows a ridge of high land formed by an outcrop of Arden Sandstone. The lower land is underlain by Lower Keuper Marls with terrace gravels present along the river.

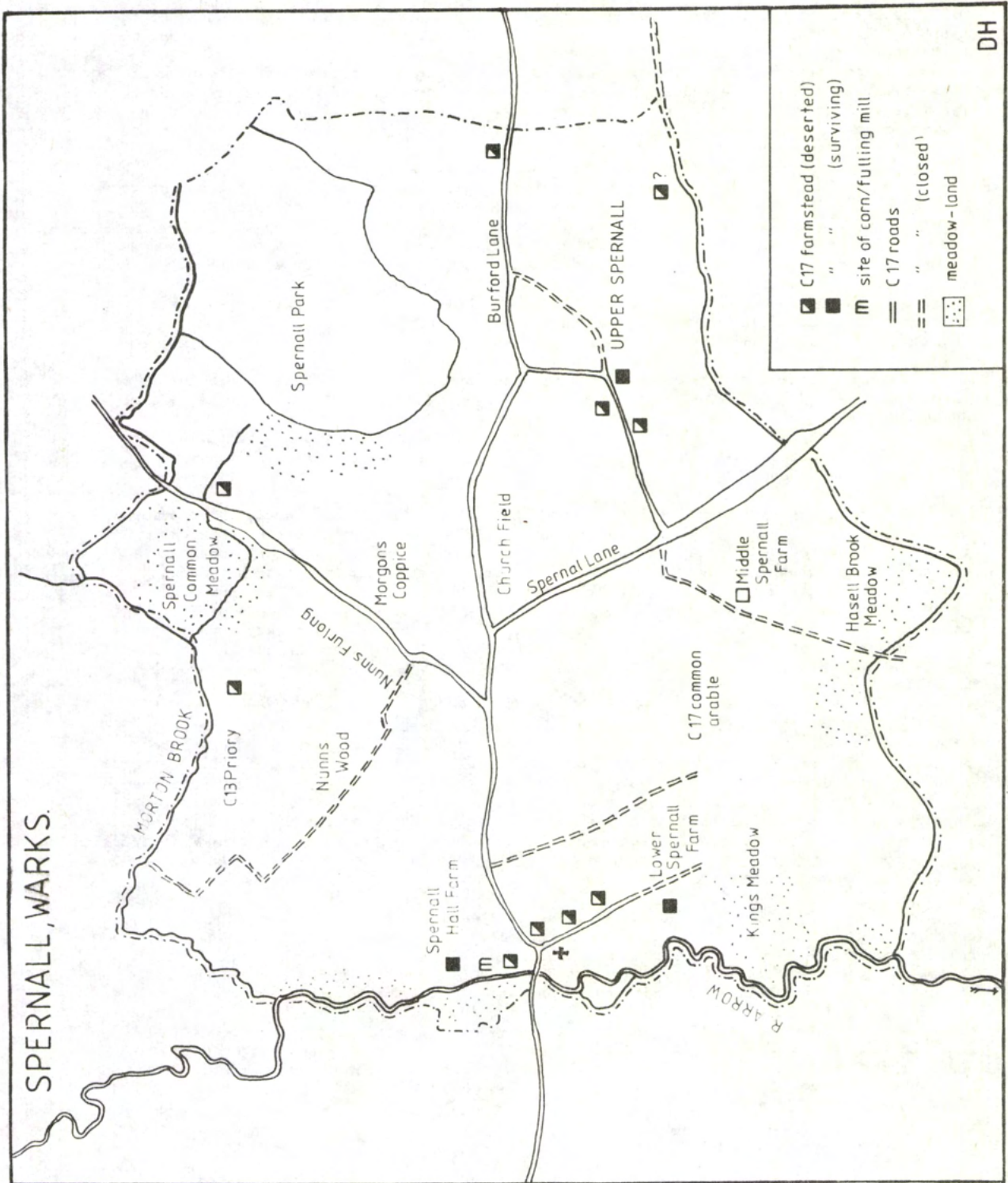


Fig. 32: SPERRALL: Field survey (Hooke)

The place-name, Spernore in 1086, has been taken by Ekwall to be derived from OE spæren 'of chalk', and ofer 'bank', probably owing to the presence of gypsum deposits on the edge of the high land in the east of the parish. Spornall was a two-hide estate held by one Hugh of William Bonvallet in 1086, valued at 40sh. Agricultural development is attested by the four plough-teams working four ploughlands, one of them on the lord's demesne. Eleven families are noted, four villeins and seven bordars. Eight acres of meadow are also recorded, with a mill valued at 4sh. contributing seven sticks of eels annually.

The Durvassel family held the manor in the 13th century under the overlordship of the Earls of Warwick by the service of attending the Earl at Christmas, Easter or Whitsuntide as "chief butler with his cup". The location of the original manorial site cannot be accurately confirmed from surviving field evidence but there is some evidence to suggest that it lay near the present Spornall Hall Farm at the northern end of Spornall village. The main village nucleus developed around the parish church of St. Leonards, a building dating in part from the 12th century. Depopulation appears to have occurred between 1195 and 1361 due to pestilence, possibly the Black Death of the first half of the 14th century, which was particularly virulent in these parts. At this date many of the villein tenements came into the hands of freemen. Raised platforms to the south-west of the church which were subsequently ploughed over may represent an early settlement site. Eleven taxpayers are noted in the lay subsidy returns of the early 14th century.

The village did not entirely disappear after the 'pestilence', for a number of small farms still lay alongside the road linking Spornall Hall Farm with Lower Spornall Farm in 1746. Two of these had disappeared by 1811 and a further one by 1839, repeating a pattern of late depopulation relatively common upon the southern fringes of Arden (Hooke 1979). The mill and an extensive fishpond complex also lay near the village.

A second settlement cluster developed at Upper Spornall, where there were a number of farms and several cottages in the later 17th century. One of the farms had ceased to be occupied by c.1695 and its site may be represented by the field then known as 'The Old Homestead', where pottery sherds and some building stone have been found. Three other farms at Upper Spornall were still occupied in 1746. Only one farm remains today but the timber-framed house of one of the earlier farms has now been converted into a barn.

Lands in the parish were donated to the 'Benedictine nuns of Spornore', their priory later being transferred to Cookhill in Worcestershire. Isabel, countess of Warwick, is said to have founded the priory in 1260 but she probably rebuilt a priory founded before 1198 (Knowles and Hadcock 1971). The priory and its chapel seem to have been situated in the north of the parish beside Morton Brook where a moated platform still survives. Described as the lands of the former Cookehill Priory, the chapel of St. Giles was granted with other lands to Thomas Broke in 1541 and a late 17th century map (Throckmorton Estates c.1695) reveals a farmhouse then standing near the edge of the moated platform, some distance away from the present house of St. Giles. Stone and charcoal have been noted on the site.

Isolated farmsteads had also been established elsewhere in the parish by the late 17th century. Rockhouse Farm stood on the north side of Burford Lane near the eastern boundary of the parish but appears to have gone by 1811. Morgans Farm stood beside the road to Morton Bagot c.1695 but only one building remained in 1746 and this may have been the timber-framed barn which stands on the site today, containing former house timbers. In the 17th century the population seems to have mainly consisted of substantial farmers and Spornall was described as a place with 'few or no poor at all in it and many wealthy inhabitants' (Warwick County Records). The 1663 Hearth Tax records note 14 taxed dwellings, 7 with 3 or more hearths.

Cottages built alongside the waste are less a feature here than in the surrounding parishes and minor encroachments were noted carefully in the 17th century. Those cottages which can be identified appear frequently to be of relatively late origin. A labourer's cottage leased to one Philip Blundell in 1813 is described as 'formerly part of the waste inclosed by the said Philip', (Throckmorton Mss. S/A). The roadside cottages near the junction of Morton Lane and Burford Lane do not appear on maps before 1746, and further cottages had been added by 1832. Many still show the long strip gardens which were enclosed from the roadside waste. A notable addition to the settlement pattern in modern times has been the construction of Middle Spornall Farm beside a field-lane which led southwards towards Coughton. It is of post-1886 construction and today farms much of the former open field land.

The park at Spornall is first recorded in 1258 in a release by the queen to right to deer, formerly payable annually by Roger Durvassal out of his park at Spornor (Saunders Mss. S/A). It lies in the north-eastern portion of the parish and other wooded areas in the northern sector included the Nunns Wood, belonging to the messuage of St. Giles, which had been 'grubbed up and converted into tillage' by 1715. Morgrove Coppice, between Morton Lane and Spornall Park, still survives.

Most of the open fields of Sperrall had been enclosed by the late 17th century and in c.1695 only the common meadow of Sperrall, earlier known as Broad Meadow, survived, situated in the north of the parish. Probably the decay of the villain holdings after the 'pestilence' had enabled land consolidation but it is noted in manorial court rolls that Thomas Hopkins of Upper Sperrall still held two arable lands in the 'Commonfields' in 1662. Consolidation was to progress in the later 17th century but many of the holdings were still fragmented c.1695, especially around the hamlets of Lower and Upper Sperrall. Adjacent strip-shaped holdings under different ownership also suggest that Hasel broke Meadow along the southern boundary stream had also been held in common.

The court rolls of the 17th century (Throckmorton Mss. S/A) are much concerned with the maintenance of agrarian standards in the manor but rural industry is also much in evidence. The corn mill was 'ruinous and in decay' by 1659 but was rebuilt as a fulling mill by 1675, only to be abandoned by 1684. A brick kiln was functioning throughout the 17th and 18th centuries in Sperrall village, seams of gypsum were worked in Sperrall Park in the same period and tanning was being carried out at Upper Sperrall. Stone was quarried in the south of the parish.

Later development: The field layout of the parish had acquired much of its present pattern by 1695 and had been altered only by the removal of a number of hedges following the consolidation of holdings. A number of farmhouses have disappeared since the 18th century but field remains are slight. The parish roads have been narrowed by post-18th-century cottage construction with their associated gardens. There seems to have been a notable decrease in the population of the parish since the mid-19th century. Early directories quote population figures of 'about 150' in 1821 (West 1830) and there were 22 occupied houses and 107 inhabitants in 1841 (Census returns). Only 44 people lived in the parish in 1951 and much of this decline may be attributed to the smaller number of agricultural labourers now required on modern farms. A number of Sperrall parishioners were also employed in the needle industry in 1851 and while this was for long a cottage industry it is probable that many were attracted to the growing needle industry of Studley from the surrounding rural area. Farming remains the chief occupation carried out within the parish today.

Della Hooke

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- | | |
|---|--|
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STAFFORDSHIRE, County

Sites and Monuments Record

In common with other West Midland counties, Staffordshire County Council is now compiling a sites and monuments record with the aid of a DoE funded post in the Planning Department. Archaeological sites and monuments are being catalogued on primary record cards and integrated into a visual coincidence card-retrieval system. All sites which have been positively located are being plotted on clear acetate film overlays on 6-inch O.S. map bases. An initial scan of major sites (except those located by aerial photography) is now complete for the county and this includes at least 1,200 locations. In Staffordshire, listed buildings and vernacular architecture are also being incorporated on the system. There is now limited access to the sites and monuments record for archaeologists and students.

Bob Meeson

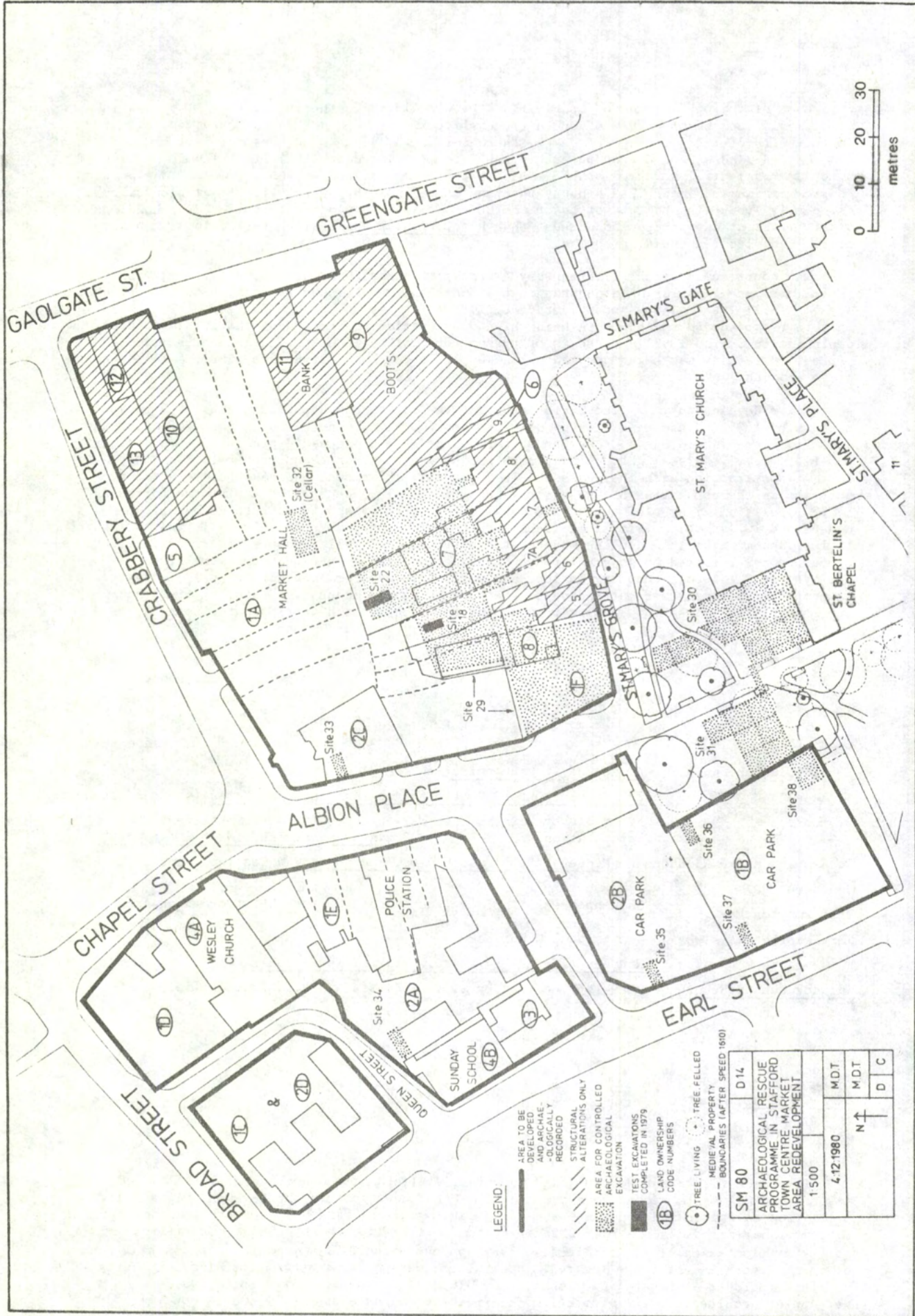


Fig. 33 STAFFORD TOWN: Area of proposed excavations (Carver/Taylor)

STAFFORD CASTLE, Staffordshire

Excavation and survey at Castle and DMV

SJ 902 223

Stafford Castle, lying on a ridge one mile south west of the town of Stafford, off the A518, is an early and large example of a Norman motte-and-two-baileys castle with an attached defended village enclosure. In 1348 a stone keep was constructed on the motte by Ralph, the first Earl of Stafford. This was partially demolished in 1643-4, though rebuilt in Gothic Revival style between 1800-1817.

Excavations at the castle have been carried out in three main areas.

A. The deserted medieval village

Fieldwork in 1978 discovered the earthwork remains of a deserted medieval village attached to the outer bailey of the castle. In 1979 a trial excavation showed conclusively that the site was occupied in the 13-14th centuries with abandonment occurring by the mid-15th century. The remains of timber structures, together with a wide pebble track-way and drainage system, were found. A large quantity of medieval pottery was also recovered. Recommendations to schedule this village, possibly the 'monetvile' of Domesday Book, have been made to the Department of the Environment.

B. The Inner Bailey

A long term excavation in the inner bailey has found a sequence of timber buildings dating from the Middle Ages. The remains of an unusually complicated stone building, possibly the medieval chapel of St. Nicholas, have also been found.

C. Within the Keep

Within the 14/19th century keep excavations have shown that far more of the medieval fabric survived the Parliamentary demolition of 1643-4 than has generally been considered. The N.E. Tower has survived remarkably well and medieval doorways, window settings and a fireplace have been found.

In the summer of 1980 the Stafford Castle trail was opened to the public as the first stage of an ambitious scheme to create and amenity at the castle by Stafford Borough Council.

Charles Hill

Stafford Borough Council

STAFFORD TOWN, Staffordshire

Excavations in new Market Area

SJ 9209 2327

ST 1600

Excavations began in December 1980 in advance of development of the new Market Area. This development involves some 225 ha of the historic nucleus, immediately north of St. Bertelin's and St. Mary's Churches, at a point where the late Saxon strata are predicted to be reasonably well preserved (see WMAANS 22 (1979); 7). The excavations (see fig. 33) are expected to take two years and it is hoped to reveal a number of adjacent artisanal tenements belonging to the earliest urban foundation in the 10th century.

M.O.H. Carver

Stafford Excavation Project,
Birmingham University Field Archaeology
Unit.

STAPLETON,

Medieval Field System

SO 330 655

HWCM 3592

A well preserved medieval field system, including substantial lynchets and ridge and furrow, to the east of the castle at Stapleton was recorded in November 1980 in advance of destruction.

J. Wills

Hereford and Worcester County Museum

STIRCHLEY, Telford, Shropshire

Architectural recording at the Church of St. James

SJ 6998 0671

The Church of St. James appears at first site to be a small 18th-century brick church with W tower, but it retains a complete Norman chancel and fragments of a medieval nave. Following redundancy, Telford Development Corporation bought the church and conserved the fabric. When plaster was stripped from the chancel wall it was discovered that the tiny Norman chancel arch was set into the infill of a larger, earlier arch. Remnants of medieval painted plaster sealed the blocking masonry, indicating that the smaller (later) chancel arch had probably been inserted during the Norman period and not as a result of post-medieval alterations.

Above the larger (earlier) arch (fig. 34) and close to the apex of the original chancel wall was a blocked, tall, round-headed opening which could have served either as a window or a door. With the exception of a few minor alterations the N, S and E walls of the chancel are remarkably complete, with four original windows and a chamfered plinth. The N. Wall plinth returns across the W face of the chancel wall and terminates at the jamb of the larger chancel arch. The chamfer passes uninterrupted behind the butt end of the later nave N wall.

Inside the chancel, there are blocked joist sockets which might indicate anything from a post-medieval ceiling to an original first floor.

This important survival gives rise to a number of tantalizing questions. If the blocked opening high in the chancel wall was a window it suggests, along with the evidence of the plinth, that the chancel was built as a single cell with no nave, but then why such a large first phase opening in the W wall? If the church was conceived from the outset as a 2 cell structure it is unlikely that the upper opening in the chancel wall was a window since it would neither light the chancel from the nave nor the nave from the chancel. If it was a door, what was its purpose, and does this imply that the Norman chancel, or nave, or both, had a first floor? If the larger arch is a chancel arch, why does the outer plinth return across the front of the chancel wall? Was the stone chancel built first and then abutted by a contiguous timber-framed nave?

The post-medieval floor of both nave and chancel is substantially raised above earlier levels so it is possible that the archaeological evidence has survived intact.

Bob Meeson

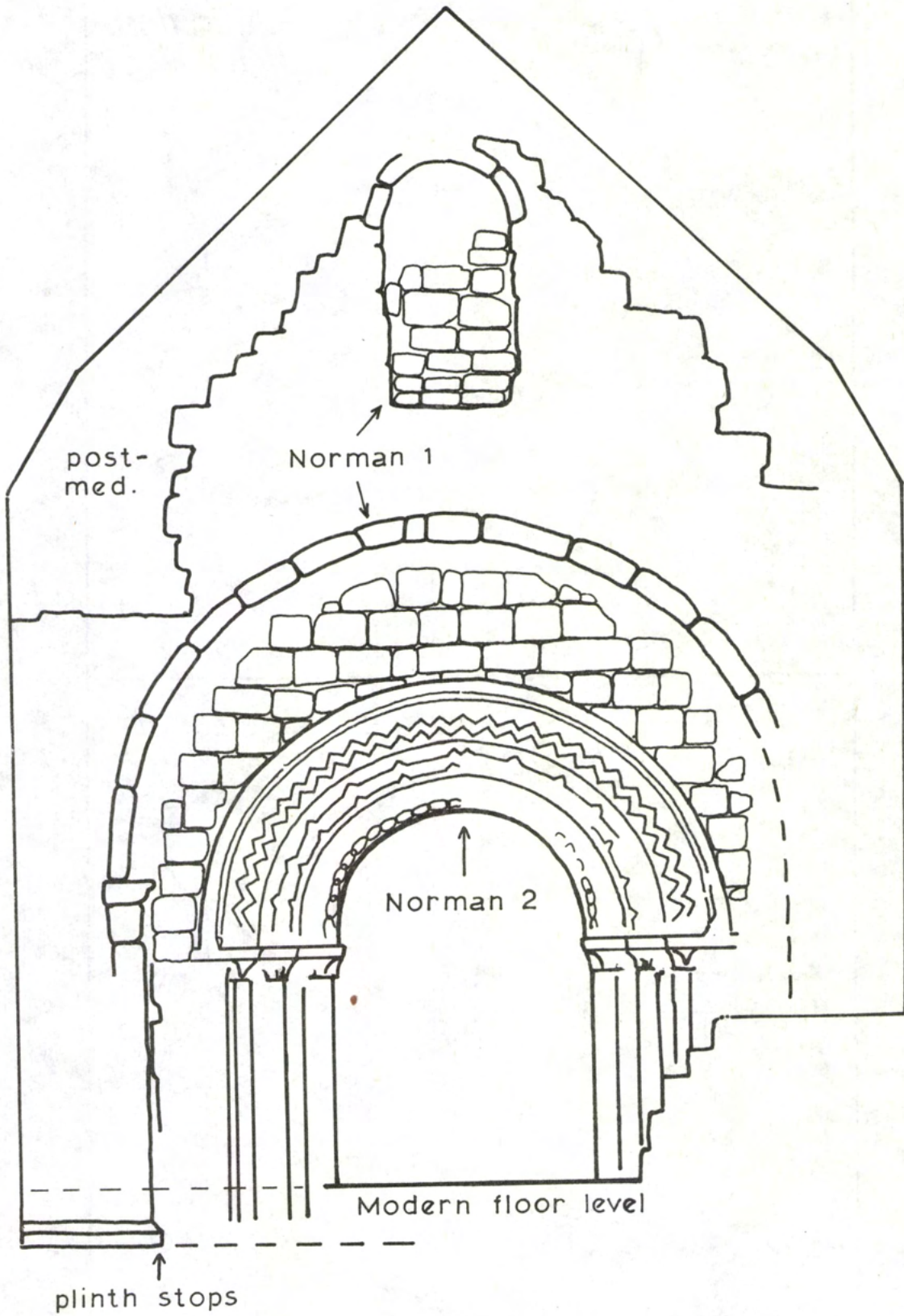
for Telford Development Corporation

SUTTON PARK, West Midlands County

Documentary and Field Survey

SP 1197

The study area consists of a natural region of c. 173 km² around Sutton Coldfield, which formed, from 1126-1528, the hunting reserve of Sutton Chase. It is bounded on the south and east by the River Tame, on the north by the Bourne Brook, and on the west by the Barr Beacon ridge (Fig. 35), and contains parts of the counties of Staffordshire, Warwickshire and West Midlands. The study employs archaeological and documentary evidence to trace the development of two zones of the late 18th century landscape as recorded on Yates' Staffordshire and Warwickshire maps. The features selected for study are the unenclosed common waste, the parks, minor settlement nuclei ('hamlets'), and moated sites.



not to scale.

Fig. 34: STIRCHLEY: Norman Chancel arches (Meeson)

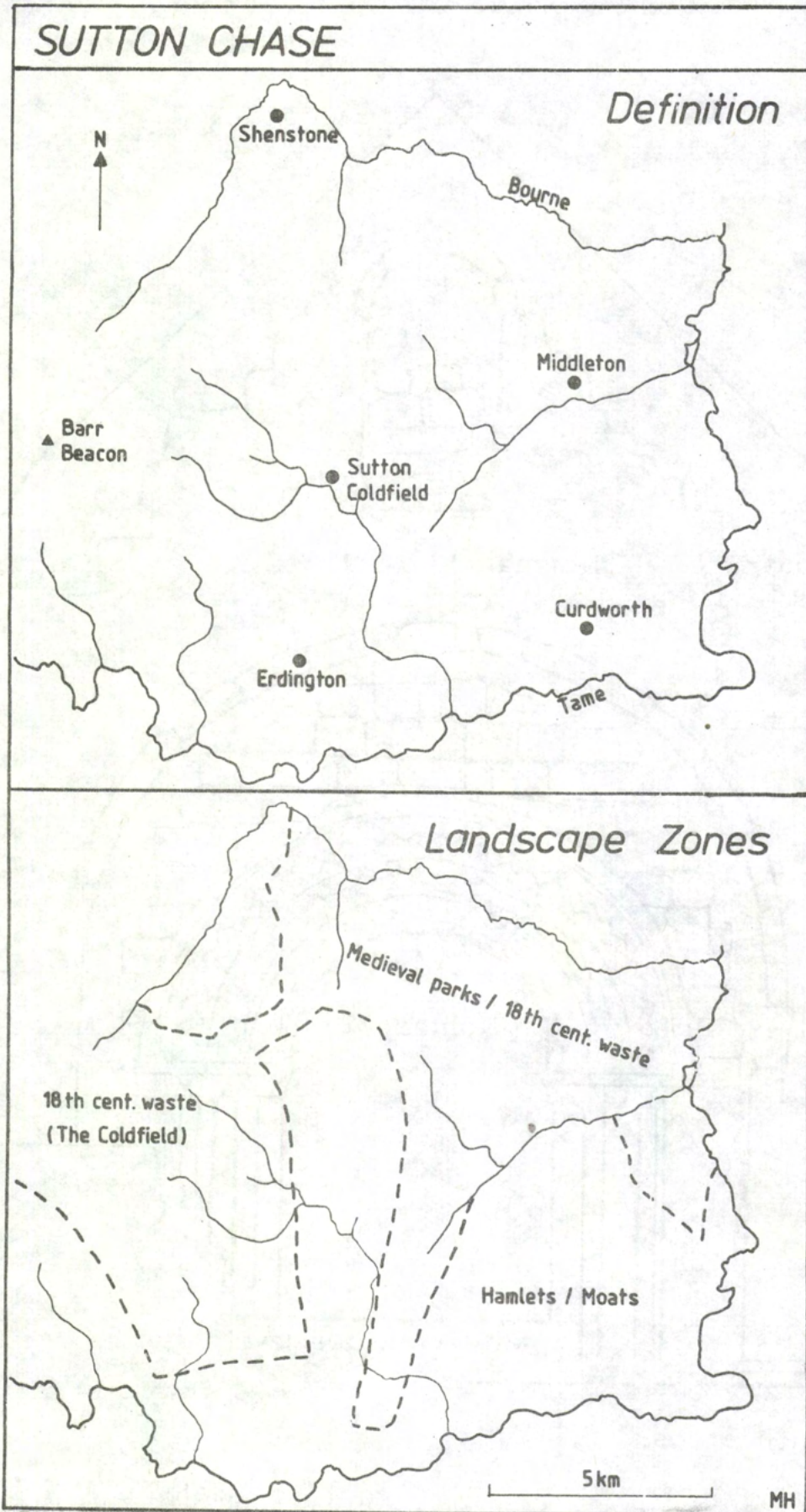


Fig. 35: SUTTON CHASE: Field Survey (Hodder)

Unenclosed Common Waste: In the 18th century this was heathland used for sheep grazing and contained only a few isolated houses. It is concentrated in the north and west of the area, and is on Bunter Pebble Beds and sandy drift, on which the main factors acting as constraints to human activity were exposure, the absence of surface water, and excessive dryness in summer, resulting in soil erosion. The largest area of waste, in the west, was known as The Coldfield, a name which first occurs in 1203 and has been derived from medieval charcoal burning. An analysis of Domesday entries, however, shows that this area had the lowest population and woodland densities in the study area, suggesting that it had by then reached its 18th century form. Fieldwalking has produced no evidence of Roman or medieval occupation or cultivation on the 18th century waste, and although the free-draining soils are probably the most suitable in the study area for the production of cropmarks, only two sites have been located. The distribution of flints of Mesolithic date from fieldwalking and chance finds suggests that activity in this period was confined to the edges where water was available but it is possible, from the virtual absence of later material, that the heathland here, as in the south of England, developed as a result of Mesolithic interference with the forest cover. Details of vegetation change will be provided by a peat monolith from Sutton Park, under analysis by S. Colledge at Birmingham University.

Parks: The boundaries of the medieval and post-medieval parks have been established by field archaeology and from cartographic and documentary evidence. The medieval parks, created in the 13th century, are on the northern edge of the study area. Drayton and Middleton parks contain cropmarks, and the latter also had a burnt mound of probable Middle Bronze Age date. Fieldwalking in Drayton, Middleton, Shenstone and Weeford parks has produced Mesolithic flints and chance finds include Neolithic polished axes, a Middle Bronze Age palstave and an Iron Age torc, but no Roman material has been found. Medieval pottery from Shenstone Park was close to a moated site and probably represents cultivation of an associated garden within the park, but arable cultivation during the Middle Ages in some of the parks is implied at Middleton and Drayton. At the former there is a spread of pottery at a distance from the moat and at the latter pottery was found within the boundary of the park as it had been established from cartographic and documentary evidence.

The evidence therefore suggests that the early medieval parks were formed out of waste land, which possibly existed by the Roman period. The later medieval parks have produced similar results: only flint flakes were found by fieldwalking in Shirral and Bangley parks.

Minor settlement nuclei: These are concentrated in the south-east of the study area, on Keuper Marl. Documentary evidence shows that some were in existence by the Middle Ages. All those at which fieldwalking was undertaken produced medieval pottery, showing that the areas were at least cultivated if not the sites of settlement. Some produced prehistoric flints, and a small quantity of Roman pottery from Lower Green suggests that some of the 'hamlets' may have Roman origins.

Moated Sites: A report has been submitted to the Moated Sites Research Group, thus only a brief note is included here. The context of moats which occur in parks or hamlets is included in those sections above. Of the isolated moats, North Wood and Langley have been investigated by fieldwalking. The former produced Mesolithic flints and Roman pottery, suggesting that it was not an example of medieval colonisation, but at the latter only medieval pottery was found.

The study is funded by a DES State Studentship and continues.

M.A. Hodder
University of Birmingham

SYDENHAM'S MOAT, Solihull, West Midlands County

Excavation of Medieval moated site at SP 144 757

Excavation has started again with concentration on the central and eastern parts of the moated platform where previous work had begun to uncover superficial features (fig. 36). The western part, where excavation in previous years had progressed to a considerable depth, has not been worked on in 1980. In the light of the year's work it has become necessary to reconsider the previously held views on stratification and sequence of features. The simple division of the evidence into two quite distinct phases will probably have to be revised.

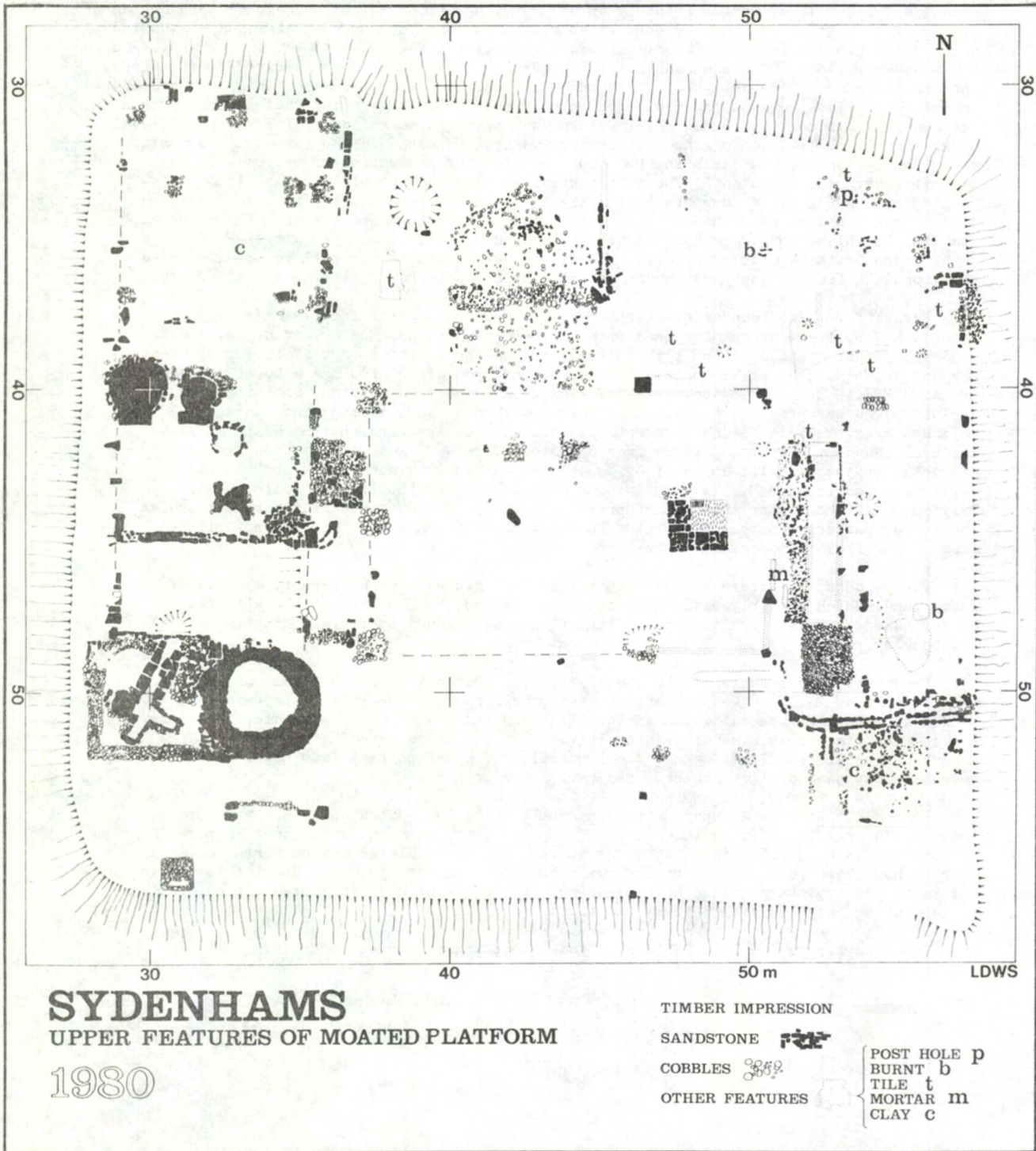


Fig. 36: SOLIHULL, Sydenham's Moat: Plan of excavated features on moat platform (Smith)

The late courtyard in the central and southern parts previously recorded by Jeffrey Perry has now been removed. This promises to provide a very useful stratification horizon between widely separated areas of the site. A series of possibly industrial features in the east side of the platform appear to be contemporary with the courtyard or later, but the yard itself covers slight traces of major structures at the centre of the platform. Traces of minor buildings, also of a slight nature, have been found at the southern edge of the platform, predating at least the top surface of the yard.

The possibly industrial features at the east side of the platform, with a thick deposit of charcoal and what appear to be tank bases, show some similarity to features at the centre of the west side of the platform previously excavated by Mr. Perry, and are probably contemporary and of similar purpose.

Slight traces of a large central building are beginning to take shape, and some structures previously regarded as separate buildings at the edge of the platform may have to be reinterpreted in the light of this, if further excavation confirms it.

Lance Smith
for Solihull Archaeological Group

TAMWORTH, Staffordshire

Log boat discovered at Bolebridge Street

SK 2095 0394

Building contractors working adjacent to the site of the Anglo-Saxon watermill at the "Ankerside Shopping Centre" Bolebridge Street, Tamworth, on 13th August 1980, removed an ancient piece of timber from the base of the new pedestrian sub-way. The timber was found lying on and within the gravel bed of the old (disused) course of the River Anker. The timber is oak, measuring 2.37 m long by 0.66 m wide. It has a prow-shaped front with two sloping shoulders on the prow's upper surfaces. The remaining 2.0 m of the timber forms the flat bottom of the 'boat'. It is thought that the odd shape of the 'log boat' is due to the deliberate re-shaping of the timber, by cutting down the full length of one of its sides for a secondary use, the purpose of which is unknown.

R. Sulima
Tamworth Museum

TIDDINGTON, Warwickshire

Site evaluation of Roman Settlement

SP 219 556

The Roman settlement at Tiddington, known since at least 1922, is currently under threat from redevelopment. Four trenches were excavated by BUFAU on 26th-27th January 1980, to test certain aspects of a Geophysical Survey carried out in 1979, by the University of Bradford, (fig. 37).

Trench A produced a large quantity of 2nd - 3rd century Roman coarse pottery, as well as some iron slag or the waste from a bloomery or blacksmith.

Trench B was situated to find the limits of a large ditch, which proved to be over 8 metres wide and 2 metres deep, and produced ten sherds of Roman pottery dated to the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D.

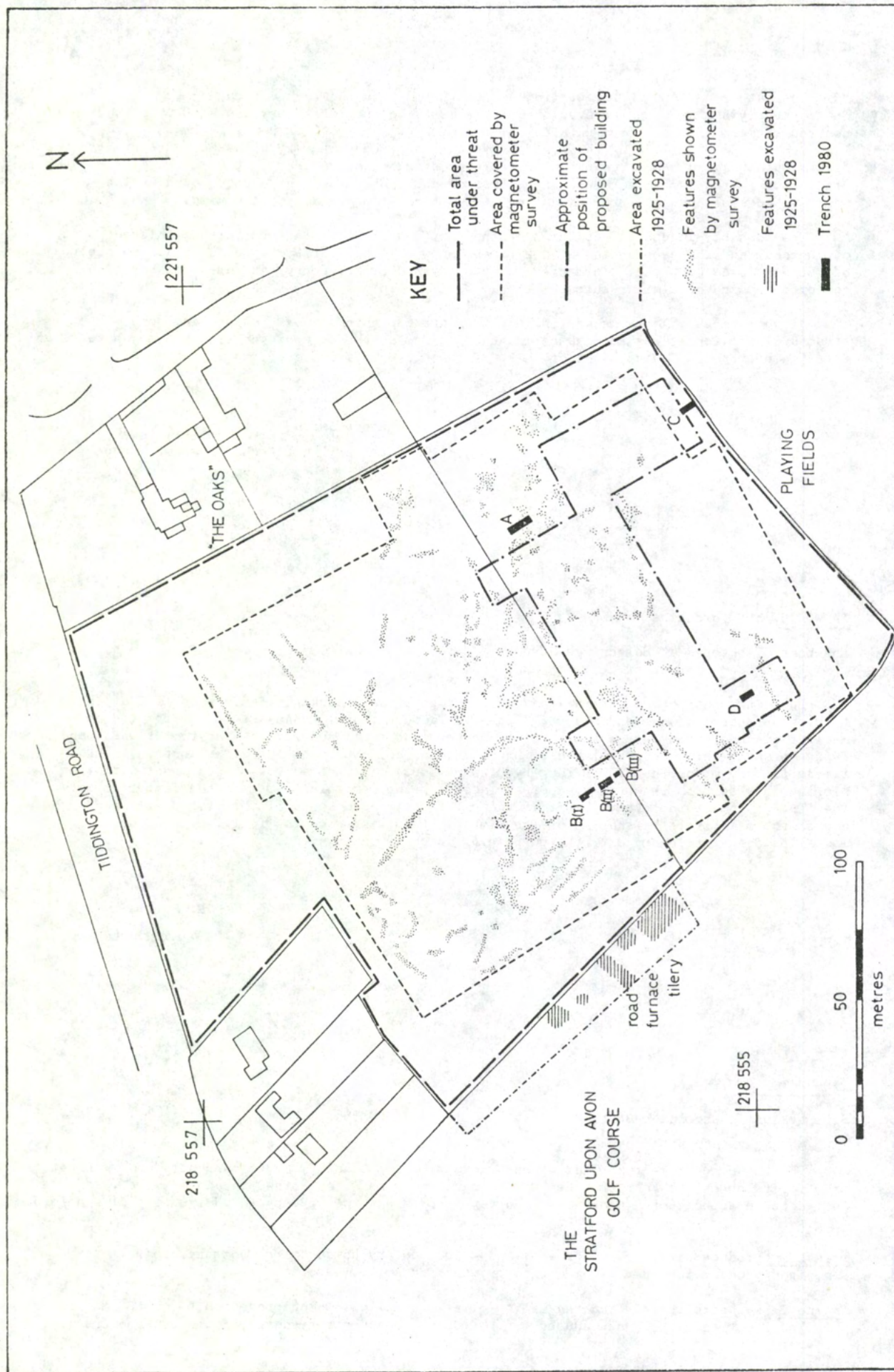


Fig. 37: TIDDINGTON: Geophysical Survey and trial excavations, 1980 (Mather)

Trench C was situated outside the area of the Geophysical Survey and produced no features.

Trench D confirmed the negative results of the Geophysical Survey.

The trenches therefore suggest that the Geophysical Survey reflects the distribution of features in the area surveyed.

A provisional interpretation of the site might be that an early defended site was superseded in the 2nd century A.D., by an extensive settlement which covered the area surveyed, and possibly beyond.

Excavation by Warwickshire County Museum has subsequently commenced under the direction of N. Palmer.

Chris Mather

Birmingham University Field Archaeology
Unit

TIDDINGTON, Warwickshire

Excavation of Roman Settlement at SP 219 557

Following the granting of planning permission for office development on part of the Romano-British settlement first discovered in the 1920's, an excavation has been launched by Warwickshire Museum and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust with financial help from the NFU Mutual Insurance Company and the DoE. The aim of the excavation is to ascertain the nature, plan and extent of the settlement and in particular to establish whether it was 'industrial', as suggested by the earlier excavators (Fieldhouse, May and Wellstood 1931), or not, as has been argued more recently (Webster 1974).

A magnetometer survey by Bradford University (Aspinal, Aspinal and Heathcote 1979) showed dense occupation over the northern two third of the site, the most prominent features being a large ditch enclosing the north west part of the field and a trackway leaving this enclosure to the south east. Trial trenching in the south part of the field has echoed the distribution of features suggested by the magnetometer survey and located a substantial stone building, possibly aisled, within the enclosure and possible timber structures alongside the trackway outside it.

Four larger areas have now been stripped mechanically: one within the enclosure around the stone building; a second includes a section across the large ditch and an area to the south bounded by another ditch; the third lies in the middle of the field on the southern edge of settlement and the fourth astride the trackway on the east side of the field. Excavation of the last is revealing extensive pits filled with domestic rubbish and quantities of metalworking slag, ditches and a well alongside the trackway.

It is hoped to complete excavation of these areas and further ones in the north part of the field before building work begins in June 1981.

Nicholas Palmer
Warwickshire Museum

References:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Aspinal, Aspinal and Heathcote, 1979: | 'Tiddington', <u>WMAANS</u> , 22 (1979), 45 |
| Fieldhouse, W.J. May, J and Wellstood, F.C., 1931: | <u>A Romano-British Industrial settlement at Tiddington, Stratford-upon-Avon</u> |
| Webster, G., 1974: | 'The West Midlands in the Roman Period', <u>T.B.W.A.S.</u> lxxxvi |

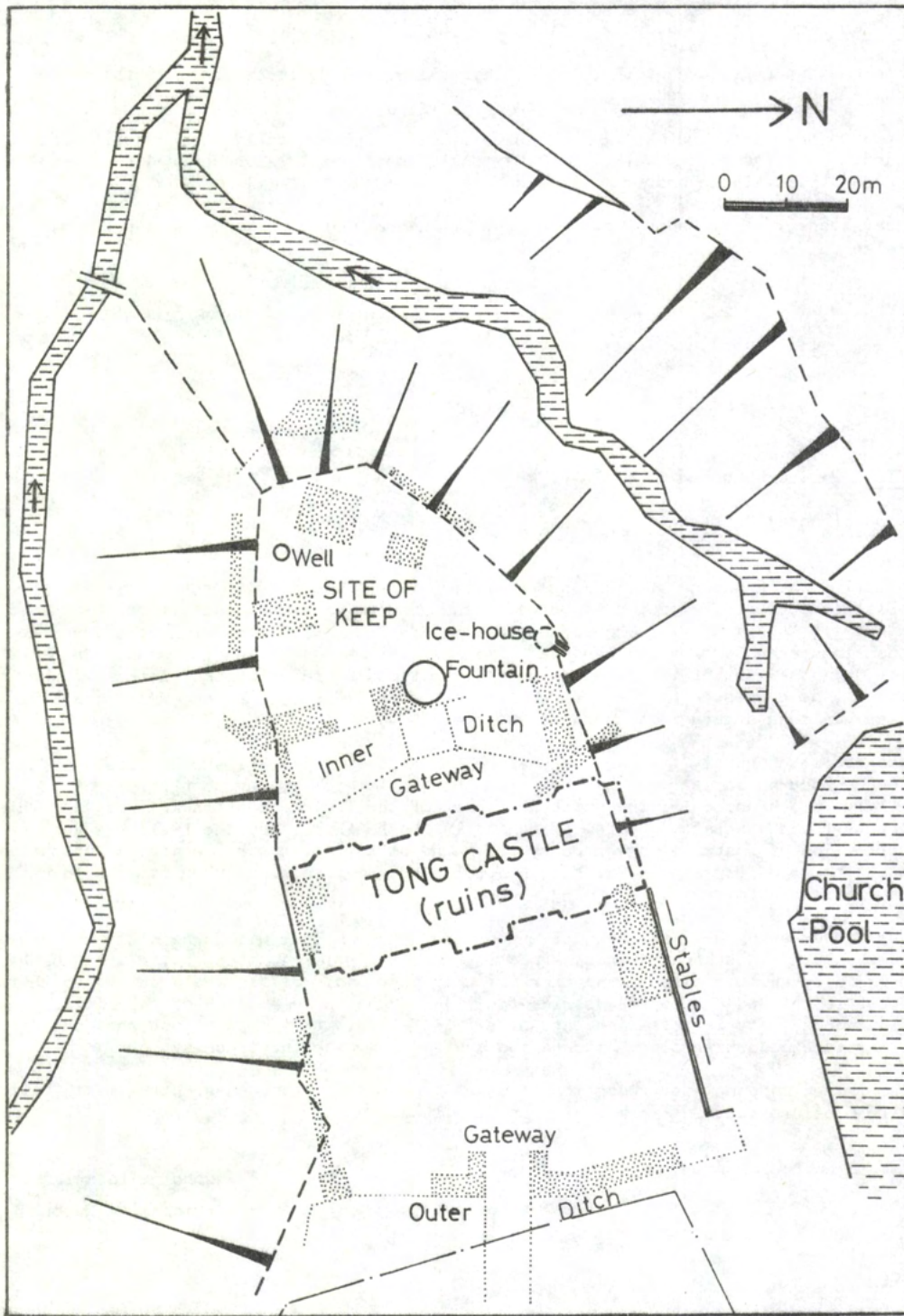


Fig. 38: TONG: Site of excavations (stippled) (Wharton)

TONG CASTLE, Shropshire

Excavation and Survey

SJ 7917 0692

Excavation has been carried out at Tong Castle since 1976, in advance of the construction of the M54 motorway, now expected in 1981. The castle has been the home of the Lords of the Manor of Tong from the 12th century to the 19th century, when the Manor was bought by the Second Earl of Bradford. The castle subsequently had a tenant until the First World War, after which it fell into ruin and was finally demolished for safety reasons in 1954. Although there is little of the latest castle to be seen, the landscaping carried out by Capability Brown still remains.

The excavation has to date recovered evidence for five castle buildings, summarised as follows (fig. 38):

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 12/13th century | A keep built of rough red sandstone with a defensive ditch, curtain-wall and gateway. |
| 14/15th century | A new manorial building of sandstone ashlar, constructed in the centre of the site; an outer gateway and ditch provided to the extended curtain wall. |
| 16/17th century | The 14th century castle rebuilt in brick |
| 17/18th century | The third castle rebuilt in dressed yellow sandstone following damage in the Civil War. The new establishment was provided with formal Italian style gardens |
| 18/19th century | The castle again rebuilt in ornate dressed sandstone. |

The finds include a number of 14th century pewter vessels and a 13th century seal. Work began in 1980 to dismantle the ice-house for re-erection at the Avoncroft Museum of Buildings. Work on site continues.

(Adapted from Tong Castle, published by the Tong Archaeological Group in 1979, with the kind permission of the author:- Alan Wharton, Tong Archaeological Group.)

WALL, Staffordshire

Roman features at SK 096 065

In the spring of 1980 we were asked by the Department of the Environment to carry out a "rescue" excavation prior to development by Lichfield District Council, who propose building bungalows on a triangle of land, approximately 0.76 acres (0.304 hec.) at the west end of WALL village.

Two previous reports have been published relating to work carried out in this area, the first by Adrian Oswald when the by-pass was being built (Oswald, 1967) and the second by A.A. Round when a new pumping station was installed (Round, 1970).

In May 1980 two trial trenches were opened by machine to assess the potential of the plot of land in question.

Trench No. 1 This was put where it seemed likely that walls and associated clay floors referred to by A. Oswald may be seen. On removal of the plough-soil a spread of sandstone was discovered which, unfortunately, had been partially destroyed by large pits dug by the road construction contractors who used the area as a vehicle park and refuse dump. Amongst the sandstone spread at the western half of the excavation were four stone pads, approximately 1.5 metres in diameter and 3 metres apart, aligned parallel to Watling Street and at right angles to the more northerly of two pitched sandstone foundations, which could be seen converging. The southern wall was sectioned, and when examined after removal, one of the large pitched sandstone blocks was found to bear graffiti on its underside.

Both foundations appear to be composed of only one course and have been laid on a deposit of gley-soil which had accumulated over a layer of gravel. This gravel layer contains a large amount of R.B. pot, including a proportion of early imported wares, the most notable being a complete Hofheim rim, identified by Dr. G. Webster who has prepared a special report.

The eastern half of this trench comprises a layer of gravel which appears to have been laid deliberately, perhaps because of flooding.

Examination of all the features and the gravel layer is continuing.

Trench No. 2 lies to the east of Trench No. 1 and was cut through a bank topped by a comparatively modern hedge which acted as a boundary to the gardens of cottages. Here it was thought possible that the defences of an early large fort may be found. Two parallel wall foundations have so far been uncovered, running north-south approximately 3 metres apart, the western one extending for at least 12 metres. Both have been sectioned and found to be 1 metre wide and at least 1 metre deep, being built of large river cobbles, re-used sandstone and limestone blocks, bonded with mortar which appears to be gypsum based. Their stratigraphical relationship to each other has not yet been established as this was destroyed by the installation of underground electric cables. The area is now being extended to the south-east in an effort to establish this relationship. No dating evidence has been found so far for these walls.

Frank and Nancy Ball

References:

Oswald, A. 1967: (in TSSAHS, vol. 8)

Round, A.A. 1970: (in TSSAHS, vol. 11)

WALSALL, West Midlands County

Architectural recording at Rushall Gatehouse

SP 026 998

Architectural recording and limited excavations were undertaken for West Midlands County Council and the owner, in advance of essential repair work. The work showed that the gatehouse was a late 15th century addition to an archway passing through the 14th century curtain wall which surrounds the hall site. The new gatehouse consisted of ground, first and second storeys, internal access being provided by a circular staircase in the north-east corner. First and second floor accommodation was probably comfortable, fireplaces being provided in the south wall, and a garderobe shaft in the north. 18th century illustrations show that both floors were lit by large rectangular mullioned windows in the front (west) wall over the archway. A fireplace at ground level in the south wall was presumably for the benefit of a watchman or porter. A blocked doorway at first floor level in the north wall gave access either to a wall-walk behind the curtain wall battlements, or to the upper floor of an adjoining building.

The building was partly demolished in c. 1830-40, only the south wall surviving to its full height. Later in the 19th century, the first floor was adopted as a garden: the vault was consolidated and c. 30 tons of topsoil and make-up laid down. A folly, in the form of a small 'grotto' was built in the north-west corner over the garderobe shaft.

Copies of an interim report and the survey drawings are deposited with BUFAU and WMCC. Excavated finds will be returned to the owners at Rushall Hall after analysis. A full report is being prepared for the South Staffs. Archaeological and Historical Society's, Transactions.

Nigel Baker

for Birmingham University Field
Archaeology Unit

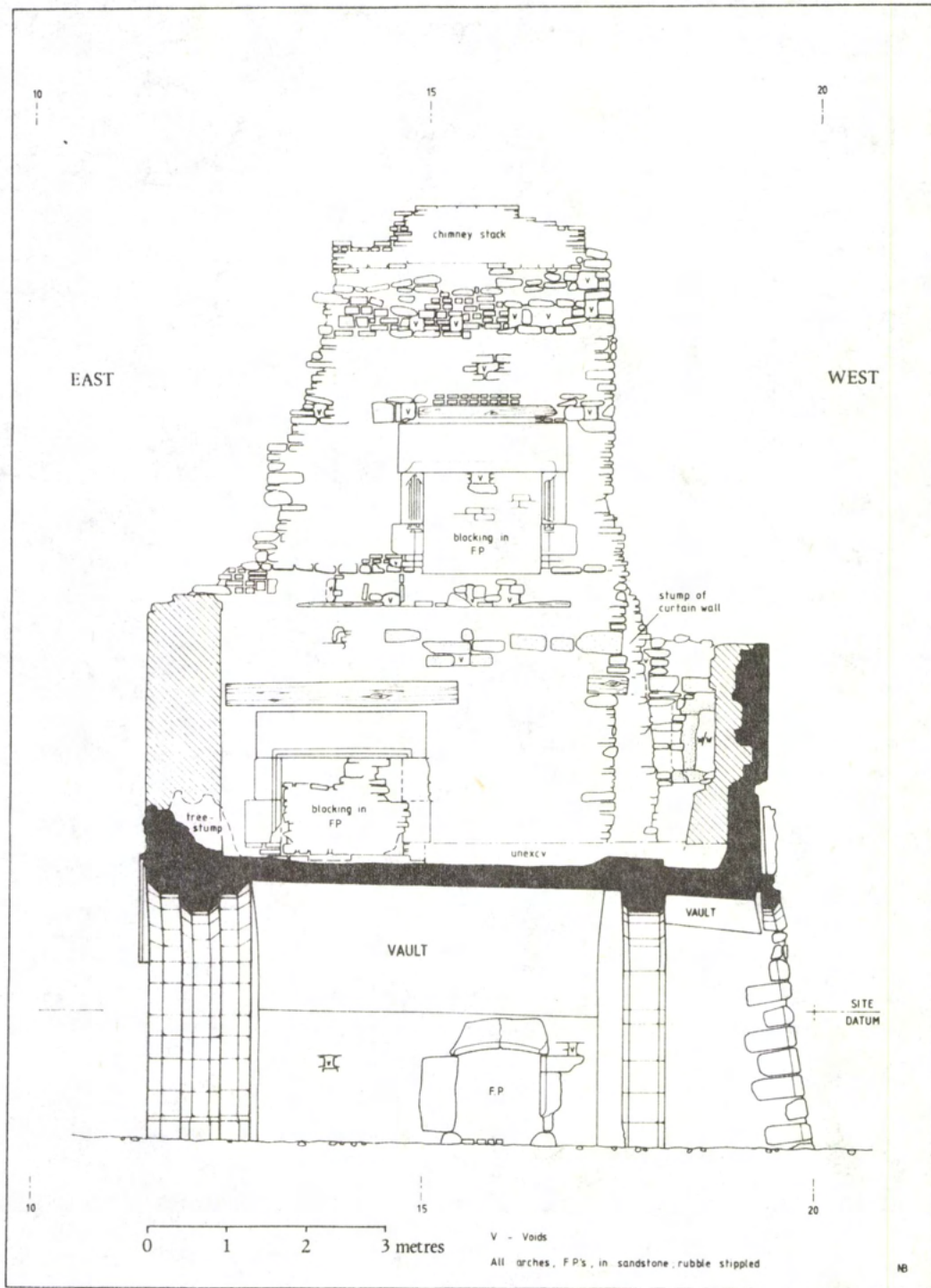


Fig. 39: WALSALL, Rushall Gatehouse: South elevation and axial section (Baker)

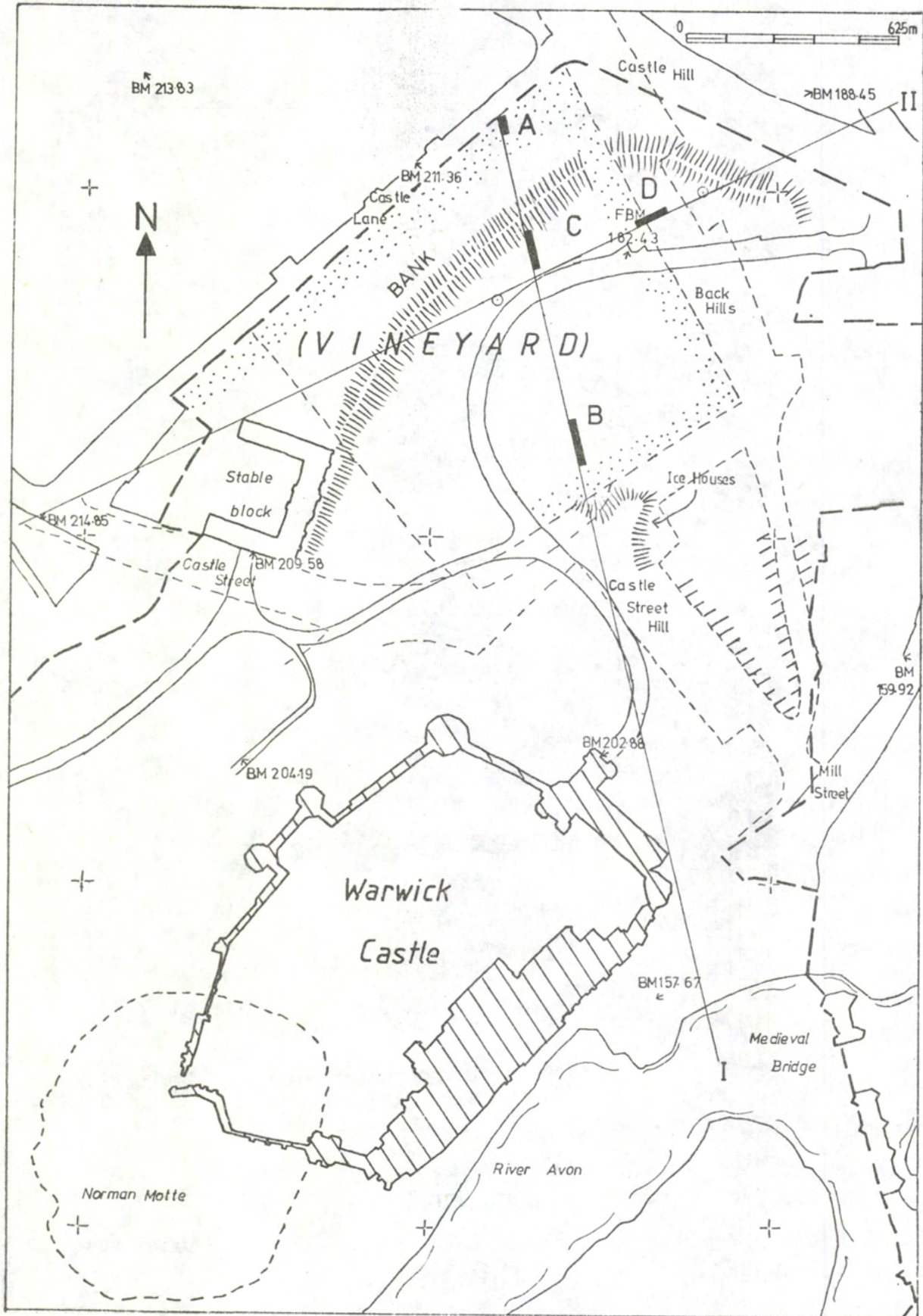


Fig. 40: WARWICK CASTLE: · Northern part of the estate, showing early post-medieval roads and vineyard (dashed) and position of trial excavations, 1980 (Turner)

WARWICK CASTLE, Warwickshire

Site Evaluation in north grounds

SP 284 647

fig. 40

A site evaluation was commissioned by Madam Tussauds, owners of Warwick Castle, in advance of possible redevelopment. It comprised a survey, the excavation of four trenches to sample the deposits, and a review of documentary and map evidence.

Neolithic and Saxon activity had been anticipated, however this was not present. 12th century occupation was suggested by a truncated pit in Site B and a yard traced in Site A. There was no 13th-18th century habitation, while levelling on Site A immediately above the 12th century deposits relates to documentary evidence of a vineyard at this period. Site D contained a 17th-18th century cess pit and structures of 18th-19th century date, including a house platform possibly associated with the vanished road "Back Hills". Cellars of former houses along Back Hills can be seen in the 18th century rock-cut road. The resultant upcast was utilised in creating an ornamental rock garden to the south of the road, and a bank to the north. The latter is thus unlikely to mark the line of a castle defence. Two 18th century quarry pits were dug in Site B, to obtain or contact the undisturbed sandstone. Levelling converted the area into a garden, burying two roads and involving the demolition of some houses, the remains being thrown into the quarry pits. Shallow pits found in Site C are further indications of landscaping. In the 19th century, ice houses were constructed which remain in a good state of preservation. More recently tennis courts to the south and a car park to the north were constructed. Archaeological survival was thus poor. Excavation along Castle Lane and Back Hills might however produce evidence of the medieval urban plan, and the preservation of the ice houses was recommended.

Val E. Turner

Birmingham University Field
Archaeology UnitWEST MIDLANDS COUNTY

Aerial Photograph Evaluation

Between August 1976 and July 1977, a complete air photographic coverage of the recently formed West Midlands County was undertaken for planning purposes. Although over half the county is highly urban in nature (see fig. 4) some three thousand of these photographs were examined for new archaeological remains, as extant earthworks or soil/crop-marks. Unfortunately a high majority of the photographs were taken in 1977, following the harvest, and other limitations included the fact that the photographs were verticals. Although this allowed stereoscopic pairs to be used, from the archaeological point of view obliques tend to show soil/crop-marks with greater clarity. Of the possible sites discovered, these were checked with other surveys including the work of Arnold Baker and J. Pickering, and visits were also paid to the National Monuments Record aerial photograph section (Fortress House, London) and the sites and monuments record for Warwickshire. All possible sites were recorded on a card index system, now held at the West Midlands County Planning Office, and arrangements were made for any further sites to be entered onto a Sites and Monuments Record (aerial photograph archive) similar to that in use by Shropshire.

Only one site emerged from the survey that had previously been unnoticed (see fig. 42). It is situated at Berryfields Farm (SK 041 099) and is henge-like in form.

M. Ashton-Cooper

Birmingham University Field
Archaeology Unit

WEST MIDLANDS COUNTY

AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL AND CONSTRAINTS.

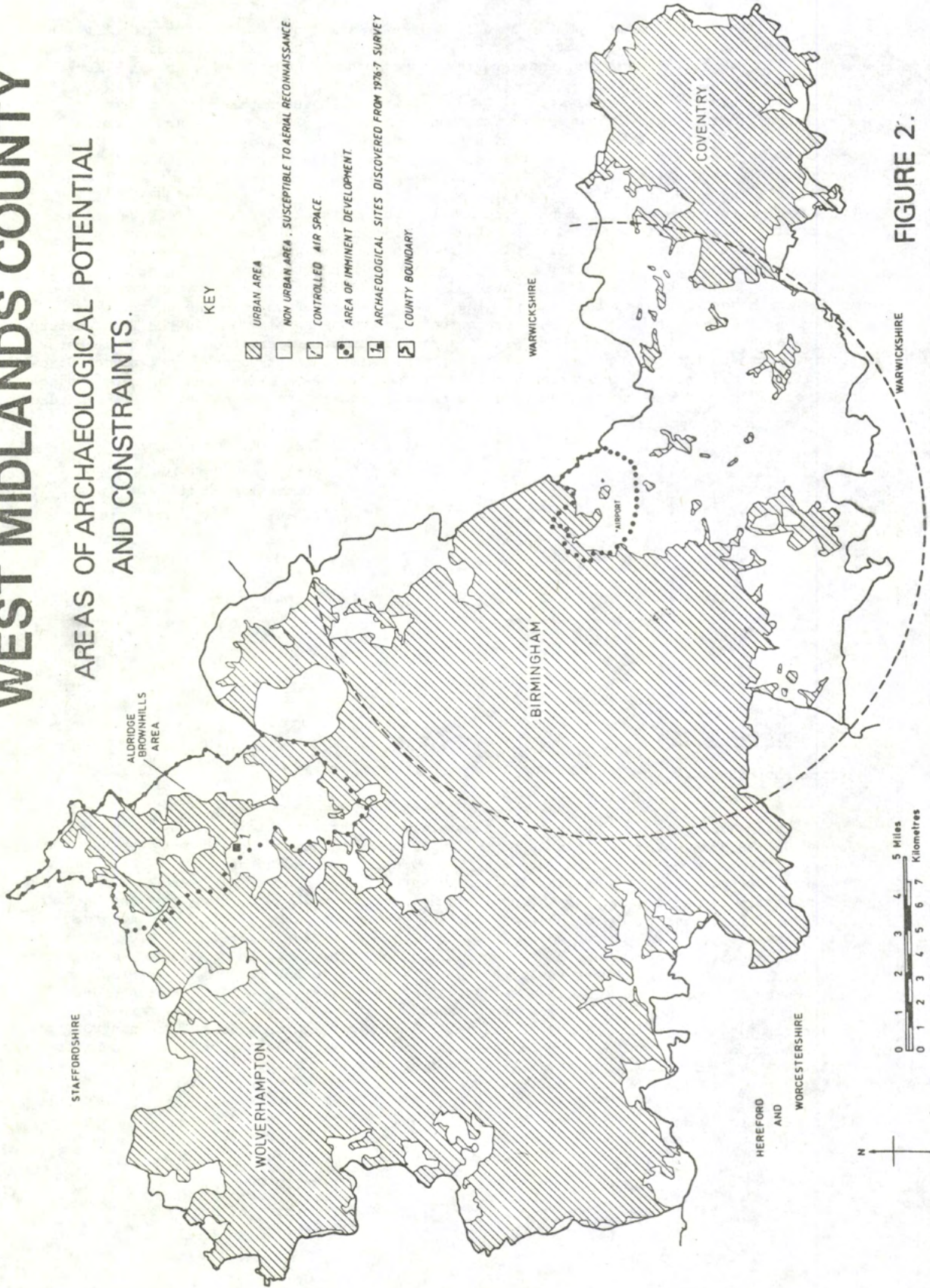


FIGURE 2.

Fig. 41: WEST MIDLANDS COUNTY: Areas of Archaeological potential and constraints for aerial photography (Ashton-Cooper)

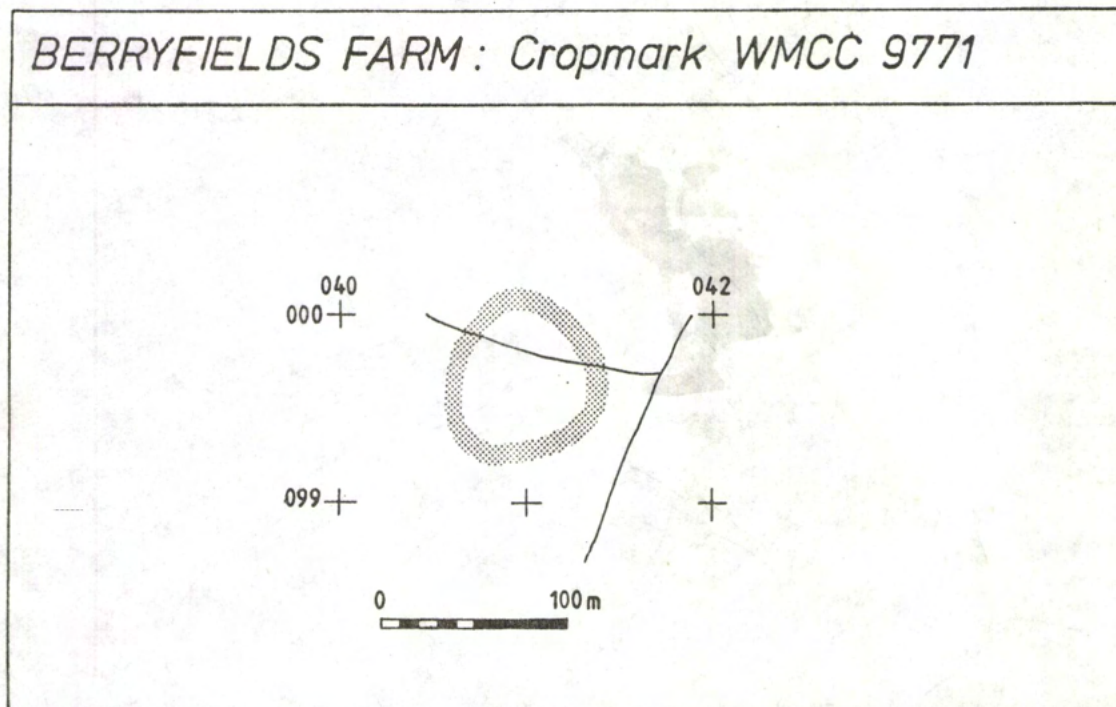


Fig. 42: WEST MIDLANDS COUNTY: Cropmark discovered from aerial survey (Ashton-Cooper)

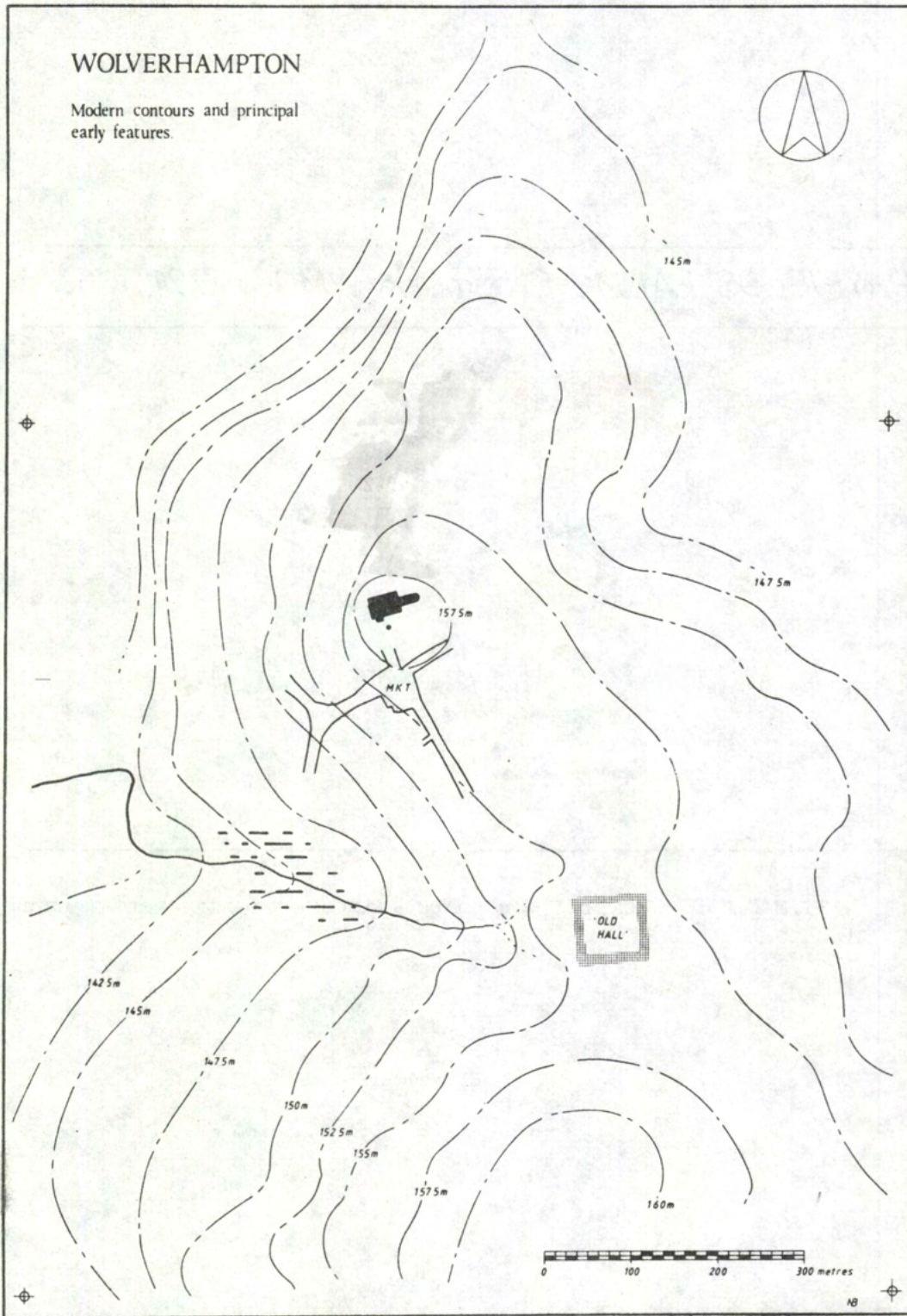


Fig. 43: WOLVERHAMPTON: Contour plan and earliest features (Baker)

WHITCHURCH, Shropshire

Excavations in Watergate Street

SJ 5425 4132

A 17m long SW-NE trench designed to intersect the line of the Wroxeter-Chester Roman road, revealed no sign of it. The road probably lies further to the W beneath the present street, which occupies the top of a low ridge. However the trench did reveal complicated timber structures and cobble hardstandings on the W edge of the marsh and mere which preceded The White Lion Meadow. Heavy timbers and boarding 3m from the SW end of the trench appear to represent a collapsed or demolished building, but further E, the uprights with surviving mortice and tenon joints, of a timber 'jetty' are in good condition. At least one of these has proved to be a re-used timber. This timber structure was superceded, probably late in the C17 by a cobble hardstanding. A worn coin of Charles I, pottery and pipes from silt levels overlying this suggest intermittent, probably seasonal, flooding in the period c1690-1720. Filling took place throughout the C18, with buildings gradually extending back from the Watergate frontage. In the early C19 nearby buildings were demolished and the tenements, themselves only recently demolished were extended to the E end of the plot.

Finds so far, mostly from the waterlogged peat of the mere, include parts of seven shoes, a bone apple-corer, a fragment of a wooden comb, and two wooden bowls, one with the initials F.H. in good lettering cut into its base. Documentary research has revealed one Francis Heatley (b.? d.1717) at Bark Hill (c 20m from the site), a skinner. There is much leather-working debris in the tip levels, and the bowls may well have been his. Other finds are suggestive of dyeing and perhaps smithing in the area, and the standard of some of the pottery suggests a not entirely poverty-stricken community.

D.S. Stewart

Whitchurch Area Archaeological
GroupWOLVERHAMPTON, West Midlands County

Urban Site Evaluation

SO 9198

An archaeological evaluation of the town of Wolverhampton was carried out for Birmingham City Council, and Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit from whom a report is available. Very few deposits are predicted to have survived, but the site is shown to have originally been a peninsula bordered by marshland (fig. 43), probably first fully exploited in the early middle ages.

N.J. Baker

for Birmingham University Field
Archaeology UnitWOLVERHAMPTON, West Midlands County

Salvage recording and excavation at St. John Street

SO 913 985

Contractors developing land at the rear of the 16th century timber-framed 'Lindy Lou' building in St. John Street, Wolverhampton, disturbed c. 0.50 m of Medieval strata. Salvage recording revealed that the Medieval deposit formed a metalled road lying beneath an accumulation of domestic and craft debris. Approximately 150 potsherds of the 13th-15th centuries were recovered from this layer, together with numerous small offcuts of leather, some derived from shoe-making activity. Two fragmentary stitched-leather shoes stratified with the Late Medieval pottery were also contained in

this layer. The street was aligned east-west, and had been inserted into a shallow ditch or gully dug into the red clay sub-stratum. Formed from many tightly packed small pebbles, the street was founded at the south by a line of large erratics, creating a kerb. To the north the street had been destroyed by a mid-19th century brick drain, and similar recent disturbances had truncated the top of the Medieval horizon.

A small excavation at the rear of the 'Lindy Lou' building located the base course of a sandstone wall, which can be tentatively identified as the gable wall of an extension to the timber frame. The position of the wall coincides with that of one shown on Taylor's 1750 plan of Wolverhampton. Approximately 35 kg. (5½ st.) of Post Medieval pottery was recovered, from a single deposit. The pottery, consisting of 'black-glazed' wares, slipware, tin-glazed ware, brown and white stoneware, is assignable to the period 1680-1740, from its association with datable clay pipe and bottle glass fragments. The timber building was known as the 'Hand Inn' in 1609, and continued as an inn to the 18th century. The ceramic assemblage, consisting of handled cups and tankards, porringers, bowls, plates, panchions and storage vessels, is possibly derived from the building when it was in use as an ale house. No material earlier than the late-17th century was found here. The stone wall and pottery deposit rested directly on the red clay sub-stratum, at a depth of 0.70 m below the present ground surface.

All the site records and finds are currently with the writer, and will eventually be deposited at the Wolverhampton Museum and Art Gallery. The final report is being prepared for publication in the Transactions of the South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society.

John Malam

WORCESTER, Hereford and Worcester

Excavations on the City Wall at 61, Sidbury

SO 85240 54450

HWCW 2505

The conversion of an old brick barn at the rear of 61 Sidbury, Worcester into a dwelling house, during Spring 1980, involved the demolition and rebuilding of the existing structure, and the addition of new extensions. Preliminary exploration of the foundations by the owner, Mr. D.C. Hooker, revealed that the west wall of the nineteenth century barn was built upon a very substantial red sandstone wall at its southern end. The position, orientation and constructional detail of the latter indicated that it was the medieval town wall, and Mr. Hooker willingly allowed two enlarged inspection trenches to be dug archaeologically by County Museum staff. These trenches are shown as Areas A and B on Fig. 44, and in addition the top of the wall was exposed between these two areas (Area C).

The main sections from Areas A and B have been simplified and amalgamated in fig. 45 which shows the sequence clearly. In neither area was the undisturbed subsoil encountered, and although a number of Roman potsherds were recovered, our knowledge of pre- or early-medieval occupation in this immediate locality must remain conjectural.

The earliest phase observed in the sequence is represented by the green clay layer in Area B (213) with the black loam (212) above. This is likely to be the remnants of a clay bank (F223) with 212 being the buried turf of its surface. The earliest ditch (F229) was only investigated in a very small area, but it may be the ditch associated with this early rampart, or a palisade trench along the outer edge of the bank.

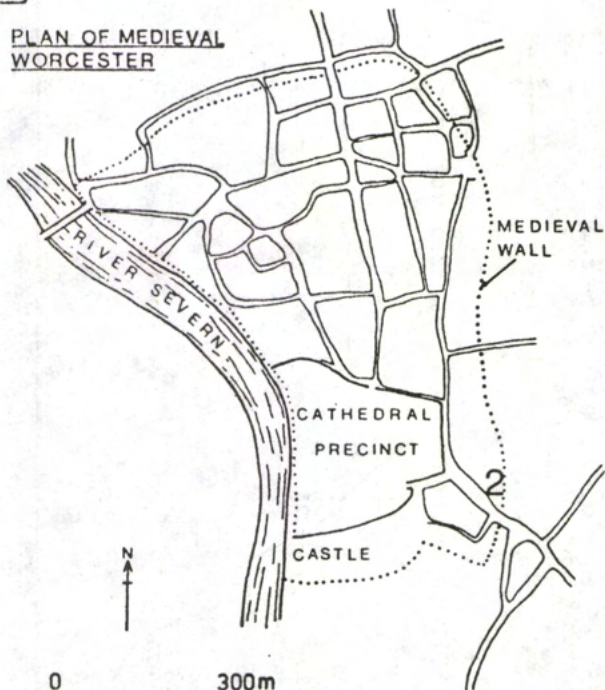
The first surviving phase of the stone wall (F119-F202) was built in this ditch (F229), with the earliest construction trench (F221) cutting the clay rampart (F223). Both 225 and 216 were layers composed of broken and crushed red sandstone fragments. The foundations of the wall were stepped; the level of the top plinth stone on the outside face corresponded with the base of the construction trench (F221) and of the lowest foundation course on the inner face.

At a later date another trench (F222) was dug along the inside of the wall, which was then rebuilt, using very large stones for the outside face, and re-using the old blocks on the inside. The trench (F222) contained much mortar and sandstone as did the layer 208.

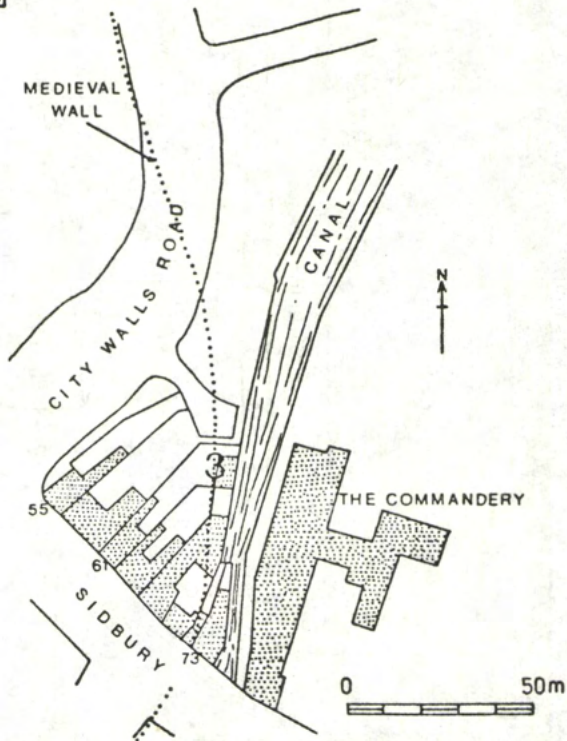
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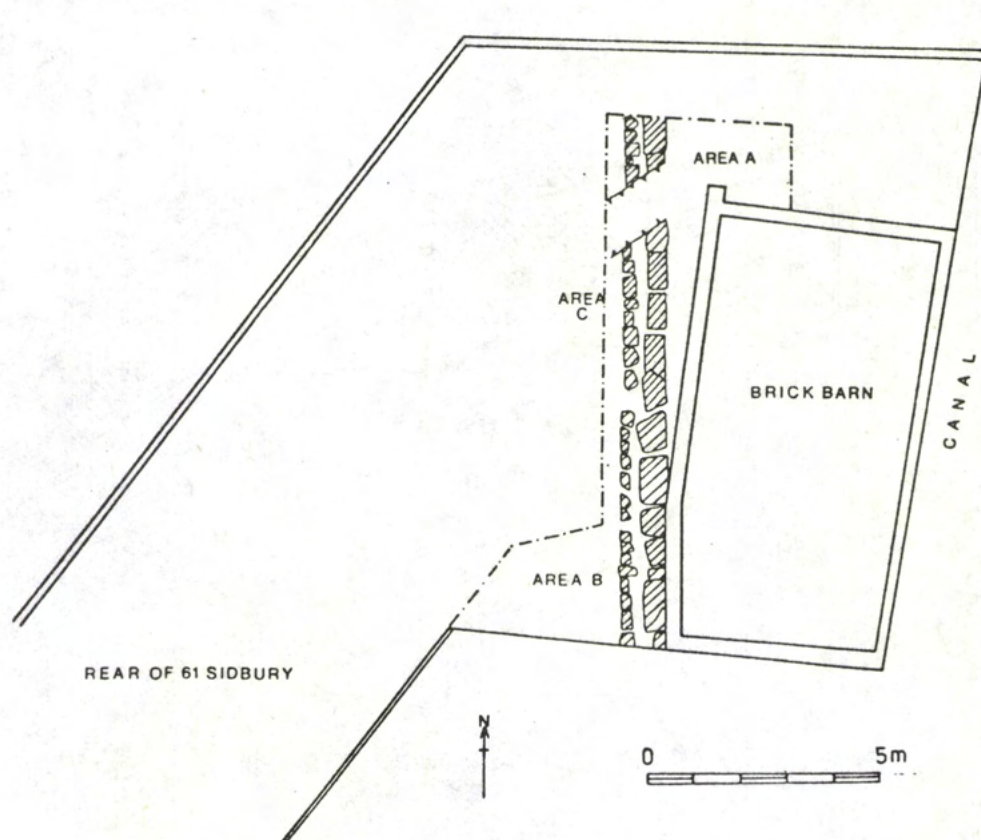
PLAN OF MEDIEVAL WORCESTER



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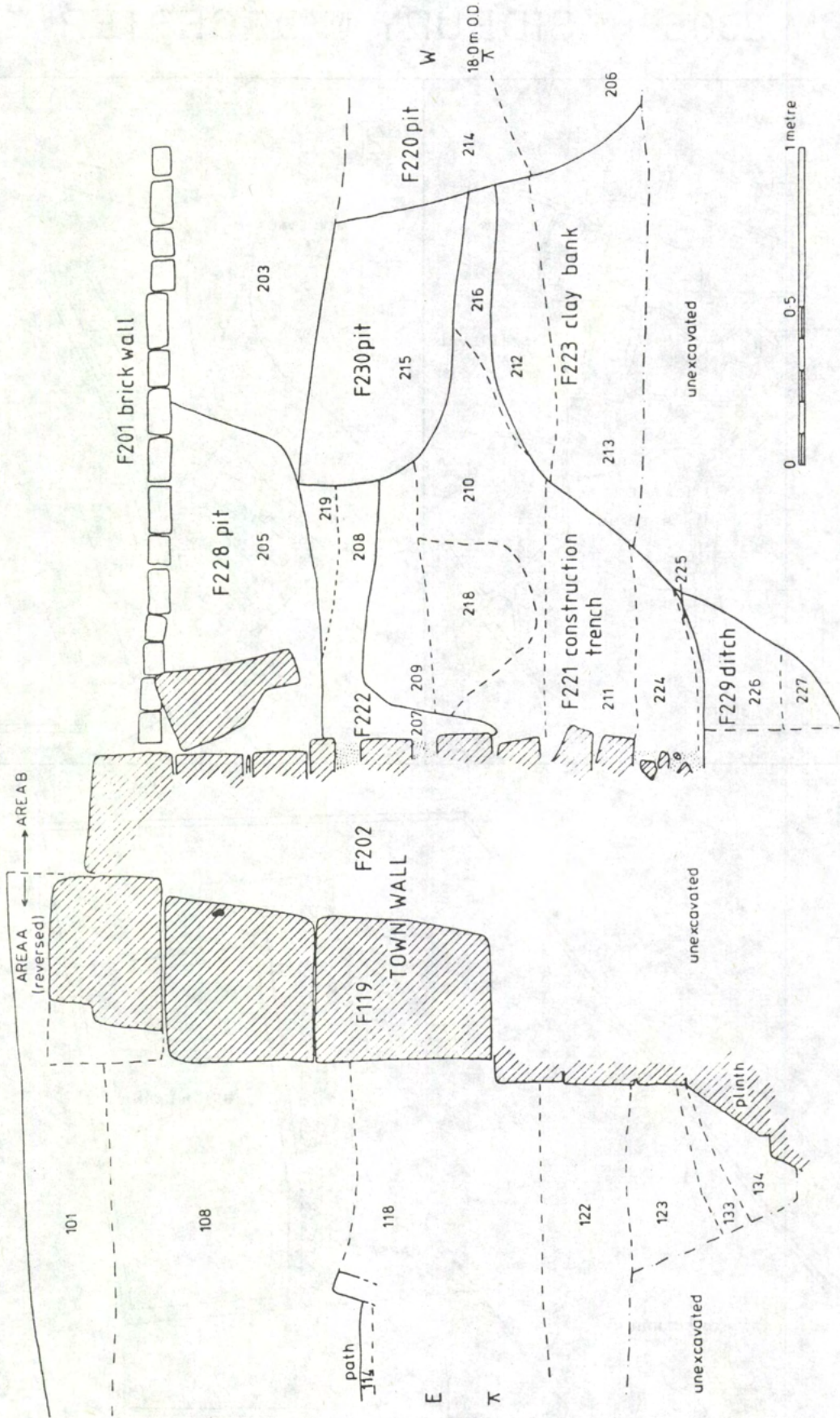


J Sawle 1980

Fig. 44: WORCESTER: Excavations on the town wall in Sidbury (Sawle)

HWCM 2505 61, SIDBURY, WORCESTER.

COMBINED SECTION THROUGH THE TOWN WALL



J Sawle 1980

Fig. 45: WORCESTER: Section through town wall in Sidbury (Sawle)

It would be of great interest to ascertain the total extent of this rebuilding, which has not been recorded elsewhere around the defensive circuit of Worcester. The ground level inside the rebuild was considerably higher than that outside, and it is probable that the top plinth level was still exposed at this time.

The wall was finally demolished, and the ground level outside brought up to the level of that inside in the early nineteenth century, probably when the construction of the canal altered the topography of this area of the town.

Although the stratigraphic sequence of these phases is quite clear it is difficult to allocate specific dates to each phase because only a small quantity of pottery was recovered, much of which could be residual. None of the potsherds would dispute with the historical framework of a pre-13th century clay rampart and ditch, succeeded by a stone wall in the 13th century. The rebuilding of the stone wall could belong to the mid-17th century strengthening of the town defences at the time of the Civil War.

J. Sawle

Hereford and Worcester County Museum

WROXETER, Shropshire

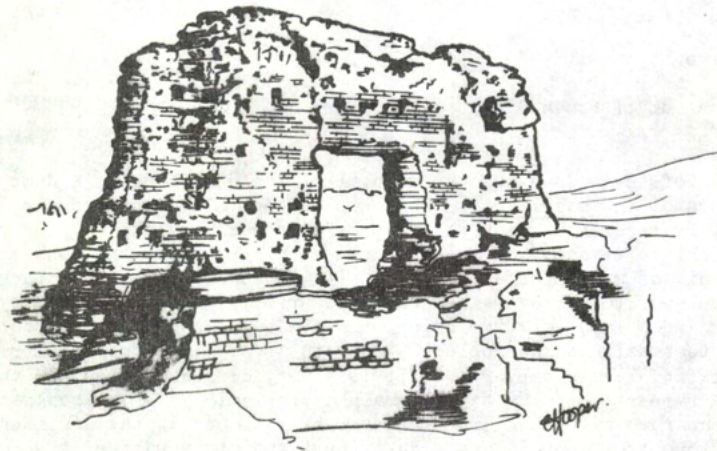
Excavations at macellum of Roman City

SJ 1608

The main task of the season was the removal of the deep Hadrianic dump under the inner portico floors of the macellum. This was successfully achieved and a large assemblage of pottery recovered which should provide a useful group for the period. The level revealed by this clearance has a remarkably even appearance and consists of fine sandy material devoid of stones or artefacts. It was suggested by Phil Barker that this could be the humus layer formed over the demolished remains of the early city houses and, if so, it may indicate a lapse of time before the new building programme started; soil sampling may help to resolve this problem. Only in Area 91, the north corridor were the early city and military levels explored. It is a very difficult area and the structures north of the stone rampart building still remain a problem. The season's target on the west portico was the removal of the 3rd century pebble floors at the south end down to the main construction level, but it was soon evident that this part of the portico was quite different from the north end; there are fragments of several structures and a series of large rectangular pits full of animal bones cutting through the mortar construction spread. There had been successive sinkages into these pits producing small patches of flooring which are not matched elsewhere. Clearly the history of this section of the portico is different from that of the north half. Work has continued on the south corridor in the three available areas. At the west end it is unfortunate that the modern drain has removed the junction between two quite different sequences of deposit. The western part of the two has a good pebble floor associated with an east-west beam-slot, while the eastern one consists of a thick dump of domestic rubbish. The smaller area to the east of this contains the robber trench of the main drain. Evidence appeared this year of an apparent robbing of the drain from the piscina connecting with it, but this has yet to be proved. Area 80, further to the east, has always been a problem with its succession of pits. These now resolve themselves into a double row of long latrine trenches on each side of a central spine, reflecting the seating arrangement. The pottery from these pits is early 2nd - mid - 3rd C. The Hadrianic filling has been dumped on a pebble surface which appears to be an early city east-west street, giving us a useful addition to the plan of that period. The south wall of the corridor produced a surprise, a working party building from the east had left an unfinished stepped end, but the construction trench continued to the west. The area was then filled in, raising the level of the floor and another wall foundation trench built into it and appearing to cut into the core of the earlier incomplete wall. This seems to indicate a change of plan and a time lapse; there may be, potentially far-reaching conclusions which it would be premature to draw. The second wall was a stylobate for a colonnade, which was later stripped and a third wall built on it with re-used materials including tufa blocks and therefore presumably at a late stage in the history of the baths. Further work is clearly needed to study these three walls in more detail.

A six week season of excavation is planned for next year, starting in mid-July with subsistence-paid volunteers who will be camping on the site, at D.O.E. rates. We are now poised for a major advance in our knowledge of the first city and military periods.

Graham Webster
University of Birmingham



REVIEWS

Medieval Worcester - An Archaeological Framework

by M.O.H. Carver (Trans. Worcs. Arch. Soc. 3rd Ser. Vol. 7)
1980 356 pp., 20 pls., 89 Figs. Price: £14 from Worcester
Archaeological Society

This remarkable volume is described on the cover as 'Reports, Surveys, Texts and Essays'. This might sound like a rag-bag of odd bits and pieces related to Worcester gathered together, Martin Carver having made a heap of all he has found. It is just this in some ways - or would have been in the hands of a less inspired editor. It is, in the event, much more what its sub-title implies: 'An Archaeological Framework'.

In the 1960's the erstwhile fair maid of Worcester was raped in one of the saddest violations of any West Midlands town. From Shrewsbury there arrived a knight, Philip Barker, who, while unable to save the maiden, did all he could to restore her honour by the publication of his memorable volume The origins of Worcester (1969). He set the scene for the work of the decade that has since passed, during which the town has received its due attention from West Midland archaeologists in the face of further destruction.

Martin Carver is now one of our most eminent urban archaeologists, and he is certainly the most original in his approach. He has in recent years made major contributions to the history of Durham, Shrewsbury, Lichfield and most recently Stafford. This volume consolidates his contribution to that of Worcester.

There are five parts to the new work. Part 1 is again concerned with Origins, developing Barker's work and is indeed a conscious tribute to that earlier work. Part 2 is concerned with the Defences, always a problematical aspect of the city. Part 3 is on the Church, 4 has the curious title of Livelihood, and the final part is on Worcester at the End of the Middle Ages.

There is a lot of new material here: reports on excavations on the defences, at the cathedral, a major site of three tenements at Sidbury, and the record of a late medieval building. The Sidbury report, by Carver himself is, like his innovatory report on the Durham Saddler Street excavations, a model of conciseness and originality, culminating in the 'Archaeological Model', a concept which has been especially characteristic of his work.

There is, however, far more in this volume than archaeological reports, crucial though these new primary data are. We have perhaps had a surfeit of data in the last few years, and our desire for synthesis is here well satisfied. Nigel Baker, one of the most brilliant of Birmingham's recent graduates has not only provided a fine new survey of all the churches, but also a bold speculative essay on their origins and topography. Della Hooke has neatly related the town to its hinterland and communications system. Elaine Morris has produced the first type series of medieval and later pottery; this uses all the latest scientific and statistical tools developed principally at Southampton, and will be the foundation for all future work. Pat Hughes has given us a very satisfying analysis of the topography and buildings in late medieval Worcester, a valuable comparison with similar recent surveys for Winchester and Bristol.

At the end of the volume are appendices of bibliographical material, modestly called 'Index to Sources' - a gazetteer of known discoveries, and what appears to be an exhaustive bibliography.

It is, however, the first section of the volume which must be especially singled out for admiration - Carver's preface, introduction, and the first essay on 'The Site and Settlements at Worcester'; these pages must be essential reading for any student of the principles of modern urban archaeology. The Preface defines the Archaeological Study: 'an evocation of the natural and material world which was the experience of Worcester citizens' - 'buildings, streets, landscape, foodstuffs, minerals and weather' - 'a parcel of evidence which the archaeological method seeks first to isolate, then to present as independent testimony to the historian'.

The Introduction defines the chronological sequence - the 'New Medieval Worcester', derived from the work of his authors 'some of whom have peered into deep pits filled with early industrial scrap, others at the inscrutable post-Roman tilth, others at fruit pips sieved from cess'. Here is the section of perhaps the most general interest to those seeking a historical-type summary - the sequence of pre-medieval settlements, the Anglo-Saxon burh, the Cathedral in Transition, New Defences and Limits, the Medieval City and its Livelihood the End of the Middle Ages.

The 'Site and Settlement' essay is however a very different summary. The Barkerian analogy of a depository of unread documents is revived:- 'In earlier days researchers tried to understand both the content of the collection and its historical meaning by scanning a few bundles tumbled at random from the shelves, and subsequently interrogated these samples according to a set of historical pre-conceptions - "origins, continuity, development, hinterland", and (where all else fails) "importance". The indifference of archaeological evidence to such concepts will be apparent to all urban excavators who have attempted to woo them'.

Contrary to the urban trends to large area excavations, Carver stresses the value of small-scale sampling, and also that of older 'antiquarian' observations, which in Worcester outnumber modern ones by 50:1. Collating all evidence, we now have the 'Archaeological Model' of Worcester - the promontory, the river, crossing points, the bridge, streams, ponds and harbours, mineral resources, and the history of the deposition or erosion of archaeology deposits. This thematic summary is rounded off by a Site Evaluation, which take us to the gazetteer at the end of the book. I look forward to the comments of medieval historians to the Carver approach in these first 29 pages.

The content of the volume is greater than its pagination might suggest; most of it is in very small and crowded print - the equivalent of three large BAR volumes. It is hardly an elegant typeface or design, but plates are reasonable for offset work, and figures are on the whole legible, if over-reduced. The latter are however not very expressive. Neither Carver nor his contributors have inherited the tradition of archaeological draughtsmanship represented by such archaeologists as Wheeler, Biddle, Hope-Taylor, or Barker. The days of the 'archaeologist his own draughtsperson' seem to be declining, the work often being left to 'technicians' who produce a 'fair', but lifeless 'copy'. Plans and sections should be the primary means of an archaeologist's expression, not as here, illustrations to an admittedly fine text.

The editor and contributors are to be congratulated on this, one of the most important volumes in West Midland urban archaeology. So too are the Worcestershire Archaeological Society, not in the past one of the liveliest of our ancient societies, but who have here (by dint of such Carver-persuasion as can only be dreamt of) supported the editor so well. Readers of West Midlands Archaeology - you should really buy this, to show that all this effort is appreciated.

Philip Rahtz

University of York

Whitbourne - A Bishop's Manor by Phyllis Williams (with an Introduction by J.G. Hillaby) Published by the author and obtainable from her at Hamish Park, Whitbourne, via Worcester. Price: £6.50

Parish histories are the fundamental framework of local history on which historians and archaeologists alike depend. They inspire considerable devotion on the part of their authors, and this is most apparent in this example, which must surely be one of the remarkable of its kind. The Bromyard and District Local History Society had already made its mark with Bromyard: A Local History, ten years ago and Mrs. Williams now follows this with Whitbourne, intended as the first of a series.

This is perhaps the nearest we can get to 'total history', especially valuable in this case, since Mrs. Williams extends her range well beyond the documents to the topographic and archaeological evidence - the geology, communications, and especially the buildings and farms, described and illustrated in loving detail. There is even a new 26 acre Iron Age hill-fort overlooking the River Teme.

Whitbourne is a major work of 186 pages with many maps, graphs and tables, and an astonishing 142 plates, which are an evocation of the last century of the people of Whitbourne - their buildings, farms, carriages, motocars, crops, picnics, animals, boats, Girl Guides, parties, school groups, floods, choirs, and weddings. These are reproduced by blocks, a welcome change from grey offset, and are of the highest quality, probably better than some of the original photographs.

For the archaeologist, this is a kind of ethnography, a detailed delineation of the systems - environmental, economic, social and religious - which have made Whitbourne a flourishing and important rural community. The only gap is one in which this reviewer is especially interested, the internal and church-yard memorials of the church. Perhaps Mrs. Williams will now embark on these as an appendix volume?

Production is excellent, and the price hardly credible. Mrs. Williams is to be congratulated on the culmination of 18 years work on her part. She has written and compiled the whole with the assistance of many friends, arranged for its publication, watched it through the press, and paid for it. Like Stan Stanford with his Croft Ambrey and Midsummer Hill volumes, this is really putting your money where your heart is.

Credit should finally be given to the Department of Extra Mural Studies and the W.E.A. who with the Bromyard Society have encouraged and helped Mrs. Williams in this achievement.

Philip Rahtz
University of York

A Complete Manual of Field Archaeology by Martha Joukowsky, 630 pp, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1980. Price: £7.50 paper, £14.95 hardback

This large and well-produced book covers all aspects of field-work and excavation from ethics in archaeology, through, surveying and pre-excavation planning, excavation itself, the conservation of artefacts and their analysis to photography and publication. The author's experience is based chiefly on Middle Eastern sites, though her illustrations include some American examples. This geographical bias is perhaps the reason for the emphasis, in the chapters on excavation, on trenching and gridding, though one or two of the illustrations, e.g. Fig. 8.12, are of area excavation (passed over without comment).

The strength of the book lies in the extensive chapters on surveying, the recording and analysis of finds, the very interesting sections on archaeological ethics and on American federal antiquities legislation, and the comprehensive bibliography.

But there are, unfortunately, many weaknesses and some fatal flaws.

There is a curious lack of correspondence between the text and many of the illustrations, which often appear to have been added as afterthoughts. For example, the well-known excavation of the preserved timber settlement at Biskupin is illustrated together with details and photographs of the reconstructed buildings, though nowhere is it mentioned in the text, nor is it included in the index. Many other of the illustrations are similarly isolated and are consequently less helpful than they might have been. Some, in fact, seem particularly pointless. For instance, Fig.4.1a, captioned 'Field walking in

Vermont to determine the location of sites' shows two figures, backs to the camera, pointing across a lake half-a-mile wide towards some wooded hills in the far distance. Equally, without further explanation figures 2.2, 2.3, 4.4, 6.4, 7.7 and 8.7 are much less helpful than they could have been.

However, these are not the book's most serious weaknesses. Pages 180-181 describe how to excavate a wall by cutting a trench perpendicular to its face. A short series of quotations will best illustrate the method recommended:

'... a trench 1 metre in width (trench A) should be cut perpendicular to both sides of the wall.

... After the floor of trench A has been documented on both sides of the wall, excavation continues by rabotage (trowelling) to establish whether or not there are any other floor levels associated with the wall.

...If a second, lower floor is encountered, a second 1 metre trench, trench B, should be cut perpendicular to trench A (see Fig. 8.11). After its upper soil is removed, the lower floor pattern should become clear. It is important to leave the balks standing for a stratum-by-stratum correlation.

...If another wall, that is not a cross-wall but part, of another structure, is discovered below either trench A or B, it is wise to abandon the trench, cutting it at another point along the wall (or along trench A)' (reviewer's italics).

Not only does this appear to take excavation back to the most unsatisfactory methods of the nineteenth century but it is not at all clear exactly what the last sentence means, while nowhere in the text is trench C-C1, of Fig. 8.11 mentioned.

Figure 9.11 is a suggested table of symbols to be used for types of earth in section drawings. One of the fundamental rules of field drawing should be to keep the observed evidence as far as possible free from interpretation at that stage. But in addition to many suitable objective symbols such as 'loose earth', 'gravel', 'sand', 'charcoal', 'clay' and etc. there are indiscriminately included symbols for 'destruction level', 'sand habitation', 'destruction level of occupation', 'habitation camping' and 'abandonment'. In the underlying caption these are all called 'qualities of earth'.

This confusion between recording and interpretation could (and does) lead to crucial mistakes in the understanding of a site's history, especially if these first interpretive labels have to be changed in the light of further work. In fact, the whole question of interpretation is only lightly touched on in this book - some 400 pages describe the recovery and analysis of the excavated evidence, but discussion of its meaning is confined to one page, 464.

However, there is an even more fundamental failing. In Fig. 7.2 and briefly on pp 151 and 456 the concepts of the terminus post quem and terminus ante quem are described and illustrated. As the following quotation shows, these absolutely essential arguments are completely misunderstood by the author:

'... Stratigraphic principles: terminus post quem and terminus ante quem. The terminus ante quem refers to the date the building was actually constructed. The terminus post quem would actually date the floor. The earliest date of the building (the date before which it cannot have been constructed), its terminus ante quem, would be the date of the earliest artefacts found lying on the floor. The most recent artefacts lying on the floor date the last use of the building - the terminus post quem of the period when the building was in use. Thus, this material cannot be earlier than the floor (except for possible "heirloom" pieces of jewellery, etc.). It is also presumed that the material under this floor will date its construction. This material cannot be later than the floor. The terminus post quem of the floor, the date after which the floor cannot have been constructed, will be the date of the latest object found under the floor. The difference between the two dates would establish the closest absolute date.'*

Anyone using this reasoning would inevitably misdate the sequence of events on their site.

Though there is much that is useful in this book, it cannot, regretfully, be recommended without the serious reservations outlined above.

P.A. Barker

* Which may be compared with the alternative explanation in Barker, Techniques of Archaeological Excavation, 1977, pp 192.ff.

Fieldwalking for Archaeologists by P.J. Fasham, R.T. Schadla-Hall, S.J. Shennan and P.J. Bates (Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society) 1980, 26 pp, 8 figs. Price: £1.50 from 2 West Street, Hambledon, Hampshire

This booklet is the only single publication available that deals solely with the surface collection of artifacts; the only other discussions of fieldwalking methods have been in individual papers or included in works concerned with fieldwork in general. It is based on the experience of the authors in southern England. In a section on the purpose of fieldwalking the authors stress the importance of the formulation of a research design and the integration of fieldwalking with other methods such as aerial, chemical and geophysical surveys. Fieldwalking is seen as a method for landscapes rather than individual sites, but the term 'site' is still used in the booklet, defined as a significant concentration of artifactual material of a certain period. Does the term 'site' really have any meaning in landscape studies? If anything, it simply refers to the particular block of landscape under study. Collection of all artifacts is advocated, but it is questionable whether this is necessary: a vast collection of the post-medieval sherds, bricks, and ironwork which occur on virtually every field is likely to be not only archaeologically meaningless but also presents serious problems, through its sheer volume, in analysis and storage. The review of methods is brief but comprehensive, including both line- and grid-walking. The former is seen as a means of rapid preliminary survey; a superficial survey of large areas by this method is probably the most pressing need at present. The recording section is supplemented by an appendix containing copies of recording forms, whose use should be encouraged. A discussion of interpretation and presentation contains surprisingly little statistical analysis, although the introduction mentions the importance of this. A major omission, considering the interests of the authors, is any consideration of the use of sampling techniques. Despite the reservations expressed here, the booklet is nevertheless to be commended as offering sound advice on methods which have for too long been formulated from trial and error by individual workers. It is surely in landscape survey by fieldwork that the part-time archaeologists can make the greatest contribution, but how many experienced full-time excavators have never carried out any fieldwalking?

Mike Hodder

A Dictionary of Terms and Techniques in Archaeology by Sara Champion
(Phaidon, 1980) pp 144; 90 illustrations

A book with a title of this kind arouses the apprehension generated by all types of 'instant archaeology', and one's instinct is to scan it rapidly, find an example of inaccurate or facile reporting and close it with self-righteous satisfaction. I would be surprised if this book succumbs easily to this test, even in the hands of the many specialists on whose work it draws. It is a little masterpiece, well-conceived, well-written, well-produced, and very well illustrated. Its most valuable service is to give to a wide range of the most frequently misquoted techniques used by ancient man or modern archaeologists concise definitions nearly all of which defy misunderstanding. Its appeal is by no means confined to the "interested amateur" of the introduction, and it would be instructive for undergraduate students to make an inventory of the subject and bibliography of the entries and see how many are taught in their degrees, yet alone explained half so well. The descriptions of Central Place Theory, Locational Analysis, nearest-neighbour analysis, network analysis, sampling, site catchment analysis, spatial analysis, and trend surface analysis, may well have saved us from that dreaded work "Geography for the Archaeologist"; or worse "Out-of-date geography for the archaeologist" (which thankfully remains unwritten). The problem of knowing what key-word to look-up might have been solved by providing a list at the beginning, and the fact that we can all think of omissions in my view only makes a second edition more worthwhile.

M.O.H. Carver

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The Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic Department of the University of Cambridge is sponsoring a new international and interdisciplinary journal, Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies, which will appear twice a year from March 1981. It is hoped that it will appeal not only to specialists but also to non-specialists who would like to keep in touch with current research about the Celtic countries from the fifth century to the fifteenth. Future numbers will include studies of the early ecclesiastical geography of SE Wales (the late Kathleen Hughes), of the boundaries of the Herefordshire charters in the Book of Llandaf (L. Rollason), of Gildas and Bede (Kenneth Jackson), of the archaeology of the Irish 'royal sites' (Bernard Wailes), and of the Cornish geography of the Tristan legend - including an attack on the identification of Castle Dore as 'King Mark's Palace' (O.J. Padel). Any readers interested in contributing or in subscribing (£10 p.a.) are invited to write for details to the Editor, Dr. P. Sims-Williams, St. John's College, Cambridge, CB2 1TP.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

* Notices of all publications of interest to West Midlands readers gratefully received.

- P. Booth Roman Alcester (Warwickshire County Council, 1980)
- M.O.H. Carver Medieval Worcester - an archaeological framework
(see TWAS below) 1980
- K.R. Midmer English Medieval Monasteries 1066-1540 (Heinemann, 1979)
- R. Shoesmith Hereford City Excavations I : Excavations at Castle Green (CBA Research Report no.36, 1980)
- S.C. Stanford The Archaeology of the Welsh Marches (Collins, 1980)
- A. Wharton Tong Castle Shropshire (Tong Archaeological Group, Convent Lodge, Tong, 1979)

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- Roberts, B. 'The Historical Geography of Moated Homesteads in the Forest of Arden' 61-70
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- Klingelhofer, E. 'Barrack Street Excavations, Warwick 1972': 87-104
- Hooke, D. 'A Field Study of Withybrook, A Warwickshire Parish': 105-112
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- Fennell, J.F.M. 'Flint implements collected at the National Vegetable Research Station, Wellesbourne, Warwickshire': 119-125

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 Claims in 1307': 81-96
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- Round, A.A. et al. 'Eleventh report of Excavations at Wall,
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 on a 'Pagan Celtic Shrine') 1-14
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 Marr, P. 'John Alcock (1917-1806), Vicar Choral and
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 reformer': 25-33
 Lockett, A.B. 'Joseph Potter, Cathedral architect at Lichfield
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(Essays presented to J. Sidney Horne)

- Midgley, L.M. 'Some notes on 'Old Stafford' and 'Old
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 Kettle, A.J. 'The Early Street-names of Stafford': 37-54
 Robinson, P. 'A pendant mount from Tenterbanks, Stafford':
 55-58
 Johnson, D.A. 'The Stafford Hobby-Horse': 59-64
 Dyson, H. 'William Horton Portraits: A short description':
 65-66
 Greenslade, M.W. 'Stafford in the 1851 Religious Census': 67-74
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- Roberts, P.K. 'Historical evolution of transport facilities as exemplified by the Harecastle Canal Tunnels, North Staffordshire': 31-41
- Rolf, D. 'Labour and Politics in the West Midlands between the Wars': 42-52

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- Bull, B. 'Cannock wood colliery and its paddy trains': 7-12
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- Lead, P. 'The North Staffordshire Iron Industry': 19-26
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- Shaw, M. 'Life in Wolverhampton 1841-1871': 1-11
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- Benson, J. 'Staffordshire Miners and their houses, 1800-1914': 19-21
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- Fogarty, M. 'An analysis of the reasons behind the Decline and Ultimate Collapse of the Wolverhampton Athenaeum and Mechanic's Library (1847-1869): 32-39
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- Copplestone-Crow, B. 'The Baskervilles of Herefordshire 1086-1300': 18-39
- Whitehead, D. 'Pipe and Lyde, Herefordshire: an unrecorded castle (SO 497 439)': 40-43
- Parker, W.K. 'Wheat supplies and prices in Herefordshire, 1793-1815': 44-53
- Phillips, A.D.M. 'Agricultural Land Use and the Herefordshire Tithe surveys, c. 1840': 54-61
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3rd series, 7 (1980) issued 1980

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edited by M.O.H. Carver

- Carver, M.O.H. 'An archaeology for the City of Worcester, 680-1680 A.D.': 1-14
- Carver, M.O.H. 'The Site and Settlements at Worcester': 15-24
- Baker, N.J. 'Churches, Parishes and Early Medieval Topography': 31-38
- Hooke, D. 'The Hinterland and Routeways of Anglo-Saxon Worcester: The Charter Evidence': 39-52
- Beardsmore, C. 'Documentary Evidence for the History of Worcester City Defences': 53-64
- Bennett, J. 'Excavation and Survey on the Medieval City Wall, 1973': 65-76
- Hirst, S.M. 'Excavations behind the City Wall at Talbot Street, 1975': 87-106
- Wills, J. 'Excavations and Salvage Recording at Friars Gate (Union Street), 1976': 107-114
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- Booth, B.K.W. and Cubberley, A.L. 'Excavations outside the south-east Transept of Worcester Cathedral, 1975': 143-154
- Carver, M.O.H. 'The Excavations of three medieval craftsman's tenements in Sidbury, 1976': 155-220
- Morris, E.L. 'Medieval and post-medieval pottery in Worcester - a type series': 221-254

- Carver, M.O.H. 'A Kiln found in Diglis in 1860: and documentary evidence for potting and tiling in Medieval Worcester': 255-262
- Molyneux, N.A.D. 'A Late Medieval stone building in Angel Street': 263-268
- Hughes, P.M. 'Houses and Property in Post-Reformation Worcester': 269-293
- 'Index to the Sources': 294-332

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- Higham, R.A. (HEN DOMEN) University of Exeter
- Hill, C. (HYDE LEA, STAFFORD CASTLE) Stafford Borough Council,
Riverside Buildings, Stafford
- Hirst, S.M. (BORDESLEY ABBEY) Lower Linceter, Whitbourne,
Worcester
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- Hooke, D. (ARROW VALLEY, AVON VALLEY, GRIMLEY, SPERNAL)
Department of Geography, University of Birmingham
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DY7 6JA (Kinver 2730)

- Magilton, J. (COLESHILL) North Warwickshire Borough Council,
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- Malam, J. (LOWER PENN, WOLVERHAMPTON, ST. JOHN'S STREET)
- Mather, C. (TIDDINGTON) Birmingham University Field
Archaeology Unit
- Meeson, R.A. (STAFFORDSHIRE, STIRCHLEY) Planning Department,
Staffordshire County Council
- Metcalfe, J.E.P. (FAREWELL) 85 Boney Hay Road, Burntwood,
Walsall, WS7 9AN (Burntwood 76465)
- Nixon, M.J. (BIRMINGHAM) 73 Natal Road, London, N11 2HT.
- Palmer, N. (TIDDINGTON) Warwickshire County Museum
- Pratt, D. (OSWESTRY) The Grange, Welsh Frankton, Oswestry,
S711 4NX
- Radcliffe, F. (HUNNINGHAM) The Trinity School, Guy's Cliffe
Avenue, Leamington Spa, CV32 6NB (Leam. 28416)
- Rahtz, P.A. (BORDESLEY ABBEY) Professor of Archaeology,
University of York, Micklegate House, Micklegate, York
- Roe, A. (SHIFNAL) Birmingham University Field Archaeology
Unit
- Rylatt, M. (BAGINTON, COVENTRY) Coventry City Museums
- Sawle, J. (WORCESTER) Hereford and Worcester County Museum
- Scott, K. (MANCETTER)
- Shoosmith, R. (ABBAY DORE, HEREFORD, LLANWARNE) City of
Hereford Archaeology Committee
- Slater, T.R. (PERSHORE, SHIPSTON-on-STOUR, STRATFORD-upon-AVON)
Department of Geography, University of Birmingham
- Smith, L. (SYDENHAM'S MOAT)
- Stewart, D.S. (LEEGOMERY, NEWTOWN, WHITCHURCH)
14 Poolside, Hanley Lane, Bayston Hill, Shrewsbury, SY3 0JW
- Stokes, M.A. (COVENTRY) Coventry City Museums
- Sulima, R. (TAMWORTH) Tamworth Museum
- Tipler, E.W. (ALVELEY) Holly Bank Cottage, Romsley,
Near Bridgnorth, Shropshire

- Turner, V. (APLEY, WARWICK CASTLE) Birmingham University
Field Archaeology Unit
- Wallsgrave, S. (MYTON) 1 Leycester Court, Leycester Place,
Warwick, CV34 4BY.
- Walsh, D. (BORDESLEY ABBEY) Rochester University, New York
- Watson, M. (SHROPSHIRE) Shropshire County Council
- Webster, G. (WROXETER) Dr., The Old School House, Chesterton,
Harbury, Near Leamington Spa, CV33 9LF. (Harbury 425)
- Wharton, A. (TONG) Tong Archaeological Group
- Wills, J. (BECKFORD) Hereford and Worcester County Museum

Directory of Archaeological Groups and Institutions

(amendments and additions gratefully received)

HEREFORD AND WORCESTER

County SMR and Museum:Hereford and Worcester County Museum,
Hartlebury Castle,
Kidderminster.(J. Roberts, J. Wills)
Tel: Hartlebury 416County Field Unit:Hereford and Worcester County Council,
Love's Grove,
Worcester.(J. Sawle)
Tel: Worcester 353366 ext. 3818Worcestershire Archaeological Society:Editor: F. Grice,
91 Hallow Road,
Worcester.Avoncroft Museum of Buildings:Stoke Prior,
Bromsgrove.(D. Downe, J. Orchard, A. Harris)
Tel: Bromsgrove 72258Worcester City Museum and Art Gallery:Foregate Street,
Worcester.(C. Beardsmore)
Tel: Worcester 25371City of Hereford Archaeology Committee:Hereford City Museum,
Broad Street,
Hereford.

(R. Shoesmith)

Woolhope Naturalists Field Club:Chy on Whyloryon,
Wigmore,

(Mrs. M. Tonkin)

SHROPSHIRE

County SMR:Planning Department,
Shropshire County Council,
Shire Hall,
Abbey Foregate,
Shrewsbury.(A. Tyler, M. Watson)
Tel: Shrewsbury 222332

Ironbridge Gorge Museum/Institute of
Industrial Archaeology:

Ironbridge,
Telford.
(B. Trinder)

Telford Development Corporation:
and Telford Archaeological and
Historical Society:

Priorslee Hall,
Telford.
(S. Rayska)

Border Counties Archaeological Group:

Mrs. C. James, 44 Vyrnwy Road, Oswestry, Salop.

Tong Archaeological Group:

Convent Lodge,
Tong.
(A. Wharton)

Whitchurch Area Archaeological Group:

(D.S. Stewart, address above)

Shropshire Archaeological Society:

(Sec: A. Tyler, County SMR)

STAFFORDSHIRE

County SMR:

Planning Department,
Staffordshire County Council,
Martin Street,
Stafford.
(K. Sheridan, R. Meeson)

Stafford Excavation Project:

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit,
8 St. Mary's Grove,
Stafford.
(M.O.H. Carver, A. Brooker-Carey, J. Cane)
Tel: Stafford 59030

Stafford Castle Project:

Stafford Borough Council,
Riverside Buildings,
Stafford.
(C. Hill)

City of Stoke-on-Trent Museum and Art Gallery: Unity House,
Hanley,
Stoke-on-Trent,
ST1 4HY.

(D. Barker)
Tel: 0782-29611

South Staffordshire Archaeology and
History Society:

(Editor, J. Whiston)
J.G. Cole (Secretary)
11 Bracebridge Road,
Four Oaks,
Sutton Coldfield.

Stafford and Mid Staffordshire
Archaeology Society:

Longfield,
Wetwood,
Eccleshall, Staffs.
(M.J. Berry)

Tamworth Castle Museum:The Holloway,
Tamworth.

(R. Sulima)

Tel: Tamworth 3561 ext. 294

Staffordshire Archaeological Research Association:

University of Keele

(D. Wilson)

Computer Archaeology Centre:Staffordshire Polytechnic,
Stafford.

(J. Wilcock)

Tel: Stafford 53511

WARWICKSHIRE

County SMR and Museum:Warwickshire County Museum,
Eastgate House,
Warwick.

(H. Maclagan, G. Crawford)

Tel: Warwick 43431

Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society:

(Editor: R. Taylor)

Secretary: J. Pierson-Jones,
Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery.Atherstone Archaeological Society:

(K. Scott)

Leamington Archaeological Group:

(F. Radcliffe)

Trinity School Archaeologists:

(F. Radcliffe)

National Vegetable Research Station:

Wellesbourne, Warwickshire (J.F.M. Fennel)

WEST MIDLANDS COUNTY

County SMR:Planning Department,
West Midlands County Council,
Queensway,
Birmingham.

(J. Tonkins)

Tel: 021-300 6532

Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery:Congreve Street,
Birmingham, B3 3DH.

(J. Pierson-Jones)

Tel: 021-235 4201

Wolverhampton Museum and Art Gallery:Lichfield Street,
Wolverhampton.

(P. Neeld)

Tel: Wolverhampton 24549

Solihull Archaeological Group:

1 Shaw Drive,
Yardley,
Birmingham, 33.
(Mrs. M. Dunlevy)

Soil Survey of England and Wales:

Woodthorne,
Wolverhampton, WV6 8TQ.
(J.M. Hodgson)
Tel: Wolverhampton 754190

Coventry City Museums

Jordanswell,
Coventry, CV1 5QP.
(M. Rylatt)

WEST MIDLANDS REGION

Council for British Archaeology Group 8:

Chairman: R.A. Meeson, 16 Falna Crescent, Coton Green, Tamworth.
Treasurer: J.G. Perry, Department of Archaeology, University of
Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester.
Secretary: M. Rylatt, 32 Middleborough Road, Coventry, CV1 4DE.
Membership Secretary: Rev. Fabian Radcliffe, The Trinity School, Guy's
Cliffe Avenue, Leamington Spa.

University of Birmingham:

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Tel: 021-472 1301

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (Tel: 021-472 3025) (M. Carver)
Department of Ancient History and Archaeology (L.H. Barfield, M.A. Hodder)
Department of Extra-Mural Studies (P.A. Barker, S.C. Stanford)
School of History (S. Bassett, C.C. Dyer, J. Crickmore)
Department of Geography (P. Buckland, D. Hooke, T. Slater)
Birmingham Archaeological Laboratory (J. Greig, S. Colledge)

Department of the Environment:

Fortress House,
23 Savile Row,
London, W1X 2AA.
(Inspector: A. Fleming)
Tel: 01-734 6010)

Diocesan Archaeological Consultants:

Birmingham:	R. Taylor (Birmingham City Museum)
Chester:	P. Greene
Coventry:	P.F. Gosling (DoE)
Derby:	P. Strange
Gloucester:	M. Hare
Hereford:	R. Shoemith
Lichfield:	M.O.H. Carver
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One copy of WEST MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY will be sent free to all subscribers to CBA Group 8. Contributors to Part 1 will receive ten offprints of their contribution.

Please send your contribution to:

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