

WEST MIDLANDS ANNUAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL

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Edited by Graham Webster

(Produced by the No. 8 Group (West Midlands) of the Council for British Archaeology and by the Department of Extra-Mural Studies, The University, Birmingham 15, from whom copies may be obtained.)

INTRODUCTION

The digging season is once more upon us. As in past years there will be too few excavators to cope with too many sites, there will not be enough money, there will also be weather problems and other difficulties to beset the long suffering field-working community, but in spite of all this we shall still manage to enjoy ourselves doing what we like doing.

1964 will be a momentous year for the archaeology of the West Midlands, in particular for those areas included in the valleys of the Rivers Avon and Severn. At the Conference last year we had a preview of some of the photographs showing a selection of the hundreds of sites discovered on the gravel terraces of these two rivers; these photographs, now counted in hundreds, many of which show upwards of twenty crop-marks on a single print, represent a monumental task for West Midland excavators. Our two intrepid fliers Arnold Baker and James Pickering cannot be too highly praised for this survey work which has changed the face of the West Midlands from a barren prehistoric waste to an area full of exciting problems; we wish these two gentlemen good flying weather in the coming season, although it will almost certainly mean more work for those of us who are grounded. Modern structural development plans have an insatiable appetite for sand and gravel, so the danger of destruction of sites on gravel areas is a very pressing problem indeed. With this in mind, Regional Group 8 of the C.B.A. has appointed a special research committee to be responsible for the examination of these gravel sites and to publish the results of the research and excavation. The scheme will be known as the Avon/Severn Valleys Research Project. An excavation programme for the coming season is already prepared and although the committee is fortunate in having several professional archaeologists to supervise the major excavations, it is hoped that local societies and research groups will be able to assist by excavating some of the smaller and less complicated sites, some of which may even have to take priority over a group's present programme, in order that they may be examined before they are destroyed by the draglines of the mineral companies. The complete programme is likely to cover a period of ten years, and it is estimated that at least £1,000 will be required each year for excavation and more at intervals for publication of the results. The Executive Committee appeal to all societies and groups to make some small contribution towards the cost of this Project; it is expected that excavation costs will be met by contributions from several major trusts and other sources, but administration costs can quite easily be covered by local contributions of quite small amounts providing they are regularly contributed.

The Proton Gradiometer (Bleper) has had several outings during its first full season and it can be said that it has already largely paid for itself by the time and labour saved in excavation. When the bleper was first acquired, a circular was sent out describing its limitations and the conditions required for successful operation; it is essential that these are fully appreciated by site organisers before requesting survey. Experience last season showed that a great deal of time can be wasted if the site is not adequately prepared; it should be remembered that the survey party often has to travel quite long distances to reach a site and should not be expected to have to mark off the site and clear the ground before commencing operations. The circular is included in this copy of the News-Sheet (p.10) for information.

Preservation and recording of historic buildings and relics of the Industrial Revolution is still a matter of great importance in the West Midlands; your co-operation is asked for and indeed expected. Since the last number of the News-Sheet, Group 8 has appointed Mr. R. Sherlock as co-ordinating officer for Industrial Archaeology, and requests for record cards and any information should be addressed to him, at the County Planning and Development Department, Staffordshire County Council, 41a, East Gate Street, Stafford.

Finally, we make the same appeal as last year. The C.B.A. must have the co-operation of all universities, museums, societies and research groups if it is to carry out its work according to the constitution. This can only be achieved by full representation from all organisations concerned with history and archaeology. In other words, please do endeavour to send a representative to Regional Group meetings, or if this is not possible, send a report of your activities and your problems.

Mrs. Julie Sanders, Chairman
Geoffrey S. Taylor, Hon. Secretary, } C.B.A. Regional Group No. 8
5 Greenside Road, Erdington,
Birmingham 24

IMPORTANT DATES FOR 1964

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| <u>Annual Conference of Societies and Research Groups</u> , to be held at the Regent Hotel, Leamington Spa | Feb. 29th - March 1st |
| <u>Study Tour of Rome and District</u> , led by Prof. D.R. Dudley, Dr. G. Webster and Mr. H. Ross | April 2nd - April 12th |
| <u>Weekend Courses</u> to be held at Attingham Park, near Shrewsbury: | |
| Archaeological Interpretation of Aerial Photographs, directed by Mr. A. Baker | Feb. 21st - Feb. 23rd |
| Safety and First Aid on Excavations, directed by Shrewsbury Civil Defence | March 20th - March 22nd |
| <u>Preston Montford Summer Courses:</u> | |
| Excavation Techniques at Wroxeter: | |
| Elementary Course A, } directed by Mr. C. Daniels and Dr. Graham Webster. | July 18th - Aug. 1st |
| Elementary Course B } | Aug. 1st - Aug. 15th |
| Intermediate Course, directed by Dr. Graham Webster | Aug. 15th - Aug. 29th |
| Rocks and Man (Field Studies Centre Course) directed by Mr. P.A. Barker | Aug. 22nd - Aug. 29th |
| Industrial Archaeology, directed by Mr. M. Rix | Aug. 29th - Sept. 5th |
| Surveying for the Archaeologist, directed by Mr. P. Pratt | Aug. 29th - Sept. 5th |
| <u>Training Excavations:</u> | |
| Romano-British villa at Barnsley Park near Cirencester, directed by Dr. Graham Webster | July 11th - July 25th |
| Roman 1st century fort at Waddon Hill, Beaminster, Dorset, directed by Dr. Graham Webster | June 7th - June 20th |
| Iron Age hill-fort at Croft Ambrey, Herefordshire, directed by Mr. S.C. Stanford | July 27th - Aug. 22nd |
| Motte and bailey castle at Hen Domen, Montgomery, directed by Mr. P.A. Barker | Easter Week |

AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE

The most important news is that Arnold Baker has left the area to take up an appointment at Salisbury but he has told us that he intends to fly over the West Midlands whenever he can manage it during the critical periods. This is nevertheless a sad blow to us as it has been entirely due to Arnold's persistent efforts over a number of years that we have been able to build up a coherent pattern of crop-marks in the area. He has been very generous in passing on information and helping all those interested in aerial photography.

Fortunately we still have with us James Pickering who has been putting in some notable work on the Upper Avon and we are now in contact with other flyers who may be able to survey some of the areas which hitherto have remained inaccessible. If anyone comes across flyers who seem to be interested in helping us we would be pleased to know about them.

Graham Webster

ARCHENFIELD ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP (SOUTH HEREFORDSHIRE)

New Ariconium (32/643244) Work in a small area on land adjacent to, and north of, Ariconium has revealed several rock-cut hollows containing remains of five iron-smelting furnaces with associated slag pits. These furnaces were probably of the dome type, similar to those found at Engsbachtel. In two furnace complexes the slag runners attached to the solidified pools of slag have been found, but very little of the burnt clay structures of the furnaces remains in situ. Samian pottery found in a sealed layer dated one furnace to c. A.D. 150, while an adjacent one was in use at a later date.

Wallingstones (32/503222) Further work on this fortified manor has revealed a ditch system beneath the mound cut into the medieval land level. The mound contains much thirteenth century material, including building stones, ridged roofing tiles and a coin of John minted in the period A.D. 1210-1250. This indicates the former existence of a building in the vicinity which would have been erected before the early thirteenth century and also gives a terminus post quem for the construction of the mound. Further lengths of curtain wall have also been traced.

Norman P. Bridgewater, Tre-Evan, Llangarron, Ross-on-Wye.

BIRMINGHAM ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Mancetter (42/330968) A rescue excavation for the Ministry of Works was carried out on a narrow strip on the south side of the Watling Street, immediately west of the fourth century fort at Manduessedum. The outer ditch of the fort was sectioned to the bottom at 11 ft; it was some 25 ft. wide and was levelled over with an industrial deposit about the middle of the fourth century. Ribbon building existed along the whole of this strip between the River Anker and the fort, mostly timber structures ranging in date from c. A.D. 60-400. A considerable road of heavy gravel, with its surface three times renewed, was discovered proceeding south-eastwards towards the kilns at Hartshill. It appeared to have been constructed in the second century and to have lasted throughout the occupation.

Nicholas Thomas, City Museum, Birmingham

Metchley, Birmingham (42/043838) The Field Group for Young Members carried out a trial excavation on the site of the Roman forts at Metchley, but this remains to be completed. It is expected that further work on this site will be made necessary this year during Easter and the summer by the building of a car park for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Volunteers will be welcome and information can be obtained from the Birmingham City Museum.

Graham Webster

BIRMINGHAM CITY MUSEUM, DEPT. OF ARCHAEOLOGY

The Roveries Hill-fort, Bishop's Castle (32/325924) A final very short season was carried out at the Roveries, where it was confirmed that a causewayed ditch, which runs across the top of the hill, represents an unfinished first phase of the hill-fort.

Beaker Barrow on Bredon Hill, Worcs A rescue excavation was carried out on the ploughed down remains of a small barrow at the south-west corner of the top of the hill. The contents of a grave pit had been disturbed by the farmer who had originally found it, but it was clear that there had been a burial of two periods. First the body of a man of about 50 had been buried with a Bell Beaker, four barbed and tanged arrowheads, a flint scraper and part of a bone pin. This burial had been subsequently disturbed for the addition of the bones of a woman of about 25, accompanied also by a Bell Beaker but of degenerate character. There was also evidence that this second corpse had been exposed for some time before burial.

Roman Burial near Conderton, Worcs A rescue excavation was carried out in a gravel pit about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile due south of Conderton village. An inhumation was discovered at the bottom of a pit lined with drystone walling, which had originally been deposited in a wooden coffin. The corpse had been placed extended on its back and scattered around it were the remains of three pairs of shoes with iron hob-nails and, beneath its shoulder, an area of leather also decorated with nails. In the left hand of the skeleton was a much corroded bronze coin probably of the Emperesses Faustina II or Lucilla.

Nicholas Thomas

BIRMINGHAM RESEARCH GROUP

Alcester, Warks Work has again been concentrated on the area between Evesham Street and Bleachfield Street. The excavations in the southern part of the Nursery Allotments (Site Ts) were continued and many interesting features have been exposed, but it is still impossible to interpret them as a whole because of the many later disturbances leading to complete lack of continuity. A well, lined carefully with thin flagstones, possibly from a nearby pavement, was very similar in content to the wells excavated in 1960 and 1961 on this site. The date of the well was late third to early fourth century. Industrial development of the Almshouse Gardens (Site A) gave sections of the earlier east-west road and cut through several walls of poor quality, but no further information was obtained about the stone drain excavated in 1956. Late in the year it became possible to start work in the southern half of the Old Grammar School Gardens (Site Tw) and it is hoped to excavate completely the south-west corner of the large "winged corridor" building of which over half has already been planned. In September, pipe laying to the east of the town cut through the agger of the east-west road at Site O and gave a very good section.

In the late summer a Ministry of Works and Public Building rescue dig in Birch Abbey (Site B) was conducted by students of the University of Birmingham and others under the direction of Mr. Richard Tomlinson. A large area excavation exposed a complex of walls, post-holes, etc. A stone-lined well was cleared and was dated to the late third to early fourth century. Work is continuing with volunteers from Birmingham and the Leamington area with the assistance of Mr. Ullan Place (50 Coniston Road, Leamington Spa, 'phone 21677) to whom enquiries should be addressed.

H.V. Hughes, 4 Turville Road, Birmingham 20

BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL OF HISTORY

Upton, near Moreton-in-the-Marsh (42/150346) This was the fourth season on the deserted medieval village site. The excavation of a series of three conjoined buildings of thirteenth to fourteenth century date has now been completed, and a first report is in preparation. There were indications of earlier timber and stone-footed buildings and these will be further explored in 1964.

P.A. Rahtz, The University, Birmingham 15

COVENTRY AND DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Baginton (42/344748) Work has been started on an unoccupied garden site behind the School House, Baginton. Results up to date are a complex of small post-holes with later pits. Among other pits found one was Roman. Part of a dry wall was excavated and pottery of Roman and medieval date was found.

Miss G.G. Wilkins, School House, Baginton

COVENTRY CITY MUSEUM

Two listed buildings have been saved from destruction and have now been restored:

16 Hinckley Road, Walsgrave - a fourteenth century saddle cruck hall house, the last one within the city boundary.

Whitefriars' Gateway - a fifteenth century stone gatehouse to the Carmelite Friary now converted to a potter's studio and dwelling.

Intervention has continued on behalf of other listed buildings in Coventry and Baginton to try and prevent their unnecessary destruction.

Mr. Paul Woodfield has continued to record other listed buildings which have since been destroyed:

153-4 Spon Street, Coventry - this building was demolished with care under supervision from the City Museum and is now stored for possible future re-erection.

A house in Cook Street, adjoining city gate.

Ice house off Knoll Drive, Coventry.

Stone barn, Lillington, Leamington Spa.

2-14, 34-38 and 72 Mill Lane, Solihull.

Mrs. Charmian Woodfield, Coventry City Museum

CREDENHILL CAMP, near HEREFORD (32/450445)

This excavation was undertaken on behalf of the Ministry of Public Building and Works. The 50 acre hill-fort was established as a Western Third B site with a Second B and thin Roman occupation on top. In the eastern quarry ditch a batch of timber granaries of Third B construction had been several times repaired before they were finally dismantled and the area given over to storage pits producing Second B and Romano-British sherds.

S.C. Stanford, Ashfield Cottage, Luston, Leominster

KIDDERMINSTER AND DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Caldwall Hall, Kidderminster (32/813762) During 1963 work was carried on outside the foundations of the recently demolished seventeenth century house and away from the still standing fifteenth century tower. A drainage ditch has yielded fifteenth century material. In the area of the nineteenth century brick outbuildings a trial trench revealed a stone wall and it was decided to strip the area. This has revealed several earlier phases, five drainage systems, two wells, pits, tanks and a cellar (all datable to the seventeenth to twentieth centuries) overlying the fourteenth century foundations. It is now evident that these continued under the swimming baths to the west as well as the road to the north and that only a fraction of the original site is available for excavation. More documentary evidence has been found and the picture that emerges is of a manor house becoming a gentleman's residence, castellated against Owen Glendower and held by a Royalist family in the Parliamentary Wars, after which it became ruinous and was demolished and rebuilt on a much smaller scale. Industrial development encroached around it and the Georgian house became a school, then offices. Only the tower now remains. It is hoped to excavate the remaining area before Easter.

C.I. Walker, 5 Caldwell Crescent, Kidderminster

LICHFIELD ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Wall The investigation of the interior of the late Roman defended enclosure astride the Watling Street (43/100065) has continued on the headland immediately south of the A5. Unfortunately most second and all third and fourth century layers had been disturbed. Early buildings of a military character were found on each of the three sites where boxes were opened. One building was at least 33 ft. long. These show the Claudian fort to have been of at least 30 acres and possibly more. Part of the undisturbed foundation of the defensive wall was removed revealing a well (39 ft. deep) sealed by the foundations. All pottery in the filling was residual.

Watch was kept on a pipe-trench which skirted the modern village. Second century occupation was found adjacent to the Watling Street on the north side of it, two miles east of the Bath-house (43/123053). The trench also revealed three isolated pits (two containing a few Roman sherds) near where Dr. St. Joseph has recorded pit alignments.

Investigations have been made along the line of the new by-pass. The Watling Street was sectioned (43/109061) and shown to have been made of gravel laid upon peat with no trace of timbering between. No occupation refuse was found at this point. Elsewhere a heavy scatter of millstone fragments and second century pottery (43/108062) has led to the discovery of a large occupation surface scored by the plough and immediately south of the Roman Watling Street. This is at present being excavated and may well be native hut floors.

J.T. Gould, 307 Erdington Road, Aldridge, near Walsall

Dipinto from Wall An interesting find from the well has been a dipinto on the shoulder of a small handled jar. This consists of a number of letters in red paint. Some of the letters are difficult to read and alternatives are possible but appear to be
...]CA[...]LLISE(?)TI.V(? or DI or AN)AT(?)[...] with SVS on a lower line probably representing the end of a word. It is very unfortunate that even with so many letters they remain unintelligible so we do not know if they refer to the contents of the jar or its owner.

Graham Webster

MALVERN RESEARCH GROUP

Dymock (32/700312) Work was carried out in the paddock adjacent to the village school where trial trenches had been dug three years ago. Excavation revealed the construction trench of a wall heavily robbed just on a right-angled bend. Floor levels seem to have been much disturbed but samian and coarse pottery suggest a second century date. A trial pit further out in the paddock showed that the Roman levels were not disturbed by modern rubbish pits and it is hoped to continue work here during 1964.

Paul L. Waters, 2 Westward Road, Malvern Link, Worcs

THE OEFFA ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY, OSWESTRY

Ysgwennant, Denbighshire (33/189305) Excavation has continued on this Bronze Age burial site. The pit in which the jet objects (mentioned last year) were found had only been partially explored in 1962 and the rest of it excavated in 1963. In this second half of the pit were found (a) enough sherds of an "A" Beaker for it to be reconstructed at the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff; and (b) a flint flake knife. At a level about two feet higher than the top of the pit, though not immediately above the pit itself, the following scatter was found (c) fragments of a second beaker of class "A" or "C"; (d) fragments from an enlarged food vessel urn with flat-topped rim and multiple broad encircling furrows above the shoulders; (e) fragments from an enlarged food vessel urn with nail impressions between horizontal ridges; (f) fragments from a Peterborough bowl or urn with multiple cord-impressed loop decoration; and (g) two small pieces of flint. It is hoped to continue work on this site in 1964.

Further work has also been done towards recording items of Industrial Archaeological importance.

W. Day, 9 Green End, Oswestry, Salop

RUGBY (PERCIVAL GUILDHOUSE) ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH GROUP

Caves Inn (42/534798) The rapid development of the gravel workings have made it necessary to concentrate all the resources of the Group on an attempt to rescue as much as possible in the teeth of the machines. It is now becoming evident that the Roman site extends over far larger an area than was previously imagined. The buildings encountered this year have been mostly timber, together with a number of wells.

J.R. Foster, 10 Macauley Road, Rugby

The Caves Inn Milestone One of the most important and dramatic discoveries at Caves Inn during the year has been the Roman milestone. It was found in a well broken into three pieces. Instead of the normal cylindrical form it is a squared, tapering shape with indications that it may have broadened out to a rounded base. The lettering which is quite clear reads IMP(ERATORE) C(AESARE) FL(AVIO) VAL(ERIO) CONSTANTINO PIO FEL(ICI) IN(VICTO) AVG(VSTO) DIVI CONSTANTII PII AVG(VSTI) FIL(IO) M(ILLIA) P(ASSVVM). It thus dates the stone to the reign of Constantine the Great (A.D. 307-337) and refers to his father Constantius I who died at York in A.D. 306. The actual mileage from a given place has not been added. A fragment of an identical milestone was found in 1954 at Bwlch-y-Ddenfaen near the Roman fort at Caerhun in Caernarvonshire and with another milestone may have been the derivation of the Welsh name (Pass of the Two Stones).

Graham Webster

SHREWSBURY

Acton Burnell Moated Site (33/529021) This site was watched, on behalf of the Ministry of Works and Public Building, during draining and bulldozing. Evidence of occupation of the interior was very scanty, only two or three sherds of medieval (? thirteenth century) pottery being found. There was a covered drain made of slabs of Wenlock limestone, and a fragment of dry-stone walling along the edge of the enclosure, but no other evidence of buildings, except two doubtful post-holes. The most important find was the complete foundation of the timber bridge which had spanned the moat, together with the stumps of its uprights and braces. The joinery is in very good condition and gives valuable evidence of the methods used. The whole structure has been removed and is awaiting treatment.

Braggington Deserted Medieval Hamlet (33/336140) This rescue excavation on behalf of the Ministry of Public Building and Works at Braggington, near Alberbury, showed that they were the remains of a small settlement dating from about the middle of the thirteenth century and abandoned about the middle of the sixteenth century. The site, which was roughly circular, was surrounded by a small but deeply-cut ditch with an inner rampart. The complete plan of a fourteenth century timber framed house was recovered. It was rectangular, with a partition at the west end. It had a large sunken hearth with the remains of a rectangular, domed clay oven and the iron nozzle of a pair of large bellows still in place. There was evidence in the form of slag of smelting in the settlement, and considerable quantities of post-medieval pottery were recovered. The documentary evidence, which shows that there were 16 tenants, all Welshmen, in 1301, confirms the archaeological dating of settlement and abandonment of the site remarkably closely, and suggests that desertion of the hamlet was connected with the building of nearby Braggington Hall in 1675.

P.A. Barker, Church House, Annscroft, Shrewsbury

Duncot (33/573114) Preliminary excavations have started on a double-ditched Roman marching camp or fort at Duncot, two miles north of Viroconium, found by Arnold Baker.

A.W.J. Houghton, Oak Wood, Fulverbatch, near Shrewsbury

Hen Domen, Montgomery (33/143981) The fourth season's work on this motte and bailey site was concentrated on stripping the north-west sector of the bailey and continuing work in the adjacent pit. The slight foundations of buildings of the last period were found close to the rampart near its junction with the motte ditch. The thin layer of stones which represented the structures of the last period was removed and a second layer, 2 or 3 ins. below, revealed. This represented a series of buildings on quite a different alignment, and included a small apsidal building orientated roughly to the east. It is tempting to interpret this as a chapel. The fact that this second layer is only 9 ins. below the surface means that one light ploughing would have removed the evidence not merely of the last but of the last two periods of occupation. The pit close to the motte ditch has been excavated to a depth of 11 ft. without the bottom being reached. It had been timber lined, some of the massive planks being preserved in its water-logged filling, which had also preserved a great variety of twigs, seeds, nuts, acorns, wood shavings, straw and other organic debris, together with some small copper, iron, wooden and leather objects in good condition. A proton gradiometer survey of the undug part of the bailey gave magnetic anomalies, some of them large, close to the rampart, but none in the central area. This bears out the evidence of the excavated area where the central parts seem to have been an open space.

Pontesford Hill Lower Camp (33/409055) The emergency excavation on behalf of the Ministry of Public Building and Works on this multi-vallate hill-fort examined the counterscarp rampart, close to the entrance, of which part had been destroyed by road building. There was evidence of three pre-rampart phases of occupation outside the fort, the earliest associated with flint implements, the other two with probable hut floors. There were widely-spaced post-holes of a palisade along the counterscarp rampart in the final phase. There were no closely datable finds.

P.A. Barker

Roman Roads There was further investigation of a Roman road from south of Ludlow to Marshbrook, Church Stretton at which place the road joined the Watling Street West.

The approach of the Watling Street West to the right bank of the Severn opposite Wroxeter was critically examined and tested. It was shown to take a sharp bend to the north and to run parallel to the river for over 100 yards, apparently heading for a possible bridge line at the northern end of the present island in the river.

Roman Bridge over the Severn at Wroxeter The river was shown to have swung considerably to the right since Roman times, thus cutting a new passage and producing the island now seen opposite Wroxeter. With the help of aqua divers the stone supports of a timber bridge were discovered crossing the older part of the river, i.e. between the left bank of the island and the left bank of the river. This was in line with the Roman road mentioned above. Upstream of this bridge was a shingle bar.

Wroxeter What is probably an inner and earlier defensive bank and rock-cut ditch was excavated in the northern part of Viroconium. Full excavation was denied owing to the collapse of the trench.

Road widening through the western defences of the town revealed the footings of a wall inset into an inner bank of stony clay. External to this bank was a ditch beyond which and overlying the ditch was a further clay bank or counterscarp in which was found an as of Domitian. The marshy low-lying Bell Brook formed a natural outer defence at this place.

A.W.J. Houghton

STRATFORD RESEARCH GROUP

Mitton, near Tewkesbury (32/905339) The Group made trial cuttings on the site of the Worcestershire deserted medieval village of Mitton which was to be destroyed during building operations. No structures were identified, but pottery of the twelfth to thirteenth centuries was recovered, and the demolition of nearby farm buildings revealed architectural fragments from the medieval church.

C.C. Dyer, "Orchard Side", Welford-on-Avon, Warks

The Group has now embarked on a programme of field-work on sites on the gravel terraces of the Avon Valley in the Stratford area.

A.P. Baker, 23 Shipston Road, Stratford-on-Avon (Secretary)

WOOLHOPE NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB

Croft Ambrey Hill-fort (32/443667) The south-west gateway of the hill-fort showed probably nine phases of construction and repair during the Western Third B and Second B occupations, indicating the constant maintenance of the defences over a long period of time. In the western quarry ditch a succession of Second B ovens overlaid Third B deposits from which a number of loomweights were obtained. On the interior plateau of the camp a hut site with many reconstructions has been recognised, and is separated from smaller timber structures behind the plateau camp rampart by a pit-free zone that is at present interpreted as a street.

S.C. Stanford, Ashfield Cottage, Luston, Leominster

WORCESTER

A watch was kept on building sites in the city, resulting in the collection of three good post-medieval pit groups, including a number of pipe stamps of the period A.D. 1640-1660, not previously recorded, and pointing to a local industry at this period.

Field-work was carried out in the area between Bredon Hill and the River Severn on a possible Roman road running east-west through the Vale of Evesham to cross the A38 and the river at Saxon Lode.

Henry Sandon, 11 Perrywood Close, Worcester

WORCESTER, SEVERN VALLEY STUDY GROUP

During the year the Group has concentrated on cutting sections across the line of the early Norman ditch in Severn Street. This feature was known to exist, but the excavations were carried out in an attempt to record the exact size and date of this ditch, and also to investigate the possibility of any earlier features being associated with it. The first trench uncovered only part of the southern slope of the ditch, and at a depth of 19 ft. 6 ins. was showing signs of being near the bottom. Another trench which would undoubtedly have reached the bottom of the ditch was taken down to a depth of 13 ft. when the site was reclaimed for development. Unfortunately this work has added very little to our knowledge of the early defences of the city, but it is hoped that another site will shortly become available in the same vicinity which may demonstrate the chronology of the two phases of the early Roman occupation already established in this area.

David R. Shearer, City Museum, Foregate Street, Worcester

WREKIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP (WELLINGTON)

Wall Farm, Kinnersley (33/681178) The excavations on the large defended enclosure reported in the last issue of the News-Sheet have been continued during the year. The section through the defences to date shows evidence of at least three periods of construction, and at the western end of the trench a number of small stake-holes have appeared which may possibly be a revetment to the outer bank at this point. There is still no evidence for the date of any of these structures.

J.A. Pagett, 48 Park Road, Donnington, Wellington, Salop

SUMMER SCHOOLS

Wroxeter (33/566086) The six weeks of training courses this year have produced notable archaeological results. At the east side of the Bath House it is now clear that we have a large dump of sweepings from the establishment and the pottery is clearly late second century, possibly extending into the third. This seems to indicate that the Bath House was not in operation until this period. One of the unusual factors is the large quantity of meat bones from which it would appear that catering facilities were available to the bathers. Particular attention has been paid this year to the problems of the early timber buildings. It is now seen that there are three main periods of these and their characteristics are becoming distinguishable. We are also gaining confidence in their identification as military and, if so, most probably legionary. With Brian Hartley on the Advanced course, it was possible to make an assessment of the dating range of the samian and it would appear from this that the earliest occupation is not until c. A.D.60, but the timber phases go on until well in the 70's. These results have considerable historical implications which cannot be developed here. A general paper on the problems of Wroxeter will appear in the next Shropshire Transactions.

Graham Webster

NOTES AND NEWS

We are very sorry to hear of the sad death of Tom Rogers of Oswestry who was such a staunch supporter of our work in the area. He not only led the Oswestry Group but has been a regular attender of meetings and courses and his cheerful personality will be greatly missed.

We also regret the death in a car accident of Pat Moore who was very active in the Leamington/Coventry area. This was particularly sad in view of the part she was playing in establishing an active group in Leamington.

It is with great pleasure that we welcome two old friends into the area and one new county museum. Philip Rahtz, an ex-freelance consultant to the Ministry of Works, has local associations with Weoley Castle and the Preston Montford Summer Schools, and has filled the new post of Lecturer in Medieval Archaeology in the University of Birmingham Dept. of History. Kenneth Barton, formerly of Worthing Museum, has been appointed the first Keeper of the Worcestershire County Museum which is now being created at Hartlebury Castle near Kidderminster. This collection is mainly based on the Parker Collection which used to be at Bewdley, but the Keeper will be interested to hear of any archaeological material found in Worcestershire as well as bygone tools and objects of a general nature.

Geoff Heys who has done such notable work at Hereford and Kenchester has left the area and will be greatly missed. He has our best wishes in his new post at a teachers' training college in Eastbourne.

We are also sorry to lose Norman and Dorothy Maisey of Malvern who have moved to Salisbury.

The Proton Gradiometer: Notes for the guidance of those requesting
Magnetic Survey Service

The gradiometer cannot be used within:

- (a) 100 ft. of A.C. electric cables (above or below ground), water mains or any other iron pipelines, steel building and car ignition systems.
- (b) 30 ft. of telephone wires, iron or wire fences and railway lines.
- (c) 5 ft. of a trench or cutting, whether open or back-filled or a spoil dump.

The site should be as level as possible, fairly uniform slopes are tolerable, but steep uneven slopes cannot be surveyed. The ground should be clear of scrub such as thistles, heather and growing crops of possible, or any vegetation likely to impede the movement of the string grid used in the survey. The site to be surveyed should be marked off with wooden pegs in 50 ft. squares and cleared of any surface iron such as tin cans, skewers etc., prior to the arrival of the survey party. Application for

survey service should be made to G.S. Taylor, Hon. Secretary, C.B.A. Regional Group No. 8, "Wychbury", 5 Greenside Road, Erdington, Birmingham 24, as early as possible. It will be appreciated if the requesting society will be prepared to make good the travelling expenses of the survey party.

A Maxbleep (Magnetometer) Symposium will be held in Oxford on 21st March. There will be talks and discussions on the operation of this instrument and practical demonstrations in the University Parks, a visit will also be made to the Archaeology Research Laboratory to see work being carried out there. Anyone interested in attending should contact Dr. M.J. Aitken, Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art, 6 Keble Road, Oxford ('phone) 55211).

Snails Messrs. J.D. Currey and A.J. Cain of the Department of Zoology, University Museum, Oxford, are working on the snails Cepaea nemoralis and Cepaea hortensis and would be pleased to receive samples of these shells found in stratified layers on archaeological excavations. Specimens should be packed in a strong box along with a note of the grid reference and a brief description of the site. Any number of shells will do, though they will be much more useful if there are more than about 15 of them. They would also be pleased to identify any other snails found in excavations.

Iron Slag Specimens of iron slag of undoubted ancient origin found in excavations would be welcomed by Mr. Henry Cleere, Assistant Secretary of the Iron and Steel Institute, 4 Grosvenor Gardens, London, S.W.1. A note of the grid reference and a brief description of the site should be included.

Interglacial Turf-lines Professor F.W. Shotton of the Department of Geology of Birmingham University would always be interested to hear about interglacial turf-lines and organic deposits. He has for some years been leading the field in the investigation of interglacial flora and fauna and is anxious to obtain Midland samples. If anyone notices any dark turf or peaty deposits in deep gravel pits please drop him or us a line.

Proposed Excavation near Marmion Street, Tamworth It is hoped to conduct an excavation on this site during April. The work will be carried out by Mr. R. Sherlock and the aim will be to locate the defences of the Saxon town. Further information should be obtained from Mr. D.W. Riley, County Planning and Development Officer, Staffordshire County Council, 41a Eastgate Street, Stafford.

Safety Precautions The unfortunate accident at Wroxeter last year involving Dr. A.W.J. Houghton and a colleague did not have any very serious consequences, but it was nevertheless a miraculous escape and focuses attention on the need for special precautions to be taken against trenches collapsing or heavy objects falling on excavators. We have found that expert advice and help is readily forthcoming from the local Civil Defence Officers. It is recommended that careful consideration should be given to obtaining proper equipment for strengthening the sides of trenches, it may be possible to hire expanding steel props and timber from local plant hire contractors. When working in deep wells or shafts protective helmets are essential. A special weekend course has been arranged at Attingham Park on this subject and it is expected that a representative from all working groups will attend. The Department is paying part of the expenses.

Charles and Clara Foyle Bursaries We are now greatly indebted to the Foyle Trust, which has been so generous to us in the past, for a new scheme which will come into operation this year. This is to help students from the West Midlands to go on a Wroxeter course. Applicants must be active digging members of a West Midlands Research group or society. Apply to the Department of Extra-Mural Studies, The University, Birmingham, 15.

PAPERS ON SUBJECTS OF WEST MIDLANDS INTEREST PUBLISHED IN 1963

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| The Site of Stanchester | J. Wood |
| The Norman Castle at Quatford | J.F.A. Mason and
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| A Pottery Sequence from Brockhurst Castle | P.A. Barker |

North Staffordshire Journal of Field Studies, Vol.2 (1962)

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| Excavations in Falcon Low and Cheshire Wood Caves
in the Manifold Valley | G.T. Emery |
| Excavations on the Roman Site at Rocester,
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| A Rectangular Earthwork at Chesterton, Staffordshire | E.W. Ball |
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An Appraisal | R.A. Butlin |
| Industrial Archaeology in Administrative
Staffordshire: An Interim Report | R.J. Sherlock |

Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, Vol. 37 (1962)

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at Kenchester, Final Report | F.G. Heys and
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| Pottery and Settlements in Wales and the March,
A.D. 400-700 | L. Alcock |
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Practical Archaeology, 1963

G. Webster

This book, a companion volume to Approach to Archaeology by Stuart Piggott, attempts to set out for serious amateur and young professional archaeologists the background for practical field-work and excavation in Britain.