

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER.

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

OFFA ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY, OSWESTRY.

A BRONZE AGE BURIAL MOUND AT YSGWENNANT, NEAR LLANSILIN, DENBIGHSHIRE.
(Grid Ref: SJ 189305) (1" Ordnance Sheet, no. 117)

The first interim report on this Mound was included in the Shropshire News Letter no. 16 (October, 1961). The Beaker there named as item no. 4 has now been restored by the National Museum of Wales at Cardiff, and is now in the Local History Room of the Oswestry Borough Library. Dr. H. N. Savory, of the National Museum of Wales, reports on the Beaker thus :- "The Beaker we restored is, of course, a member of the 'A' family, and perhaps the best parallel to its decoration is provided by that on the lower portion of the Beaker from Llannon, Carmarthenshire (Grimes : Prehistory of Wales, p. 261, fig. 73.7), though there is a more distant parallel on the 'C' beaker from Clynog, Caernarvonshire (Wheeler : Prehistoric and Roman Wales, p. 117). This lozenge pattern is much more commonly rendered in a different way with the zigzag elements reserved and the logengic areas filled in with notched lines, as in the 'A' Beaker from Llanelltyd, Merionethshire (Grimes: loc. cit. fig. 73.10) and a number of 'A' beakers from Gorseay Bigbury in Somerset. It is, however, treated in the Ysgwennant way, but with the lines in continuous incision rather than notched, on two 'A' Beakers from Bateman's old diggings in Derbyshire - Bee Low and Hay Top Hill, Monsal Dale - reproduced by Abercromby in Bronze Age Pottery, I, Nos. 52 and 54. These, I should have thought, are relatively early in the 'A' Beaker series, like Ysgwennant, and notably lack the sharply inbent rims which are common at a later stage in the eastern counties.

During this season's excavation two jet buttins, with V-shaped perforations, and two jet rings have been found surrounding a circle of hardpan (about 4-inches in diameter) in which, near the top, was embedded a flint knife. Of the last-names Dr. Savory says - "The flint knife, with working down one edge, is of the rather coarse kind fairly frequently found with beaker burials." Miss Chitty suggests that the hardpan may represent the remains of iron pyrites which, with the flint, would have been used for striking fire (cf. William Greenwell, British Barrows, (1877) pp.266-268).

Miss Chitty's distribution map (unpublished) of jet and other black objects shows this occurrence of jet at Ysgwennant as being in isolation. Dr. Savory submitted the jet objects to Dr. D. A. Bassett, Keeper of Geology in the National Museum of Wales, and says that Dr. Bassett's verbal report, based on consultation with several other geologists (at conferences) who have special knowledge of the Carboniferous, Yorkshire, etc. was that the rings were undoubtedly jet, probably from the Whitby area in Yorkshire, but that the buttons were "not true jet as found in Whitby area but impure, probably from marginal stratum between jet proper and the next 'seam'. It could be from Yorkshire; definitely not Kimmeridge Shale or Cannel Coal."

Close to this complex of jet, hardpan and flint, were two stones; one about six and seven-sixteenths inches long, three-quarters of an inch wide and three-eighths of an inch thick; and the other about four inches long, five-eighths of an inch wide and seven-sixteenths of an inch thick. Dr. Savory considered these to be whetstones and said that Dr. Bassett's verbal report on them, confirmed by colleagues, was that they were of "Silurian silt-stone such as could have been obtained from the immediate area of Ysgwennant."

On the other side of the complex, but about 15-inches away, was a circular patch, about 4-inches diameter and a quarter of an inch thick, of charcoal and finely burnt bone. Its significance has still to be determined.

The soil from the pit in which the 'A' Beaker was found has been analysed for P_2O_5 , and the result compared with the analysis of soil from outside the pit. It was thought that if there had been in the pit an unburnt body which had been dissolved in the acid soil, this would be shown by an excess of P_2O_5 in the soil from the pit. The analyses showed no such excess.

Comparisons.

(a) For the association of jet ring, jet buttons, whetstone, flint and iron pyrites, See Greenwell, British Barrows, (1877) pp.262-269: Barrow LXVIII, Rudstone Parish, East Riding of Yorkshire.

(b) For the association of jet (or lignite?) ring, jet (or lignite?) buttons, flint and "dark matter" ("iron pyrites"?) see The Yorkshire Archaeological Journal, Part 121 (1932), pp.36-43: Bronze Age Burial, Inglebank Gravel Pit, Boston Spa, by Mary Kitson Clark.

In J.R. Mortimer, Forty Years' Researches in British and Saxon Burial Mounds of East Yorkshire (1905), there are the following similar associations :-

(c) pp.90-92, Barrow no. 124, Group IV; jet ring, flints and lump of pyrites (with jet stud, amber stud, flint dagger and beaker)

(d) pp. 209-211, Barrow no. 37, Group XI; jet button, worked flint and lump of pyrites (with flint dagger, stone hammer-head and beaker).

In the above cases (a), (b), (c) and (d) a skeleton accompanied the finds.

In the Catalogue of Devizes Museum, Part I, The Stourhead Collection, (1896), the following associations are noted (the number given after the object is the Item no. in the Catalogue) :-

(e) Jet button (85c), Kimmeridge Shale ring (85d), and whetstone (85e); in a Barrow near Durrington Wells. (A.W. 172, Pl. xix).

(f) Jet button (210), jet ring (178), and two slate objects (whetstones) (72); in Winterbourne Stoke East, Barrow 5 (A.W. 118).

Note: A.W. = Hoare's Ancient Wilts.

W. Day.

EXCAVATIONS AT MUCH WENLOCK, 1962.

Some important excavations were made, with the approval of the owner and of the Ministry of Works, at Wenlock Priory during the Summer of 1962. These took the form of a series of trenches, dug under the auspices of the British Archaeological Association by Mr. Dudley Jackson in conjunction with Mr. Eric Fletcher, M.P., the President of the Association.

The remains of walls, consisting mainly of the lowest course of footing, were uncovered, and the most important exposures were six circular bases of two western flanking stair turrets found near the western piers of the medieval crossing. These, with the triple apse found by the late Dr. Cranage in 1901, may mark the western and eastern terminations of the eleventh century Church, generally ascribed to Leofric, Earl of Mercia and his lady, Godiva. The circular bases appear to relate to two walls which Dr. Cranage considered marked the position of the 'pulpitum', but so far no evidence has been found of a westward extension of the nave.

Results of the excavation to date would appear to confirm the evidence which has recently come to light at Winchester that the scale and architectural designs of Saxon builders immediately before the Norman Conquest approached, it not exceeded, those of the Normans.

It is hoped to continue the excavations next year, with the object of tracing the size and plan of the still earlier foundation of St. Milburga in the seventh century.

INTRODUCING SHROPSHIRE. A series of six talks, following those given last year, on the History of Shropshire from medieval times to the Industrial Revolution, will be held in the Borough Art Gallery, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury on alternate Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. beginning on January 8th. The speakers will be Mr. Philip A. Barker and others.

THE PROTON GRADIOMETER.

Regional Group no.8 of the Council for British Archaeology, which covers the West Midlands, has acquired a Proton Gradiometer which is available for use within the Region, and the Hon. Secretary, Mr. G.S. Taylor, of Wychbury, 5, Greenside Road, Erdington, Birmingham 24, has kindly supplied the following notes for the guidance of archaeologists requesting a magnetic survey service with the assistance of this instrument.

The gradiometer cannot be used within:

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

The site should be as level as possible, fairly uniform slopes are tolerable, but steep uneven slopes cannot be surveyed.

The ground should be clear of scrub such as thistles, heather and growing crops if possible, or any vegetation likely to impede the movement of the string grid used in the survey.

The site to be surveyed should be marked off with wooden pegs in 50 foot squares and cleared of any surface iron such as tin cans, skewers, etc. prior to the arrival of the survey party.

Application for survey service should be made to the Hon. Secretary, Regional Group No.8 at the above address, as early as possible. It will be appreciated if the requesting society will be prepared to make good the travelling expenses of the survey party.

(November 1962)

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RECENT DISCOVERIES AND FINDS.

Mr. H.H. Jones, Borough Librarian of Oswestry, has reported on the following item recently added to the small, but rapidly growing, Museum section which is being built up in the Local History room of the Oswestry Public Library. It is a Papal Bull, the lead seal with which Papal documents are authenticated, found recently in a garden at Oswald Park, Oswestry, near King Oswald's Well. It is the seal of Pope Gregory XI, who ruled the See of Rome from 1370 to 1378, the last Pope before the great schism of 1378 to 1447. The condition of the seal is fair.

Amongst finds presented to Shrewsbury Museum recently are a Spindle Whorl found on Long Meadow, Hill Farm, Pontesford Hill and presented by the finder, Mr. J. V. Jones, and two parts of an oval stone dish, made from a Silurian nodule, with ornamentation on the rim, found close to the N.W. side of the A.5 Roundabout at the junction with the Longden-Medle Brace road, west of Shrewsbury cemetery. This was presented by the finder, a Council workman, Mr. Richard Carswell, of 16 Callow Crescent, Minsterley.

A curious four-handled copper cup was also recently brought into the Museum by Mrs. E.J. Cooke, of Harnage Farm, Cressage, having been dug up on a field on the farm. Made of copper or bronze, it appears to be a mortar, perhaps used by an apothecary for mixing his materials. The Keeper of the Welsh Folk Museum says that it dates probably from the second half of the 17th century. Such mortars were often made with four handles in order to give a good grip when mixing materials with a pestle. Two of the handles were fitted with loose metal rings, indicating that the vessel may at one time have been hung on a chain, but it is thought that these may represent a later, not the original, use of the cup.

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WROXETER, 1962. (Concluded from page 4)

Below the earliest street were the remains of substantial timber buildings of at least three periods. There is thus a phase of occupation at Wroxeter which predates the street plan as it now appears.

Graham Webster.

THE RAVEN SITE, SHREWSBURY.

With the co-operation of Messrs. Laing Ltd., to whom sincere thanks are due, observation is being kept during work on the Raven Hotel/Woolworth's site in Castle Street. Since the site must lie within the boundary of the early town, and probably within the limits of the Saxon civitas and since only one object (A Saxon shroud pin)¹, datable before the 13th century has previously been found in Shrewsbury, it was hoped that the excavations would produce material from the 12th or earlier centuries. However, the finds so far recovered are all 13th century or later, the bulk of the material being 17 - 19th century.

This lack of early finds is explained by the fact that the late layers lie directly on the natural sand and gravel some four feet below the present level of the pavement in Castle Street. It appears, therefore, that all the early layers have been stripped off during previous building operations on the site. Even the pits dug as much as six feet into the natural contained only late material, though it is possible that earlier pits may yet be discovered. The evidence from this site and from Barclay's Bank opposite, where the layers of natural gravel came up to the present road level, make it likely that the chances of finding early occupation levels in this highest part of the town are slim. Probably the only sealed early levels are under the Castle motte, which may lie on some of the 52 houses demolished during the construction of the Castle.²

The excavations on the Raven site cut across the lowest courses of the presumed 13th century Town Wall along the scarp, but revealed little new information. The remains of a sandstone building lying at 45 degrees to the main line of the Town Wall have been found at the N.E. corner of the site and plotted on the site plan on which structures are being recorded as they appear. Finds to date include a number of stamped and glazed floor tiles of 14th century date in designs known elsewhere in the town, sherds of jugs from the 13th to 15th centuries and much post-medieval material, some of which is described below by Mr. R. James.

An interesting feature of the layers of natural sand and gravel is that they run upward at steep though varying angles towards the scarp edge, where they have been cut off, presumably by the river at a time when it ran under the scarp.³

Notes.

1. Shropshire Archaeological
1. Shropshire Archaeological Society. Trans. LIV (1951-2).
2. Domesday Book, fo. 252, a, 1.
3. Excavations on the Town Wall, Roushill, Shrewsbury. Medieval Archaeology, Vol. V, 1961. Appendix by C.A. Sinker, 'The Geographical and Ecological Implications' of the Excavation', p.207.

P. A. Barker.

A Note on Remains from the Raven Site.

During excavations prior to the erection of the new Woolworth's store a quantity of interesting objects has come to light, and by kindness of the contractors, Messrs. Laing, have been brought to Shrewsbury Museum for examination. They included a quantity of beef bone, mainly thigh bones, possibly kitchen refuse, for the Raven was an inn of some considerable antiquity, dating at least from the early 16th century. The pottery of various dates was very fragmentary, but it included one interesting 19th century piece - the lid of a china jar bearing the inscription "Genuine Russian Bear's grease (for) the Growth of Hair". The lid bears rather a charming Victorian design.

There were also pieces of medieval floor tiles and a possible piece of roof tile. Also a collection of clay pipe fragments made at Broseley, the majority bearing the name of 'John Roberts' who was active c. 1637-1683.

R.E. James.

W R O X E T E R, 1 9 6 2 .

During the course of the Summer Schools further attention was given to the timber building of the first century which preceded the stone built baths. The plans of these timber buildings which are now beginning to emerge show that they are large and complex, but their precise nature and the important question as to whether they are civil or military has yet to be answered. A section was cut across the street which runs along the northern side of the Baths Insula. This revealed a succession of ten streets of varying widths and constructions with their respective drains on both sides,

(concluded at the foot of page 3)

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A NEW IRONWORKS IN SHROPSHIRE

A new ironworks site came recently to light at the Hurst (O.S. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$, S.O. 69: 670960). It is something of a mystery, since although evidently on a very large scale, and operated over a long period of time, nothing is known about it from any literary source. It is not, for example, in the Fuller Mss. list of ironworks of 1717.

It is marked on a map of the Willey Estate made in the early 17th century by Samuel Parsons, now in the Forester Collection in S.R.O. although it is not clear whether it is on land belonging to that Estate. Industrial cottages surviving on the site, but now deserted, (e.g. Pool Cottages), or incorporated in farmsteads, are evidently of mid to late 18th century date. This suggests an active life of at least a century and a half.

There are three large dams and pools, and although the uppermost is now drained, its dimensions are clearly visible from vegetation marks. The bottom dam of the series is a large one, some 30 feet high at centre. Below it is an extensive scatter of slag remaining from the operation of a furnace. A leet runs away south below the bottom dam, and after about three hundred yards passes through a scatter of brick debris which (on the analogy of the already known New and Old Willey sites) is probably the remains of a corn mill associated with the works. The close resemblance between the known New and Old Willey Furnace sites, and this new site, both in scale and general lay-out, is one of the most interesting features of the find.

Robin Chaplin, M.A.

THE SMITHIES FURNACE AND THE WILLEY PARK POOLS

It now seems clear that the 3 large (and supposed ornamental) pools running away south of Willey Hall (O.S. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ S.O. 69: 666988) are of industrial origin, and were in fact created as reservoirs to feed the Smithies Furnace, some $\frac{1}{4}$ mile further down the Linley Brook (O.S. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$, S.O. 69: 671984). The main evidence is chronological. The pools are marked on Baugh's Map of 1808; Willey Hall was not built until 1812 at very earliest. Before this the Foresters lived in Willey Old Hall, from which the pools are not visible. It is unthinkable that a country gentleman would have created such an expensive landscape feature as this series of pools, without the compensating pleasure of being able to view it from his windows. It is equally unlikely that such a feature would have been created in preparation for a new house; most likely that the new Willey Hall was located to take advantage of the magnificent view provided by the already existing pools. Moreover, if we accept these pools as feeders for the Smithies Furnace, we have a site plan identical in all respects with New Willey Furnace, and the newly discovered Hurst Furnace; we also have a solution to the otherwise knotty problem, of how the Smithies Furnace operated at all with only the poor head of water available from the Linley Brook and the miserable little pool immediately above the Furnace site.

Robin Chaplin, M.A.

MR. PHILIP BARKER.

Mr. Philip Barker, a member of the Council of the Shropshire Archaeological Society was recently elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in recognition of his contributions to Archaeology, and we extend to him sincere congratulations upon this deserved honour.

FORTHCOMING EXCAVATIONS.Excavations at Hen Domen, Montgomery (Grid Ref. SO 214981)

The fourth season's work on this motte and bailey castle site started in April and will continue at week-ends throughout the Summer, with a concentrated 'dig' from Saturday, 3 August to Saturday, 10 August inclusive. Work will continue with the stripping of the north-west area of the bailey and the excavation of the large timber-lined pit discovered last year.

The site is one mile north-east of the town of Montgomery, to which there are buses from Shrewsbury and Welshpool, but transport can usually be provided from Shrewsbury, leaving the Priory Boys' School, Priory Road at 10 a.m. Volunteers are urgently required and beginners are very welcome, and should get in touch with Mr. P. A. Barker, Church House, Annscroft, Shrewsbury (Tel. Hanwood 297) A list of dates on which digging will be done can be supplied on request.

Pontesford Hill Camp (Grid Ref. SJ 409055)

There will be a short emergency excavation for the Ministry of Works on part of the entrance of this small hill-fort from Saturday, 1st June to Sunday, 9th June inclusive. A few volunteers will be needed and visitors will be welcome. Applications to Mr. P. A. Barker at the above address.

Wroxeter. Work in the Wroxeter area is continuing under the direction of Dr. A.W.J. Houghton, of Oak Wood, Pulverbatch, near Shrewsbury (Tel: Dorrington 224) from whom details can be obtained.

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The ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWS-LETTER for April 1963 (volume 7 no. 9) has been received and it contains a number of interesting articles and features.

There is a report by Martin Biddle on 'Excavations at Winchester during 1961-62', in which a late Saxon chapel was found under the Cathedral Car Park, and a note on Tudor leatherwork found on the site of No. 10 Downing Street in London, during rebuilding work at the Prime Minister's official residence.

Mr. M. Aylwin Cotton discusses recent archaeological literature in "Reading and Writing", and the issue also contains a detailed Report of the 1962 Conference of the Prehistoric Society held in London, and of the Archaeological Section of the World Congress of Underwater Activities, organised by the British Sub-Aqua Club in London in October 1962. There are also several notes of smaller excavations, study courses, etc.

The Annual Report of the Council for British Archaeology for 1962 is also to hand, and it is well worth detailed study by people interested, either actively or passively, in Archaeology. The Report of Regional Group, no. 8, which covers the West Midlands, including Shropshire, notes that field surveys and research programmes are continuing.

The excavations of Mr. Stanley Stanford of Roman forts at Leintwardine, Budton, Clifton-on-Teme and other places is building up a completely new picture of conditions in this area during the second and third centuries A.D. The investigations along the line of the Watling Street west in South Shropshire are also breaking much new ground and yielding interesting results.

The aerial survey of the West Midlands, being carried out by Mr. Arnold Baker and Mr. Pickering, is building up to a complete coverage of the whole area.

The Group is attempting to get a full photographic record of all buildings, listed or not, threatened with demolition, and the co-operation of the National Buildings Record and of County Planning Departments is being sought in furtherance of this project. Much attention has also been given to remains of Industrial Archaeology in the West Midlands area.

REGIONAL SURVEY OF INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY.

The Council for British Archaeology is becoming increasingly concerned at the rate at which relics of the Industrial Revolution are disappearing, and it is therefore sponsoring a survey of existing remains of industrial importance, with a view to scheduling those of outstanding interest, and the recording of those which have already disappeared.

Regional Group no. 8 is organising a survey covering the whole of the West Midlands, and it has asked Mr. Robert Sherlock, Archaeology Officer to the County Planning and Development Department of the Staffordshire County Council to be responsible for co-ordinating this survey. The organisation of the survey is to be on a county basis, and the Shrewsbury Museum has agreed to co-ordinate the records so far as Shropshire is concerned. Record cards are available from the Curator, who will be pleased to receive offers of help in recording general industrial remains, or those of a particular industry.

The following is a list of the kind of evidence which will come under the heading of Industrial Archaeology. The date 1850 has been set as a deadline, but so much material in Shropshire of a later date is either in decay or threatened with destruction that it is important that it should be recorded.

MINING. Coal, copper, lead and other minerals have been extensively worked in the County. Caving and Mining Clubs could do a great deal in this field. The economic history is reasonably well documented, but details are needed of pit-head gear still standing, pumping or winding gear still in position, and of grinding mills and mineral railways.

WIND AND WATER MILLS. Watermills are rapidly falling into decay, and, apart from a few stumps, the windmills have gone. Some of the watermills still have their plant, and the recording and photographing of this is an urgent need. Such a survey might lead to the preservation of one or two of the best mills.

TEXTILES. One textile mill (now the Maltings, Ditherington, Shrewsbury) is on the provisional list of scheduled buildings. Small manufactories existed in other towns such as Church Stretton, Oswestry and Ludlow and of these little is known. Some of the buildings may still exist. Also important are the cottages of workers in this and other trades, many of which have disappeared and others may be threatened by slum-clearance orders.

POTTERIES AND GLASS-WORKS. The Broseley-Coalport area apart, other small potteries existed, one near Cleobury Mortimer, another at Westbury, of which no details are known. The same applies to early glass-works, such as those at Wrockwardine Wood and Cheswardine.

MACHINERY AND PLANT. In Shrewsbury one beam engine is still working, and notes on the location of other machines and their state of preservation is urgently needed. Local craft workshops are going rapidly and unless action is taken will be completely lost. Photographs again will be of great value in showing the tools in their right setting.

WORKHOUSES. Church Stretton workhouse has recently been destroyed. Morda and Cross Houses are now hospitals, but may soon go under hospital rebuilding plans.

FORGES, FURNACES, BLAST FURNACES, etc. Here again there is a fair amount of documentary history which needs to be amplified through field-work and photography. The location of some early forges and furnaces is coming to light after a long period, but the site of others is still unknown.

THE RIVER SEVERN. There are very few existing remains of the once flourishing river trade on the Severn. The location of the various quays and ware-houses and the public houses, known as 'Mug houses' on the river-bank, need to be recorded, as do records of surviving craft, such as Severn trows and barges, coracles, etc.

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held at the Priory Boys' School on Friday, 7th June at 7.30 p.m. The business meeting will be followed by a public meeting at 8 p.m., when a public lecture will be given on 'The Church Plate of Shropshire' by Mr. S.A. Jeavons, who is the author of several works on the Church Plate of the Midlands and who has recently completed an account of the Plate of the Archdeaconry of Salop which the Society is to publish shortly. Members of the public are welcome to attend this lecture. The Society is arranging whole-day excursions to Haugmond and Lilleshall Abbeys, and to Little Aston Hall, Birmingham, and is also hoping to organise a half-day visit to the 'Berth' at Baschurch, where Mr. F. S. Gelling will be resuming his excavations later in the summer.

SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

Several courses in excavation techniques have again been arranged at Worcester during the Summer of 1965, under the direction of Dr. Graham Webster. Course A, an introductory course for those with little or no experience as systematic excavation, and including lectures and discussions on background topics, will run from the 27th July to the 10th August. This will be followed from August 17th to 31st by a further course designed to extend and develop the knowledge and experience gained in the first course. An advanced course, C, chiefly intended for those who have previously attended the first two courses will also be held at Worcester from the 31st August to the 14th September. By special arrangement with the Field Studies Council, the University's Department of Extra-Mural Studies uses Preston Montford Field Centre as accommodation for many of its courses in archaeology, and residential students may be accommodated there. A course on Roman sites in Wales and the Marches, directed by D.R. Dudley, will run from the 10th to 17th August, and will include visits to Worcester, Chester, forts in Wales and other civil sites in Wales and the Marches, with relevant lectures on the historical and archaeological background.

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM. ARCHAEOLOGICAL COURSES 1965.

A working party has been set up, under the auspices of the Salop County Council, to make a detailed historical survey of the area to be included in the new town at Dawley, and it has already held several meetings. It is proposed to organise an exhibition illustrating the past, present and future of the area, to be held first in the Art Gallery at Shrewsbury, but also subsequently at a suitable place or places in the Dawley area. The existing material is being surveyed by members of the Working Party, who would be interested to hear of any photographs, records or printed material relating to Dawley, Ironbridge, Coalbrookdale, Malinslee, Stirriley and other places which will be included in the area of the new Dawley. The exhibition is being arranged by Michael M. Pitt, M.A., of 35 Birches Barn Road, Wolverhampton, but material may also be reported to the Borough Library, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury or to the County Record Office, the Shirehall, Shrewsbury.

D A W L E Y N E W T O W N .

It will be seen that Industrial Archaeology covers a very wide field, and the above list is by no means exhaustive, and to record in any form or completeness the important industrial remains in Shropshire will require a large number of helpers. Clubs and societies which specialise in Mining, Engineering, Railways and Canals can do, and are doing, a great deal to help not only in locating disused canals, rail and tram-ways, but also in recording locks and bridges, craft on the surviving canals, railway stations, signal boxes, level crossings, tunnels and rolling stock with a history of local use. But individual helpers are urgently required, and a supply of the Record cards will be sent to anyone who would be willing to help by recording details on them and by supplying sketches or photographs where necessary. R. E. JAMES.

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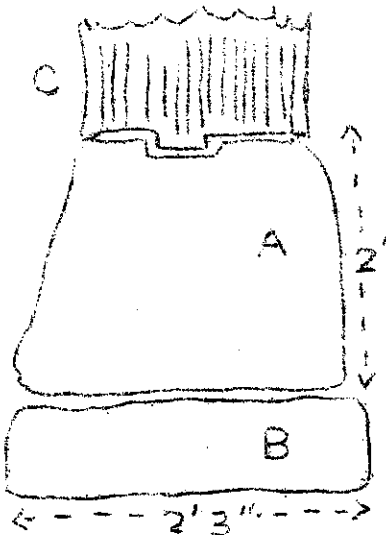
THE ROMAN BRIDGE AT WROXETER.

Dr. A.W.J. Houghton.

The site of the bridgehead on the left bank of the Severn opposite Wroxeter, together with the site of the bridge, has been determined with the help of the Birmingham Branch of the British Sub-Aqua Club. It must be clearly realised that without the help of these keen and willing people it would have been impossible to discover the remains of the bridge.

1. The approach from the South West. The Watling Street west, on approaching the river bank, took an abrupt turn upstream and so continues for about 140 yards. That side of the road nearest the river is much eroded and the road itself is composed of a thin layer of medium gravel on a firm clay base. In all probability the road at this point was often destroyed by flooding and the force of the river when in spate.

2. From the left bank of the river there extends down as far as the island and nearly opposite the road mentioned above, a series of stones shaped as in the accompanying sketch. Stone B. was very firmly set in the river bed, which consists of rock and large stones. Stone A. rested squarely upon B. Only a single pair of stones was removed, which may be seen outside the Museum on the Ministry of Works site at Viroconium. There can be no doubt that a stout timber upright rested upon and was morticed in the top of stone A. By this means a strong trestle bridge could be made and would be similar in style and design to the well-known example on Trajan's Column. The land is low and often flooded on the right bank of the Severn, so that a stone bridge would be impracticable and unnecessarily expensive. Moreover the force of the river when in flood is such that constant damage and destruction would be a costly drain on local financial resources. A timber bridge, on the other hand, would be far cheaper to maintain and repair.



There is evidence that the river has swung to the right since Roman times and this may account for the passage to the right of the island. There may have been no island in ancient times. Opposite the modern island on the left bank is a large patch of alluvium beneath which the bridge base may extend to the original edge. Here there is room for a turning area and in all probability there were several ways up the steep slope to the town. More work remains to be done on both sides of the river. The stones found and moved by J.A. Morris can have no possible relationship to a bridge.(1. and 2.)

POSSIBLE EARLY DEFENCES TO VIROCONIUM.

A crop mark on an aerial photograph taken by Mr. Arnold Baker in 1961 suggested that a line of defences ran along the southern escarpment of the valley of the Bell brook in the eastern part of the town. Mr. R. Rogers of the Post Office at Wroxeter described in vivid detail how, on that line, a bank existed until 1957 when, owing to the danger of tractors over-turning upon it, it was bull-dozed flat. When this happened it was found to contain much stone. In line with this mark an excavation was commenced in the field W. of the Norton Lane and South of the Bell brook. A natural glacial deposit of rounded stones was found. On top of this a rampart may have been constructed. Externally there was a shallow ditch 7 feet in diameter followed by a deep ditch cut in soft sandstone, the bottom of which was 13 feet below the field level. Complete excavation of this ditch was prevented by the total collapse of both sides of the trench.

3. Work has been completed on a Roman road which appears to be the northern continuation of I. Margary's no. 613. ARICONIUM - Ashton (nr. Leominster)³. No effort has yet been made to trace this road from Berrington (Herefordshire) to Ludlow, but the course then seems to be Ludlow Old St. thus passing the most convenient gap in the hills in that region, Bromfield Station, near the Race-course, where a marching camp has been identified. Then the old direct route to Onibury avoiding the marshy area around Bromfield village, which appears to have arisen in the 13th century. Ascending to the N.E. the road follows high ground eventually crossing the Craven Arms - Wenlock road at Greenways Cross, after which the road passes through hilly country crossing the Byne Brook⁴ at Strefford⁵. Thereafter the road passes close to another Marching camp at Affcot, near the Travellers Rest, where it falls into the course of the modern road for about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile. The final course is through the wood to the west of the railway, where it has been excavated and on emergence it joins the Watling Street where that road descends from the hill at about the point of the present Marshbrook Lane crossing.

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1. MORRIS, J.A. Trans. Shrop. Arch. Soc. 4th ser. XI (1927-28), p.304.
2. DYMOND, D.P. Arch. J. CXVIII 1961. pp.163,159.
3. MARGARY, I.D. Roman roads in Britain, vol. II, fig. II, p.63.
4. O.S. 1st edition. Byne Brook was the Strad Brook.
5. BOWCOCK, E.W. Shropshire Place-Names, p.228, and vide. Ekwall, E. 'The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-names, p.429. Strefford - 'Ford where a Roman Road crosses a river.'

I N D U S T R I A L M O N U M E N T S .

The Council for British Archaeology has announced, in its Annual Report for the year ended 30th June 1963, the appointment by the Ministry of Works of a Consultant, Mr. Rex Wailes, M.I.Mech.E., F.S.A., to advise the Minister on industrial monuments. This action by the Government is to a large extent the result of pressure exerted by the Council since 1959.

The survey of industrial monuments in Shropshire is now going forward actively, and several correspondents are reporting regularly. The help of the Shropshire Federation of Womens' Institutes has been enlisted in tracing and recording wind and water mills in the county; the West Midlands Branch of the Railway and Canal Historical Society is dealing with surviving remains in these fields, and the assistance of the Shropshire Photographic Society has been enlisted in making a photographic record, where this is deemed to be necessary. In particular, surviving Work-houses and iron bridges in the county have been listed to permit a comprehensive photographic record to be made.

SIR JOHN TALBOT'S CASTLE AT WHITCHURCH.

Mr. Richard Griffiths, a member of the Shropshire Archaeological Society, and a member of the staff of the Ministry of Works, has recently made some interesting discoveries in the remains of Sir John Talbot's castle, dating from the 12th century, which stood overlooking Blakemere at Black Park near Whitchurch. He has unearthed from what was at one time the Castle moat a storage jar, complete but for one small fragment, and also pottery and iron-work dating from the 13th and 14th centuries. It is hoped that these will eventually find a place in the Whitchurch Museum.

The Winter Courses arranged by the Extra-Mural Department of the University of Birmingham during the coming Winter include a course of twelve meetings on 'Medieval Archaeology' to be held in the Public Library at Wellington on alternate Thursdays.

A series of six lectures on 'Aerial Photography' will also be held at a suitable venue in Shrewsbury. Further particulars of these courses may be obtained from the Resident-Tutor, Mr. John Pilgrim, M.A., of Nabwood House, Heathgates, Shrewsbury. (Ten. 4727).

EXCAVATIONS AT HEN DOMEN, MONTGOMERY, 1962-63.

Mr. Philip Barker, F.S.A., has produced an interim report, dated August 1963 on the excavations which he has been carrying out at Hen Domen, a motte and bailey castle one mile north-west of the present town of Montgomery. Copies of this Report are available from Mr. Barker at Church House, Annscroft, Shrewsbury.

Mr. Barker says that it is beginning to be clear from the evidence of the pottery already found, and the rowel spur (a form introduced in the late 13C) from the middle filling of the pit, that the castle must have been in use long after the building of the stone castle in 1223. A date much nearer to 1300 is probable, though there seems to be no context for this small border castle after the end of the Welsh war in 1284. We are here probably being wise after the event and the Welsh did, after all, rebel in 1295/5. It is probably significant that the stone castle has one weakness - that its view to the west was completely blocked by Ffriddfaldwyn, so that the original castle may have been maintained as a forward post covering the crossing of the Severn.

Finds during the last two years consist mainly of a great variety of cooking pot rims and jug fabrics. Since the layers in the bailey are shallow, and there was obviously frequent disturbance due to rebuilding, the sherds are likely to span almost the whole life of the castle, and it will be necessary to find sealed early layers before the pottery can be given its relative dating. Iron objects include typical 12C. wavy-edged horseshoes, a number of arrow heads, part of an axe-head, fittings such as hasps and staples, keys (one of them a barrel padlock key) and a great variety of nails. There have been few bronze objects, but these include a fine belt buckle with plate attachment. Among the wooden finds from the pit are parts of a small shovel very similar to those found in the lead mines at Shelve during the last century and now at Linley Hall.

EMERGENCY EXCAVATIONS ON THE DESERTED MEDIEVAL HAMLET

AT BRAGGINGTON (SJ 336140)

Preliminary Report by P. A. Barker, F.S.A.

A rescue excavation carried out by the Shrewsbury Research Group on earthworks at Braggington, near Alberbury, have shown that they are the remains of a small settlement dating from the later 13th century and abandoned about the middle of the 17th century, probably a little before the building of nearby Braggington Hall in 1675. The settlement which was roughly circular was surrounded by a small but steeply cut ditch with an inner rampart which seems to have been destroyed on the North East side. The complete plan of a timber-framed late Medieval house was recovered. It was rectangular, with a partition at the Western end. It had a large sunken hearth with the remains of a rectangular clay oven, with the iron nozzle of a pair of large bellows still in place. The house also appears to have had a bay window overlooking the superb view of the Shropshire plain.

At the other end of the enclosure was an area which contained considerable quantities of iron slag, which must imply iron smelting in the settlement, though this is quite unexpected, since there is apparently no ore near at hand, and the nearest stream is tiny and a quarter of a mile away.

Considerable quantities of pottery were recovered, extending the series of types in the region into post-medieval times, and some interesting metal finds are awaiting cleaning and examination.

The documentary evidence is yet to be assessed, but there is evidence of 16 Welsh tenants in 1301, and the existence of ridge and furrow round the site suggests that enclosure may have been the cause of the hamlet's desertion.

EMERGENCY EXCAVATIONS AT PONTESFORD HILL LOWER CAMP

(SJ 409055) By P. A. Barker, F.S.A.

The Forestry Commission, in bulldozing an access road on to Pontesford Hill, destroyed part of the entrance to the lower camp and cut a section along the counter scarp of the main ditch close to the entrance which is multivallate

The section cut by the bulldozer exposed a layer of burnt clay and charcoal which clearly ran under the rampart and pre-supposed an earlier phase. As this exposed face was almost vertical and was collapsing, due to weathering a short rescue excavation was arranged by the Ministry of Works and directed by the writer. The work was carried out by members of the Shrewsbury Research Group and other volunteers and lasted from June 1st to June 9th.

The top of the counter scarp rampart was stripped along its length and revealed the bases of three large post holes, the bulk of which had presumably been weathered away. These must represent a palisade along this rampart, though such a palisade seems to be unprecedented.

The rampart was removed in three areas, and it was clear that the layer of charcoal, dark earth and burnt clay ran underneath the whole of the rampart in the area investigated. In the centre of the area this layer consisted of two superimposed floors of packed stones, together with three pits with considerable burning in their upper layers. There were almost no finds on these floors or in the pits. A few small fragments of teeth ivory were all that remained of the large quantities of bones that one would expect from such an occupation area; there was no pottery, nor any finds of metal. However, below this occupation layer at the South-Eastern end of the excavation (the only place where the underlying layers were examined) was a gully, cut in the natural boulder clay and filled with soft brown clay which produced half a dozen worked flint plates and a large circular scraper. These flints are not closely datable, but it is perhaps significant that, in spite of close search, no flints were found in the other, overlying, occupation levels.

Summary of Results

The excavation showed that the multivallation of the entrance of this small camp was preceded by at least three phases of occupation of the more or less level col between the camp and the steep rise of Pontesford Hill proper behind it.

This small settlement could not have been defended since it was surrounded by rising ground on two sides. Whether it preceded occupation of the lower camp or not remains to be seen. The whole area deserves the most careful excavation in the future, and it is therefore proposed to schedule the site to preserve it for this purpose.

A POST-MEDIEVAL POTTERY RESEARCH GROUP

It has been suggested that people actively engaged in the study of post-medieval pottery, or those who are undertaking excavations which will bring them into contact with such material, might be interested in the formation of a group to further its study. At a week-end course on the subject, organised by Birmingham University Extra-Mural Department in May, it became obvious that any serious study of the subject must be formally organised and the proposal is therefore as follows.

The post-medieval period for this purpose will be taken to include the ceramics which were in existence c. 1500 A.D. down to non-porcellanic wares of c. 1750 A.D. The ceramics will include all those manufactured in Britain for use at home and abroad and all imports to this country. Proposed topics for study will include the methods of manufacture and related techniques, the trade of pottery and documentary evidence relating to these subjects.

Inter-group communication will be through the medium of a broadsheet by which means news of activities and details of progress and problems can be made known. Some form of subscription will have to be made to cover the cost of postage and duplicating. The cost will depend on the number of persons who join, but it will probably not exceed 5/- a year.

It is hoped that the activities of the group will be launched at a week-end meeting to be held at the City Museum, Bristol, starting at 2.30 p.m. on the 16th and ending about 5.00 p.m. 17th November, 1963.

One of the immediate tasks of the group will be to form a register of kiln sites with relevant dates. It is hoped also that a collection of type examples from kiln sites and general groups from various areas will be collected and be available for comparison.

Those interested please contact K. J. Barton, Esq., 6 Hertford Rd., Worthing, Sussex.

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER.

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

1187 BRYN AMWLOG CASTLE, NEWCASTLE, CLUN.

X On Saturday, 28th September, the Shropshire Archaeological Society made an Excursion to Bryn Amwlog Castle, by kind invitation of Mr. Hartley P. Davies, who also entertained members to tea at the nearby Anchor Inn. The site is at present being excavated by members of the Cambrian Archaeological Association under Mr. Leslie Alcock and the following preliminary report on the excavations was distributed to members.

Castell Bryn Amlwg (Cefn Vron Castle) (SO 167846) stands at the western limit of the medieval lordship of Clun, overlooking a junction of two streams which form the boundaries of Kerry, Maellenydd and Clun, and commanding an offshoot of the Kerry ridgeway. It has long been regarded as an earthwork castle; but recently it has become apparent that there were also masonry structures, including a gate tower of XIIIth century type. In August 1963 a small excavation was carried out, with the intention (a) of establishing in outline the plan of the masonry castle and (b) of examining the relations of the stone castle with the supposed earthen castle.

In the event, six structural phases were determined. Although no pottery or coins were found to assist in dating, approximate dates can be assigned to these structural phases by analogy with other sites.

Phase 1.: early XIIIth century. A ditch was dug and a bank thrown up round an isolated knoll to form an oval ringwork about 125 ft. x 50 ft. internally, with a bank 12 ft or more wide. The bank was doubtless supplemented by a timber palisade and gate, and perhaps a defensive tower of wood.

Phase 2 : late XIIIth century. A circular stone keep, 21 ft internal diameter, with walls 8 ft thick, was built at the south end of the ringwork, where it may have overlooked a gateway. (cf. Ogmere and Coity).

Phase 3.: a stone revetment or curtain was added to the front of the ring-bank, and butted against the keep. As found, the curtain was not more than 6 ft. 6 ins. wide, and battered above a square plinth. There was a latrine-chute in the thickness of the curtain where it butted against the keep. Since the masonry and mortar of the curtain resemble those of the keep, Phases 2 and 3 may represent successive works in a single scheme.

Phase 4.: early XIIIth century.

Two D-shaped towers were added to the curtain on the east and west.

Phase 5. early-mid XIIIth century. A twin-towered gateway was added on the north, facing the easiest approach to the castle. An entrance passage, 6 ft. 6 ins wide by 30 feet deep was flanked by two round fronted towers, each 20 feet wide externally, their fronts projecting for more than a semi-circle. The guard-rooms were entered from the passage. The front of the passage had been robbed below the road level, and all traces of door and portcullis arrangements had gone; but it is certain that there were no door-jambes or portcullis at the rear of the passage. There was a latrine-chute in the wall of the western tower near its junction with the curtain.

Phase 6. : mid-late XIIIth century. After a major collapse, the gate-tower was largely rebuilt on its original lines.

There are no certain historical references to this castle, but its position and long structural history suggest that it was an outpost or border castle of the Clun lordship, akin to the border castles of Morlais, Morgraig and Penller in Glamorgan. It is possible that this part of Clun Forest had been granted to Llywelyn ap Gruffydd, and that this was the site of the Castle which he was rumoured to be building in 1274. Phase 6 might well fit this reference. Because of the very limited extent of the excavations, the absence of pottery has no chronological significance; but it may reinforce the idea that this was a border castle which had very little residential occupation.

It was pointed out to members of the Society that, as a result of work which has been done since the above Report was prepared the dates for the various phases may be advanced by about half a century.

EXCAVATIONS AT BLAKEMERE CASTLE, WHITCHURCH (SJ 560425).

By Richard W. Griffiths.

All that now remains of Blakemere Castle is a grassy mound on the south side of the mere. There is a moat on two sides and a stream on the S.W. side, which was probably the source of water for the moat. The N.W. side slopes down to the water's edge (Blakemere).

The castle was first occupied by the Le-Strange family in the early 12th century. Robert Le-Strange (whose wife was Akitnore, one of the four sisters and co-heirs of William de Blanminster) died in 1289. The Talbot family who originated in Bedfordshire, where the name Richard Talbot appeared in the Domesday Book as holder of nine hides in Bedfordshire under Walter Giffard, married into the Le-Strange family when Richard Talbot married the heiress of the Le-Stranges.

The great John Talbot was born at Blakemere in 1373, and he became one of Shropshire's greatest heroes in the war with France. He met his death at the Battle of Cartillion (Bordeaux, 1453), when he faced 20,000 Frenchmen with an army of only 6,000 men. Although he was shot through the thigh, the same shot killing his horse, he still continued to fight and the gallant men of Whitchurch rallied round their great leader. The battle was a victory for the French when the great Talbot met his death as the result of a blow from a battle-axe. As he lay dying on the battlefield, he requested that his heart be embalmed, placed in a silver casket, and buried beneath the porch of St. Alkmund's church, Whitchurch in order that the successors of his "men of Whitchurch" should remember this gallant man.

The Talbots sold Blakemere in 1590 and moved to Egerton Hall. In 1650, 'Blakemere Manor' was the most important house in the district but in 1695 it was stated that "it is almost quite ruined". It probably suffered at the time of the Civil War, when many of our castles and manors were wantonly destroyed.

I started the excavations with the help of Mr. G. Ellis, History Master at the Modern School. The top of the mound had already been dug into by 'treasure seekers'. The object of my dig was to reveal the original depth of the moat, and the texture of the mound. I put a section down through the moat on the south-east side; it was 32 feet long, 3 feet wide and started 4 feet from the top of the mound, going through the ditch and up to the natural level of the field.

LAYER 1. This was a grey loam containing evidence of Victorian and later picnics.

LAYER 2. This was a destruction level of the early 18th century. There was much evidence of burning amongst the rubbish. There is a rumour that Whitchurch church was rebuilt using the blocks of sandstone from this site (1711-14). From information given to me by Miss M.C. Hill, the County Archivist, it is quite possible that some may have come from here. She says: "A churchwardens' account for 1713 shews several payments for carriage of stone, but does not say where it came from; some at least was supplied by one John Griffiths." Some of the sandstone blocks in the stream on the SW side are in a remarkable state of preservation even after a period of 250 years.

LAYER 3. This appeared to be a period of rebuilding and cleaning probably after the Talbots had sold the house in 1590. The moat was cleaned out and two retaining walls were built. The bottom wall was in a trench dug into layer 4. The pottery in this layer is of the 16th century, and I found two buckles, one of iron, the other of brass or bronze, and two pieces of copper binding. There was an abundance of nails and metal objects of all types, and I also found some Tudor bricks in the bottom of the moat.

Layer 4. This was a very dark layer with burning in the base of the moat and containing pottery of the early 15th century.

Layer 5. A sandy clay layer with burning in the base of the moat and containing pottery of the early 15th century.

Layer 6. In the base of the moat near the side of the mound and of a dark, sandy nature. Finds included the pewter plate, and a variety of pottery, probably early 15th century.

Layer 7. This is the green silt with vegetation layer. In the base of the moat I found a plank of wood, probably used in the construction of the building in the early 13C. Another object was a pottery weather-vane ? in the shape of a bird? dating from the late 13C or early 14C. In the very bottom of the ditch I found a prehistoric axe-head. All the pottery and finds are being identified and classified and there will be a further Report later.

NOTES ON A STONE AXE FOUND AT STOCKTONGATE, CHIRBURY, WEST SHROPSHIRE.

By Lily F. Chitty, O.B.E., M.A., F.S.A.

On the 3rd of June 1963, a stone axe was found at Stocktongate, in Chirbury parish, West Shropshire, by Mr. Charles Crowe, of Montgomery. The discovery was reported by the Borough Surveyor of Montgomery, Mr. H.J. Sléigh to Mr. J.D.K. Lloyd, F.S.A., who kindly forwarded the axe to me for examination, pending further enquiries. On June 15th, Mr. Eric Harrison, F.S.A., kindly took me to see the site, which was pointed out by Mr. Albert Lewis, of Parker's Tenement, Marton-in-Chirbury, who happened to be passing; without his help it would have been almost hopeless to have located the spot through the thick herbage along the south side of the road.

THE SITE. The name 'STOCKTONGATE' (6" O.S. Shropshire Sheet XLVII NW., South of centre; 1" no. 117, (Welshpool) 274013 SE corner) was given to a former toll-house at the lowest point (B.M. 313.5) between Marton and Stockton-in-Chirbury on the road branching from the main Shrewsbury-Montgomery road above Aylesford Bridge and $\frac{3}{4}$ mile East of the Montgomeryshire border. Here the road runs close to the Aylesford Brook, which was traversed by an old cross-road from Stocktonwood to Wotherton through a ford and by a footbridge. 50 yards west of this crossing, a streamlet draining the field north of the present road is carried underneath it by a culvert and descends south to the brook through an alder thicket. It was in cleaning out this ditch south of the road that Mr. Crowe made his discovery: I am grateful to quote the clear account which he gave subsequently to Mr. Sleigh.

The place where the axe was found is in a watercourse. It was at a depth of 4' 6" bedded in clay and was unearthed by the excavator. There was a depth of about 3' 6" of mud, sand and gravel with solid clay below and it was one foot down in the clay. Mr. Crowe had excavated this ditch three years ago to a depth of 3' 6", which would account for the mud, sand and gravel excavated this time. On the present occasion he excavated to a depth of 5' 0" and is sure that the clay under the old ditch had been undisturbed for a very long time; it was quite solid and the axe was firmly embedded in the side of the trench. It is reasonable to assume that the axe-head was dropped in a small hollow of boggy ground, a natural occurrence before the ditch was cut, and gradually worked down by its weight.

Mr. Crowe is to be heartily congratulated on his careful observation and record, as well as on his recognition of the importance of this interesting artifact.

The Aylesford brook flows on SW for just over $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to join the River Camlad, a tributary of the Upper Severn, at Stockton Mill. The second field SW of Stocktongate rises high above the brook and contains the site of an old Gravel Pit (noted on 6" O.S. map), indicating dry ground suitable for settlement by early man within easy reach of wood and water. It might be worthwhile to examine the surface after ploughing for signs of habitation, e.g. flint implements and potsherds.

THE IMPLEMENT. The Stocktongate axe is a finely-preserved specimen of small-medium size, with smooth grey surface showing remains of polish, mainly on one face which is curiously mottled; the form is slightly asymmetrical. The implement is 119 mm long (4.6"), 58 mm (2.3") at its greatest breadth above the edge, which is 54 mm wide, sharp and slightly oblique; the butt is thin and narrow, 21 mm wide; both butt and edge are lightly chipped and show signs of use: the maximum thickness is 31 mm (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ") below the centre. The sides have been worked down in broad (6 mm.) smooth facets, sharply squared off towards the butt. The faces are ground in wide secondary facets down to the blade. A small nick taken out of one face by the spade of the finder shows a conchoidal fracture. The weight of the axe is 10 oz.

MATERIAL. Professor F.R. Shotton, F.R.S. Department of Geology in the University of Birmingham, reports as follows: The axe from Stocktongate (Sh 45/c) is made of the epidotised andesitic ash of our Petrological Group VI, which means that it was manufactured in the Great Langdale area of the Lake District. This is of great interest in relation to the diffusion of such axes from their source to our Borderland.

SIGNIFICANCE. This is the first solid stone axe ("celt") to be recorded from the extensive parish of Chirbury¹, but the general distribution pattern suggests that it was connected with traffic carried on in late Neolithic times (perhaps upwards of 4,000 years ago) along the Welsh Marches from the mouth of the Clwyd across to the Dee and over the hills by the Oswestry Region to the Montgomeryshire sector of the river Severn. It was probably by this route that axes from the Lake District (Group VI, Great Langdale rock) reached the Camlad-Onny country (Sh 13/c, Brompton Hall; Sh 16/c, Lodge Farm Lydham, both in Shrewsbury Museum); and an axe of rock from the Lleyn peninsular (Group XXI, Mynydd Rhiw) has been found at Churchstoke.² Evidence for settlement by Neolithic folk long preceding the Iron Age hill-fort on Ffridd Faldwyn above Montgomery was published in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 1942, pp.9,21,33,51-53, Fig.13; and an axe-head of altered mudstone is recorded in P.P.S., 1951, p.144, no. 218 (National Museum of Wales, Cardiff).

Shropshire is much indebted to Mr. J.D.K. Lloyd for the record of the Stocktongate axe and for its presentation to Shrewsbury Museum.

- NOTES. 1. But perforated stone axe-hammers dating from the Bronze Age have been preserved, though without history, in two Chirbury farm-houses flanking the Camlad valley at the northern end of Marrington Dingle; a fine large example of Group XII Hyssington picrite was kept till recently at Hockleton (sh 52/ah) and one that proved to be of Group XIII Freselite was found in a box brought down from Rockybank Farm when the Davies family moved house (Sh 61/ah, Shrewsbury Museum). Publication pending.
2. C.H. Houlder, *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* 1961. List p.142, no. 7; since presented by the finder to the National Museum of Wales, no. 59.153.

COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY - ANNUAL REPORT.

The Annual Report of the Council for British Archaeology for the period ended 30th June 1963 has recently been published and may be seen in the Reference Department of the Shrewsbury Borough Library.

The section of the Report dealing with the activities of Regional Group no. 8, which includes Shropshire, states that the work of the Group during the past year has been largely concerned with Industrial Archaeology and the very urgent problem of the preservation of listed buildings. The progress of the West Midland survey of the relics of the Industrial Revolution is expected to improve following the appointment of Mr. Robin Sherlock, Archaeological Assistant to the Staffordshire County Planning Department, as co-ordinating officer for this Region. Shrewsbury Museum has agreed to act as a clearing house for the record cards sent in by fieldworkers appointed by local societies. These will be completed in duplicate and one copy will be retained by the Museum and the other forwarded to the main depository at Stafford.

Group VIII has for some time been very concerned about the incomplete nature of the statutory lists for buildings of historic importance in the West Midlands. There are still many hundreds of buildings which are merely on provisional lists and which thus have no protection whatsoever. A complete Survey of the West Midlands has been made, with the co-operation of the County Planning Officers, and the results were so alarming that representation has been made to an MP. requesting him to ask the Minister of Housing and Local Government to explain the delay in the completion of the statutory lists. Negotiations are still in progress.

Many hundred photographs, taken from the air by Mr. Arnold Baker and Mr. John Pickering, of the valleys of the Avon and Severn, have revealed an astonishing record of crop-mark sites and investigation of these is now being co-ordinated on a regional basis.

On the subject of the study of Implement Petrology, Professor F.W. Shotton of the University of Birmingham, states that he has continued the routine examination and classification of such implements in the West Midlands as have been brought to his attention, pending the completion of the West Midlands report for publication.

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER.

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

OFFA ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY, OSWESTRY.

Copper / Bronze Age Burial Mound at Ysgwennant, nr. Llansillin, co. Denbigh.
(Grid Ref: SJ 489305; 1" Ordnance Sheet no. 117)

Interim reports on this Mound have been included in the Shropshire News Letter no. 16 of October 1961 and no. 21 of January 1963. This is still more work to be done on the Mound, but the following is the result of the excavations during the 1963 season. The pit in which the jet objects, etc. were found had only been partially explored in 1962, and the rest of it was excavated in 1963. In this second half of the pit were found :-

- (a) Sherds comprising about half of a beaker. The sherds were found together, but lying flat, and were at about the same level as the jet objects.
- (b) a flint flake knife near (a).
- (c) various pockets of charcoal.

The beaker (a) has been reconstructed at the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, where it is now undergoing the final touches. Afterwards it will be housed in the Local History Room of the Oswestry Borough Library. Dr. H.N. Savory, Keeper of the Department of Archaeology at the National Museum of Wales, who has very kindly examined all the finds, reports thus on the beaker:

"The beaker... is a well-proportioned example of the 'A' (long-necked) type, 7½ ins. high, 5⅝ ins. in diameter at the rim and 6¼ ins. in diameter at the maximum girth... The decoration is notched throughout... There is no close parallel (to the decoration) in Wales... It is about the same date as the 'A' Beaker previously found at Ysgwennant, that is Copper Age, c. 1800 - 1600 BC.

The pit in which the beaker and jet objects were found was about six feet below the present ground level at its lowest and about four feet below at its top (i.e. it had been cut about two feet into the 'natural'). At a level about two feet above the top of the pit (but to the side of the pit) were scatters of sherds, etc. which seemed to be connected with the two hearths at about that level. Of these sherds Dr. Savory says:

(d) Some are part of a large Beaker of class 'A' (long-necked) or 'C' (short-necked). The decoration consists of notched lines throughout but the "arrangement of the decoration does not relate particularly to the 'A' beakers with bar-chevron, multiple lozenge or saltire patterns hitherto known from Wales, and might fit in with a 'C' beaker rather like the one from Dlynog, Caernarvonshire. (Arch. Camb. 1910, pp.399 ff.)

(e) Many sherds come from a large urn of the Enlarged Food-vessel type; but "they represent only a small part of the vessel, and are connected either with a burial which has been disturbed or a ritual removal of soil from elsewhere. The Urn was evidently of the unusual North Wales variety, derived from Food-vessels of Type 2 in which the shoulder-groove has been multiplied to produce continuous horizontal corrugation between the rim and the shoulder. The local parallels are the lost urn from Hillburg, Wrexham, and the urn from Carnedd Howell, Llandegai (Caern.) in the Pitt-Rivers Museum, Oxford (Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies, XVII (1956-8), 205, nos. A7 and B11, figs. 3.2. and 6.1) The ware is coarse and gritty but well-fired: the flat-topped outwardly projecting rim is unusual..."

(f) One other sherd "appears to be from another Enlarged Food-vessel... which appears to have multiple furrowing above the shoulder with vertical finger-nail impressions in rows between the ridges."

(g) Three sherds "seem to be from a fairly large urn or other vessel distinct from the two just described... the fabric... resembling that of some large cinerary urns and some Neolithic 'B' (Peterborough) ware. The decoration consists of at least two horizontal friezes of loops, closely sited, made by deeply impressing a loop of whipped cord." Dr. Savory cites examples from Russia of this decoration technique, but says "there appears to be no example of it among the Neolithic 'B' pottery hitherto recorded from Wales," neither is there "any example of it on any recorded cinerary urn from Wales. It seems best, in view of the Neolithic 'B'

sherds already reported from Ysgwennant, to conclude that one sherd in particular comes from a Peterborough bowl."

At the edge of this scatter of sherds, which occurred about two feet above the level of the top of the pit, were found two small pieces of flint.

In addition to item (a), the items (b), (d), (e), (f), and (g) have been accessioned as donations by the Offa Antiquarian Society to the National Museum of Wales, but are to be deposited in the Oswestry Borough Library on permanent loan.

W. DAY.

THE ROMAN BRIDGE AT WROXETER.

Further investigations by Aqua Divers has revealed the presence of a shingle bar about three to four feet wide and four to six feet upstream of the bridge line described in the last issue of this News-letter.

A.W.J. Houghton.

ROAD WIDENING AT WROXETER.

This has occurred on the Shrewsbury to Ironbridge road at the place where the western ramparts of Viroconium have been cut through by the existing road. An inner clay bank was seen into which, at some later date, a wall had been built. The stone footings were seen to be about six feet thick. External to this was a ditch about 11 feet wide. This, in its turn was overlaid by another bank, the outer edge of which sloped towards the Bell Brook which is very marshy at this point and would have served well as a defensive ditch. Sealed in this bank was an AS of Domitian and a small hearth near which two small dumps of pottery were found dating from the end of the first century AD.

A.W.J. Houghton.

INSURANCE FOR EXCAVATORS.

The Shropshire Archaeological Society has taken out an insurance policy which covers various eventualities, but the premiums which would be necessary to provide comprehensive cover for all accidents on archaeological sites have been found on enquiry to be prohibitively costly. It is therefore in the interest of anyone working on archaeological sites in Shropshire to arrange his or her own insurance cover. The Honorary Treasurer, Miss Joan Wood, of Ivy Cottage, Condover has made several enquiries, as a result of which the Copeley-Williams, Walpole Insurance Group of London is prepared to allow a 10% reduction on such policies to members of the Society.

Directors of excavations, school-masters and any other persons undertaking excavations with assistance are urged to notify the Hon. Secretary of the Shropshire Archaeological Society (Mr. H. Beaumont, Silverdale, Severn Bank, Shrewsbury) since otherwise no responsibility under the Society's Insurance Policy can be accepted. Those in charge of excavations are also reminded that, where the services of young children are used in any capacity, the written consent of parents should first be obtained.

PUBLIC LECTURE.

The Birmingham University Department of Extra-Mural Studies has arranged a Public Lecture on "The Cult of Mithras and its Temples" to be given by Mr. Charles Daniels, M.A., Assistant Keeper of the Museum of Antiquities in the University of Newcastle, in the Art Gallery, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury on the evening of Friday, 21st February at 7.30 p.m.

Mr. Daniels has travelled in many countries in search of Mithraic temples, and has made a series of excellent slides of excavations illustrating the Mithraic cult, which he will use to illustrate his lecture.

A MOATED SITE AT ACTON BURNELL By PHILIP BARKER.

This square moated site has now been levelled. The levelling process was watched on behalf of the Ministry of Works and a covered drain of slabs of limestone, running from the centre of the enclosure and discharging into the moat was found, together with the rough foundations of a drystone wall along the eastern edge of the enclosure.

There were very few small finds. A number of fragments of pottery of the 12th and 13th centuries type and a few glazed roof tiles represent the only dateable material, and suggest that the site was occupied during this period, though no post-holes or other evidence of structures were revealed.

The most important find was the remains of the foundations of the timber bridge which had spanned the moat. These consisted of four large beams half-lapped into one another to form a rectangular foundation, in which the stumps of the uprights and braces were still preserved to a height of some eighteen inches. The whole of this sub-structure was removed and is now in Shrewsbury Museum awaiting treatment.

STOKE-ON-TERN CASTLE By Philip Barker.

SA 1147?

The owner of this site at Stoke-on-Tern cut a large trench through it from north-west to south-east for drainage purposes. The trench showed that the enclosure had been enlarged towards the north-west, and the interior raised some two feet. A buried ditch of the original site contained a great quantity of preserved organic material in its lower layers. There were the remains of a massive dry-stone wall of sandstone blocks resting on the original ground surface near the southern end of the trench. There were no dateable finds.

NOTES ON A STONE PESTLE FOUND IN THE RIVER SEVERN BELOW FORD,

By Miss Lily F. Chitty, O.B.E., Hon. M.A. (Wales), F.S.A.

While bathing in the Severn below Ford, West Shropshire, on 11th June, 1963, David Yeomans, of Ford, a pupil at Pontesbury County Secondary School, discovered a remarkably large stone pestle in the bed of the river: it lay about midstream (then some six feet deep) a short distance above the confluence of the Ford brook, west of the bylets in the bend of the Severn opposite Montford and one-third of a mile above the old ford, which was at the S.E. end of the long island. The find spot has now been mapped on 6" O.S. Shropshire Sheet XXXVIII N.E., south of the "We" of Weir Farm, Montford; 1" O.S. 118/418145: the parish boundaries of Ford to S. and Montford to N. of the river here meet in the middle of the Severn.

David showed his find to Mr. V. Gray, Second Master of Pontesbury School, who kindly brought it to me for a report before its presentation to Shrewsbury Museum. The implement is made from an almost cylindrical stone rod, somewhat bowed; it is $13\frac{3}{4}$ inches long (350 mm.) with a well-defined shallow-domed pestle face, 1.8 x 1.7 inches diameter (45 x 42 mm.) and a conical butt, slightly oblique. The middle areas of both faces have been rubbed down; the sides are rounded. There is a good hand-grip with a flattened space for the fingers directly above the centre of the tool. The cross-section of much of the body is a slightly flattened oval behind the almost circular pestle-end and it again approaches a circular form towards the butt (diam. 19 mm.) which has been ground down and subsequently chipped on one side (perhaps by a recent blow). Both pestle-face and butt appear to have been used: the rim of the pestle-dome is highly polished: a flake $1\frac{1}{2}$ ins. long has been splintered off up the body from one edge of this face and shows transverse striations. The colour of the implement is very dark grey, almost black at the ends, with a lustrous surface, considerably pocked and showing some unworked flake-scars. The weight is $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.

The specimen was submitted to Professor F. W. Shotton, F.R.S., for petrological examination in the Department of Geology of the University of Birmingham and his Report is appended:

Sh 44/c, from River Severn, Ford, Shropshire.

"This pestle is a most peculiar object. At first glance one wonders whether it could be a casting for there is what looks like a mould junction running along its length. Fortunately, where a small flake has been chipped off, it can be seen that this line is made by a thin resistant vein that runs through the rock. I find it very difficult to decide whether the cylinder is natural as the result of most unusual wear by water, or whether it has been deliberately shaped. It looks rather as though it had been pecked into its present shape, but it is notable that the whole surface is polished by natural erosion, whereas the end which is clearly shaped artificially does not show this polish.

Petrologically, the rock is difficult to define, but I think it can be best described as a greywacke-type siltstone. It probably comes from one of the greywacke horizons which occur in the Silurian of the Welsh Borderland, west of the limestone development. Wide as is this location, the provenance becomes even vaguer when it is realised that the parent rock might have been a glacial erratic."

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AN EXPANDING STONE BATTLE-AXE FROM THE HELDRE, NEAR TREWERN.

Preliminary note by Miss L.F. Chitty.

In 1957 Robert Hilditch, a pupil at Gnosall Secondary Modern School, brought to his History Master, Mr. J.H. Simpson, a small perforated stone axe-hammer with expanding ends, found long before near the Welsh border where Shropshire meets Montgomeryshire in the Breidden gap. The boy said it was dug up by his grandfather in 1911 on "Eldry Farm, Trewern, near Welshpool". Robert's father, Mr. Walter Hilditch, now living at Norbury, Staffs. confirmed that the axe was found by his father, the late Mr. George Hilditch, when he was digging a hole for a post on 'The Heldre' Farm; the find spot was two fields away behind the farm-house. Although the farm is on the Welsh side of the border, the find-spot, perhaps marked by one of the gateposts in the N.W. corner of Ten Acres field at its lower end (Grid Ref. 118/295108) lies in Shropshire, and we may accept gratefully the generous offer of Mr. Walter Hilditch and Robert to present their treasure to Shrewsbury Museum.

The implement proves to be of Group XII Picrite and is a small variant of the "Snowhill battle-axe", one of our finest products of the British Bronze Age, which was made at our Hyssington Picrite centre and exported widely, reaching southern England at a time when inhumation was still the normal burial rite among chieftains of the Wessex culture and Stonehenge III was being erected on Salisbury Plain; its date may be around 1500 B.B. (See Proc. Prehist. Soc., 1951, 127, 159-167; further publication pending.)

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F O R T H C O M I N G E V E N T S .

The Department of Extra-Mural Studies of the University of Birmingham has again arranged an Annual Week-end Conference of Archaeological Research Groups and Societies to be held at the Regent Hotel, Leamington Spa from the 29th of February to 1st of March. It will take the form of reports on excavations and field work undertaken during 1963 by various archaeological organisations in the West Midlands, but the programme is extremely flexible. The Conference will be open to resident students for which the charge at the Regent Hotel is £3..14s. and to non-residents.

The Department has also issued a brochure outlining its Archaeology Courses for 1964, and copies are available from the Director of Extra-Mural Studies, and at various local libraries and museums. The courses this year include one on Industrial Archaeology (August 29 - September 5); Surveying for the Archaeologist (August 29 - September 5); the archaeological interpretation of Aerial Photographs (February 21st - 23rd) and an unusual course on Safety and First Aid on Excavations (20th - 22nd March).

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER

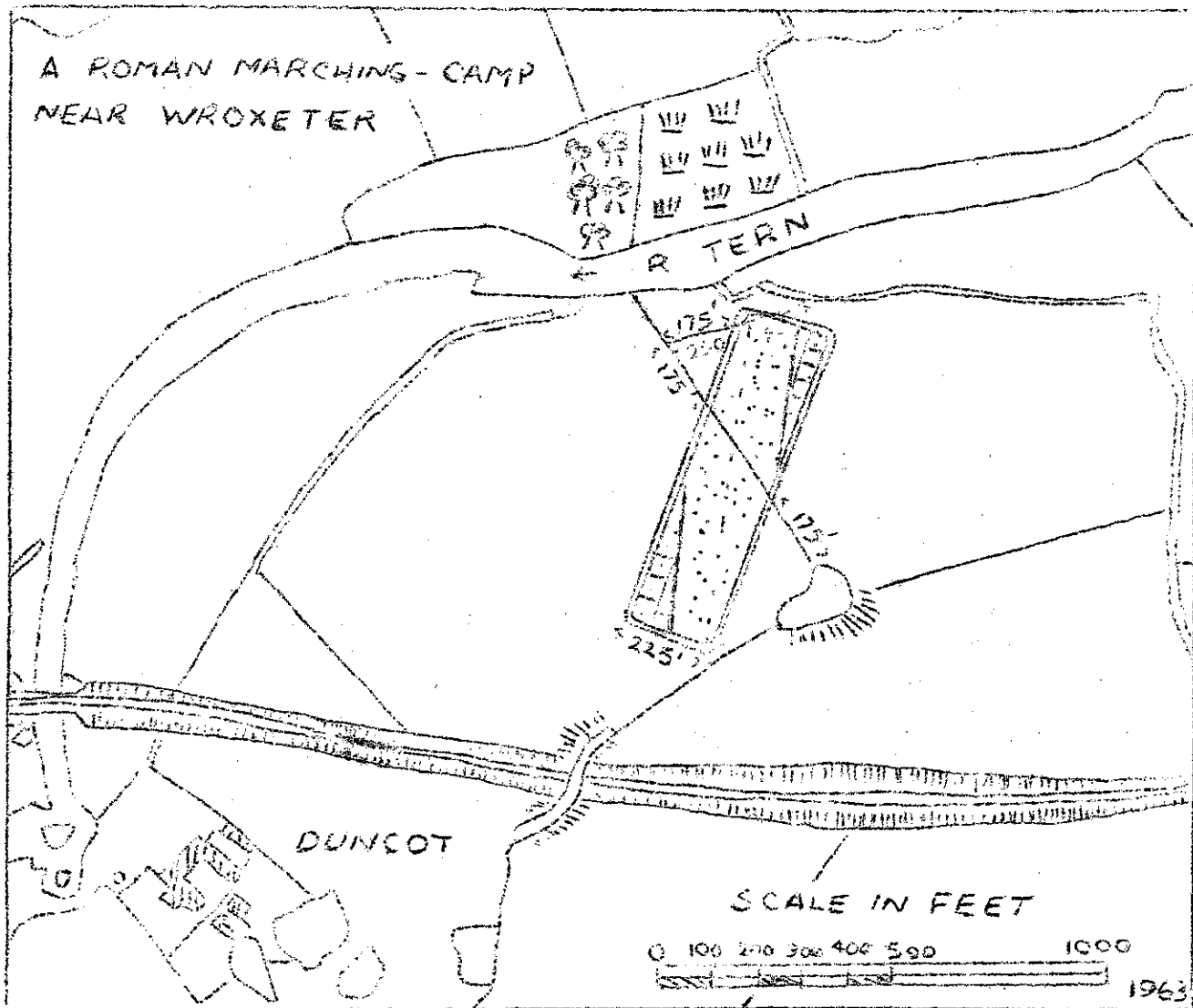
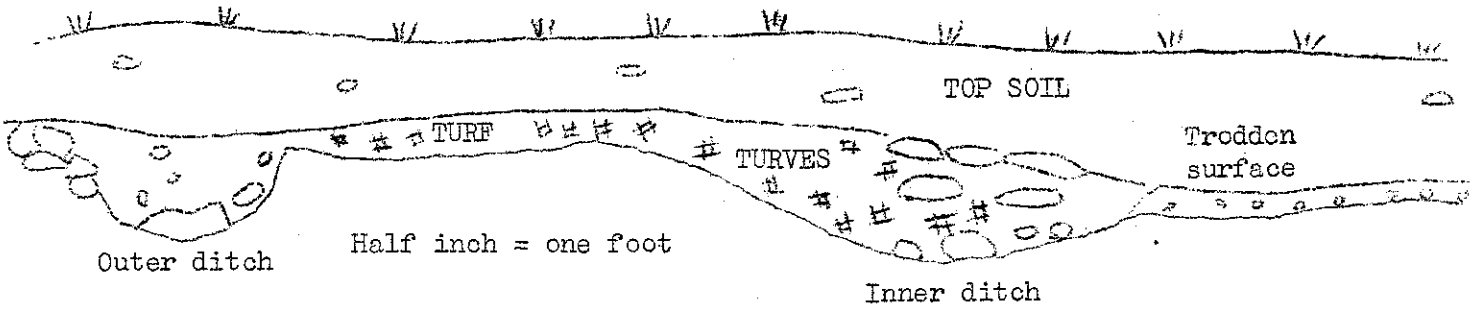
Edited by J. L. Hobbs, Shrewsbury Museum, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury.

A ROMAN MARCHING - CAMP AT DUNCOT, NEAR WROXETER

From the beginning of this year work has taken place at Duncot farm (Grid Ref: SJ 577117), north-east of Atcham, where last year Mr. Arnold Baker discovered a Roman fort with double ditches during the course of an aerial survey. By kind permission of the farmer, Mr. R. O. Griffiths, trenches were put transversely across the ditches at three sites as indicated in the sketch. As appeared likely from an examination of the aerial photograph, two shallow ditches were found with the remains of a turf bank between them. The greater part of this bank had been pushed back into the inner of the two ditches.

Mr. Geoffrey Taylor kindly brought a magnetometer, and a survey was made of approximately 2,500 square yards of the N.E. corner of the camp. Only vague differences were noted and excavation revealed nothing of special significance other than the trodden surface noted previously. Mr. T. Ewart, using a mine detector, found a large Roman nail within the camp area, which suggests the possibility that timber buildings had been present.

Dr. A. W. J. Houghton.



CAUGHLEY POTTERY SITE.

The site of the 18 - 19th century porcelain works at Caughley, near Broseley, Salop has been examined. It will be recalled that this comparatively large factory manufactured a fine quality porcelain from about 1750 to 1819 when the business was acquired by the Coalport concern. Open cast clay working is in progress nearby, but the proprietors are well aware of the importance and interest of the site which before long they must destroy, and they have given all facilities for examination and excavation of the remains of what appears to be a "bottle" type of kiln situated near the ruins of the Old Overseer's cottage. An interesting collection of sherds has already been collected. It is proposed to commence excavations in about three weeks' time and volunteers should get in touch with Dr. A.W.J. Houghton, of Oakwood, Pulverbatch.

WROXETER BRIDGE SITE.

With the help of volunteers from the VIth form of the Girls Priory School, Shrewsbury and the Wellington Grammar School survey work and excavations have been started on the Wroxeter side of the River Severn opposite the bridge site discovered by Aqua Divers in June 1963 (See Newsletter no. 24).

Here the ancient declivity has been masked and altered by landslide, surface water drainage and weathering but excavation has already revealed the original surface, on which a memorial Denarius of Fuastina Junior (after 175A.D.) was found. The latest pottery gives a 'terminus post quem' of the end of the 4th century A.D. Work will continue on this site at week-ends throughout the summer. Will volunteers please contact Dr. A.W.J. Houghton.

A.W.J.H.

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THE SHROPSHIRE MINING CLUB.

A group of friends who were the forerunners of the above Club, began to examine the South Shropshire lead mines in the latter part of 1958. A purely sporting activity developed into a more scientific field survey, with the assistance of Mr. D. B. Corbyn, who is now the Club's President. Visits to Derbyshire and elsewhere were begun the following year, and in September 1961 the present Club was formed, having ten founder members.

The first year was spent mainly in exploration, members travelling far and wide. In 1962 more serious work was considered and visits concentrated on the North Wales area. The Club became members of the Derbyshire Caving Association and in 1963 were elected on to the Committee. The Survey of the South Shropshire mines was published in December 1962 and was well received. Much work was done in North Wales in 1963, several new caves being discovered. It was decided to open an Associate Members Section towards the end of the year which brought a number of new members whose knowledge and experience are beginning to alter the scientific side of the Club considerably.

Their main interest is in the South Shropshire mines to which much further attention has been given during recent months. A survey of the Roman copper mine of Llanymynech Ogof, begun in 1963, is nearing completion; the survey will include all aspects of the mine, a detailed plan, its full known history, description, possible methods of working, geological survey, etc. This may be the first complete study of a Roman mine in Britain. At a recent meeting the Club became founder members of the North Wales Caving Association.

The principal objects of the Club are now : - the exploring, recording and surveying of underground cavities in Shropshire and North Wales. The investigation of old mines and their histories; the study of mining engines and machinery and the preservation of mining records and of other articles which may be of interest in the future.

The Club has applied for membership of the Cave Research Group of Great Britain, and arrangements are being made for members to be on call in view of possible Cave Rescue proceedings in North Wales. The Club now has 17 members and is still growing.

D.R. Adams, Leader and Secretary.

HEN DOMEN, MONTGOMERY.

Excavations at Easter, 1964.

Work continued on the apsidal building discovered last Autumn near the motte ditch, and showed that it had been timber-framed, 25 feet long and 12 feet wide. There is little doubt that it was the chapel of the Castle. Between it and the motte ditch there was a double-post hole palisade extending from the large pit on the ditch edge towards the main Bailey rampart.

Finds during the week's work included a spear-head of the 12th century and a late Bronze Age socketed axe, which was lying on a narrow path surface of the last period. It was perhaps a chance find of the 13th century, lost when the Castle was abandoned.

Further excavation will be taking place at Hen Domen on the following dates, weather permitting: Sat 2 May; Sun 10 May; Sun 17 May; Mon 18 May (Whit Monday); Sat 23 May; Sun 14 June; Sat 20 June; Sun 28 June; Sat 4 July; Sun 12 July; Sat 18 July; Sun 26 July.

We normally leave the Priory Boys' School, Shrewsbury at 10 a.m., reaching the site at 10.30. In case of bad weather, please ring Harwood 297 - every effort will be made to keep to this programme but last-minute alterations may be unavoidable. Tools can be provided - all are welcome, beginners especially.

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

THE ROVERIES, LYDHAM.

A very limited excavation was carried out last Summer over two week-ends at the Roveries, a hill-fort site about one mile NW. of Lydham, in south-west Shropshire, under the direction of Mr. Nicholas Thomas, Assistant Keeper of the Department of Archaeology in Birmingham City Museum. The excavators concentrated their attention on the unfinished ditch and bank of the first phase of the Hill Fort and in particular they examined its junction with part of the rampart of the final phase of the Hill Fort. They were able to show that the first phase ditch ran underneath the later rampart, and this was the final confirmation required for proof of the date of the early ditch.

The party also completed its survey of the main North Entrance. It is unlikely that there will be further excavation of the site, and the results of the work already done will be published in due course.

SHROPSHIRE PARISH REGISTERS.

The Shropshire Parish Register Society, which is now incorporated into the Shropshire Archaeological Society, has in the past printed the Registers of many Shropshire parishes, and many other parishes had been transcribed by willing volunteers ready for eventual printing.

Unfortunately, the enormous rise in the costs of printing has precluded the Society from publishing any further registers for some years past, but the Society has recently made an effort to complete the copying of all the registers of Shropshire parishes down to the year 1812, and it has now completed this task. The Registers of more than two hundred parishes are now therefore available to students in the Shrewsbury Reference Library, either in printed form, in manuscript or on microfilm. While in many cases the copies end at the year 1812, there are many parishes in which the copying has been done to the year 1837, when the national registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths commenced, and from which date records can be easily found either at Somerset House or in local Registries.

Recent copying has taken the form of microfilming, by which means the original registers can be quickly and economically copied by photography, which has meant that the valuable original registers could be returned to the churches with the minimum of delay.

AVON-SEVERN VALLEYS RESEARCH PROJECT.

Aerial survey carried out by Messrs. Arnold Baker and James Pickering during the past two years has revealed literally hundreds of new and hitherto unsuspected sites on the gravel terraces of the rivers Severn and Avon and as many as twenty crop-marks have been found on a single print. This survey work has changed the face of the West Midlands from a barren prehistoric waste to an area full of exciting problems, and Regional Group 8 of the Council for British Archaeology has appointed a special research committee to be responsible for the examination of these gravel sites and to publish the results of the research and excavation. The scheme will be known as the Avon-Severn Valleys Research Project.

The complete programme is likely to cover a period of ten years, and it is estimated that at least £1,000 will be required each year for excavation and more at intervals for publication of the results. These financial problems are now being organised; the excavation costs may be met by contributions from several major trusts and other sources, but the results of an appeal to local societies in the area has been disappointing. Dr. Webster reported at the last Committee meeting of Group 8 that the Project was now firmly established. An initial excavation programme for the forthcoming season has been arranged and liaison established with the County Planning authorities so that there would be no danger of gravel working destroying a site before excavation could be carried out. Dr. Webster also stated that there was every hope that the aerial survey of north Shropshire would be completed in the near future.

NEW BOOKS ON ARCHAEOLOGY.

Dr. Graham Webster, who is well-known to Shropshire archaeologists, has recently had a new book on Archaeology published by Messrs. A. and C. Black at 21/-. Its title is "Practical Archaeology: an introduction to archaeological field-work and excavation" and it is intended as a companion volume to Stuart Piggott's "Approach to Archaeology". Dr. Webster's long practical experience of excavation and of training young archaeologists eminently fits him to write such a book, and not only practising archaeologists but also intelligent laymen will find it of great value in attaining a better understanding of the problems of archaeological research.

Another book, "The Severn Basin" by K.S. Painter is one of the first of a series of Regional Archaeologies to be published by Messrs. Cory, Adams and Mackay. This is aimed at young general readers, rather than at archaeologists and lists of sites and of museums to visit are given. The price is 15/-.

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER

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

EXCAVATIONS AT PONTESBURY CASTLE, SHROPSHIRE, AND HEN DOMEN,MONTGOMERYSHIRE, 1964.

Excavations by the Shrewsbury Archaeological Research Group, directed by P. A. Barker, for the Ministry of Public Building and Works, on the site of Pontesbury Castle (Grid Ref. SJ 401058) a roughly circular mound 10 - 12 feet high and 120 - 150 feet in diameter south-east of the church, have revealed the massive footings of a square tower or keep on the eastern side of the site. These footings were 13' 6" wide, and made of mortared rubble. The wall above them had been severely robbed, only the core being left to a height of some four feet. The wall was unlikely to have been less than six to seven feet thick, and it seems probable that the tower was at least fifty feet high. A layer of charcoal and burnt wattle and daub inside the tower and a thick layer of charcoal outside it suggest that the castle and its outbuildings had been burnt down. Since none of the pottery found is likely to be later than the late 13th century it appears that the castle came to an end then.

Previous excavation (in 1961) on another part of the site had shown that the rest of the apparent mound consisted of a rampart and ditch with three periods of occupation, in timber buildings, within the enclosure. There is some evidence to suggest that the castle began as a ring-work with timber buildings only, and that later, probably at some time close to 1200, the tower was erected near the rampart on the eastern side. Leland, the 16th century antiquary, say in Pontesbury "great Tokens and Stones fallen down of a great Manor Place or Castelle; and thereby yet remaineth the name of Castelle Paviment," and it seems certain now that he saw the ruins of the recently discovered tower. The rampart had been demolished and used to fill the ditch at some time in the 19th century, and at the same time the tower had been finally robbed of its useful stone, and the site levelled. About 1900 a gin-ring, a horse-driven power unit, used for driving a chaff-cutter and for root pulping, had been installed where the tower had been. This interesting machine has been preserved for Shrewsbury Museum.

The group has also continued the excavation of the 11th century motte and bailey castle at Hen Domen, Montgomery. The season's work has shown that there was a small wooden apsidal chapel of the 12th century in the bailey close to the motte ditch, and that the structures of the last period in all cases seem to have been flimsier than those of the penultimate period, which fits in with the hypothesis, suggested by the dating, by pottery, of the last period, that in 1223 when the new stone castle was built at Montgomery the timber castle was remodelled for a new role, probably that of an early warning station and outpost overlooking the Severn, which cannot be seen from the later castle.

P. A. Barker.

BRONZE LOOPED PALSTAVE FROM NEW HOUSE FARM, NORTHWOOD, NEAR WEM,NORTH SHROPSHIRE

By Lily F. Chitty, O.B.E., M.A., F.S.A.

1. Discovery and Site During the spring of 1961, when Mr. J. D. Stokes was harrowing the Long Length field on his farm, The New House, Northwood, in the parish of Wem Rural, he found a bronze axe, a looped palstave. It was caught in the harrow as he was turning on the headland near the western hedge boundary. The soil is a wet clay and the field had not been under cultivation for a long time. It has now been re-seeded for grass. (6" O.S. Shropshire Sheet XIV S.W., E. of centre of top edge; 1" O.S. 118 (Shrewsbury), 477 323).

The Long Length is a small narrow field (5 acres approx.) running NNE. - SSW., flanked on the east by the road from Newtown past Pinfold farm and The Lawn northward towards Whixall Moss: this lane here runs parallel to and slightly above a stream draining from the Moss area by Dobson's Bridge down to join the River Roden near Loppington House. After defining the north end of Long Length, a brook-let from Wem Moss joins this stream. To the west of the field damp, low-lying ground is marked by a line of ponds. Long Length and the road adjacent thus occupy

an area of slight elevation and there appears to be a low platform near the centre of the field.

The find-spot is $\frac{1}{3}$ mile just W. of N. from Newtown Church and $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles WSW. of the site of the bronze looped palstave found in Whixall Moss in 1927.²

In March, 1964, Mr. Stokes's son Michael took the New House axe to show to his History Master, Mr. B. Burrows, at the Secondary Modern School, Wem, and it was then reported to me by the Headmaster, Mr. George Stinson, B.Sc.: I am most grateful to them both for bringing it to Pontesbury for discussion and, subsequently, for taking me to see the site and to call upon Mr. and Mrs. Stokes at New House; also to Mr. Stokes for the loan of his palstave for drawing and study, with the full story of its discovery. He has generously presented it to Shrewsbury Museum, where it is a very interesting accession.

2. Description The axe is a well-preserved example of a looped palstave with trident pattern, transitional in type between the Middle and Late Bronze Age forms: it may date from around 1,000 B.C. It is nearly $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches long (163 mm.); the blade is of somewhat "crinoline" form with one angle inclining slightly to a narrow edge (41 mm.), which is almost straight and moderately sharp: below the gentle overhang of the stop-ridge (th. 31 mm.) each face has a small blurred trident extending into a long thin midrib, a trifle oblique. The flanges (th. 30 mm. where they terminate at the stop-ridge) are ogival in form, being slender below the thin butt (w. 20 mm.), which is not quite straight. The axe has been cast in a double mould, presumably of bronze; the ridges of juncture are distinct on the sides, but have been smoothed down. The loop is well moulded, narrowing towards its upper end. The axe was cleaned and the metal shows through vestiges of green patination. The weight is 15 oz.

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1. In 1752 this was known as the Redfellis Brook and is described in Reverend S. Garbet's History of Wem (1818), 325, 329.
 2. L. F. Chitty, Shrops. Arch. Trans., XLVII, i (1933), 73-5, Figure reproduced in E. M. Hardy, New Phytologist, XXXVIII (1939), 373-8, Figs. 7-9 and 13, Pollen Diagram.

A DUG - OUT CANOE FROM MARTON POOL, CHIRBURY.

On Wednesday, the 26th of September 1964, Mr. P. H. Rowlands of the Department of Geology at Birmingham University called at Shrewsbury Museum to report that he had seen the remains of a dug-out canoe on the edge of Marton Pool, where a drinking-place for cattle had been made at the edge of the mere. A telephone call to the Divisional Engineer of the Severn River Board confirmed that the Board had, during the early summer of 1964, lowered the level of Marton Pool and made several drinking places for cattle; and that the dug-out canoe had been found during these operations, probably early in July.

visit

An immediate visit was made to the Pool by members of the Museum staff and by Mr. P. Barker, and the remains of the boat were found a few yards from the edge of the pool, in the long narrow field opposite the New Inn, some twenty yards from the drinking-place in which the object had presumably been found. The time which had elapsed since the canoe was found unfortunately precluded any precise identification of the site of the find or the taking of soil or peat samples for pollen analysis, but arrangements were made to bring the dug-out canoe in to the Museum at Shrewsbury.

This was done a week later after the owner of the field had been traced and the necessary permission obtained. Treatment of the timbers is now in progress. A previous dug-out was found on the N. margin of Marton Pool in June 1908 and is also now in Shrewsbury Museum. This is recorded, with a plan by Miss Chitty in the Shropshire Archaeological Society Transactions, 1927, 4th ser. vol XI, pp. 113-133 (plan facing p. 125). The site of the present discovery lies two fields to the SW of the previous find, in the narrow field immediately north of the boat-house. Marton Pool, lying in the valley between the Long Mountain and the Corndon range, was formerly of much greater extent than it is today. Old Marton is said to lie at the bottom of the Pool, and there is a tradition which says that "if you row out to the middle of the lake on Christmas Eve, you will hear the bells ringing below."

It was possible to make an arrangement this year with the Ministry of Public Building and Works for the use of two dozen prisoners from Staffordshire to begin the serious clearance of the site at Wroxeter and to assist in the work of the training school. It has been possible to clear the whole of the interior of the caldarium, but unfortunately medieval or later robbing and 19th century excavations had left very little, only two pieces of the floor were found, and these not in their original position; they had however preserved for us some interesting details which show alterations to the building. A small problem in Wright's account (Uriconium, 1872, p. 122) was also elucidated. He illustrated on his plan what was described as a sunken floor made of flat tiles which he thought to be the base of a cold water tank - this of course would have been impossible in the middle of the caldarium. It is now clear that a strip of flat tiles was in fact laid on the sub-basement floor in line with the stoke-hole, presumably to protect the floor from the heat which would here be at its maximum intensity. There is evidence of the replacement of some of the tile pilae by red sandstone, showing that in some late stage in the history of the Bath-house tiles were becoming scarce.

Perhaps the most interesting revelation was in the grey stone retaining wall round the calendarium. This was discovered to finish at a distance of ten feet from both corners of the caldarium on the south side, it could thus never have been a retaining wall and must be considered in the nature of an encasement to protect the main wall of the building from subsiding into the soft sandy subsoil. It is possible that in fact it was never higher than its surviving point since the cement over the uppermost course of stones bears no impression of a further course of tile or stone. This would also account for its astonishing survival as it would have remained completely buried and unnoticed by stone robbers.

Further work on the east side of the main building has produced more evidence that the Bath-house was not in commission until the late second century, and we have added further to the maze of water mains criss-crossing this area.

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UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM EXTRA-MURAL DEPARTMENT LECTURES.

A Series of twenty Lectures and Discussions to be given by Philip A. Barker, F.S.A. has been arranged on Wednesday evenings, commencing on Wednesday, October 21 at Castle Chambers, 38A, Castle Street. The title of the series is "Domestic Architecture from the earliest times to the Renaissance", and the talks will be chiefly concerned with the development of the house, the farm and the village in north-western Europe from prehistoric times to the end of the medieval period. A great deal of the material will be unpublished, illustrations being drawn from recent excavations of house and settlement sites and from recent work on deserted medieval villages in this country and on the Continent.

Three courses on Industrial Archaeology have also been arranged for the Winter Session of 1964-65. Mr. J. Horsley Denton will be the lecturer for a series on 'East Shropshire Industrial and Transport History in the Shirehall, Shrewsbury, which continues last year's course on this subject, and a similar course will also be held in the High School for Girls at Wellington.

A series of ten meetings under Mr. Michael M. Rix, M.A. on the Industrial Archaeology of Shropshire will be held in the Borough Library, Shrewsbury on Thursday evenings. Those attending these courses and anyone interested in the subject of Industrial Archaeology will be interested in the new 'Journal of Industrial Archaeology' which has

recently made its appearance, published by the Lambard Press in association with the Newcomen Society.

The first number, which appeared in May contained many valuable articles, including "An Open-Air Museum for the north-east" by Frank Atkinson, who recently spoke on this subject at Attingham; "Company Museums" by Derek Hudson and a list of sources of Industrial History in the National Register of Archives.

The August issue has articles on "Birmingham's gun quarter and its workshops"; "The Stratford-upon-Avon Canal"; "Survivals of 17th and 18th century blast-furnaces" and "The Photographic aspect of Industrial Archaeology". The magazine will be filed permanently in the Shrewsbury Borough Library. A recent book on this subject is "Industry and Technology" by W. H. Chaloner and A.E. Musson in the 'Visual History of Modern Britain' series, edited by Professor Jack Simmons. The 238 well-selected illustrations in the book show the development of Britain's industry from the late Middle Ages to the present day.

TWO NEW ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN SHREWSBURY.

Two new sites of archaeological interest, discovered as a result of aerial survey carried out by Mr. Arnold Baker, have recently been reported by Mr. P. A. Barker to the Council of the Shropshire Archaeological Society.

The first of these sites is near Weeping Cross and the Shrewsbury by-pass on the outskirts of the town, where a square enclosure has been revealed by crop-marks on aerial photographs. The actual site lies on land which may shortly be built on during the development of the new Sutton Farm estate, where a start has just been made on a project for some 600 houses by Messrs. Ashley, Ashley and Newbrook of Bayston Hill. It is not, however, anticipated that the site will be in danger for twelve months at least, and preliminary arrangements have been made by Mr. Barker for an excavation of the site to be made during next Summer.

The second site lies about half a mile from the first, on the other side of the Shrewsbury By-pass, in a field between Murrell's new Nurseries and the railway line to Hereford, and immediately behind the houses on Oteley Road. Here, another enclosure with a noticeable entrance, was revealed by aerial photography. Nothing is known about either site, and it is hoped that both will eventually be investigated.

Mr. Barker also reported on the discovery of a Bronze Age burial ground at Cross Houses, and an enclosure or camp near Lythwood Hall, both found as a result of Mr. Arnold Baker's work.

DAWLEY NEW TOWN HISTORICAL SURVEY.

A meeting of the Working Party of the Dawley New Town Historical Survey was held in the Shirehall on October 2 under the chairmanship of Miss M. C. Hill, M.A. It was reported that a Pilot Architectural Survey of the area had been made, and that a list of companies operating in the area had been compiled. The projected Exhibition, which had been in the hands of Mr. John Golby, who has now left Shropshire, was discussed and Mr. R. E. James, of Shrewsbury Museum agreed to be responsible for its organisation and arrangement. The Exhibition will be held in Shrewsbury, probably in the Art Gallery, in May 1965, and it is hoped that it will then be shown in the Wellington and Dawley areas.

Members of the Railway and Canal Historical Society visited Shropshire on Saturday, September 26. Meeting in Shrewsbury where a display of maps, documentary material and material objects was arranged at the Museum during the morning, the party then proceeded to Dawley and Coalport to visit sites of interest to members.

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER

Edited by P. A. Barker for the Shropshire Archaeological Society and the Shrewsbury Museum

Mr. J. L. Hobbs, whose loss is felt in so many ways, began this Newsletter in October 1957. Since then it has been invaluable in keeping all those interested in the archaeology of the county informed quickly of events and discoveries, the results of excavations, and the future plans of excavators and fieldworkers. It was felt strongly that the Newsletter should be kept going, and the present edition is a token of this intention.

As Mr. Hobbs said in his first number, the success of the Newsletter depends on the co-operation of all those with local archaeological and historical information sending us material for publication here, which is not intended in any way to take the place of fuller accounts which may later be published in the Society's Transactions or elsewhere. We appeal, therefore, not only to excavators and fieldworkers, but also to local historians and those who have made chance finds, to send us details, which will thereby reach a large public in the county, and an increasing one further afield.

DESERTED VILLAGES IN SHROPSHIRE

With the formation of the Deserted Medieval Village Research Group in 1953, a much neglected aspect of English economic history came under close scrutiny. This Group set about the monumental task of locating and classifying all lost villages in England according to degree of desertion, and at the last count had been able to list over two thousand proved or provisional sites.

Shropshire, for the most part, has been by-passed by the Group's efforts, for although Eyton in his Antiquities traced a large number of lost settlements in the county, little attempt has been made to locate these on the ground. Professor Beresford, in his book "The Lost Villages of England" attributes only one deserted settlement to the county, and the Research Group lists only a dozen suspected sites and two recognized deserted villages at Caus, SJ337078, and Detton, SO667796. In 1959 Mr. S. C. Stanford undertook an emergency excavation at Chapel Meadow, in front of Detton Hall where there were a number of hollow ways and platforms. Although he found some 12th and 13th century pottery, the medieval occupation layers seem to have been destroyed by 19th century marl quarrying.

Recently the work on Shropshire's lost settlements has accelerated with interesting results. In 1963 Mr. P. A. Barker carried out an emergency excavation on the site of the deserted hamlet of Braggington SJ336137 (Shropshire Newsletter, No. 23) and large numbers of deserted or shrunken hamlets have been identified by the staff of the Victoria County History in the preparation of the current volume of the History, which deals with parishes in the Hundreds of Condover and Ford. In this part of Shropshire the original settlement pattern was one of numerous small hamlets - the isolated farmstead, now so typical a feature, is not found here before the later Middle Ages. A few hamlets were deserted as a result of direct action by lords of manors - Allcot in Acton Burnell and Ramshurst in Frodesley may be examples of this - but shrinkage was a much more common occurrence. The two main reasons for shrinkage here were (i) the movement of population out of hamlets to isolated farmsteads on the fertile clay soils of former woodland areas, in particular during the period 1550 - 1650, and (ii) the rise of the large farm in the 18th century, rendering superfluous such houses in ancient hamlets as were not converted into labourers cottages.

The shrinkage and desertion of ancient hamlets was probably even more widespread in the South Shropshire uplands, where isolated churches or moated farm-houses with adjacent earthworks are commonly found. Recent work (by R. T. Rowley) on settlement here has revealed a number of wholly deserted or severely shrunken villages. Most of the newly discovered sites lie on or about the 800 ft. contour, on the north-west facing slopes of Brown Clee. The two best examples are at Abdon (SO 575866) and Heath (SO 557856) (see Shropshire Newsletter No. 2).

At Abdon the parish church of St. Margaret lies half a mile to the north of the present settlement, but in the field running south-east from the church-yard, there are a number of what appear to be house platforms intersected by depressed and wholly sunken ways. At Heath, the area of desertion seems to be greater than was at

first suspected, with surface indications in the chapel yard and in the orchard to the west of the chapel in addition to those in Chapel Meadow beyond. At Cold Weston (SO 552830) an isolated church, accessible only on foot, provides the nucleus of a small deserted village. Here, however, the earthworks are far less extensive. Isolated farmhouses at Witchcot (SO 534818) and Ashfield (SO 588895) with nearby earthworks also provide probable sites.

In Corvedale the extensive earthworks at Corfham (SO 526848) which have previously been classified purely as castle remains, also mark the site of quite a large extinct village. At Holdgate (SO 563897) all that remains of the considerable medieval settlement are the church, parts of the castle and a farmhouse. Earthworks can be traced in the field running south-east from the road. Similarly at Upton Grosset (SO 656924) the fine Tudor brick building of gate-house and manor house, and the neglected church are the sole remnants of a once extensive village. Here too, earthworks can be traced, but are partially hidden by trees and thick undergrowth.

It is hoped that an aerial survey will soon be made of the region, when other lost Corvedale settlements, such as Kingseye, Marston, Upper Larden and Corve may be located. It is also hoped that, with the help of a Liverpool Boys' Club, a ground survey of the sites at Abdon and Heath will be made at Easter.

Although the remains of settlement desertion in Shropshire are modest compared with those found in some other counties, the economic and demographic changes which they reflect are as important as the more spectacular examples found elsewhere in England.

A. Gaydon, Esq., and R. T. Rowley, Esq.

CAUSE CASTLE, ALRETONE AND TREWERNE

Eyton by a process of elimination identified the Domesday manor of Alretone with the site of Cause Castle. (Eyton vii, pp. 5 - 7). This identification has passed unquestioned despite the evidence of place-names, which, is overwhelmingly against it and despite strong topographical and tenurial objections which cannot be entered into here. Alretone, as Eyton realised means "the Alder township" and until c. 1300 the township of Trewerne, (Montgomeryshire) which is the Welsh equivalent of Alretone, was known by its Saxon name which is found in three forms, Halretton, Alleretton, and Orleton. These are found in the same historical context in 1245, 1263 and 1289. (Archives of All Souls College, Alberbury no. 113; Cal. Close 1264-4, 265; Reg. Swinfield (Cantilupe Society), 221) and they can leave no doubt that the Domesday manor of Alretone is the modern Trewerne. This identification answers all the topographical and tenurial objections and I hope to develop its implications more fully at a later date. It seems likely that the site where Cause was ultimately built lay in one of the 13 unnamed berewicks of the great Domesday manor of Worthen.

J. Lawson, Esq.

CALLOW CASTLE (SJ 384048), HAWCOCKS MOUNT (SJ 349077) AND BRERELAW (SJ 342109)

Recent research for the Victoria County History on Westbury parish has revealed the site of a completely unsuspected medieval castle on Callow Hill, north-east of Minsterley, and has shed new light on the origin of Hawcocks Mount and the ring-work west of Westbury Station. The prehistoric earthwork on Callow Hill has been known for over half a century and a fresh examination of the site has revealed nothing which would lead one to deduce the site of a castle, but a charter of c. 1274-8 from Peter Corbett of Cause to Richard de Hope speaks uncompromisingly of a 'castellum' here to which the service of two half knights fees had formerly pertained. (Longleat MSS.) The castle was clearly disused at this date and was probably of stone, for c. 1540 John Leland speaks of the substantial remains of a castle between Pontesbury and Hogstow wood, which can only refer to Callow Castle. The site was still being robbed of stone in 1688 when rubble-stone was brought from Callow Hill for use in the foundations of Minsterley chapel. (Longleat MSS)

Hawcocks Mount lying almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile due east of Cause Castle has always been difficult to understand within the castle pattern of the Rea Valley, unless we presume that it was anterior to Cause. The evidence of field-names confirms this presumption for in the mid 14th century the demesne arable field immediately adjacent to the ring-work was known as Aldecausfield, (Longleat MSS) which leaves no doubt that it preceded Cause Castle. This field-name by a series of dateable corruptions during the 16th and 17th centuries had reached the form Awcocks by 1679 and its present form by 1841 when the tithe map was made.

The hamlet of Brerelawe which Eyton records in the 13th century (Eyton vii, 170-1) can now be identified with the ring-work, near Westbury Station. Fields surrounding the site on the tithe map of 1840 were called Briarleys, a name which has been used locally down to the present day. No date can be given for the desertion of this settlement.

J. Lawson, Esq.

THE ROMAN BRIDGE SITE AT WROXETER (VIROCONTUM)

Work has recommenced here. Across the river Severn, looking westwards, a soil mark indicates the final stages of the Roman road from Caer-Sws via Newtown, Forden, Westbury, Meole Brace, Brompton and so to the river bank where it is seen to join the well known Watling Street West.

The approach road from the Roman city to the bridgehead has been sectioned. It is about 12 feet wide and is composed of stiff clay set upon the natural sand. At either edge there are set large cobbles. The road is cambered and at the centre is a well-made core of stones and sand. The top dressing is of large gravel grading to medium and then small.

A resistivity survey revealed a linear feature running across the field almost at right angles to the road. This may represent the line of the town rampart, here parallel to the river.

WHITCHURCH

Trenching for a pipe-line has extended for 80 yards on the Whitchurch - Wrexham road at a point near Chemistry in the western suburbs of the town. This has revealed the edge of a straight, hard and very well-made cobbled road surface. This is found at a depth of 3-4 feet below the present road surface. When the present road turns the road below continues in a straight line. It is suggested that this is a new Roman road alignment and it is hoped that it will be possible to have a transverse trench so as to estimate the width of the road. Its significance has yet to be worked out.

A local group hopes to continue work on the Roman building discovered last year in Newtown, Whitchurch.

A. W. J. Houghton, Esq.

WREKIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP

Wall Farm, Kinnersley SJ 681178

Work on this site is almost completed for the present. This year's excavations have still produced no evidence of date. They have, however, shown that the main bank, which has been sectioned with the help of a mechanical excavator, does not contain any internal bracing on the line of our trench. It appears to be of dump construction, and to contain a number of turf-lines within its make-up. The section seems to show that there were at least two periods of construction, and that during one of these the outer face of the bank was to the west of its present position, and on a different alignment. The whole of this structure rests upon a turf-line overlying the natural boulder clay.

It is also almost certain that the bank was thrown up from an internal scoop ditch since a trial section through the main ditch has shown that it was probably about 15 feet wide and had an overall depth of about 4 feet from the tip of the counter-scarp bank. Further stake-holes have also appeared at the western end of the trench.

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

HEN DOMEN, MONTGOMERY

The season at Hen Domen will begin with a continuous week's work at Easter, from April 16th (Good Friday) until Saturday April 24th inclusive. Thereafter work will continue one day each weekend. As much help as possible is needed - those without experience will be welcome.

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

SHROPSHIRE NEWS LETTER

Edited by B.Trinder for the Shropshire Archaeological Society and the
Shrewsbury Museum

EXCAVATIONS OF PREHISTORIC SITES AT WEEPING CROSS, SHREWSBURY.

All three sites so far investigated in this area lie in a field on the northern side of the Shrewsbury By-pass which was formerly part of Sutton Farm (SJ 505108). It stands on the northern slope of the SW to NE ridge of the Pre-Cambrian "Longmyndian" Spur, stretching along Bayston Hill to the Severn. The soil consists of glacial deposits of gravel with patches of clay. It is naturally well drained, light and workable, and rather acid. The western end of the field was formerly a separate enclosure known as "the rushy meadow", and building excavations revealed an underlying prehistoric pool, which pollen analysis proves to have been filled with water until circa 2200 B.C.

The original purpose of excavation on the site was to investigate a rectangular enclosure revealed by crop marks on an aerial photograph taken by Philip Barker. Preliminary work began in February 1965 and was undertaken by an amateur group under the direction of Mr.W.E.Jenks. During the excavation of the enclosure ditch in May, a middle Bronze Age cremation urn was found. This showed the site to have a greater importance than was originally realised, and during July the Ministry of Public Building and Works sponsored a fortnight's full-time excavation under the direction of Philip Barker. Since then building operations have revealed a cremation pit (Site B) 360 yards to the N.W. of the enclosure (Site A), and a series of linear ditches and a charcoal filled pit (Site C) 120 yards north of the enclosure.

SITE A The enclosure is bounded by four ditches of widely varying dimensions.

The Eastern side is 46 yards long and more or less straight. It is interrupted by an entrance causeway 16 yards from its southern end. The northern end appears to be incomplete and makes a T-junction with an earlier linear ditch. For the greater part of its length this side is 14ft. 6in. wide, 3ft. 9in. deep and flat bottomed. On either side of the entrance causeway it appears as a fully defensive construction, 14ft. 6in. wide and 7ft. deep and V-sectioned.

The Northern side is 40 yards long, straight, and makes an approximate right angle with the Eastern side. It is 6ft. wide and 4ft. 3in. deep and V-sectioned, which suggests that it was constructed as a barrier against animal rather than human intruders.

The Western side is 48 yards long and chevron-shaped. As yet it has been sectioned only at its two extremities, where its width is 8ft. 6in.

The Southern side is 47 yards long and more or less straight. It runs parallel to and approximately 45 feet from the northern edge of the Shrewsbury by-pass. At the eastern end it is 14ft. 6in. wide, 7ft. deep and V-shaped, while at the western end it is 8ft. 6in. wide, V-shaped, and of undetermined depth. The aerial photograph of the site appears to show where the change in dimensions occurs. Sections across this side have revealed post holes on the inner side of the enclosure which probably represent strong palisading.

No traces of a rampart remain, though it seems unlikely that the large quantities of spoil removed in the excavation of the ditch were not used up. The shallow depth of some of the large internal postholes suggests the existence of some sort of dump rampart.

Around the entrance a number of sections across the ditch were cut in the hope of obtaining stratified pottery, and an area of approximately 4,500 square feet was stripped of ploughsoil and cleared.

Common features revealed by the ditch sections were:

- 1) Rapid primary silting, followed by a long period of even silting.
- 11) Re-cutting on a major scale, leaving a layer of silt internally, followed by deliberate in-filling.
- 111) A further silting period during which a structure standing near the entrance collapsed partly into the ditch. This period continued until ploughing

obliterated all surface indication of the ditch.

Generally the ditch was V-shaped, 14ft. 6in. wide at lip-depth, and 7ft. 4in. below ground level.

The pottery in the ditch sections comprised numerous fragments and sherds of coarse grog(?) /gritted Iron Age ware from ditch features (l), one Roman rim and flake of fine red ware from ditch feature (lll), and a base of a fine hard red ware with signs of grooved decoration from the rubble of the collapsed (structure???) within ditch feature lll.

The causeway through the entrance was 12ft. wide at its narrowest point, and funnelled outwards. A revetment from the south side of the entrance suggests an internal rampart. On the north side of the entrance there appears to be a small "gatehouse". There is a floor of large stones containing a hearth, and surrounded by a set of large postholes showing signs of replacement. The hearth lay over a pit which contained a sherd of V.C.P. identical with those in the primary ditch silt. A sherd of cord-impressed ware, probably a class 'B' beaker, rested among the stones of the floor.

The Middle Bronze Age cremation urn was found on the opposite side of the ditch from the "gatehouse". The urn, of the Enlarged Food Vessel type, was dug into an earlier pit 2ft. 3in. deep, and was enclosed by a circular gully of approximately 76 ft. diameter, having a V-section with slotted bottom. The gully was cut into two arcs by the digging of the Iron Age enclosure ditch.

Other features found by Mr. Jenks' group, in the part of Site A which was stripped of plough soil were a number of linear depressions filled with stones which show up as "wet-marks" and which overlay the Middle Bronze Age gully, an area of burnt debris and several other silted up features. A series of circular marks shown on the aerial photograph were shown to be unconnected with any of these features, and must be the result of cultivation phenomena.

W. E. Jenks.

WEeping CROSS, 1965. (Ministry Excavation)

The Ministry of Public Building and Works excavation uncovered about 10,000 sq. feet of the interior of the Iron Age enclosure and produced the plan of a circular, trench built hut 30 feet in diameter with a wide out-turned entrance and a group of internal posts, presumably for supporting the roof, together with an internal pit, 3 feet in diameter and 3 feet deep, perhaps for storage. There were other Iron Age structures within the enclosure, some antedating and some postdating the hut. Among these was a late circular structure of postholes, perhaps another hut with some evidence of a hearth.

The enclosure, with its huts, had been built over a Bronze Age cremation burial of the enlarged food vessel type. Close to the site of the burial was an oval area of burnt clay, with fragments of calcined bone, and a central post-hole, which almost certainly represents the site of the funeral pyre. A shallow, roughly circular ditch, approximately 2 feet wide and approximately 96 feet in diameter, with the burial and pyre at its centre, must indicate the limits of the barrow, perhaps a disc barrow, which covered the burial.

It is extraordinary that the Iron Age settlers should have chosen to build their enclosure and huts over a cemetery, and it seems most likely that the barrows had had only very small mounds which had disappeared by the Iron Age - the barrow ditch had silted naturally to the top and was almost certainly invisible before work on the Iron Age settlement was begun.

Finds were not numerous, and were chiefly confined to Iron Age pottery from the backfilled features of the settlement.

P. A. Barker.

WEeping CROSS: SITES B AND C.

The outstanding discovery at Site B has been a late Bronze Age cemetery superimposed on an earlier burial site. Several linear ditches which appear to enclose field systems were traced. A fuller report on this area will appear in the next

newsletter.

At Site C an ancient set of ditch features were uncovered and revealed partly in section by the building. They are cut into the clay which forms the junction between the natural gravel of the field and the peat of the prehistoric pool. The sections were completed and revealed a U-shaped ditch, 3ft. deep, filled with highly ferruginous deep pink clay, with a layer of broken stones apparently laid across it at a later stage. A third period was represented by a shallow flat-bottomed pit which cut through the stone layer at the side of the ditch, and which contained a fill of burnt branches. The pit was at least 3 ft. 6in. long at the point of sectioning, and 3 ft. wide at the lip.

Mr. Jenks and his helpers are continuing to investigate this site and a further report will appear in the next newsletter.

W. E. Jenks.

DAWLEY NEW TOWN HISTORICAL SURVEY.

During recent months, several groups have been actively engaged in various aspects of research. The University of Birmingham Extra-Mural classes in East Shropshire Transport and Industrial History have both had a number of field meetings in the area in co-ordination with records research being currently undertaken. At Easter, members of both classes, together with members of the Railway and Canal Historical Society and others commenced digging the site of the Stirchley furnaces under the direction of Mr. Denzil Nield and Mr. J.A. Pagett. Work commenced by the exposing of the eastern-side arch, through which much of the debris was passed and approximately seven feet of excavation was made below the existing fall of thirteen feet. By July, this was sufficiently advanced to reveal most of the lower part of the furnace and some measuring was possible. In view of the extensive foliage it was then decided to suspend operations until the Winter months when declining vegetation would assist photography. At this stage, a considerable part of the southern furnace had been exposed, in addition to the work on the more complete northern furnace.

The scene of these activities was visited by the Newcomen Society in the late Summer and several members present were able to amplify the findings of the working party. Elsewhere, a small group made a brief exploratory dig in the canal bed near to the site of what is believed to be the earlier works where Madeley Porcelain was made. It is known that 'rejects' were thrown in the canal here. No trace has so far been found. At Tweedale Basin, the last known Shropshire tub boat has successfully been raised by members of the Development Corporation and is to be restored and preserved. The proposal to retain the Blists Hill Furnace environment and turn it into an industrial museum which was originally made by Mrs. V. Saxon, a member of the Birmingham University Extra-Mural Research Group at Shrewsbury, has been given detailed consideration and approved in principle.

Perhaps the biggest individual contribution during the past year has been the magnificent research into the early plateways and wagon ways which was made by two students of the Birmingham School of Architecture in close collaboration with the Shrewsbury Research Group. This resulted in considerable progress in this particular field in which Shropshire played an important part. The whole story has not yet been uncovered by a long way and much research is still needed. The small Shrewsbury Group are making slow but steady headway, but we could do with a few more members. We meet on Monday evenings and I would be glad to hear from anyone interested.

J. Horsley Denton, Marchmont House,
CODSALL, Wolverhampton.

WOOLSTASTON MOTTE AND BAILEY - APRIL, 1965.

Site

The castle site lies in the foothills which form the northernmost extension of the Longmynd range in western Shropshire (OS 129 450985). It stands on a ridge lying immediately to the west of the present village of Woolstaston at a height of about 850 feet and it commands an impressive view of all the surrounding country.

Circumstances of excavation.

A small reservoir was to be constructed on a position inside the rampart of the

-4-

bailey. The work was done with the aid of a small Ministry of Public Buildings and Works grant.

Method

Initially, a 15 feet square was excavated on the site of the proposed reservoir

Description of results

In spite of very careful trowelling, no structures even of the flimsiest were revealed. There was a small scatter of medieval sherds lying immediately below the humus layer at a depth of about ten inches, below which there was an undisturbed clay layer. Five test pits were then dug into the natural sub-soil in order to establish its nature.

Because of the negative results a 20 feet by 3 feet section was dug across the motte ditch in order to confirm occupation and to attempt to date it. The section revealed that there had been a great deal of rapid primary silting followed by an accumulation of humic silt with charcoal, this layer containing the bulk of the medieval pottery recovered from the site. Although this fairly shallow layer was 2-3 feet above the level of the original ditch, there was no evidence of a recut. A post-hole on the outer lip of the ditch may have belonged to a bailey palisade.

Pottery

A good deal of medieval pottery was found, consisting mainly of cooking pot sherds, most of them similar to those found at the castle sites at Smethcott nearby and at Hen Domen, Montgomery, and dating broadly from the late 12th to early 13th century. There was very few jug sherds and no glazed pottery, though there was one thumb-pressed base.

The sherds are of pottery of the simplest kind, implying a generally frugal standard of living. There was no typically 14th or 15th century pottery suggesting that the castle was finally abandoned in the period 1275 - 1325.

Documentary evidence quoted by Mr. A. Gaydon, confirms that the site was deserted in the first quarter of the 14th century.

Sherds of a 16th/17th century jug found immediately above the humic silting of the ditch, but with medieval pottery stratified above it, infer that the ditch was open to a considerable depth until that late period, and was subsequently filled rapidly and probably deliberately.

R. T. Rowley.

SURVEY OF THE DESERTED VILLAGE AT ABDON, MARCH, 1965.

During one weekend in March, a ground survey was carried out at what appears to be a deserted village site at Abdon, which lies immediately west of Brown Clee. The principal area of interest was a field called Child's Yard, running eastwards from the isolated Church of St. Margaret, and containing a number of earthworks, which were identified as house platforms.

An area of 120 yds. by 100 yds. was surveyed, using simple triangulation techniques. The finished plan revealed nine obvious platforms, and several more obscure features, with a network of sunken ways between them. There were two large platforms measuring 90' x 50' and most of the others were about half this size. The north-eastern sector of the field was covered with ridge and furrow, the ridges measuring about 20ft. in width. There were several platforms in the adjoining field to the north, but these were not surveyed.

As all the platforms were raised, and several of them were seen to have worked sandstone embedded in them, it is reasonable to assume that the last buildings on the site were of stone.

A good deal of unstratified pottery was found on the surface of the field, most of it 18th century. However there were several sherds of 16th century pot and four small medieval sherds.

It is hoped to apply this very successful method of surveying to several other

suspected settlements in the area, notably those at Heath and Cold Weston. A preliminary excavation of the site at Abdon is to be undertaken next Easter.

R. T. Rowley.

WOMBRIDGE PRIORY.

1106

The Ministry of Works is now considering an application for permission to raze the remaining portion of Wombridge Priory in order to build a Housing Estate.

Wombridge lies between Hadley and Oakengates in an area of increasing urbanisation.

A housing Estate has already been built up to the original confines of the Priory, on its South side. The area under discussion consists of Wombridge Farm and its outbuildings. The Farm is early 19th Century and has been unoccupied for some time.

Wombridge Priory was an Augustinian foundation and its building was begun in 1130. The Cartulary has recently been bought by the British Museum. It was never as important as the neighbouring Lilleshall Abbey and apparently lost what importance it had as it is recorded that at the time of the dissolution, it had only one Prior on its strength.

The site of the Priory is bisected by the modern Wombridge Road. On the North side lies Wombridge Church, which was rebuilt in 1870. In the graveyard of the Church is an overgrown mound of stone and rubble which is thought to be the site of the original Lady Chapel of the Priory Church. Excavation in 1831 revealed an Altar and a Piscina. The only item recently identifiable in the rubble was a doorway.

On the South side of the road lies the farm which is to be demolished. Here, the remains of the Priory consist of interrupted courses of squared stone which have been incorporated into a large barn. The courses of stone rise to a height of four and six feet. The barn is at present entirely filled with strips of tin-foil stored by the Government since the last War when they were used as an anti-Radar device. There is also in another part of the farm a length of stone wall rising to a height of about 12 feet, and with a rudimentary buttress on one side. A large piece of heavy cornice was recently found with carving in bas-relief of a sub-human head with large ears and is lying in the courtyard.

A new sewer was recently being laid from the road into the farm courtyard. At a depth of nine feet the workmen discovered what they described as a stone street. This floor consisted of stone slabs, one of which measured 20 by 23 inches square and 7 inches deep. This floor is certainly below the level of the remaining buildings of the Priory and since it lies in the position of the Priory Church, could be the floor of the Crypt. A search was made for finds both in the bottom of the ditch and also in the soil excavated by the Bull-dozer. Many bones were found from animals, including a sheep's skull, two glazed tiles, two primitive nails, two fragments of red pottery which had been very inexpertly turned on a wheel and somewhat incongruously a fragment of moulded cornice of probable Tudor date.

J. Gask.

MORTARIUM FOUND AT ELLERTON.

An intact Mortarium has recently been turned up by the plough at Ellerton. Ellerton lies two miles south of Hinstock and is on the line of the Roman road from London to Chester after it left Watling Street at Pennocrucium.

The farmer, Donald Cartwright, of Ellerton Mill, was ploughing in July, 1964, and turned up the Mortarium with the front wheel of his tractor. The Mortarium was intact and was in no way damaged! The field had not been ploughed within living memory, but about two feet of the top soil had recently been pushed away by a bull-dozer, in order to fill up an old sand-pit. It is therefore probable that the Mortarium was lying about three feet below the surface of the ground before disturbance. No other finds have been previously reported from this field or area. The farmer reports that he also dug up with the plough a "number of lumps

of sandstone rock".

The finding of the Mortarium did not become known to us until October of 1964, when it was too late to do much about it as the field had already been seeded. A search of the whole area of the field showed a great many fragments of modern pottery and one very small fragment of grey pottery with comb markings which did appear to be Roman.

The Mortarium is a warm pink terra-cotta in colour. It is intact apart from a hole which has been worn in the bottom of the bowl from the continued use of the pestle. The rim is very fully curved. The potter's mark is unfortunately undecipherable.

Dr. Graham Webster very kindly gave his opinion from a drawing of the Mortarium that was sent to him. He said that it belonged to the Second half of the Second Century and was probably of local manufacture. He confirmed that the small grey sherd was Roman but virtually undateable.

The site of the find is only about 200 yards from the course of the Roman road and is overlooking a small stream. There is no indication at the moment whether the Mortarium and the piece of pottery were casual discards from travellers along the road or whether they will prove to be the clues to a more settled habitation.

D. Bentham and J. Gask.

HEN DOMEN, MONTGOMERY, 1965.

The season's work at Hen Domen produced the plans of more small buildings on the bailey rampart, including that of a round tower at the junction of the rampart and the motte ditch. The large pit, which was emptied to a depth of 20 feet, proved to be a cess-pit on deep-litter principles, from the filling of which a number of interesting leather and wooden objects were recovered. A small sherd of developed Stamford ware was the most notable pottery find.

P.A.B.

WALL PAINTINGS AT THE OLD MILL HOUSE, ALBRIGHTON.

The Old Mill House stands just off the Holyhead Road (790051). It is a brick-built house incorporating stonework, some timber framing and outsize bricks from earlier structures. It stands away from the mill race, and it is doubtful if it has ever contained milling machinery. It would seem likely that it was built after the demolition of the water mill house.

The painted room, which measures 13ft. 2in. by 10ft. 3in. is on the ground floor in the eastern corner of the house. The paintings were uncovered when oak panelling was removed. The oak panelling is still on the site and was obviously brought to the house from another building. Apparently nothing has been painted or plastered on top of the paintings. The paintings are done on $\frac{1}{2}$ " of white lime plaster, and no decoration of any sort is visible underneath. They must have been either the original decoration of the room or alternatively, they could have been added during a particularly thorough re-decoration, involving complete replacement of plaster. The composition of the plaster is very similar to that in the other ground floor rooms which bears many coats of paint and distemper.

The dominant feature of the paintings is a pattern of flowers on spiky stems which form a network covering all of the walls. In the gaps in this network, on a grey background, are series of scenes of country life. Among the subjects are a woman chasing a fox from her cottage, a house or church in the style of the Kremlin, brown and blue birds, swans, deer, cows, peacocks, doves and dogs. Above the fireplace was a scene around a lake, though this fell from the wall almost as soon as the panelling was removed. There is a great vitality about the paintings, particularly about some of the plants, and this might be compared to the wall papers of C.F.A. Voysey. Draughtsmanship is poor however and might almost be the work of a child.

The decoration might well be suitable for a nursery, though it may be doubted whether there would be sufficient space for a separate nursery in a house of this size.

Paintings are clearly visible only on two walls of the room. On the outside walls the paint is severely faded and on the wall above the fireplace much of the plaster has fallen away.

The house is at present the property of Mr.G.R.Roberts of Pattingham, who is carrying out an extensive reconstruction and may decide to live thereh himself. It is his intention to retain the wall on the SW side and preserve the painting, but the half-timbered wall on the NW side is in a shaky condition and it will probably not be possible to save the paintings on it.

The paintings have been photographed both in colour and black and white.

B.S.Trinder.

A considerable amount of material submitted has had to be left out of this issue of the Newsletter on grounds of shortage of space. A further issue will appear early in the new year.

SHROPSHIRE
NEWS LETTER.

Edited by B. Trinder for the Shrewsbury Museum. Flat No. 2. 52. Abbey Foregate.
Shrewsbury.

VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY.

The volume containing histories of parishes in the ancient Hundreds of Ford and Condover (V.C.H. Salop vol viii) has now gone to the printers and should be published in about 18 months time. The following parishes are covered :-
Condover Hundred : Acton Burnell, Berrington, Condover, Cound, Cressage, Frodesley, Harley, Kenley, Leebotwood, Longnor, Pitchford, Church Preen, Pulverbatch, Ruckley & Langley, Smethcott, Stapleton, Woolstaston.

Ford Hundred:- Alberbury, Cardeston, Ford, Habberley, Minsterley, Pontesbury, Westbury.

Work is now in progress on vol ii, a 'general' volume which will contain articles on Religious Houses, Parliamentary History, Endowed Grammar Schools, Sport and Population.

A. Gaydon.

OFFA ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY.

Copper/Bronze Age Burial Mound, Ysgwennant Denbighshire. SJ.189305.

Previous Report in Newsletter No. 25.

Excavation continued in 1964 and 1965. There were no finds in 1964 and the only find in 1965 was an unstratified flint implement having a great resemblance to a Gravettian point (cf. K.B. Oakley : Man the Tool-maker B.M. 1950 Fig. 24b pl.58) Dr Savory considers that it might be Mesolithic. Excavation will continue in 1966.

W. Day.

LLANYMYNECH HILL, Montgomeryshire SJ. 266222.

In old mine-workings leading from the Ogof. ('Ogof' is Welsh for cave) a party of schoolboys found a hoard of 33 silver denarii on 11th of November 1965. They were sent to Mr. G.C. Boon of the National Museum of Wales who reported that they were struck between 31 B.C. and 149/50. A.D. The hoard contained the following :- Republic 1. Vitellius 1. Vespasian 1. Titus 1. Domitian 2. Nerva 1. Trajan 11. Hadrian 11. Antoninus Pius 2. Faustina (1) 1. Marcus Aurelius 1.

Mr Boon said that this represented approximately a month's pay for a soldier. At the inquest at Oswestry on 16th December 1965 the coins were declared "treasure trove". The Ogof is less than a quarter of a mile outside the Shropshire boundary.

W. Day.

EXCAVATIONS AT THONCLANDS, MOATED MANOR HOUSE. O.S. 129. 545890. September 1965

Site. The manor house at Thonclands is surrounded by a circular moat, which has been partially infilled on the eastern side. Documentary sources indicate that there was a grange and a hamlet here during the middle ages, and when the farm buildings were re-constructed in the mid 19th century several skeletons were uncovered in the farm yard. It is thought that these were associated with an early chapel which stood there, and the O.S. six inch map marks the farm yard as the site of the chapel. In addition the field lying to the north of the house has several pronounced earthworks with ridge and furrow representing the fossilized open field system.

Purpose of excavation. It was hoped that a section across the moat would reveal stratified pottery which would give a chronology of occupation for the site. It was also hoped that such a section would give some indication of the original function of the moat. It was far from clear if the moat served a defensive function, or was created in the late 16th century by the Lacon family as a piece of landscaping.

Method of excavation. A four foot section was extended across the moat at the south western corner, where it lies nearest to the house. The ditch infilling was a heavy black silt, which made excavation difficult as water continually drained into the section. Parent material of sandy loam was reached at a depth of five feet at the centre of the section and at a depth of two feet at either end. The moat was found to be U shaped with a pebble revetment on the western side.

THONGLANDS.

It was impossible to follow this as it extended into a hedge. Although large quantities of modern pottery were found, no sherds of any antiquity were uncovered. Three complete earthenware jars, about 8 ins in height were recovered.

After this negative result it was decided to strip part of one of the earthworks in order to determine their nature. A 20 foot square covering the corner of one mound was stripped. Parent material was reached at about 12 ins. without uncovering any structures except a small area of loosely bedded stones. Again no pottery of any antiquity was uncovered, although 3 pieces of worked flint were found lying immediately above the parent material. One of the pieces had been finely fashioned and seems to have been a scraper. Several other worked flints have been found in the neighbourhood, they are deposited in the museum at Ludlow.

Conclusions:- That the moat was subject to rapid silting aided by refuse deposited from the house and that it had been thoroughly scoured within the last century. Continuous occupation of the site has meant that the moat was periodically cleared, and that future attempts to date moated farmhouses should be confined to deserted sites, or to sites which have been less disturbed. Shortage of time did not enable further investigation of the earthworks, although it does seem probable that they do not contain any building structure.

R.T. Rowley.

DESERTED SETTLEMENTS IN SOUTH SHROPSHIRE.

In the past year several new sites have been uncovered - notably a small hamlet centred on the Prior of Wenlock's hunting lodge at Oxenbold. O.S. 129 595920. In 1250 Henry III ordered the Prior to demolish the houses he had recently erected at Oxenbold which lay within the Royal Forest. It is obvious however, from later rentals that if the township was ever destroyed it was later rebuilt. The settlement was properly deserted due to farm rationalisation in the early 16th century.

The isolated farmstead at Great Oxenbold contains some medieval tracery, and in the adjacent fields are the remains of a large fishpond, several sunken roads with a number of indistinct house platforms. There is also extensive ridge and furrow.

Documentary research has confirmed the initial assumption that there were no sudden desertions in South Shropshire, and that the present settlement pattern of nucleated villages and isolated farmsteads has resulted from protracted shrinkage of numerous small hamlets.

It is hoped that a full account on deserted settlements in Shropshire will be ready for the next report a preliminary list of abandoned and shrunken sites uncovered by the writer is appended.

R.T. Rowley.

DESERTED AND SHRUNKEN SETTLEMENTS IN SOUTH SHROPSHIRE. All on O.S.129. Ludlow.Preliminary list.

Abdon. 575865. D.M.V. A+.	Holdgate. 562898. U.S. M. (R.F.).
Ashfield. 588895 D.M.V. B.	Hudwick. 628926. D.M.V. ?.
Baucott. 540874 U.S. P.	Kinson. 576821. D.M.V. Cov.
Bockleton 578834. D.M.V. ?.	Langley. 488805 U.S. Cov.
The Bold. 642848. D.M.V.	Larfen (Upper) 568934. D.M.V. M.
Bradley 595950. G.R. ?	Larden (Lower) ? U.
Broncroft. 545868. U.S. Cov.	Lawton. 514838. U.S. Cov.
Burley. 480810. D.M.V. Cov.	Marston. 532862. D.M.V. B.
Cold Weston 522830. D.M.V. A.	Milliohope
Cold Green. 595820. D.M.V. ?.	Lower. U.
(Leverdgrene)	Hughale. 614940. D.M.V. ?.
Corfham 526850. D.M.V. A.	(Monkhal)
Corvehill 575920. D.M.V. (RF) P.	Newton 590821. D.M.V.
(Corfield.)	Norncott. 566857. V.S. D.
Corve. 595936. D.M.V. P.	Oxenbold. 595920 A. (F.P.) (R.F.)
(Corve Barn)	Patton 586950 D.M.V. M. (F.P.)
Derrington. 607908. U.S. C.	Petelie D.M.V. V.
Heath. 566855. D.M.V. A+ (R.F.)	Poston. (Greater) 549824. D.M.V. C.
	Ruckley. 481804. D.M.V. Cov.

DESERTED AND SHRUNKEN SETTLEMENTS IN SOUTH SHROPSHIRE.

Ruthall	549824.	D.M.V.	C.	Sutton (Little)	514825.	V.S.	(P)
Shipton	463919	V.S.	A.	Thonglands	549890	V.S.	(C) (R.F.)
Sidnall	644902	D.M.V.	?	Tugford (Little)		D.M.V.	Cov. (C)
Siefton	485830.	V.S.	Cov.	Upton Cressett	655925.	D.M.V.	Cov. (C)
Skinblescott.	59692.	?		Witchcot	534818.	D.M.V.	(C).
(Kinblescott)				The Yelde.	521820.	V.S.	?
Sparchford	496830	D.M.V.	Cov. (R.F.).	(Lydehole)			

Deserted Medieval Village Standard Abbreviations.

- D.M.V. Any site with evidence of former village status but now possessing only a farm and/or Manor (with or without church & parsonage)
- V.S. Very shrunk: now having more than six houses or fewer assuming evidence either from documents or ground that is was much larger.
- M. Migration to new site.
- Gr. For Medieval Grange.
- FP. Fishpond.
- RF. Ridge and Furrow.
- Archaeological Classification .

- A.+ Excellent (Very good pattern of roads and crofts with house sites visible
- A. Very good pattern of roads and crofts, but no house sites visible.
- B. Medium Good street or streets, but otherwise confused earthworks,
- C. Poor. Vague bumps making; no certain pattern: or church or church ruins without visible earthworks.
- D. Nothing to see at all.
- P. Now ploughed.
- Cov. Sufficiently large modern farm or country-house & gardens to have obliterated a suspected site.
- U. Location unknown
- V. Emparking mainly 17th and 18th C.

THE RECORDING OLD HOUSES GROUP.

The object of this group which was formed in 1965 is to record (principally in the form of measured plans) those smaller houses in Shropshire which are likely to fall down, be demolished, or altered beyond recognition. Its activities this summer are being concentrated on the area of Dawley New Town and Shrewsbury. This Group would welcome new members, who will not be expected to possess and specialised knowledge. For further particulars please contact Alec Gaydon, 26 Hereford Rd., Shrewsbury (Shrewsbury 3160) who would also be glad to receive information on houses in danger anywhere in the county.

INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY.

A successful course was held at Attingham in April, students came from a wide area, ranging from the Home Counties to the North East of England. A second conference will be held at Attingham in 1967 to discuss the formation of a publishing society to deal with the large amount of material which is being prepared on Shropshire.

Publications 1966.

- Norman Mutton, Charlote Furnace 1733 - 1779. Historical Metallurgy Group Bulletin. No. 6. Jan 1966.
- W. Howard Williams, The Inclined Planes of East Shropshire. Industrial Archaeology. vol. 2. no. 3. 1966.
- W. Howard Williams. The Botfields - Shropshire Magazine Dec. 1965. Jan. 1966.
- Trevor Rowley, Bouldon Furnace & Mill. Shropshire Magazine Feb. 1966.

Activity.

The Historical Metallurgy Group continue their investigations into the furnaces and forges of South Shropshire and are excavating at Bouldon Furnace. The Dawley Research Group continue with the Dawley area with the widening field which will involve Oakengates and Wellington. Extra volunteers are urgently needed to help. The Group meets at the Reference Library, Shrewsbury, October to March on Mondays at 7.p.m.

INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY.

Mr A.P. Wallace of the Shropshire Photographic Society has completed a pictorial survey of the Shropshire Workhouses and Poorhouses. This is now available on loan in 35.mm. black and white slides from the Editor.
Work is again commencing on Stirchley Furnace under Mr Denzil Neil and help is again needed, for information apply to the Editor.
The Newport Canal Group are endeavouring to enlist public support to save the Newport Canal.

EXCAVATIONS SUMMER 1966.

Weeping Cross Prehistoric Site.

Excavation will take place on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, Saturday afternoons and evenings and Sunday mornings (9.30 - 1.30) throughout the summer. Anyone requiring further information should contact Mr. W. E. Jenks, "Trevarrison" Langford Avenue, Upper Pulley, Bayston Hill. (Tel. Bayston Hill 492).

Abdon Deserted Medieval Villiage.

Work will continue on the following dates :- June 18/19. July 23/30/31. August 20 - 28th. Transport leaves the Priory Boys' School, Shrewsbury at 9.30. a.m.

For details contact Trevor Rowley, 33 Upper Road, Meole Brace. Tel. Shrewsbury. 51193.

Hen Domen: Motte & Bailey Castle.

This year's excavation will take place from Monday August 1st to Sunday August 14th. Further details can be obtained from Philip Barker, 4. St. George's Square, Worcester. Tel. Worcester 26335. Anyone requiring information during the period of the excavation should contact Barrie Trinder, Flat 2. Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury. Tel. Shrewsbury 52310.

CONTRIBUTIONS.

Contributions for future issues of the News Letter should be sent to the Editor. at Flat 2. 52. Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury.

Information about finds and discoveries should go to the Shrewsbury Borough Museum.

INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY.

This is a repeat of the paragraph above which suffered from inking troubles in the duplicator.

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