No. 9, 1966

Edited by Jim Gould

Produced by

The Council for British Archaeology, Group 8

and

The University of Birmingham

Department of Extra-Mural Studies



Historic Environment and Archaeology Service:

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## Dates for 1967

Saxon Pottery, weekend at Attingham, near Shrewsbury February 10th to 12th ...... Course full

Animal Bones for Archaeologists, weekend at Wroxton Abbey near Banbury

January 27th to 29th ..... Course full

Romano-British Coarse Pottery, weekend at Wroxton Abbey near Banbury

February 17th to 19th ..... Course full

Annual Archaeological Research Groups' Conference Tudor Hotel, Wells Road, Malvern March 4th to 5th

## Extra-Mural Summer Schools

#### Wroxeter:

Elementary I ..... July 29th to August 12th

Elementary II ..... August 19th to September 2nd

Training Excavation (with special facilities for training site supervisors .. September 2nd to 16th

Barnsley Park Roman Villa .... July 8th to 29th
Industrial Archaeology ..... August 12th to 19th

#### Training Excavations

Waddon Hill, Dorset ...... May 27th to June 10th

Details from Dr. Graham Webster, 30 Portland Street,

Leamington Spa

Hen Domen, Montgomery ...... Dates to be arranged

Details from Mr. P. Barker, 4 St. George's Square,

Worcester

Upton, Deserted Medieval Village .. Dates to be arranged
Details from Mr. P. Rahtz, School of History,
Birmingham University

## Research Excavation

Midsummer Hill Camp, Herefordshire .. Dates to be arranged Details from Mr. S.C. Stanford, Ashfield Cottage, Luston, Leominster, Herefordshire

## Bursaries

Those living in the West Midlands are reminded that Foyle Bursaries are available for people attending the training Schools at Wroxeter and the training excavations at Barnsley Park and Hen Domen. The only conditions are that applicants should be attached to active research groups or societies. They can be of any age, but the bursaries are NOT, as people seem to imagine, available only for college students. Applications should be made to the Department of Extra-Mural Studies, Birmingham University.

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Annual News Sheet does not vary from year to year. Its function is to present in summary form, current information on all aspects of archaeology in the West Midlands for the benefit of those already active, and to give newcomers an easily assimilated introduction to the area. It is the result of co-operation between the University of Birmingham, C.B.A. Group 8, the Museums, the Archaeological Societies and local excavating groups. Thanks are due to all these, and especially to the editor, Jim Gould, and to the Extra-Mural Department of Birmingham University, which undertakes the production and circulation.

Although its purpose does not vary, the number of contributors to this publication grows each year as new archaeological groups develop. This is a tribute to the tradition of co-operation which has been established between all archaeologists, amateur and professional, in the West Midlands.

All projects mentioned in last year's introduction - the Avon-Severn Valleys' Research Project, air photography, the recording of buildings, efforts to prevent the demolition of worthwhile buildings, etc., have continued to develop in varying degrees. Details will be found in the reports which follow.

It is hoped that an extension of the activities of C.B.A. Group 8 will eventually widen the opportunities for those interested in the archaeology of the West Midlands to meet and discuss their problems. In the meantime this News Sheet provides a valuable link and its circulation, already wide, can be extended on request.

Mrs. Julie Sanders, Chairman C.B.A. Group 8 9 Victoria Road, Harborne, Birmingham 17

## AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE

Again, 1966 was mainly unsuitable for recording crop-marks due to excessive rainfall at the wrong stage of crop growth, following a wet, early spring. About a dozen new sites were recorded on the Avon, north of Stratford, but very few of the sites recorded in previous years revealed themselves.

The Trent produced more sites, but they were mostly too faint for a good record. The next good recording year should provide evidence of many sites on the River Tame between Tamworth and the junction with the Trent. The Alrewas area has sites of several periods and includes a long stretch of Roman road connecting several Romano-British enclosures with hut circles.

J. Pickering, The Outwoods, Hinckley, Leics

This season the West Midlands crop conditions proved worse than in 1965 and exploratory flights revealed only meagre indications of the more well-known sites. The poor response was evident over a wide area and it was decided for the first time in ten years to discontinue the survey. As a consequence there are no results for this season.

A. Baker, Latchmere House, Durrington, Salisbury

The aerial photographs of both Mr. Baker and Mr. Pickering are being filed in the National Monuments Record at the Royal Commission for Historical Monuments. There, a catalogue is being compiled and will eventually be available to enable all to secure copies of those prints which are applicable to their work.

Editor

## ALCESTER EXCAVATION COMMITTEE

Alcester. Meeting Lane site (SP 092575) Excavation of two sections through the defences of Roman Alcester, begun under the direction of Miss C. Mahany last year has been continued by a local amateur group working at weekends. Some further light has been thrown on the foundations of the stone wall, and on the way in which the wall was inserted into the earlier turf and clay rampart. The foundations of the wall consisted of wooden piles driven into the natural gravel, packed with a layer of clay. The absence of a ditch in front of the rampart and wall at this point has been demonstrated. It appears that the ground sloped down to the River Arrow more steeply at the Roman period than it does at present, and that the river was considered an adequate substitute for a ditch. The slope of the natural gravel down to the river may have been artificially scarped.

In the layer beneath the toe of the rampart, a number of hearths were uncovered. Two of these consisted of small pits cutting the pre-rampart turf line, and containing a mass of burnt material, a quern stone and a quantity of coarse hand-made pottery, tentatively dated to the Late Bronze or Early Tron Age.

Future Saturday excavations will be on a site between Gas House Lane and the Stratford Road (SP 091572) which is due for development as a car park.

Hobditch, Dean's Green, Ullenhall (SP 138688) Work was started in April on cutting a section through a linear earthwork consisting of an embankment 50 ft. wide and 3 ft. 6 ins. high with a ditch on either side. It runs for approximately 4/5ths of a mile east-north-east from the hamlet of Dean's Green to the River Alne. Attention was drawn to this earthwork by Mr. Brian Hutty (51 Lyndon Road, Olton, Solihull), who with his family and friends, has done most of the digging.

Excavation has shown that this earthwork is the agger of a previously unknown Roman road. As seen in the section it is composed of local red clay thrown up from the ditches and capped with a layer of gravel also 50 ft. wide laid directly on the clay.

The ditches, especially that on the south side, contained large quantities of Romano-British occupation and building material, with a pottery sequence from the mid-second century to the fourth century. This indicates the presence of some kind of settlement or habitation site in the immediate vicinity of the point where the road has been sectioned. There is evidence from the materials found that one of the buildings in the vicinity was a bath house.

Some fieldwork has been done in an attempt to follow the road in both directions. To the east it has been traced by alignments of hedgerows, lanes and parish boundaries, with the agger showing in places as far as the earthwork known as Harborough Bank, Lapworth

(SP 185707). To the west no definite traces have yet been found for some  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles beyond Dean's Green. But half a mile to the south of Mappleborough Green (SP 080655) a continuous sequence of hedgerows, tracks and lanes, followed in part by parish boundaries, follows the alignment of the Hobditch across Ryknild Street at Washford to join the Alcester-Droitwich road at Feckenham.

There is also evidence of a short length of agger running north-north-east from the crossing of the River Alne for a branch road towards Hockley Heath where an old road runs parallel to the A34 along the west side of the village. Beyond the village the line is taken up by the modern road to Monkspath and Shirley on a north-westerly alignment which, if extrapolated, would lead directly to the Edgbaston-Metchley area.

Excavation of the Hobditch section continues (Sundays).

Ullin Place, Grey Lodge, Birmingham Road, Henley-in-Arden

## AVON AND SEVERN VALLEYS' RESEARCH PROJECT

Thelsford Priory (SP 271583) The excavation of the Trinitarian Priory at Thelsford, near Barford, took place during June and July 1966. The aim was to find the extent of the site, which was four acres bounded on the south and west sides by a large ditch or moat, on the east by the present road and to the north by the present Thelsford Brook. About half this area is covered by buildings which were either entirely of timber, or with stone footings to support a timber superstructure. The exception is the church, which appears to have been entirely of stone. The date of foundation was A.D. 1214, and of dissolution A.D. 1538. The pottery encountered was entirely consistent with this dating. The church was very badly robbed, but the other conventual buildings had suffered no damage except from continuous ploughing.

Mrs. Margaret Gray, School of History, Birmingham University

## BIRMINGHAM ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY (Young Members' Field Group)

Bordesley Abbey, Redditch (SP 035697) Two seasons' work now show the position of the south range in relation to the church and cloister garth. Work on the kitchen produced evidence of continuous use from mid-thirteenth century to the dissolution, and postmonastic occupation. Investigation of the west range showed an undercroft with large central pillars supporting a first floor room, probably a lay-brothers' dorter in the Cistercian manner.

Miss K.B. Hughes, New Hall, Cambridge

## BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY (School of History)

Upton Deserted Medieval Village (SP 152344) Examination was begun of a new range of end-to-end buildings which preceded the peasant house complex examined in previous years. The middle building of the new range is a very fine example of a long house with oven, central hearth and opposite doorways. Lower than the long house

was a square building or perhaps animal pen. At the other end, four feet higher than the long house was a building approached by a ladder set into a pit, and could represent a solar. Outside were three cess pits. This new range of buildings suggests comparative prosperity and the small finds included a pottery ridge crest for a thatched roof. The ruined stone wall associated with the western boundary bank was found to overlie post-holes suggestive of a timber stockade.

R.H. Hilton and P.A. Rahtz

# BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY (Extra-Mural Department)

Bromfield Quarry (SO 481776) Rescue excavations have been conducted at weekends with the aid of grants from the Ministry of Public Building and Works and Ludlew Museum, and the unstinted co-operation of Lord Plymouth and the staff of the Bromfield Sand and Gravel Company. Work has proceeded on two Bronze Age cremation cemeteries (of Middle to Late Bronze Age aspect) and a number of settlement features including a small ditched enclosure. To date over 130 cremation pits have been excavated, fortytwo of them containing pottery, in many cases sufficient to allow restoration of the vessel.

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

# BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY (Extra-Mural Department), SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY AND SHROPSHIRE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Hen Domen, Montgomery (SO 214981) Excavation this year produced more detail of the buildings on the inner slope of the rampart, and, for the first time, post-holes of the main palisade assignable to an early phase. Two sections were cut across the bailey ditch. In one of them three water-logged still-beams with longitudinal grooves three inches wide, and with peg-holes approximately fifteen inches apart are almost certainly from a framed palisade with planks which were therefore fifteen inches wide and three inches thick. These timbers support the view that framing superseded post-hole construction in the latter phases. Other early structures in the bailey included a hearth and an oven, perhaps for bread, since there was no evidence of any industrial or other use, and a stake fence some forty feet long with a pebble paved gateway. The primary silting of the cuter ditch yielded, in addition to the preserved timbers, half a leather ankle boot, two great toe bones and a humerus, graphic reminders of the constant petty warfare which a castle such as this provoked.

P.A. Barker, 4 St. George's Square, Worcester

## BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Grimley (Worcs) (SP 833610) The site as revealed by air photographs consists of two parallel ditches leading from a square enclosure. Excavation has located the ditches which are being followed. Work will continue during January and February as it is expected that sand quarrying will have destroyed them by March.

E.J. Peltenburg, Department of Ancient History and Archaeology

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E.J. Peltenburg, Department of Ancient History and Archaeology

## COVENTRY AND DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Baginton (SP 344748) Excavation has continued on this site, revealing further medieval occupation with clay floors, a succession of robbed pebble and sandstone walls and post-holes, some of which are cut into an area of stake-holes similar to those found in 1963 and 1964. Roman pottery seems to have been brought to the site with the stones used for walls and post packing, as was a Roman boot sole. Other finds include part of a medieval water stoup. A quantity of iron slag may be intrusive. Excavation is still proceeding and a smaller area has been opened to find more of the sandstone and pebble wall found in 1965. A clay patch associated with an ashy layer and ladder (?) holes has been revealed here, as well as a wide range of pottery.

Miss G.G. Wilkins, School House, Baginton, near Coventry

Caludon Castle (SP 374802) After a member had observed that the standing ruin was being damaged by local vandals, representation was made to the City Council and the remains were protected and repaired. Members of the Society then surveyed the entire site - platform and moat - and recorded the ruin by photographs and measured drawings. These, together with a written report, including a study of the documentary evidence will be placed with the National Monuments Record.

Miss V.A. Singer, 3 Shortley Road, Whitley, Coventry

Ryton, Warwicks (SP 371725), Upper Avon Survey Site 97B The crop-marks for this site showed what appeared to be two circles and a rectangle. Initial excavation revealed a circular ditch and a number of pits. A resistivity survey was carried out and a start has now been made in establishing the plan.

Material of differing cultural types was found, e.g. a few worked flints, sherds of Roman material, sherds acceptable as Iron Age B and recently a reasonably complete pot, some 19 cms. high, which contained black material. Several leading authorities have been consulted in respect of this latest find and they consider it may be Bronze Age/Iron Age A in culture; no parallels are known from this area of the Midlands. The contents are to be analysed along with other samples with a view to confirming the existence of cremations.

Earlier in the year unstratified pottery was recovered from two areas close to the site. Sherds of six distinct pots were found and they have been recognised by Dr, Webster et alii as being mid-first century A.D. A small butt beaker, of which nearly all the pieces were recovered, being a notable find.

J. Bateman, 116 Robin Hood Road, Coventry V.S. White, 4 Bigbury Close, Coventry

Warwick Nos 49 and 57 West Street, Warwick, have been measured and recorded and the records sent to the National Monuments Record.

Miss V.A. Singer

## COVENTRY, HERBERT ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM

Cathedral Church and Benedictine Priory of St. Mary, Coventry (SP 336792)
The second season of rescue excavations jointly sponsored by Coventry
Corporation and the Ministry of Public Building and Works commenced in
April 1966 and lasted for three months. The labour force was comprised
of twelve prisoners from Leicester Jail and local volunteers. MasseyHarris kindly loaned a digger-scraper excavator and provided training
facilities from their Stoneleigh college. The strip excavation
carried out could not have been achieved in the time available without
this positive co-operation.

The large site known as New Buildings and now scheduled for a multi-storey carpark was the main site excavated. Here the north end of the dorter range was opened up and a wall standing 6 ft. high and 6 ft. wide was exposed for over 100 ft. A single doorway, 4 ft. wide and a window was revealed.

West of the dorter, the 20 ft. by 30 ft. kitchen of the monastery was fully excavated and a door opening revealed leading to a pentice and to the frater. A 30 ft. length of the north wall of the frater was excavated and showed window openings with evidence of glazed tiles on the inside sills. The discovery of the west wall of the frater produced an overall length of 65 ft. and a width of 25 ft. Just west of this wall a freestanding octagonal central column with eight roof springers indicated an undercroft structure with a floor level well below that of the frater.

A massive slabbed sandstone drain was revealed beneath the kitchen court. Associated with the cobbles of the court were several hundred sherds of uniform coarseware cooking-pots and plates. A handful of green glazed sherds were also found within this level with two residual fragments of possible Stamford ware, the first recorded in Coventry.

The eastern end of the site disclosed the 2 ft. 6 in. high wall remains of the rere-dorter range. This wall had almost certainly collapsed in antiquity due to the soft nature of the ground beneath. The east-west wall of the rere-dorter extended at least 110 ft. but due to post-monastic levelling down, only the barest footings were in evidence, resting on the natural sand. A large slabbed sandstone drain within the rere-dorter was subsequently cleared but it contained no reliable datable finds. However, stratified within the same trench were eight large fragments of glass from medieval urinals. Dr. D.B. Harden has given them a late fourteenth or fifteenth century date. It will now be possible from the present excavations to produce a plan of the conventual buildings immediately north of the medieval cathedral, which at present show certain parallels to Canterbury Cathedral.

The Lunt. Baginton (SP 344752) The first eight-week session of a long-term excavation began in June 1966 on the first-century Roman fort known as "The Lunt". The primary object of the trial excavations was to prove the archaeological evidence for the future reconstruction of buildings within the fort and the suitability of the defences for a full-scale reconstruction. Both these objects were achieved.

The eastern defences were located along the 255 ft. contour, and a fine example of an anklebreaker-drainage slot found at the bottom of the rock-cut 'V' shaped ditch which had been recut several times. Within the fort, evidence of timber beam slots were found and a clay-lined water tank, 6 ft. in diameter and 6 ft. deep, later reused as a rubbish pit, was cleared.

Outside the rampart and ditch defences, beneath the ravelin of the fort, timber beam slots were located cut into the sandstone bedrock. Close by a 5 ft. by 4 ft. rock-cut water tank was excavated which contained an imported fine white ware flask. Covering the beam slots was the collapse of wattle and daub walling which sealed and stratified heavily rusticated coarse ware pottery, first-century samian, a bronze coin of Claudius I and La Tene III type one-piece bronze brooches. A non-stratified fragment of dark-blue glass was examined by Dr. D.B. Harden and proved to be part of a Roman flask or jug prevalent in the early Imperial period. It would seem therefore, that The Lunt site could have at least two Roman forts.

Apart from the archaeological excavations it was decided to reconstruct, as an experimental earthwork, a 35 ft. section of the Roman turf rampart, fronted by the excavated and cleared rock-cut Roman defensive ditch. The excavations revealed a 17 ft. 6 in. to 18 ft. wide rampart with a gravel foundation, over this a turf and earth rampart was built by Roman military techniques, to a height of 12 ft. This gave at the top a 6 ft. fighting platform, and a defensive slope to the ditch bottom of 24 ft. A timber and wattle front has been erected on the rampart to simulate those recorded on Trajan's Column.

Both the rampart and the ditch will now be left for a long-term study to be carried out on the rate of rampart settling and deterioration, ditch silting and collapse. The research area is permanently fenced but the earthwork can be viwed by appointment.

B. Hobley, Keeper, Department of Field Archaeology, Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry

## HEREFORD CITY EXCAVATIONS COMMITTEE

Hereford Blue School Street (SO 512402) and Bath Street (SO 514399) Rescue excavations in Blue School Street and Bath Street have located three of the City Wall bastions. In the former street where work was supervised by Miss H. Sutermeister, the semi-circular thirteenth century bastion near Bycesters Gate has been rebuilt as a rectangular structure, perhaps during the Civil War. In the Bath Street carpark, the City Wall was shown to be inserted in an existing earthen bank later than mid-twelfth century in date. It is clear that this bank followed the known circuit of the City Wall and presumably represents the work envisaged by the charter of 1189 for the enclosure of the The refurbishing of the defences in stone with the aid of murage grants of 1224 and later, entailed building straight alignments on the originally curved rampart in order to meet the tactical requirements of the new bastions. This sequence clearly explains the curved course of the intramural roads (e.g. parts of Gaol Street, Maylord Street, and Wall Street) reflecting the early bank's alignment, and the uneven spacing of the bastions which was determined by the desire to conform as closely as possible to the existing defence line.

S.C. Stanford (Hon. Director), Ashfield Cottage, Luston, Leominster

## HISTORICAL METALLURGY GROUP

As a result of field-work and excavations carried out under the supervision of Messrs. G.R. Morton, M.M. Hallett and N. Mutton, the following sites have been identified and investigated:

Sharpley Pool, Kidderminster (SO 246873) The ruined remains of a seventeenth century charcoal blast furnace has been investigated.

Charleot, Salop (SO 634860) The structure of Charleot Furnace, which is remarkably complete, has been cleared of undergrowth and excavated. The structure of this charcoal furnace is now being preserved by Messrs. Stewarts and Lloyds Ltd.

The Hurst, Morville (SO 671959) Three pools strung along a valley to provide water power for the blast are a characteristic West Midland feature. Slag and remains of masonry were found near the lowest dam. There is extensive evidence of charcoal burning. This charcoal blast furnace may date back to the .early years of Elizabeth I.

Upper Norncott, Abdon (SO 567867) This is the site of a seventeenth century furnace.

Bilston (SO 955950) The site of John Wilkinson's furnace has been located. Here he pioneered the steam-blown, coke-fired, blast furnace that made possible the iron trade of the Black Country.

N. Mutton, Wolverhampton College of Technology

#### KEELE AND NEWCASTLE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Gailey, Staffs (SJ 922109) The earthworks at Plough Farm, Gailey, consist of a low central mound surrounded by a shallow ditch, an earth bank to the east of the ditch, and subsidiary ditches or depressions within the area. Three trial trenches showed hard-packed clay and pebbles forming the central mound, all overlying an ancient turf line. The clay and gravel clearly came from the digging of the ditch. No dating evidence was found and thus the earthworks may be the remains of a motte and bailey or possibly medieval fish ponds, or they might be of even more recent date.

Hales, Staffs (SJ 722338) Much new evidence of this Roman villa has been uncovered in the comparatively short period of this excavation, and it is quite clear that there is a lot to be done and much to disclose. To date, apart from outer and inner walls, remains of concrete flooring etc., a hypocaust has been uncovered, unfortunately much disturbed except for one small area by an earlier excavation when trial holes were dug in this particular part of the site. The hypocaust, as it can now be seen, contains several standing pilae. Most of the pottery to date has been recovered from disturbed layers.

Ivor Newcomb, 175 Basford Park Road, Basford, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs

## KENILWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Cherry Orchard (SP 279648) Excavation has continued on the small area of land which remains untouched by the brickworks. No further significant evidence has been found to confirm the possibility of there having been a third to fourth century tile kiln in the immediate vicinity. Although work will continue, it is feared that any major feature has been lost in the brickworkings. A resistivity search on the nearest undisturbed soil has disclosed no significant anomalies. Konsilwanth

H.L.G. Sunley, 57 Highland Road, Kenilworth

## LICHFIELD AND SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Wall (Letocetum) (SK 101066) Excavation in the field west of the school which it was hoped might reveal evidence of buildings of the earliest fort on the site, has shown the existence of a so far undated rampart and the lip of a ditch running to the north-west. Much slag and other evidence of metal-working has been found behind the rampart, together with two early beam slots. It is hoped by further excavation in 1967 to relate these defences to those previously section to the south-east.

A.A. Round, 95 Darnick Road, Sutton Coldfield

Wall (Letocetum) (SK 097068 and SK 098066) Work on both sites was badly hampered by the presence of underground springs. On the former to the north of the church, an extensive spread of rubbish 2 ft. thick was dated to the pre-Flavian period and has yielded a large group of coarse pottery firmly dated by an abundance of samian sherds. Here were also a socketed spearhead, three possible pilum heads and a socketed head similar to that of a catapult arrow from Camulodunum. There was also evidence of silver-working in the form of a small slab of silver, a broken bronze "steelyard" and rivets with some silver embedded in baked clay.

On the second site immediately to the west of the churchyard, the springs were very close to the surface, and all Roman levels appeared to have been removed when soil was taken to build up the level of the adjoining churchyard.

Direction of excavations at Wall has now been transferred to Mr. A.A. Round (see above).

Jim Gould, 307 Erdington Road, Aldridge

### MALVERN RESEARCH GROUP

Dymock (SO 705311) Excavation was continued at this site near the village cricket pitch, reported on last year. It was confirmed that there were a number of occupation levels extending over a long period at the side of the Roman road. The edges of two gravel floors belonging to wooden buildings of the latest phase, were traced and linked up with earlier excavations. Two small bowl furnaces were discovered at a lower level and a beam slot belonging

to a fairly large building. At the lowest level were three parallel ditches, traces of which have been noted in earlier trenches. A number of brooches, coins and other metal-work, included a Roman Republican coin which suggests early occupation on the site but not much early pottery has yet been discovered.

Paul L. Waters, 2 Westward Road, Malvern Link

MALVERN HILLS ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMITTEE (in association with the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club and the Worcestershire Archaeological Society)

Midsummer Hill Camp (SO 760375) The trench across the southern defences suggested that the small earth rampart had been fronted with a stone wall - probably twice rebuilt. Beyond a broad berm was a shallow defensive ditch which had been waterlogged since it was first cut. What, on the surface, appeared to be an outer defensive bank, proved to be a natural ledge composed of glacial material. Below the archaeological features, the trench was cut some way into complex glacial deposits that indicate the former presence in the valley between Midsummer and Hollybush Hills of a pre-glacial lake. Glacial turf lines were found below such deposits at either end of the trench, but no artifacts were recovered from them.

The main effort was expended on the southern entrance. the frequent replacement of gate posts showed that the camp was permanently defended over a long period of time. At least eight successive posts were used, and on the assumption that the gate would not have been repaired after the Roman Conquest, a date for the original construction of this entrance in the second century B.C. would seem reasonable. The earliest form of the gateway has not yet been determined, but from an early stage it was of a type (i.e. where the corridor walls of the inturned entrance were curved round the inner ends of the ramparts just inside the gate position) which is associated with the Western Second B culture of the Cotswolds. At the gate, the corridor was 13 ft. wide, and the excavation shows the approach to be at least 30 ft. long. In the later stages it seems likely that a bridge was placed over the corridor some 8 ft. to 10 ft. forward of the gate. All the pottery so far recovered from all levels in the entrance is consistent with a Western Second B occupation. soil over the entrance and in the trample over the defensive ditch were found a few sherds of Romano-British pottery, indicating some, perhaps intermittent, occupation during the Roman period.

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

## MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY (Department of History)

Whitchurch (Mediolanum) (SJ 541416) A second and final season of excavations was undertaken for five weeks during Easter 1966. The choice of date was controlled by a deadline by the Whitchurch U.D.C., and the extremely adverse weather conditions at that time were a major factor in hindering work.

The programme was designed to complete the general clearance of the site to second-century levels, and to explore further the first-century levels detected by the previous years exploratory trenches. The ditch found at the western end of the site was reexamined for dating material at two separate points and produced a

consistent body of Flavian- early Trajanic material. This occupation, presumably military in character, was not the first on the site. Clearance of the central area showed two periods of occupation beneath this level, without however providing adequate dating evidence of the finds. Structurally the upper contained a drain associated with timber buildings, the lower clay footings for wattle walls, similar to the structures in the mid-first century legionary base at Wroxeter. In fact, one of the two levels is probably contemporary with this military occupation of Wroxeter, and samian rubbish survivals confirm occupation by the initial years of the Flavian period.

Clearance over the rest of the site was carried out to the level of the main stone structure encountered in the previous season. This formed the southern side of a late second-century courtyard building (at least 80 ft. across) with an internal cobbled verandah. It was well executed in local sandstone and divided into regularly spaced rooms. The building was occupied until well into the third century; at the end of its life, smelting took place in the south-western corner. More surprisingly a complete skeleton had been inserted through the floor of another room at a date not earlier than the first quarter of the fourth century. It was a rarity in that the dead man had received intramural burial and had died from a trephining operation on the cranium, the first example of such a surgical practice in a proven Romano-British context.

Evidence of fourth-century occupation not found during the previous year's work took the form of half-timbered buildings and cobbled yards on the eastern side of the site. Occupation probably continued into the second half of the fourth century though the evidence was greatly disturbed by medieval pits. Throughout the periods from the first to the fourth century all buildings were laid out on the same basic alignment. This showed that the Roman forerunner of the present High Street must have formed the axial street or decumanus, controlling the layout of Mediclanum in both military and civil periods, just as it has continued to do in medieval and modern Whitchurch.

G.D.B. Jones, Department of History, Manchester University

## MINISTRY OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND WORKS

Sudeley Castle, Griff, Nuneaton (SP 357892) This moated medieval manor house was excavated prior to site development for open-cast coal. A considerable portion of the enclosed area was stripped and revealed a substantial stone building at the east end. This consisted of a two-phase building in stone, phase one being a hall 40 ft. long with chambers above and one side chamber; in phase two an additional large chamber, probably with a first floor above, was added to the north of the main hall. Lighter foundations, largely destroyed by ploughing, and probably representing the kitchen and storehouse range were situated along the north side of the moat. The life of this manor house was, from the archaeological evidence, short; no material earlier than the thirteenth century or later than the fourteenth being found.

Documentary evidence shows connections the the de Sudeley family in Gloucestershire.

Stanley E. West, 2 The Street, Woolpit, near Bury St. Edmonds

#### NUNEATON

Chilvers Coton (SP 342893) Excavations by Keith Scott in the area of the damaged stokehole of this Romano-British tile kiln has shown a small area of the brick-built front wall remaining, and a rubbish pit has yielded some coarse pottery including colour-coated ware.

S.C. Clarke, Lindley House, Lindley, Nuneaton

## OFFA ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY, OSWESTRY

Ysgwennant, Denbighshire (SJ 189305) Excavation has continued on this Bronze age burial mound but no find has been made. Little remains to be done to complete the excavation of the mound.

W. Day, 9 Green End, Oswestry

## RUGBY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Tripontium. Rugby (SP 534796) The fourth century ditch which encloses part of the site was traced by mechanical excavation for a length of over 400 ft. The plan is rectangular and only one corner is included in the length known. The long side is approximately parallel to the road and 100 ft. from it. Other occupation features close to the ditch, but apparently not related, include floors, walls, slots and smaller ditches.

In the area to the south-west, one wing of a building has been excavated for a length of over 75 ft. and the bath house has now been uncovered.

Excavation on a bigger scale is necessary as this site is threatened by gravel digging. Funds are available for the mechanical movement of topsoil but volunteers are needed for work on Saturdays and Sundays from Easter onwards. Volunteers should get in touch with Mr. Lucas who will direct field-work next season.

H. Cameron, 1 Vernon Avenue, Rugby

J. Lucas, Dorset House, Lilbourne, near Rugby

## SHREWSBURY ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH GROUP

Wroxeter (Viroconium) (SJ 568083) Work has continued at Finger Post Cottage on the most eastern point of the ramparts of Viroconium. Here an angle is formed and a Roman road of first century date has been found leaving the city. This road seems to have fallen out of use at an early date. Offsetting it is a rough road of post-Roman construction. As part of the hard core of this later road was a Roman column capital with motifs representing the harvest carved all round. It is suggested that this capital formed part of a tall free-standing votive column. Prof. J.M.C. Toynbee reports that up to the present no parallel monument has been reported from any part of the Empire.

A.W.J. Houghton, Oakwood, Pulverbatch, Shrewsbury

Abdon Deserted Village (SP 865575) Excavation at this recently discovered site at the foot of the Brown Clee in Shropshire started last spring and continued throughout the summer.

In the hope of locating a hearth, a magnetometer survey was taken near to the isolated church. Following encouraging readings an area 50 ft. by 60 ft. was stripped. The stone base of a two-roomed rectangular building, covered with an extensive deposit of sandstone rubble, was found. This lay immediately to the south of the circular churchyard wall, which had been extended in the midnineteenth century, and part of the medieval building was destroyed in the process.

The walls of the building were made of worked sandstone. They had been robbed extensively, possibly for a later rebuilding of the village in the sixteenth century. There was a small eastern room, interior 14 ft. by 13 ft, which contained a small pit 2 ft. by 3 ft. by 2 ft. 6 in, this was possibly a solar. The larger adjacent room, 13 ft. by 30 ft, was divided into two by a wide timber slot about half way along. The section near to the solar contained a hearth based on natural bedrock. There were traces of several floor levels in this section. The second section of this room was at a slightly lower level and was based on tightly packed clay. The walls of this section were more crudely constructed than in the rest of the building. It is probable that it was a cattle byre.

To the south of the main building were traces of several subsidiary buildings, these were represented by robbed walls and closely spaced post-holes containing burnt clay infilling. From the extent of daub, up to 1 ft. thick in parts, it is probable that during the last period of occupations these buildings were burnt down.

A large volume of pottery was found dating mainly from the thirteenth century but some of the material may be earlier. Most of the sherds were unstratified, much of it lying on or in the rubble covering. A few forms of cooking-pot rims and glazed sherds had not previously been found in Shropshire or at Hen Domen.

Bedrock was found throughout the site and there was no indication of any earlier occupation. It is hoped that excavation next year will identify the extent of medieval occupation and delimit the later desertion at Abdon which is associated with a seventeenth century coal-working community.

Richard T. Rowley, 33 Upper Road, Meole Brace, Shrewsbury

## SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Weeping Cross, Shrewsbury (SJ 508105) This is a ploughed-out site of approximately nine acres with a Middle Bronze Age horizon.

Barrow No. 1 Almost the entire area bounded by the 80 ft. diamter circular gulley was uncovered, and the gulley itself sectioned, permitting the following conclusions:

- 1) A shallow Beaker burial was disturbed during the Iron Age when the Iron Age enclosure ditch was cut through the barrow.
- 2) During the cutting, the primary urn cremation was also disturbed but replaced in exactly the position found though the urn may have been damaged in the process.
- There were no secondary cremations but a number of silted gravel features may have contained inhumations.

- 4) The sections clearly indicated an outer bank.
- 5) The barrow was probably of disc type and contemporary with barrow No. 2 which was 22 ft. to the south-west.

Barrow No. 2 Only approximately one half of the area within this oval barrow was examined. Five cremations without urns or grave goods were found together with a large boat-shaped feature which lay at the centre along the major axis. Four more cremations without urns were plotted outside the bounds of the barrow gulley. This was probably a disc or saucer barrow, the primary urn cremation lying 15 ft. north of the boat-shaped feature.

Barrow No. 4 Unfortunately this was almost entirely destroyed by building operations. The 76 ft. diameter gulley which was probably circular enclosed an area of gravel features. A single sherd of cinerary urn was found near the centre.

Late Bronze Age/Iron Age A horizon Several pits and post-holes, a number of which contained simple forms of plain, heavily-gritted cooking wares including one with fingernail decoration, occurred in association with a linear gulley. A loose cremation near the Late Bronze Age cremation area contained a bronze awl.

Iron Age B The continued examination of the main enclosure revealed many interesting features including:

- 1) Occupation extending up to the first century.
- 2) A narrow causewayed entrance at the north-east corner. The main entrance 5 ft. 6 in. wide was only 27 yds. away.
- 3) A further trench-built house with a complex of internal and external gulleys partly intersected the gulley of House I.
- 4) A path to this latter ran over the slighted rampart.
- 5) A sub-rectangular structure had three trench-bedded sides and the fourth open, save for individual posts.

Romano-British horizon Considerable lengths of 'U' shaped gulleys were discovered including:

- 1) Sullage gulleys, probably associated with huts and yielding first century pottery.
- 2) Linear gulleys bounding field systems, one of which was shown to run under a parish boundary stone.
- 3) Storm-water gulleys dug each side of tracks.

Medieval horizon A deeply rutted road with a single storm-water gulley and pavement was found below an eighteenth century forge. The surface lay 1 ft. 11 in. below an existing lane and was extremely hard. Evidence of considerable burning lay along its route. A thirteenth century baking oven which apparently went out of use shortly after re-lining with clay, lay approximately parallel with the above road. It had side flues and was approximately 16 ft. long including the raking pit.

General Finds were miserably small and metal almost non-existent. This leads one to presume that only by almost total excavation can this type of site yield satisfactory results.

W.E. Jenks, 18 Langford Avenue, Upper Pulley, Shrewsbury

# STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (County Planning Department) with MINISTRY OF FUBLIC BUILDING AND WORKS

Bagot's Park (SK 090270) These rescue excavations were on a site where surface indications suggested a glassworks. Two furnaces were found; the main melting furnace was rectangular and about 12 ft. long with stoke-holes at each end. Crucible platforms or sieges stood on each side of the central flue and had each held three crucibles. No trace of the roof structure remained, although a gathering-hole cover had fallen on to a siege. The structure had been largely of stone, now much robbed, although the west flue-end was of brick; the flue had filled up with accumulated fused glass with which the sieges and walls were also coated. Four large post-holes were found, one at each corner of the furnace, giving for the first time evidence of an overall roof above the furnace itself. As is usual, a system of drainage ditches had been dug around the furnace.

The separate annealing furnace had brick footings with an uncertain superstructure. Its plan formed a quarter circle, and wooden racks for glass probably caused the numerous stake indentations alongside the hearth.

A small timber building, located by post-holes, lay to the east of the main furnace: its purpose was uncertain.

The products of the works were largely window-glass and the waste suggested that this was Crown rather than Broad, although waste from the latter is difficult to identify. A certain amount of opal waste was of sufficiently high quality to suggest deliberate manufacture. Vessel fragments were less common, though still sufficiently numerous to have been made on the site. Only a very small quantity of flashed glass was found.

The dating evidence must be treated with reserve. The documentary material for glass-working in Bagot's Park by Lorraine immigrants from 1585 until at least 1615 does not necessarily refer to this site which is one of at least fifteen in the vicinity. The furnace itself followed late-medieval practice, and although similar to the Tyzack example at Bishop's Wood, Eccleshall, Staffs, was less advanced than Weald examples. The pottery evidence, though sparse, does however point to a late sixteenth century date, for although Flemish stoneware and cup bases of early sixteenth century types were present, a multi-handled brown tyg suggests that these may have been survivals. A good deal of weight therefore must be put on the results of sampling carried out for magnetic dating whose results should be available in 1967.

D.W. Crossley, Department of Economic History, University of Sheffield.

#### WARWICK

Market Street, Warwick (SP 279648) Excavation was continued inside the line of the medieval town defences on the site of the former Mulberry Tree public house to the east of Market Street. The site had been much disturbed by post-medieval buildings and drains, and no trace was found of medieval or earlier buildings. A series of seven large pits (two at least of which were originally stone quarries) produced a considerable quantity of domestic pottery of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, also a silver penny of Cnut and a halfpenny of Henry II. Immediately above the natural sandstone was a sandy

layer containing flint flakes, cores and Neolithic sherds similar to Windmill Hill - Abingdon types. Some twenty shallow pits, none more than 18 ins. deep, were found cutting from this layer into the natural - these also yielded Neolithic pottery, flints, and in one instance carbonised hazel nuts.

It is hoped that further excavation in the vicinity will give more positive evidence of the nature of the Neolithic occupation and also assist in building up a datable sequence of local medieval pottery.

Michael Farr, Deputy Archivist, Warwick Steven J. Taylor, 18 St. John's Court, Warwick

## WARWICK SCHOOL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Warwick. Bridge Field (SP 290645) This excavation is as yet in its first stages; however a recut ditch, about 3 ft. deep has been discovered. This has a sandy bottom for the most part, but traces of a light silt in the recut indicate that it may at one time have been water-filled. The ditch has been dated by pottery found in its filling to the twelfth to thirteenth centuries. The pottery is typical of the period and was manufactured locally. A lump of greenish-blue fused slag also found in the ditch has yet to be analysed. A number of nails have been found in the layers around and in the ditch. No positive remains of houses have yet been found although there are many pieces of brick, tile (of the Tudor period) and mortar. The function of the ditch remains uncertain. The excavation will continue next year.

J.C.W. Jolleys, Warwick School, Warwick

#### WOOLHOPE NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB

Croft Ambrey hill-fort (SO 44,3668) The total excavation of a mound in the annexe, showed to be of entirely Roman date. What is regarded as a religious sanctuary had been prepared in the late-first century A.D. by cutting a terrace on the hillside. The terrace, 23 ft. by 29 ft. was defined uphill by a shallow ditch, and there were associated fire-pits and stake-holes. The ash from whatever ceremonies took place on the terrace had been swept downhill along with many tiny fragments of burnt bone (from animal sacrifices?), numerous potsherds, iron nails and a number of more precious items. After c. A.D. 150 the terrace was raised two feet and enlarged within a sub-rectangular stone kerb 36 ft. by 38 ft, the extra material coming from an arcuate quarry uphill from the sanctuary. The site was subsequently converted into an oval-based mound (axes 40 ft. and 30 ft.) when it was redefined by a ditch cut around its upper half. In this final form the mound was 3 ft. high with a flat top, 15 ft. in diameter.

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

#### WORCESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH GROUP

Worcester, Lich Street (SO 851550?) Emergency excavations on this site showed occupation with pottery and boiling stones dating from Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age times on the original ground surface. There were a number of other prehistoric features and occupation levels sealed by the remains of a rampart which was associated with a large ditch of presumed Iron Age date. The

filling of this ditch was cut across by a Roman ditch with firstcentury pottery. This ditch was itself cut by a very large ditch
some 80 ft. to 100 ft. wide datable to the late-second or early-third
century, which was traced along a curving line for more than 500 ft.
There was also another ditch containing Roman pottery outside the
line of this major ditch. The major ditch narrowed towards the
junction of Pump Street and High Street, and since the extension of the
known line of the Roman road from Droitwich to Worcester meets this
point, it is almost certain that there is here a gateway to the Roman
town. There were no structures or finds of post-Roman date until the
twelfth century but many cess pits and rubbish pits of medieval date
produced important groups of pottery and many well-preserved leather
fragments including a number of complete datable shoes. There were
also a number of good associated groups of post-medieval pottery.

King School Site (SO 850550?) Excavations here in advance of building have sectioned a defensive ditch dated by pottery to the seventeenth century. This must be part of the Civil War defences shown on a map of 1651. Within the same trench are two other ditches running at right-angles to the Civil War ditch. One of them, which must be earlier than the Civil War ditch, has produced a sherd of medieval pottery. The other is as yet undatable.

There is no sign yet of the Roman military ditch which was found a few years ago within 50 ft. of the present excavation. Work continues.

Broad Street Site (SO 850551?) Work has begun here on the site of the Black Friars. The comparatively small area opened has revealed a number of medieval inhumations cut into four late Roman iron-smelting hearths. The hearths and the associated slags, which are of the greatest importance since vast quantities of slag have been found in Worcester in the past, are being fully examined at the Wolverhampton College of Technology. Work is continuing on this site.

P.A. Barker, 4 St. George's Square, Worcester

## WROXETER TRAINING SCHOOL

## Wroxeter (Viroconium) (SJ 566086) The 1966 season consisted of:

- 1) The clearance of the large open swimming bath attached to the public bath house made it possible to establish that the bath was never completed since a piece of unfinished flooring had been tipped in with the rubbish. When the site was abandoned, the sunken area was filled up, apparently with garbage from the town, and includes a large collection of animal bones and pottery dating to c. A.D. 180-210; this will be a very valuable closed group.
- 2) Further work was done on the legionary fortresses in the open space adjacent to the swimming bath.
- 3) Exploratory work was carried out for the Ministry of Public Building and Works in the <u>palaestra</u> area where it is proposed to begin stripping prior to consolidation. In a small area to the east of, and beyond the bath house yard, a group of ephemeral buildings was revealed inches below the present ground level, fronting the street forming the eastern boundary of the <u>insula</u>.

Grahm Webster, 30 Portland Street, Leamington Spa

## GENERAL NOTES

<u>Dr. David Peacock</u> (Department of Geology, Birmingham University) reports that work has continued with the study of pottery fabrics. Extensive thin-sectioning of Iron Age Western Second and Third B pottery has demonstrated the existence of production centres, probably in the Malvern district, each with its own range of stylistic traits.

Mr. D.C. Dévenish of the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry, wishes to draw attention to the John Shelton collection in that museum as hitherto virtually no record of it has been published. He writes:

"During the 1930's and 1940's, John Shelton amassed a very large collection from commercial excavations, bomb sites etc., in the City of Coventry. This was given to the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum in 1949 but it is only recently that its full extent has been realised.

A very little of the collection is Prehistoric, Roman or Anglo-Saxon but by far the greater part of it is medieval with some later objects. Although none of the material is stratigraphically recorded, and most of it is not even accurately sited yet its sheer bulk and scope ought to force its attention on the student of the Middle Ages, particularly the student of medieval domestic life or metal-working techniques. A brief description of its extent is given below:

Medieval household goods are represented by about 50 complete or restorable pots as well as over 60 boxes (1/2 cu. ft. each) of sherds. There are five almost complete bronze vessels, 24 metal spoons and about 30 lamps of stone or clay.

Costume is represented by about 1,500 shoes and fragments of shoes, about 60 buckles, about 30 dagger/sword chapes and about 20 badges as well as strap-ends, belts, combs, purse-frames, rings, dress-hooks, pattens etc.

The art of metal-working is illustrated by about 130 Lower Jurassic limestone moulds for, among other things, decorative plaques and badges (some heraldic) buckles, strap-ends, bells, a spoon, a dagger chape and a figurine."

The <u>Proton Gradiometer</u> (Bleeper) and the <u>Resistivity Meters</u> are available for loan by Societies in the West Midlands and applications to borrow them should be made to Mr. Geoff Taylor, 5 Greenside Road, Birmingham 24 (telephone ERDington 6818).

Discovery and Excavation in Scotland. This book is published annually by the C.B.A. Scottish Regional Group and conveniently summarises all finds and excavations during the year. It is available at 3/- post free from Mr. S. Willey, c/o National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland, Queen Street, Edinburgh. Back numbers are available.

Archaeology in Wales This news letter is published by C.B.A. Group No. 2 annually. It is presumably available from the Editor, 32 Cyncoed Road, Cardiff. No detail of price is given.

## PERSONAL NOTES

Christine Johnson (now Mackreth) Dr. Graham Webster writes:

"At the Wroxeter Reunion at Attingham Park there was a presentation to Miss Christine Johnson and her fiance, Mr. Donald Mackreth. Both of them are very well-known in the area, and Christine has for some years been the mainstay of the archaeological work in the Department of Extra-Mural Studies and her departure will be a great loss to the area. Christine and Donald were married in Kings Lynn on 30th December and are to make their home in Leicester. The response to my circular was extraordinarily generous, no less than 101 students contributed a total of £66 towards the wedding presents. Donald and Christine chose a very handsome French style clock, some pieces of silver and glass, and all those present at the Reunion were able to extend their felicitations. I would like to thank all those who made contributions and pass on the very warm thanks which were expressed by both Christine and Donald."

Christine's place in the Extra-Mural Department has been taken by <u>Miss Cynthia Holme</u> who is a law graduate from St. Andrews and whose home is at St. Anne's-on-Sea.

We were very sorry to lose <u>Howard Hughes</u> during the year. He devoted much of his time to Alcester and through his efforts it was possible to persuade the Ministry of Public Building and Works to finance the large-scale excavations directed by Miss Christine Mahany.

Ken Barton We congratulate Ken on his appointment as City Curator of Portsmouth City Museums and Art Gallery. We will be sorry to see him go, but he leaves behind a considerable monument to his labours in the new Worcestershire County Museum at Hartlebury Castle which is well worth a visit. We wish him well in his new sphere.

We welcome to the area two new museum curators.

Miss C.F. Tarjan from Liverpool is the first full-time curator of the Castle Museum, Tamworth, and Mr. F.L. Fawcett has recently taken up the appointment at the Nuneaton Museum. Mr. Fawcett has spent much of his life doing archaeological work in Italy and has a rare skill in conservation and restoration. He is anxious to make contact with field-workers in his area.

The following is a list of names and addresses of local organisers of excavations. Names in brackets refer to the sites or towns with which the person is particularly associated. Further copies of this list are available separately from Miss Cynthia Holme, Department of Extra-Mural Studies, The University, P.O. Box 363, Birmingham 15 (SELly Oak 1301, Ext. 150).

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COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY, GROUP NO. 8	

A.A. Round, Esq., 95 Darnick Road, Sutton Coldfield (Sec.)

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# PAPERS ON SUBJECTS OF WEST MIDLANDS INTEREST

ENERAL CONTRACTOR OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PROPE
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