

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER

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

NOTES ON THE EARDINGTON HOARD.

SA 3218

By J.Phillip Dodd, M.Sc., M.A., F.R.G.S.

THE HOARD.

This consists of four bronze artefacts which date to the Late Bronze Age, c.1000 - 500 B.C. These are:

- A. A socketed chisel.
- B. A socketed gouge.
- C. Two looped and ribbed palstaves.

All four implements are cast mould-made specimens, the palstaves being cast in the same mould. The cutting edges show some signs of wear, and may be presumed to have formed the working equipment of a woodworker.

THE SITE.

The site lies about 900 yards to the south-east of Eardington village. Grid reference, Salop 727 899. The location of the find is indicated by X on the map, (figure 4).

At this point a ridge, at approximately 200' O.D., runs N - S between the deep, gorge valley of the Mor Brook on the West and the broader valley of the Severn on the east. The surface of the ridge is formed of the Main Terrace fluvio-glacial gravels which rest on the Lower Mottled Sandstone beds of the Lower Trias. These rocks form a prominent feature of much of the local topography of the Bridgnorth area.

Immediately to the east of the site of the find, a shallow valley was formerly occupied by a stream flowing south to the Severn or the Mor Brook. (figure 4). A cross section of the area is shown in Figure 2, which indicates the much gentler fall of the land towards the flood plain of the Severn.

The site was obviously very suitable in Bronze Age times from the point of settlement. Further study of this aspect is hampered by the consideration that the gravel pit has, in recent years, been filled in and the whole of the field bulldozed to 'restor' a level surface for cultivation.

This is unfortunate, particularly in view of other finds made in this immediate locality. At Z, shown in Figures 3 and 4, was found the "Perforated Stone Implement" (Neolithic- Early Bronze Age), at a distance of about a mile on the east bank of the Severn. From the river itself a Bronze Age sword was fished up in 1775.

THE HISTORY OF THE FIND.

The hoard was originally discovered by Mr.F.Price of Bridgnorth in c. 1925, when he was twelve years of age. It was about four feet below the surface and some four feet above the floor of the gravel working. He found nothing further on subsequent visits. The find remained unpublicised until November 1959 when his son, Michael, took the implements to school and they were brought to me for identification by John Wells Esq., B.Sc., a Science Master at the Bridgnorth Modern School.

A fuller report will eventually appear in The Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society. The hoard will be permanently housed as follows; one palstave in the Historical Museum at the Secondary Modern Boys School, Bridgnorth, and the remainder of the artefacts will be on view at the Northgate Museum of the Bridgnorth Historical Society. This public spirited action on the part of Mr.Price will commend itself to all amateur archaeologists in the County.

For details of the other finds in the locality see - Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society. Vol. LII. 1947 pp. 127-131, by Dr. Watkins-Pitchford; and pp 132-138 by Miss Lily F. Chitty, M.A., F.S.A. Also Vol LIV. 1951-2 pp. 149-152, by J.Phillip Dodd.

RECENT FINDS IN SHROPSHIRE.

Miss L. F. Chitty, O.B.E., M.A., F.S.A., has sent the following report on a very fine small axe-hammer recently presented to Shrewsbury Museum.

"A beautiful little axe-hammer, a miniature example of the type classed as an expanding battle axe, has been ploughed up East of Featherbed Lane, which runs SE from Harlescott; the site is close to the S. end of Gregory's coppice and NE of Sundorne Grove, in the parish of St. Alkmund, Shrewsbury (Six-inch O.S. 34NE; one-inch 521154). This lovely implement was found in October 1959 and was presented to Shrewsbury Museum in February 1960 by the finder, Mr. Harry Egan of 73 Allerton Lane, Harlescott. In the Prehistory section of Rowley's House Museum it may be compared with two small specimens from the Titterstone Clee district and one from Morfe near Claverley. The date is probably about 1500 BC. It has not yet been examined by Professor Shotton to find out what stone was used in its manufacture."

This is a preliminary report only: a full report will eventually be published.

Mr. Henry Jones, Librarian of Oswestry, has started a small Local History museum in the new library premises at Oswestry, and the first item presented to this collection is a bronze palstave which was found in 1923 near to the site of Knockin Castle and estimated to be about 3,200 years old. It was presented by Mrs. M.E. Christian, having been in private hands since its discovery. The palstave was reported on by Miss Chitty in the Shropshire Archaeological Society Transactions, 4th series v.12, 1929-30, Miscellanea IV. It is closely similar to a palstave from Asterton Prolley Moor which is now in Shrewsbury Museum.

The Oswestry Museum has also received some local flint scrapers from the Clun area and Mr. Jones hopes that more objects of local interest will be deposited in the Museum.

Mr. Graham Webster, M.A., F.S.A., A.M.A., Staff Tutor in Archaeology at Birmingham University reports that he has located a fragment of a Legionary tombstone (C.I.L., vii, 157) which was listed and described in V.C.H. Shropshire I, page 245. Mr. Everall kindly drew his attention to the presence of this stone in a low wall near his house at Wroxeter. It is now possible to see on the lower edge of the stone the serifs of two digits which probably belong to the number of the legion and most likely means that it is a tombstone of a soldier of the XIVth Legion. The stone has now been seen by Mr. R.P. Wright and a note will probably appear in a forthcoming number of the Journal of Roman Studies.

Two Roman coins have recently been presented to Shrewsbury Museum. The first, a coin of Commodus, was found by Philip Jarvis of 2, Rural cottages, Yockleton, in the garden of No. 2, which is on the west of the drive to Yockleton Hall (6" O.S. 33 SE). This is on the line of the Roman road west from Wroxeter through Yockleton, which was traced some years ago by Miss Chitty.

The second coin is one of Valentinian which was found a few years ago by a schoolboy, Thomas Albert Jones, near the Moat at Moat Hall farm, Hookagate, when he was living at the farm. Mr. Jones, now of the Manse, Uffington, has presented it to the Museum. It is very gratifying to find that schoolboys are taking such an interest in archaeological discovery, and are also recording their finds in a proper manner and also being public-spirited enough to give their finds to the local Museum. Both these coins, together with another Roman coin from Hopesay lent by Mr. Tom Hamar of Clun, were exhibited in the Roman section of the Exhibition recently held in the Shrewsbury Art Gallery.

Through the good offices of Graham Webster, the Museum has also received a collection of Roman coins from a schoolboy, Alan Carter, who is attending one of the Wroxeter Summer courses this year. The collection had been left to Mr. Carter by his grandfather, Captain Paddock of Oteley Road, Meole Brace, who was a former member of the Shrewsbury Library and Museum Committee. Mr. Carter also has a collection of bronze objects from an early excavation at Wroxeter about 1831, which were formerly in Captain Paddock's collection, and Mr. Webster is at present drawing and recording these for eventual publication.

A ROMAN TILERY AND BRICKFIELD NEAR WROXETER.

By Dr. A.W.J. Houghton.

Excavations have recently been carried out in a field south of Ismore Coppice near Wroxeter (562089). Here on a level plateau brick and tile fragments are always turned up during ploughing operations. A survey with the Proton Magnetometer under the direction of Dr. Martin Aitken revealed an area of disturbance about 50 feet in diameter, but elsewhere in the field no marked changes occurred.

This area was found to coincide fairly closely with a pit about 5½ feet in depth from the modern surface. In the bottom of this pit was a dense ash and clay layer, and sealing this and filling the pit was a consolidated mass of brick kiln rubbish - tile and brick wasters, burnt and unburnt daub and gritty burnt soil. Pottery from the early second century to the fourth century was found: also of interest were two intact kiln pads such as might be used in stacking bricks and tiles.

Adjoining the edge of this pit was a rough clay floor about five inches in thickness and covered by 16-18 inches of topsoil. About 200 square feet of this floor were uncovered. Trodden into the surface were brick waster fragments, pottery, nails and what appeared to be black sweepings from the floor were found wherever an edge was demonstrated. The floor itself was set upon the natural sand which here is the subsoil.

About fifty feet to the south another smaller floor of clay was found. Irregular slots and post holes gave the overall impression of flimsy shacks or sheds which could have housed the tilers' benches. No hearths were found and no patches of burning noticed on any part of these floors.

Just to the north of this last floor the foundation of the combustion chamber of a pottery kiln was found. This kiln had never been completed and was therefore unfired. The sides of the flue were present but this had never been roofed. The combustion chamber floor was of rammed greyish, soft clay and was about 3½ feet in diameter. Half of it was taken to pieces, but no pottery or dating evidence was found. After its desertion the part kiln had become a dumping ground for kiln debris for on top was a heap of soft clay, complete though distorted tegulae, brick wasters and part of the base of a black burnished cook-pot.

Near this kiln another clay floor was found, similar in appearance and construction, though a good deal smaller, to the one described above. No trace of any tile or brick kiln structure was found though sondages were made over an area far outside the plateau, and it is therefore presumed that the bricks and tiles were fired in clamps.

(May 1960)

REVIEW. A new book which will interest all archaeologists is "A Guide to Prehistoric England", recently published by Messrs. Batsford and Co. Its author is Mr. Nicholas Thomas, who is well-known in the West Midlands area as the Assistant Keeper in the Department of Archaeology at the Birmingham City Museum, and also as a practical archaeologist who has done much excavating and published reports and notes on several sites in the West Midlands.

The book consists of a long introduction, in which Mr. Thomas gives a conspectus of the history of Man in England before the coming of the Romans. This is followed by a useful glossary of archaeological terms, and by a detailed Gazetteer in which, under each county, all the principal prehistoric sites in the county are listed with brief descriptions and notes. Seven Bronze Age sites and thirteen Iron Age sites are listed in Shropshire, and the bibliography provides sources for further information on many of these.

Attention should also be drawn to Professor F.W. Shotton's Second Report on the petrological investigation of stone axes, based on axes from the West Midlands, which appeared in the Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society for 1959. A copy of this is available in the Shrewsbury Borough Library.

SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY NOTES.

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held at the Priory Boys' School, Shrewsbury on Saturday, 21st May at 2.30 p.m., when the President, Captain Sir Offley Wakeman, Bart, C.B.E., will be in the Chair.

Following the Business meeting, Mr. Arnold Baker, widely known for his recent work in the field of aerial photography will give an address on "Aerial Survey work for Archaeology in the Border Counties". The lecture will be illustrated by slides from Mr. Baker's large collection of aerial photographs, and it is open to friends and members of the public, as well as to members of the Society.

Two excursions have been arranged for the Summer months. On Saturday, 25th June there will be a whole-day excursion to Caynham Hill fort and to other interesting places in the Ludlow area. Excavations under Mr. Gelling will be in progress at Caynham, and the leader for the excursion will be Mr. F. G. Reeves, of Ludlow.

On Saturday, 9th July the Society will join the Caradoc and Severn Valley Field Club for a whole-day excursion to the Clun area under the leadership of Mr. Tom Hamar. Will those who wish to go on either of these excursions please contact the Hon. Secretary, Mr. H. Beaumont, at Silverdale, Severn Bank, Shrewsbury (Tel: 3992)

The Exhibition of recent developments in Archaeology in Shropshire, held in the Shrewsbury Art Gallery from March 12th to 21st was very successful, and the Council wishes to record its indebtedness to all those, whether members of the Society or not, who worked hard to arrange the display and to steward the exhibition. Many schools from various parts of the county visited it, and a great deal of interest was also evinced by members of the general public. Several new members have been enrolled into the Society as a result of enquiries made during the Exhibition.

Excavations by the Shrewsbury Research Group, under the leadership of Mr. Philip Barker, have been proceeding at the motte and bailey site at Hen Daman, near Montgomery, built before 1086 and abandoned in 1223, and these will continue at weekends until the Summer. Further volunteer workers will be welcomed and they should get in touch with Mr. Barker at Church House, Annscroft (Tel: Harwood 297). A report on the excavations will be published in due course, but it can be said that already remains of the bridge between the bailey and the motte have been uncovered and the excavation is being extended in the hope of recovering the whole plan of this bridge.

A small group of workers under Mr. Frank W. Carter of Sheffield University has carried out an emergency excavation on a site at Dothill Park, near Wellington during the week-end of May 7-8th. This site is due to be developed as a modern building estate and it is hoped to find out something of the nature of the site, which was revealed by aerial survey, before the building work commences. We hope to publish a brief report on this in our next issue.

The C.B.A. Calendar of Excavations for May 1960 lists an interesting Residential training course in prehistoric archaeology designed mainly for beginners and combined with the excavation of a round barrow on Gallowsclough Hill in Cheshire. Instruction will be given in methods of excavation, recording and elementary surveying, lectures on British prehistory and a series of visits to neighbouring archaeological sites. This will be held at Marbury Hall, Cheshire, near Whitchurch and applications should be made to James Forde-Johnston, Esq., Manchester Museum, The University, Manchester 13. Residence in the Hall is confined to men only and women who wish to join will need to make their own arrangements. The inclusive fee for the course from the 14th August for September 2nd will be £4.10s. per week.

The Shrewsbury Borough Library has recently joined the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies and the Society for Mediaeval Archaeology and will henceforth receive the publications of both these bodies. It has been fortunate in obtaining a number of back issues of the Journal of Roman Studies and now has a file dating from 1943, while it has copies of "Mediaeval Archaeology" from its commencement in 1957.

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER

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

EXCAVATIONS AT DOTHILL PARK, WELLINGTON.

SA 719

I.S. Maxwell. SJ.648130.

While carrying out field work for his studies in geography at the University of Sheffield, Mr.F.W.Carter noticed certain surface features in Dothill Park that aroused his interest. Through the kindness of the Surveyor (Mr. A.G.Barton), he was able to examine certain air photographs of the area and these revealed unmistakable evidence of the existence of what is believed to be a hitherto undiscovered site. This appeared to consist of at least three distinct features -

A. To the east (that is, nearest to the main road) there was a series of concentric lighter and darker markings having an external diameter of 250-300 feet, and with a central feature whose plan was difficult to distinguish from the air photograph, but which could have been either sub-circular or rectangular.

B. To the south-west there was a sub-circular ditch, with a mean diameter of approximately 150 feet, lying within an area of ridge-and-furrow. Subsequent ground observation revealed that the ditch had been constructed just below the top of a small hillock.

C. To the north-west there was another circular feature, with a diameter of perhaps 75 feet, which was sited within the angle formed by the intersection of two raised trackways.

As at least a part of this site was due to be destroyed by building operations within the next few months, a "recue dig" was organised, with the kind permission of Mr.Barton, and a party of ten from the Department of Geography of the University of Sheffield worked on the site from 6 - 8 May. It is hoped to continue work here at a later date if this can be arranged.

Careful inspection revealed no trace of any relief features at Site A that could account for the pattern shown on the air photograph. The ground, which sloped gently down towards the west, was slightly hummocky and contained one nearly straight though slight depression, but there was otherwise no significant pattern in these minor relief features and neither they nor the straight depression showed on the air photograph.

Having first laid out a grid that would cover all three sites, the party then began to excavate a trench, 2 feet wide and 300 feet long, across Site A. This was aligned down the slope (that is approximately east-west) and positioned so that it went as nearly as possible through the estimated centre of the feature. Lack of time prevented the party from completing the trench to the desired depth and work was therefore concentrated on the section from the estimated position of the centre to a point some 75 feet to the west.

Altogether, nearly 120 pieces of pottery, probably ranging in age from medieval to modern were recovered, together with some pieces of brick (two of which were "decorated" with a curious pattern of scratches) and a few other minor objects. Perhaps the most interesting find was a small circular lead ornament(?), half an inch in diameter, nearly a quarter of an inch thick and decorated with a raised cross on each side. Two holes, with a diameter of approximately one tenth of an inch and bored at right angles to one another across the diameter of the object, were aligned along the arms of the crosses.

Finally, neither a line of levels taken at 10 feet intervals along the side of the trench, nor an examination of the soil and sub-soil along the same line, provided any evidence to explain the pattern that showed up Site A so clearly on the air photograph.

THE POTTERY FROM DOTHILL PARK, SITE A.

P.A.Barker.

Though the pottery from the trench cut across this site has not yet been fully examined, there is no doubt that the bulk of it, about 90% of the three hundred odd sherds recovered, dates from the later 12th and the 13th century. Some of the smaller body sherds are almost undatable, but they are clearly not post-medieval. The majority of the sherds are unglazed, whether from cooking pots or jugs, and there is almost no decoration. There seems little doubt that there was here a dwelling of some sort, occupied principally between about 1150 and 1300 or a little later, but apparently deserted by Tudor times. There was equally no evidence of earlier occupation.

The small lead object mentioned above appears to be a seal, the two diametric holes being slightly offset so that they pass one another and enable two pieces of string or wire to be threaded through the seal at right angles to one another.

EXCAVATIONS AT QUATFORD, BRIDGNORTH

P.A.Barker.

O.S. 1" map 130. Grid Ref.S.O.738907

Excavations, on behalf of the Ministry of Works, will be carried out on the portion of the bailey of the motte and bailey castle at Quatford, Bridgnorth, which is to be destroyed by road widening. The excavation will begin on Monday, August 29th, and continue until September 10th. Volunteers, skilled or unskilled, will be very welcome, in order to extract the most information possible from the area before it is destroyed.

The site is of great interest, since it is not mentioned as a castle in Domesday Book, (1086), but was almost certainly deserted when Robert de Belesme refortified Aethelfleda's burgh at Bridgnorth, since the collegiate church and the borough moved at about the same time. There is also the possibility that the camp occupied by the Danish host during the winter of 895/6 is in the immediate vicinity, or that it preceded the castle on the same site. There are, therefore, many reasons why the excavation should be of more than usual interest, and we hope that as many volunteers as possible will join in. Although unskilled helpers will be very welcome, there is also the need for the services of a surveyor, to survey the small area to be excavated, and record the position of the trenches. Any offers of help of this kind will be most gratefully received.

Further details from P.A.Barker, Church House, Annscroft, Shrewsbury.
(Tel. Hanwood 297)

SHREWSBURY MUSEUM - SOME RECENT ACQUISITIONS.

Two interesting stone axes have recently been added to the Prehistory Section of Rowley's House Museum, through the kindness and generosity of Mrs. Jasper More, of Linley. They are survivors of a hoard of four axes found near Netley more than a hundred years ago. The only contemporary record of the discovery was found by Miss Chitty in Bagshaw's "History and Gazetteer of Shropshire" which was published in 1851. This states that "in a field not far from here (Netley) were found four peculiarly hard stones, with a sharp axe-like edge all round; they are known by the name of celts, and were used by the priests to slay the victims of their sacrifices".

After the fashion of the time the hoard was not kept intact, but was split up. One of the implements is undoubtedly the 'stone celt' which was presented by Mr. J.T. Hope, then owner of Netley Hall, to the Shropshire and North Wales Natural History Society, the forerunner of the Shropshire Archaeological Society, on November 5th, 1850. This implement is now in Shrewsbury Museum. One stone was perhaps returned to the finder, whose name is unknown and this has been lost sight of. The remaining two were apparently retained at Netley Hall and came into Mrs. Jasper More's possession and have now been presented to the Shrewsbury Museum. Both have been identified by Professor Shotton as Group VII and are made of Graig Lwyd rock. Miss Chitty hopes to publish a full report on them in due course.

Mrs. Jasper More has also presented to the Museum a fine specimen of a partly-bored axe-hammer, also from Linley, further details of which are awaited in the hope that it will prove to have a definite history. Miss Chitty points out that this is the second unfinished axe-hammer to be found in the parish of More and if, as she suspects, it is made of Group XII Picrite it may possibly indicate the site of this factory somewhere in the vicinity, since this has not yet been identified. This implement will be submitted to Professor Shotton for analysis. SA 3577

Other items recently added to the Prehistory section of the Museum include a fine flint axe, chipped and partly polished, found by Mr. B. Morgan on Brick's Upper Turnip field, near Stow in 1954, and a Flint Fabricator found at Highfields, Hordeley, near Wistanstow in the parish of Lydbury North in 1953 by Mr. F.C. Taylor of Bank Farm, Hordeley. A fabricator is a tool used for working other flint or stone implements, and the method of use is illustrated in the British Museum handbook on 'Flints' (fig. 11).

An excellent flint arrowhead, found on Buckett's field, Wall Farm, Kinnersley on the Weald Moors in 1953 has also recently been placed on display in the Museum, having been presented by Mr. A.W. Felton of Wall Farm.

Other recent discoveries include two quern stones found on Upper Farmcote Farm, near Bridgnorth. One was found about 1948 by a farm-worker during ploughing on the farm (SO 77319151); the other was found in July 1960 by Mr. A. Pickett, also a worker on the farm, while lifting potatoes at SO 77889270. Both have been presented to the Museum by the farmer, Mr. V. Kite of the Lion Inn, Upper Farmcote, through the good offices of Mr. J. Rigg of the Archaeology Division of the Ordnance Survey, Chessington, Surrey. Mr. Rigg also gave to the Museum a flint scraper which he himself had found recently on the ploughed surface of Sheepcote leasow, west of the River Severn above Bridgnorth in the parish of Astley Abbots (SO 71939431). Mr. Kite has also presented four stone spindle-whorls from the Ridge of Morfe, near Claverley. Three of these have been retained in the Museum and the fourth returned to Mr. Kite.

MARTIN-CLARK RESISTIVITY METERS.

Resistivity meters have proved extremely useful in various kinds of archaeological investigation and no. 8 Regional Group of the Council for British Archaeology recently purchased two Martin-Clark Resistivity Meters, with the aid of a grant from the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust. They are available for use by societies and research groups which are constituent members of the Regional Group and applications for loan will now be considered.

The Committee has laid down certain conditions which must be strictly adhered to with the regard to the loan of the instruments. Applications will be considered strictly on a priority basis, bearing in mind the date of the application and the importance of the site. Loans will normally cover two consecutive week-ends, but may be extended if the importance of the work merits this. The meters must be collected and returned promptly. No charge is made for the loan, but the group concerned will be expected to make good any damage, other than fair wear and tear. Applications should be made to the Secretary of the Group, Mr. G. S. Taylor, of 5, Greenside Road, Erdington, Birmingham 24, stating the period for which the meter is needed and the type of site to be tested.

Mr. Graham Webster has been asked to prepare an explanatory note on the construction and use of the meters for circulation to societies and groups.

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER

Edited by J.L. Hobbs, Shrewsbury Museum, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury

EXCAVATION AT HEN DOMEN, CO. MONTGOMERY (SO 214981)

Two cuttings of the motte-bailey ditch of this pre-Domesday castle were made by the Shrewsbury Research Group during the summer of 1960 in the hope of obtaining stratified 11th and 12th century pottery. A good series was obtained from one cutting, though the stratification is suspect, and more work will be needed to clarify the sequence of types. The second cutting unexpectedly revealed the remains of a timber bridge, of at least two periods, spanning the ditch between the bailey and the motte. The whole area is being stripped in the hope of recovering the plans of this early bridge and its successor. Present indications are that they were wider and more complicated than those shown on the Bayeux Tapestry.

P.A. Barker.

MOTTE AND BAILEY CASTLE AT QUATFORD (SO 738907)

A short excavation, on behalf of the Ministry of Works, was carried out between the 29th August and the 10th September 1960, on the outer edge of the bailey of this site, an area which was due to be destroyed during the course of road widening.

The Quatford region deserves thorough investigation as it was the reputed site of a camp of the Danish host in 895/6 (1); the recorded site of a 'new house' built by Roger de Montgomery before 1086, and of a borough then rendering nothing (2); and, visibly, the site of a motte and bailey castle presumably deserted by 1102, when Robert de Belesme moved castle, borough and collegiate church to Bridgnorth. (3) In view of the promise of the site, the results of this excavation were baffling. A segment 90 feet long and 30 feet wide was thoroughly examined, the central area of about 900 square feet being stripped to the bedrock. A complex of more than seventy postholes, ranging in diameter and depth from two inches to three feet, all undatable and at present indecipherable, occupied this central area. There were no floors, nor hearths, nor any other evidence of continuous occupation, nor was there any firm evidence of more than one period of construction. The finds consisted of a leaf-shaped flint arrow-head of Windmill Hill type, dating from the Neolithic or Early Bronze Age, a 12th or 13th century bronze annular brooch, a 15th or 16th century bronze buckle, together with a thin scatter of sherds of pottery dating from the 12th to the 19th centuries. The apparent rampart along the edge of the bailey had 17th/18th century pottery in its base; there was no evidence of a stockade, and there was no bailey ditch. It seems likely that the postholes represent outbuildings which were hardly used before being abandoned; there was nothing to connect them with the Danes or with Roger de Montgomery and the search for the earlier sites must continue elsewhere. A full report of the excavation is in preparation.

References.

1. Anglo Saxon Chronicle, sub anno 895.
2. Domesday Book, fo.254.a.1.
3. Florence of Worcester, vol. ii, p.49.

P.A. Barker.

MARDOL HEAD, SHREWSBURY (SJ 491125) A MEDIAEVAL ROAD.

In August 1959, during the course of sewer laying operations in Pride Hill, a manhole pit 6 feet square and 9 feet deep was dug in Mardol Head, almost in the centre of the road. At a depth of 4 feet 6 inches below the present road, and under 3 feet 6 inches of earth and rubble filling, a layer, 18 inches thick, of cobbles set in clay, was revealed extending throughout the area of the pit. This heavy cobbling had been laid on the subsoil, an extremely wet, loose, gravelly yellow silt. During the few hours in which it was open this silt flowed slowly downwards into the bottom of the pit, making work on the manhole very difficult. In the south-western corner of the pit the subsoil was particularly loose, and must have been so during the laying of the cobbled surface, since it is clear that the first layer of cobbles had sunk into this mire, and that beams of oak (called 'faggots' by the workmen on the site) had been laid here horizontally to form the foundation for a second cobble layer which had remained firm.

There seems no doubt that this very massive cobbling is an early road which, as it did not appear in the trenches dug further up Mardol Head and Pride Hill, apparently ran along the line High Street - Mardol, in which case it may well have been a road between the bridges. Since there were no other roads in the section below the modern surface, it is tempting to see this early road as one of those built in 1269/70, perhaps on the orders of Henry III (1), but throughout the paving accounts of those years mention is specifically made of stone brought from quarries at Bayston Hill and Downton, near Haughmond, and from no other source.(2) Since the road surface (if that is what it was) revealed in 1959 was made of large waterworn cobbles, and since there was no independent dating evidence, it seems unlikely to be related to the 1269/70 paving, and it may have been an earlier road on a different alignment from the final mediaeval lay-out (3), though in this case, one would have expected the later roads to have appeared somewhere in the 1959 trenches. It is to be hoped that further evidence of the early system of roads at this nodal point will be found in future excavations in the area.

References.

1. Shrewsbury Paving and other Accounts, 54 Henry III. 1269/70, transcribed and edited by the Rev. C.H. Drinkwater, (Shrop. Arch. Soc. Trans. 3rd series, vol. VII, 1907, p. 193.
2. Drinkwater, op.cit., points out that the stone from both quarries is a purple or gritty slate (?shale). There was no stone like this in the section exposed. He also mentions that the Bayston Hill quarries were given up early in favour of those at Downton. The accounts show clearly that the stone from Downton was brought by river from Uffington, whereas the stone from Bayston Hill would have to be brought by road, and since this paving was done from November 1269 to May 1270 it is probable that the Bayston Hill quarries were abandoned because the roads were impassable.
3. It can hardly be post-mediaeval.

P.A. Barker.

(Various finds of animal bones, deer antlers, etc. found by the workmen during the digging of the trench and manhole have been deposited in Shrewsbury Museum. They include a boar's tusk which had been made into a tool and which was well-worn through use. Several of these finds had been made in the manhole pit above the cobbled road referred to by Mr. Barker. Editor.)

ATTINGHAM WEEKEND. A reunion week-end for those who have taken part in recent excavations at Wroxeter will be held at Attingham Park from Friday, December 2nd to Sunday, December 4th under the direction of Mr. Graham Webster. The general title of the course is "Recent Progress in Archaeology".

Because of the above course the Archaeological Council meeting on December 3rd has been rearranged for Saturday, December 10th, and the Research Groups sub-committee meeting will take place on the same day at the customary time.

YOUTH HOSTELS ASSOCIATION ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOURS IN SHROPSHIRE.

This Summer, for the second year running, the Youth Hostels Association 'Home Tours' organised holidays with an archaeological theme in Shropshire. Last year the tours started from Shrewsbury and made a circuit through South Shropshire and N. Herefordshire and attempted to give an introduction to archaeology in its broadest sense. Greatly appreciated help was given by members of the Shropshire Archaeological Society, and members of the party not only kept in touch with each other but several of them returned to help with the excavations at Hen Domen at Easter.

This year it was decided to base the tour on the Ludlow and Clun hostels and to attempt to trace Roman Roads associated with the complex of newly discovered forts around Leintwardine. Some success was achieved in tracing a probable line of road eastwards by Whitton and Woodhead Farm towards Bronfield, but the assignment proved a difficult one for a large and inexperienced party, and when the organiser of the tour fell ill early in the first week it was only the remarkable efforts of the Ludlow Research Group and other members of the Shropshire Archaeological Society which made it possible for the archaeological side of the tour to be maintained.

So much help was, however, forthcoming that the archaeological aspects were extended far beyond the normal resources of such a tour. Some members gave illustrated lectures and talks, and tours were arranged for the party. Particularly remarkable was the fleet of cars, driven by volunteers, which took them in unaccustomed ease around the principal monuments of Corvedale, Ironbridge and Bridgnorth, giving a cross-section of Shropshire antiquities which could hardly have been covered in a week of walking. The whole effort gave these young people a great impression of the helpfulness and hospitality of Shropshire's archaeologists.

The Y.H.A. has found that there is a considerable demand for these courses and experience suggests that the greatest need is for courses which give a general introduction to the whole field of archaeology. These would make it possible for members to decide whether they wished to train as excavators at centres such as Preston Montford or merely to develop a more general interest in the archaeological aspects of the country scene. If an increasing number of Y.H.A. members take an interest in archaeology as a result of these courses there should be several beneficial results in early reports of threats to ancient monuments and in help with 'rescue' excavations and other digs by local groups. Shropshire seems to have everything needed for the provision of such courses - and the advantage most deeply appreciated by these parties has been the remarkable helpfulness shown by members of the Society and of its Research Groups. Future courses could hardly expect the amount of voluntary help which was so readily forthcoming in this year's emergency conditions, but the value and importance of local goodwill and co-operation cannot be over-stressed.

F.A. Noble.

HARLESCOTT GRANGE MOATED SITE, SHREWSBURY (SJ 502160)

The Shrewsbury Research Group dug exploratory trenches on this site in advance of landscaping by the Borough Council as part of the Harlescott Grange Estate plan. A house on the site is mentioned by Blakeway in his "History of the Liberties of Shrewsbury" (p.267) but a number of trenches cut in the area enclosed by the moat failed to reveal any structures, floors or hearths or any other trace of occupation. There were no finds except a handful of very small fragments of pottery dating from the 13th century to the present day. It seems very probable that the gardeners of the past two hundred years had been only too efficient in clearing the site of stones and every sort of debris which they encountered. Blakeway (op. cit) mentions a line of masonry which, he says, "may have been the inner wall of the mansion." This could not be found. He further suggests that the building within the moat was half-timbered, and this may account for its complete disappearance, since the foundations of timber framed buildings are often very shallow. Sometimes, as at Roushill, where half-timber buildings were demolished in 1959, they merely rested on the surface.

The writer was told that '13th century pitchers' had been found at a point on the moat edge, but enquiries failed to substantiate this rumour, and digging at the place suggested produced nothing. However, a large fragment of the thumb-pressed base of a jug of rather coarse, sandy ware, probably datable to the 13th century, which was found when the moat was drained some time ago is in the possession of Mr. Michael Peele.

P.A. Barker.

REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS AT REDHILL (VXACQNA) SJ/728 109.

SA 1113
SAM 201

Excavations on this site up to date have revealed the following remains.

Roughly laid foundations of sandstone, possibly those of a Gate Tower and the main wall. These have been very heavily robbed, and no stratified material has been found above or alongside them. Pottery of second century date has, however, been found in among the stones.

To the west of these foundations the following structures have been discovered. A North-south gully which had at some stage been recut. The butt-end only of the defensive ditch which is all that appear on the part of the site at present available. Near the Ditch and to the south a cobbled area with fourth century pottery imbedded in its surface ran in an East-west direction. Further to the west a Gully runs in a westerly direction, widening as it does so, and possibly becoming a roadside ditch at the western limit of the site.

The latest discovery is a cement lined, circular brick structure, three feet two inches internal diameter. It appears to be an early 19th century well. This is to the east of the wall foundation, and excavations are continuing in the hope of reaching the bottom of it before the end of the season.

J.A. Pagett.

EXCAVATIONS AT CAYNHAM

The Ludlow Group has this year completed another most successful season of excavations at the important hill fort site on Caynham Hill, near Ludlow under the guidance of Mr. P.S. Gelling, of Birmingham University, who is in charge of the excavations. Large quantities of pottery of Iron Age B. type were found, also a Saddle Quern. A preliminary survey and excavation of the centre of the fort was undertaken, when carbonised grain and post-holes were brought to light, but the main digging operations continued at the two entrances to the fort. It is hoped to continue next year but meanwhile Mr. Gelling's preliminary report on this interesting site has appeared in the new issue of the Shropshire Archaeological Transactions, which has just been published.

NEW ISSUE OF THE TRANSACTIONS.

This new issue of the Society's Transactions (Volume LVI, part 2) still in its fresh attractive format, contains several articles of interest to the archaeologist. In addition to the First Interim Report on Caynham camp, referred to above, there are records of the excavations on Nesscliff Hill, undertaken some years ago, and of an enclosure at Uppington. Mr. P.A. Barker has catalogued and drawn examples of medieval pottery from Shropshire sites, and there is a detailed study of the aqueduct which supplied water to the Roman town of Viroconium (Wroxeter) by Graham Webster and David Hollingsworth. Mr. Webster has also supplied a note on the Roman Coin hoard found at Hordley Grange and Mr. J.P. Dodd describes the discovery of a stone axe near Alveley in 1957.

Several other articles relating to later periods make this issue certainly one of the best which the Society has produced, and anyone interested in Shropshire archaeology of history, who is not already a member of the Society, should consider joining for the very modest subscription of one guinea a year.

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER.

Edited by J. L. Hobbs, Shrewsbury Museum.

NOTES ON EXCAVATIONS IN HEREFORDSHIRE AND SOUTH SHROPSHIRE, 1960.

By S.C. Stanford, B.A., Dept. of Extra-Mural Studies, Birmingham University.

CROFT AMBERY - Iron Age Hillfort, near Aymestrey, Herefordshire (SO 443668).

Excavations during 1960 were directed by S.C. Stanford for the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, by kind permission of the National Trust.

It has been shown that an early (? Iron Age A) hillfort was levelled when the existing defences were constructed by Iron Age B people, with stamped pottery similar to that known from Bredon Hill, Worcs., and Sutton Walls near Hereford. At least two phases have been recognised in these defences which were originally univallate, and were subsequently rendered multivallate by the digging of an outer ditch and the construction of medial and counterscarp banks.

Abundant occupation material behind the main rampart shows that the site was occupied by this Iron Age B group as a fortified village. The discovery of storage pits, and finds of grain, a sickle, and fragments of rotary querns indicate a corn-growing economy.

No evidence has so far been found to suggest occupation during the Roman period or subsequently. The excavation will be resumed during the Summer of 1961, from 31st July until 26th August.

The Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club has published (in duplicated form) Mr. Stanford's First Interim Report, dated December 1960, on the excavations at Croft Ambery. The Report was prepared for circulation to patrons and is not available for wider distribution or for sale, but a copy has kindly been deposited in the Shrewsbury Reference Library.

- - - - -

BUCKTON - A Roman fort near Leintwardine, Herefordshire (SO 391733).

Excavations in 1960 were directed by Mr. S.C. Stanford for the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, by kind permission of Messrs. C. Harley and J. Manford.

The excavation of the east gate showed that timber gate-towers had been demolished when the fort was reconstructed in stone. The (?) Hadrianic stone gateway is remarkably large for an auxiliary fort, measuring 73 ft x 20 ft over the foundations, the external dimensions of the guard-rooms contained in this unit being 24 ft x 20 ft. It now seems certain that this re-furbishing involved also the insertion of the stone fort wall in front of the original turf rampart. This modifies the conclusion drawn from the 1959 trial trench (Woolhope Club Transactions for 1959, p. 216), but has provided further proof that the fort was deliberately dismantled by the Romans, presumably when the local garrison was transferred to the Leintwardine site, c. A.D. 160.

- - - - -

DETTON HALL, ? Medieval village, Neen Savage, Shropshire (SO 667796)

Excavations in 1960, directed by S.C. Stanford on behalf of the Ministry of Works as a "rescue" dig prior to levelling.

Trial trenching on most of the promising platforms revealed no structural remains, although a quantity of medieval pottery (? 12th to 14th centuries) was recovered. Topographically, the site looks convincing as a deserted medieval village, and the former presence of a chapel there (not, however, confirmed by excavation) lends support to the idea.

- - - - -

The location and scale of Tern Works.

By Robin Chaplin, M.A., Deputy Warden, Attingham Park.

The whereabouts and scale of an 18th century industrial establishment referred to variously in contemporary sources as Tern Works, Tern Forge and Tern Mills, has not hitherto been known, but recent work on the Attingham Papers in the Salop Record Office, and on the ground in Attingham Park has enabled the site of the works to be located, and an impression of their scale to be obtained.

The Site. Rocque's Map of Shropshire (1752) marks the site of Tern Works on the east bank of the tern, a few hundred yards north of its entry to the Severn and immediately north of Tern Bridge. The bridge shown on Rocque's map is the old Tern Bridge, of which some stonework is still clearly visible in the river c. 130 yards above the present stone bridge which was built to replace it between 1777 and 1784. There is no trace of the Works in the position marked on Rocque's map, and two pieces of evidence suggest that the site was in fact some 500 yards north of the old Tern bridge, or about 650 yards north of the present Tern bridge.

Firstly, a picture in the possession of Lady Berwick, of Attingham Hall, shows a group of buildings quite close to the south east of Tern Hall, and on the river.

Secondly, numerous references in the letters of Thomas Bell (agent to Thomas Hill, the then owner of the estate) refer to the 'pounding of water' at Tern Works, and to the pool which provided power for the works. There is a raised causeway 100 yards south-east of Attingham (which is on the site of Tern Hall) which, with two bridges, provides access from the House to the Deer Park. The central section is eighty yards long and 10 feet above the surrounding land. A further section on the Deer Park side makes a total length of 150 yards, and completely spans the shallow valley in which the tern flows at this point. It looks very like the eroded remains of the pool dam, and is in the same position as the buildings on the picture described above.

The Scale. A letter from Thomas Harvey to the Hon. Richard Hill, dated 16th April, 1713, says: "We have erected a Mill for Rowling of Brass plates, and Iron hoops, and slitting of Bar Iron into Rods for making of nails which cost us £1,500. Since we have erected, a Wire Mill, a forge and a furnace for Converting Iron into Steel, and Shops for about 40 men." All this, he goes on, has cost another £2,500, and has made Tern Works "the first Joint Work of this kind in England, and for its goodness of Building Europe can't produce the like." As late as 1752 a community of at least 40 was living on the site. This is made clear by a series of letters written in the spring of 1752 by Thomas Bell which describe an outbreak of small pox in the works. The main part of the works was levelled to the ground in 1757, the fifty year lease having run out in 1756, when Thomas Hill decided to remove this blot on his landscape.

The Alteration of the route of Watling Street between Atcham

Bridge and Norton, by Robin Chaplin, M.A.

Examination of the Minute Book of the Bridge Committee in the Salop Record Office makes it clear that when Tern Bridge was rebuilt in 1777-81 (See map) it was moved about 132 yards downstream (south) nearer the confluence of the Tern and Severn. This explains the pronounced loop to the north which is made at this point by the Watling Street on Rocque's Map of Shropshire (1752). The remains of the old bridge, apparently the bases of two oval shaped piers, are visible in the Tern, c.130 yards above the present Tern Bridge. The 'hollow-way' running away to the east of the old bridge is also still clearly visible in the Deer Park of Attingham Hall.

The idea of moving the bridge was first suggested by Noel Hill at a meeting of the Bridge Committee on October 28th, 1777. His intention was clearly to expand the area between his house, Tern Hall, and the main road, and to prepare the way for the replacement of the modest Tern Hall by the much larger and more magnificent Attingham Hall. This was begun in 1783, the year following the completion of the new bridge. The cost of moving the bridge instead of rebuilding on the old site was also met by Noel Hill. After all this, it must have been a bitter moment when Humphrey Repton,

landscape gardener, surveying the grounds with a view to 'improvement' April 1797, reported : ... "every stranger, who sees the House from the rampike road would describe it as a large house with very little ground betwixt the road and the House, this at first sight requires, either that the House, or the road should be removed."

The Minute Book also makes clear beyond any shadow of doubt that Tern Bridge was rebuilt between 1777 and 1781 by William Hayward, not, as Pevsner (basing his information on Mr. C. Gotch) asserts, by Robert Mylne (See Pevsner, N. Buildings of England: Shropshire, 1958, page 66)

BRITISH SUMMER SCHOOL OF ARCHAEOLOGY.

The British Summer School of Archaeology meets each year at a different centre and selects a specific topic or problem in Archaeology as the theme of a series of lectures, discussions and excursions. It offers a forum where all students of British archaeology, including professional scholars and amateurs, veterans and beginners, can meet to discuss problems and interchange views. Lack of specialised knowledge is not, therefore, a serious disadvantage, since it is intended that members should combine study with an enjoyable holiday, and anyone who is interested may regard himself or herself as eligible for membership of the School.

This year's course of lectures will cover the various aspects of the Roman Villa in Britain, and an extremely distinguished team of lecturers and scholars will be present, while excursions will take members to all the important Romano-British sites in five or six counties around Cirencester, the school's headquarters. Cirencester, in the heart of the Cotswold country, is an ideal centre for an archaeological conference or a holiday.

Full particulars and details of the 1961 School can be obtained from the Hon. Director, F.T. Wainwright, Esq., Ph.D., F.S.A., at Ingleby, Newport-on-Tay, Fife, Scotland.

A MATTER OF TIME : AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY.

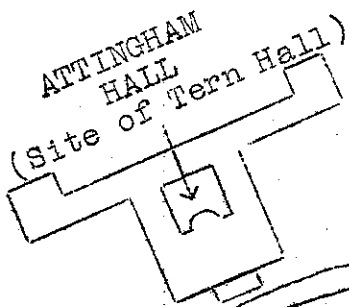
A book of considerable interest to archaeologists has recently been published by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments. Called "A Matter of Time", it is a detailed archaeological survey of the river gravels of England which, in prehistoric and Roman times, were thickly populated and which often produce a remarkable variety of ancient remains.

These gravel terraces are usually rich agricultural land surface remains have long been obliterated by successive generations of ploughing activity, but many can still be seen as crop marks on aerial photographs. The recovery of many such sites has been made possible by modern developments in the technique of air photography. The Royal Commission is seeking to enrol local archaeologists and potential excavators in discovering as many of these sites as possible and in promoting the necessary excavations before it is too late. The book indicates to the field archaeologist areas in which detailed surveying is urgently needed and the points at which excavation might yield the most valuable results. It is available from H.M. Stationery Office, price 10/6d.

FINDS FROM SITE OF DELLA PORTA'S SITE, HIGH STREET, SHREWSBURY.

When Della Porta's premises were erected in 1927, several interesting finds were made in the area between High Street and Princess Street which had, in the Middle Ages been the site of a large pool in which the town scolds were ducked (the original name of High Street was Gumblestool street). They included a complete boat, some 10 to 12 feet long, which unfortunately collapsed when handled and was not preserved. Some smaller finds were preserved by the architect, Mr. A.E. Williams, and his widow recently presented these to Shrewsbury Museum. They include a Sack bottle, which was full when found, two keys, two pewter cups lined with blue glass and a chain for tethering goats or small animals. The finds are referred to by Mr. A.W. Ward in his pamphlet "The Shrewsbury of 1772", published by the Shrewsbury Chronicle, 1947.

Low Lying Meadow



Attingham Front Drive

A

B

C

D

WEIR

DEER PARK

RIVER TERN

OLD COURSE OF TERN

Remains of old Tern Bridge

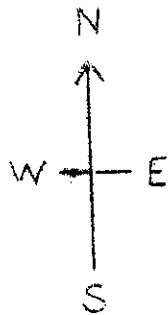
Hollow Way

To Norton

TERN BRIDGE

To Severn

- A - Site of buildings on picture, c.1760.
- B - Stone bridge over drop in water level of about 8 feet
- C - Central section of Causeway or Dam
- D - Iron bridge - date 1851.



SCALE: 25 inches to the mile

Conjectural line of main road before 1781

To Atcham

A5

SKETCH TO SHOW:

- 1. Possible site of Tern Works
- 2. Alteration in site of Tern Bridge, 1781.

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER

Edited by J.L.Hobbs, Shrewsbury Museum, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury

EXCAVATIONS AT HEN DOMEN, MONTGOMERY (Grid. Ref. SO 214981)

Interim report, 1960/61

The excavation of this motte and bailey castle, built about 1075 by Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury, as a frontier post from which to launch attacks into Wales, was initially projected to obtain a sequence of pottery types dating from the 11th century until 1223, when the site was abandoned, as little is known about the pottery of the 11th and 12th centuries in the West Midlands and in Wales.

Work began at Easter 1960 and continued at week-ends until November. The structures discovered survived the mild winter and work was resumed at Easter 1961.

Two sections were cut across the ditch between the motte and the bailey in the hope that a series of sherds would be found stratified in the ditch. One of these sections showed clearly that the ditch had been recut at least three times, and probably four, and that on the first two occasions the redigging had cut deeply into the primary silting of the ditch and removed the upper layers, in which pottery might have been expected. The primary silting of both these ditches contained no finds.

Above the second recut was a thick layer of charcoal which could have been produced only by a great fire, perhaps the destruction of the motte tower, which, together with the other buildings of the castle, would have been of timber. This charcoal layer contained sherds of pottery dating from about 1150 - 1200. When the castle was rebuilt, the ditch had again been dug out, the new ditch cutting across the deep charcoal layer. There is some evidence that there was yet another recut before the final destruction of the site, when it was abandoned and the buildings on it probably demolished.

On the edge of the ditch, in the bailey, was a circle of nine postholes, with a tenth in the centre. These are perhaps the remains of a small granary or haystack frame, though the evidence is not yet complete.

The other ditch section unexpectedly revealed postholes and timber slots which, from their position on the slope of the ditch, could only be those of the timber bridge which had led across the ditch to the motte. As a bridge of this kind must be stripped horizontally and seen as a whole if it is to be understood, permission was sought from the Ministry of Works to extend the excavation as far as necessary. This was granted and the ditch section is now (May 1961) 50 feet long and 25 feet wide.

Some 35 timber slots and postholes, showing where timbers have been embedded in the ground have been found, and it is now clear that they represent two distinct bridges, stratified one above the other. The upper, latest, one is symmetrical in plan, and consists of a number of postholes and timber slots on the bailey side of the ditch, and two large postholes on the motte side. The underlying bridge has a much larger number of heavy timber slots on the motte side, but it is not yet clear what the structure of this bridge was like on the bailey side.

A piece of 13th century pottery found in the filling of one of the timber slots of this earlier bridge (which was almost certainly burnt down) shows that it must have been destroyed late in the life of the castle, and renewed not very long before the site was abandoned. As Llewelyn the Great held the castle from 1216 until 1223 it is possible that this latest bridge was built by him. A good deal of work has yet to be done in order to marry the recorded history with the archaeological history which the excavation is revealing.

FINDS.

Finds from the year's work include three to four hundred sherds of pottery, the majority of them from the later periods of the site's occupation, and consisting of fragments of glazed jugs, including two or three tripod pitchers, a type not known before in this region as early as the 12th century, and many sherds of cooking pots, mostly of very coarse fabrics and with heavy rims of simple shape. These are in marked contrast to the late 12th and early 13th century cooking pots found nearer to Shrewsbury.

Other finds include a quantity of nails - horseshoe nails as well as nails from the wooden buildings of the castle - a gilt bronze or copper strip ornament which had been rivetted to a wooden box or book cover, a bronze strap end, and a cut silver penny of John or Henry III dating from 1215-1218. The only other find of metal was a practice hand grenade from the upper silting of the ditch. It is not thought to be of Welsh origin.

Our grateful thanks are due to Mr. Wainwright, the owner, and Mr. Windsor, the tenant, for permission to work on the site; to the Ministry of Works for their permission and for their help in many ways; and to all those who have worked on the excavation, for long periods or short. Without them, this report could not have been written.

Work will continue on the site at weekends throughout the summer, except for the periods of the excavations at Dothill and Weoley Castle, (29 July to 12 August).

As much help as possible is needed if complete plans of the bridges are to be recovered. Volunteers, skilled or unskilled, will be very welcome - transport can usually be provided from Shrewsbury, and normally leaves the Priory Boy's School at 10 a.m.

In case of uncertain weather or other difficulties ring HANWOOD 297.

PROGRAMME

Hen Domen: Sunday, May 7; Sunday, May 14; Whit Sat. May 20th; Whit Sun. May 21; Whit Mon. May 22; Sunday May 28; Saturday June 3; Sunday, June 11; Saturday, Jun 17; Sunday July 9; Saturday July 15; Saturday July 22.

Dothill, Wellington: Monday, 19 June to Saturday, 1 July inclusive, except, Sunday 25 June. See below for details*

* The dig at Dothill, Wellington, is an emergency excavation on behalf of the Ministry of Works on a ring-work of unknown date discovered by aerial photography, which is to be destroyed during the course of redevelopment. Volunteers will be welcome for long or short periods, and will be entitled to 5/- a day subsistence. Twelve workmen will be employed during the whole period, and volunteers will not be asked to do heavy work.

Volunteers for either of the above digs will be welcomed, and they should write to or ring: Mr. P.A. Barker,
Church House,
Annscroft, Shrewsbury. Hanwood 297.

INTERESTING FIND FROM LONGDEN. An interesting and possibly a most important discovery was recently made at Longden, near Shrewsbury by Master Robert Blazey, of Brookfield, Longden Common. It appears to be a stone mould for casting Bronze Age flat axes and was found in Longden brook by Robert, who brought it into Shrewsbury Museum for identification. Each side of the stone has a cut-out hollow for making a flat bronze axe; one side has moulds for both an axe and an awl. The mould is in excellent condition and shows little signs of water wear, and it may have been washed down from the bank during the heavy floods of December 1960.

The stone has been submitted to Mr. H.W.M. Hodges of the University of London Institute of Archaeology, and it is now to be tested at Oxford for copper content. It has also been sliced for petrological analysis by Professor Shotton of Birmingham University, and the reports of these scientific experts are awaited with interest. Robert is to be congratulated on his find and on his public spirit in agreeing to present the mould to Shrewsbury Museum.

Gifted - Bronze Age, in Museum.

A ROMAN SITE AT THE CONFLUENCE OF THE RIVERS TERN AND SEVERN.

By Dr. A. W. J. Houghton.

In 1949 Mr. J. Durnell noticed that pot sherds were falling out of the left bank of the Severn about 50 yards above the point of confluence of the rivers Tern and Severn, east of Atoham (G.R. SJ552092) Here the river is rapidly eroding the soil and laying it down on the right bank below Wroxeter. A further point of interest is that the present course of the Tern from the bridge to the river Severn dates only from 1798, the parish boundary between Atoham and Wroxeter indicating the ancient course of the stream.

An area 40 feet by 30 feet was stripped at the point where sherds were seen in the eroded river bank. An occupation layer was found at an average depth of 2½ feet below the present land level, which consists of an old pasture. This layer consisted of Roman building debris and extended right up to the river bank, it being apparent that an area of unknown extent had long since been destroyed by the action of the river.

The rough floor was quadrilateral in shape, the sides being 35 feet by 28 feet in length. A single posthole was found outside the floor and at one point on the floor a row of broken roof tiles may indicate the collapse of a roof. The floor in general looked as if cartloads of rubble had been dumped and spread and then trampled into the natural alluvium of the river terrace. Two hearths were found near the bank, and in the thick ash layer which lay around these were found large numbers of sherds of flanged and beaded straight-sided bowls of early 4th century date. The dominant cook pot was the black burnished pot with a narrow band of obtuse-angled latticing and an evolved rim which in many cases oversails the widest girth of the pot.

Shallow pie dishes were common, also wide-mouthed jars or bowls and narrow-necked jars in a soft buff ware, which was almost impossible to wash on account of its softness. Many 'wasters' and lumps of kiln debris were found, though no actual kilns were discovered. A little Samian ware of East Gaulish origin was found and numerous sherds of imitation DR 29 and 37 in the soft buff ware which is so common at this site. These were mostly coated in a reddish colour.

There seems no doubt that this site is a late 3rd to 4th century AD. settlement - almost certainly a pottery manufactory. The interesting point is that a few fragments of Samian ware were found and were being copied at least 100 years later than the date of their original importation. A full report on the site will appear in due course in the Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society.

ARCHIVE STUDY IN SHROPSHIRE.

Research into municipal archives is being actively pursued in three Shropshire centres under the auspices of the Extra-Mural Department of the University of Birmingham. At Shrewsbury, Oswestry and Much Wenlock small groups of local people are working on Corporation records under the leadership of Mr. Peter Newton at Shrewsbury and of Mr. L. C. Lloyd at Oswestry and Much Wenlock. Nearly all the group members were totally untrained and inexperienced in this kind of work when they started; but after regular weekly meetings during the winter months they learned to read handwriting dating from the 12th to the 18th centuries and gained some familiarity with the various types of document represented in the borough archives. Transcriptions are made of the more important documents, notes are taken from those of less importance, and various aspects of the history of the areas concerned are being studied in detail.

Work of this kind brings us into intimate contact with the raw materials of history -- the actual contemporary records of what was happening in Shrewsbury, in Oswestry or in Wenlock, a hundred, three hundred or five hundred years ago. We meet the familiar names of villages and streets -- often, however, in an unfamiliar spelling --- and family

(continued at foot of page 4)

SUMMER TRAINING COURSES.

The University of Birmingham, in conjunction with the Preston Montford Field Studies Centre, is again holding Excavation Training Courses in Archaeology at Wroxeter from July 15th to September 2nd. The Elementary Course under the direction of Stanley C. Stanford will be held from July 15th to 29th, and the Intermediate Course from August 19th to September 2nd. In addition, a course on the Iron Age archaeology is to be held at the Roveries, near Lydham from July 29th to August 12th.

Two further courses, "The Romans in North Wales and its Border", consisting of lectures and tours under the guidance of Professor D.R. Dudley (from August 12th to 19th) and of "Archaeological Techniques", which will consist of lectures, demonstrations and practical field work, under the direction of K. Barton (September 2nd to 9th) will also be organised. Applications for any of the above should be made to the Warden, Preston Montford Field Centre, near Shrewsbury.

A residential course at Attingham Park from the 6th to 8th June will have as its theme "Archaeology in Adult Education, and for fuller particulars the Warden or the Director of Extra-Mural Studies at Birmingham University should be approached. A Summer Course in Local History will be held at Thwaite Hall, Cottingham, near Hull from July 28th to August 5th. This is organised by the Department of Adult Education of the University of Hull, under Mr. K.A. Macmahon, Staff Tutor in Local History, and visiting lecturers will include Mr. F.W. Brooks, Reader in Medieval History at Hull University, Dr. H.P.R. Finberg, Head of the Department of English Local History at Leicester University and Dr. J.K. St. Joseph, Curator in Aerial Photography at Selwyn College, Cambridge.

OSWESTRY CASTLE MOUND.

Members of the Offa Antiquarian Society have recently fought a successful 'battle' with the Oswestry Town Council for the retention of the Castle Bank or Mound, the site of the ancient Castle of Oswestry, mentioned in the Domesday Book. The proposal was to bulldoze and level the site, which had been presented to the town some years ago as an Open Space, and to turn it into a Car Park.

In addition to sending to the Town Council and to the Ministry a resolution strongly condemning the proposals, the Society sent to each member of the Council a paper on the history of the Castle compiled by Mr. Gerald Griffiths, Secretary of the Offa Antiquarian Society, and it further marshalled public opinion in the town by letters to the press and other means. Largely as a result of these efforts, which inspired comment on the matter in the national press, and the activity of the Society's indefatigable chairman, Mr. T.W. Rogers, the Town Council saw the error of their ways and agreed not to proceed with the scheme.

ARCHIVE STUDY IN SHROPSHIRE (continued)

names which remind us that the people we are reading about are the ancestors of our friends and neighbours, and on occasion, perhaps, of ourselves. This feeling of intimacy lends a wonderful fascination to the work, a fascination experienced by all who take part in it.

The three Shropshire groups of archive students have now been at work for four or five years, and the first results of their work are about to be published. In the forthcoming issue of the Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society articles will be printed on 'The Hayes, a 17th-century house on the outskirts of Oswestry; on 18th century Oswestry Overseers' accounts; on some letters of Sir William Fowler, steward of Shrewsbury; and on 18th century highway surveyors' returns in the Franchise of Wenlock. A number of other papers on various topics, based on the study of original documents are to follow. In each group there is room for two or three more members. Knowledge or experience are unnecessary; all that is required is interest and the ability to attend weekly meetings in winter with reasonable regularity. Full particulars can be obtained from Mr. J.E. Pilgrim, M.A. Nabwood House, Heathgates, Shrewsbury.

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER.

Edited by J.L. Hobbs, Shrewsbury Museum, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury.

BRONZE AGE BURIAL MOUND AT YSGWENNANT, NEAR LLANSILIN, DENBIGHSHIRE.

(Grid Reference:

In "The Prehistoric and Roman Remains of Denbighshire" by the Rev. Ellis Davies, M.A., F.S.A., published in 1929, the following appears on pp.241-2 (for "Sgwennant" read "Yogwennant") :-

" MOUND : SGWENNANT.

SITE. This stands about midway between Llangadwaladr Church and Sgwennant farmhouse in a field called Cae Castell, to the S. of the road, about 35 paces from the latter (6in. O.S. sheet xlii. S.W.: lat 52deg. 51'54"; long. 3 deg. 12'12")

DESCRIPTION. The mound is oval in shape, measuring about 110 paces round, 33 long, and 10 to 15 feet high. Its long axis lies N.W. and S.E. It is composed of shaly soil. An oak tree grows on its S. slope. There is not sufficient reason to think that it is artificial... Visited Nov. 23, 1923."

In 1951 the Offa Antiquarian Society of Oswestry, heard that the mound was to be bull-dozed, and they started on a rescue dig as, despite the Rev. Ellis Davies, it was thought that the mound might be in some part artificial. On the first day a pocket of burnt bones, with no covering, was found and the National Museum of Wales reported that the bones were human. Thereafter, the bull-dozing proposal having been abandoned, the excavation was carried on in a more leisurely style. Although ten years have elapsed, the work is not finished, but perhaps a short interim note may be of interest.

About three-quarters of the mound has been excavated and the finds include:-

- 1) A plano-convex knife; a flint thumb-scraper, and several flint flakes.
- 2) A few small sherds of Neolithic A and Neolithic B pottery.
- 3) Several small scattered sherds of beaker ware.
- 4) About half of a complete 'A' Beaker, broken but all in one place in the mound.
- 5) Small sherds of cinerary urn.
- 6) An urn of the overhanging-rim type, but with the rim missing.

The beaker (item no. 4) is now at the National Museum of Wales being restored.

The urn (item no. 6) was found inverted, and was only five inches below the existing ground level. It contained cremated bones of which it could only be said that they represented an adult human (sex unknown). The urn is considered to be of the Early Middle Bronze Age, say 1,200 - 1,000 BC. It was restored at the National Museum of Wales and is now in the Local History Room of the Oswestry Borough Library.

The mound itself is thought to be a natural one to which additions have been artificially made. The primary burial has not been found but considerable soil disturbance near the centre of the mound may mean that the primary burial has been robbed. Still, the fourth quarter has yet to be excavated - that is, the S.W. sector on which the tree mentioned by the Rev. Ellis Davies stands. In the N.W. and N.E. sectors a ditch was traced but in the S.E. sector it is not so obvious. In these N.W. and N.E. sectors there was, on the top of the ditch filling, a stone kerb (or, rather, peristalith) the stones being about 6 to 16 inches long and lying flat. Four hearths have been found, two in the N.W. and two in the S.E. sector, but their significance has not been decided.

As the site is in Wales, the finds have been submitted to the National Museum of Wales at Cardiff, and Dr. H.N. Savory, Keeper of the Department of Archaeology there has identified the finds, and has been most helpful in this and in other ways.

W. DAY.

EXCAVATIONS AT REDHILL, OAKENGATES, DURING 1961.

By J.A. Pagett.

SA 1113
(SAM 201)

Work so far during this present season has been directed towards tracing the front of the wall in the area of the Gate. This wall has been followed to a point about 15 feet north of the present A5 road, where it appears to end in a gateway.

To the west of this gate remains of a road have been found. Unfortunately only about half of it is in the area available for excavation, the remainder being under the present main road, but its width appears to have been about 30 feet, narrowing as it approached the gate. Like everything else on the site, it has been much disturbed.

Excavations inside the enclosed area have so far revealed no structural remains, but these excavations, as well as those connected with tracing the 'inturn' of the Gate, are still proceeding. The 'Well', reported in an earlier issue of this Newsletter, has been found to be some form of water storage tank.

HEN DCMEN, MONTGOMERY.

By Philip A. Barker.

Work has continued during the summer on the bridge systems of this motte and bailey castle. Stripping of the side of the motte above the post-holes and timber slots found previously revealed two parallel gullies leading to the top of the mound, and containing at least one large and a number of small postholes which appear to relate to the latest bridge.

There is now some evidence of a large building in the Bailey, close to the end of this bridge, together with a pit, cut vertically into the boulder clay, and, from indications on the ground, about 15 feet in diameter. A segment has been emptied to a depth of four feet without the bottom being reached. This segment was filled with grey silt and yielded a sickle and some 12/13C pottery.

A sector cut into the body of the motte showed that the ditch area had been turfed before building began, and the soil piled on to the central, motte area. The clay from the ditch digging had then been heaped on to this double thickness of soil to form the mound.

Work will continue at week-ends on the dates listed below, and for as long afterwards as weather permits. Volunteers, skilled and unskilled, are still most welcome, and details may be obtained from Mr. P.A. Barker, Church House, Annscroft, Shrewsbury (Tel: Hanwood 297).

Sunday, 8th October.

Saturday, 11th November.

Saturday, 21st October.

Sunday, 19th November.

Sunday, 29th October.

Sunday, 26th November.

Sunday, 5th November.

THE ROUSHILL WALL, SHREWSBURY By P.A. Barker.

A trench dug across the Smithfield Road, Shrewsbury, close to the old mortuary during the course of sewer-laying in September 1961 cut a section across a sandstone rubble wall, roughly faced and well mortared, which ran parallel to the road, with its front face about a foot south-east of the pavement kerb on the river side. The trench, eight feet six inches deep, did not reach the foundations of the wall, which was three feet thick and backed by a solid bank of dirty yellow stone-free clay. In front of the wall, through the whole depth of the trench, and extending to the river bank, were layers of rubble and earth-fill, yielding scraps of post-medieval pottery and a bone apple corer.

There seems to be little doubt that this is the wall built by the Parliamentarians c. 1645, to enclose the Smithfield marsh which, being impassable during medieval times was not included within the circuit of the earlier walls, but which by now had been drained and was used for grazing, and perhaps for cultivation. Two entries in the Parish Register of St.

Chad's Church, Shrewsbury for the year 1719, "Rousil April 10 Ploude and sowde" and "Rowsill plowed and soude Aprille 23", show that the newly enclosed area was being cultivated at that time.

A plan and section will be published in due course in the Miscellanea in the Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society.

SKELETON FOUND ON THE BOUNDARY OF FIELD BANK FARM, DITHERINGTON.

(2 feet N. from Flood drainage manhole S.6.A.)

By R. E. James, Assistant Curator, Shrewsbury Museum.

On August 1st, 1961 a skeleton was found during the mechanical excavation of a drain to connect to manhole S.6.A. near the boundary of Field Bank Farm, Ditherington, near to the new road called Sandford Avenue. On the discovery by the operators the work was stopped and the Police informed.

The site was visited by the District Coroner, who decided that the bones were not the concern of his department and the Police informed the Borough Museum on the morning of August 2nd, 1961, when the site was visited by Mr. Hunnisett, Deputy Librarian, and myself. At the request of the Police the bones were cleaned up, photographed and removed. This had to be done as quickly as possible owing to possible damage by sight-seers if they were left 'in situ' overnight.

The main bones of the body were exposed, but the skull visible only to the upper jaw, and the lower jaw was missing, the remainder of the skull being embedded in thick red clay. At the head the depth of the excavation was 4'6", with a 30" base of red clay and the remainder soil and rubble. At the foot of the skeleton, there were 26" of red clay with 13" of top soil and rubble. The whole area, which had been subject to a slum clearance order, had been bull-dozed and new road levels made up. Two old field drains crossed the body, one from the left shoulder over the torso, and another which, when dug, must have involved the destruction of the feet bones.

The bones lay in a SE to NW direction. the head two feet N. from the manhole, the body lying on its back, head turned to the right shoulder and rather depressed on the chest, arms to the sides. On removal there was no trace of the pelvis, hands and spinal column, but a colour change in the clay indicated that they had been present. All around the bones where the flesh layer had been, there was a change in colour in the clay from red to light blue, and where the bone had perished this colour trace remained. The bones were taken away by the Shropshire C.I.D. for further examination.

Further discoveries of bones, including one almost complete skull, have been made subsequently in the near vicinity of the first skeleton during work by the mechanical excavator. The skull is now in Shrewsbury Museum.

These discoveries have inevitably given rise to speculation as to the origin of the bodies. The evidence seems to point to stray burials of dead from the Battle of Shrewsbury in AD 1403, in spite of the statement that the dead were gathered up and buried in pits on the site of the present Battlefield Church. Another possibility is that the bones were those of malefactors hanged on the Gallows which is known to have stood in the fields to the West of the Ditherington road near this point. The body was often hung in chains on the gibbet and allowed to rot, and the general custom was to hand over the body for burial to relatives, but there must inevitably have been cases when no-one came forward to claim the body. After the introduction of the new drop at the Prison, which replaced the gallows at Ditherington, the bodies were interred in one of the town's churchyards, and burial within the Prison walls seems to have come in with the abolition of public hanging.

EXCAVATIONS ON THE WATLING STREET AND AT VIROCONIUM.

By Dr. A.W.J. Houghton.

During recent months investigations have been carried out on the Watling Street West and in connection with the aqueduct which supplied water to Viroconium.

1) A trench has been cut across the Watling Street West approximately 250 yards W. of the River Severn crossing opposite Wroxeter. About half of the road was found: a deep modern drain and a hedge having been put along the E. side of the road in this area. Roman levels were found intact and extremely hard at a depth of about 4 feet from the present surface. There was no roadside ditch, the road being trench built. There was a complicated sequence of post-Roman pitching and varying degrees of quality.

2) A further trench was cut across the same road in the parish of Pitchford, where similar construction and subsequent history was found. Both these sections of the road are now abandoned though they were in use at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

3) The Roman aqueduct has been found within the city boundary of Viroconium. With the aid of a number of aerial photographs taken and kindly lent by Mr. Arnold Baker, the silted ditch has been sectioned at three points in the large field bounded to the SE by the "Little Watling Street", to the N. by the Watling Street coming from the Horseshoes Inn and to the S. by the Shrewsbury - Ironbridge road. At the higher or NE end, two sections were cut just inside the 3rd century town's defences. Here, at a depth of between 3 and 4 feet the clay lined water-course was found. At the lower end of the field, just N. of Wroxeter Post Office and 30 yards to the E. of the hedge boundary another trench was cut. This was in a more populous part of the town and here the aqueduct was about nine feet across and five feet deep. It was concrete and clay lined and straight-sided, and so far the earliest pottery is not anterior to the end of the third century - most of the contents are of fourth century date. Investigations are now continuing and full reports on the road and the Aqueduct will appear in due course.

Excavation Training Courses in Archaeology have again been held during the Summer at Wroxeter, under the auspices of the Extra-Mural Department of the University of Birmingham, in conjunction with the Preston Field Studies Centre. There is little to report, except to say that more details of the timber buildings which preceded the Baths have come to light, showing that they were all of a complex character.

Mr. P.V. Addiman, of Peterhouse College, Cambridge has recently undertaken an excavation of the motte at Winsbury, near Chirbury, on behalf of the Ministry of Works, and has kindly promised an Interim report on his findings, which will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter.

Mr. P.S. Gelling, M.A., of Birmingham University, hopes to excavate the Berth at Baschurch during 1962, and the results of this important excavation will be awaited with interest.

SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held at the Priory Boys' Grammar School, Shrewsbury (by kind permission of the Headmaster) on Friday, 6th October, at 7 p.m., when the President, Captain Sir Offley Wakeman, Bt., C.B.E., will preside.

The meeting will be followed at 7.30 p.m. by a Public Lecture, entitled "A Tour of Roman Libya" by Dr. John Kent of the British Museum. The lecture will be illustrated by slides from Dr. Kent's collection, and friends of the Society and members of the Public will be welcome, as well as members of the Society.

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER.

Edited by J.L. Hobbs, Shrewsbury Museum, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury.

EXCAVATION OF A MOTTE AT WINSBURY, NEAR CHELBURY. (Grid Ref: SO 247984)

By P. V. ADDYMAN.

The Winsbury motte was partly destroyed and half the ditch was filled up during extensions to the present farm in 1376. The remaining third of the motte and ditch has for some time been threatened with destruction in further alterations to the farm-yard. A short excavation was therefore arranged by the Ministry of Works in September 1961. The work was limited to clearance of the standing face of the motte to record the section, and of the top, and the excavation of a section through the ditch. In addition, a Romano-British ditch was found beneath the motte.

The present height of the motte is deceptive; for lowering of the adjacent farmyard has left the mound on a pedestal of natural clay. Above this, however, were three basal layers, all horizontal except that the lower two dipped into the pre-existing Roman ditch. The lowest of these layers was presumably the old turf line. Above them was piled the clay and stones of the body of the motte. Construction had begun on the N. side with the making of a pile of material; the tip-lines showed that all subsequent loads had been piled against this or, more likely, had been tipped from above. Indeed the mound may have been constructed much like a large excavation spoil-heap. The maximum height of the remaining part of the motte above old ground level was 12 feet, but it could have been 15 feet at the centre, and a certain amount may have been eroded away. Erosion may also account for the absence of post-holes on the mound top. Only one was found, of uncertain age, though in the expected position of a palisade.

The ditch was a maximum of 13 feet below the old ground surface. It had a V-shaped bottom though the inner face had a much less steep slope than the outer, having almost a platform half way up.

Only an approximate estimate of the original dimensions of the mound can be made but, assuming that it was circular, the basal diameter cannot have been much over 80 feet. It is possible that there was a bailey attached to the motte, but little trace of it remains; if slight earthworks to the S. of the farm are part of it, then it is very large. Some scarping of the hill-top may have been done to produce a plateau, as is perhaps the case at the nearby motte at Wotherton. A nineteenth century observer (in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, July 1880, p. 207) wrote of Winsbury - "The farm-yard and buildings stand on what seems to have been the base-court."

The motte, quite small in size, is comparable with several in the Vale of Montgomery. Since the only pottery found (in the ditch) was no earlier than the thirteenth century, one is tempted to relate the mound to the Order of Henry III in 1224, when Montgomery Castle was under construction, for the re-fortification of all mottes in the Vale of Montgomery.

Beneath the motte a straight ditch, 5 feet 6 inches deep and of U-shaped profile, was traced for a distance of 65 feet. The meagre finds from it included a piece of mortarium, a flagon rim and a spindle whorl. It is possible that the ditch was part of a small Romano-British rural settlement. It had been filled up by the motte builders.

THE 1961 SEASON AT WROXETER SUMMER SCHOOL.

A Report by Graham Webster, M.A., F.S.A.

Work in 1961 was confined to the Baths and in particular details of the timber buildings of the earliest phase. Although there is yet insufficient evidence to make a plan of these buildings worth publishing, it can be said that they appear to be rather more complicated than has been hitherto appreciated. Part of the floor of the caldarium of the eastern range of the Baths was stripped, and it is now quite clear that Wright was mistaken in his interpretation of a central sunken bath (Wright: Uriconium, 1872, p. 122). What he found was evidently a large hole in the upper suspended floor due to the activities of tile robbers, who had broken open the floor to extract the tiles from the pilae. It was also noted that on the top of this broken floor were pieces of roofing, the collapse of which might have been due to further depredations. This roof debris consisted of lumps of tufa but not in any organised form of vousoirs, but merely broken lumps cemented together. These may well represent the filling above a barrel vault which consisted mainly of tiles.

EXCAVATIONS AT HEN DOMEN, MONTGOMERY. Grid Ref: SO 214981.

Interim Report, 1961 by Philip A. Barker.

The excavation of this motte and bailey castle, built by Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury about 1075, was begun in 1960 with the sectioning of the motte-bailey ditch in two places.

One of these sections revealed post-holes and timber slots of the bridge spanning the ditch, and the 1961 season has been spent in stripping the remains of this bridge and its predecessor, which was stratified below it and to one side.

Both bridges, though differing in construction, now seem to have been of the narrow, flying type, shown on the Bayeux Tapestry. This modifies previous interpretations, though the evidence is not yet complete. The upper, motte end of each bridge appears to have been laid in a radial gully cut into the mound close to the top.

A sector cut into the motte showed that the ditch area had been turfed, probably completely, before the ditch digging began. The turf and humus had been piled on to the central, motte area, and the clay from the ditch heaped on to this double thickness to form the mound.

There is evidence of a large structure, consisting of massive posts set in a wide gully or beam slot, in the bailey close to the end of the penultimate bridge, and a pit, some 15 feet in diameter, cut vertically in the boulder clay nearby. A segment of this pit has been emptied to a depth of four feet without the bottom being reached. This segment was filled with grey silt, and yielded a sickle and some 12th/13th Century pottery.

Finds this season include a cut half-penny of John or Henry III, 1214-1218, a number of small metal objects, and a quantity of pottery, though probably none earlier than the mid 12th century. This must be attributed to the deep and frequent re-cutting of the ditch at this point.

EXCAVATIONS ON THE CASTLE MOUND AT PONTESBURY. Grid Ref: SJ 402058.

Excavation (by the Shrewsbury Research Group, with the aid of a grant from the Ministry of Works, and subsequently by P. V. Addyman for the Ministry) of a large flat mound in the centre of Pontesbury, long thought to be the site of the castle, showed it to be a ring-work of three periods with a ditch some six feet deep cut in boulder clay, and with a corresponding rampart on the inside. The first occupation was on the natural ground level of the interior. No structures of this period were found in the small area

excavated. Period 2 was marked by a secondary rampart of stones and clay piled against the back of the first, but subsequently levelled with it when the ditch was filled, probably in the eighteenth century.

Associated with this second rampart were the remains of a heavy wall of unmortared stones, close to the tail of the rampart. The remains of Period 3 consisted of a clay floor, with four small post-holes along its edge, stratified above the wall of period 2.

There were no datable finds from Period 1. Periods 2 and 3 can be dated by pottery to within the period 1150 - 1225. A full report of the excavation is in preparation.

A QUERN FROM SUTTON, WEST FELTON. By T.W. Rogers.

Last year the lower half of a quern or hand-mill for grinding corn was presented to the Local History section of the Oswestry Borough Library by Mr. T. H. Nicholas of Sutton Farm, West Felton. This stone had been ploughed up in one of the farm fields (Grid Ref: 358271). It is roughly cylindrical in shape with a diameter of $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches on the upper surface. It is $8\frac{1}{4}$ inches thick in the centre and approximately 7 inches thick at the outer edge. The base is irregularly shaped. Slightly off centre in the upper (grinding) surface is a hole for a spindle, which is $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches across and $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep. The grinding surface sloped down from the spindle hole to the edges at approximately 10 degrees. The stone from which it was made has not been identified but it is of a grey gritty substance of fine texture.

Information about quern stones is hard to come by, but by the kindness of Mr. Nicholas Thomas, of Birmingham City Museum, attention was directed to the result of studies in this subject by Mr. E. Cecil Curwen, published in volumes XI and XV of "Antiquity". From these it appears that the local example is of an early type. The essential features leading to this conclusion are the thickness of the stone, the slope of the grinding surface and the fact that the hole for the spindle does not go right through the stone. It seems that a date prior to the Roman Conquest can be assigned to this example. Even allowing some time-lag for its position on the extreme edge of the Lowland zone it might be as late as the first century A.D. Mr. Graham Webster, from a description and a scale drawing, confirms this estimated date.

Unfortunately the upper stone has not been found. From known examples of this type of quern it would be expected that it would have an opening in the centre going through the stone and acting as a hopper for the corn to be ground and having room at its foot for the "rynd" which would pivot on the spindle of the lower stone. Another hole in the side might occur to provide for the insertion of a handle to move the upper stone. It is understood that these features exist in an upper stone in the Shrewsbury Museum. It should be noted that together they make the upper stone of such a quern more liable to accidental breakage and in pieces they might not be recognised.

Superficially the discovery of this quern suggests an agricultural occupancy of this area much earlier than has hitherto been supposed. It must be admitted, however, that a good deal more work needs to be done in studying querns before a clear-cut conclusion can be reached. It might be helpful if other known examples could be discovered and reported. Field workers might keep a look-out for them and at least secure descriptions and scale drawing of any examples found.

SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

The Annual General Meeting of the Shropshire Archaeological Society was held in the Priory Boys' School on Friday, 6th October, when the President, Sir Offley Wakeman, was in the Chair.

The Hon. Secretary, Mr. H. Beaumont, in his Report, stated that membership of the Society now stood at 186 ordinary members. In his opinion the Society was in a good and flourishing state of health, both as regards membership and enthusiasm, and the Research Groups and affiliated Societies were doing valuable work in the way of excavation and recording. The new and improved format of the Society's transactions had met with general approval and he considered that the standard of contributions to the Transactions was rising.

Mr. Beaumont then referred to the increased pressure of work laid on the Honorary Secretary by the greater activities of the Society, and he thought that the time was rapidly approaching when a separate Excursions and Meetings Secretary should be appointed. This was a matter which he hoped that the new Council would consider during the forthcoming year. He referred to the appointment of Miss Joan Wood as Hon. Treasurer of the Society and wished her well and thanked her for consenting to accept the office, which had hitherto been joined to that of Hon. Secretary.

Mrs. C.E. Thickpenny was re-elected Chairman of the Council, Mr. John Dyke was re-elected Auditor and Mr. J.L.Hobbs as Hon. Librarian. Mr. Michael Peele moved a vote of thanks to the President, Sir Offley Wakeman for presiding at the meeting, and also for his interest and encouragement of the work of the Society during the year.

Following the business meeting, Mr. John Kent, of the British Museum, gave a talk on "Roman Libya", illustrated with a wealth of coloured slides.

Members of the Council to serve for the year 1961-62 are Sir Offley Wakeman, President; Rev. J.E.G. Cartlidge, Miss L.F. Chitty, O.B.E., Mrs. L. Hayward, Messrs. T. Hamar, L.C. Lloyd and J.B. Oldham, Vice-Presidents: Miss E.M. Mackenzie, Mrs. C.E. Thickpenny, Miss M.C. Hill, Messrs. P.A. Barker, Dr. A.W.J. Houghton, J.E. Pilgrim, H.de C. Peele, E.M. Rutter, T.W. Rogers, J. Salmon, A.W. Welch, J.R.W. Whitfield and J.L.Hobbs. The following were co-opted to serve on the Council, Mr. A. Gaydon, John Pagett, G.S. Gamble and Graham Webster.

A series of three monthly meetings has been arranged for the New Year, to be held in the Morris Hall, Belstone on Thursday evenings. It is hoped that all members of the Society will do their best to support these meetings, which are in the nature of an experiment. Friends and members of the general public will be welcome. The meetings are as follow:

- Thursday, 25th January. Mr. Alec Gaydon. "The Victoria County History of Shropshire" 7.30 p.m. Morris Hall, Belstone.
- Thursday, 22nd February. Mr. John Salmon. "A History of Windmills" (Illustrated with slides) 7.30 p.m. Morris Hall.
- Thursday, 29th March. Mr. Philip A. Barker (Title to be announced) 7.30 p.m. Morris Hall.

A further report from Dr. A.W.J. Houghton on the completion of the excavation of the pottery site at the confluence of the rivers Severn and Tern (See Bulletin no. 15) and on the investigation of the water supply to Viroconium are unavoidably held up until the next issue, owing to shortage of space.

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER

Edited by J. L. Hobbs, Shrewsbury Museum, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury.

STONE AXE MOULD FOR CASTING FLAT AXES FOUND AT LONGDEN COMMON,434046 PONTESBURY, CO. SALOP, EASTER 1961.

N.G. S.J. 441062

(6" O.S. old sheet. XL. S.E.)

The mould was found during the Easter School Holidays of 1961, by Master Robert (Ian) Blazey of Brookfield, Longden Common, in the Walleybourne Brook, about 10 yards below the confluence with a small stream, and 500 feet upstream from the bridge under which the stream crosses the Longden-Pulverbatch Road. The stream marks the boundary between the Pontesbury and Church Pulverbatch parishes, and the mould was found more or less in mid-stream.

The site of the find is a miniature gorge densely over grown and inaccessible. The mould could have lain there for a considerable time without discovery. Only a child paddling in the brook would have seen it. On the other hand the Walleybourne just above its confluence with the small stream contains a considerable amount of flood debris. December 1960 saw extensive flooding all over Shropshire and it is possible that the mould may have been washed down from a higher point at this time, or dislodged from the bank. Stones in both streams at this point are stained black by a form of matter identified by Professor Shotton as algae. The staining on the mould is not so extensive as that on stones taken from the stream bed.

The Walleybourne, a tributary of the Cound, runs in a small valley leading up to the Highland Zone of Shropshire. This area has been worked since Roman times for minerals. Westcott and Cothercott were mined for copper, the latter as late as 1914. Callow Hill near Pontesbury produced lead and zinc. There are all these within $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles of the site. Further to the South West the ground is riddled with abandoned mine shafts. The only raw material lacking in the locality is tin.

Refs. minerals

Mem. Geol. Surv.

Special report on mineral resources of Great Britain Vol XXIII. Lead and Zinc ores in the Pre-Carboniferous rocks of West Shropshire and North Wales. 1922.

p. 1.

Geological Sur. Shrewsbury District 1938. p. 217.

R. E. James.

REPORT ON THE STONE MOULD FOR CASTING FLAT AXES.By Nicholas Thomas, M.A. (Birmingham City Museum)

This is the nineteenth Early Bronze Age axe-mould to have been found in Britain. Of these, thirteen come from Scotland with three others from Northumberland and Co. Durham (2). A large number of moulds has been recorded also, in Ireland. All are of fine-grained sandstone and represent the most important piece of equipment carried by itinerant bronze-smiths.

The Shrewsbury mould enabled axes of five different sizes to be cast. Its four sides are so much flatter than its ends that it is possible that the stone was artificially shaped into a rectangular block. There is also a hollow for casting a short rod, probably an awl with a point at each end - the Beaker type of c. 1800-1600 B.C.

Scrapings were taken from two of the casting hollows and submitted to the Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art at Oxford. These yielded copper and tin in sufficient quantity to show that the mould had been used for casting.

The mould was sliced by Professor Shotton. He reports it to be made of coarse felspathic grit, almost certainly Millstone Grit.

On stone moulds it was common practice to include hollows for casting objects other than axes. Rods and awls, rings and West European tanged knives are the main types of contemporary copper and bronze equipment cast at this earliest stage in the British Bronze Age.

ISHORE COPPICE (SJ558090)

The excavation of a pottery factory, near the confluence of the Rivers Tern and Severn, commenced in the winter of 1960 was completed at the beginning of the year. (vide Newsletter No. 15, June 1961.) Around the cooking hearths used by the workers were large numbers of worn and chipped utensils which fell into three main groups.

1. Pie dishes in black burnished ware.
2. Tall rather slender cookpots with the rim oversailing the widest girth and having a narrow band of obtuse angled latticing. The late Dr. Philip Corder referred to these pots as the fossils which date the site and therefore the associated pottery.
3. Straight sided cook pots with high internal bead. Some were in a red fabric with a burnished black slip; others were in grey or black fabrics.

Very great numbers of wasters were recovered of which the majority were underfired though a proportion were distorted and vitrified. The following types were identified.

1. Wide mouthed bowls similar to D. Atkinsons Nos. B5, C5 and C8 in Wroxeter Forum figs. 45 and 46.
2. Narrow mouthed jars with lip similar to Atkinsons C4 fig. 46 supra. Both these types in buff or reddish ware some with pale red colour coating.
3. Imitations of Samian forms 23, 29, 31, 37 and 38.
4. Tankards in buff ware.
5. Colanders.
6. Attempts to copy exotic types.

WATLING STREET.

Further sections were cut across Watling street west at a point on the right bank of the Severn within sight of Wroxeter (078558) and in Pitchford parish (047540). The width of the road was about 23 feet in each place. The Roman levels had been deeply eroded and successive layers of post Roman pitching provided a picture of patchy casual repair carried out at long intervals.

INVESTIGATION OF THE WATER SUPPLY OF VIROCONIUM.

This followed upon the published work of Graham Webster and D. Hollingsworth (SAS LVI pt. II. 1957) who traced the aqueduct in the fields east of the defences. A trench was laid out to the north of Wroxeter Post Office after study of aerial photographs taken by Arnold Baker in 1959. This revealed not the aqueduct as was expected but the one end of a great sewer 10 feet deep and 8 feet across. This was constructed not earlier than 155 A.D. according to coin evidence and a stamped amphora. Subsequently the sewer was robbed of its lining in Roman times-probably in the late third or early fourth century. Trenches on the possible line of the aqueduct within the east defences are being excavated.

Dr. A. W. J. Houghton.

EXCAVATIONS AT REDHILL (SJ/7208 1090)

By Wrekin Archaeological Group (Previously Wellington
Archaeological Research Group)

SA 1113

(same 201)

Work on this Site, previously reported on in No's. 10, 13, and 16 of this Newsletter, has continued during the year in an endeavour to trace the front of the Wall in the area of the Western Gate.

What appears to be the line of the much robbed foundations of a structure connected with the Gate have been found and also the lowest levels of the Roman Watling Street outside it to the west.

The remains of the Road consisted of Sandstone rubble, containing small scraps of pottery and broken tegulae, resting on a pebble foundation lying on top of the natural. No signs of an Agger were found. It had been much denuded, the maximum thickness remaining being only 9 inches, and at one place what appears to be a Forge or Furnace has been cut into it.

Since stonework has been found in front of its construction trench, it is thought that the Gate may have been partly blocked at one stage.

Finds during the year have been, as usual, few consisting of: one small piece of plain Samian from the interior of the area, and two metal objects, one a Jeton, the other a Sestericius of Antoninus Pius, shewing Marcus Aurelius as Caesar (c. 144 A.D.) The field to the west however has produced, as a surface find, a Samian stamp (OP·MRRR, mid 1st. Century, Mr. B. Hartley).

J. A. Pagett

ST. LAWRENCE'S CHURCH GLASS - REVIEW

"Ludlow Stained and Painted Glass" by E. W. Ganderton, F.S.A., and Jean Lafond (1961 published for the Friends of the Church of St. Lawrence, Ludlow, 12/6d.)

It may be fairly said that the stained and painted glass in the Parish Church of Ludlow is one of Shropshire's greatest artistic possessions and a detailed study of the windows has been long overdue, although its glass has been referred to by numerous antiquaries from Stukeley in 1722 to Dean Christopher Woodforde in 1954. This book, therefore, which deals with the modern as well as the ancient windows, fills a real gap in our Shropshire bibliography and even more in the catalogue of our artistic heritage which even today is remarkably incomplete. It represents the first real attempt by experts to examine and describe the glass thoroughly and completely.

M. Lafond is one of the foremost authorities in the world on this subject and a Membre de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France and Hon. Fellow of the British Society of Master Glass Painters. His co-author, Edwin W. Ganderton has the advantage of being a Ludlow man, born and bred, in addition to being also an expert on British stained glass.

The book consists of 109 pages, 38 of which are devoted to a series of excellent plates illustrating the glass. The historical text describes the windows in detail, lives of many of the personalities depicted are included, and technical terms are, in general, carefully explained. The work can be thoroughly recommended, not only for the student of stained glass or of church history, but for the general public which is increasingly interested in the art and heritage of our churches. The authors have generously presented the copy-right and 400 copies of this excellent work to the Friends of the Church of St. Lawrence, and these are on sale at 12/6d. (13/- post free) and may be obtained from the Secretary, The Friends of St. Lawrence, The Grammar School, Ludlow, Salop. At this low price it is excellent value and deserves support from all who are interested in the history of Shropshire.

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

ARCHAEOLOGY FIELD COURSES, 1962.

The Department of Extra-mural studies of Birmingham University has just issued a leaflet with details of its courses and excavations during the coming season.

There are the usual courses in excavation techniques to be held at Wroxeter, the introductory course under the direction of S. C. Stanford from July 14th to 28th and the more advanced course in charge of Dr. Graham Webster from September 1st to 15th. A further course on Archaeological Field Work and Surveying will be held from August 18th to September 1st.

Further courses arranged at Preston Montford will cover "Roman Sites in Wales and the Marshes" (August 25th to September 1st) under Professor D. R. Dudley, M.A., F.S.A., and "Industrial Archaeology" (1st to 6th September) in charge of Michael Rix, M.A.

Excavations in the Shropshire area during 1962 include a continuation of Mr. Philip Barker's extensive excavation at Hen Domen, near Montgomery, and a further excavation at the Roveries under Mr. Nicholas Thomas. Students will be welcomed at both these sites, but they will be expected to have had some previous experience.

Instruction will be given on the study of dateable finds, surveying, drawing plans and sections and the preparation of reports. Both these courses are from August 4th to 18th and further particulars may be obtained from The Director of Extra-Mural Studies, The University, Birmingham, 15.

Mr. Barker's Archaeological research group will be working at Hen Domen throughout the Summer, commencing on Sunday 25th March, continuing on Sunday, April 1st, Saturday April 7th and for the whole week at Easter from Friday April 20th to Saturday April 28th inclusive. For dates subsequent to this please apply to Philip Barker, Church House, Annscroft. (Tel: Hanwood 297) Volunteers will be welcome.

Mr. Barker has also arranged an excavation of a medieval moated site at Shifnal (SJ46074) as a trial dig for the Ministry of Works, from April 9th to April 14th inclusive. Volunteers will again be welcome and some expenses will be paid.

The Annual Meeting of Archaeological Research Groups and Societies will again be held at the Worcestershire Hotel, Droitwich, on March 17th - 18th 1962. It is hoped that as many representatives as possible of local archaeological research groups will be able to attend. As in previous years, it will take the form of reports on excavations and field work undertaken during 1961 by various archaeological organisations in the West Midlands.

The Conference will open at 3.30 p.m. on Saturday 17th March, and continue until 4.30 p.m. on Sunday, and applications should be made to The Director of Extra-Mural Studies, The University, Birmingham, 15.

SHROPSHIRE: DETTON (SO/667796)

Rescue excavation before bulldozing on behalf of the Ministry of Works, by S. C. Stanford.

"Chapel Meadow", in front of Detton Hall, has every appearance of being the site of a deserted medieval village with holloways and platforms. The supposed site of the Chapel is marked on the O.S. map, but the latest authority for its position appears to be Dukes's "Antiquities of Shropshire" (1842) wherein it is stated that there were "remains within living memory". Excavation in this area revealed only one dry-stone wall, and this western half of the site appears to have been largely destroyed by marl quarrying and brick-making early in this century. An undisturbed medieval occupation was found over a limited area, but no building structures could be recognised. The absence of stones suggests timber buildings, and 12th and 13th Century pottery was found. Elsewhere, erosion has removed any occupation levels that may once have existed on the remaining platforms.

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER.

Edited by J. L. Hobbs, Shrewsbury Museum, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury.

INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE WEST MIDLANDS.

The Council for British Archaeology is very much alive to the problem of recording and, where appropriate, preserving monuments of the Industrial Revolution in this country, and it has recently sent a circular letter to all its constituent societies and organizations in the West Midlands to seek assistance in the primary task of recording the surviving industrial remains in the area, of which Shropshire has so many significant examples. The importance of such monuments has been recognised only recently, since they belong to a time when Britain was leading the world in almost every industrial activity, and they have, therefore, more than a local importance. They are milestones in human progress.

Despite this, destruction of these monuments is proceeding apace. Many are included in re-development areas and few are capable of adaptation to modern requirements. The need to record them is alarmingly urgent, not only for its own sake but also because until the value of what survives has been assessed it is impossible to formulate a preservation policy. This is a point which the Minister of Works has stressed in answer to questions in the House of Commons, and the responsibility of providing the Minister with the necessary information rests ultimately with the Council for British Archaeology.

The West Midlands Group of the Council, responsible for the counties of Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire, Herefordshire and South Staffordshire, an area where so much pioneering has been done, is anxious to play its part in the Survey, and it will require all the help possible from archaeological and technical societies and other interested organisations. What is needed are persons ready to record items of a particular class or in a particular area. Enclosed with this circular is a sample record card, showing the type of information required.

A course on Industrial Archaeology will be held at Preston Montford Field Studies Centre from the 1st to 8th of September, and another at Penderel Hall, near Wolverhampton, for the week-end 14th to 16th September. Enquiries for these should be made to the Director of Extra-Mural Studies, The University, Birmingham, 15 and the Warden, Penderel Hall, Codsall Wood, Wolverhampton.

The question of recording industrial remains in Shropshire was discussed by the Archaeological Society Council at their meeting on Saturday, 2nd June, and it was decided to help the C.B.A. project as far as possible and to invite individual members of the Society to undertake the work of recording in their special fields. It was felt, however, that the information collected should be made available locally in a county centre, and Shrewsbury Museum was suggested as a suitable central point, and that the record cards should therefore be completed in duplicate. The importance of the coordination of effort and the need to avoid duplication was also stressed, and this too will be avoided by the appointment of a central agency in each county to collect and pass on the collected information to the Council for British Archaeology.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The Annual General Meeting of the Shropshire Archaeological Society was held in the Priory Boys Grammar School on Friday, 1st June, when the President, Captain Sir Offley Wakeman, Bart., C.B.E. presided over a very good attendance of members. The business formalities were soon disposed of, and the Committee and Officers re-elected, while the Hon. Secretary, Mr. H. Beaumont, gave a brief account of the principal activities of the Society during the past year and noted some of its hopes for the future.

The meeting was followed by a Public Lecture entitled "Celt, Anglian and Norman in Shropshire's rural scene", given by Miss Dorothy Sylvester, M.A., Senior Lecturer in Geography at the University of Manchester. Miss Sylvester, a member of the Society, is at present carrying out extensive and important research into this absorbingly interesting aspect of local historical geography and her conclusions will eventually appear in a book which has been given the provisional title of "The Rural Landscape of the Welsh Borderland". We are privileged indeed to have been given a preview of Miss Sylvester's work and findings on this important subject which has obviously meant a great deal of intensive and detailed study into place and field-names and a wide variety of documentary sources. The lecture was profusely illustrated with excellent colour-slides and by plans and charts, by means of which Miss Sylvester had attempted to summarise and clarify her conclusions.

The Society has arranged the following day excursions which it is hoped will be well supported.

Saturday, 7th July. Excursion to Montgomeryshire, including the motte and bailey site at Hen Domen, where excavation will be in progress, and Powis Castle. Leader - Mr. T.W. Rogers.

Saturday, 11th August. Excursion to Croft Ambery, Shobdon and Wigmore in Herefordshire. Leaders - Mr. C.S. Stanford and Mr. F. Noble.

NOTES ON EXCAVATIONS IN PROGRESS.

HEN DOMEN, MONTGOMERY.

The section of the motte-bailey ditch has now revealed the remains of four successive bridges. A sole-plate of the earliest bridge, more than twelve feet long and ten inches square, with a large rectangular mortice in the end at present exposed, has been discovered preserved in situ in the water-logged bottom of the ditch, which had subsequently been recut six times.

Stripping of the north-west end of the bailey has begun, and the pit found last year is being emptied. Volunteers, skilled and unskilled, are urgently required. Please ring Mr. P.A. Barker (Hanwood 297) for details.

WREKIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP.

REDHILL, SJ/ 728109. Work on this site terminated for the present on 29th April 1962, and all trenches have been filled in. Nothing has so far been discovered to alter the picture given in the previous report.

A Bronze object, identified by Mr. Graham Webster as an apron mount, was found by Mr. C. Lears on the 30th March 1962 on the surface of a ploughed field to the west of the site at SJ/7260,1090.

WALL FARM. SJ/8100,17850.

With the kind permission and fullest co-operation of the owner, Mr. A. W. Felton, work commenced at this site on May 5th, 1962, and is still in progress.

A trench cutting through the main bank has been made and at least two, possibly three, ditches have been found. The only significant discovery to date is a pipe bowl stamped 'MD' in a disturbed area, above what appears to be Tumble, near the foot of the Main Bank on the west. No trace of post-holes has been observed on top of the bank. The clay pipe was dated by Mr. R.E. James of Shrewsbury Museum to between 1683 and 1698 and was made by Morris Deacon of Broseley.

J.A. Pagett.

WELLINGTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY.

Overley Hill. SJ/6160, 6060.

An excavation to examine the bank on the south side of the field at the point shown above (Grid. Ref) was commenced on the 19th April 1962,

and is still proceeding under the direction of Mr. R.A. Meeson, as and when school work permits. The site is along the line of the Roman Watling Street. About seven road levels have been discovered, the southernmost one being of pebbles, also a ditch to the north side of these. In association with the fifth of these levels a piece of pottery of uncertain date (possible Roman or medieval) has been found.

R. A. Meeson.

FORTHCOMING EXCAVATIONS.

CROFT AMBERY, co. HEREFORD.

A third season of excavation on this multi-vallate hill-fort is to be carried out under the direction of Mr. S.C. Stanford, B.A., F.S.A., on behalf of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club. This will include work on the Iron Age A defences and the Iron Age B levels. 30 volunteers, trained and untrained, are needed and can be accommodated in dormitories in the stable-block of Croft Castle, one mile from the site. Charge for full board is £3..5s. per week. Please apply to Mr. S.C. Stanford, Ashfield cottage, Luston, Leominster.

RICHARD'S CASTLE.

Excavation took place on the motte and bailey site at Richard's Castle, near Ludlow from the 16th to 28th May, and these will be resumed from the 25th of August to the 8th of September, 1962, under the direction of Mr. P. E. Curnow, B.Sc., and sponsored by the British Archaeological Association. Volunteers willing to do hard digging will be welcome, and should apply to Mr. Curnow, 11 Hall Place, St. Alban's, Herts.

RECENT FINDS.

Mr. James H. White, of Cloverley, 23, Old Park, Wellington, Salop recently brought into Shrewsbury Museum a fragment of a rotary quern, found at SJ/5569/2553, a few yards off the line of the Roman road near Paper-mill Bank, in the parish of Stanton-on-Hine-Heath.

The fragment was in a modern fence line and had obviously been ploughed up from the field to the south. Mr. White, who is Officer for the Western Region for the Archaeological Division of the Ordnance Survey says that in checking the line of the road here, several sherds of Roman pottery were found, including some Samian. Taken with the large quantity of Roman sherds found some years ago by Miss Sladdin, of Shrewsbury Museum, in the same field, the evidence points to definite occupation, probably connected with the Roman road north from Viroconium to Whitchurch (Mediolanum) and to Chester.

There is evidence to suggest that after turning through the gap in the hills at Holloway (a significant place-name), the road made directly from the western side of the gap to the straight stretch of road on the west side of Prees Green. Two stretches of agger have been surveyed on this alignment.

It is always difficult to assign even a tentative date to rotary querns and the consensus of opinion seems to be that they were used over a wide period of time, from pre-Roman times perhaps to late medieval times. However, in the context in which this particular fragment was found, it would certainly appear that it may date from Roman times. Mr. White had kindly allowed the stone to remain in Shrewsbury Museum.

A Bronze Age socketed axe, said to have been found near Greenfields, Shrewsbury some years ago, was recently presented to Shrewsbury Museum by Mr. E.R. Swales, of 59, Dawley Road, Wellington. Unfortunately, precise details of its discovery have been lost since the finder has died in the interim, but it is an interesting example of the Irish type of socketed axe. The socket contained remains of the wooden shaft used with the axe-head, which the finder had tried to burn out. Efforts are being made by the Museum to arrange for a radio-carbon dating to be carried out on this wood, which might provide some very interesting information.

THE PARENTAGE AND ANCESTRY OF JOHN GWYN, THE ARCHITECT

John Gwyn, R.A., the architect and friend of Dr. Johnson, was, on his own testimony, born in Shrewsbury, but his parentage and the date of his birth have never been satisfactorily determined. The D.N.B. says that he "was born 'of a respectable family' in Shrewsbury, probably in the parish of St. Chad's, but the year of his birth is not known".

Wyatt Papworth, in his admirable memoir of Gwyn in *The Builder* of June 1863, pp. 454-7, states that a local antiquary had informed him that he could never ascertain the date of his birth and that the parish registers had been searched without success. This was probably Joseph Humphreys, a Shrewsbury antiquary, who had tried unsuccessfully to establish the dates of Gwyn's birth and death.

Attempts have been made to link Gwyn with a notable family of this name who were living in Shrewsbury as milliners in the first half of the eighteenth century and the Betton MSS. state categorically that he was the John Gwyn, son of Richard Gwin, milliner, who was baptized at St. Chad's Church on 26 March, 1739, but this cannot be true since the architect was known in London "as a writer on art and a draughtsman" as early as 1734.

The writer has carefully searched the registers of each of the five ancient Shrewsbury parishes and he believes that it is now possible to establish Gwyn's parentage and date of birth. The following entries appear in the baptismal register of St. Julian's Church, Shrewsbury:

- 1713. 12 Nov. John, son of John Gwin and Elizabeth his wife bapt.
- 1715. 2 Nov. Richard, son of John Gwin and Elizabeth his wife bapt.
- 1718. 2 June. Elizabeth daughter of John Gwin bapt.
- 1722. 15 Apr. Margaret daughter of John and Elizabeth Gwin bapt.
- 1724. 16 Aug. Anne daughter of John and Elizabeth Gwyn bapt.

Is the record for 12 November, 1713, that of the baptism of the architect? There are no burials for John or Richard Gwyn in the register and presumably they both survived infancy. The daughter, Elizabeth, was buried at Holy Cross (The Abbey) Church, Shrewsbury, on 28th October, 1752, aged 34, and there is, or was, a monument to her and to the parents in the Abbey which is quoted by Owen and Blakeway in their *History of Shrewsbury* (1825), II, 160. This states that John Gwin was buried in 1733, aged 68, and his wife in July 1758, age 74. The authors have, however, misread the date "1733" and it is apparent from the burial entry of John Gwyn, senior, which occurs in both the Register of Holy Cross and of St. Julian's that he died on 21 September, 1735. He would thus have been born about 1667 and his wife, Elizabeth about 1684: he was evidently considerably older than his wife and would be in his forties when his children were born. John Gwin, born in 1713, was presumably the eldest child, but I have not been able to discover the marriage of the parents.

The will of John Gwyn, the elder, dated 19 September, 1735, shows that the five children mentioned above all survived at that date. He left his house and goods to his wife, Elizabeth, for her life and after her decease to his three daughters, Elizabeth, Margaret and Ann. To his son, John, he left his Flying Gun and to his son, Richard his Long gun. Neither of the sons was made an executor, perhaps because they had both left Shrewsbury by that date. The monument at Holy Cross must have been erected after the death of the mother in 1758, perhaps at the expense of John Gwyn.

When the architect died at Worcester in 1786 his will mentioned only a brother, Richard Gwynn of Liverpool, and a natural son, Charles, who died at the age of 18. Since Richard Gwyn features both in St. Julian's Register and in the will of John Gwyn, the elder, it seems reasonable to assume that it was John Gwyn the architect who was baptized at St. Julian's on 12 November, 1713. There is no other John Gwyn about this date who cannot be otherwise accounted for.

J.L.H.

(The above is abridged from a short article which appeared in "Notes and Queries" for January 1962. pp. 22-24.

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER

Edited by J. L. Hobbs, Shrewsbury Museum, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury.

FERNHILL FORGE AND MAESBURY FORGE

by W. Day of Offa Antiquarian Society, Oswestry.

Pages 185-202 of the Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society, Vol. LVI Part II (1959), give an account by Ifor Edwards of "The Early Ironworks of North-west Shropshire". In this are mentioned "The Fernhill Forge in the lordship of Whittington, and the Maesbury Forge within the lordship of Oswestry". Being near Oswestry these Forges are of interest to the Offa Antiquarian Society, and an attempt has been made to fix their sites. It seems reasonable to suppose that the Fernhill Forge was at the place still called "Iron Mills", a little over half-a-mile north-east of the cross-roads on the A5 between Whittington and Gobowen. There, at Grid Ref: SJ 318333 just south-west of the bridge over the River Perry, the road runs on what appears to be a dam thrown across the narrow neck between the higher ground on each side of the river. The present bridge is at the north-east end of the "dam", but at the south-west end is some masonry which suggests that a bridge previously existed there. Was this south-west end the site of a mill-race, or was it the site of a former river-bridge as seems possible from the rather remarkable turn the river makes to get under the present bridge? In this connection it is interesting to note the remark made by the Rector of Whittington in his Parish Register (see Shropshire Parish Registers, St. Asaph Diocese, Vol. II, Whittington, Halston, page 484) namely :- "1773 ... Mr. Lloyd of Aston for the purpose of draining his lands at the iron mill sunk the channel of the river crossing the road and caus'd a bridge to be made over the channel ...".

This "dam" is very similar to the one near Attingham Hall, mentioned by Robin Chaplin in his article on "The location and scale of Tern Works" on page 2 of the Shropshire News Letter of February, 1961; and it seems feasible that upstream of the "dam" was the pool which fed water to the Fernhill Forge on the downstream side.

The only reference to the Forge at Fernhill in the "Index Locorum" of the Whittington Parish Register, mentioned above, is on page 64 where there is an entry on Feb. 2, 1629/30 of the baptism of "Elizabeth, d. of William Blockley, of the forge, in Fernill". This date is before that of the accounts, etc., given by Ifor Edwards in his article in the Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society.

As to the Maesbury Forge, no trace of this site has been found; nor is there any mention of the forge in the "Index Locorum" of the Oswestry Parish Register.

WREKIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUPWall Farm SJ/68100 17850

Work on this site is still continuing. From what can be seen at present it appears that the Inner Ditch (Ditch I) has been interfered with to such an extent that it is almost invisible. The two outer Ditches (Ditches II, and III) have however still to be fully investigated.

Indications of an earlier period, in the shape of a low Bank covered with what may be a Turf Line, have been found beneath the Main Bank on its Western side. No dating evidence has as yet been found for any part of the site, the Pipe Bowl referred to in the last Report appears to be residual.

WELLINGTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

(Information from: Mr. R. A. Meeson)

Overley Hill SJ/6160 6060

The examination of the hedge bank at the point shown above is still proceeding, and has shown that the Ditch to the North of the Road levels is an extremely complicated structure. At least three recuttings of it are associated with the upper most Road level.

A piece of Pipe stem, and a piece of pottery (which still awaits precise dating) have been recovered. The piece of Pottery referred to in the last Report was stated by Dr. Graham Webster to be Medieval. Since the above was written the Northern edge, and about 10 feet of the Roman road have been found.

SHROPSHIRE MINING CLUB

(Information from: Messrs. D. R. Adams, C. Lears, and M. James)

Ogof Llanymynech SJ/2650 2220

While clearing fallen rock to open out a passage in the interior of this cave, which is considered to have been a Roman copper mine, two members of the Club (Messrs. C. Lears, and M. James) found a piece of Roman pottery, two whetstones, and a quantity of bones including a human lower jaw.

The piece of Pottery is a rimeherd from a Black Burnished Cooking pot dated by Dr. Graham Webster to 2nd Century.

For the Whetstones, one of which is a rough-out, see: Donald Atkinson, "Report on Excavations at Wroxeter" (Oxford 1942), pages 129 and 130.

J. A. Pagett.

DIGGING AT RICHARDS CASTLE

Members of the History Department of King's College, London, who are digging into a little known piece of Midland history at Richard's Castle, hope that during the remainder of their 10 days on the site this summer they will unearth positive evidence of the timbered 11th century castle which was the predecessor of the Norman fortress which helped guard the Welsh border.

All that remains of Richard's Castle, which it is believed was built about 1050, is a tall mound and fragmentary ruins of the Norman walls which stand above the deep ditch of the old moat in the woods adjoining the church, just over a mile off the Ludlow-Leominster road.

While most of this summer's work is being confined to the mound, preliminary work is also being undertaken on the castle gatehouse.

Walls 12 feet thick

So far, under the direction of Dr. M. W. T. Thompson, a member of the staff of the Ancient Monuments Department of the Ministry of Works, and Mr. P. E. Curnow, a section of the base of the keep has been exposed at the top of the mound, and work is going ahead on digging out the centre of the keep, the walls of which are 10-12 feet thick.

Richard's Castle was mentioned in Domesday Book, and it is known that in Tudor times the keep, towers, and curtain walls existed, although even by then they were probably in ruins.

Next season, the volunteer diggers hope to find the foundations of the principal buildings of the courtyard or bailey. By the end of next summer they feel they will have a detailed plan of the old castle.

The castle was built of Ludlow shale, as was Ludlow Castle, and the

excavations of the mound will have to drive through many feet of this impacted stone, which is what remains of the demolished keep.

Private Fortress

Richard's Castle was a private fortress and was one of the earliest in England. It was built by Richard le Scrob, a Norman noble who was a friend of Edward the Confessor. In later years it became one of the chain of fortresses established between Chepstow and Shrewsbury to defend the Welsh border.

Richard's Castle was granted a charter by King John to hold a fair and market in 1216, which was earlier than Ludlow. It is thought that the castle fell into disuse late in the 14th century.

In Tudor times the castle passed through many hands, including the Bishop of Worcester's. A manor house was built inside the ruined walls, but nothing remains of it to-day.

AN ALTAR FRAGMENT AT WROXETER

In September 1960 a fragment of a Roman altar was noticed built into a garden wall in the modern village of Wroxeter, by a student of one of the Summer Schools. A photograph and squeeze was sent to Mr. R. P. Wright and he suggested that the first line on which there are no letters now visible may have contained the name of the dedicator. The second line contains the letters: ARA M; the third: D(ONO) D(EDIT) and the fourth: DEO V ... This means " (the donor) gave (this) altar as a gift to the god V ..."

The placing of the dedicator's name in this position is unusual but not without parallel. He further suggested that the stone ought to be taken from the wall and preserved. When the site was visited in September 1962 to arrange for this transfer it was discovered that a house was being built on the site and the section of wall in which the stone had rested had been removed to provide an entrance. Fortunately the stones from the wall were still lying nearby and the altar fragment was soon found, but now in two pieces and with other damage.

The owner, Mr. V. G. McChesney, very kindly agreed to the removal of the stones into safe keeping and they are now in the University Training School on the Baths Site.

Dr. R. Graham Webster.

B O O K R E V I E W .

"Prehistoric England" by Graham Clark (Batsford, 5/-)

This latest addition to the Batsford paper backs at the extremely reasonable price of five shillings is really a new edition of the book first published in 1940. It contains an entirely new introductory chapter and substantial portions of others have been rewritten to include the many new discoveries which have been made in the field of pre-historic archaeology which have been made during the past two decades.

Important new finds, it is said, have also been added to the map included in the book, but this still shews an astonishing blank so far as Shropshire is concerned. No hill-forts nearer than Malvern and Bredon are indicated, although Old Oswestry is included amongst the illustrations, and it is apparent that the map at least is very selective. This is partly offset by an exhaustive index of places which is arranged on a county basis.

The text is a thorough and scholarly survey of its subject; the work is exceedingly well-illustrated with plates and line-drawings, and its modest price brings it within the range of the student and every practising archaeologist.

EXCAVATIONS AT SHIFNAL, Easter 1962.

The Shrewsbury Research Group excavated, on behalf of the Ministry of Works, a moated site at Shifnal, (SJ747074) in advance of housing development.

A series of trial trenches revealed the mortared sandstone rubble foundations of a house on the east side of the site. They had been severely robbed, no faced stone being found. There was evidence, in the form of scattered post-holes, of timber buildings in the rest of the enclosure, while the bases of postholes along the rampart on the west and north-west sides showed that there had been a timber palisade.

Finds were few, but the pottery was closely comparable with that from Brockhurst Castle, Church Stretton, all the cooking pot rims from Shifnal being of Brockhurst Type 3, dating from the first half of the thirteenth century.

There was no evidence of more than one period of occupation, and the absence of earlier or later finds suggests strongly that the site was occupied for only a short while, probably for less than a century.

EXCAVATIONS AT HEN DOMEN, MONTGOMERY

This season's work at Hen Domen has revealed a stratified sequence of five successive bridges, all of different construction, spanning the motte ditch, which had been recut six times. A sleeper beam of the earliest bridge was preserved by waterlogging in its slot in the bottom of the earliest ditch. It is 14 feet long, 10 - 11 inches square, with large mortices in each end. There is evidence that it had been reused.

An area of about 3000 square feet of the bailey is being stripped. There were two buildings, one very flimsy, on the edge of the motte ditch, an open area near the ends of the bridges, and a surface of fine pebbles, a floor or a yard, to the south of the open area. The pit found last year on the edge of the ditch was timber lined and sealed in its upper levels with two successive clay floors, in the lower of which was preserved the foot of a massive post. Part of the timber lining is preserved in the waterlogged filling at a depth of 6 feet.

Finds, apart from pottery, have been few, but include an armour-piercing arrowhead, two knives, some hooks, and links of a heavy chain. The most important pottery find is a plaited strap handle of Stamford ware, dating from the early years of the 12th century. This Saxo-Norman ware has not hitherto been found further west than Leicester.

Work will continue on the site until mid-November, or later if weather permits. Volunteers, with or without experience, are still urgently required.

P. A. Barker.

COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY

A one-day conference on "The Iron Age in the South-East Midlands" has been arranged by Regional Group 9 of the Council for British Archaeology. It will be held under the chairmanship of Mrs. M. A. Cotton, O.B.E., in the new Central Library Lecture Hall at Bridge Street, Luton on Saturday, 27th October, commencing at 10.45 a.m.

Professor C. F. C. Hawkes will open the Conference with a general survey of the Iron Age in the South-East Midlands and this will be followed by papers on Iron Age sites at present being investigated in the area. An Exhibition of finds and selected material will be displayed in the adjacent exhibition gallery.

The C. B. A. is also organising a Conference for the Editors of Archaeological periodicals to be held in the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, 31/34 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1. on Saturday, 17th November. Programmes and tickets of admission (7/6d) may be obtained from the Secretary, C.B.A., 10 Bolton Gardens, London, S.W.5.

A full series of lectures, tutorial classes and research groups will be meeting in various centres in Shropshire during the coming Winter in classes arranged by the Department of Extra-mural Studies of Birmingham University, the W.E.A. and the Shropshire Education Committee. Details from Borough or County Libraries.