

This 'Newsletter', a joint venture by the Shropshire Archaeological Society and Shrewsbury Museum, is intended to keep members of the Society and anyone interested in the local history and archaeology of Shropshire in touch with events, discoveries and excavations which take place from time to time. Since its success will largely depend upon the assistance received from others, we appeal to those in touch with local historical and archaeological discoveries to send us details of these for publication, which is not intended in any way to take the place of fuller accounts which may later be published in the Society's Transactions or elsewhere.

ANNUAL EXCURSION. The Annual Excursion of the Society took place on Saturday, 14th September, 1957, when a party of about fifty members was conducted by Mr. John R.W. Whitfield, LL.B. on a tour of the North Shropshire Marches. Several houses and fortified sites connected with Marcher history were visited, including the Iron Age and Roman camp at Nesscliffe, the significance of which was described to the party by Miss L.F. Chitty, O.B.E., M.A., F.S.A. Hardwick Hall, the 17th century "Baroque" mansion of the Kynaston family, so intimately connected with the history of the Northern Marches, was also visited and tea was taken at Ellesmere.

LEA CROSS EXCAVATIONS, 1956-57. A small team of workers under Dr. A.W.J. Houghton has, during the past two years, been excavating the site at Lea Cross in Pontesbury parish where a Roman villa, with a tessellated pavement in one room, was found in 1793. The digging had to be abandoned this summer when sewage from nearby buildings seeped into the site, and Dr. Houghton has kindly supplied the following report on the excavations.

"Lea Cross is a hamlet situated near the Rea brook five miles S.W. of Shrewsbury. Here in a field, at an altitude of 250 feet above sea level and sheltered to westward by a low ridge a mosaic pavement 14' square was discovered in 1793 and a brief note appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine.(1) The engineer, T. Telford made a drawing of the pavement (2) which has been reproduced in the Victoria County History of Salop (3). Unfortunately no plan or sketch of any sort was made and apart from the brief description quoted above no record remains.

In the early Summer of 1956 an endeavour was made to locate the site of the building. The remains of dressed stone walls were found at modern ground level lying from beneath a hedge bank for a distance of 4 feet to NE and SE respectively. Adjacent to the N. wall a trench was cut. The wall was found to continue for a distance of 9 feet at which point it was robbed down to the footings, which made a right-angled corner with traces of another wall going to the S. A finished cement floor was found contiguous with part of the E. extremity of the remains of the wall. The whole area was covered with about a foot of unstratified soil containing tesserae, wall plaster and fragments of roof tiles. It is possible that this layer was the result of the efforts of the 18th century excavators who had apparently spread their spoil heap evenly back over their trenches, thus producing a sort of flat platform about 40 yards square.

The cement floor was exposed for a total area of about 144 square feet. In this N. part a shallow trench 4' wide was found running N. to S. and a circular pit 2' in diameter and 9" deep found. These features appear to be contemporary with the floor and in the trench an iron fragment was found which seemed to be part of a collar such as was used to join lengths of wooden pipes.

In 1957 efforts were made to locate the boundaries of the building and to this end trenches were cut about 30 feet to the east of the excavations already referred to. At a depth of 4' the dig was hampered by the presence of a sewage effluent which came from some houses on the low ridge to the W. but a pitched stone floor was found, covered by a thin layer of rammed clay. To the N. this adjoined a wall of roughly-dressed stones set in rammed clay running SW to NE. Large quantities of burnt wood and cinders were found in this area and the impression gained from the necessarily curtailed dig was that a building of simple construction had been burnt down and that there was evidence of rebuilding. The pottery, both stratified and unstratified, was of the second half of the 2nd century. No coins were discovered. Owing to the sewage contamination the dig had perforce to be abandoned and the trenches were filled in.

Conclusions. The evidence of the mosaic pavement and the hypocaust found in 1793, together with the outbuildings found in the present excavations suggest the presence of a farmstead of some comfort and moderate pretensions. At Cruckton,(4) about 1½ miles down the valley towards Shrewsbury another simple building with a bath suite was excavated by Miss E. Sladdin in 1952-4, and there is evidence that at Whitley in the same valley about a further 1½ miles in the Shrewsbury direction is another Roman site (5). The latter it is hoped to survey and investigate in the coming Winter.

Those three sites are within easy reach of each other and of the great public road running W. from Wroxeter to Caersys, and the Lea Cross site has direct communication by means of what may be a secondary Roman road going from Stony Stretton via Lea Cross, Exfords Green, Hunger Hill and Allfield to Wroxeter. Thanks are due to Mr. C.W.E. Peckett, M.A., P.A. Barker, T.F. Wright, J.A. Jerman and to sixth form boys from the Priory School, in particular R.V. Buckley, M.R. Wells and D. Hughes. The pottery and other objects found, together with sections, plans and photographs will be deposited in Rowley's House Museum, Shrewsbury.

References: (1) Gentleman's Magazine, 1793, ii, p.1144.
 (2) Telford. Autobiography (1828) p.23-25, plate IV.
 (3) Victoria County History, Shropshire, v.1. p.258, fig. 34.
 (4) personal communication, Miss E. Sladdin.
 (5) Shropshire Notes and Queries, April 1893.

EXCAVATIONS AT UPPINGTON. Excavations are proceeding at a suspected mediaeval site at Uppington under the leadership of Mr. P.A. Barker, and further help would be welcomed. The site is about half-way between Uppington and Charlton Hill, and can be reached from the A5 road via Uppington village.

It consists of a roughly circular ditch enclosing an area of about 3 acres. Mediaeval pottery and wall plaster have been picked up on the site, and a road has been discovered on the outer edge of the ditch, which is in process of being sectioned. The site is connected, in a way not yet clear, with Wombridge Priory, as is a complex of earthworks on the Bell brook, half a mile away. There is a good deal of surveying and soil resistance measuring, as well as excavating, to be done, and help in any of this work will be most welcome. Will those interested please contact Mr. P.A. Barker, 2a, The Priory, Shrewsbury. It may be possible to offer transport from Shrewsbury, and with prior notice buses will be met at Uppington turn.

LLANYMYNECH HILL. Mr. T.W. Rogers, of Glentworth, Oakhurst Rd, Oswestry has kindly sent the following account of recent excavations undertaken by the Oswestry Archaeology Research Group at Llanymynech Hill.

"Llanymynech Hill is a prominent feature of north-western Shropshire, although the hill itself is partly in Montgomeryshire. It has long been the scene of mining for copper and lead, probably from Roman times, but there is evidence of occupation considerably before that period. The southern end of the hill (roughly the part in Montgomeryshire) is defined by the innermost rampart of an Iron Age camp which encloses more than 100 acres, an unusually large area for such a camp. Two intrenched entrances can be traced on the N. and NE. sides. On these sides, two, and in places three, additional ramparts can be traced. These, together with an outwork on Blodwel Rock, are in Shropshire. An interesting description of this camp and its relationship to Offa's Dyke, the line of which also runs along the western edge of the hill, can be found in Archaeologia Cambrensis, 1926, pages 395-400. There is, however, evidence for much earlier occupation although this is no longer visible. Edward Lhwyd's "Parochialia" contains a reference to, and a drawing of, a cromlech which existed there at the end of the 17th century. This cromlech is mentioned also by later observers but it was destroyed by local treasure-seekers towards the end of the 18th century. These references unfortunately give no precise record of its position, the best being that it was a 'bow-shot' from the "Ogof", which is a well-known opening in the hillside leading to underground galleries from which minerals have been extracted.

Last year Mr. Graham Webster suggested to the Oswestry "Research Group" the desirability of a study of the hill with its potential wealth of archaeological information. The group had already had their attention directed to one site, about 80 yards from the Ogof, which was known to some local inhabitants as the "Giant's Grave". This consisted of a long, low ridge which might possibly represent a much eroded long barrow or give some clue to the whereabouts of the lost cromlech. The site is that marked on the 6" O.S. map by the figures "300" which actually fix the position of a nearby firing point on a former rifle range.

During the past few weeks a set of trenches on the crest and sides of the ridge have proved that it is a grass-covered natural ridge of rock, but a couple of trenches at the southern end disclosed that an irregular hollow nearly four feet deep had at some time been cut into the rock. It was obviously essential to empty this to make sure whether it had any archaeological significance and this has recently been completed. It seems certain that it is of comparatively recent date. No artefact of any kind was found. A few bones from the upper levels of the filling of this hollow have, by the courtesy of Mr. I.F. Cowley of the National Museum of Wales, been found to include parts of bones of sheep, ox and horse, the estimated height of the horse being about 12½ hands. As this site was in Wales, advantage was taken of the recent meeting of the Cambrian Archaeological Association at Bala to secure a visit by D. H.N. Savory and Mr. A.H.A. Hogg, and they agreed that the hollow had no feature of archaeological interest. An inspection by a quarrying expert has been arranged, and further work on the hill will be carried out.

YARCHESTER ROMANO-BRITISH VILLA.

By W.A. Silvester, M.Sc., F.S.A.(Scot).

The Ordnance Survey, in the booklet of the Map of Roman Britain (3rd ed. 1956) lists Yarchester - Grid Reference SJ (33) 6000 - under "other substantial buildings", and so indicates it on the map itself. But Mr. Rivet, of the Ordnance Survey, could, for himself (Archaeological News-Letter, 1955, 6, pages 32 and 54) call it a Cornovian villa, of which, he said, there were only eight, mostly poor things.

Yarchester, in fact, more than some of the others, was a villa by surmise. Until 1955 there had been no surveying in detail of the site and no recorded excavation, but many visitors had found pieces of roofing tile and potsherds, and there is a literature, up to 1908 conveniently condensed in the Shropshire Victoria County History, with some later records in, e.g. the Transactions of the Caradoc and Severn Valley Field Club. One writer, impressed by the wide scatter of potsherds, etc. thought that the place might even have been a small town.

There has been some confusion as to whether the vestiges pointed to a site in Harley parish or in Much Wenlock parish, or in both. Two fields on the Wenlock side of the boundary were named by the Tithe Commissioners as "Hairchester" and "Upper Hairchester". The now accepted name is that picked up, doubtless verbally, by the Ordnance Surveyors in 1833, there being at that time a 'crofter' dwelling on what is clearly the true site. This dwelling is named, on the O.S. 1" map of 1833, "Yarchester Cot". The last pieces of timber from this cot were removed within the lifetime of the grandfather of a local resident.

Survey and exploration were, with the kindly permission of Mr. J. Griffiths, of Harley, begun in the summer of 1955. Fragments of tegulae, potsherds (no early Samia and scraps of stone roof shingle, identical with that at Wroxeter, were found. The tooled stone in scattered lumps was found to be not the near-by limestone, but sandstone eventually identified as Kenley grit. Spring 1956 was good for moles; soon three oblong areas of closely clustered molehills, rich in fragments of roof tile stone and even potsherds, all in a little plateau, became distinct and were mapped. At the NE corner of this plateau a walling stone was found to be part of a wall corner. The wall was at least four courses deep and 30" thick, with a typical Roman plaster floor inside.

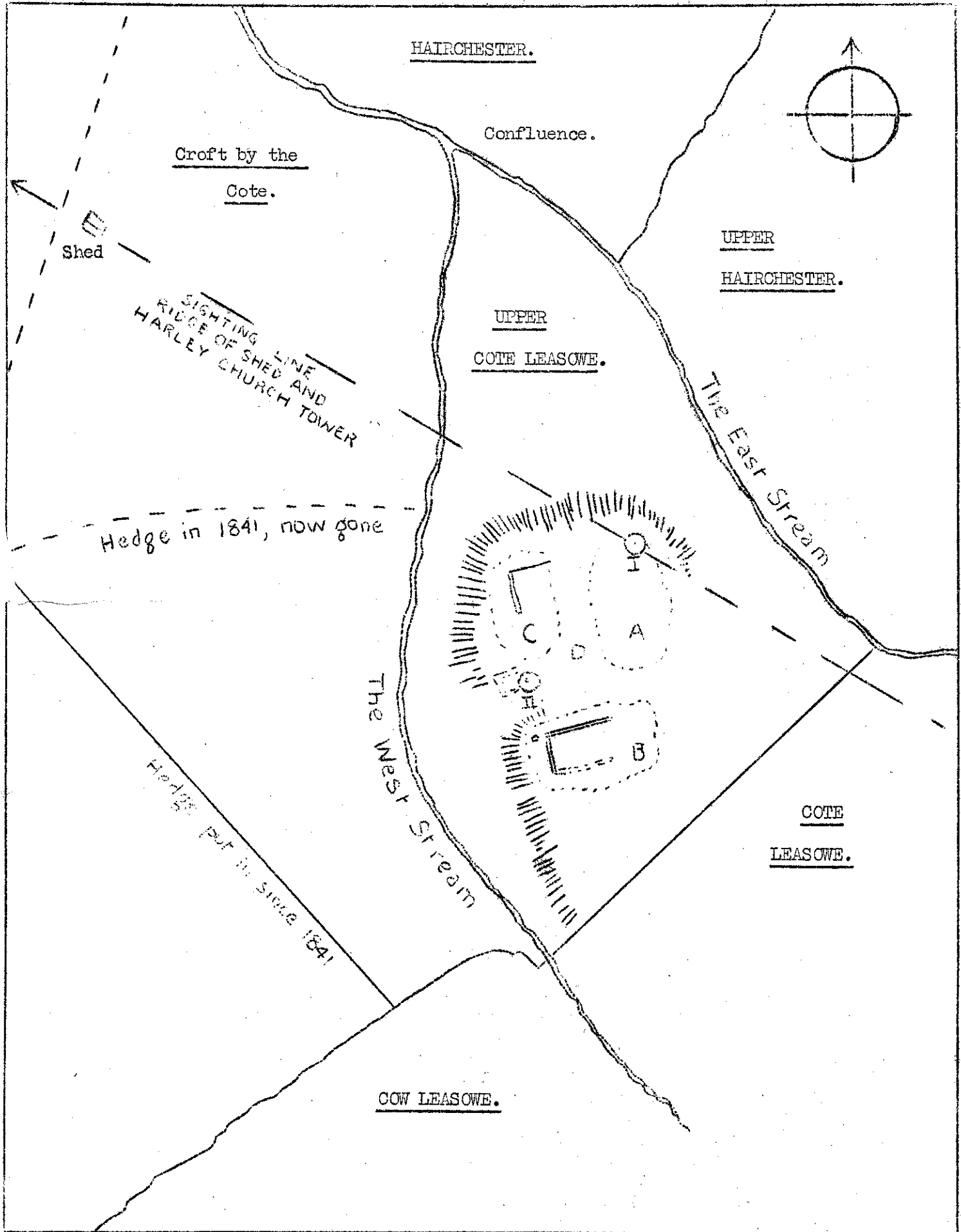
For 1957 a scheme for joint work was arranged with Mr. J.L. Edwards, of the Much Wenlock Secondary Modern school and his colleague, Mr. J. Corbett, on their initiative. Teams of staff and senior pupils have joined in two digging campaigns (Spring and Summer). The first, beginning with exploratory shallow trenching, led to the uncovering of, in all, about 150 feet of foundation or boundary walling. This was duly measured, mapped and covered up again. The site thus clearly outlined, about 60 x 30 yards, was evidently that of a medium-sized villa, with buildings round a yard, and the superior stonework of the southern block, as well as the indicated lay-out, suggested that the residential quarters were in this southern building.

In the Summer 'dig' an exploratory hole on a line of distinguishably scorched turf exposed not only the south wall of this building but a tessellated floor within, of a room eventually found to be about 19' square. The soil above this floor, about 2' deep, contained large clumps of stone roofing, some of the shingles having iron nails still in their holes. As the floor was cleared there was uncovered a gilloche-patterned mosaic within a wide border of large tesserae. Then, surprisingly, a 12' diameter semicircular alcove projecting from the south wall was opened up. A photograph of the almost undamaged mosaic in this alcove has appeared in the local press. This mosaic is of much beauty, the tesserae (cubes about $\frac{3}{8}$ " square) are of brick, marble and various kinds of limestone, giving patterns in white, red, brown, green and blue. The mosaic in the main room is much damaged by subsidence and falling roof.

Almost no charcoal has been found, nor is there other evidence of destruction of the house by accident or violence. Potsherds so far found, mostly at the NW corner of the site, in a rubbish tip (?), indicate occupation already about A.A. 200, and the one coin so far found is a small bronze of Constantius II (A.D. 353-360). Some of the pottery is also about this date.

Everything so far discovered fits into the general picture presented by Sir Mortimer Wheeler in his Norman Lockyer lecture of 1937. There is even, perhaps, a glimmer of evidence of hard times before the building was finally deserted: a human molar tooth, ground down almost to socket, was found in the out-throw above the mosaic. A "skeleton of aged female, teeth ground down to socket" was found, as a Christian (?) burial, in the villa at Llantwit Major (Nash-Williams, Arch. Cambrensis, 1953, 102, page 105).

YARCHESTER. Plan No. 1, revised June, 1957.



SCALE: 1" = 33 yards.

W.A. SILVESTER.

The last few years have seen intensive investigation into lost or deserted mediaeval village sites in England, and the Deserted Mediaeval Villages Research Group has for some years been collecting and correlating information and arranging for the investigation and excavation of many of these sites. Shropshire has not yet come into these investigations in any detail, and Maurice Beresford, in his "Lost Villages of England" mentions only one site, that of Caus Castle where a Survey of 1540-1 shows 9 burgages still occupied and 24 decayed (S.A.T. LIV. 1951-52, p.45-68).

Shropshire lies, for the most part, outside the area where extensive depopulation occurred in the late Middle Ages, but it is thought nevertheless that there are several places where investigation might reveal a habitation site in the Middle Ages which is no longer occupied, and this is at present being done at at least two of the sites listed below. It has been fashionable, in the past, to ascribe the depopulation of villages to the ravages of plagues, especially the Black Death, but this, as Mr. Beresford points out, is an over-simplification of the problem.

The following list purports to be no more than a list of sites in the county which might bear further investigation, and whose exact status needs to be checked. Further details of these, or of any other possible sites, will be welcomed by the editor. There is urgent need at the present time when information on Deserted Villages sites is being built up, for local correspondents to make quick visits to a large number of sites to see if there are any earthworks visible and if so to define their extent. More detailed plotting can then await the results of these preliminary surveys.

AMASTON. NG 378113. The site of this settlement, shown on Morden's map, 1695, is now marked by Heath Farm, about 2½ miles E. of Halfway House in the parish of Alberbury with Cardeston.

ALBERBURY. NG 383152. The site of Woodmere or "Wytmere", mentioned in a mid-13th century deed belonging to Alberbury Priory, has been identified in a field between Eyton's Gorse and the Severn.

CAUS CASTLE. A well authenticated mediaeval village, sited in the outer Bailey of the Castle. It was granted a weekly market by King John in 1200, but was much decayed by 1387. For further information see the account by Miss L.F. Chitty in the Programme of the Annual Meeting of the Cambrian Archaeological Association, held in Shrewsbury, August 1954. NG 337078.

COLD WESTON. NG 550831. This village has not disappeared, but it much diminished from former days, and there was once a woollen mill there.

COLEHURST (SUTTON-ON-TERN) NG 662313. Mr. R.C. Purton (S.A.T. v.48, 1935-6, p.64) suggests that Colehurst or Coulshurst Manor is the ancient manor of Corselle, which Eyton placed at Cross Hills in Hinstock. Colehurst was occupied by the Barker family until the 17th century.

CONDOVER. NG 493056. According to Miss H.M. Auden, the old village was sited near the Cound brook between Condover Bridge and the weir, where a mill existed until the 19th century.

HARDWICK. 'Old Hardwick' (NG 367344) is a possible DMV site, which may possibly have some connection with the dispossession of Welshmen noted under Old Marton.

HARDWICK GRANGE, near Hadnall. NG. 518214. Evidence of a settlement at Hardwick Grange, 1 mile N. of Hadnall, is said to be visible on aerial photographs, but I have not verified this.

HAUGHTON, near Hadnall. NG 553165. Mediaeval mills and fishponds, discovered a few years ago, have recently been surveyed by Dr. A.W.J. Houghton, of Pulverbatch.

HEATHWAY. NG 281036. Eyton (Antiquities, v.11, p. 115-6) mentions houses in Hathway, Halwey, Heywey, Hegway, etc. during the 13th century, and also refers to "Marton juxta Hathewildeford" in the fee of Montgomery (Cal Inq. P.M. v.1. p.49). At this time it was evidently a thriving settlement and its site, under Marton Mountain, is now marked on the O.S. map by an isolated farm called The Beeches. The map also shows an old ford on the Lowerfield Brook below the Beeches.

HUMPHRESTON. NG 816050. There are two moated sites at Humphreston, near Donington, Albrighton, one adjacent to Humphreston Hall, the other a short distance W. Around these may have been a considerable settlement in the late Middle Ages.

MARTON. NG 351342. No direct evidence of a former village apart from the names Old and New Marton. Mr. T.W. Rogers, of Oswestry, has visited the site and made enquiries without success and nothing suggesting former occupation has been turned up by the plough. Eyton, however, appears to assume (v.10, p.243-4, 254) that this was the mediaeval 'vill' of Merton in the manor of Ellesmere. In 1280 it was held by Welshmen, who joined Llewellyn in rebellion against Edward I and were ejected, the estate being conferred on Philip, son of Robert de Say in 1284. The conversion from a settlement to a personal estate probably dates from this date.

PITCHFORD. NG 527042. According to the late Mr. W.J. Slack, the mediaeval village lay in the fields below Pitchford Hall, though no remains are now visible.

4.
SIBBERSCOT. NG 427077. A hamlet in Pontesbury parish which has declined. Miss Auden reports that it had 5 tenants in 1327, but in 1610 only three houses are recorded. Nevertheless it appears on Speed's map of that date. Today it is an isolated settlement off the main road, approached by several footpaths.

SIWALDSTON. Exact site to be identified. Eyton (v.VIII, p.284) says that it probably lay between Aston and Rushton, but the Rev. R.C. Purton (S.A.T. v.48, 1935-36, p.64) suggests that it may be equated with Charlton Hill in the parish of Uppington, with 'Snalston's Hill' as an intermediate form.

Messrs. Barker and German of the Priory Boys' School, Shrewsbury, are at present investigating a site of some three acres, surrounded by a ditch or moat, just below Charlton Hill, which may prove to be the site of Siwaldston. Finds so far have been limited to late mediaeval pottery, but Siwaldston may have been occupied until Richard Jenkins built the house known as Charlton Hill, c. 1660. In the Middle Ages, Siwaldston was a member of the important manor of Eyton-on-Severn.

STANCHESTER. Another site, referred to in several mediaeval documents, which cannot now be traced. It would appear to have been in the vicinity of Berrington and Eaton Mascott, and possibly Roman in origin. Dr. A.W.J. Houghton is endeavouring to locate the site.

STOCKET. NG432307. One of the lost townships of Cockshutt, but formerly a member of Ellesmere. It was formerly co-extensive with the townships of Whattall and Kenwick, but is now denoted only by the site of an old fort between Crosemere and Whattall Moss. The name comes from OE stocce, a tree or stump, and perhaps denotes a settlement built up on 'stocks', which would be necessitated by the marshy nature of the ground.

STOW. Two sites of deserted mediaeval settlements have been tentatively identified by the Rev. J.C. Williams, formerly vicar of Stow, near Bucknell.

One of the townships of Stow listed in 1341 is 'Thorneton' which Mr. Williams equates with 'Tornett', a local name recorded on the O.S. 6" map for a wooded place between Stow and Weston, where he found evidence of some sort of a settlement. N.G. 320734.

The second site is that of an old church, burial ground and possible settlement on the Stow side of the Clun parish boundary, near Five Turnings (NG 286755). This is marked on the Lurkenhope Enclosure map of 1854 as 'ruins of an old church', but all traces have now disappeared, and of any surrounding settlement. Old residents cling to the tradition of such a settlement at this spot, which is known as 'Goreham' from OE. gara and hamm, "the settlement by the triangular piece of land", which fits the topography.

WHITLEY NG 455094. Remains of buildings have been found in Chapel Field, Whitley, near Annscroft, but these have never been fully investigated or described. (See Sh. Notes and Queries, 14.4.1893)

WICHERLEY. NG 591092. The site of the "Grange of Wycherley" mentioned in several deeds in the Cartulary of Wombridge Priory has recently been identified at Uppington by Messrs. Barker and German, and fuller details will be published later.

WILLEY. NG 663996. A small settlement is indicated in Willey Park on a 16th cent. estate map, near Hangster's Gate. This probably dates from the development of furnaces and ironworks in this area in the 15th and 16th centuries.

NOTICE OF EXCAVATIONS. If all those who wish to take part in or be informed of excavations in the Shrewsbury area will send their names and addresses to Mr. P.A. Barker, 2a, The Priory, Shrewsbury, they will be kept informed of excavations and other archaeological activities in the area. Particulars of these will also be published from time to time in this Newsletter.

UPPINGTON. Mr. Barker also reports that work is continuing on the earthwork at Uppington (Nat. Grid ref. 593087) and further help will be welcomed. For particulars of dates, times, transport, etc. please contact Mr. Barker at the above address.

THE TOLSEY, LUDLOW. After considerable discussion and consultation between the several interested parties, the Salop County Council have signified their intention of proceeding with the proposal to demolish the Tolsey at Ludlow in order to relieve the traffic congestion in the town. Opponents of the scheme claim that this will merely touch the fringe of the problem which will only be solved by a North-South bypass round the town. Ludlow Town Council have written to the Ministry of Transport again protesting against the scheme and all M.P.'s for the county have been approached. The Shropshire Archaeological Society has promised the Ludlow Council its full support in any action it may take to preserve this historic building.

The January meeting of the Shropshire Archaeological Society Council will be held in Riggs Hall on the 21st January at 11.15 a.m. instead of January 7th.

RECENT OBSERVATIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS ON THE ROMAN ROAD SYSTEM IN SHROPSHIRE.

By Dr. A.W.J. Houghton.

(All map references are to the one-inch O.S. sheets)

1. WELLINGTON area. HAYGATE 640107.

A sewer trench 14 feet deep and 4 feet wide was cut across the Holyhead Road and extended for a distance of 70 feet to the S. in order to reach houses on the rising ground. Beneath the modern asphalt layers was about 18 inches of dirty, stony soil, the stone being mostly 2-3 inch broken fragments. For a depth of nearly five feet below this layer were successive strata of washed gravel and cobbles, those at the bottom being 9 inches or more in length and were rammed into the natural, sandy clay. This artificial formation extended from the edge of the S. side wall, across the width of the present road to well into the width of the N. sidewall. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the Roman road lies directly beneath the modern road at this point. The rest of the trench in a S. direction revealed the natural sandy clay subsoil only.

2. In August 1957 a trench 10 feet wide and 15 feet deep and over 100 yards long was dug in the field adjoining the Holyhead Road on the South side immediately west of Haygate, Wellington. The trench ran parallel to the high-road and at a distance of ten feet from the hedgerow. Only natural and undisturbed subsoil was found along the entire distance excavated.

3. The Holyhead Road east of the traffic lights at the Hadley - Newport road junction. 664111 to the Cock island, 657111.

A trench $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide and 7 feet deep extended along this length of the road. The W. half was on the N. side of the road and the E. half on the S. side. The stratification at the East end for a distance of above 50 feet was as follows:

1. Modern asphalt, 9 inches.
2. Old Macadam 1 foot.
3. Broken stone and dark soil, 1 foot.
4. ? flint and buff-coloured clay, 3-4 inches.
5. Gravel and ? clinker or furnace slag, 1 foot.
6. A grey homogeneous mass, 3 feet.
7. Natural reddish clay.

A specimen of layer 6 was sent to Professor Shotton at the University of Birmingham, who kindly examined and reported on it. His finding was that it was vitrified glass slag. It is therefore not likely that the Roman road is associated with this particular stretch of highroad.

The modern road to Wolverhampton immediately after the Watling Street branches and dips away to the N. 685108. A small area was opened and the layers were seen to consist of an asphalt and stone layer 9 - 10 inches in thickness lying on natural reddish clay.

4. The triangle of ground between the Rea Brook, Meole Bridge and the new building estate to the South. (Centre of Triangle 489107)

This area is of interest as it is possible that the Roman road from Caersws, via Westbury and Meole Brace and after fording the Rea brook, crossed this piece of land on the way to Viroconium. Numerous trenches were cut in connection with building operations, but in none of them was any artifact found and no trace of any road was discovered. It is probable that in time past this area was subject to frequent flooding and all traces of the road may have been washed away.

5. Meole Brace - Bayston Hill Road. 488100 - 490108.

Telephone engineers cut a trench about 3 feet deep along the W. side of the present highroad. Immediately beneath the topsoil a rough, cobbled road was found. The cobbles were all of large size, about 5-7 inches, and loosely thrown down and fragments of 19th century pottery and two bowls of clay pipes were found beneath the top layer of cobbles. No smaller stones or gravel were present and this formation did not possess the features of a Roman road.

6. Meole Lane (now called Stanley Lane). Site of new bungalow on S. side of lane 100 E. of cross roads. 480107.

The layers of a Roman Road were discovered 2 feet below the modern surface. The surface was cambered and was found to extend beneath the hedge bank and for fully six feet to the south. Evidence of two stages of repair was found in the exposed sections.

7. Westbury. 354094.

In a garden adjoining and SW of the garden of Brook House is a hollow-way in direct alignment with the known Roman road descending the Long Mountain from Vennington and the Roman road E. of Westbury, now represented by the modern highroad. (This is, in fact, in continuation with 6 above)

Trenches were cut in the crest and N. side of the south bank going down to natural subsoil. No trace of a road was discovered, although a series of potsherds from the 17th (or earlier) to the 19th centuries was found. A trench in line with the above was now cut at right angles across the hollow-way, immediately beneath the topsoil was a mixture of medium and small-sized broken stones, black soil and occasional fragments of soft brick. This layer was about 4" in thickness at the S. side and became thinner to the N. end of the trench where the ground surface fell away slightly. Beneath this, at the S. end, large cobbles firmly rammed in natural stiff clay were found.

It is suggested that this last layer represents what is left of the Roman road after extensive robbing or erosion, and that the top layers of broken stone were deposited in mediaeval times or later. There is a local tradition that the "hollow-way" was used as a drover's or pack-horse road until well into the 19th century until the garden of Brook House was extended so as to cut across it.

8. The Shrewsbury - Ford - Alberbury road.

It has been suggested that this alignment represents the course of a Roman road.

9. Bicton. 458133. A trench 4 feet wide and 10 feet deep was opened transversely across the highroad at this point. It was further extended for a distance of 20 feet across the N. sidewalk into the W. end of the yard of the Harp Inn. No trace of any buried road surface was found. Beneath the asphalt and a layer of dirty soil and broken stone the natural subsoil was clearly seen. A further trench was subsequently opened transversely across this road at a point about 60 feet to the East. Again no old road traces were revealed.

10. Alberbury. 358143 (E. of Park entrance gates) A trench seven feet deep was opened across the present highroad. No trace of any buried road was found.

11. Strefford, near Wistanstow. Investigations are proceeding here, as it is thought that an important Branch road left the Watling Street near this point.

MOATED ENCLOSURE AT WATLING STREET GRANGE, OAKENGATES. By Philip A. Barker.

In December 1957 it became known, through the County Planning authority, that the owner of Watling Street Grange, Mr. B. J. Ward, intended to fill and level the moat which lies 100 yards N. of the farm (NG ref. SJ 722113, O.S. 6" map 36SE)

Watling Street grange was one of four known granges of Lilleshall Abbey, the others being Cheswell, Lilleshall and Wildmoor, and it is mentioned in the Forest Perambulation of 1300 (Eyton, vol. IX, p.148) and in the Excheator Inquisition of 1353. No further mention has been found, although the Lilleshall Cartulary, which is unfortunately not immediately available, probably contains further references.

The moat is square and encloses an area of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres. The remains of a wall of large blocks of dressed sandstone run E-W across the enclosure 70 feet N. of the south side. The area enclosed by the walls and the moat is level and higher by about a foot than the general level of the centre of the enclosure. Two short days only were available for surveying and excavation, and trial trenches were cut in places as varied as possible over the surface of the enclosure. Time did not permit sectioning the moat, which was waterlogged throughout and would have required pumping. Finds on this occasion were not very significant, consisting chiefly of fragments of slip-ware pottery and coarse, dark-glazed ware and a number of pieces of bottles and thin window glass. A clay pipe-bowl was dated by Mr. R.E. James of Shrewsbury Museum as from the period 1681-8, the maker being Morris Deacon.

This limited excavation found no structure or finds datable before 1600, but much evidence of later occupation into the 19th century which would make the survival of traces of earlier buildings unlikely. The sandstone wall has the appearance of being original and two or three field walls nearby may well have been made of stone robbed from within the enclosure, as they are made of similar sandstone blocks, and are the only walls in the area, the other boundaries being hedges.

Subsequently some mediaeval tiles were found by workmen. A whole, stamped tile covered with pipe-clay and glazed, found outside the ditch has been provisionally dated c. 1420, while from disturbed ground within the enclosure three incomplete line-incised tiles were found. A plan of the farm in 1804 shows no buildings outside the moat, in the position of the present farm, but three buildings within the enclosure, roughly corresponding to the walls found by excavation.

The site is an interesting one and several possibilities suggest themselves, and it is hoped that further investigation may be possible at a later date. A full report on the site will be printed in the forthcoming issue of the Shropshire Archaeological Transactions.

SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held at Shrewsbury Castle on Saturday, 17th May commencing at 3 p.m. After the usual brief Business session there will be a lecture. Dr. R.S. Mott, Superintendent of the British Coke Research Association's Research Station at Sheffield has been invited to speak on some aspect of Shropshire's association with the early history of the Iron Trade in England, a subject of which he has made a detailed study. Members, guests and visitors are cordially invited to this meeting.

The Society is also organising a visit to the Clun district on Saturday, 31st May, when members will be received by Mr. Tom Hamar and other members of the Clun Town Trust at the Clun Museum. It is hoped that the Earl of Powis, who is President of the Trust, will be present on this occasion.

It is also hoped to arrange a visit to Wroxeter on the afternoon of Saturday, 7th June when Sir Mortimer Wheeler will open the new Charles Henry Foyle Archaeological Centre, which has been built on the site for lectures and for practical work in connection with the excavations.

The first course to be held officially in the Foyle Centre will be a Week-End School on Romano-British coarse pottery from the 6th to 8th June, under the direction of Graham Webster, M.A., F.S.A., with lectures by Dr. Philip Corder and John Gillam, M.A., F.S.A., which will study the manufacture, use in dating and regional variations of this pottery.

This is but one of a series of extremely interesting and valuable Field Courses being held during the Spring and Summer of 1958 at the Field Studies Centre at Preston Montford, which are described in the illustrated brochure recently issued by the Centre. Copies of this are available from Preston Montford or from the Director of Extra-Mural Studies, The University, Birmingham 3.

Another course involving practical excavation is that entitled "The Anglo-Danish Struggle" which will be directed by Dr. F.T. Wainwright, F.S.A., Head of the Department of Anglo-Saxon Studies at the University of St. Andrews, for two weeks, 12th to 26th July. It is proposed to excavate the remains of the fortress at Chirbury which is thought to be the fort built by Aethelflaed in A.D. 915 as a defence against the encroaching Danes.

The Course will be treated as a school for training in excavation techniques as well as for a general study of the history and archaeology of the period, and the two-week course has been so designed that a student may attend for either or both weeks.

Then there are those courses, now an annual institution, for beginners, intermediate and advanced archaeological students, in Romano-British excavation techniques at Wroxeter, which will again be directed by Graham Webster during the Summer vacation. There is, too, a course on the Identification and Survey of Earthworks, directed by A.L.F. Rivet, M.A., F.S.A., Assistant Archaeology Officer to the Ordnance Survey, designed as an introduction to the study of antiquities through field investigation rather than excavation. This will be held from the 30th August to 6th September.

Another course of more general interest to historical students is being organised by the Extra-Mural Department of Birmingham University at Westham House, Barford near Warwick. This is the 7th Annual Easter School of Local Historical Studies from April 11th to 18th under E.R.C. Brinkworth and W.E. Tate, both names well-known to the student of local history.

NEW RULES OF THE SOCIETY.

A special General Meeting was held in the Shirehall, Shrewsbury on Saturday, 15th March to discuss and approve the proposed new rules as a constitution of the Society. These rules, altered for the first time for many years, bring the Society up-to-date and into line with similar local societies in other areas. Copies of the new rules are available from the Secretary, Silverdale, Severn Bank, Shrewsbury.

The new rule 6 states that "The management of the Society shall be vested in the Council, which shall consist of the following: the President, Vice-Presidents, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, the Shrewsbury Borough Librarian, the County Archivist and not more than 12 elected members. The officers shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting on the recommendation of the Council, but the President and Vice-Presidents shall be elected for five years and shall be eligible for re-election. Casual vacancies amongst officers

shall be provisionally filled by the Council, subject to confirmation at the next Annual General Meeting. Members of the Council (Other than ex-officio members) shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. Members of the retiring Council shall be eligible for re-election and their names may be proposed without previous notice; in the case of other candidates a proposal, signed by four members of the Society, must be sent in writing to the Honorary Secretary not less than fourteen days before the Annual General Meeting. The Council shall have power to co-opt not more than five additional members to serve on the Council for the year."

MEDIAEVAL FIND IN SHREWSBURY. The scarcity of 'finds' from sites in Shrewsbury has often been commented upon, and it is therefore gratifying that a most interesting discovery made recently on the site of the new Barclay's bank building on the corner of Castle Street and St. Mary's Street has come to light. The soil from this site, below the foundations of the old building which has been completely demolished, was removed wholesale by a mechanical shovel, so that the chances of archaeological finds being made was small. However, the contractor removing the soil for tipping noticed in one load a piece of mediaeval pottery which was subsequently brought into Shrewsbury Museum.

It was identified as an incomplete mediaeval pot known as an "aquamanile", which is a kind of horizontal ewer designed to hold water and to be used for washing the hands. Such vessels were extensively used in the Middle Ages amongst the richer classes for the frequent washing of hands which was called for before forks came into general use, being filled with water and poured over the hands of diners by a servant during a meal. They are always striking because of their unusual shape, usually an animal or sometimes a knight on horseback. This particular specimen seems to have been in the form of a boar. The head, which also formed the pouring spout, is missing, as are the bases of the four legs in which it stood, but the body of the vessel, including the handle, is intact and in a good state of preservation, the greenish-brown salt-glaze being very well preserved.

While such vessels cannot be dated very accurately it has been ascribed by experts from the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum to whom it has been shown as of about 1500. It will shortly be placed on exhibition in Rowley's House Museum, where it is hoped shortly to arrange a special display of mediaeval exhibits relating to Shropshire.

MEDIAEVAL SITE AT EYTON-ON-SEVERN. On Monday, 3rd February 1958 the Museum received a telephone call from Mr. T.B. Beddoes, of Eyton Farm, Eyton-on-Severn, who stated that his men had found sandstone wall foundations in a field below the farm whilst ploughing the field.

Arrangements were made to visit the site and on the following day, Mr. P.A. Barker and Mr. German of the Priory Boys' School, Mr. Grundy of Bridgnorth and myself went to Eyton where Mr. Beddoes and his son took us to the site. This is the field sloping down from the farm to the river and marked by a walled enclosure on the 6" map, 42 SW. In the centre of the field, opposite the walled enclosure, the soil had been balkened over a fairly large area and remains of sandstone walls had been uncovered below the surface. The upper portion of these foundations is being removed to facilitate ploughing and seeding. A small (about 5' x 2'6") bricked pit, about 3' deep was also found, the top of which was covered by four large slabs. Small pieces of pottery, glass, etc. were picked up on the ploughed portion of the field where the soil was darkened. The walled enclosure referred to is known as the 'Monk's Garden'. The E. wall of this contains some sandstone built in the brick wall but the three remaining walls are entirely of brick.

The remains are probably those of the country house of the Abbot of Shrewsbury, which is known to have stood at Eyton-on-Severn in the Middle Ages. According to Forrest (Old Houses of Shropshire, p.64-65) the property was purchased at the Dissolution in 1535 by Chief Justice Bromley, whose only child, Margaret took it to her husband, Sir Richard Newport. Their son, Francis Newport, built a new house on the top of the hill about 1580, near Mr. Beddoes' farm, parts of which are still remaining although the house was burnt down. Probably additions were made to the Abbot's house to fit it as a permanent dwelling between the Dissolution and 1580, which may explain the brickwork found on the site. It is hoped that excavations may be possible on the site later on this year.

J.L.H.

Edited by J.L.Hobbs, Shrewsbury Museum, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury (Tel. 4554)

YARCHESTER ROMANO-BRITISH VILLA.

A Second Report by W.A. Silvester, M.Sc., F.S.A. (Scot)..

Plan no.1, in Shropshire Newsletter no.2, showed the north and west walls of a building in an area marked 'B'. That building is now shown on a larger scale (1" = 20 ft) in the plan annexed to this Report. It will be seen that the building is almost certainly a residence of the category known as "corridor house" (cf. Haverfield, VCH Shrops., 1908, p.212, and Collingwood, ARB, 1930, Ch. VII)

As said earlier, the exploratory digging so far has mostly been a mere uncovering of foundation walling. There is evidence of deliberate removal of stone in past centuries, and not only has the site been tilled but, one is told, there has been digging for rabbits. Nevertheless, some foundations are only 8 inches from the surface. Taking the rooms as numbered on the plan, the following remarks are made:

Room I. The SW corner has 'concrete' floor with indications of hypocaust (?) duct - large square floor tiles. (Note: a few scattered fragments of box tiles have been found here and elsewhere) This room has still to be systematically explored.

Room II. No exploration as yet except of small area in SE corner - 'concrete' floor.

Room III. Floor completely uncovered in August 1957 and covered up again in October. Mosaic in apse almost undamaged. This, and undamaged parts of mosaic in main room systematically photographed (some colour transparencies) and measured. One trial hole in main room showed under tesserae about 4" of concrete resting on bed of cobbles. In due course to look for hypocaust in apse (cf. J. Ward, Roman Era in Britain, 2nd ed. 1920, p. 77).

Except for a few small potsherds, nails, animal bone fragments and, of course, masses of roof shingles (and the human tooth already mentioned) nothing was found in this room on its main floor, but in the alcove resting at random on the mosaic were found a red sandstone flagstone, a piece of red sandstone column (?) and the base of a grey ware pot apparently hand-chipped to make a disc 5" diameter and $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick. The residual walling round the apse is 15 inches high; at the north side of Room III it is irregularly about one course, i.e. a few inches, high, and the present soil surface slopes correspondingly to the north. The walls of the whole room were seemingly plastered, and coloured in a pattern of the usual tints, but all the coloured plaster found was in fragments; no large pieces were found in situ.

Room IV. In foundation walling on east side, as shown on plan, is a break which may represent site of a hearth. Some lumps of vesicular slaggy material were found, also nut-size lumps of charcoal.

Rooms V and VI. No exploration yet. The south wall of Room VI is slightly out of alignment with, and so far as visible, less well constructed than the rest of the south wall. Roots of nettles are very troublesome hereabouts.

There was a short school party digging campaign from 9th to 12th April last, and another similar 'dig' is planned for August. Meanwhile Mr. Corbett and the present writer continue with local surface observation filed work, and with literature hunting, etc. on constructional materials.

According to Dr. D. Smith (ANL, 1955, 6, 50) there have been about 360 villa mosaics recorded in Britain, and of the few so far dated on external evidence none is earlier than the fourth century. The present writer, seeing by accident an enlarged photograph of a mosaic in an advertising display in a London bank, has obtained a photograph of that mosaic. The roundel therein is a little larger than that in the Yarchester apse, but the eight 'petal' pattern is almost identical (the nearest to an equivalent so far found). Dr. Anthony, of the Verulamium Museum, through whose kindness the photograph has been obtained, says that beneath this pavement, found last year, was a coin of Constantine II. Hence the mosaic cannot be earlier than about A.D. 360. This fits the date so far surmised for the peak of prosperity at Yarchester. As Dr. Smith has said (loc. cit) ultimately we may discern, from study of the mosaics, something of the size and organization of the firms which laid them. It may perhaps be added that the Yarchester mosaic is the largest so far found in Shropshire outside Viroconium; in general style, especially of guilloche patterning, the much smaller Lea Cross mosaic (VCH. Shrops. p.258) was similar and perhaps laid by the same hands, whereas the specimens on exhibition in Shrewsbury Museum of early finds at Viroconium are mostly more geometrical, with larger tesserae.


YARCHESTER, HARLEY, SHROPSHIRE.

Romano-British Villa Site - Plan no. 2a.

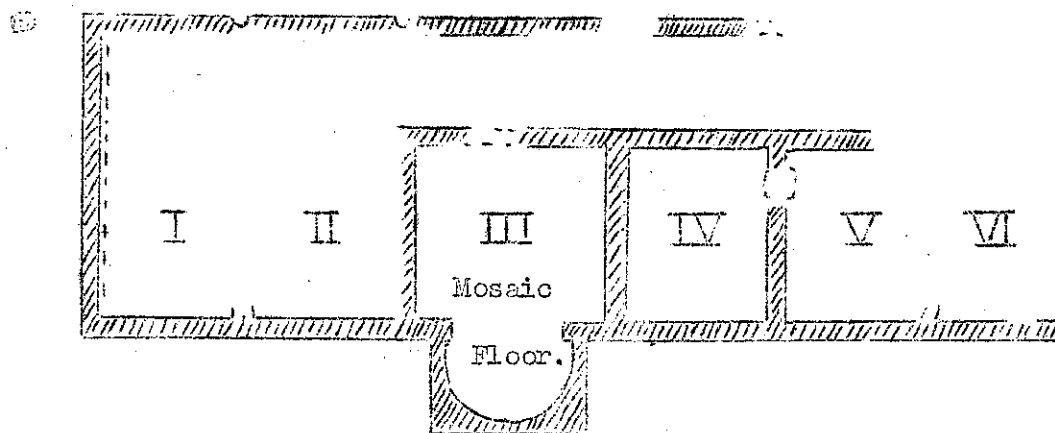
Residential Building as explored to May 1958.

Scale: 1 inch = 20 ft.



This point is shown as  on

Plan no.1 (Shropshire Newsletter, no.2. Dec 1957)



W.A.Silvester del.
16.5.58.

DESERTED MEDIAEVAL VILLAGES.

Following the publication of the notes on possible Deserted Mediaeval Village sites in Shropshire in the second issue of this Newsletter, a visit was paid to the county on May 12th and 13th by Mr. J.G. Hurst, of the Ministry of Works, who is also Secretary of the Deserted Mediaeval Village Research Group, and Mr. Maurice Beresford, author of "The Lost Villages of England" and (in collaboration with Dr. J.K. St. Joseph) of "Medieval England". They were met by Mr. P.A. Barker, Mr. G.S. Gamble, Mr. Graham Webster and the Editor and several of the sites listed in the Newsletter were visited, commencing with the earthwork at Uppington (SJ 592086) which, it is suggested, may be the site of 'Siwardston' and also the possible site of the grange of Wycherley at SJ 591094, where the mill bank and pool site were observed and evidence of mediaeval cultivation was noticed between the Bell Brook and the old road to Uppington.

Uckington, a suspected shrunken mediaeval village, for which there 26 entries in the Lay Subsidy Roll of 1327, as compared with only 6 for Uppington, was next examined. The considerable ridge and furrow East of the site was noticed and the rather indeterminate earthworks S. of the present farm were also examined, without any positive conclusions being drawn. It is hoped that this promising site, and the others at Uppington will be given aerial cover in the near future.

Mr. Hurst and Mr. Beresford also visited Caus Castle and examined the site of the 'vill' of Caus in the outer Bailey where cultivation has obliterated the slight surface traces which wooden buildings might be expected to leave. On the following day, May 13th they intended to visit sites in the south of the county, especially the two sites of Tornett and Goreham at Stow, on their way into Herefordshire.

(Continued at foot of page 4)

SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held in the Priory Boys' School, Shrewsbury on Saturday, 17th May, when the President, Captain Sir Offley Wakeman, Bt., C.B.E., presided. When the brief business formalities had been concluded Dr. R.A. Mott, Superintendent of the Midland Coke Research Station at Sheffield spoke on "The early Iron Industry", illustrating his talk with several slides and dealing particularly with Shropshire's part in the early development of this vital industry.

On Saturday, 31st May many members of the Society visited Clun on the occasion of the re-opening of the Clun Museum. The Opening Ceremony was performed by the President of the Society, Sir Offley Wakeman, who was introduced by Mr. F. Lavender, former Town Clerk of Bishop's Castle. Members then inspected the Museum, and after a visit to Clun Castle, unfortunately cut short by heavy rain, they were entertained to an excellent tea in the Memorial Hall, by kind invitation of the Clun Town Trust. After tea the party visited a tumulus at Newcastle and also Spoad Farm with its carved timbers and cruck-roofed barn, before re-embarking for Church Stretton and Shrewsbury.

At the first Council Meeting of the new year, held on June 3rd, Mr. J.B. Oldham, M.A., F.S.A., was unanimously re-elected Chairman of the Council. Dr. A.W.J. Houghton was welcomed as a new member of the Council. The Secretary reported on a meeting which had been held between members of the Council and representatives of the local research groups on the 10th May when the following were present - Messrs. Oldham, Beaumont, Rutter, Rogers, W.S. Davies, G.S. Gamble, P.A. Barker, T.W.G. Snape, C.S. Stanford, G. Webster and Dr. Houghton. The committee had discussed methods by which local research groups could become affiliated to the Shropshire Archaeological Society and could share in its activities. After discussion and consideration of the recommendations of the sub-committee the Council agreed to accept the following recommendations -

(1) groups should be allowed to affiliate by means of payment of such sum as each group would be willing to pay and that transactions and notices, etc. should be sent out in bulk to each group in the proportion of one copy of each to each guinea paid.

(2) Groups should receive the Archaeological Newsletter and should be encouraged to contribute material for the Newsletter.

(3) Meetings of the Society should be held in parts of the county other than Shrewsbury.

(4) Meetings might be arranged at Wroxeter for members of this Society and other groups to explain the scheme of affiliation. This meeting could form part of a joint excursion.

It was agreed that the September, December, March and June Council meetings should be held on a Saturday at 11.15 a.m. Mr. Graham Webster, Mr. G.S. Gamble, Mr. P.A. Barker and Mr. J.E. Pilgrim were co-opted to serve on the Council.

At the July meeting of the Council it was agreed, after much discussion, to obtain estimates from various firms for printing the Society's transactions in a new, and larger, format. The Secretary also reported briefly on the programme for the Winter session. It was reported that Hopton Castle, the condition of which had given cause for anxiety, had been repaired by the Ministry of Works. The Council also decided to ask the Society for Mediaeval Archaeology and the Flintshire Historical Society to exchange publications with the Society.

A whole-day excursion to Mitchell's Fold, Montgomery and Chirbury has been arranged for Monday, 21st July, leaving Smithfield Road by Vagg's bus at 10 a.m. This attractive outing includes a visit to the excavation school which will be working on the possible site of Aethelflaed's fortress (c.915 A.D.) where the work in progress will be described by Dr. Wainwright, Head of the Department of Anglo-Saxon Studies at St. Andrews University, who is directing the survey. Members and friends intending to go on this excursion should notify the Secretary as soon as possible.

A half-day excursion to Wroxeter has also been arranged for Saturday, 13th September, when Graham Webster, M.A., F.S.A., will describe the work of the School of Roman Archaeology being undertaken there this summer. This excursion will also enable members of the Society to meet members of the active local research groups in the county.

LOCAL FINDS.PREHISTORIC STONE AXE.

Mr. S. W. Bridgewater, headmaster of Ifton Heath Primary School, near Oswestry recently reported to Shrewsbury Museum the discovery of a perforated stone axe which was found by Mr. Emlyn Davies, of 38, Greenfields, St. Martin's. It was found at a depth of about 3 ft. six inches while digging drains for the County Agricultural Committee on Mr. David Jones Evan's farm, the Manor Farm, West Felton. The implement was handed to the supervisor, Mr. Johnson and has now been brought in to the Museum, where it will be fully drawn and recorded. The axe is a large specimen, approximately $8\frac{3}{4}$ " x $3\frac{1}{2}$ " with a perforation of about $1\frac{1}{4}$ " diameter. It is hoped that the farmer on whose land it was found will permit the stone to be sent for petrological analysis, and will also eventually deposit it in the Shrewsbury Museum.

AN OLD WELL.

Early in June an old well was found in the garden of no. 14, Claremont Hill, the house of Mr. and Mrs. Denville-Jones, which stands on the left at the top of the hill, during alterations which were being made to the house. A few days previously a similar well had been found by the workmen, but this had been covered by the floor of a new garage. The well was found by Mr. C. Mathews, the foreman working for G. H. Bickerton and Sons. It was 50 feet deep and contained about 18 feet of water. The top was covered by four large stone slabs, and the side of the well, which was circular, was bricked, the bricks having the appearance of dating from about the 17th century.

Three or four large pieces of timber, consisting of tree trunks about eighteen inches thick were lying in zig-zag fashion down the well to below the water level. It has been suggested that this is an old tree pump, which originally ran up the middle of the well and which has collapsed against the sides in the course of time. Each piece of the tree trunk was joined to the one above it by a leather valve, and the water was drawn up through the hollowed centre.

The well has now been filled up, but the top has been preserved and incorporated into the garden rockery. Wells were, of course, a common feature of our old towns, and are much commoner even in heavily built up-areas than is commonly supposed. They were probably particularly numerous in this area at the top of Claremont Hill, the highest part of the town, because the pressure would not allow of a pumped supply from the Conduit Head. The well is not mentioned in the list of wells and borings in the Geological Survey of the Shrewsbury District (H.M.S.O. 1938, Appendix III).

ROMAN ROAD SYSTEMS. Arising out of Dr. Houghton's notes on the Roman road system in Shropshire in the last issue of this Newsletter, the Rev. Gordon Cartlidge informs us that the Watling Street at Wellington lies underneath the Car park of the Buck's Head Inn, and not under the modern A.5 road at this point. His informant was the Superintendent of the local Gas Works, whose workmen found it during digging operations some years ago.

Mr. Cartlidge also reports that he found evidence of a tiled pavement and a well within the enclosure at Watling Street Grange, when he was Vicar of Oakengates a few years ago. He further states that, at the Roman station site on the Watling Street nearby workmen found the remains of a 'watch' tower and also Roman coins.

DESERTED MEDIAEVAL VILLAGES (continued)

Another possible site has been reported by Mr. Stanley C. Stanford, W.E.A. Tutor-Organiser for Herefordshire and South Shropshire, who visited Heath Chapel (NG 557856) with his Ludlow Archaeological Group on 12th June, and inspected some interesting earthworks there.. There can be no doubt, he says, that these represent the site of a former nucleated settlement, with evidence of mediaeval cottages and arable strip farming grouped round the chapel and a moated homestead. This site would be well worth detailed investigation at some time.

Edited by J.L. Hobbs, Shrewsbury Museum, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury (Tel. 4554)

FLINT IMPLEMENT FROM SHEL FIELD HILL, SHELVE

This account is condensed from a report received from Miss L.F. Chitty O.B.E., L.A., F.S.A. and relates to a plano-convex flint knife found near Shelve on the 26th May 1958, the first flint instrument to be recorded from the Corndon and Stapeley Hill country, which is relatively rich in other pre-historic evidence. It was found by K. Ritchie, a pupil of Ash Lea, County Secondary School, Carlisle, while he was taking part in a field excursion during a course at Preston Montford Field Studies Centre, and was found on the surface on Shel field Hill about one third of a mile N.E. of Shelve.

The implement is a plano-convex knife of Early Bronze Age type made of pale, opaque, cherty grey flint, of which the source was probably N. of the Wash, and has apparently been worked from a longitudinally curved flake. The central part of the back shows two long flake surfaces, unworked; the upper part is lustrous, the lower cherty. Both sides have been steeply pressure-flaked and show some secondary trimming; the edges are still sharp but have evidently been used. The length is 60 mm, the greatest width 24 mm, the maximum thickness 7 mm, and its weight is just over $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. The implement is probably contemporary with the general culture of the Corndon-Stapeley Hill area, which assignable to the early to middle Bronze Age, probably during the second half of the second millenium B.C. It is now in the pre-history section of Shrewsbury Museum.

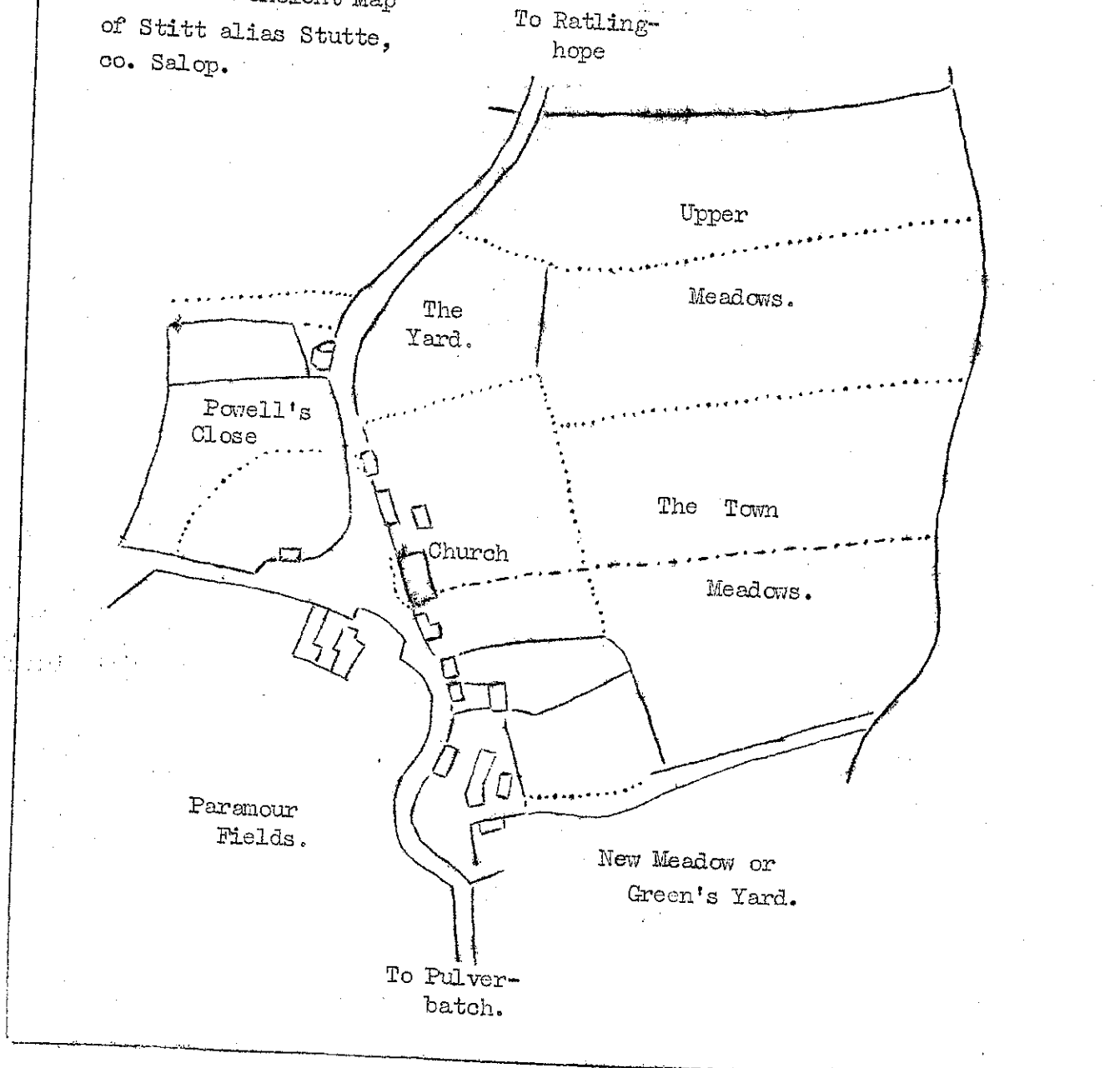
Miss Chitty has also produced a report on the perforated stone axe-hammer found near West Felton N.W. Shropshire, which was reported briefly in the last newsletter. She points out that while such perforated stone axe-hammers, often of considerable size, occur fairly frequently among the south Shropshire hills and dales and along the Severn Valley, they are less common in north Shropshire, and only two, found in gravel at Aston are on record from the Oswestry region. The find from Manor Farm, West Felton, therefore, is of outstanding interest, the more so since it derives from peat and should, therefore, be approximately dateable.

The implement is fairly large (8.7") and heavy, weighing 3 lbs. 12 ozs. It is a pale grey stone and was probably originally well ground, though the surface is now uniformly rough; two natural grooves cross the butt end diagonally, with an elongated protuberance down one side. The overall length is 220 mm, the maximum width is 86 mm across the shaft-hole which was bored from opposite faces well above the centre of the stone; the mouths are 40 mm diameter, the centre of the perforation is 31 mm; most of the shaft is nearly cylindrical and somewhat oblique, with a rough internal surface. The exact site of the find has been pointed out by Mr. W.A. Johnson, supervisor of the workmen who made the find, and the farmer Mr. Jones Evans has agreed to present it to Shrewsbury Museum. It is now being sent to Professor F.W. Shotton of Birmingham University for petrological identification.

VOLUNTEER RIFLE RANGE, HENCOTT. On the six-inch Ordnance Survey map, Sheet 34N.W. this is marked as a square to the S. of Almond Park Coppice and slightly to the N.W. of the stream running from the coppice to the old river bed. From its appearance on the map this has been taken for a possible early earthwork, and in view of bull-dozing operations to be carried out in connection with agricultural improvements the area was examined in August 1958. On Tisdale's Map of Shrewsbury, 1875 the site is marked as 'Target and butts' and a line running from this position to a spot on Round Hill is inscribed 'Volunteer Rifle Range'. It is similarly shown on a small map in W.A. Day's 'Observations on the proposed removal of Shrewsbury School', dated 1873. It was used as a rifle range within living memory and examination of the mound showed all the characteristics of such a range, and there was no evidence that the mound was any other than one artificially created to accommodate the targets for the range.

The above note has been kindly supplied by Mr. R. E. James.

Copy of an ancient Map
of Stitt alias Stutte,
co. Salop.



A further site worth investigating as a possible deserted mediaeval village has come to light as a result of the discovery of an old plan, undated, of the township of Stitt, in the parish of Ratlinghope, in the Mss. of Thomas Farmer Dukes, vol. 3. Although the site, on the lower slopes of the Long Mynd, is now occupied by two farms, there was a church with several cottages surrounding it in mediaeval times. It is too remote to have been a fully nucleated village, and there is no direct evidence of an open-field system, but there was evidently a small settlement clustered round the church.

The township was granted to Haughmond Abbey by King Henry II, and the church was built about the year 1180, the canons having previously had an Oratory there. The Church did not survive the Dissolution, when it passed to the Crown, and by 1840 all trace of this and most of the surrounding houses had gone.

COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY.

The Annual Report (No. 8) of the Council for British Archaeology for the year ending 30th June, 1958, has just come to hand and is well worthy of study by anyone interested in local history or archaeology. It details the progress in research projects, such as implement petrology, the survey of roman roads, etc.; the work of official bodies such as the Ancient Monuments Inspectorate of the Ministry of Works and the Archaeological Division of the Ordnance Survey, and also records the activities of its Regional Groups and constituent organisations. An interesting short section is entitled "The Groups, Schools and the general public", detailing the public relations work being carried on to further the already wide-spread interest in archaeological studies. This with other publications of the C.B.A., which include a Calendar of Excavations and "Current Offprints", is available in the Shrewsbury Reference Library.

COALBROOKDALE COMPANY

Next year, 1959, will be the quarter millenary of the successful inauguration by Abraham Darby of the Coalbrookdale ironworks and his discovery of the new method of coke smelting which, perhaps more than any other single event, paved the way for the Industrial Revolution later in the 18th century. This epoch-making event is being celebrated by the present owner of the Company, Allied Ironfounders Ltd., by a National Meeting to be held in September 1959, probably at Birmingham University. The event will also be marked by the restoration of the old Furnace at Coalbrookdale, erected in 1638 by Sir Basil Brooke and later used by Darby. There will probably also be certain publications concerning the Darby's and the Coalbrookdale Works, and the idea of a small museum at the site of the original works has been mooted. The Shrewsbury Library, Museums and Arts Committee hopes to organize an exhibition in the Art Gallery showing Shropshire's important place in the development of the iron industry in this country.

Many experts in the history of the Iron and Steel industry are represented on the National Committee or are assisting it, including Dr. H.R. Schubert, author of the recently published "History of the British Iron and Steel Industry, 450 - 1775"; Mr. T.S. Ashton of Manchester University, who has written several books on aspects of the Industrial Revolution; Dr. Arthur Raistick, author of "Dynasty of Ironfounders; the Darby's and Coalbrookdale", and Dr. R.A. Mott, superintendent of the Midland Coke Research Station at Sheffield, who has written several papers dealing with the early history of coke smelting.

Much still remains to be discovered concerning the early years of the Company and about the Darby's and their associates, and also about their forerunners. The furnace at Coalbrookdale for smelting iron with charcoal had been in use for about 70 years when Abraham Darby I took over the lease in 1708, and had previously been rented by a succession of ironworkers. One of these, Shadrach Fox, leased the furnace for 21 years in 1696. Fox is something of a mystery man, of whom little appears to be known. He was baptised at St. Chad's Church, Shrewsbury, on June 7th 1678, the son of Shadrach Fox, Gent., and Mary, his father being apparently a member of the Fox family of Muxton in the parish of Lilleshall. Shadrach Fox, senior, seems to have been some sort of a spy in the Government Service during the Monmouth troubles, since in a letter dated February 7th 1684 amongst the Charlton papers he reports that William Leveson Gower of Lilleshall and William Forster of Dothill were making and storing arms ostensibly to be used in supporting Monmouth's rebellion.

Hannah Rose's account of Abraham Darby, which is in the Library of the Society of Friends, London, states that Fox junior used the furnace at Coalbrookdale for making cannon balls, hand grenades, etc. for the Government. Fox had a daughter baptised at Shifnal in 1693 and a son baptised at Madeley in 1702. Hannah Rose states that Fox's furnace was blown up as a result of the river Severn flooding and breaking down the Pool dam at Coalbrookdale and inundating his works. She infers that this was the cause of his leaving Coalbrookdale. His subsequent history is curious - about this time Peter the Great was attempting to introduce the industrial methods being developed in West Europe into his Russian Empire, and his agents visited England to prevail upon skilled men to go to Russia. Denidoff had built the Neviansky works, probably the first blast furnace in Russia, for King Peter in 1699 and foreign ironworkers were particularly in demand. Some time between 1702 and 1708, therefore, Shadrach Fox went to Russia, leaving his wife and children behind to suffer hardship and poverty, although, according to Hannah Rose he had received a fortune of £10,000 as his wife's dowry. His wife Mary is referred to several times in the Coalbrookdale accounts for 17 08-9 as Widdow Fox. Mary Ford, wife of Darby's partner, took pity on her and found her employment.

Too little is known about many others who had a hand in the early history of the iron industry in Shropshire in the pre-Darby period. These include such men as Francis Wolfe, who sheltered Charles II after the battle of Worcester in 1651; (Hannah Rose states that Wolfe of Madeley carried on the Coalbrookdale furnace before Fox) Laurence Wellington, who held the Coalbrookdale forges about 1685; Thomas Burton and Thomas and John Pate, who were lessees of the furnaces at one time. Even the part played in the story by the aristocratic families, the Welds of Willey, the Brookes of Madeley, the Corfields of Pitchford Forge and the Benthalls of Benthall, has never been fully explored.

It is well-known that Abraham Darby III, grandson of the founder, played a great part in the building of the first Ironbridge ever erected, and forged the castings for the bridge at his Coalbrookdale works. What has however never been satisfactorily established is whose was the original idea to use cast iron in bridge-building. Was it Darby himself, John Wilkinson, another famous pioneer

ironfounder, and one of the original trustees of the bridge, or someone else? Two architects, Robert Maguire and Peter Matthews, have recently given the results of an extensive search into this question. They discovered in the Science Museum Library at South Kensington the original designs of Thomas Farnolds Pritchard, the Shrewsbury architect who was commissioned by Darby and Wilkinson to explore the possibilities of a cast iron bridge. They found not only Pritchard's design for a cast iron bridge between Madeley and Broseley, dated October 1775, but two previous designs dated 1773 and 1774 for similar bridges. Evidently Pritchard had, for some time, been contemplating such a bridge and although his actual design was not used at Ironbridge (he died in 1777, before its completion) it proves what later authorities, including Samuel Smiles, have denied, that his plan would have made the fullest use of iron and would indeed, as authors Maguire and Matthews point out, have been more advanced and a more imaginative structure than the one eventually built, for which Darby himself provided the drawings. Their verdict is that "with the discovery of the original design, Pritchard is seen as a pioneer engineer of great intuition, and the frustration of his efforts and his premature death as a considerable tragedy".

SHREWSBURY DISCOVERIES

Great interest has been aroused in Shrewsbury recently in excavations which have been taking place in Roushill on property belonging to Messrs. Shuker & Son (Shrewsbury) Ltd., where two houses were demolished during the summer. The digging has been done by members of the Shrewsbury Archaeology Research Group, lead by Mr. P.A. Barker and assisted by Mr. German, Mr. R.E. James, Assistant Curator of the Museum, and helped by school boys from the Priory School.

The excavations have uncovered a hitherto hidden and exceedingly well-preserved section of the old wall of the town. The finds, which include pottery fragments from the 13th to 18th centuries and a quantity of leather, including a complete shoe dating from about the 14th century and part of a jerkin, were exhibited at the public meeting and exhibition of "Recent Archaeological Excavations in Shrewsbury" held at the Priory Boys' School on Saturday October 18th. Plans, sections and photographs of the excavations were on view, and Mr. Barker and his associates were able to explain the progress of the work to interested members of the public. We hope to publish an interim report on the excavations in the next issue of the newsletter, and also a report on the excavation of a mediaeval motte and bailey site at Smethoote by members of the Ludlow Archaeological Research Group.

Further local finds have been presented to Shrewsbury Museum recently, including a small mediaeval pot, about 5" high, made of coarse, unglazed earthenware which was found at a depth of about 15' 9" during borings made to test the foundations for the proposed new Post Office and Telephone Exchange just behind the General Post Office on Pride Hill. This was sent by the Post Office authorities to the Ministry of Works for examination, but has now been presented to the Museum.

During demolition and excavations on the site of the premises of the Shrewsbury Typewriter Co. in Swan Hill during August 1958, two large sandstone blocks, hollowed out in the centre, were found and passed on to the Museum. The precise origin and purpose of these has not yet been established. Fragments of pottery and old clay pipes, the latter of the 17th century, were also found on this site.

Miss M. Manley of Somerwood House, Uffington, has also presented to the Museum a flint axe-head and a stone spindle-whirl which had been in her possession since 1935 when they came to light during plowing operations. The axe was found in a field known as Gorsy Leasows on Somerwood Farm just south of the Roddington Road and the spindle-whirl in a field almost opposite to the north of the road. It is gratifying to think that these finds, made more than 20 years ago have been placed in the safety of the Museum and not become lost as it is feared happens to so many similar finds.

Edited by J.L. Hobbs, Shrewsbury Museum, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury. (Tel. 4554)

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EXCAVATIONS AT ROUSHILL, SHREWSBURY, 1958. By P.A. Barker.

At the beginning of September 1958 two houses in Roushill, Shrewsbury were demolished and, since they were seen to be on the probable line of the Town Wall, the owners of the property, Messrs. Shukers Ltd., were asked for permission to excavate on the site. This was readily granted and work began on the 6th Sept. and continued intermittently until the end of November.

SUMMARY

There is ample documentary evidence for the dating of the stone wall of Shrewsbury to the second and third quarters of the 13C, with subsequent repairs down to the 17C. The existence of an earlier rampart of earth and timber is probable but its extent and position have not been determined.

The 13C wall can be traced along the scarp behind Pride Hill curving down towards the site of the present excavation and terminating about 20 yards from it in Shukers' warehouse, where it still stands to a height of some 15 feet.

The portion of the wall uncovered on the Roushill site runs parallel to Mardol towards the Welsh Bridge, at an angle of approx. 120° to the Pride Hill section, but unfortunately the junction lies under the present road. This prevented the examination of the site of the Roushill Gate, which appears on Burleigh's map of the late 16th century.

The area outside the Roushill and Mardol walls is known to have been a marsh until drainage in the 18C. This is reflected in the fact that the house inside and on the wall was a half timber building of the 16C, whereas that on the outside was a brick house of the 18C. (1).

This 18C house had been built immediately above a cobbled surface (a yard, or perhaps a road) which abutted the wall. 3'3" of layers of varied filling separated this cobbling from a pebble surface laid on sandstone rubble set in clay. This surface, which seems to have been a road or path, is datable to the mid 14C. A foot below this a very compact pebble surface had been laid on the natural clay a little below the level of the footings of the wall, and extending along its length. This surface was presumably laid for the transport of stone and for ease of working on the construction of the wall.

In front of this hard pebble layer and six feet in front of the wall the clay had been cut to form a low bank with a vertical outer face a foot high. Beyond this the clay had been cut in a slope of some 35°, an angle which seems too shallow for a town ditch, but may represent the deliberate scarping of the bank in order to allow the marsh to flood more easily up to the wall. The natural surface was still sloping downwards when the present road was reached 17' in front of the wall. Whatever the explanation of this gently sloping scarp, it is clear that it has always been waterlogged, since layers of black clay and silt lay immediately above the natural clay, to a depth of 5' at the lower end of the trench. In addition, throughout these layers, every kind of vegetable matter, twigs, leaves, seeds, and pieces of wood, had been preserved together with considerable quantities of leather. Most of the leather was found in peaty layers which lay near and at the top of the silting. There was an almost complete shoe of medieval type, two adult size soles, and a sole of a shoe of a child of about 2. All these had been worn. There were also a great many thongs, points and offcuts. The shoes and the leather debris were associated with pottery of the late 13-early 14C. (2). Since they were near the top of the silt layers, these must have been deposited fairly rapidly during the 50-75 years after the building of the wall. At the top of the silt was a thick layer of vegetable and other debris which has the appearance of being the deposit from an exceptional flood. Since it is about 20 feet above the present normal river level, and floods of that height have been recorded, this is not impossible.

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- (1) The probable line of the wall can, in fact, be traced along Mardol at the junction of half-timber with 18C brick buildings. The line is almost parallel to Mardol and about 40' from the shop fronts.
- (2) Tanning and leather working were chief industries in medieval Shrewsbury. A charter was granted to the Curriers in the late 14C, and it seems likely that leather dressing and working have gone on continuously from the 13C to the present on Roushill just as tanning has gone on in Barker street until this year.

The wall itself was rubble built, faced on the outside with coursed dressed red sandstone, and on the inside with coursed rubble. The front face had a battered plinth, the batter being stepped. In the twenty foot length of wall exposed, this plinth was stepped down twice in order to conform with the slope of the hill.

The footings were of sandstone rubble, laid on the natural clay a little above the hard pebble surface already mentioned. The footings were much heavier and more prominent at the southern, higher end of the stretch exposed. It is suggested that these heavier footings prepare for the tower or gate which is believed to have been immediately south of them. They do in fact provide an additional piece of evidence for the existence of such a structure.

At the northern end of the exposed portion the wall had been taken to pieces and rebuilt in a projecting, bastion-like structure, some of the plinth stones being reused on end. This rebuild proved to be associated with sandstone and clay foundations extending away from the wall at this point, and firmly dated by pottery to the late 18C. A number of large postholes, one full of the ash of its post, were also associated with this late building, and the face of the wall had been blackened when it was burnt down.

Behind the wall was a puddled clay bank extending for more than seven feet away from the wall, and up to the present surface, where it had not been disturbed by later building. Since there was a layer of mortar between the back face of the wall and this bank, the bank must precede the wall, which had been built against a vertical face out in the clay. The clay was sterile and undatable, and the bank may therefore precede the wall by only a short time, and may perhaps be part of a single building operation. Opportunity should be taken, however, to explore the possibility that this clay bank is the remains of an earlier clay and timber rampart dating perhaps from the Norman expansion of the town.

In the clay bank had been cut a pit 6' in diameter and 8' deep. This still had in its bottom a quantity of soft grey material which is almost certainly the remains of lime slaked in the pit, and probably used for the construction of the wall. Chemical analysis of the material has shown a very small degree of alkalinity, but this it is thought may be due to leaching, and acidity in the water which constantly fills the pit.

The pit was dated by a considerable number of early-mid 13C. sherds which came from the lime, and from the filling of the pit, and from a cobbled floor subsequently laid over it. The cobbled floor had been part of a timber building, (one corner post support of which overlay the pit) which had been burnt. A subsequent rebuild incorporated part of a moulded jamb of simple chamfered and half-shaft section. This rebuild itself was of 13C or early 14C date since only sherds of these dates were found to within two inches of the present surface, the floor packing of the half timber house.

THE POTTERY

The chief characteristic of the pottery, of which some 300 pieces have preserved, is its diversity, there being few sherds which are similar to one another. The medieval fabrics and glazes are mostly those commonly met with locally, but among the earliest types are some sherds of thin walled, white-bodied green glazed jugs, with a fragment of a pedestal base, which can be paralleled from Rhuddlan Castle and from a jug in the Collection of the Society of Antiquaries (3) which, it is suggested, may be derived from polychrome jugs and may be imported. There are also fragments (from the lip of the bank in front of the wall) of a thicker, light grey bodied ware, green glazed, with diagonal incised decoration. These fragments are also of pedestal bases and may be related to the previous examples. Though, as one would expect, there are few fragments of cooking pot, except from the earliest levels, there are some thick sagging bases, glazed internally, of late fabrics and from late contexts.

The pottery and other finds have yet to be examined systematically, and it is hoped also that a pollen analysis will be available from the peaty deposits.

Thanks are due to Messrs. Shukers Ltd. for permission to excavate, to the Shrewsbury Borough Council Surveyor's Department, and Messrs. J.L. Hobbs and R.L. James for invaluable assistance, and to the members of the Shrewsbury and Ludlow Research Groups and the Priory School Archaeological Society without whose help the excavation would not have been possible.

These thanks will be detailed more completely in the full report which is in preparation.

The third season's excavations at Smethcott have now closed down for the winter.

The site is a motte, a fortified settlement site occupied possibly towards the end of the twelfth century and during the first half of the thirteenth century A.D.

During the past three seasons work has been concentrated on the reconstruction of the structural history of the site. It appears that a ditch which has been found on the N.E., E., and South sides surrounded the circular motte or mound, on the summit of which was a large timber construction, believed to have been a special type of tower. The exact plan of the feature has not yet been recovered and one of next season's tasks is to define it. So far a number of post-holes, in which the large timbers of the original structure stood, have been found. In addition, the stone foundations of what may have been a guard house, or some such feature are clearly visible just outside the ditch on the eastern side of the motte.

During the past three seasons a large quantity of mediaeval pottery of the period has been found, consisting of fragments of ordinary cooking and table ware and some better quality glazed vessels.

Of great interest is a bronze ornamental plaque, and a small annular silver brooch, about the size of a sixpenny piece, which is intricately decorated with designs incorporating animals heads, and may owe something to Celtic influence.

The excavation will be continued during 1959 and particulars of the dates can be obtained from G.S. Gamble, Harcourt House, Bridgnorth. Tel.: Bridgnorth 2382.

OFFA ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

The report of the Offa Antiquarian Society, Oswestry, for the years 1956-58 has recently come to hand, and the officers and Council of the Society are to be congratulated on a very fine and readable account of three years of valuable and active work.

The report gives a summary of the activities of the Oswestry Research Group and of excavations at the Cronlech on Llanynynech Hill during 1957 and of the Bronze Age barrow at Ysgwennant, Llangadwaladr, Denbighshire, since 1956. There is a detailed and interesting account of the pre-historic hill-fort of Old Oswestry with a summary of Professor Varley's lecture on this subject, a report on the Stone Axe from Whitehaven Upper Quarry and also notes on various smaller finds from the Oswestry region.

The report, which occupies 24 pages of typescript concludes with details of the excursions and public lectures organised by the Society during the period under review, and is altogether a mine of valuable information on an area which, covering as it does several English and Welsh counties, offers great interest to the archaeologist. The report is available to non-members from the Honorary Secretary, Mr. W.S. Davies, 34 Beech Grove, Oswestry. Price 2/6d.

BRITISH SUMMER SCHOOL OF ARCHAEOLOGY

Two British Summer Schools of Archaeology have been arranged for next year by the Honorary Director, Dr. F.T. Wainwright. The first, from April 4-11, will be held at Douglas, Isle of Man and will cover the archaeology of the island from the earliest times, with excursions to important archaeological sites and monuments in every part of the island. Special arrangements for travelling to the Isle of Man will be made for members of the School.

Of more immediate interest to Shropshire is the second school, to be held during the week August 8-15, the headquarters of which will be the University College of North Wales at Bangor. This will cover pre-historic and Roman Wales, and an extremely impressive list of lectures will be led by Dr. Glyn Daniel and Sir Mortimer Wheeler who hopes to attend and deliver the opening address. Many other distinguished scholars will be present.

Further information on these and other future schools can be obtained by writing to the Hon. Director, Dr. F.T. Wainwright, Ingleby, Newport-on-Tay, Fife. Applicants are asked to give their names and addresses clearly in capital letters.

RECENT FINDS

Rotary Quern. Mr. J. A. Pagett, of Donnington, has reported the discovery of the lower stone of a rotary quern of Romano-British type found about 1953 by workmen employed by Mr. W.H. Slater of Sheriffhales Manor, near Shifnal, Salop, on the N.W. side of field No. 536 (Nat. Grid SJ/75001265). This is part of an area of former woodland reclaimed by Mr. Slater and the stone was fetched up by the plough from a depth of approximately 10" in the course of subsequent cultivation of the land. Mr. Pagett describes the stone as a fair, hard, conglomerate, brown in colour (though stained in places with tar) and of an average diameter of 12½". The stone remains at present in Mr. Slater's possession.

Almost as important as the recording of new finds is the proper investigation of old ones which have remained in private hands and which, unless investigated periodically, tend to disappear on the death or removal of their owners. In 1906 a very fine, large axe-hammer was found during excavations to make a new cellar at Longnor Hall Farm near Leebotwood, and the finder, Mr. Henry Hall, retained it in his possession. It still belongs to his son Mr. H.E. Hall of All Stretton, who very kindly recently lent it to the Museum in order that it might be sent to Birmingham University for petrological analysis, and Professor F.W. Shotton's report on this stone has just come to hand. This is as follows:

"Andesitic tuff. Broken, but usually well shaped crystals of feldspar, chiefly andesine but some orthoclase, fresh; fairly numerous fragments of rock, chiefly andesitic lava in a fine feldspathic matrix, which is penetrated by a little epidote. Provenance: this is not my new Group XX which I believe comes from Charnwood. This ash is such a general type that I cannot suggest anything better than one of the Ordovician ashes which might be either Welsh or Lake District."

Professor Shotton has also examined and reported on a small axe-hammer from an unrecorded site on Titterstone Clee which is made of a vaguely defined sedimentary rock, and on two stones from Worsley Farm, All Stretton which probably emanate from one of the grit bands of the Longmynd.

Another old find has recently been successfully followed up on the suggestion of Miss L.F. Chitty. In July 1930 some stone implements found at Garmston, in the parish of Leighton near Buildwas, were reported on by Miss Chitty. They had been found in March 1922 by Mr. Richard Lysons when digging up the roots of an old hedge in his garden, and they lay about 2'6" below the surface in black, pebbly soil, all within a radius of about 3 yards. The stones consist of a celt, a ball and a pebble with a natural cavity slightly enlarged and we are pleased to record that Mr. Lysons' daughter, Mrs. Ruscoe has kindly agreed to place these in Shrewsbury Museum. The celt was described by Miss Chitty as "a beautiful axe of medium size with symmetrical faces well ground and polished, but the cutting edge and the butt have been seriously damaged and large flakes removed; on one side a large chip has been knocked off. The special interest of these finds, Miss Chitty suggests, lies in the fact that they are the first associated group of stone implements recorded from Shropshire, and the blackness of the soil suggests that they may have been derived from an early occupation site overlooking the Severn Valley.

SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY. The Society is arranging a Week-end Course in Archaeology, entitled "Discovering the Past", to be held at Attingham Park from Friday, Feb 27th to Sunday, March 1st, and it is hoped that members will support this. Dr. Glyn Daniel will lecture on the development of archaeological ideas and on Primitive Art, and there will be sessions devoted to Castles of the Welsh Border and aspects of mediaeval Shropshire.

Great interest was aroused by the meeting at Church Stretton on Nov 18th, when Mr. S.E. Thomas of Leicester University gave a talk, illustrated with slides, on the excavations at Smethcott. He pointed out that, although the I" O.S. map refers to the site as a tumulus, it is definitely not a burial mound, and the V.C.H. calls it more accurately a motte and bailey castle. Little research and excavation has yet been done on such sites, and the evidence produced by three years' work here is therefore very valuable. The pottery and associated finds date mainly from the first half of the 13th century. The very large attendance, about 140, included a large contingent from Ludlow and a smaller one from Shrewsbury, and great interest was shown in the exhibition of finds, plans, photos, sections and equipment, and Mr. Gamble and his small team of helpers are to be congratulated on the meeting's success.

IMPORTANT. Members of the Society who wish to continue to receive this Newsletter are asked to sign and return to Shrewsbury Museum the slip which is enclosed with this copy. Thankyou, and a Happy New Year to all our Readers!

Edited by J.L. Hobbs, Shrewsbury Museum, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury. (Tel. 4554)

EXCAVATIONS AT MOAT HOUSE, LONGNOR, SALOP.
SJ493002

In June 1958 the opportunity occurred for the examination of the moated site known as Moat House, Longnor. The excavation was not completed owing to bad weather and other commitments, but it is hoped to continue work there during 1959.

The site is a large polygonal enclosure surrounded by a moat, largely water-filled, with a fishpond lying to the east. The N.E. corner of the enclosure is occupied by a fine half-timber house of ?150 date with stonework which may be earlier on its south side.

The site is not that of the Manor House of Longnor. This lies in the village, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the west, near the subsequent 170 house.

This is probably the site of the house of Richard Clerk, son of Osbert de Dudelburi, whom Richard Sprengnose, lord of Longnor, granted, between 1291 and 1298, a path through certain fields to the village, and permission to widen his moat by twelve feet. (1).

SUMMARY

A section cut across the inner edge of the moat on the north side revealed a stone built bank, but no postholes in a length of eight feet. Exploratory trenches in the N.W. quarter of the enclosure failed to find any trace of buildings, though one revealed a section of cobbling which petered out towards the moat edge. There were no finds in these trenches.

A section was cut across about a third of the width of the moat, from the inner edge, at a point close to the present entrance, the only point where it appeared to be dry enough for excavation.

The moat had been filled in here during the 190 with boulder clay dug locally. Below this was black silty earth lying on the primary silting of black clay, silt and sand. In this primary silt below the clay, and therefore deposited before the first flooding of the moat had deposited its finest particles, were a number of pieces of wood, all adze cut, which almost certainly represent the debris from the construction of a palisade or the bridge across the moat.

Pottery from the 190 - 13/140 was stratified above the primary silting, but the silt itself was sterile. The pottery was all fragmentary and of no importance outside its context.

There were a number of pieces of red-bodied unglazed ridge tiles with vestigial crests, stratified in the uppermost silting with 190 pottery, which suggests the re-roofing of the existing house during that century.

Thanks are due to W.A. Sylvester, Esq., for his introduction to the site, to R.W. Corbett, Esq., for his permission to excavate, and to all those who helped with the work in spite of appalling conditions.

P.A. Barker.

NEW FINDS IN SHROPSHIRE

Three new prehistoric finds have been reported in the county during the last month. On March 30th, 1959, Mr. R.A. Hardy, a farmer of Broad View Farm, Hinstock, near Market Drayton, picked up a flint axe-head on one of his fields. It was found on the surface of the second field west of the Fox Inne, near the hamlet of Shakeford, which on the line of the Longford, the road from Newport to Whitchurch which is usually regarded as of Roman origin. The field was one which has been cultivated for many years, but which has been deep ploughed only since the last war. The site is near the top of the 6" O.S. sheet 24 N.W. and the national grid reference is 676284. Miss Chitty, to whom the flint has been passed, hopes to get further expert opinion on it and will report her conclusions in due course.

Not far away from this site, on February 23rd, a schoolboy, Graham Lowe of the Lilleshall Junior School, picked up, also on the surface of a ploughed field, a stone axe which he took to his Headmaster, Mr. E.L. Goodyear, who kindly brought it in to the Shrewsbury Museum. It is, according to Miss Chitty, a fine example

of a type unusual in this country, and it may prove to belong to our Group I classification of stone. It has been sent to Professor Shotton of Birmingham University for petrological analysis, and his report will be published in a later issue. It is interesting to note that both Mr. Hardy and Mr. Goodyear who brought these implements into the Museum, are members of the local study group which is meeting under Mr. Griffiths Price, B.A. at Market Drayton.

The third prehistoric implement is a perforated stone hammer which was reported by Miss Chitty from a verbal report from Mr. Beardsley of Clun, to the April Council meeting of the Archaeological Society. This large hammer which weighs about $5\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. has been in the possession of Mr. A.E. Davies of Middle Farm, Rorrington, Chirbury, Montgomery, for many years. Its exact history is obscure, but it is said to have been found at Rocky Bank, Wotherton, near Rorrington, which is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles N.N.W. of Brithdir Quarry. It has been in the possession of Mr. Davies' family for many years and has been kindly lent by him to Shrewsbury Museum so that it may be expertly examined.

In 1953 a bronze spearhead was found on Wheathill Farm, Uckington, which is on the Attingham Estate. It was brought by the farmer into Shrewsbury Museum and identified by Miss Chitty as a bronze looped spearhead (class IV) of the late Bronze Age, approximately 1,000 - 450 B.C. This very interesting specimen was subsequently claimed by the National Trust, owners of the Attingham Estate, and was taken to London, where it was examined at the British Museum. We are pleased to say, however, that it has now, through the strenuous efforts of Captain Gordon Miller, Agent to the Attingham Estate, been returned to Shropshire and will henceforth have a place of honour at the Attingham Hall Adult College.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWS.

The principal feature of the Society's programme since the appearance of the last Newsletter was the Archaeological Week-end, entitled "Discovering the Past", which was sponsored by the Society from February 27th to March 1st, at the Attingham Park Adult College. A most impressive array of lecturers was provided, and the week-end was a huge success, both numerically and from the social point of view. The course attracted one of the largest attendances of any held at Attingham during recent years. All available places at the Hall were booked, but some keen Archaeologists were "boarded out" at the Mytton & Mermaid at Atcham, while several people living in or near Shrewsbury attended the lectures during the day-time.

Probably less than half of those attending were actually members of the Society, and it is hoped that this might be remedied in due course, but it was generally agreed that the venture was highly successful and well worth while. Your editor only regrets that a severe attack of 'flu prevented him from attending this week-end, and this note is therefore compiled from the views of others who were more fortunate. The highlights of the week-end were probably Dr. Glyn Daniel's introductory talk on "The Development of Archaeological Ideas" and the masterly lecture on "The Art of the Pilgrimage Routes in the 12th Century" by Dr. Georg Zarnecki of the Courtauld Institute of Art, but the whole course was characterised by a genial and friendly atmosphere. The Council has decided to repeat this experiment in due course, but feels that it would not be wise to make it an annual event at the present time, the general feeling was that such a project should be attempted every two or three years and that an effort should be made to maintain the high standard set by this course.

Future Events. The Society's Annual General Meeting will be held at the Priory Boys School on Saturday, 23rd May, when Dr. W.H. Chaloner, Senior Lecturer in Modern Economic History at Manchester University, will speak on "John Wilkinson", the ironfounder, whom he has made the subject of a detailed study. The lecture will be accompanied by lantern slides and it is hoped that as many members of the Society as possible will attend and bring their friends.

On Saturday, May 9th, the Society will join the Caradoc and Severn Valley Field Club for a whole day field meeting to Alberbury, Wattlesborough and Wollaston, under the leadership of Miss L.F. Chitty, O.B.E., M.A., F.S.A., and Mr. S.R. Turner. The coach will leave St. Chad's Terrace at 10 a.m., calling at the White Abbey to see the remains of Alberbury Priory, and the Church which will be described by the Vicar, the Rev. J. Ashton. At Loton Park a talk on the Leighton family and the house will be given by Mr. Griffiths Price, B.A., after which the picnic lunch will be partaken. The coach will then proceed to Wattlesborough Castle, through the Breidden Gap to Wollaston, where the Motte and Bailey site near the Church will be examined. The cost of the excursion, including tea, which will be available at the Crown and Sceptre Inn, Minsterley, is 9s. and members should be back in Shrewsbury by 6.30 p.m.

On Saturday, July 4th, the Society has arranged a visit to Chester, full particulars of which will be sent to members in due course. It will, however, be a full day excursion and members will be shown round the Cathedral before lunch by Archdeacon Burne. The afternoon will be taken up with a visit to the Grosvenor Museum where Mr. Kelley, the Deputy Curator, will explain the exhibits and a tour of historic Chester under the guidance of Miss Higgins, also of the Museum staff.

West Midlands News-Sheet.

We are pleased to record and welcome the appearance of the first issue of the West Midlands Annual Archaeological News-Sheet, 1958, issued by the Department of Extra-Mural Studies of Birmingham University, and edited by Brian Stanley, 34 Babbacombe Road, Coventry. It hopes to do on a regional scale what this Newsletter is aiming to do for Shropshire Archaeology and local history, that is, to provide a medium for the exchange of views, recording of activities and the results of field work and excavation. This first issue includes interesting reports on the past years work from the various societies and research groups now operating in the West Midlands, including the Shrewsbury group. There is also a brief report on the Summer excavation schools held at Wroxeter in 1958.

Council for British Archaeology.

The West Midlands Regional Group of the Council for British Archaeology, which comprises the counties of Worcester, Warwick, South Staffordshire, Shropshire and Herefordshire, is proposing to hold a joint regional meeting with No. 5 Group, which covers Lancashire, Cheshire and North Staffs., in Shrewsbury on Saturday, 18th July. The programme and details of this meeting are not yet to hand.

Roman Roads.

Dr. A.J.W. Houghton has continued his survey of Roman roads in Shropshire and is now collecting evidence for a new link between Watling Street, at a point north of Craven Arms, running S.S.W. through or near Ludlow to join another road which has so far been traced to a point a mile east of Leominster.

Landscape Features of the Georgian Period.

The Georgian Group, with the assistance of the Council for British Archaeology, is compiling a list of and information relating to landscape features of the Georgian period, and we have been asked to co-operate by compiling a list of such features in Shropshire. Included are such items as temples, obelisks, mausoleums, grottos and gatehouses, and the nature of the feature, its location with the name of the estate and the owner, and its condition are required. Many of these features are known to be in a poor state of repair and the information collected will be sent to the Ministry of Works, with a view to encouraging grants for their preservation in suitable cases under Section 3 (3) of the 1931 Act. The following list of such Georgian features known to exist in Shropshire has been compiled principally by Mr. Bernard Mason of the National Buildings Record, and if readers know of any further examples in the County, the editor would be pleased to hear of them.

| | | |
|-----------------|--|---------|
| Acton Burnell | Shell Grotto | c.1750 |
| Aldenham | Entrance gates | 18th C. |
| | Chapel in grounds | 18th C. |
| Apley Park | Orangery | 1811 |
| Aston Hall | Greek Doric gateway | c.1780 |
| Attingham | Classical lodge | 18th C. |
| | Gothic lodge | ? Nash |
| Badger Hall | Temple in grounds (house demolished) | ? Wyatt |
| Brogynryn | Gateway and lodges | 1811? |
| Burford House | Garden House, Tuscan portico | |
| Court of Hill | Georgian Tuscan pavilion | |
| Culmington | Flounders' Polly | 1838 |
| Davenport House | Round Brick Dovecote (by Smith of Warwick) | 1726 |
| Downton Hall | Gothick lodge | c.1760 |
| Halston Hall | Chapel in gardens, Georgian tower | c.1760 |

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|---------------|
| Hawks tone | Conservatory (Tuscan) | c.1820 |
| | Domed rotunda | before 1784 |
| | Complete set of garden buildings: obelisk, hermitage, ruins, summerhouse, etc. | |
| Loppington Hall | Square classical lodges | |
| Millichope Park | Square summerhouse on garden wall | early 18th C. |
| Onslow Hall | Ionic Rotunda | 1770 |
| Orleton Hall | Greek Doric lodges | 1820 |
| Peplow Hall | Gatehouse, partly late Georgian | |
| Preston-upon-Weald-moors | Wrought iron gates | 18th C. |
| Pitchford | Hospital: lodges | |
| Tong Castle | Summerhouse in tree (Gothick) | c.1760 |
| Whitton Hall | Gate, lodges, gazebo | 1765 |
| Worfield | Folly on opposite Hill | Georgian |
| Blodwell House | Swancote Farm summerhouse | late 18th C. |
| Shrewsbury | Stone Summer House | c. 18th C. |
| | Summer House, 12 St. John's Hill | |
| | Gazebo, near English Bridge. | |

ANCIENT MONUMENTS.

The Supplementary List of Ancient Monuments in England and Wales, issued on behalf of the Ministry of Works by Her Majesty's Stationery Office in 1956, includes the following sites and monuments in Shropshire.

BURIAL MOUNDS AND STONE CIRCLES.

Lydbury North, Acton Bank Round Barrow.

CAMPS AND SETTLEMENTS.

Clun, earthwork south of Rockhill.

Westbury, earthwork north-east of Marche Hall.

ROMAN REMAINS.

Lilleshall, Roman camp on Red Hill.

CASTLES.

Diddlebury, The Mount, Corfton; Little Stretton, Minton Castle Mound; Lydham, Motte and Bailey castle; More, motte and bailey castle; Quatford, motte and bailey castle; and Stapleton, Castle mound.

OTHER SECULAR SITES AND BUILDINGS.

Bretchel Mound, Alberbury with Cardeston; Colebatch Mound;

Upper Barn moated site at Wistanstow; and moated site at Wollaston.

FUTURE EXCAVATIONS.

Both the Shrewsbury and Ludlow Archaeological Research Groups are organising further excavations during the Spring and Summer. The Shrewsbury Group hopes to include sites at the Moat House, Harlescott, a Motte and Bailey site at Pontesbury, and Brockhurst Castle, near Church Stretton, while there is a possibility of a further dig at Roushill Walls in Shrewsbury where further demolition is taking place. These will be held on alternative week-ends, with a week's excavation in the Summer, and as far as possible the dates will not overlap the week-ends when the Ludlow Group will continue their excavations at Smethcott, which will be assisted by some members of the Shrewsbury Group. Anyone interested in helping in these excavations is invited to get in touch with Mr. P.A. Barker of Church House, Anscroft (Tel. Hanwood 297). The Ludlow Group at Smethcott would also welcome further assistance and volunteers are asked to contact Mr. G.S. Gamble, Harcourt House, Bridgnorth.

The Ludlow, Kidderminster and Bridgnorth Groups working jointly under the direction of Mr. Gelling, will be investigating Caynham Camp, Caynham, near Ludlow.

In addition to the Summer Schools which will again take place during the Summer under Mr. Graham Webster, a very interesting course on Medieval Archaeology will be held at the Field Studies Centre at Preston Montford from 11th - 18th July. The course will be directed by Mr. Brian Hope-Taylor, F.S.A., Archaeological Consultant to the Ministry of Works, and will be based on the excavation of a selected medieval site in Shropshire, which we understand may be that at More, near Linley. During this course there will be lectures on aspects of medieval archaeology, visits to sites and museums in the neighbourhood, and training will be given in excavation techniques.

SHROPSHIRE NEWSLETTER.

Edited by J.L. Hobbs, Shrewsbury Museum, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury. (Tel. 4554)

EXCAVATIONS AT BROCKHURST CASTLE, CHURCH STRETTONSO 44.7925

The Shrewsbury Research Group intends a short excavation at Brockhurst Castle, Church Stretton, in the hope of obtaining a series of sherds of pottery which will precede in date the series from the Town Wall excavation at Roushill.

Brockhurst was a Royal Castle, first mentioned in 1154, and apparently dismantled a little before 1255.

It is intended to begin work on the site on Saturday August 1st at 2 p.m., and to continue work each day from 10.30 a.m. until Sunday 9th August, omitting Saturday 8th August. Thereafter, work will be intermittent, on one or two days a week, depending on the availability of members of the group.

ADVANCE INFORMATION ABOUT THE DAYS ON WHICH WE SHALL WORK CAN BE OBTAINED BY RINGING HANWOOD 297.

The site is approached from the A49 Shrewsbury-Ludlow Road over a small railway bridge leading to the field below the Castle. Cars should be left on the grass verge. Please shut all gates. For further information please contact P.A. Barker, Church House, Annscroft, Shrewsbury. Tel.: as above.

EXCAVATIONS AT LEINTWARDINE, HEREFORDSHIRE.

Volunteers with or without experience are required for an excavation to be directed by Mr. S.C. Stanford, B.A., under the auspices of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, Woolhope, Leintwardine, from 25th July to the 14th August inclusive. A trial trench in 1958 across the northern defences of the Roman site of Bravonium at Leintwardine indicated the site to be that of a permanent fort. This year it is hoped to elucidate some of the outstanding problems of the defences and to explore the north-western part of the interior. The site is in an orchard behind Chantreyland House at the north-western corner of the village (SO. 404.742). The nearest railway stations are Ludlow (from Hereford and Worcester) and Bucknell (from Shrewsbury). There are buses from Ludlow, transport from Bucknell by arrangement. Hotel and private accommodation is available in the village, but a camp will be organized on the site, where tents, beds, etc., will be available. Enquiries should be sent to Mr. Stanford at Brockington Grange, Bredenbury, Bromyard, County Hereford.

SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY NOTES

The Council has received with regret the resignation of Mr. J.B. Oldham, M.A., F.S.A., as Chairman of the Council. Mr. Oldham had been elected to the Society in June 1910, had served on the Council for many years, and had been Chairman since June, 1954, and the Council resolved to place on record its deep appreciation of Mr. Oldham's long and valued services. Councillor Mrs. C.E. Thickpenney was unanimously elected to the Chair in place of Mr. Oldham, and Mr. G.W. Rogers was elected Vice-Chairman.

It is proposed to hold an exhibition of archaeology in the Shrewsbury Art Gallery for one week during March 1960, and a Sub-Committee consisting of the Chairman of the Council, Mr. Graham Webster, Mr. P. Barker, Mr. G.S. Gamble, Mr. Paget and Mr. J.L. Hobbs, was formed to make the necessary arrangements.

The Society's Annual General Meeting was held at the Priory Boys Grammar School, Shrewsbury, on Saturday, 23rd May when, after a short business meeting, members heard a lecture by Dr. W.H. Chaloner of Manchester University on the Wilkinson family. Dr. Chaloner, who has made a special study of John Wilkinson, the Shropshire Ironfounder, illustrated his talk with lantern slides.

On the 4th July about 30 members went on a whole day excursion to Chester. They were met at Chester Cathedral by Archdeacon R.V.H. Burne, M.A., Chairman of the Chester and North Wales Archaeological and Historic Society, who took members on a delightful conducted tour of the Cathedral and its precincts, terminating in a picnic lunch in the cloistered garden by the river. After lunch members proceeded to the Grosvenor Museum where Mr. D.B. Kelly, Assistant Curator, gave a comprehensive illustrated lecture on "Roman Chester", setting a background for a tour of the Museum built up by Mr. Graham Webster and so strong in Roman material, which followed. Mrs. K.M. Higgins, a city guide, then took the party round the Norman Church of St. John the Baptist, and other places of interest in the city. The weather was very warm, and tea at Bolland's Cafe was very welcome and ended a very delightful day's outing.

CAYNHAM HILL FORT.

During June members of the Ludlow and Bridgnorth Archaeological Groups, with students from Birmingham University, working under the direction of Mr. P.S. Gelling, M.A., Lecturer in Archaeology at Birmingham University, have excavated the prehistoric hill-fort at Cayham, 2 miles east of Ludlow.

The fort covers an area of at least 10 acres on the top of a hill and is surrounded by tremendously steep ditches cut through the sheer rock. The excavation, therefore, involved a great physical effort, not without its attendant dangers, and Mr. Beaumont, who had visited the camp while excavations were in progress, was most impressed with the manner and methods of the excavation and considered that all the workers ought to be congratulated.

The site is of immense archaeological significance, and there may be from five to ten years' work to be done before excavations can be satisfactorily completed. At the moment four periods of reconstruction have been very tentatively identified and photos and coloured slides made of the various stages of excavation. A very fine inturned entrance was traced and this will be excavated next year in the hope of finding occupation material within the fort. We look forward to seeing the interim report which Mr. Gelling hopes to produce in due course for the Society's Transactions.

Digging has started again at Smethcott on July 19th, and some further interesting discoveries have been made. Further volunteers are needed, and are asked to contact Mr. G.S. Gamble at Harcourt Grange, Bridgnorth.

ROMAN FINDS AT ATTINGHAM. By Dr. A.W.J. Houghton.

Roman pottery of early date, roof tiles and fragments of plaster have been found during recent weeks on a raised sandy area, perhaps two acres in extent, S. of Ternbridge at Attingham, bounded on the E. by the Tern River just above its confluence with the Severn and on the S. by the Severn itself. To W. and N. is a low lying marshy area presenting the appearance of once having been a branch of the Tern and which may thus have formed a ditch. Now-a-days, in Winter this area is often flooded. The site therefore, in Roman times, might have been a small pleasantly situated island.

Artefacts have been found at an average depth of 1-2' below the grass line in the Severn bank. They are first found at a point roughly 30 yards W. of the Tern-Severn confluence and then extend upstream for about 70 yards. Molehills over most of the area contain tile, plaster and pottery sherds including sand-faced ware, black burnished and coarse black ware.

A resistivity survey is at present being carried out and a physical survey will next be undertaken. It is hoped that permission to excavate this site will be granted. It is possible that this is the place referred to in B.M. Parkes' MSS. addit. 21,011, p. 37, where it is stated that on 8th February 1798 between the Tern Bridge and the River Severn at Attingham a Roman cremation burial was found at little more than plough depth under a flat stone. The objects discovered consisted of several glass and pottery urns containing charred bones and ashes. J. Corbet Anderson, in his book on Viroconium, published in 1848 notes this reference but does not state whether further investigation of the area was ever carried out.

The "Chemistry" at Whitchurch. By W.A. Silvester, M.Sc.

Three-quarters of a mile west of Whitchurch, just north of the Wrexham road, is 'Chemistry', now almost a patch of suburbia, but shown on the O.S. one-inch map of 1833 as a building by the side of the canal. In the Salop Directory of 1828, published by Tibnem at Shrewsbury, one reads that at Whitchurch there was a manufactory of "oak acid", and that Hassall and Company were pyroligneous acid manufacturers. Lewis's Topographical Dictionary, 5th edition, indicates that there was still in 1844 "an establishment for making oak acid", but to judge from Bagshaw's Directory of 1851 it was by then extinct.

The remark will be made here that "oak acid" appears to be contemporary slang; "pyroligneous acid", to be found in contemporary chemistry books, is still a well-known name for what was spoken of. Actually there are, at the place indicated above, still some remains of buildings to confirm what is depicted on old maps, but various oral and other enquiries (including some kindly made by Mr. Hobbs, who also consulted Mr. H. Clayton, Clerk to the Whitchurch U.D.C.) produced no more historical information. To some residents at least in the town the place-name is an amusing local mystery.

However, it is a reasonable inference that Hassall and Company, making pyroligneous acid in 1828, had their factory at the "Chemistry" shown on the map of 1833. It is also reasonable, on a general knowledge of the history of the chemical industry to regard the name "Chemistry" as applied to a factory as an early form of nomenclature.

In point of fact, the "Chemistry" at Whitchurch was not unique. Also on the earliest edition of the O.S. one-inch map - for the Flint and Mold district - one finds a "Chymistry" shown, three-quarters of a mile south of what was still King's Ferry. The building shown was later cut off from its roadway to the river by the railway, but the building and the name were kept on the O.S. maps until 1892. On the O.S. map of 1908 the name had gone, and the building may not have survived the 1914-18 War, there having been a large Ministry of Munitions explosives factory at Queen's Ferry.

According to Lewis's Topographical Dictionary of Wales, 3rd edition, 1844 (under Hawarden) a laboratory for the making of Glauber salt, sal ammoniac and ivory black was established in Saltney in the year 1781, and was then (1844) conducted on an extensive scale, but for the manufacture of ivory black only. Ivory black, it should be said, is a superior form of bone charcoal, not necessarily made from ivory. It is still listed by artists' colour makers.

The technical chemistry of what was being done at the outset is sufficiently indicated by an earlier account, and from that it can be deduced that ivory black had become the sole remunerative product between 1822 and 1844. According to "A Memoir of Hawarden Parish", by 'A Parishioner' (Chester, 1822) a Mr. Tharp, a button manufacturer in Chester, erected the Chemistry on Saltney marsh in 1780, and sent his refuse of horn and bones there. 'Destructively distilled', these gave what would now be called a crude ammonium carbonate and a charcoal, ground down to give ivory black. Details of the technology - Minish's process - can be found in Ure's Dictionary of Chemistry, 4th ed. 1835, p. 154. At that time (1822) the manufacture continued "to a considerable extent".

In the indicated period - 1822 to 1844 - the manufacture of sal ammoniac from button makers' waste had become unremunerative because cheap ammonia had become available as a by-product of the rapidly expanding coal-gas manufacture (Boulton and Watt's works at Birmingham lighted by coal gas in 1798; Phillips and Lee's cotton mill at Manchester in 1805). One sees, in a historical perspective, the obsolescent little retorts near Queen's Ferry being kept in work for a time on sales of black pigment, but finally going for scrap.

Now, as will have been noted, it was the 'Parishioner' of Hawarden who first put into still extant print the word "Chemistry" as a name for a building, etc. Ordnance Survey maps and local speech provided for preservation. It is reasonable to suppose that preservation at Whitchurch of the place-name

implies a similar history, i.e. the "Chemistry" at Whitchurch was originally built in the 1780-90 period, also to work Minish's process. When such working had become unremunerative, an effort was made to keep the retorts, etc. in service: the change was to wood distillation, probably with use of a local supply of oak trimmings. It can at least be said that when Messrs. Hassall were making pyroligneous acid the market for that acid was expanding; a main use for it was in dyeing and calico printing, to make mordants. But in a world of 'Manchesterism' this attempt to keep an old plant in work had no lasting success. Before the Great Exhibition of 1851 its career was ended, and now, three generations later, there remains at Whitchurch little more than a name to puzzle, or at least to amuse, the passer-by. But possibly, in some Lancashire archives, there are still some records of business done.

LANDSCAPE FEATURES OF THE GEORGIAN PERIOD.

The list of Georgian features in Shropshire which appeared in our last issue has brought correspondence from several people who have added further examples to the list, and the following supplementary list is therefore printed as a record, with sincere thanks to those who have supplied the information.

Burford, Burford House. The Summer house in the garden of Burford House is dated 1728. It consists of four Tuscan pillars and pediment and bears the shield of William Bowles, proprietor of the Vauxhall glass works (See Country Life, December 1947)

Craven Arms. Milestone in the form of a stone obelisk, about 20' high, with mileages to chief towns and cities, such as Edinburgh, York, etc. Late 18th cent.

Hawkestone. There are two gazebos in the park to the east of the Hall. Also to the east, beyond the terrace, is a long avenue of trees, terminating at each end in a domed gazebo, with open-columned sides.

Hodnet. Dovecote at Home Farm, Hodnet Hall. Brick gable with stone facings and massive stone doorway, surmounted by three arches, over the centre of which is inscribed T.M. 1656 I.M. (Scheduled)

Ludlow. Gazebo in garden of no. 27, Broad Street. Mid. 18th c. Two storeys, finished with battlements and wrought iron weather vane. 'Gothick' traceried window on first floor with panels of 17th c. enamelled glass shields of arms.

Quatford Castle. Mock fortalice of red sandstone and brick, probably built by John Smallman, as a residence, c. 1830.

Shrewsbury. In addition to the gazebo mentioned near the English Bridge, two further examples are noted:

1) a gazebo on Town Walls, part of a house which is now empty and which may be demolished to widen the road.

2) Gazebo in grounds of Quarry House, overlooking the Quarry. 19th cent?

Tong. The Tower, Tong Knoll. 19th cent. gazebo in Western Park.

DISCOVERY OF OLD PUMP,

During work on open-cast coal workings on Horsehay Common (N.G. 119/672080) the mechanical digger brought up the remains of a pump, which had probably been used to clear the sump of one of the old mines which are so numerous in this area. The pump has several unique features, one being that the main pump housing consisted of a solid piece of wood, about 3' high x 12" square, through which the pump shaft had been drilled. The plunger was also wooden with a leather washer, the clapper valve being the only metal part. No trace of the overhead gear was found, but the remains of a bucket, also wooden, were found in association. The pump has been passed on to the Coalbrookdale Company (Allied Ironfounders Ltd.) for inclusion in the Museum which is to be installed at Coalbrookdale to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the founding of the Company in 1709.

SHROPSHIRE NEWSLETTER.

Edited by J.L.Hobbs, Shrewsbury Museum, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury. (Tel.52255)

EXCAVATIONS AT BROCKHURST CASTLE, CHURCH STRETTON.S.O. 447925

(See Shropshire News Letter No.8)

This short excavation is nearly concluded. The purpose of the excavation was to obtain stratified datable pottery of the period 1150-1250, and a good series of cooking pot rims and body sherds, and a few glazed sherds, including the foot of a tripod pitcher, have been found, the majority in sealed deposits.

The section of the ditch between the baileys showed that it was originally V-shaped, 40 feet wide and 14 feet deep, cut in the natural boulder clay, which here overlies the gravel. This ditch section disappointingly produced only one sherd, but, on the other hand, revealed that the ditch had been recut and immediately filled with massive debris and burnt timber. The violent destruction of this part of the castle is the obvious interpretation, but more work will be needed before this can be proved.

The main, southern, bailey had had a massive curtain wall, 6 feet thick, which had been robbed completely away, the debris round about showing that it had been built of Longmyndian shale, imported to the site, presumably from the hills opposite. Behind the wall were the remains of timber structures, from which most of the pottery came. Two massive postholes, presumably of the bridge which spanned the ditch and led into the main bailey, were found on the upper slope of the scarp of the ditch, and shallow postholes of a timber palisade were found on the rim of the outer bailey.

A full report is in preparation.

Thanks are due to Lt.Col. J.H.Gibbon, R.A., owner of the site, and Mr.P.Prince, the tenant, for permission to dig, and to those members of the Shrewsbury Research Group and the Priory School Archaeological Society who gave their help in spite of the heat and the dust.

P. A. Barker.

A 13th CENTURY WELL AT LOPPINGTON, WEM.S.J. 469294

In the middle of September Mr.Roy Burden, son of J.E.Burden, Esq., Church Farn, Loppington, was cutting a drain in a field a quarter of a mile N.E. of the village when he fell into a hole full of mud, which proved to be a timber lined well of medieval date.

The well was five feet deep from the present surface, but little more than three feet deep from a layer of cobbles which adjoined it on the west side. It had been lined with a section of the trunk of an oak tree which had been hollowed out and trimmed with an adze. It had been packed on the outside with clay and stones and more massive sections of trunk. The bottom of the well had been packed with stones, set in the natural subsoil, and a triangular section had been cut out of the base of the timber lining in order to allow water to flow in from the adjacent spring.

The well was cleared and Mr.I.Cureton-Jones and Mr.R.James saw it and collected a quantity of pottery and waterlogged wood from the filling. The writer collected a number of sherds from the undisturbed sandsilt at the bottom of the well and these show positively that the well was in use during the 13C, and probably early in that century. A great deal more pottery was obtained from the vicinity of the well and, although it has not yet been closely examined, it appears that the well was in use from about the end of the 12th century or the beginning of the 13th century into the 14th century but not beyond. Almost without exception the sherds were from jugs,

a large proportion of them glazed. It seems extremely likely, therefore, that there was a house nearby during the 13th century, but that the well, and perhaps the house, went out of use during the 14th century, and it may even be that the village of Loppington itself shrank or moved at about this time, the present village of fine half-timber buildings dating from the 15th or 16th centuries. This is purely conjectural, and the history of this village clearly deserves further attention.

THE FINDS.

The pottery included large thumb-pressed bases and a number of glazed slashed handles of typical 13th century type. The fabrics range from rather soft sandy fabrics to much harder fabrics typical of the late 13th and 14th centuries. In general the softer fabrics were found at lower levels than the harder ones; one hundred to one hundred and fifty years could reasonably span the range of pots represented.

The wood from the well filling had been worked with the adze and in two places drilled to take pegs. The four pieces preserved seem to be the debris from a simple hoist for a bucket, a groove worn by the rope being clearly visible on one piece. There seems to have been no sort of winch and, indeed, one would hardly be necessary in so shallow a well.

The most interesting find was made when Mr. Burden was consolidating the well in order to cover it up. One of the pieces of wood which had been used to pack the sides of the well proved to be the remains of an oaken shovel, the handle of which had been sharpened to a point, when it had been thrust point downwards into the soft clay round the well. It is rather like a Gargantuan wooden mustard spoon and must have been extremely clumsy to use. Since it was incorporated in the structure of the well when it was built, the shovel must date from the late 12th or early 13th century. Steps are being taken to preserve it.

A full report is being prepared.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due, first, to Mr. Burden, who recognized the importance of the find and gave every facility and encouragement for its investigation, and to Mr. George Parry who reported the find to Mr. Cureton-Jones. Mr. Cureton-Jones photographed the well and the shovel and gave very valuable assistance throughout. Thanks are due also to a small team who, in very unpleasant weather, investigated the possibility of a house being close by, and, in proving that there was not, found a great deal more pottery.

P. A. Barker.

SUMMER SCHOOLS AT WROXETER, 1959.

Mr. Graham Webster reports that a very successful series of summer schools was held at Wroxeter this summer, in the course of which some more of the large plunge bath was uncovered. This is now seen to be 25 feet wide internally. The main walls are two feet thick, which suggests that it may have been without a roof. It seems to have gone out of use before the end of the occupation as some of the stones have been removed and the area then used as a rubbish dump. Work was also carried out on the eastern range and although there has been considerable 19th century investigation in this area, there is good prospect of working out the chronological details of the various building phases as the Roman levels to the east of the building are almost completely intact.

The fragment of a military tombstone recorded in V.C.H. (Shropshire I, p. 245; C.I.L. 157) but missing for many years, has now been located in Mr. C. Everall's garden and he has kindly given it to the site Museum. The River Severn was exceptionally low this year and the stones on the river bottom were examined. Many were found to be dressed and may well have come from the Roman town wall. The only sculptured example was a much battered relief of a male head and upper torso which was probably part of a tombstone and may have been re-used in a reconstruction of the defences.

WROXETER AND YARCHESTER - STONE SHINGLE ROOFING.

By W. A. Silvester, M.Sc., F.S.A.(Scot.)

The stone roofing shingles, also called slabs or slates, found at Yarchester are (cf. Shropshire Newsletter no.2) of the same micaceous fissile sandstone, and of the same average size and thickness, as those found at Wroxeter (see the re-assembled roofing on frames in the Roman Museum at Rowley's House, Shrewsbury and the site museum at Wroxeter).

Although a few are large and others specially cut for eaves, etc. the bulk is uniform: about a foot long, $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, and about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick. The average weight, on eight entire specimens of these dimensions from Yarchester, is 5 lb. 2 ozs. The coverage per shingle cannot have been more than about 36 sq. inches, so that a square yard of roofing would have needed about 36 shingles. The weight of such a covering is about, on the lowest estimate, 180 lb. per sq. yard.

Thus if transport from quarry to building site was by mule or pack-horse and pannier (cf. Pliny, Natural History, VIII, 68-9, and Carcopino, La Vie quotidienne a Rome, Paris, 1939, p.69 - English trans. available) one mule load - two panniers at about $1\frac{1}{2}$ cwt each - would cover about 2 sq. yards of roof and the 20 ft. by 20 ft. over the 'mosaic' room at Yarchester would need about 22 mule loads.

In 1908 Haverfield (V.C.H. Shropshire) said that at that time less than one hundredth of the town area of Viroconium had been uncovered. Even now, after the extensive excavations of Bushe-Fox and Atkinson, on the west side of the present road, and other digging, the explored area is only about one twentieth, i.e. about 8 acres. In Wright's excavations so many stone shingles were turned up that he could speak ("Uriconium", p. 212) of roofs sparkling and glittering in the sun. And stone shingles had been used on buildings on the west side of the road (Bushe-Fox, 1912 Report, pp. 5,7,12; Atkinson, p. 109), perhaps in the third century, perhaps originally earlier.

If Viroconium housing had been distributed no more densely than that at Silchester (plan reproduced in Sir C. Fox's 'Personality of Britain') then there would have been up to eight acres of roofing, but even if in the whole town only one acre of roofing was of stone shingles the total weight of that would have been about 350 tons, or over 2,000 mule loads.

For present purposes it may suffice to reckon that 50% of what was quarried was left behind as waste and trimmings. Then 300 tons of prepared shingles would involve getting about 600 tons from the quarry face. Thus, on a fifty yard quarry face of a fissile bed 3 feet thick there would be in all a cutting back of 7 or 8 yards, and a correspondingly deeper cut on a narrower face. Any such quarry, even if never again worked, might still be a present-day feature of the landscape, and there might also still be vestiges of the provisions for dwellings and transport.

It is possible that T.C. Cantrill (Arch. Cam., 1931, v.86, p.95-6) having read Murchison and studied (as has the present author) the Geological Survey maps for mention of quarries, disregarded merely stratigraphically interesting mentions of fissile micaceous sandstones elsewhere, and pointed to Bouldon as the nearest likely source. Here is a quarry which was still worked for flags in 1839, but is now long disused. It has still to be examined in detail, but specimens of stone already obtained resemble closely in texture, range of colour shades, and in some chemical testing, roofing material from Yarchester. Note will be made here that Mr. L.V. Grinsell, F.S.A., of the Bristol Museum and his colleague, Dr. F.S. Wallis, kindly advised, on examination of shingle fragments sent by me in June 1958, that the Yarchester material was not a "Pennant" sandstone but almost certainly from Shropshire. The Pennant sandstone was used extensively for the roof-slabs of villas and other buildings in Somerset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. (Grinsell, Archaeology of Wessex, 1958, p. 244)

The use of stone shingles, each fixed with one iron nail, may have been a relatively late development in housing Roman Britain. One relevant statement will be cited here: a 4th century building at Margidunum was roofed with shingles ('standard' size and shape, but not neatly made - the stone was probably not easily worked) and F. Oswald could say (Nottingham Museum reprint of a Thoroton Society paper of 1927) that it was a noteworthy fact that slates were only used in the late phase of Margidunum; in the early days flange and ridge tiles were the only form of roofing. No analysis will be made at this stage of the possible relevance of the "Devil's Causeway" and the "Roman Bank", which names appear on the O.S. 1" map of 1833.

X ROWLEY'S HOUSE MUSEUM - MEDIAEVAL SECTION.

An increasing amount of mediaeval material has been found during recent excavations in Shropshire, and the Museum is endeavouring to make a more representative display of Mediaeval Archaeology. The small room on the first floor has been fitted with two display cases which now contain some of the most interesting finds of this period which have been made in the county.

During the last month two mediaeval jugs, similar in design and shape, have been acquired by the Museum and added to this mediaeval section. The first was found as long ago as 1841 when Petton Moat, near Cockshutt, Ellesmere was being cleaned out in that year. It was drawn by Miss Chitty in 1923 but subsequently lost sight of for a time, but it has now been placed 'on permanent loan' in the Museum by Mrs. Frank Davies, widow the late chief constable of Shrewsbury, to whom it was given. Also in the Museum is a bronze spear-head (Class IV) found in the same moat in 1825. Several other finds are recorded from Petton Park and its neighbourhood.

A similar jug was found recently during excavations on the site of the West Midlands Trustee Savings Bank in Market St, Shrewsbury, and this has kindly been presented to the Museum by the Manager, Mr. A. Harrison.

EXCAVATIONS IN SHROPSHIRE, 1959.

Mr. G.S. Gamble reported to the Council of the Shropshire Archaeological Society that the Ludlow Group had been forced to give up this site as the land was required by the farmer for arable use. Mr. Rogers said that some concern had been expressed at the recent C.B.A. Regional meeting in Birmingham that this motte and bailey site should be destroyed since the farmer intended to plough the land, and action to have the site scheduled so that excavation could proceed at a later date was proposed. The matter had been referred to the Shropshire Archaeological Council for their observations. Mr. Gamble was strongly of the opinion that scheduling would not be in the best interests of the site or of the Ludlow Group which hoped at some time in the future to resume excavation of the site. He expressed the view that such ploughing as was contemplated would not harm the site since the remains were at a substantial depth. The Council agreed to recommend to the Council for British Archaeology that the site should not be scheduled.

Excavations during the summer by the Wellington Research Group at Redhill on the A.5. road at Oakengates have succeeded in locating the Roman posting station of Uxaona. We hope to include further details of these in our next issue.

Mr. T. Kelsall, who farms the Woodhouse Farm near Redhill has presented many interesting finds from his farm to Rowley's House Museum in Shrewsbury. In 1946 he found a flint hoe (FC. 3/1946) and his most recent finds include a discoidal flint knife, and some twenty other flints, four fragments of Roman pottery, coarse ware and a fragment of a mortarium. Several coal measure fossils, probably thro ups from the nearby coal workings, and some fragments of mediaeval tiles complete the collection. It is obvious that this area has a long and varied history, and it is hoped that further investigation may be possible. SA 732 SA738?

It was reported to the last meeting of the Regional Group (no.8) of the Council for British Archaeology that a new Roman marching camp had been located on Atcham Aerodrome. Further details are awaited. Excavations at More, near Linley by the Mediaeval School under the direction of Mr. Brian Hope-Taylor had revealed a low mound and a palisade.

At Leintwardine, Herefordshire, Mr. Stanford, continuing his work, had found the disturbed remains of a 1st century fort underlying the Flavian fort discovered earlier, while a new Roman fort had been discovered at the junction of the Teme and Clun rivers about one mile from Leintwardine.

SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY - ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXHIBITION.

The Shropshire Archaeological Society is hoping to stage an Exhibition of archaeological trends, developments and discoveries in the county which will be held in the Art Gallery, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury from March 12th to 21st, 1960. The Council would very much welcome offers of interesting exhibits for this Exhibition, and also of assistance in staging the displays and acting a stewards during the period of the Exhibition.

SHROPSHIRE NEWSLETTER.

Edited by J.L.Hobbs, Shrewsbury Museum, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury. (Tel.52255)

THE CHIRBURY EXCAVATION (1958)

SA498

By F.T.Wainwright, Ph.D., F.S.A.

Head of the Department of Anglo-Saxon Studies
in the University of St.Andrews.

Between 907 and 910 Edward the Elder and his sister Æthelflæd, Lady of the Mercians, built a series of fortresses as part of their joint and successful campaigns against the Danish armies in the eastern midlands. One of these fortresses, built by Æthelflæd early in 915, was æt Cyricbyrig. Several suggestions for Cyricburh have been put forward, but the most likely is that it is represented to-day by the place-name Chirbury.

At Chirbury there is a rectangular enclosure, marked on Ordnance Survey maps as "Castle (site of)", and it seemed likely that this might be Æthelflæd's fortress. To check this possibility an excavation was arranged, sponsored as an archaeological training school by the University of Birmingham (Department of Extra-Mural Studies), and I accepted an invitation to direct the operation. Work continued during the two weeks 12-26 July 1958. A full report will be published in due course, but in the meantime a summary of conclusions may be of interest to readers of the Shropshire Newsletter.

The bank which surrounds two sides of the rectangular enclosure was examined, and its structure was revealed. It had never been more than a comparatively slight rampart of thrown-up earth and stones; there was no sign of a palisade; and a small ditch associated with it was apparently designed for drainage rather than for defence. These defensive arrangements had the appearance of being unfinished or, rather, of never having been used, and a thorough examination of the interior confirmed the impression that the fortress had never been permanently occupied. It was a disappointment that the site produced no late Saxon or early mediaeval pottery, for specialists urgently need evidence of ceramic developments in the western midlands in this period.

There was no positive archaeological evidence for the date of the enclosure, but, for one reason or another, it was possible to say that it was not prehistoric, not Roman, not mediaeval (twelfth century or later) and not modern. Which at the very least leaves the door open to the possibility that the structure is Æthelflæd's fortress. Taking other factors into account - its defensive position, its relation to an ancient gap in the nearby Offa's Dyke, its control of a main route into (and from) central Wales, and its place in the national system of defence devised against the Danes - it is possible to conclude that the so-called "castle" at Chirbury is in all probability the fortress built by Æthelflæd æt Cyricbyrig in 915.

Full acknowledgements will be made in the final report.

Æthelflæd Lady of the Mercians

Æthelflæd, Lady of the Mercians, mentioned elsewhere in this issue in connection with the 1958 excavation at Chirbury, was a figure of considerable importance in this area during the early years of the tenth century. The few facts known about her are scattered and sometimes ambiguous, and it is not surprising that until recently no scholar has attempted to bring them together into a coherent story. What amounts to the first "life of Æthelflæd" has just been written by Dr. F.T.Wainwright, who has kindly presented a copy to the Shrewsbury Borough Library, where it may be seen. It appears in a volume of essays entitled The Anglo-Saxons, edited by Dr. Peter Clemoes (Bowes and Bowes), and written to honour Professor Bruce Dickins by his colleagues, students and friends. The picture of Æthelflæd drawn by Dr.Wainwright describes her contribution to the campaigns against the Danes, discusses her relations with Wales, emphasizes her position as the leader of an anti-Norse coalition in northern England, and assesses her contribution to the unification of England.

BRITISH SUMMER SCHOOL OF ARCHAEOLOGY

The Bangor meeting of the British Summer School of Archaeology, referred to in Shropshire Newsletter No. 6. (January 1959) was held as planned during the week 8 - 15 August. About 300 members attended to hear lectures on Prehistoric and Roman Wales by Sir Mortimer Wheeler, Dr. C.B.M. McBurney, Professor W.F. Grimes, Dr. H.N. Savory, Mr. A.H.A. Hogg, Professor Ian Richmond, Professor I.Ll. Foster and Dr. Glyn Daniel. Excursions were also made to all the more important archaeological sites in North Wales and Anglesey, and the School has been described as one of the most successful of its kind to date. The distinguished lecturers are now re-writing their lectures as chapters in a volume to be entitled Prehistoric and Roman Wales. This will be edited by Dr. Glyn Daniel and Professor Idris Foster, and it will appear in Studies in History and Archaeology, a series of which Dr. F.T. Wainwright is the General Editor.

In 1960 the British Summer School of Archaeology will take "The Scottish Abbey" as its theme; members will travel by coach to several different centres and they will cover a large part of Scotland. Details of the 1960 School will be found in the yellow leaflet distributed with this issue of the Shropshire Newsletter.

FURTHER FINDS AT LOPPINGTON.

Following the discovery of a mediaeval well with pottery and other finds, including an old oak spade, at Loppington, near Wem, reported in our last issue, Mr. P.A. Barker states that the farmer, Mr. J.E. Burden, has found in the same vicinity some further pieces of wood which seem, on a cursory examination, to be the mould-board and beam of an ancient plough. These are now awaiting expert examination. Meanwhile the oak spade has been taken to the Research Laboratory of the British Museum in London, where Dr. Wernher is to treat it and to try to estimate its date. The well, which is in a field known as Tan-pit field, is probably of a date earlier than 1350 and was perhaps associated with a mediaeval house or a small hamlet in its vicinity.

ARCHAEOLOGY EXHIBITION

Arrangements are going ahead for the exhibition of recent work in archaeology in Shropshire, which the Society is staging at the Borough Art Gallery, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury from March 12th - 21st. Mr. P.A. Barker has kindly agreed to see to the organisation of the exhibition and Mr. Pares, head of the Shrewsbury School of Art has kindly agreed to help with the lettering and layout of the exhibition. Assistance, both with organising the exhibition and with the arrangements for stewarding during the time it is open, will be welcomed by Mr. Barker whose address is Church House, Annscroft Near Shrewsbury.

WROXETER SUMMER COURSES IN 1960.

Arrangements have been made by the Department of Extra-Mural Studies, University of Birmingham, for the usual summer courses in archaeology to be held under the direction of Mr. Graham Webster M.A., F.S.A., A.M.A., Staff Tutor in Archaeology, during the summer of 1960. Students intending to participate in any of the courses are invited to get in touch with Mr. Webster at the University of Birmingham. The course will again be arranged at three different levels - Elementary, from July 16th to July 30th; Intermediate - from August 15th to August 27th; and Advanced from August 27th - September 10th. In addition there will be a special course in iron Age Archaeology and Excavation which will be directed by Mr. Nicholas Thomas of the City of Birmingham Museum. This is to be held from July 30th - August 13th.

Professor F.W. Shotton's report on "New Petrological Groups, based on Axes from the West Midlands" appeared in the proceedings of the Prehistoric Society volume 25, published in December 1959. A copy of this is available in the Shrewsbury Museum.

THE ROMAN SHROPSHIRE RESEARCH GROUP.

By A.W.J. Houghton, M.B.(Lond), M.R.C.P.

A site at Trench Hall near Wem has been examined (516271). SA1136 ✓
 This is described on the O.S. Map as an "ancient earthwork" and no published account or reference has so far been found. It is a rectangular banked structure situated on a low promontory at the level of the 300 foot contour about one mile S. of Wem, which it overlooks. Three miles to the east, across a tract of marshy country, is the main Deva - Viroconium road. Immediately below, to the north, is an ancient water-hole. The longest sides are 117 yards and 114 yards long respectively and the shorter sides 64 yards and 73 yards in length. The corners are rounded and the longitudinal axis runs NW-SE. The interior is flat and featureless and due to cultivation the banks are ploughed down and much damaged and no certain evidence of an entrance is visible from the ground though on the NW and NE sides traces of a ditch are to be seen. Preliminary topographical examination leads to the tentative conclusion that the structure is a Roman fort.

The examination of the Roman road from Viroconium to Whitchurch has now been completed. This and all other road work has included photography of selected areas. The difficult stretch from Harcourt Mill to Moston has been identified and excavated at Paper Mill Bank (557261), where an eroded agger was found on the west side of the Holloway leading up the slope. At the S. (lower end) of the Bank the road is at present being robbed for the sake of the enormous cobbles which form the foundation. To the north of Paper Mill Bank the alignment is marked by an overgrown and almost completely concealed lane which goes north along the edge of Moston Coppice and joins the Moston-Holloway road. This lane is shown on the 1st edition O.S. map of 1832 but not on subsequent editions. Traces of the agger are seen to the west side of the present highroad between Linford and Prees Green. At Sandy Lane the ancient road crossed to the east side of the present road and is more easily seen when the sun is low and looking from the field towards the modern road.

North of the Raven Hotel the agger is of large size and runs parallel to the west side of the present road. This has been excavated by a party of students under the direction of Mr. Graham Webster, three periods of use and repair being demonstrated. To the south the river crossing at Duncot (573115), north of Ataham Airfield has been identified and during road-widening operations at Norton the remains of the road were found to consist of a layer of large cobbles, the farm buildings at Norton in large part being founded upon the old road, the present road from Norton to Wroxeter winding to the east of these buildings.

The road from the Wroxeter ford passing via Meole Brace to Yockleton and Stony Stretton has been further examined. Recent pipe-laying trenches opposite the Fox Inn in Cross Houses village revealed the road at a depth of $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet below the present tarmac. It was 14-15 feet wide and consisted of thick layers of gravel and cobbles packed very hard. Thence it passed along a line which is still a right of way over the railway south of Berrington Station and then followed a wide shallow valley to the north of Berrington village, where pipe-laying operations again cut across it (529071).

The Watling Street west has been excavated in Brompton, Cross Houses (559077), where six post-Roman layers were found. In the small SW ditch a fragment of a rim of buff-coloured egg-shell ware was found. This road has been further examined north of Wistanstow, where a branch has been traced passing by Strefford, Dinchope, Green Way cross, Onibury and so to Old Street, Ludlow. A working hypothesis is that this branch road is in fact a continuation of that traced by I.D. Margary from Ariconium to Ashton, south of Woolferton (see 'Roman Roads in Britain', I.D. Margary, vol. 2.)

Crossing the Watling Street West just north of Craven Arms is Long Lane, and in the angle so formed are two temporary marching camps. This road has been shown to continue on a deserted straight alignment up the hill to the Wart Hill area, whereas the present road curves to the south to avoid the gradient. Above Lydbury North, where a Roman figurine was found some years ago (now in Rowley's House Museum, Shrewsbury) it is known as Stank Lane. The road passes to the south of Bishop's Castle where it commences a long, straight ascent. East of Bishop's Moat it sharply changes direction on the summit of the hill.

At Offa's Dyke excavation at three points has shown that the Dyke was placed across the Roman road, remains of the agger existing in a slang immediately West of the Dyke and on the north side of the present road.. Here the county and parish boundary deviates slightly to the south, passing through the now deserted Saxon passage. At a subsequent period a gap has been cut through the Dyke thus nearly but not quite restoring the ancient course. At its westerly extremity, out of Shropshire, a NW branch descends to Sarn with connections to Forden (Lavobrintvm) and it is probable that a SW branch passes down the valley of the river Ithon at Llanbadarn to Castell Collen, N. of Llandrindod Wells. Here then is a great road of military importance traversing the Central March of Wales and establishing a connection between the Mid Wales fortresses and the temporary marching camp and permanent forts in the area, Affcott (444864), Craven Arms, Bromfield, possibly Stanton Lacy, and Leintwardine.

At Whitchurch reconstruction of the interior of Barclays Bank on the E. side of the High Street is now taking place. Observation is extremely difficult on account of the cramped conditions and excessive wetness of the sandy subsoil. At an approx. depth of 8 feet Roman potsherds have been found, including fragments of a poppy-head beaker in linear rusticated ware. The total sherds are not later than the Hadrianic-Trajanic period. At the south or lower end of the High Street it turns to the West into Mill Street where demolitions have taken place on the S. side, beyond which is a marshy unoccupied area. Deep cuttings have been made for the construction of new cellars. The stratification thus revealed has been photographed and shows a series of tip-lines sloping from the S. edge of the road down into the peat bed of the marsh. The lowest levels produced a large sherd of samian ware and coarse pottery, and consisted of black, sodden debris. Above these were two layers of stone and soil and then about 7 feet of black greasy material containing large wood fragments very well preserved, but no Roman material. The appearance was that of a town tip used continuously through the centuries. Full reports will appear in the Archaeological Society's Transactions in due course.

WELLINGTON RESEARCH GROUP. The following account of the recent activity of the Wellington Research Group is taken from the West Midlands Annual Archaeological News-sheet, no 2, which has just been published.

SA 29. Atcham Airfield (SJ 571099) This site is a ditched enclosure, three sides of which, together with a possible entrance, were shown on an aerial photograph by Arnold Baker. A section through the eastern defences showed a ditch with a slot in the bottom. Unfortunately the rampart has been destroyed at this point and no dating evidence was found. The crop mark and section raise the possibility of the site being a marching camp.

SA 1113
(Sam 201) Redhill. (SJ 728109) This, the probable site of Uxacona, shows as an enclosure on a photograph by Dr. St. Joseph. The first trench revealed the foundations, 14 ft. wide, of a structure which has been heavily robbed. No direct evidence of date was obtained through sherds of Romano-British coarse pottery were found in the filling over the foundations. A second trench traced these foundations 12 ft. to the south, where a gap was followed by a mass of sandstone - the purpose of which has not yet been found. Dr. St. Joseph's enclosure ditch has not yet been found. It seems possible that the remains so far found are the foundations of the wall of the settlement possibly associated with a gateway.

AERIAL SURVEY. Mr. Arnold Baker reports that this season's work has revealed, in greater detail, a complex of native and Roman sites in the West Midlands area. The general pattern of survey work was followed, as in previous years, with particular emphasis on the Watling Street south of Wroxeter. A new Roman fort was found near Leintwardine, where the crop-mark showed stone walls and a nearby auxiliary camp. New features showed up at Wroxeter, especially the Forum and the town defences. The Severn Walley, particularly north of Worcester and around Eredon, showed many new sites but Kenchester, Ariconium and Alcester were disappointing.