

Transactions

of the

Shropshire Archaeological Society

with which is incorporated the Shropshire Parish Register Society

VOLUME LVII

Part II

(1962-63)

Issued April, 1964

23 May 1964

SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
(WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE SHROPSHIRE PARISH REGISTER SOCIETY)

EDITORIAL.

NOTICE

To facilitate printing and avoid unnecessary cost, the following points are brought to the notice of contributors :—

It will generally be possible to consider for publication, in the Part then next forthcoming, only such papers as are submitted to the Editor (complete in all details), in sufficient time for consideration by the Editorial Committee towards the end of the year, and hence not later than the 31st October.

Papers offered should have the text in double spaced typescript. Illustrations, plans, etc., must be submitted at the same time, and be accompanied by a note of the intended captions. If notes and references are numerous, it is preferable for them to be placed together at the end of a paper rather than as footnotes to each page. Printers' proofs are sent to contributors for checking. They should be corrected clearly in ink, and in accordance with the established customs of proof correction. The process should be strictly confined to rectifying typographical errors, and *not* extended to making new insertions ; if any insertions are made, or alterations other than typographical corrections, the contributor may be asked to reimburse to the Society the extra expense involved. Corrected proofs must be returned speedily to printers.

It may be of advantage for all Plates and Figures to be numbered consecutively throughout a Volume, and with this end in view, contributors are requested *not* to place indelible numberings on their illustrations. The relevant numbers will be notified during the course of printing.

Contributors are urged to be concise, and to limit illustrations to those of importance.

GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting for 1962 was held on the 1st June at Shrewsbury Priory School for Boys, the President, Capt. Sir Offley Wakeman, Bt., C.B.E., being in the chair. The business of the Meeting followed its normal course, and in his report for the past year the Hon. Secretary indicated various matters for which members could reasonably feel a sense of satisfaction.

The Meeting was followed by a public lecture entitled "Celt, Anglian, and Norman in Shropshire's Rural Scene," by Miss Dorothy Sylvester, M.A., Senior Lecturer in in Geography, University of Manchester. This was illustrated by a beautiful series of slides. Miss Sylvester, who is carrying out important researches into matters of this nature, dwelt in a thoroughly interesting way on intricacies of the pattern shown by distribution maps of factors being considered. Those who attended were glad to realise that the lecture briefly summarised many of the features intended to appear in a book by Miss Sylvester on this subject.

LECTURES AND OTHER MEETINGS

EXCURSION TO MONTGOMERY, 1962.—On the 7th July a visit was made a short way over the border to Hen Domen, near Montgomery, the site of a motte and bailey castle raised by Roger de Montgomery about 1075. The visit was of particular interest because of excavations being made there, and members were able to learn from Mr. P. A. Barker, who was directing the work, a description of the results so far obtained. In the afternoon Powis Castle was visited, with time for the Castle and its terraced gardens to be viewed at leisure.

EXCURSION TO HEREFORDSHIRE, 1962.—Thirty-four members of the Society enjoyed fine weather for the Annual Excursion, which took place on the 18th August. Mr. F. Noble kindly acted as leader. The first halt was at Croft Castle, from which centre most of the party climbed up to the Hill Fort of Croft Ambrey, where Mr. S. C. Stanford, who is directing the excavations there, described the work and probable significancies. Meanwhile the less active members ate their picnic lunch upon the terrace of Croft Castle with its lovely views, and visited the Church, which contains an elaborately canopied altar tomb with effigies of Sir Richard Croft (1471) and his wife. The next halt was at Shobdon, an 18th century rebuilding, which retains its Norman font and other old features. The Norman arches of the old Church were set up as a "Folly" on high ground by an 18th century squire, and could be seen on the skyline. Then followed a beautiful drive through "Deerfold Forest" with fine views of hills, vales and woodlands, past several early hill forts, to Wigmore, where tea was taken. The President proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Noble for his guidance and interesting talks during the day. The return journey was by Leintwardine, where three sites of Roman Forts were pointed out.

LECTURES.—A series of Lectures held in the winter months at Shrewsbury has been a new venture, and one of good value although attendance has sometimes been rather small. Those held in the first three months of the year were as follows : "The Victoria History of Shropshire" (Mr Alec Gaydon, M.A., who is editing the forthcoming volume of the *History*), "A History of Windmills" (Mr. John Salmon, F.S.A.), and "Medieval Fortified Sites of Shropshire and Adjacent Counties" (Mr. Philip Barker). The programme was started again in November, in conjunction with the Shrewsbury Branch of the Historical Association, and the following were given towards the year's end : "Roman Provincial Administration" (Mr. B. L. Cooke, B.A.), and "Industrial Archaeology Surveys" (Mr. R. Wailes, F.S.A., M.I.Mech.E.). In this last one the pressing need for surveys of areas threatened with probable destruction of evidence of early industries was stressed. It has of course great local significance, having regard to proposals for the new town of Dawley.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

The following notes contain a summary, which is purposely very brief, of such items of the Minutes as (generally) may seem of special interest or likeliest to be needed for future reference.

ISSUE OF TRANSACTIONS.—Agreed that members in arrears when Transactions ready for issue be so informed, and the issue not sent to them until payment made (February).

RECORDS AND REPORTS.—Consideration given to establishing a repository of reports which merit preservation but for which space cannot be found for printing in Transactions; suitable space reported as available at Shrewsbury Borough Library; a sub-committee appointed to supervise this project was to remain in being (March-May).

FINDS.—Dr. Houghton reported discovery at Wroxeter of a legionary denarius of Mark Antony, c. 35 B.C., and showed a sherd of unusually fine quality, decorated with figure of a horse in barbotine with white slip.

BEQUEST FUNDS.—Resolved that the fund from Mr. Purton's bequest be so designated, and allocated to the printing of Parish Registers; and that "C. S. Woollam Memorial" be added to the title of the "Excavation and Research Fund" (June—July).

PARISH REGISTERS.—Agreed that, in future policy, priority be given to the work of transcribing and microfilming of transcriptions, rather than the printing of Registers; efforts to be made to microfilm the Registers not yet transcribed (Sept., November).

PUBLICATIONS

The following publications of the Society may be obtained at the prices quoted, plus postage or carriage charges (the special prices for Members are indicated in brackets), subject to stocks being still available. Applications should be made to the Hon. Publications Secretary for any of these, except Parish Registers.

Shrewsbury Burgess Roll. Ed. H. E. Forrest. Bound 10/6 (Members 7/6). Unbound 7/6 (5/-).

The Lordship of Oswestry, 1393-1607. Ed. W. J. SLACK. Bound 21/- (12/6).

An Architectural Account of the Churches of Shropshire. DR. D. H. S. CRANAGE. Parts 2-9 inclusive, 5/3 each; Part 10, 10/6; Shrewsbury Churches (portion of Part 10), 5/3; the Appendix, 1/3; General Survey, 2/6.

Transactions. Unbound. First-Fourth Series, 7/6 per part. Vols. 46-55, 20/- per Part. Vol. 56 onwards (new quarto format), 30/- per Part. (For Members, discount of 10% off above prices.)

Printed Parish Registers. From 3/- to 7/6 per Part, according to size of Register. Wellington Register, 20/-. Applications for Registers should be made to Mrs. L. H. Hayward, Ticklerton, Church Stretton, Salop.

SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

1962

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J. L. HOBBS, F.L.A., F.R.Hist.S., Borough Library, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury.

Hon. Treasurer:

Miss J. WOOD, Ivy Cottage, Condover, Nr. Shrewsbury.

Hon. Auditor:

J. DYKE, F.C.A.

SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND PARISH REGISTER SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1961

RECEIPTS	£	s.	d.	PAYMENTS	£	s.	d.
To Balance in hand, 1st January, 1961—				By Printing Transactions, Vol. 56, Part 3	487	7	8
Lloyds Bank	237	12	9	Expenses of Meetings	5	5	0
West Midland Trustee Savings Bank	123	5	1	Lectures—Shropshire Adult College	15	18	0
				Expenses of Excursions, excluding Teas	8	8	4
Members' Subscriptions	360	17	10	Subscription to C.B.A.	5	0	0
Sale of Parish Registers	207	18	6	Postages on News-Letter	3	14	0
Sale of Transactions and other Publications	47	11	6	Postages on Registers and other Publications	5	6	6
Grants—	12	15	6	Expenses of Excavations recoverable against United Kingdom Carnegie Trust Grants	49	15	0
Carnegie Trust to aid work on Mediaeval Sites in Shropshire and Border Counties	122	0	0	Expenses of Excavation Labour—ex Collection Box, Rowley's House Museum	17	15	0
University of Birmingham—£10 each for three Papers in Transactions	30	0	0	Printing of Letterheads, Receipt Books and Duplicating	14	17	3
Members' Payments for Excursion Expenses	3	9	6	Cheque Book	10	0	0
Collections at Rowley's House Museum	46	14	3	Clerical Expenses, Postages, Phone, etc.	25	2	2
Interest on Deposit Account: West Midland Trustee Savings Bank	3	1	8	Balances at 31st December, 1961—			
Dividend on 3½% War Stock	1	15	0	Current Account—Lloyds Bank	£73	18	1
				Deposit Account—West Midland Trustee Savings Bank	128	1	9
					201	19	10
					<hr/>		
					£836	3	9

C. S. WOOLLAM MEMORIAL FUND

RECEIPTS	£	s.	d.
To Balance, 1st January, 1961	54	18	10
Interest, West Midland Trustee Savings Bank	1	7	0
	£56	5	10
	<hr/>		

AUDITOR'S CERTIFICATE
 Examined with the Cash Book, Vouchers, Bank Statements and Receipts, and found correct.
 (Signed) JOHN DYKE (Hon. Auditor).

J. WOOD (Hon. Treasurer),
 9th February, 1962.

SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND PARISH REGISTER SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT FOR YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1962

RECEIPTS		PAYMENTS	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
To Balance in hand, 1st January, 1962—		By Lecturers' Expenses and Room Hire	6 19 3
Lloyds Bank	73 18 1	Subscriptions to C.B.A., 1961 and 1962	4 7 0
West Midlands Trustee Savings Bank	128 1 9	Postages on News-Letter	6 19 1
Subscriptions	201 19 10	Microfilming Parish Registers	1 18 3
Sale of Transactions	233 2 0	Excavation Expenses—	5 5 0
Tax Rebate, 1960/61/62	51 1 3	Recoverable against Ministry of Works Grant	74 12 4
Grant for Transaction Paper on Excavation—Quaiford	94 5 8	Ex Rowley Collection	26 19 0
Grant towards Excavation at Shifnal	60 0 0	Printing and Duplicating	6 2 6
Collection Box at Rowley Excavation Fund	75 0 0	Expenses of Excursions (excluding Postage)	35 4 9
Transfer of C. S. Woollam Excavation Fund	56 5 10	Clerical Expenses, Postage, Phone, Stationery, Stamp-	
Collection Box at Rowley House Museum	30 7 2	ing Fees, etc.	41 6 6
Sale of Parish Registers	70 4 8	Balances at 31st December, 1962—	
The Rev. Purton Legacy—Parish Registers	106 0 0	Current Account—Lloyds Bank	£624 10 2
Income from Excursions	40 5 0	Deposit Account—West Midland	133 0 8
Interest on Deposit Account—West Midland Trustee	3 3 11	Trustee Savings Bank	57 13 10
Savings Bank	1 15 0	C. S. Woollam Excavation Account...	*815 4 8
Dividend on 3½% War Stock	1 8 0		
Interest on C. S. Woollam Excavation Fund	£1,024 18 4		

	£ s. d.
Analysis of Balance in hand—	
Transactions	372 16 11*
Parish Registers	211 13 2
Excavation	76 7 2
Administration	21 6 9
Capital	133 0 8
	£815 4 8*

* Less cost of Transactions (1961) not invoiced until 1963

AUDITOR'S CERTIFICATE

Examined with the Cash Book, Vouchers, Bank Statements and Receipts, and found correct.
JOHN DYKE (Hon. Auditor).
19th April, 1963.

J. Wood (Hon. Treasurer).
2nd January, 1963.

EXCAVATIONS AT CAYNHAM CAMP, NEAR LUDLOW

FINAL REPORT

by PETER S. GELLING

The third and final excavation at Caynham Camp took place in June and July 1961, and once again was carried out by the Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, Birmingham University, in conjunction with the Ludlow Group of the Shropshire Archaeological Society. It was partly prepared for in April 1960, by a short but valuable excavation by the Ludlow Group. Once more we are most grateful to Mrs. C. Harrisson, the owner of the site, and to Mr. J. P. Powell, the tenant, for permission to excavate. As in 1960, camping facilities were provided by Mr. D. Lamb, of Camp Farm, Caynham. The work was largely financed by a grant from Birmingham University.

Two principal objectives were set for 1961: the first was to find out more about the timbered rampart of period i, and the second was to locate an occupation deposit. Something was achieved towards the first objective, but very little towards the second.

At the east end of the fort, where it had been found that the entrance through the timbered rampart was not wholly buried under later works, a little further excavation was carried out, and the final plan is shown in Fig. 2. It is likely, though not certain, that all the rock-cut post-holes on the north side of the entrance have been uncovered, giving a thickness for the rampart of about 23 feet. The post-holes in the centre of the gateway, which may represent the position of a support for a bridge, extended a little further towards the interior of the fort than did those on the north side, suggesting that the bridge—if there was one—was aligned more on the rampart to the south of the gateway than on its continuation to the north. The cross-hatched

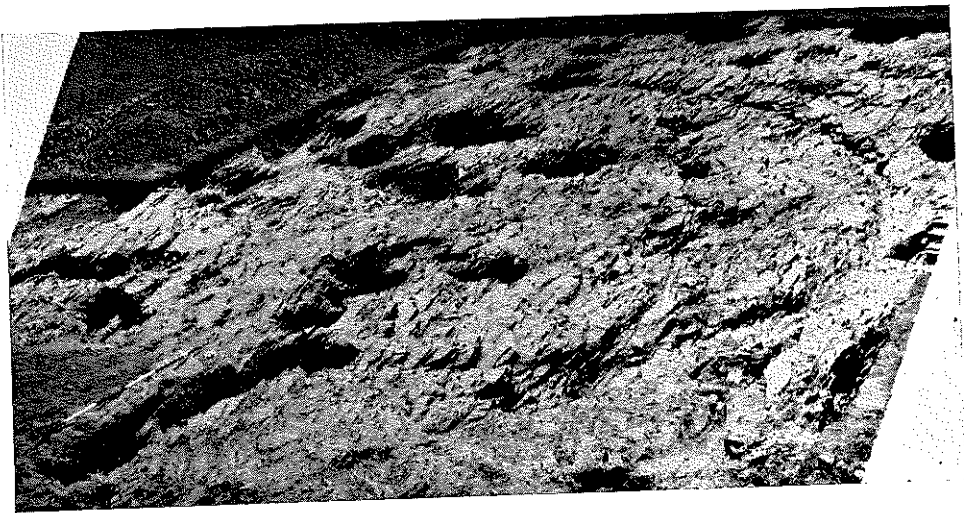


PLATE XIII—Caynham Camp. General view of Site F from the north-east

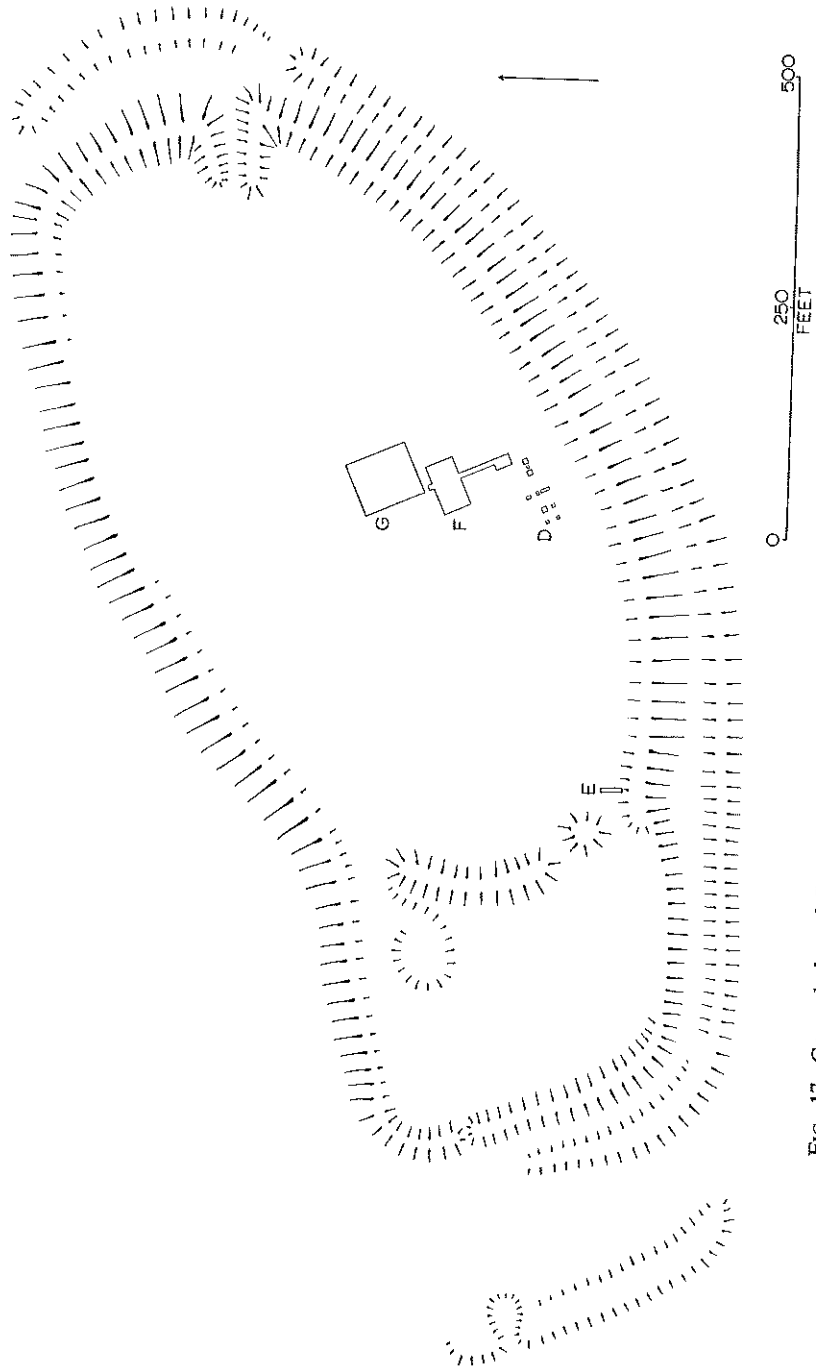


Fig. 17. General plan of Caynham Camp, showing the positions of sites excavated in 1961.

post-holes in Fig. 2 may not belong to this period at all. Three of them run parallel with the ditch to the south of the entrance, and could mark the position of posts which stood in the outer face of the rampart, leaving a berm about 9 feet wide; but this impression may be misleading, as a glance of the complete plan of this area will show (*Trans. of the Shropshire Arch. Soc.* vol. LVI, part iii, p. 222). Post-holes are numerous hereabouts, none of which could be associated stratigraphically with one period rather than with another, and it may be unwarranted to select three because they happen to appear to fit in with the plan of period i. The same must be said about the

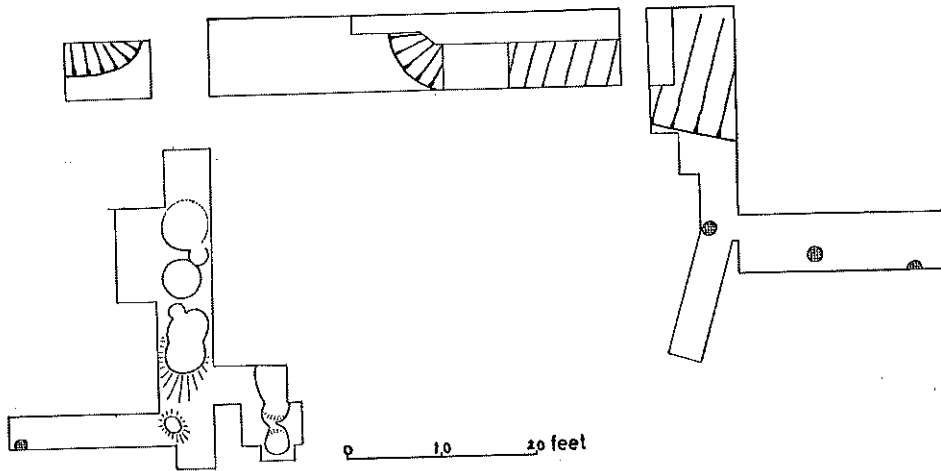


FIG. 18. Plan of the east entrance in period i. This may be compared with fig. 2, p. 222, in vol. LVI, pt. III (1960) of these Transactions.

single cross-hatched post-hole to the north of the entrance. It may have been connected with the timbered rampart, but it may equally well have belonged to a later period. Further digging in this area was prevented by trees.

The work at site D on Fig. 1 represents an attempt to locate a stretch of the timbered rampart. It will be seen from Fig. 3 that a line of post-holes (lettered *a-i*) was uncovered which might conceivably be regarded, allowing for some irregularities and repairs, as belonging to a single system; and as they stood on the line along which the inner face of the rampart had been calculated to run, it was hard to resist the conclusion that they were connected with it. The deepest were *c* and *h* (24 inches); *a, d, f* and *i* were between 16 and 20 inches; and *b, e* and *g* were between 12 and 14 inches. A slot, resembling that found at site F (Fig. 6) had been cut across the top of *c* after it had been filled in.

The spacing between the upright timbers in the rampart suggested by the three post-holes which ran parallel with the ditch to the south of the east entrance was 9—10 feet; and as the space between *a* and *c* and between *c* and *d* (in Fig. 3) is 23 feet, between *d* and *f* is 24 feet, and between *f* and *i* is 22 feet, it might be guessed that these were alternate posts in the inner face of the rampart, especially as *g* is almost midway between *f* and *i*.

From the centre of *d* to the centre of *l* is 23 feet, which corresponds with the thickness of the rampart deduced from the post-holes on the north side of the east entrance. A similar measurement between *a* and *k* might be about 21 feet. Post-hole *k* was about 8 inches deep, and *l* only about 4 inches, but they were in an area where the surface of the rock had been quarried away fairly uniformly to provide material for the later rampart, so they must originally have been appreciably deeper; and this quarrying *may* account for the absence of a corresponding post-hole in front of *c*.

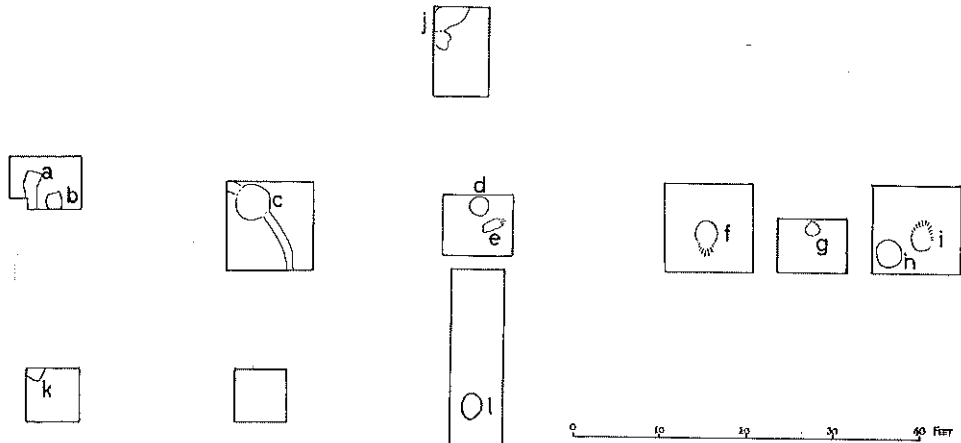


FIG. 19. Plan of site D.

The trench which produced post-hole *l* at least makes it probable that the line of post-holes, if connected with the rampart at all, cannot have belonged to its outer face, a possibility which had suggested itself when an irregular post-hole, *j*, (18 inches deep) was discovered some 20 feet behind, though not directly behind, post-hole *d*. The evidence, such as it is, points to a berm 9—10 feet wide, and it would have helped to resolve some of the numerous uncertainties connected with this area if it had been possible to dig in front of post-hole *l*; but unfortunately this ground was not available for excavation.

The evidence from this part of the site must be regarded as inconclusive. One thing that emerged from the excavation as a whole was that post-holes were in places extremely common, and only the total clearance of a supposed stretch of the timbered rampart would have shown to what extent individual post-holes were connected with it, and not with quite different features.

The only point at which the 1961 excavations picked up the period *i* ditch was at site E, near the south-west corner of the fort, where, as it happened, the trench could not be extended far enough into the fort to link up convincingly with traces of the rampart. For what it is worth, there was a post-hole, 15 inches deep, just 10 feet from the edge of the ditch (Fig. 4), which would give only a slightly wider berm than that indicated at the east entrance. Purely by chance, this trench cut through the wall and part of the occupation deposit of a hut which overlay the period *i* ditch and was

covered by the tail of the period iii rampart. Its date is therefore between these two periods, though naturally it is not proved to be contemporary with the period ii rampart. The outline of the wall showed as a rounded bank (stippled in the section) of slightly less stony soil than that occurring in the unshaded parts. It might be expected to have had a stone facing, at least on the inside, but the layers of occupation deposit could hardly have ended so cleanly against the wall, with so little sign of disturbance, if a stone facing had been robbed. Some of the occupation deposit ran under the wall, but no traces of an earlier wall, associated with it, could be seen. All the layers were examined with the greatest care, but produced not a single sherd of pottery, nor any artefact of any kind except for a tiny bronze bead. The increasing overburden formed by the later rampart made it impossible to dig any further across the hut.

The first attempt to uncover an area in the centre of the fort was made in April 1960. It had been noticed in 1959, when the interior of the fort was bearing a crop of oats, that during a brief dry spell the most distinct crop-marks appeared almost everywhere. They took the form of relatively small clumps of tall green oats, and suggested the presence of numerous post-holes or small pits. To uncover a sample of these several trenches were opened at site G (see Fig. 1), a detailed plan of which is shown in Fig. 5. As this was simply exploratory work, and continued for only four days, no attempt was made to uncover complete structures; but it became clear that at least in places post-holes were very numerous. A considerable area of rough cobbles set in clay was also revealed.

In some of the post-holes (cross-hatched on Fig. 5) there were carbonized stumps of posts; and in many of them, as well as in some of the post-holes on site F, (see below) there were considerable quantities of carbonized grain. A sample was submitted to Dr. W. E. Montgomery, of the West Midland Forensic Science Laboratory, who kindly reported that it consisted mainly of wheat grains, along with a few weed seeds, including a species of *Chenopodium*, probably *C. Album* (White Goosefoot or Fat Hen) and a species of the family *Polygonaceae*, probably a *Rumex* species (Dock).

The soil hereabouts was very thin, so when, in 1961, a further area was to be opened, a position was chosen nearby but a little way off the highest part of the interior (site F on Fig. 1); and a narrow trench was continued down to a square at the foot of the slope in the hope that some occupation material might have accumulated there. This lower square did in fact contain a shallow deposit of dark slightly greasy earth mixed with scraps of burnt bone, a few pieces of daub, and a few very small sherds of pottery. There was also in this layer a small annular bead of uncoloured glass with three inlaid zigzag lines of yellow paste.

In the large upper square (Fig. 6) there were numerous hollows cut in the rock, most of which, if not all, were post-holes. In some the outlines of the posts were clear, and these are cross-hatched on Fig. 6; in others, (stippled), the former presence of posts was certain, even though their precise outline could no longer be seen. In a few there was no trace whatsoever of a post, but none of these appeared from its contents to have been used as a rubbish pit.

The most striking feature in the square was a rock-cut slot, 4—6 inches deep, outlining a roughly semi-circular area. The natural surface of the rock sloped gently down from north-west to south-east, but the space enclosed by the slot had been levelled, so that there was a marked step, up to 12 inches high, outside the central part

EXCAVATIONS AT CAYNHAM CAMP

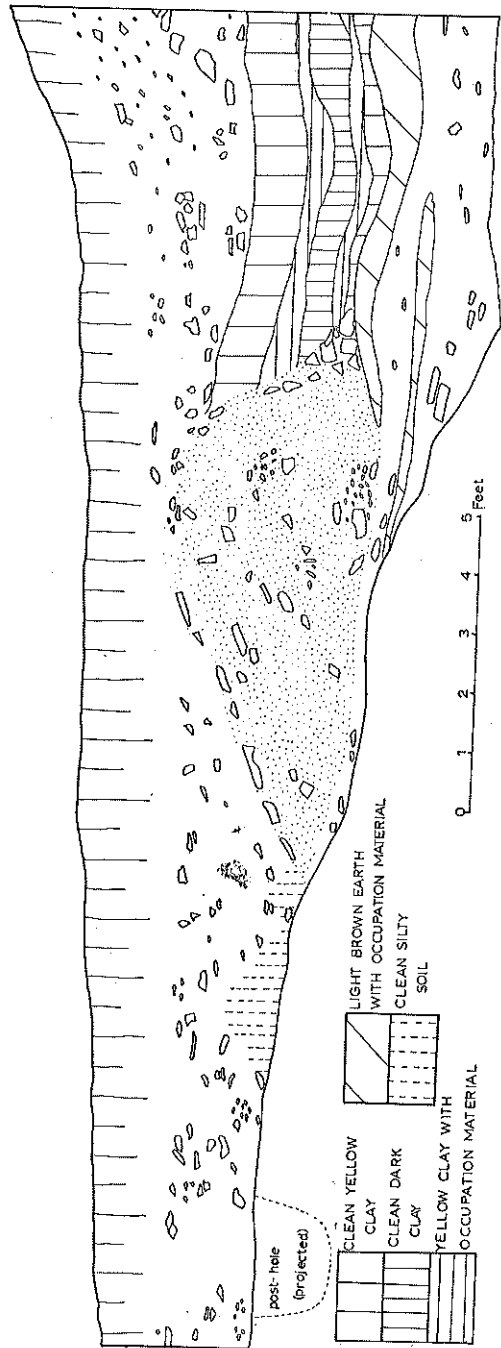


FIG. 20. Section on the east side of the trench at site E.

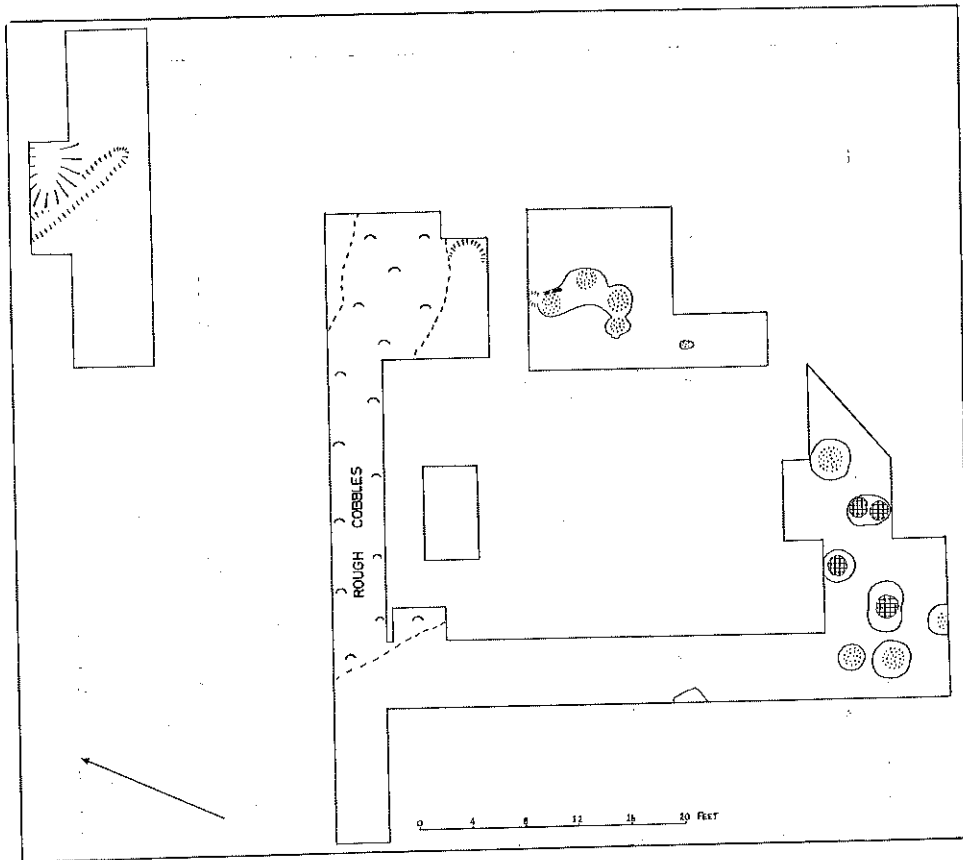


FIG. 21. Plan of site G.

of the slot. The levelling came to an end precisely along the line of post-holes 21—26, beyond which the natural downward slope of the rock became appreciably steeper.

The post-holes in this square may belong to very different periods, and any attempt to associate a selection of them with a single building is bound to be rather arbitrary and subjective, as there was no stratification to act as a guide. The association of the ends of the slot with post-holes 21 and 26 *seemed* to be intentional and not fortuitous, and if so, it would imply that the slot was not a drainage channel. It was probably, therefore, cut in the rock to hold the foot of a wattle wall, and if it was needed for half the circumference, there is no obvious reason why it should have been dispensed with in the other half, had this been a circular building. Post-holes 26 seemed to be associated with post-holes 24—28; nos. 22 and 23 appeared to continue the line to no. 21; and nos. 19 and 20 could be regarded as two projecting posts corresponding to 27 and 28. Post-holes 19 and 20 could well be considered to go with others on the west side of the square, such as 9, 33 and 34; but they do seem to be the counterpart to nos. 27 and 28 which, as there are no post-holes beyond them, can be more plausibly regarded as connected with the same building as the semi-circular slot.

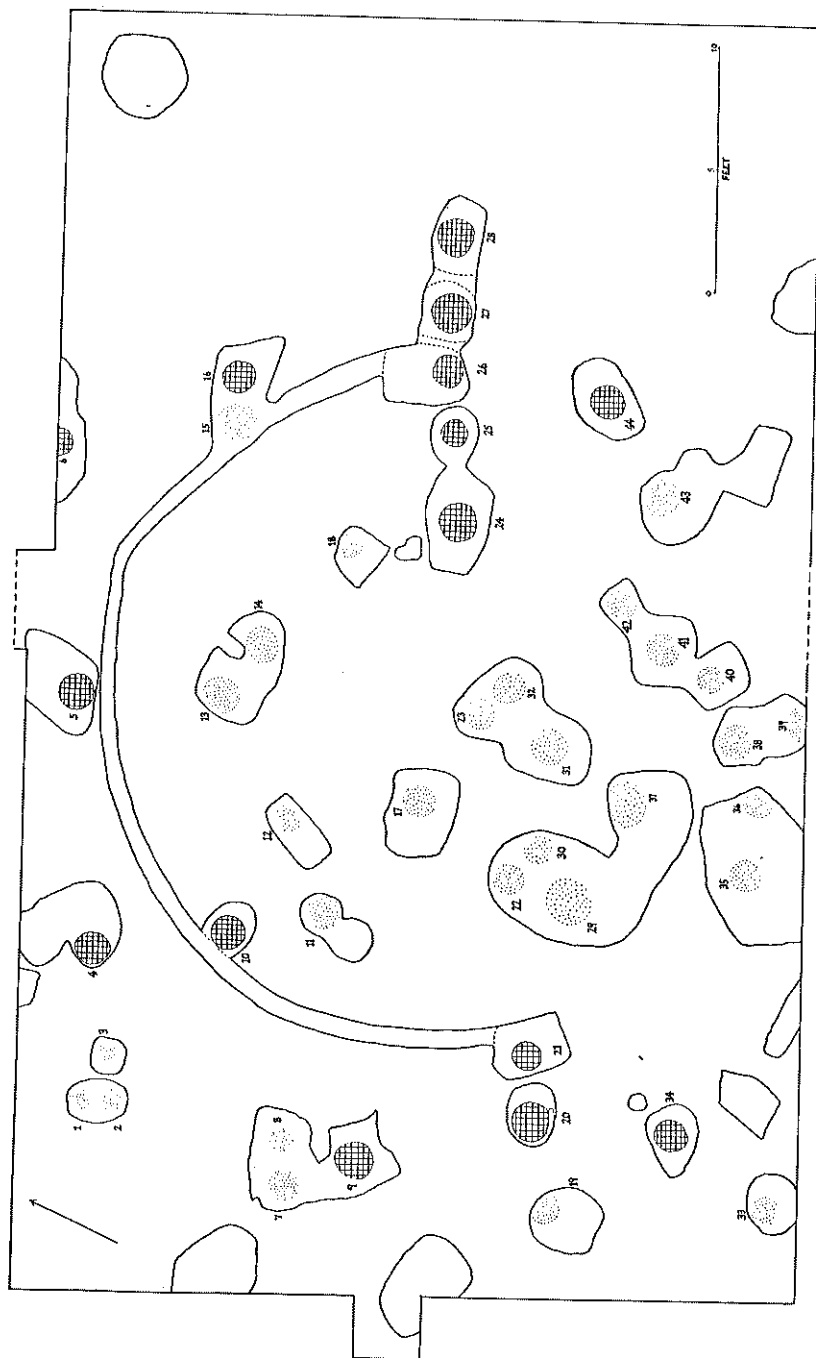


Fig. 22. Plan of site F.

One can do no more than indicate the possibility that an unorthodox kind of building may have stood here. It would have been semi-circular, with some attempt at an impressive facade (post-holes 19—28) facing down the slope towards the south-south-east, and it would presumably have served some other purpose than ordinary domestic occupation. The lines of its main rafters might be indicated by post-holes 23—18—15, 23—13—5, and 23—10.

The depth of the post-holes was as follows :—

1. 14"	10. 7"	19. 29"	28. 22"	37. 25"
2. 11"	11. 11"	20. 18"	29. 25"	38. 16"
3. 11"	12. 22"	21. 22"	30. 16"	39. 12"
4. 13"	13. 8"	22. 21"	31. 22"	40. 11"
5. 14"	14. 18"	23. 17"	32. 13"	41. 9"
6. 18"	15. 14"	24. 18"	33. 16"	42. 13"
7. 10"	16. 24"	25. 22"	34. 18"	43. 22"
8. 8"	17. 32"	26. 24"	35. 20"	44. 18"
9. 11"	18. 21"	27. 20"	36. 13"	

The most noteworthy feature of this excavation has been the contrast between the abundant evidence for occupation provided not only by the excavated areas of post-holes but also by numerous others seen as crop-marks, and the extreme paucity of small finds of any description. Most of the few sherds of pottery were small and insignificant, and with very few exceptions were loose in the soil. This contrasts most markedly with the results obtained by Mr. Stanford at Croft Ambrey, less than eight miles away to the south-west. It is true that in certain places at Croft Ambrey finds have been rather scanty, and it is theoretically possible that the choice of area for excavation at Caynham has simply been unlucky or ill-advised; but from the evidence of three seasons' digging one cannot help concluding that Caynham was occupied by a community which throughout its history was blessed with fewer worldly goods, and, in particular, used much less pottery. There seems to have been a marked difference in wealth between the two communities, and this may be a reflection of some kind of political subordination of one to the other.

At one stage it was possible to think that Croft Ambrey might mark the furthest expansion in this direction of "duck"-stamped pottery, and that the absence of such ware at Caynham might even have helped to pin-point the northerly limit of that culture; but subsequent work 32 miles further north at The Berth, near Baschurch, (by the same parties as at Caynham), has produced one sherd of that ware, and once more made uncertain the extent of its expansion through the Welsh Marches.

The history of Caynham Camp in the Iron Age, even after two further seasons of excavating, is not very much clearer than it was at the end of the first season in 1959 (see First Interim Report in vol. LVI, pt. II, p. 145sq., of these Transactions). The first identified period has been confirmed, with reasonable certainty, as having been defended by a timbered rampart. The hut found at site E probably belonged to the second period, which was represented in the 1959 section by the rather insignificant rampart covered by the outer edge of the large rampart of period iii (First Interim Report, Fig. 2). This seemed to have been surmounted by a stockade, behind which there was probably a platform resting on rather superficial timber supports; and it looks rather like an unskilful copy of the Hollingbury type of rampart, built by people

who were familiar with the general appearance of such a rampart, but had no real knowledge of how it was constructed. If we could postulate a change of ownership of the site between periods i and ii—and there does seem to have been an appreciable gap between the two periods—it might be surmised that the people responsible for a rampart of this kind were possibly a 'Secondary' Iron Age group of the kind postulated by Mr. A. H. Hogg : that is, a surviving Bronze Age community imitating (in this case) the unfamiliar defensive works of the Iron Age invaders.

Of period iii we can only say that it belongs to a time when a really large rampart was considered necessary; and period iv was marked by a refurbishing of these defences. The latter period *may* belong to A.D. 43 or thereabouts, but no doubt there were plenty of threats at earlier dates which were sufficiently serious to lead to some kind of re-fortification. As no Roman pottery was found, it is unlikely that occupation continued much after the Claudian invasion; and it is possible that it ended earlier.

In conclusion, a word may be said about the carbonized wheat. The filling of certain post-holes was really thick with it. It is true that this apparent abundance could represent accumulation over a long period, and may not necessarily mean that grain was plentiful at any particular time ; but it does suggest that, beyond the region of the Woodbury economy, cereal-growing in the Iron Age may have been more intensive than some scholars have implied. (See Professor Piggott's chapter in *Roman and Native in North Britain*, ed. I. A. Richmond, Nelson, 1958, esp. pp. 7—12.)

A ROMAN POTTERY FACTORY NEAR WROXETER, SALOP

BY A. W. J. HOUGHTON, M.B.,M.R.C.P.

In 1949 large sherds of Roman pottery were found by Police Constable J. Durnell and by schoolboys at a point on the left bank of the Severn about 200 feet upstream from the modern confluence of the rivers Tern and Severn. At this point, about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile north west of Wroxeter, the Severn, after swinging in a series of meanders down from Atcham, is rapidly cutting away its left bank and by its erosion has already destroyed

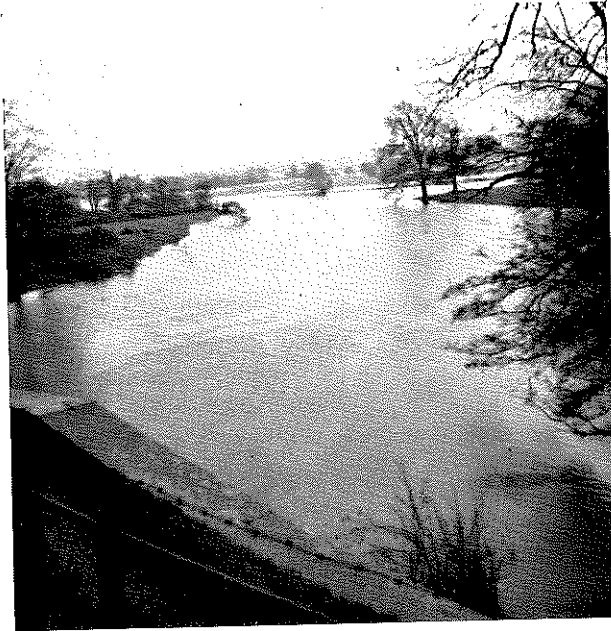


PLATE XIV—Modern junction of rivers Tern and Severn from Tern Bridge. The pottery factory is on the small promontory to the right with two trees at the extreme point. The Severn is in flood

a large area of the site here described, at the same time exposing pot sherds on the face of the 12 foot high bank. (Salop N. 552092.) In 1798 the architect Repton who was carrying out work at the neighbouring Attingham Hall, altered the course of the Tern. He cut the present channel below Tern Bridge, then newly built. The old marshy course is still to be seen curving west and south up to the left bank of the Severn; it also indicates the course of the parish boundary between Wroxeter and Atcham in this area. When the Severn is in flood the waters back up the new Tern channel and then flow into the old course, thus isolating the small pasture where the pottery was found. (*Pl. 1 and fig. 1.*)



PLATE XV—North-west corner of site

In this connection the following extracts are relevant and interesting.

1. From *Seats of the Nobility and Gentry in England and Wales*.¹

The improvements of the Park at Attingham are now carrying on under the direction of Mr. Repton, who has begun by digging a new channel for the River Tern, to unite with the Severn in view of the House; and as the great Principle of Improvement at the Place consists in the extension of the Park and Lawn to both sides of the High Road, the banks of the Severn are to be planted and connected with the Park by a Passage under the large Bridge, over which the Turnpike Road passes.

2. From *The Gentleman's Magazine*.²

On 8th February, 1798, as Lord Berwick's workmen were digging between Tern Bridge and the river Severn, at Attingham, in a ploughed field at little more than plough depth, they came to an enclosure of large stones within which were ranged three large glass urns of very elegant workmanship, one large earthen urn, and two smaller ones of fine red earth. Each of the urns had one handle, and the handles of the glass urns are elegantly ribbed. The glass urns were about 12 inches high and 10 inches in diameter. The large earthen urn was so much broken that its dimensions could not be ascertained; but on its handle was stamped the letters SPAH, probably the workman's mark; the small urns were about 9 inches high. Within the glass urns were the remains of burnt bones and fine mould and in each a fine glass lachrymatory of the same materials as the urns, which are a most beautiful light green. Near one of them was part of a jawbone: an earthen lamp and a few Roman coins of the

lower Empire, of little value, were discovered in the same place. The whole was covered with large flat stones, covered with a quantity of coarse rock stone. . . . One of the glass urns, and part of another, the fragments of the large earthen urn, one of the small ones, one of the lachrymatories, the lamp, and a few coins, are the only remains of this curious discovery which were rescued from the spades of the workmen. These remains of antiquity are preserved in Lord Berwick's museum at Attingham.

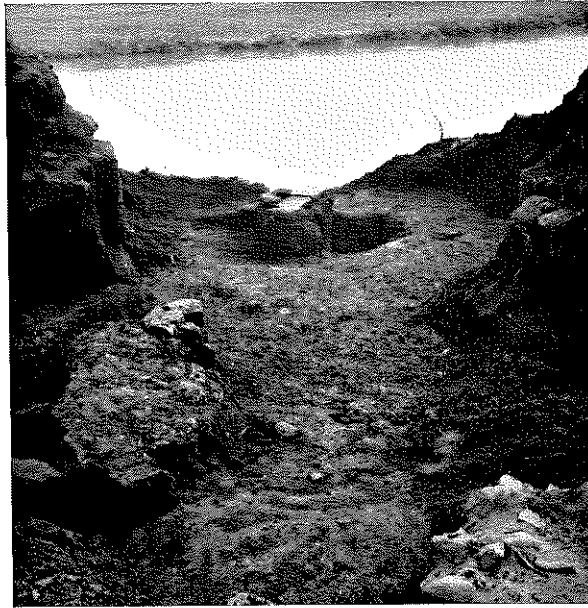


PLATE XVI—The two hearths, River Severn beyond. Ash has been cleared from the level of the tops of the hearths

There seems no doubt that this discovery was made during the cutting of the new Tern channel and it would be interesting to know what other discoveries were destroyed by the spades of the workmen and never reported.

Because some of the sherds were evidently kiln wasters formal excavation was decided upon. A soil resistivity survey was carried out over an area which comprised 110 feet of river bank and extended inwards for 80 feet. This procedure turned out to be unhelpful and therefore trial trenches were dug in various areas. Fragments of buff burnished ware and a few rims of fourth century black burnished cook pots were found lying beneath the top soil which was dark and silty. At the edge of the river bank and $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet below modern ground level a rough floor was found which was composed of cobble stones and building debris pitched and rammed on to the old turf line that lay above the clean sandy alluvian. There had been little effort at any construction other than rough levelling, the presence of a post hole outside the floor and one in it together with a tumble of broken roof tiles suggests that perhaps a roof did exist over part of the floor (plate 2 and fig. 2) In the north west corner

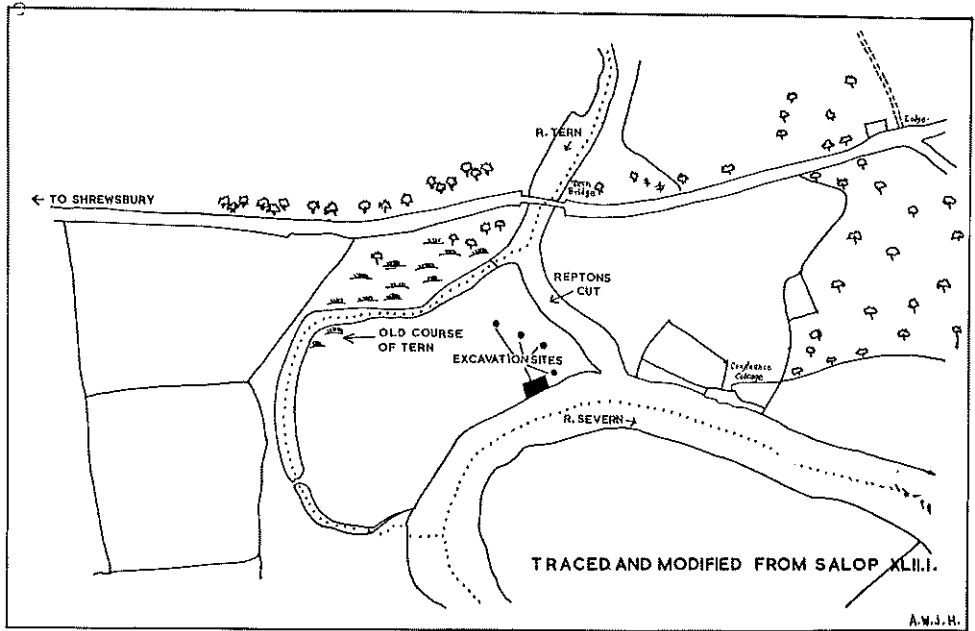


FIG. 23—Based upon the Ordnance Survey Map, with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office. Crown Copyright reserved

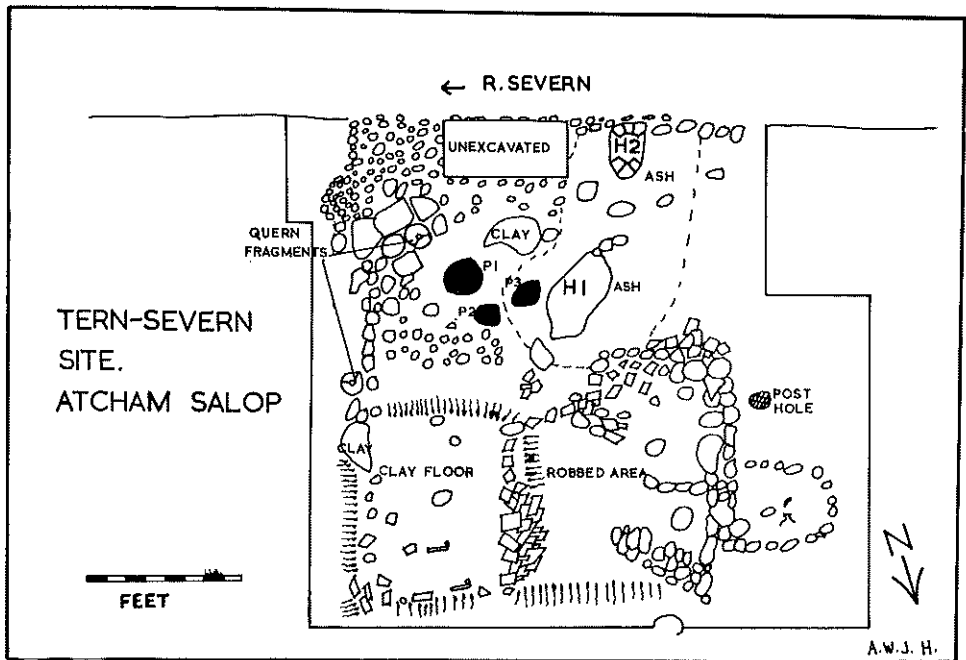


FIG. 24

waster sherds were strewn so thickly on the ground as to make part of the floor, while in the south east corner a column base and broken quern stones were laid so as to form a fairly regular surface. Other quern fragments were lying in a ditch outside the eastern edge of the floor.

Two small hearths were found one of which was on the verge of the bank and nearly toppling into the river. On it tiles had been set as if in readiness for another fire (Plate III). Ash, a foot or more thick, surrounded both hearths and in it were found worn and broken pie dishes, straight sided and bulbous cook pots in greyish and black burnished ware which displayed the familiar chipping of the rims and burning of sides and bases produced then as now by rough usage.

Two small rubbish pits were found (Fig. 2) under the ash of hearth no. 1. These contained body sherds of buff burnished ware and rims of black burnished cook pots of heavy build.

Although no kiln was found there can be little doubt that these structures are the remains of a pottery factory, and it seems certain that the river has destroyed the kilns and an unknown area of the workshop. In a few years the whole site will have gone.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE POTTERY

I. Pottery at the hearths and apparently in use.

17 shallow pie dishes in either reddish or greyish fabric burnished black were found. All were decorated with looped lines on sides and base when leather hard. One, (fig. 4 no. 14) appeared to have been made in two parts, for the looped lines did not extend to the lower edge and the base was broken cleanly away from the side. Another was made of buff burnished ware and may have been a local product.

There were 22 straight sided cook pots with a high internal bead. (Fig. 3, no. 16 and 17). The larger ones were in a gritty grey ware covered with a black burnished slip. A few were in a reddish fabric with a similar slip. One small vessel was in a fine polished grey fabric. All these pots showed signs of burning. A few sherds of black burnished pots of allied form were noted, of which some had an internal ledge or lid seating, a few had unevolved internal beads, and one or two a smooth upper surface to the rim (fig. 3, nos. 8 and 12). These types are found in fourth century deposits at Leicester.³

A total of 57 bulbous cook pots were identified (Fig. 5, nos. 1 and 2). A great many were at or close to the hearths while smaller heavily burnt sherds were more widely scattered. The majority had the rims over sailing the girths and were decorated with wide laticing at the widest girth. Where the slip was intact it was black burnished and the fabric grey or black. The late Dr. Philip Corder said concerning these pots—there is the fossil which dates the site.

From the pits sherds of black burnished bulbous cook pots were recovered and all were in a black fabric with heavy rims which did not quite reach the widest girth of the pot. (Fig. 5 no. 3)

Fragments of 15 mortaria were scattered about the site. These consisted chiefly of small rim fragments. (Fig. 3 nos. 18—23)

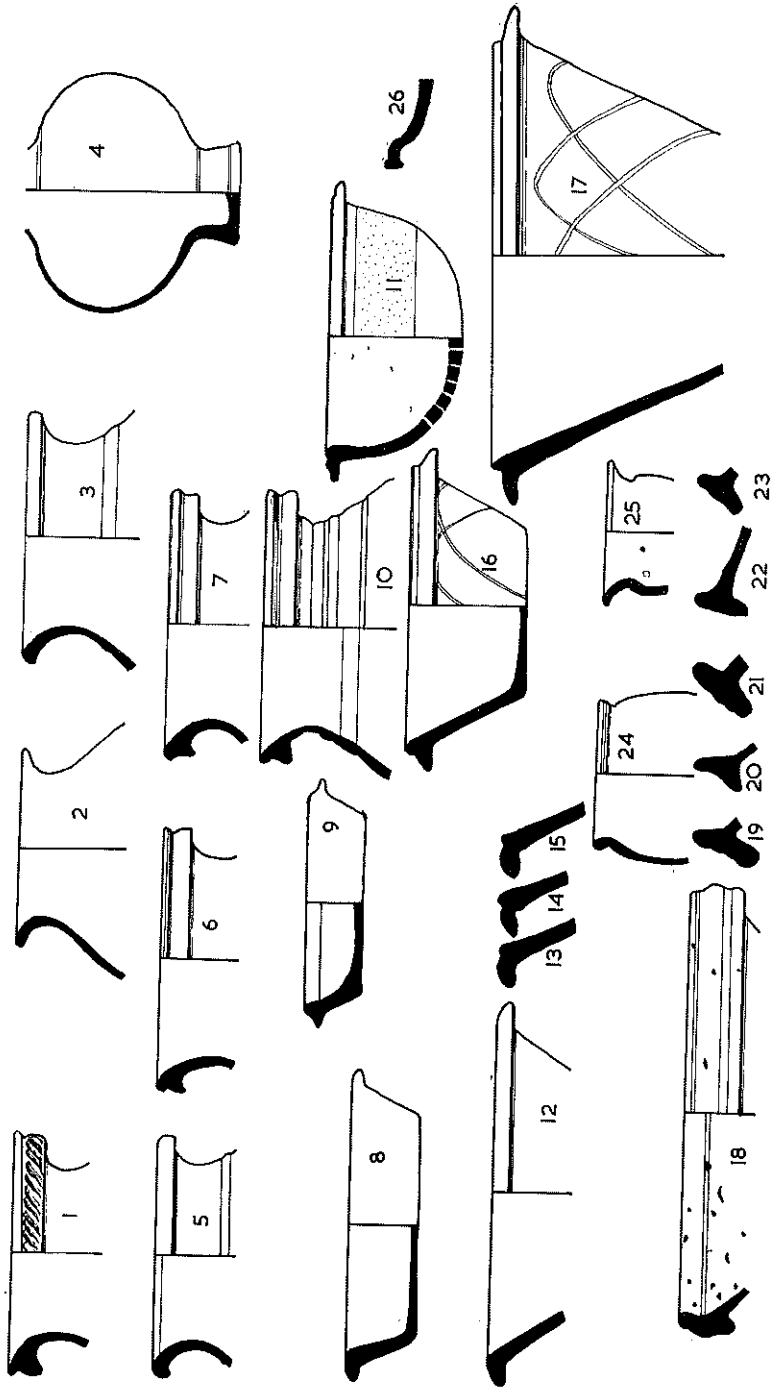


Fig. 25

Scale: One quarter

Mrs. K. F. Hartley kindly reports as follows : One mortar of Rhaetian type. 2nd half of second century. Two mortars in soft creamy fabric. These can be matched at the potteries at Hartshill and Mancetter and I think they were almost certainly made there. Third to fourth century. Most of the remainder were in a sandy white fabric, some with a pink core. These are of West Midland origin, possibly at Wroxeter, and are of third century date.

A little *Samian ware* was found scattered about the site and *Mr. Brian Hartley* kindly reports on it.

Decorated Ware

1. Form 37, Central Gaulish, probably from Martres de Veyre, judging by the fabric. The decoration is in the style of CETTVS (the Small S potter), whose moulds have been found at Marteres and allegedly at Lezoux (Oswald, Stamps on *Terra Sigillata*, p. 75).

2. Form 37, Central Gaulish. The ovolo is one of the common ones used by CINNAMVS (Stanfield and Simpson, fig. 47, 1).

Plain Ware

The plain pieces are almost all from form 31 and 31R of Central Gaulish origin and mid to late Antonine date. In addition there are :

a. Form 79, Central Gaulish. Late Antonine.

b. A variant of form 36, probably East Gaulish, and late second or early third century.

c. An interesting unusual form which combines the rim of Curle 15 with the body of Ludovici Tg. It is, therefore, basically a Tg variant. The fabric appears to be Central Gaulish, and the dish is thinner and altogether more delicate than the normal Tgs. Presumably Antonine. (Fig. 3 no.26)

II. *The wasters*

There were two large and four small groups.

a. Small groups.

1. *Red colour coated ware*. Six vessels of form 23, one of form 29 with crude decoration, five of form 31 and six of form 38. All were in buff or reddish buff fabric and many had a pale red colour coat. (Fig. 4 nos. 4,5, 6, 7, 8, 9, &12)

2. *Tankards* with the mouth wider than the base in similar fabric to the above. Pieces of four were identified.

3. *Colanders*. Two were certainly identified, one being in a brown sandy ware and the other a cruder affair in buff clay. (Fig. 3 no. 11)

4. *An effort was being made to produce copies of an exotic globular flask*. (Fig. 3 no. 4) This was wheel thrown and in a very fine thin hard fired creamy ware with a splash of light red colour on the neck. The foot was finely proportioned and the whole vessel displayed great artistic merit. Modern potters of experience state that probably no craftsman now living has the skill to throw such a pot. The two fragments of copies were poor clumsy things in white underfired pipeclay. An interesting odd specimen was a miniature straight sided cook pot with internal bead. This was made

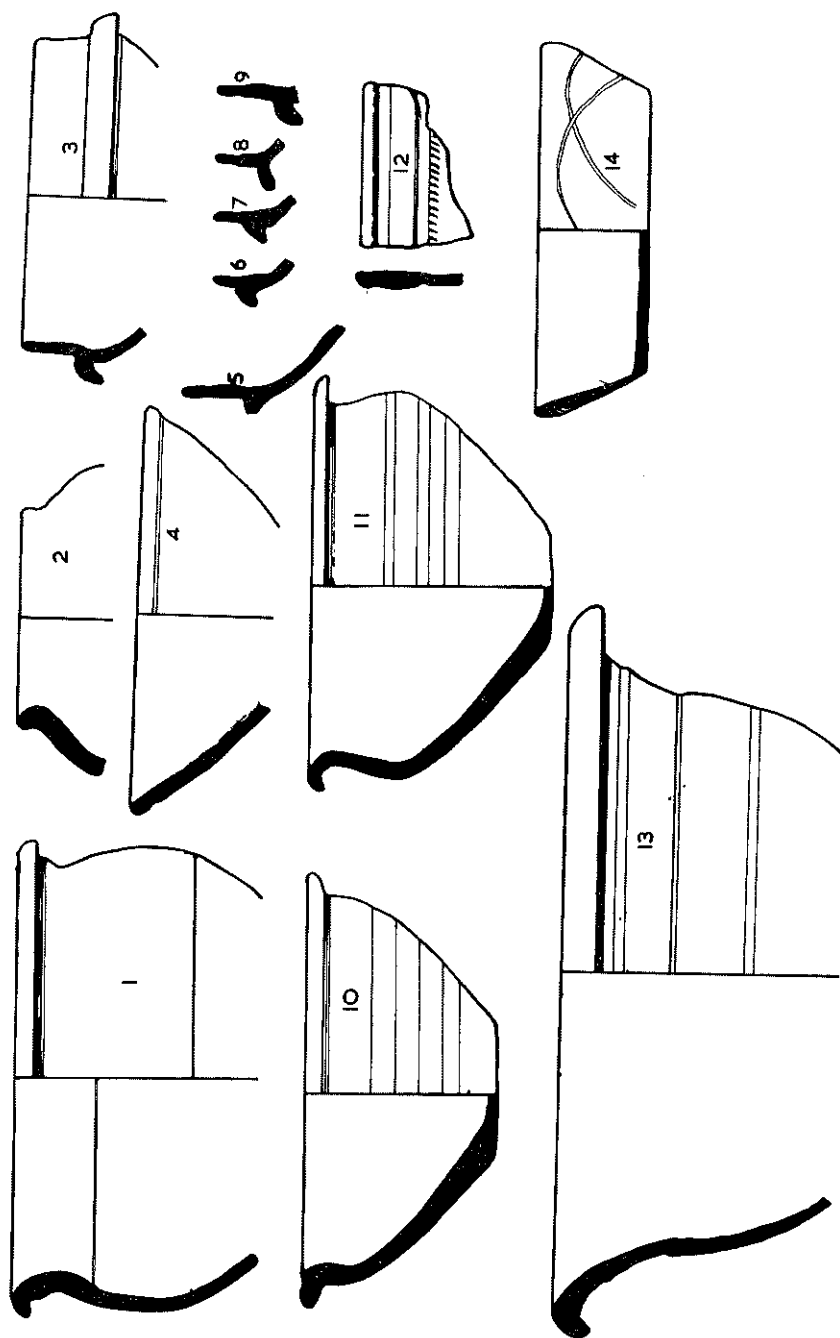


FIG. 26

Scale: One quarter

of buff clay and looked like a toy or some scrap made in an idle moment. (Fig. 3 no. 9) Alternatively it may have been, as Dr. G. Webster suggests, an ointment jar.

b. Large groups.

1. *Wide mouthed bowls or jars.* (Fig. 4, nos. 1, 2, 10, 11, 13) 52 different vessels were identified and all were in the same type of reddish buff or pinkish fabric. Some had lines of burnishing and others had a thin light red colour wash. It is of interest that pots as different in shape as those illustrated are contemporary.

2. *Narrow mouthed jars.* Fragments of 104 separate vessels were identified. The sherds were thickly trodden in places and apart from a few rope-rim and piecrust rimmed jars all except four were of the split or double rim variety and all were in the same buff or reddish clay fabric. The majority of these wasters were underfired though vitrified and distorted rims were found. (Fig. 3 nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10).

Other pottery.

The battered bases of two colour coated beakers were found ; these were of Nene Valley type. There were also found the burnt rims of two small beakers. (Fig. 3 nos. 24, 25.)

It will be seen that the wares being manufactured on a large scale at this site were wide mouthed bowls and narrow mouthed jars in a reddish buff clay fabric. Some were decorated when leather hard with lines and bands of burnishing, others with pale red colour wash, and many were plain.

The close similarity of these bowls both as regards form and fabric to the wares described by the late D. Atkinson in the "Second Period of the Forum"⁴ is of great interest especially in view of his remark that its commonness at Wroxeter suggests a local origin. This is especially noticeable in the following examples.

1. The wide mouthed bowl in Forum p.292 fig. 45. B5 and C5 and our fig. 4 no. 13.

2. The bowl in Forum fig. 46. C8. and our fig. 3 no. 10.

Similar bowls were also found by Bushe-Fox at Wroxeter in 1914.⁵ He states that they occur in the early period. They are found at Pennocrucium,⁶ Bravonium⁷ (Leintwardine) and Astley.⁸ They do not appear at Northern Stations or on the Wall. In the West Midlands these useful bowls appear throughout the greater part of the period of the Roman occupation.

The necked jars appear to have had a less wide distribution. They occur at Wroxeter in the Forum⁹ and at Whitchurch, Salop where two examples are known :¹⁰ one had been used as a cremation urn. They are also reported at Astley, Worcs.¹¹ The body sherds of many were thin and fragile ; the vessels cannot have lasted long.

On a number of sites imitation Samian Ware or red colour coated ware is common from the first third of the fourth century onwards. At Leicester it is commonest in the second half of the fourth century.¹² At Richborough it is found throughout the fourth century.¹³ Finally the late Philip Corder comments that this recurrence of good Samian imitations presupposes the survival of a considerable number of the Antonine dishes. Red colour coated ware of form Drag. 38 was found at the Roman building at Yarchester, Salop, north of Wenlock Edge.

There seems no doubt therefore that the period of greatest activity of this small factory was from the mid fourth century onwards. The presence in the pits of a slightly

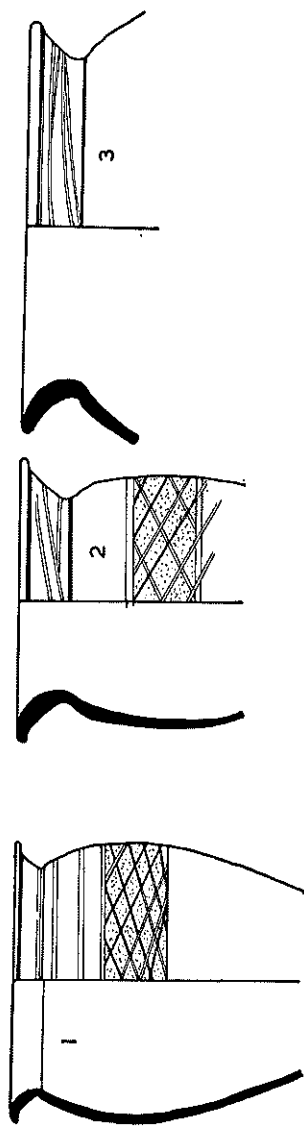


FIG. 27

Scale: One quarter

earlier type of black burnished cook pot may indicate that business was done on a small scale at the turn of the third to fourth centuries ; certainly the wide mouthed bowls in buff burnished ware could have been made at that period or indeed a half century earlier. This varied production of pottery so late in the Imperial occupation, may perhaps be regarded as casting a ray of light on what went on at VIROCONIVM and the neighbourhood in the latter half of the fourth century. In this context it is well to recollect the numbers of straight sided bowls with high internal rims in plain and colour coated ware that were found by D. Atkinson in the Wroxeter forum and which have yet to be published.

In conclusion I would like to thank all who helped with the excavation ; particular mention should be made of Messrs T. Ewart, T. Cole, E. Jenks, and boys from the Priory School. Mr. and Mrs. R. Horton of Wellington did much patient work. I wish also to acknowledge with thanks the helpful comments of the late Dr. Philip Corder, the assistance of Mr. and Mrs. Brian Hartley and of Dr. Graham Webster who has read the manuscript.

1. *Seats of the Nobility and Gentry in Great Britain and Wales*. pub. Angus. 1787.
2. *Gentleman's Magazine*. 1798. Part I., p. 162.
3. Dr. Kathleen Kenyon. *Jewry Wall*. p. 195 Fig. 52.
4. D. Atkinson. *Wroxeter*. Forum. 1942. p. 293 Fig. 45. B5 C5. Fig. 46 C8.
5. Bushe-Fox. *Wroxeter*. 1914. p. 64, Pl. xxviii 78.
6. G. Webster. *Trans. Birm. Arch. Soc.*, Vol. 74, 1956, p. II, Fig. 62, I.
7. S. C. Stanford. *Woolhope Trans.* 1958, p. 89, Fig. 5, No. 1.
8. I. Walker. *Trans. Worcs. Arch. Soc.*, 1958, Fig. 14 126.
9. D. Atkinson. *op. cit.* Fig. 46, C4.
10. J. Houghton *Trans. Shrops. Arch. Soc.*, vol. LVI. Pt. III 1960. Fig. 3, No. 2.
11. I. Walker. *op. cit.* Fig. 14, 122.
12. *Jewry Wall*. p. 209.
13. *Richborough I.* Pls. XXVIII and XXX, 107, 109-114.
14. P. Corder and Helen O'Neil. *Arch. J.*, vol. CII. 1945. p. 88.

VIROCONIUM : A STUDY OF PROBLEMS

by GRAHAM WEBSTER AND BRIAN STANLEY

The division of responsibility for this paper is a simple one. Brian Stanley has produced the basic plan from excavation reports, from the aerial photographs of Arnold Baker and those published by Dr. J. K. St. Joseph, and from a close ground survey. Graham Webster has written the text and there has been close collaboration throughout.¹ The authors wish to acknowledge the kindness of Mr. C. V. Everall in allowing their access to the fields under his cultivation and to Dr. A. W. J. Houghton for additional information and for allowing us to anticipate the results of some of his recent work on the site and its environs.

Viroconium, the tribal centre of the Cornovii, has over the last few decades been well known for the remarkable crop-marks of its buried buildings.² Some of these have been studied and published by Dr. J. K. St. Joseph.³ This present paper is the first attempt to survey in detail the results of these reconnaissances over the whole area of the town. Since, however, it is impossible in present conditions to excavate more than small selected parts of the area over the next few years, it is felt desirable at this stage to consider what problems such a survey presents as a basis for a plan of future selective excavations. Only the spade can uncover the whole story of the origin and growth of the town and it is clear from the work already undertaken by the previous excavators, J. P. Bushe-Fox,⁴ D. Atkinson,⁵ and Miss K. Kenyon,⁶ that the story will be very complicated.

Origins

No evidence has yet come to light of any pre-Roman occupation of the site. The excavations carried out by Miss Kenyon on the Iron Age hill-fort on the Wrekin in 1936-37⁷ showed a poverty in metalwork and pottery, but this may not be true of other groups of the Cornovii. So far as is known Viroconium was first occupied by the Roman Army and the most probable context of this would have been the advance of Ostorius Scapula against Caratacus.⁸ While the exact site of the famous battle remains in doubt, there is a strong possibility that it took place somewhere in the upper reaches of the Severn.⁹ Wroxeter would have been an excellent site for the rearward base for this and any succeeding campaign into central Wales.

There is ample evidence of military activity in the area. An auxiliary fort, on the banks of the Severn 450 yards south of the town, was first discovered and investigated by Dr. J. K. St. Joseph.¹⁰ This may be associated with the initial advance as might also a five-acre, double-ditched, marching camp observed by A. Baker at Duncot on the Tern a mile and a half north of Wroxeter in 1963. Tombstones, now in Rowley House Museum, Shrewsbury, testify to the presence of a trooper of the sixth cohort of Thracians,¹¹ two soldiers of the XIVth Legion¹² and possibly a third¹³ and a *beneficarius* of the XXth Legion¹⁴ serving on the governor's staff. Items of military equipment and coins of Claudius I have also appeared in excavations.¹⁵ In spite of aerial reconnaissance on an extensive scale, the actual site of the legionary fortress remains elusive. If it had been in the immediate vicinity of the town, to north or east, where

crop-marks of various kinds have been recorded, indications of the defensive ditches would surely have been noted. The two most likely possibilities are that it will be found either some distance away in a position so far overlooked or not susceptible to crop-marks, or that it lies below the town itself, with the effect that the long occupation and superincumbent later buildings have completely masked the earlier remains. There is a growing amount of evidence to lend support to the latter suggestion. Dr. J. K. St. Joseph has recorded crop-marks of two parallel ditches north-west of the Forum which turn at right angles towards the south and are considered by him to be military in origin.¹⁶ These ditches, which are faintly discernible on the aerial photograph (Pl. XVII), clearly pre-date the civil buildings as a large house has been built over them. (Fig. 30). They are also in alignment with the street grid of the town, though whether this means that the grid was related to the earlier system connected with the ditches, or whether there was a defensive system round the nucleus of an early town, as at Verulamium,¹⁷ must remain uncertain. An attempt was indeed made in 1958¹⁸ to section these ditches, but it was found that later pits had interfered with both profiles and stratification and no clear answer to the problem was possible. Pottery datable to the Flavian period was found in the lower filling of the inner ditch and there was a slight indication of timber revetment on the inner edge. The layer above the upper filling of the ditches contained burnt pottery datable to the first Forum destruction. Further evidence of early occupation came in 1962 when a section was cut across the street immediately to the north of the later Baths by Graham Webster and Charles Daniels. Below the lowest of ten streets there were the remains of at least two periods of timber buildings set at right angles to the line of the street. Large and complicated timber buildings of *c.* A.D. 55-75 have also been discovered on the later Baths site itself in the same general alignment. It is thus clear that there are early timber phases at Wroxeter pre-dating the street system which at this point could not have been laid down before the end of the first century. All this evidence, slight though it is at present, tends to suggest that there was a military occupation preceding the establishment of the town at the end of the first century, but more information on the character of the buildings is needed before this can be argued with any conviction. The excavations of 1912-14 by J. P. Bushe-Fox showed that the street passing between the Forum and the later Baths and proceeding towards the bridge was lined with open-fronted timber buildings *c.* A.D. 75. There had been earlier occupation and the amount of pre-Flavian material clearly puzzled the excavator.¹⁹ If the remains of the buildings of this early phase were as slight as those investigated on the Baths site it is hardly surprising that the excavator could make so little of them.

A study of the street system and approach roads, as they now appear, does not materially assist the discussion. One must first appreciate the fact that the streets and buildings showing crop-marks represent the uppermost structures in most cases. Here and there traces of earlier features may be thought to be visible but the overall plan shows the development at its final stage and also the effects of stone robbing and cultivation over the centuries, which might well have removed all potential crop-marks of slight structures, while timber buildings are not likely to show at all. Watling Street approaches Viroconium from the north-east and military tombstones and cremation burials have been found by its side, somewhat to the south of the modern lane which roughly represents its course.²⁰ It follows that this must be the general

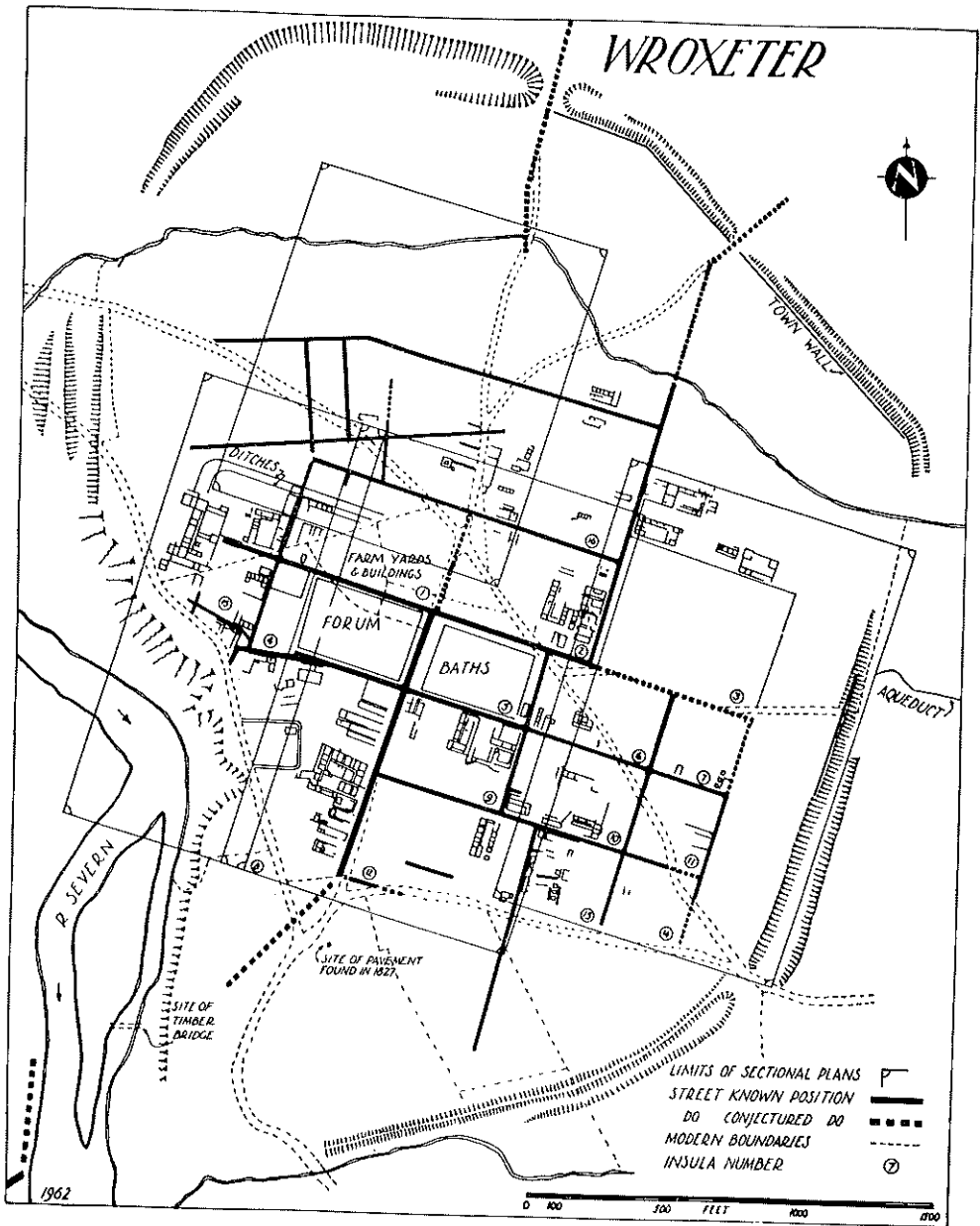


FIG. 28

course of the Roman road associated with the military occupation, although the cemetery could have been a considerable distance away from the fortress as was the cemetery on the South Common at Lincoln.²¹ If the earliest timber buildings are those of the legionary fortress, the road, approaching from the north-east, must have joined one of the main streets of the fortress at an oblique angle, presumably at a north or east gate.

The growth of the town

The site remained in military hands until the final withdrawal of the XIVth Legion in A.D. 70, but there may have followed a few years of care and maintenance. Another possibility to be considered is that the XIVth may have been replaced here by the XXth which would up to that time have remained at Gloucester where it appears to have been established *c.* A.D. 49 by Scapula.²² Excavations on the site of a Claudian fort at Waddon Hill in Dorset have led to the suggestion that the army may have remained in the south-west rather longer than has hitherto been supposed.²³ This would help to explain the disobedient absence of the IInd *Augusta* from the Midland battle against Boudicca.²⁴ Had this legion been divided amongst several forts, as the evidence from Hod Hill implies,²⁵ and the Durotriges joined in the rebellion, these conditions and the distance from the Midland rendezvous might have determined the decision of Poenius Postumus. There were no known historical events after the revolt which would have necessitated the reorganisation of the legions in Britain until A.D. 66 when Nero withdrew the XIVth for his eastern campaign. This might have been the occasion for the transfer of the XXth to Wroxeter and the IInd to Gloucester, which with the IXth still at Lincoln would have represented a balanced and well-spaced frontier arrangement. The problem then remains of what happened to the XIVth when it was returned to Britain by Vitellius in A.D. 69, only to be ordered back to the Continent the following year to help put down the revolt of Civilis. In the commotion of the Civil War the frontier policy in Britain may have been of secondary consideration. If the XXth had replaced the XIVth at Wroxeter, the legionary fortress would have been occupied until A.D. 71 when Agricola, as its *legatus*, led the legion north to play its part in the subjugation of the Brigantes under Cerialis. Eventually when Agricola became governor the XXth was established in permanent quarters at Inchtuthil.²⁶ It may only be the fortunate find of a stratified coin of suitable date that will determine this debatable issue, and until then the transfer of the site to civil authority must be dated to *c.* 75-85 and presumably the street grid was first laid out and work started on the public buildings in the years following this event.

Wroxeter was one of four legionary fortresses from which the army was evacuated and the area handed over to civil use in Britain. The site of the other three, Colchester, Lincoln and Gloucester, were developed as *coloniae* or settlements for retired army veterans.²⁷ Wroxeter was the only one to become a tribal centre. After at least twenty years of military occupation the civil settlement must have been considerable, traders from other parts of the Empire as well as Britain and local inhabitants would have flocked to the site to provide for the needs of a body of some 5,000 well paid soldiers. If, as seems reasonable, Viroconium was also a campaign base between A.D. 48 and 60 for the various assaults on Wales, whole armies would have been encamped here and the governor and his staff been in residence. While it is difficult to judge the

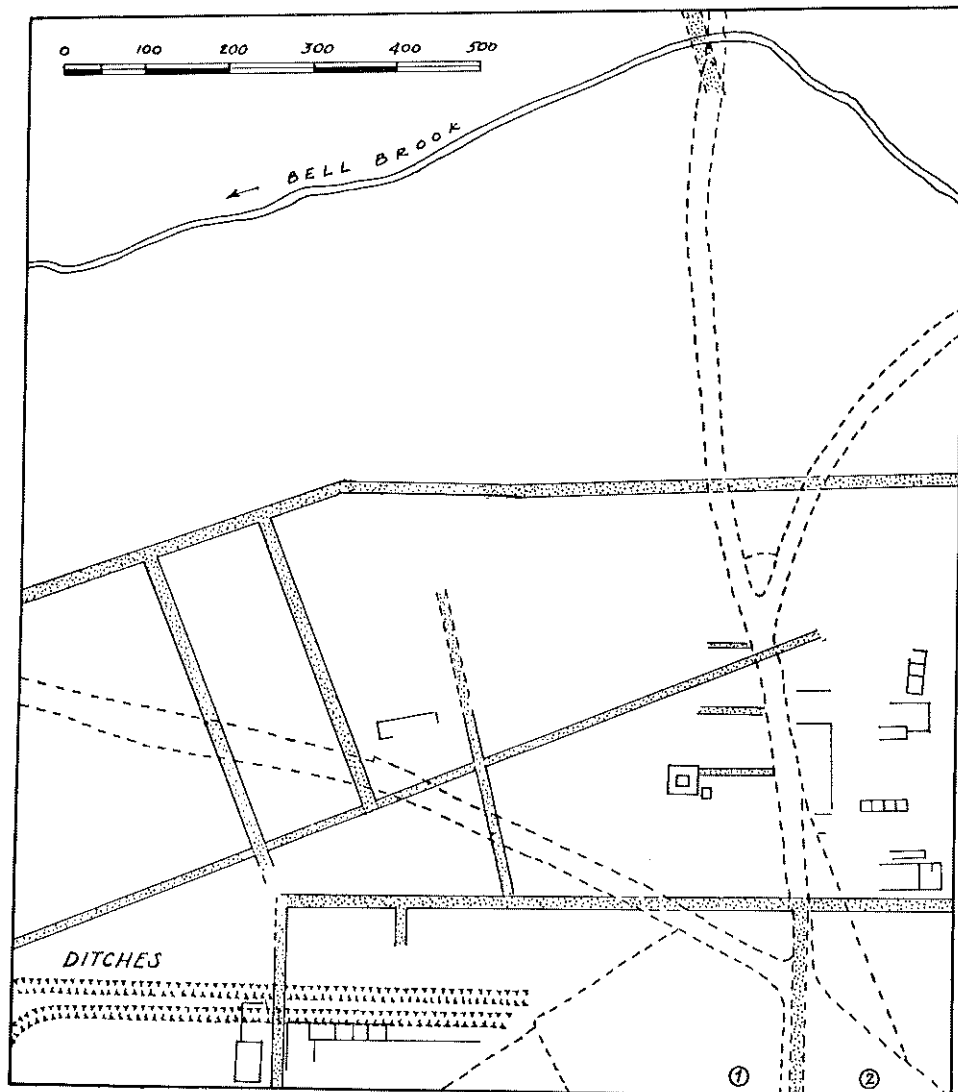


FIG. 29

situation, it would not be unreasonable to suppose that many traders continued to follow the Army, but others might have remained, having settled down and established trading contacts with the local inhabitants.

The *insulae*, which have here been numbered, probably represent the original nucleus of the town. But there are anomalies of which there is no immediate explanation. The main north-south street is presumably that dividing the two principal public buildings, yet immediately to the north of them it either contracts or it is discontinued. When a water main was recently laid along the west side of the modern road there was no sign of any Roman street metalling²⁸ and part of a building with apsidal room has been noted under the hedge and verge 500 feet north of the Post

office.²⁹ The lack of subdivision in *Insula* 8 is also remarkable, although there is a trace of a narrow street in the early development north of the temple.³⁰ It might be argued that the proximity of the river prevented the normal *insula* planning. But the course of the river has changed, and its encroachment has led to the complete disappearance of the western defences.

Beyond the reasonably orderly arrangement of the central blocks, there is immediate confusion. To the west of the Forum the system seems to break down into a number of disjointed lanes (Pl XIX). The area north of *Insula* 1 appears to be planned out of alignment with the main grid (Pl. XVII), while the small Romano-Celtic temple seems to conform to the main plan. In *Insula* 3 there is a large area (600 ft. by 550 ft.) surrounded by a wall. It occupies the highest part of the town yet seems to be completely empty; from its size and position it might be supposed to have been an important temple enclosure (Fig. 32).

The situation in the southern part of the town is far from clear as the subsoil here is clay which is not favourable to crop-marks. The large arable field in the south-east corner can be seen by observation after ploughing to have occupation and buildings in it. Perhaps the greatest problem is the extension of the town beyond the Bell Brook. The steep slope into the Brook might have effectively sterilised any building development in a 150 yard strip along its full length and no traces of stone buildings have been observed between the stream and the northern defences, but the great complexity of pits and post-holes to be seen on the aerial photographs (Pls. XVII and XX) suggests occupation with timber or more ephemeral structures. Nor must one altogether neglect the possibility of arable or pasture areas within the city limits for market gardening and cattle in winter, or semi-siege conditions.

Nor can one demonstrate the same possibilities in other Roman towns. The very size of Wroxeter is a problem in itself. Allowing for the losses on the west side, its original area must have been at least 180 acres and possibly more, ranking at least fourth in the sizes of the towns of Britain. That this should be the case of a town on the very edge of the Roman world after such an inauspicious start with its public buildings, demands an explanation.

Public buildings.

The basic history of the principal buildings has now been established. Epigraphic evidence has shown that the Forum was dedicated in A.D. 129-30 and it is known that an earlier Bath building underlies it. These Baths, begun towards the end of the first century, were never completed. The lack of progress in the development of the town's chief buildings cannot be readily explained. What seems strange is the considerable interval allowed to elapse before public Baths were provided. The *thermae* built on the east side of the main street would seem to have been completed somewhat later than the Forum and could not have been in operation until c. A.D. 160 or possibly later.³¹ It would seem reasonable to expect an earlier, presumably more modest bath-house serving the needs of the citizens in the earlier years of the town's existence.

The Forum and the buildings to the south of it were seriously damaged by fire about A.D. 160-170. A second and more catastrophic destruction affected the masonry, the whole front with its monumental entrance collapsing into the street. The late Professor Donald Atkinson dated this by coins to the end of the third century, but

it may be well to note that coins of this period seem to have continued in use until the large-scale issues of Constantine I, *c.* A.D. 330.³² The Forum itself was not rebuilt, but parts of the building were adapted for other purposes. The excavator regarded these later structures as slight, but as the uppermost remains, they have suffered severely from the attention of stone-robbers and cultivation.

The Bath site presents rather a different story. An attractive suggestion was made by Miss Kenyon that just as the Forum replaced the Baths on the west side of the road, so on the east the Baths replaced the Forum. There is certainly evidence for an early stone building, never completed, on the site but its plan is very inadequately known and does not suggest a normal type of Forum. The whole site is complicated ; fronting the main street is a group of buildings whose purpose has not been satisfactorily explained. The Baths only occupy part of the site with the *palaestra* on the north side and the main bath block forming a wing on the east side. There is no evidence of this building being destroyed by fire, matching either the two destructions of the Forum, or at the end of the occupation. The dramatic evidence of burning and skeletons presented by Wright may be re-interpreted as rakings from the large stoke-holes in the one case and for the other people sheltering in the ruins long after the final abandonment of the town.³³ What is certainly clear from the more recent excavations³⁴ is that the building had a very complex history with additions and alterations taking its life as *thermae* well into the end of the fourth century. Even when the building ceased to be used as a bath-house there is evidence from Wright's excavation that the *frigidarium* was used as a granary³⁵ and some of the blockings of the doors may date from this phase.

Two temples are known, one from crop-marks north of *Insula* 1 (Pl. XXI), and the other excavated by Bushe-Fox.³⁶ The buildings to the north of the latter temple (Bushe-Fox, Site vi) are reminiscent of the shops and house at Caerwent identified by V. E. Nash-Williams as a *Tempel-Bezirk* or group of buildings in the temple compound with various functions, and known from examples on the Continent.³⁷ This suggestion would also provide an answer to the problem of the subrectangular enclosure to the west of the group (Bushe-Fox, Site vii). This could be explained as an enclosure for the enactment of periodic religious dramas. The parallel stone walls would support a timber superstructure of raised seats or stands as originally suggested by Bushe-Fox ; one could fit into this space a row of at least six seats. There are examples of temple-theatres in Britain at Verulamium³⁸ and Gosbeck's Farm, Colchester,³⁹ but the same effect could be achieved on a more modest scale by a walled enclosure of this nature. It may also be worth observing that the so-called amphitheatre at Caerwent⁴⁰ lies at the rear of the temple-group. This is a simple oval enclosure surrounded by a single, or possibly double, wall although the latter survived only at one point. The 2 ft. inner wall was possibly a fence or boundary wall separating the spectators from the events in the enclosure. The Caerwent enclosure was constructed late in the history of the site and stone-built houses had to be demolished to accommodate it, yet the evidence of the kilns or ovens on the north side show that it must have gone out of use before the end of the Occupation unless they had a religious function.

The chronology of the Wroxeter temple can be established from Bushe-Fox's account. Buildings below the temple had suffered in the conflagration of *c.* A.D. 160 and a foundation deposit was placed in a black-burnished cooking pot⁴¹ of late second

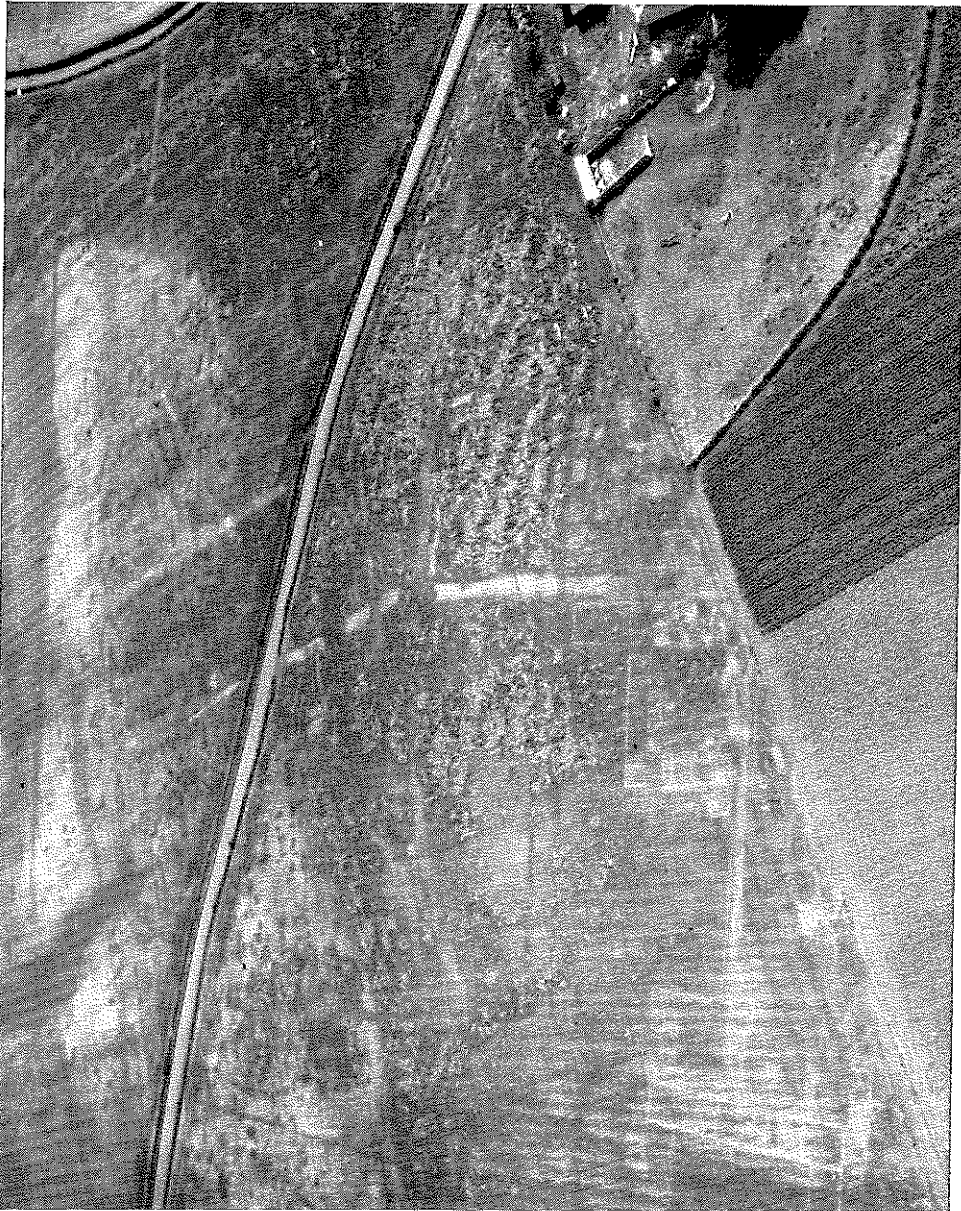


PLATE XXVII—Insula 15, showing ditches underlying buildings, looking north.
(*Photograph Mr. A. Baker*)



PLATE XVIII—Insulae 5 to 7 and 9 to 11, looking east.

(Photograph Mr. A. Baker)



PLATE XIX—Insulae 4 and 15 looking south.

(Photograph Mr. A. Baker)

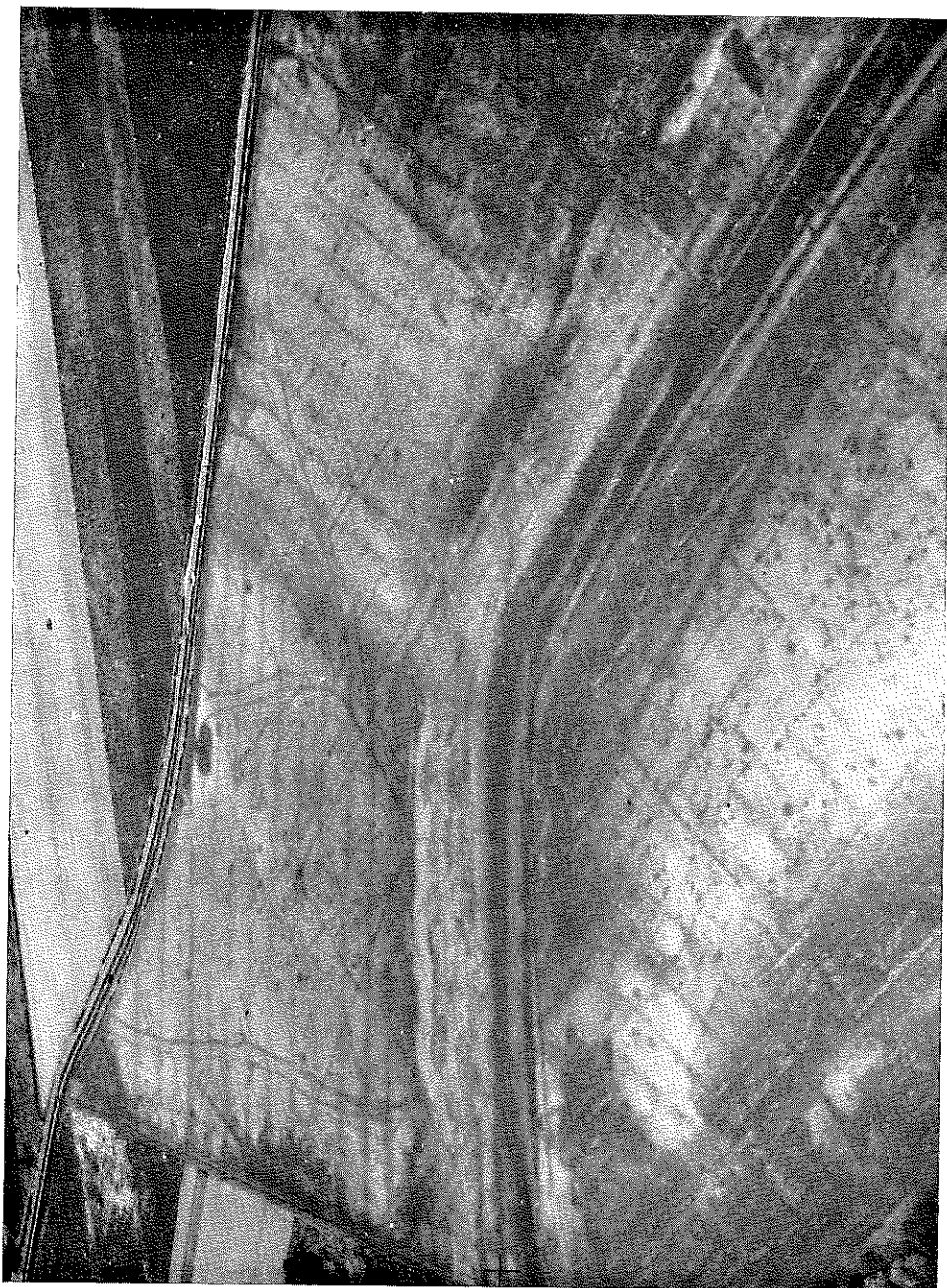


PLATE XX—Northern defences, looking north.

(*Photograph Mr. A. Baker*)

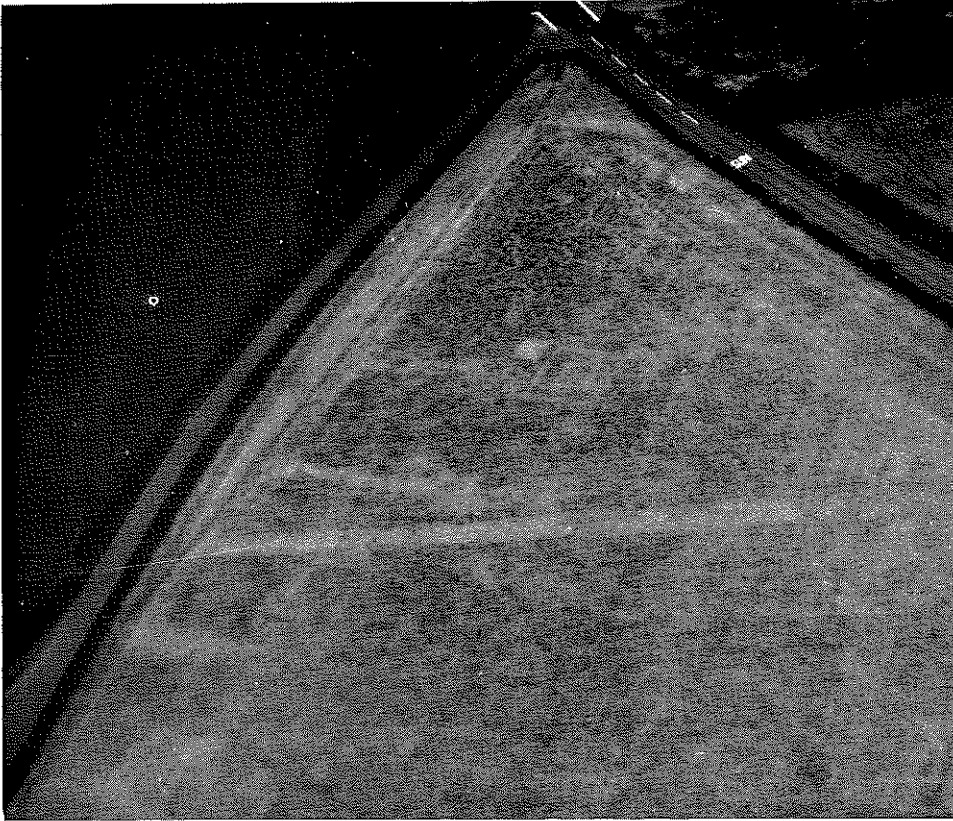


PLATE XXI—Insula 16, including a small temple, looking south.

(Photograph Mr. A. Baker)

century date. The destruction of the temple was associated with coins down to A.D. 293 indicating a date in the early fourth century possibly associated with the Imperial adoption of Christianity. The history of the stone-walled enclosure is less easy to understand. The excavator considered that the walls had been demolished by the time the drain from the house had been laid and his photograph (Pl. xiii) clearly shows the drain cutting across the curved wall. If this is so, the enclosure was out of use before the temple buildings had been constructed and the two can hardly be associated. On the other hand the building inside the enclosure is clearly aligned to it and was presumably built when the walls were still visible, although the enclosure itself may have gone out of use. This building is assigned to the "latter part of the occupation". A smaller structure to the west also post-dating the enclosure produced coins down to Valentinian I. It would thus seem possible that the enclosure had ceased its function when the temple was despoiled if an alternative explanation could be found for the relationship of the drain to the walls.

The course of the aqueduct at Wroxeter has been studied where it can be traced beyond the defences⁴² but its relationship to the latter and its course through the town

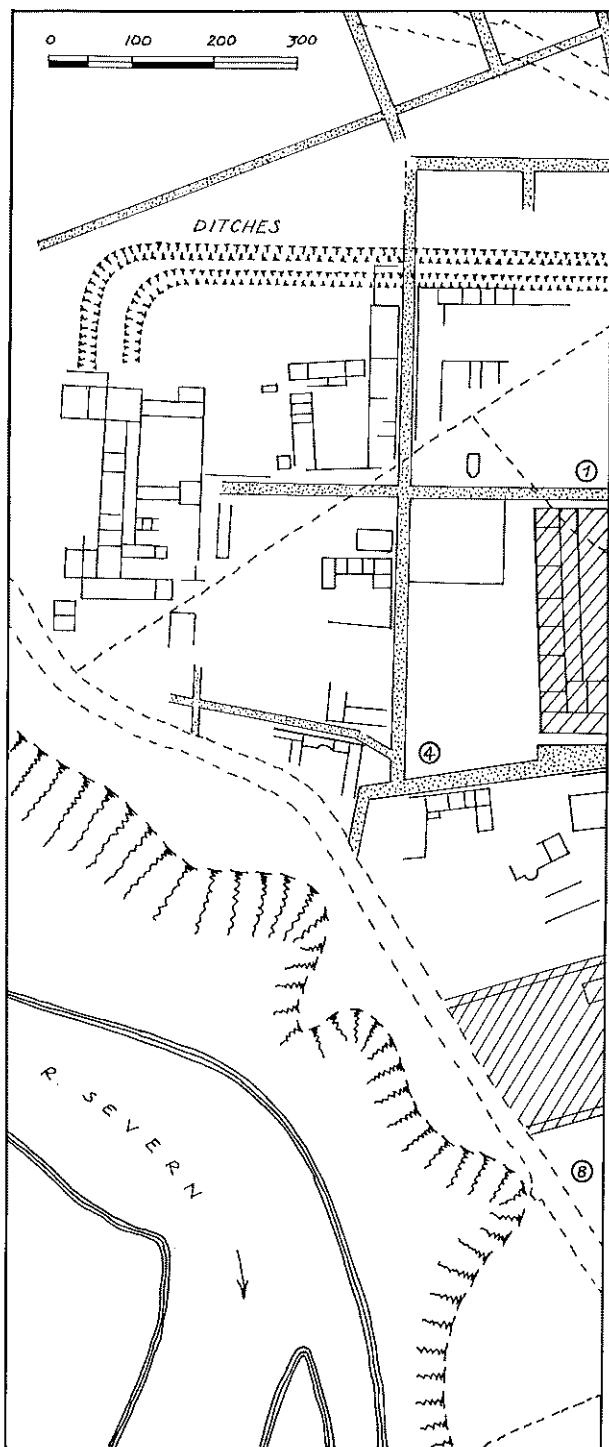


FIG. 30

to a central fountain and the baths has yet to be established. An overflow must connect at some point with the drainage system which is also in need of study. A number of drains have been noted running westwards towards the river but whether they belong to a general system with a single outlet or are independent remains to be discovered.

Defences.

The circuit of the town defences has long been known and studied, except for the stretch on the west side where it would appear that the line has been lost in landslide along the edge of the river. Wright found the wall foundations, six feet thick, on the south side in the Vicar's Glebe, a field known as "Old Walls".⁴³ Similar foundations averaging seven feet in width were traced by Professor Atkinson in 1923 on the north side⁴⁴ and a ditch of W-profile. An investigation by Miss Kenyon in 1936-37 on the east side was more revealing.⁴⁵ The wall footings, about seven feet wide, were found and the W-ditch profile noted earlier. An additional feature was the bank, 50 feet of which were included in a section and from which pottery was obtained dating its deposition to a period not earlier than the mid-second century. Another section cut in 1960 by the first author on the south side added further details to the story.⁴⁶ It is clear from this excavation that there were two phases in the defences; the first consisted of a bank 56 feet wide with at least two ditches and datable to a period not earlier than the end of the second century, while the second consisted of the insertion of the wall and the cutting of a new ditch about 70 feet wide. The cutting of this latter ditch through the outer part of the earlier inner ditch explains the W-profile illustrated by the previous excavators. The change in the character of town defences was made necessary by the introduction of bastions, but at Wroxeter a close scrutiny of the aerial photographs fail to reveal any trace of features of this nature and it seems doubtful if they were provided in the fourth century reconstruction. The basic chronological pattern of civil defences in Roman Britain has been demonstrated elsewhere⁴⁷ but it is also becoming more evident in recent years that there are sites with anomalous situations⁴⁸ and it is probable that with further work many of the towns will be found to have defences of greater complexity than would seem to be the case at present.

At Wroxeter, a system of earlier town defences has already been postulated by Miss Kenyon, but the evidence from her sections on the east side fails to convince in terms of civil defences. As the first author has already indicated, what was claimed as a ditch of these defences on the northern side is probably the robbed-out aqueduct or similar large structure.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, there are traces on the ground and on air photograph of a bank along the south side of the Bell Brook and part of which was removed by bulldozer a few years ago in Field No. 422 to facilitate ploughing and reaping. In 1963 a section was cut by Dr. A. W. J. Houghton 80 feet south of the Bell Brook in Field No. 469 which revealed what appeared to be the north side of a large ditch, but unfortunately the trench collapsed before the work was completed. Clearly more investigation is needed before any general conclusions can be reached.

There is yet no satisfactory evidence of the situation of the gates. On general grounds it now seems possible that there were two gates on the north side, and none on the east, but perhaps there are indications in the behaviour of the fourth-century

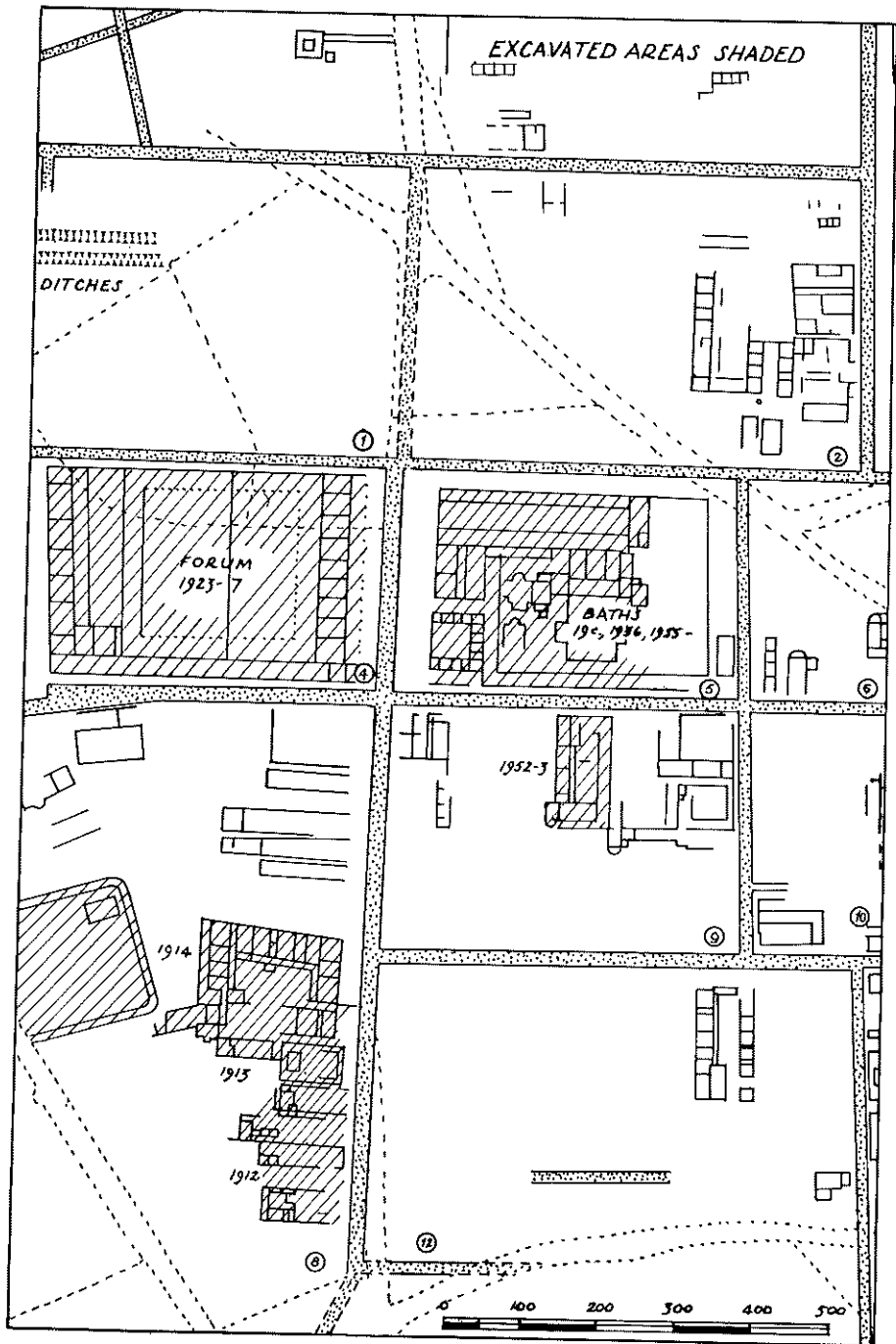


FIG. 31

ditch for one in the south-east corner where the modern road crosses the defences. There was presumably a gate by the bridge in the south-west corner but the situation on the west side will for ever remain in doubt although the street plan at least suggests a postern giving access to the river.

The houses

The only reliable information about the domestic buildings and their development rest on the work of Bushe-Fox in 1912-14 and Miss Kenyon who excavated part of a house south of the Baths in 1952-53.⁵⁰ The houses south of the temple complex west of the main north-south road had an involved history. There were simple strip-type houses in timber in the first century to which were added in the second century concrete floors and plaster walls, and the foundations were replaced with stone probably in the second half of the second century. There were subsequent reconstructions and alterations involving an extension into the street and the erection of porticoes. On the site of an elaborate house excavated in 1952-53, there had been timber structures lasting well into the second century followed by two main stone phases, the earlier using red sandstone and the later grey. The first of these stone periods dates from the late second or early third century and the second from the early fourth century (Pl. XVIII).

It is impossible to reach any general conclusions on the house types from a plan of crop-marks as they are far too fragmentary, but there seems to be a considerable variation in size and type. There are several hints on the aerial photographs of timber buildings, especially in the north-western area and it is possible that many other apparent gaps in the town plan could be filled in this way. There is at present insufficient evidence on which to attempt any calculation of population.

The future.

It should now be evident that Viroconium presents many complicated problems which only careful excavation over large areas can ever solve with satisfaction. This seems at the moment a remote possibility and one watches the slow but steady erosion of the site by the plough with many misgivings. An attack could be made on some of the problems by carefully selected excavations carried out at critical points and this could be listed as follows :—

1. *The defences.* The origins and history of these may have little bearing on the development of the town but, as illustrating external pressures, are important for the history of the Province. One of the first tasks should be that of elucidating the ditch-systems inside the town by sections at places where minimum interference may be anticipated. On the main circuit there are the problems of the gate positions and presence of bastions at the corners.

2. *The street system.* Elucidation of this could come about by two kinds of attack. Firstly one could add to the plan by undertaking superficial trial excavations following the lines of streets already established. Secondly one needs to cut sections across many of the streets to recover evidence of their chronology. This would be an operation of some magnitude as the streets of the central *insulae* would be hard-packed

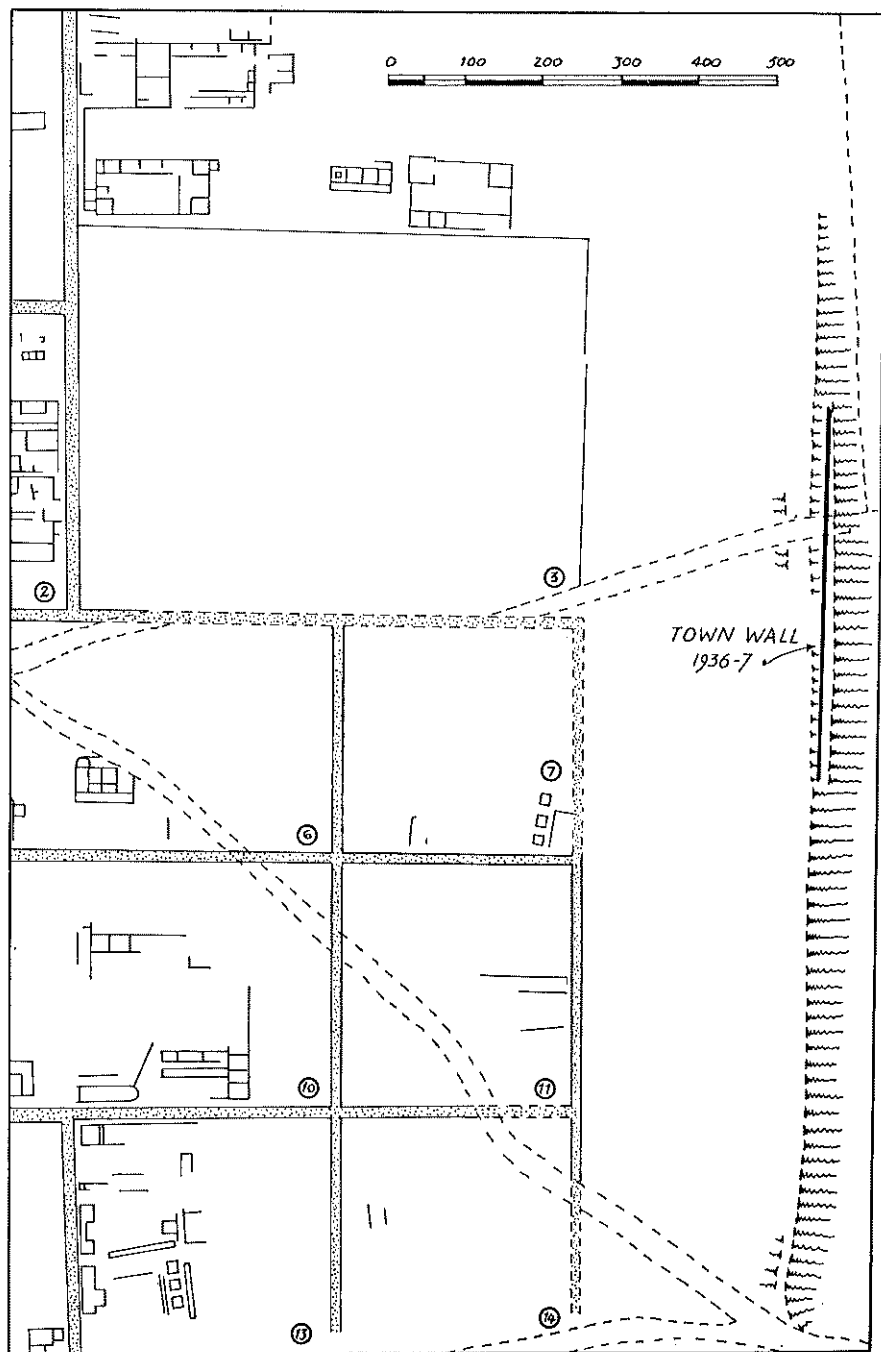


FIG. 32

gravel to a depth of about 12 feet and the complexities of surfaces, drains and water-pipes can be seen from the section cut across the street north of the Baths in 1962.⁵¹

3. *Water supply and drainage.* Work involving a modest amount of disturbance and labour might be instituted in following the aqueduct and drains. This might prove difficult if one became involved with other structures and one needs to plan this wherever possible well away from known buildings.

4. *Buildings.* Of the buildings themselves, any attempt to carry on a superficial reconnaissance or series of trial trenches are doomed to failure. Most of the buildings are so complicated in themselves and have so much history in depth that only extensive stripping will give any satisfaction. No attempt should therefore be made unless adequate time and resources to complete the work are available. Possible exceptions may be in some of the outlying buildings, the history of which might be found to be much simpler than that of the building in the central area.

5. *Approach roads, bridges, cemeteries and extra-mural sites.* Useful work could be done in tracing the approach roads and working out their history by sections at selected points. Recent work by Dr. A. W. J. Houghton with the assistance of the Midland Branch of the British Sub-Aqua Club has revealed the presence of the stone foundations of a timber bridge across part of the Severn.⁵² The identification of a stone bridge by J. A. Morris⁵³ has now been discredited.⁵⁴ There may have been more than one bridge and possible sites and their approaches should be studied on the ground. Very little work has been done on the town's cemeteries which must be along these approach roads.⁵⁵ There must also be much settlement outside the defences and some of this may be associated with the industries which were not allowed in the town, such as potteries and tile works. Excavators on Roman sites need to know a great deal about the dating of local wares. One of the main difficulties at Wroxeter is that no production centre has been found and in consequence our knowledge of the pottery recovered from excavations is very limited. It might be suggested that the most essential task for the immediate future is the discovery and excavation of the pottery kilns which must lie somewhere in the vicinity of the town. There is a hint of an industry of this nature where the Severn joins the Tern⁵⁶ but most of the site has already been eroded by the river. Aerial reconnaissance has produced a number of crop-marks of sites near the town, some of them simple ditched enclosures, but they all need careful field-work and trial trenching. It is possible that an amphitheatre may have existed outside the town as at Dorchester and Cirencester. Neither can one divorce from the municipal problems those of agriculture, as the town and its countryside were closely dependent on one another. Shropshire, like most of the West Midlands, appears to be remarkably thin in Romano-British farmsteads, but this need not necessarily reflect the extent of agriculture if the native homesteads continued to exist, but merely shows that Roman influences did not penetrate the rural areas to the same extent as in southern England.

The work of the excavators has given us a few signposts, the activities of the airmen have shown us the rich potentialities, but the problems large and small remain and only a large amount of devoted field-work and a series of well-planned excavation can possibly help towards a better understanding of the origins, growth and decline of this large town with its imposing buildings.

1. We are most grateful to Professor I. A. Richmond for reading the text and making helpful suggestions for improving it. Since the writing of our text, he has published his own assessment of Viroconium in *Culture and Environment*, 1963.
2. These effects are very uneven, whereas some fields such as the one south of the Baths has produced remarkably detailed results in good conditions (Pl. XVIII), others are poorer and some have never produced a crop-mark at all. The variation may be due to differences in subsoil, drainage or farming processes and as yet the cause and effect of crop-marks are very imperfectly understood.
3. *J.R.S.*, xxxix (1949) p. 104 and Fig. 22 ; xliii (1953) p. 88, Pls. xi and xii ; xlv (1955) p. 88, Pl. xix ; xlviii (1958) p. 97.
4. *Excavations on the Site of the Roman Town at Wroxeter, Shropshire in 1912, 1913 and 1914*, p. 96.
5. *Report on Excavations at Wroxeter 1923-27, 1942*.
6. "Excavations at Viroconium", *Arch.*, 88 (1940) pp. 175-224.
7. *Arch. J.*, xcix (1942) pp. 99-109.
8. *Arch. J.*, xcv (1958) pp. 49-98.
9. The most recent candidate, advanced by Dr. J. K. St. Joseph, is near Caersws, *Antiquity*, xxxv (1961) p. 270.
10. *Birmingham Arch. Soc. Trans.*, 69 (1951) p. 54.
11. *C.I.L.*, vii, 158.
12. *C.I.L.*, vii, 154 and 155.
13. *C.I.L.*, vii, 157.
14. *C.I.L.*, vii, 156.
15. Listed in *Arch. J.*, cxv (1958) p. 95 ; some further examples in *Birmingham Arch. Soc. Trans.*, 78 (1962) p. 35.
16. *J.R.S.*, xlv (1955) p. 88 and Pl. xix.
17. *Antiq. J.*, 41 (1961) p. 80.
18. By B. R. Hartley and Graham Webster during the course of a training school. It might appear from the aerial photograph that the ditches cut through the street, but the same effect could have been caused by the street metalling subsiding into the ditches and being covered by more humus than elsewhere, thus removing the cause of the crop-marks at these points.
19. *Wroxeter 1914*, p. 3.
20. Wright, *Uriconium*, 1872, p. 340 ; see also Atkinson, p. 327.
21. *J.R.S.*, xxxix (1949) p. 58.
22. *Arch. J.*, cxv (1958) p. 61.
23. *Somerset & Dorset N. & Q.*, xxviii (1962) p. 54.
24. *The Rebellion of Boudicca*, 1962, p. 63.
25. The presence of legionary equipment, *Antiquities from Hod Hill in the Durden Collection*, 1962.
26. *Carnuntina*, 1956, p. 165 ; there is no direct evidence of the XXth at Inchtuthil but a strong supposition of its presence there.
27. *Arch. J.*, ciii (1946) p. 57.
28. This was observed by Brian Stanley in 1958.
29. Found by Dr. A. W. J. Houghton in searching for the aqueduct and kindly communicated.
30. *Wroxeter 1914*, Pl. xxix.
31. This conclusion of Miss Kenyon has been supported by more recent excavations by Graham Webster.
32. This may also be true of the houses at Verulamium (R. E. M. and T. V. Wheeler, *Verulamium, A Belgic, and Two Roman Cities*, 1936).
33. Wright associated with the old man "a small coffer" containing 132 coins, down to Valens, but one would need stronger circumstantial evidence to prove a connection between the skeleton and coins.
34. During the course of summer training schools from 1955 onwards, organised by the Department of Extra-Mural Studies of the University of Birmingham—report forthcoming.
35. *Uriconium*, p. 121, p. 2.
36. *Wroxeter*, 1913, pp. 2-9.
37. *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, xv, p. 96.
38. *Arch.*, 84 (1934) pp. 213-261 and *Antiq. J.*, xvii (1937) pp. 28-55. A study of these two excavations shows that the two buildings are related both in the respective positions and their main structural sequences in a way that would be unlikely if they had been disassociated. When the theatre became disused, the entrance from the temple was blocked and another constructed on the opposing axis. The apparent use of the theatre as the town rubbish dump may possibly be associated with the introduction of Christianity. The temple underwent considerable modification at the same time.
39. *Roman Colchester*, 1958, p. 259.
40. *Arch.*, 59 (1904) p. 18.
41. *Wroxeter*, 1913, Fig. 19, No. 66.
42. *Shrops. Arch. Soc. Trans.*, xlvi (1933-34), p. 79 and lvi (1959) pp. 133-137.
43. *Uriconium*, p. 95.
44. *Excavations*, 1923-27, p. 331 ; Field No. 393.

45. *Arch.*, 88 (1940) p. 176 and Pl. lxx.
46. *Birmingham Arch. Soc. Trans.*, 78 (1962) pp. 27-34.
47. P. Corder, "The Reorganisation of the Defences of Romano-British Towns in the Fourth Century", *Arch. J.*, 112 (1955) pp. 20-42.
48. For example at Silchester, G. Boon, *Roman Silchester*, 1957, p. 50 ; Verulamium, *Antiq. J.*, 40 (1960) p. 2 ; Cirencester, *Antiq. J.*, 41 (1961) pp. 63-71.
49. *Shrops. Arch. Soc. Trans.*, 56 (1959) pp. 133-137.
50. As part of a training school. The report is forthcoming, and we are grateful to the excavator for allowing us to anticipate her results.
51. Report forthcoming.
52. By an unfortunate error the bridge is placed on the plan (Fig. 1) about 850 ft. south of the actual point of discovery.
53. *Shrops. Arch. Soc. Trans.*, 11 (1927-28) p. 304 ; the masonry recovered at this time has been deposited on the site of the Forum Colonnade now under Ministry of Works care.
54. D. P. Dymond, "Roman Bridges", *Arch. J.*, 118 (1961) p. 159.
55. Wright, p. 340 ; Atkinson, pp. 324-328.
56. *Shropshire News Letter*, No. 15 (1961) p. 3, and this *Trans.*

NOTE

The Society is much indebted to the Council for British Archaeology for a grant towards the cost of publishing this paper.

ROMAN FINDS FROM RED HILL, NEAR OAKENGATES

by GRAHAM WEBSTER

The Roman Watling Street runs from the small posting station of Pennocrucium¹ almost due west in a straight line towards Wroxeter. At a point about a mile east of Oakengates the road rises steadily to Redhill (SJ 728109), 614 feet above sea level, and offers a splendid view of the Wrekin and parts of the Shropshire Plain stretching away to the west. It would seem to be a site most fitted for a Roman military signal station, bearing in mind that this road was the principal line of advance of Ostorius Scapula *c.* A.D. 48 against Caratacus,² and must have remained the most important westward route towards central and North Wales. Crop-marks of rectangular enclosures have been recorded by Dr. J. K. St. Joseph.³ One of these, a single detached, rectangular site, is bisected by the road and has been the subject of investigation by the Wrekin Archaeological Group over the past few years.⁴ Although little conclusive evidence has been obtained, it seems probable that this defended site is that of a small posting station similar to Pennocrucium, and is likely to have been the long lost Uxacona, which appears in the Antonine Itinerary, and is the correct distance away.⁵

The other sites noticed by Dr. St. Joseph lie a short distance to the north of Watling Street and where a water tank has been built. The site has been more recently photo-

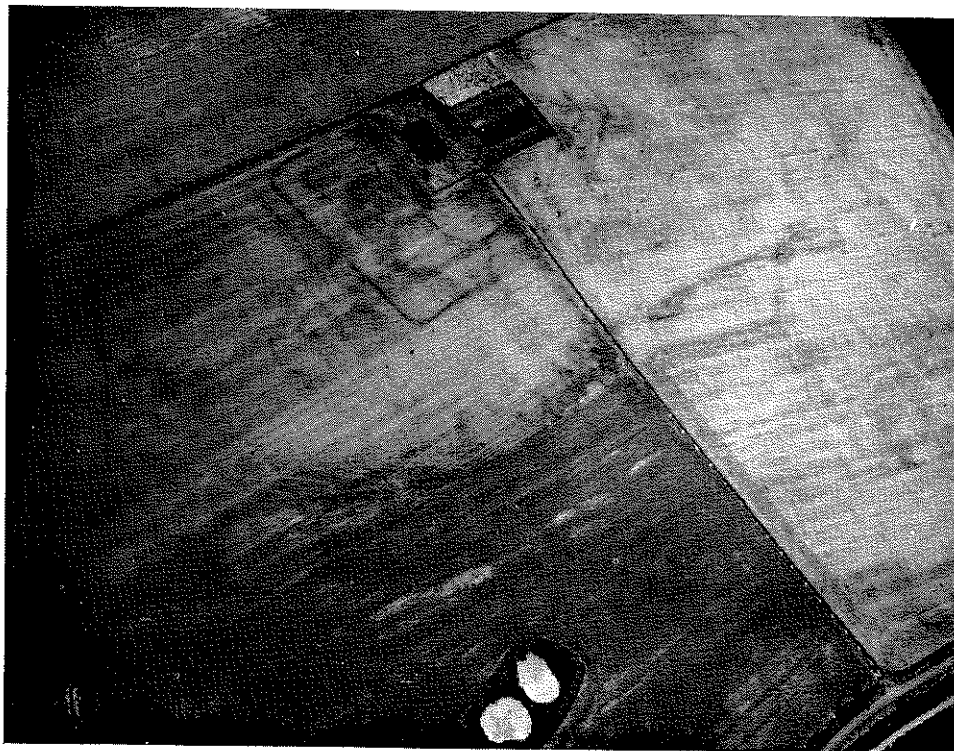


PLATE XXII—Air photograph of crop-marks of a military site at Redhill
(*Photograph Mr. A. Baker*)

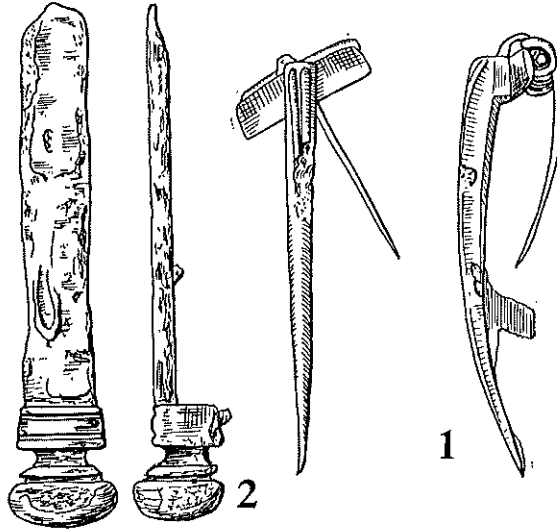


FIG. 33—Bronze objects from Red Hill (†).

graphed by Mr. Arnold Baker (Pl. XXII) and shows a complex of sites which have a distinct military appearance and may be the defences of a series of small forts and/or signal stations occupying this very prominent position. Only excavation will eventually produce a full interpretation of this site. Meanwhile, two metal objects were found last year on the surface of the field to the west of the site (SJ 7260010890) and can be described as follows:—⁶

1. A simple type of brooch decorated with two ribs on the upper part and having a pierced catch-plate. It is an example of Camulodunum Type iv⁷ and dated to the second half of the first century.

2. A bronze apron mount with heavy knobbed terminal and traces of silvering and niello decoration on the surface. This object belongs to the apron worn by Roman legionaries,⁸ and some infantry cohorts⁹ and which hangs from the belt and swings between the legs like the Highland sporrán. Examples have been found on military sites and there are close parallels from Hofheim¹⁰ and Colchester.¹¹

These two objects clearly indicate both first century occupation nearby and the presence of a unit of the Roman Army which may be associated with the hill top site partially covered by the reservoir.

1. *Birmingham Arch. Soc. T.*, 74 (1956), 1-11.
2. *Arch. J.*, 115 (1958), 60.
3. *J. R. S.*, 43 (1953), 84.
4. *Shropshire News Letter*, 13 (1960), 4 ; 16 (1961), 2 ; 18 (1962), 3.
5. *O. S. Map of Roman Britain*, 1956, Fig. 2.
6. I am most grateful to Mr. J. Pagett for drawing my attention to these finds, the brooch Mr. M. James and the apron mount by Mr. C. Lears.
7. C. F. C. Hawkes and M. R. Hull, *Camulodunum*, 1947, Pl. xci.
8. As seen on tombstones from Germany, *Germania Romana*, 1922, Taf. 29, Nos. 2, 3 and 5, Taf. 30, Nos. 1 and 7.
9. *Ibid.*, Taf. 29, No 6 (Coh I Sagittariorum), No. 7 (Coh I Pannoniorum), Taf. 30, No. 5 (Coh VII Raetorum).
10. *Annalen des Vereins für Nassauische Altertumskunde und Geschichtsforschung*, 40 (1912), Taf. xii, No. 19.
11. *Camulodunum*, Pl. cii, Nos. 24 and 25.

AN EARLY TWELFTH CENTURY ACCOUNT OF THE TRANSLATION
OF ST. MILBURGA OF MUCH WENLOCK

by A. J. M. EDWARDS

INTRODUCTION

Before the publication of Dr. Woolley's *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Lincoln Cathedral Chapter Library* in 1927, the account of the Invention of St. Milburga (apart from a brief notice to be found in William of Malmesbury¹) was known only through the version preserved in a MS of the Lansdowne collection, no. 436. This is a fourteenth century book of Lives of Saints which belonged to the nunnery of Romsey. It contains an abbreviated Life of St. Milburga as well as the account of the Invention.

The author of the account in the Lansdowne MS makes quite clear that he has copied the story of the finding of the bones from another: "Post multa vero tempora videlicet circa annum domini millesimum centesimum primum corpus gloriosae virginis mildburgae, sicut testatur dominus otto ostiensis episcopus cardinalis in libello quem fecit de miraculis inventionis praeditae virginis . . ." f. 75r.

And in his conclusion he acknowledges that he has abbreviated :

. . . ob sancte virginis meritum ut in praeallegato libello plenius continetur. immemorabilia iuxta eorum fidem optatum petitionis sue effectum consecuta sunt . . ." (f. 75r)

This has usually been understood as referring to other miracle stories, but Lansdowne has also made considerable abbreviations in the earlier and more interesting part of the work, the narration of the events which led up to the finding of her bones. Miss Rose Graham, relying on the Lansdowne version (although she knew of the existence of the Lincoln MS) was obliged to attempt a reconciliation between the account given there of the discovery of the bones and the slightly different version of William of Malmesbury.² But it will be seen that there is no fundamental discrepancy between the version William received and the complete story as it issued from Wenlock under the name of a Cardinal Bishop of Ostia.

The complete text of the *Miracula Inventionis Beate Mylburge Virginis* was discovered in a twelfth century Legendary, no. 149 of the Lincoln Cathedral Chapter Library, together with an abbreviated Life. This was evidence that the tradition attributing the work to Odo of Ostia (the name found in the Lansdowne MS and elsewhere) was at least as old as the later years of the twelfth century, since the hand is obviously of this period, and the text itself must be of somewhat earlier date. This MS contains the unique complete account of the Invention of St. Milburga.

The original monastery at Wenlock (or *Wininicas* as it is called in the Life) was founded by the Saint's father, Merewald of the Magonsaetan, in the 660s, and Milburga was abbess of this establishment (which included both men and women) until her death in the second decade of the eighth century.

As a princess claiming kinship with the royal houses of Kent, Mercia and East Anglia, and as abbess of what was probably the most vigorous centre of Christianity in her father's kingdom, Milburga must have been a person of considerable importance. She would have been for the kingdom and for *Wininicas* what St. Hilda was for Northumbria and Whitby: a force to be reckoned with by Church and State, a formative influence in the early days of Anglo-Saxon Christianity. But between her death and the Norman Conquest Wenlock fell into decay and was probably completely abandoned at certain moments. These periods of decline may have been due to external pressure (the menace of Danish invaders, for example) as much as to a decline in the level of religious life. While it is quite possible that *Wininicas* degenerated as much as any other house mentioned in Bede's famous Letter, here as in other instances, the fact that this was the resting-place of the holy foundress, together with the association of holier days, would have remained as some sanction and instigation to renewal.

It was however a stranger who was responsible for the last foundation at Wenlock. Roger of Montgomery, invested by the Conqueror with the earldom of Shropshire in 1072, made his request to Abbot Hugh of Cluny; but the monks who arrived in 1079⁴ came, not from the great mother-house, but from the monastery of La Charité-sur-Loire, by permission of the prior Wilencus⁵.

Although a stranger to Shropshire loyalties and cults, Roger's decision to make a new foundation on the old site may well have owed something to a desire on the part of the new Norman lord to win the good will of his Saxons. The monks coming to Wenlock to live there according to the rule of St. Benedict and the customs of La Charité-sur-Loire, would have known nothing of the Old English Saint who had given her name to their house. However both they and the general reading public of the day were soon to know a good deal more, and it was the interest aroused in the new community by certain extraordinary events which was responsible for the *Vita Sancte Mylburge* as well as for the *Miracula Inventionis*.

Beginning his account with a conventional prologue the author soon becomes the factual and interested reporter. His story is simple enough. The new monks at Wenlock, disappointed at finding no relics of their patron-saint, had begun to speculate on the possible resting-place of her bones. During this period of discontent an old document was discovered, written in the English tongue, which purported to tell of the site of the Saint's grave. Unfortunately for the monks it referred to a landmark which had long since disappeared—a certain altar, near which lay the coveted bones. They sought and obtained the permission of the Archbishop of Canterbury to dig up the floor of the old church, but their efforts were crowned with success when they least expected it. One night a couple of boys fell accidentally into the old grave and in the morning the bones themselves were discovered, some traces of a coffin, and finally the foundations of the altar mentioned in the old document. According to custom the bones were washed and translated with ceremony to the main monastic church. The remaining half of the account deals with five miraculous cures: that of two lepers, of two blind people and one of a woman who was able to get rid of a monstrous worm thanks to the healing power of the water in which the bones had been washed. Already, it would seem, Wenlock was well on the way to becoming a popular pilgrimage centre⁶.

Setting aside for the moment the vexed question of authorship (for if the author was indeed none other than a Cardinal of the Roman court, there can have been few such visitations which have passed off as discreetly as this one, of which there is no other record) what can we learn of the writer as historian, from the text?

The account of the Invention and the description of the ensuing miracles is explicitly not the work of an eye-witness. The author refers occasionally to his authorities, as he does when writing of the first miracle performed at the tomb : “. . . ut non nulli ex nostris boni testimonii fratres qui eam sepiissime viderant mihi certissime testantur . . . ” (f. 88r)

He never abandons the position of recorder of the oral testimonies of others except for the few occasions when he is able to add evidence from his own experience. He had for example, handled the box which had contained the monstrous worm and he had seen the young girl Moruid who had been cured of leprosy.

He is manifestly dependent on his eye-witness reports when he records certain details which it would have been unprofitable to have invented but which testify to the vividness of these events in the memory of those recalling them. He describes Prior Richard hastening to the tomb at the news of the discovery of the relics, only to return to Matins, disappointed, in order to wait until daylight should allow him to continue the search. (f. 88r) Then there is the lively picture of the father of the blind boy standing over his son and protecting him from the crowds with a stick. (f. 89r) It should be noted that not only did the author take pains to consult reliable witnesses and to elicit considerable detail, but that according to the reports that he received the actual discovery of the bones and the miracles which followed appear to have been submitted to a rigorous and none too credulous examination by those present at the time.

He mentions the early manifestation of scepticism in regard to the claims of the silver casket, the fact that even after the discovery of the bones the monks did not accord them full honour until they had come across the foundations of the altar by which they were to have been identified. Certain of the brethren were sceptical as to the cure of the first young girl who had previously been afflicted with leprosy and demanded to examine her, and there is the Prior's incredulous and prolonged examination of the boy who had received his sight, and his interrogation of all those who were present.

The style of the author and his attitude to his subject is a point in favour of his claim to be telling the truth. He is persuasive because he tells his story in a sober and coherent fashion. There is no attempt at sensationalism. The language is never exaggerated—in contrast to the style employed by Goscelin in the *Life of the Saint*. There are no incongruities in the narrative, and he is careful to establish the exact chronology and topography of events. When his references can be verified they are found to be accurate.

He does not, unfortunately, fully account for his presence at Wenlock soon after the important discovery, but it is clear that in part at least it was to investigate in an official capacity the extraordinary happenings at the tomb of St. Milburga : “antequam Winlocum monasterium advenissem. et sancte virginis miracula indiciiis approbassem . . . ” (f. 89v) And if he was indeed the Cardinal Bishop of Ostia elected to that See in 1088, then it is curious that there should be no other evidence of his presence

in England at that time. A careful examination of all the available scanty evidence suggests that this was however what happened, and that this Roman Cardinal, a Cluniac monk of Italian birth and La Charite loyalty, friend of Urban II, did indeed visit England, probably in 1102, and that he afterwards put down in writing (probably at the request of the Wenlock monks) the results of his investigation³.

Whatever the truth regarding the authorship of the Invention it would certainly seem that it was written by a man concerned with furnishing a sober record of what actually happened. For the author's contemporaries, the main, indeed, the unique interest of the account was the fact that the bones were actually proved to be those of St. Milburga by the incontrovertible evidence of several authentic miracles. For other readers the interest lies elsewhere. Taking the text in its own right, as a document relating to a particular period in one of the more important religious houses in Shropshire (and not merely as a footnote to the history of Cluniac expansion in England) we are forced to admit that in spite of the impression of veracity given by the author, the early part of the story abounds in rather suspicious discoveries.

Four separate discoveries are mentioned. That of the silver reliquary or casket, of the piece of parchment found by the lay-brother Raymond, of a parchment which told of certain miracles of the Saint, and finally that of the bones. The reliquary (which may well have been transmitted to the French monks by previous occupants of the monastery dispossessed by Earl Roger in reforming zeal) was of little importance for it was empty, but the discovery of two pieces of parchment, one of them containing very desirable information, might well seem highly suspicious were it not for the evidence of the Testament of St. Milburga. This text is to be found in the complete long Life of the Saint, the *Vita Sancte Mylburge Virginis* of Goscelin (in the thirteenth century British Museum Additional MS 34 633 ff. 206r-218v) No mention is made of it in the Invention although it was written at the same time as the Life.

The Testament, as it has been copied into the MS, is an early tenth century copy of certain authentic late seventh and early eighth century land-charters relevant to *Wininicas*.⁷ If this document could have survived into the twelfth century it is quite reasonable to suppose that a similar document may have survived with information as to the site of the Saint's grave, both of them perhaps hidden in the iron box mentioned in the account of the Invention (f.87v.)

As to the discovery of the bones, this was indeed a great stroke of good fortune for the foreign monks of the new foundation at St. Milburga's. Under her obvious protection the future of their house was assured. And it is this crucial discovery which still remains the most interesting, not so much for the sake of the bones as few would be interested as to whether they were truly hers or those of another, eight hundred years later, but for the light which this detailed narrative throws on early twelfth century Wenlock. For the particular value of the *Miracula Inventionis* is the explicit written evidence which it offers for the existence of two churches at Wenlock, from the earliest times right up to the twelfth century. Pending the results of the most recent excavations at Wenlock (conducted on the site of the monastery in the summer of 1962 by members of the British Archaeological Association) it would seem worth while to put on record this written evidence and some explanation for the fact that there were indeed two churches.

The account given by William of Malmesbury, the other contemporary historian of the Invention, will serve as an introduction, for although his story is essentially the same as that of the Cardinal there is much detail of which he knows nothing.

“ . . . Apud Wenelok fuit antiquissima sanctimonialium habitatio. ibique beatissima Milburga . . . vitam transegit et sita est. Sed locum omnino desertum praedictus comes (*Roger of Montgomery*) monachis Cluniacensibus implevit, ubi modo spetiosa germina virtutum conantur in caelum. Enimvero sepulchrum virginis clam erat novis advenis, omnibus videlicet vetustatis munimentis violentia hostium et temporum deletis. Noviter vero dum inchoata novi templi fabrica quidam puer per pavimentum concitatus cursitaret effracta mausolei fovea propalam corpus virginis fecit. Tunc balsamisti odoris aura per ecclesiam spirante, altius elatum tot miracula praebuit ut catervatim eo populorum agmina, dum aequis umbonibus dives et mendicus se agerent cunctus in commune praecipitante fide. Nec cassum eventum res habuit ut nullus exinde nisi extincta vel mitigata valetudine discederet, nonnullosque etiam regius morbus medicis sane incurabilis per merita virginis relinqueret . . .” 1.

He has assumed, or has been told, that the accident which befell the two boys (he only mentions one) immediately preceded the discovery of the bones. His conventional allusion to sweet odours is a detail not to be found in the other more sober account. It should be noted that he does not specify which church was in the process of reconstruction when the Invention took place.

Cranage, who conducted the excavations at Much Wenlock in 1901, assumed that this was a reference to a new monastic church erected by Earl Roger for his Cluniac congregation, a church to replace the one which had served the monks of the previous foundation⁸. He does however admit that “there is a curious silence about Earl Leofric’s church at the time, probably less than half a century later when Roger’s church was founded,” and he is surprised that he “could discover no sign of Earl Leofric’s minster.” There was apparently some disagreement between the two archaeologists who examined the site, Clapham believing that certain foundations probably belonged to the earlier part of the eleventh century, that is to say were part of Leofric’s building, while Cranage remained convinced that this was part of Earl Roger’s church—although Malmesbury was his only written evidence that the monastic church was rebuilt by the Cluniacs. (.p.108 op. cit.)

It should be remembered that Cranage did not know of the Cardinal’s account, even in the abridged form in which it is found in the Lansdowne MS. Miss Graham,² who used the latter manuscript (but not the full version of Lincoln 149) rightly emphasises that William of Malmesbury’s words are “the only source on which it is possible to base the building of a Norman church in the place of Earl Leofric’s minster.”

In the text of the Invention found in Lansdowne 436, the disappointment of the silver shrine is mentioned, and Raymond’s discovery of the parchment, and the appeal to Archbishop Anselm to be allowed to dig for the grave. But the incident of the two children who stumbled on the tomb in Holy Trinity Church is omitted, and the account in Lansdowne reads as though the brethren struck upon the tomb by chance in the course of their building. The only miracle mentioned in the Lansdowne

version is that concerning the woman who drank the water in which the bones were washed, but the other stories with their references to the two churches are not included and the account is brought to a conclusion with a mere allusion to other miracles that had taken place.

From the evidence before her, (evidence which has been briefly reviewed here) Miss Graham concluded that the body of St. Milburga was discovered within the precincts of the one church at Wenlock. She suggests "that when the monks came to Wenlock it was soon necessary to separate the monastic choir from the nave and to lengthen the nave of Leofric's minster to serve as a parish church for the people. The excavations of 1901 revealed the site of the nunnery, and its relation to the eleventh century church, from which as we are told in Lansdowne 436, it was but a stone's throw away, as shown in *Archaeologia*, LXXII 107. An altar would be set up against a stone wall or partition, for there was then no parish church of the Holy Trinity; it was not built until possibly the middle of the twelfth century. The population of Wenlock was purely agricultural at the time of the Norman Conquest. The town grew up gradually round the Priory. The parish church was built, probably at the expense of the monks, to remove the parishioners from the nave, for as the number of the monks increased they required it for their own use. It is significant that the dedication of the parish church to the Holy Trinity is that ascribed to the nunnery in Lansdowne 436 and in MS. 433 in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge."

Eyton, on the other hand,⁹ believed that the parish church was founded in the late eleventh or early twelfth century; "The church of the Holy Trinity, being then from time immemorial the parish church of its district, had little more to do with the conventual church than that it was of the patronage of the Prior. I take it to have been founded soon after *Domesday*, and to have been almost a corollary of the altered *status* of the Priory: for, though the church of Earl Leofric may well have involved a parochial cure, any such charge was not congenial to the Cluniac rule."

The complete account of the Invention, as it is found in Lincoln 149, states clearly that there were two separate churches which could not be mistaken as parts of the same building. It would seem that the dedication of Holy Trinity church was certainly older than the Cluniac foundation at Wenlock, and may indeed date from the time of St. Milburga, although the actual building, according to Cranage," affords abundant evidence of a Norman commencement." But in order to examine the written evidence for these churches one must return to the famous scrap of parchment found by the lay-brother Raymond.

This document came to light in Holy Trinity church, "in monasterio de sancta trinitate quod quantum est iactus lapidis a sancte mylburge oratorio distat." The writing was in English and when it had been translated for the benefit of the foreign monks they learnt that St. Milburga's body was buried in that church near the altar. The author of the account goes on to say that the altar was no longer standing, and had presumably disintegrated in the course of time. The document itself probably belongs to the same period as the tenth century copy of the Testament and is therefore worthy of respect.

Here then is evidence for the church of the Holy Trinity, (close by the monastic church, *oratorium sancte mylburge*) which, according to Malmesbury and the author

of the Invention, the monks had already begun to rebuild. That it was indeed derelict at that moment, and was not then used for the *Opus Dei*, is obvious from the next part of the Cardinal's story. On the eve of the feast of John the Baptist, while the monks were singing the night office in the main monastic church, a couple of children fell into the Saint's grave ; someone immediately ran off "ad sanctae mylburge monasterium" to fetch the Prior. But since at that hour it was too dark to see anything clearly, Prior and the monks returned to the monastic church to finish matins, and postponed further investigations until it should be day. Later in the morning the holy relics were discovered, and the following day the foundations of the altar that had been mentioned in the parchment. After their translation the bones remained in the church of the Holy Trinity : "Rursum ea postea abluentes in novo quodam scrinio recondiderunt. in quo usque ad diem translationis eorum scilicet diem purificationis sancte genetricis MARIE. in eadem ecclesia supra altare mansuerunt."

In three of the miracle stories reference is made to the *churches*. At the end of the story of the woman who vomitted a worm, the author says that the church could hardly contain all the people who came to pray at the shrine of St. Milburga, but he does not specify which church. The second story is however, more explicit, and makes clear the distinction between the two buildings.

This miracle-story concerns a leprous girl who is carried to Wenlock by her step-father to beg alms from the pilgrims there. They arrive on a Sunday evening when the brethren are singing vespers before the outer altar of the greater church (ie. the monastic church). There her step-father lays her down. A little later he returns—"Vespertina namque celebrata sinaxia cum homo ad egram suam quam ante altare reliquerat revertisset, eamque ad aliam ecclesiam in honore et nomine sancte trinitatis dedicatam in qua venerabile corpus beate virginis iacebat portare voluisset, mirabile dictu. ipsam quam leprosam attulerat omniumque membrorum officio destitutam videt subito convaluisse . . ."

The girl has been healed even before she has been carried to the "other church" which housed the shrine of the Saint.

From the third miracle story it would seem that after the Invention and the miraculous events which followed, the monks occasionally sang office at the shrine. For when a blind woman recovered her sight after spending the night in vigil at the tomb of the Saint, the Prior (who had returned to his bed after matins) hurriedly made his way to the church which he had left only a little while before. Having given thanks to God for this miracle he left the church to return to his own part of the monastery, stopping for a moment to speak to a blind boy at the door. But he was then met in the cemetery of that church by a messenger sent to inquire into the alleged miracles—queries which he was able to answer very promptly with the news of the cure of the blind boy to whom he had only recently been speaking.

There can be little doubt, then, that at the end of the eleventh and beginning of the twelfth century there were two churches at Wenlock, although one of them was in a somewhat dilapidated condition. But if both these churches were equally venerable, as would seem likely, what was their original relationship ?

The research of Cranage brought to light the foundations of an eleventh century church on the site of the main monastic buildings (foundations which were almost certainly part of Earl Leofric's minster) and also traces of what seems to have been an eight century church. There is no reason why one should not accept these ancient walls as part of the monastery erected for St. Milburga's community by her father Merewald. Presumably some ruins were still visible in the eleventh century and guided Leofric to erect his monastery on the same spot. But if the remains of the ancient house of *Wininicas* lie beneath the present ruins of the Priory of St. Milburga, how is it that the Saint's body was buried in another building, a stone's throw away?¹⁰

Two explanations may be advanced to account for this : the bones of the Saint may originally have been buried in or near her monastery, and may then have been translated (at some time between the eighth and eleventh centuries) and reburied in the church of the Holy Trinity ; this translation would then probably have been the occasion of the priest Alstan's record. But in the absence of any documentary evidence for such a translation it would seem more likely that the primitive double¹¹ community at *Wininicas* required two churches, and that Milburga was buried in the nuns' church, while later re-foundations took place on what formerly had been the site of the men's church. Very little indeed is known about the constitution of these houses, but it appears that separate churches were not a regular feature of the English double monastery¹². However, some Early English monasteries had two churches, Wimbourne for example, and also Barking, and these may not have been the only ones.

In the case of Wenlock this hypothesis is not wholly dependent on the coincidence of evidence being available for two churches at Wimbourne and Barking. Miss Bateson has shown that in Gaul, on the contrary, the normal double monastery had at least two churches. If the Testament is reliable in maintaining that St. Milburga's house was dependent on the monastery of Icanhoe, then there is here a direct link with the monastic system of Northern Gaul.

St. Botolph, founder of Icanhoe, spent part of his youth in the monastery of Chelles (*Kale*) which was certainly a double monastery and must be presumed to have followed the normal custom in regard to separate churches. His successor, Edelheg, is named in the Testament as superior and part-founder of the monastery of *Wininicas*. It would have been the regular procedure for *Wininicas* to have followed the example of the senior house, particularly in this instance where the foundation was the first of its kind in the newly converted kingdom, and where there were no local precedents or examples available.

This separation of the places of worship, entailing the almost complete separation of the monks and nuns in all other spheres, was chosen as a symbol of the profound change, the cleavage between the new life and the old. Milburga was accordingly buried in her wooden coffin near the altar of her church, a stone's throw away from the other church. Today the parish church of Much Wenlock still maintains the continuity of religious observance which was initiated in the primitive little monastery whose foundations lie beneath its own.

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6. A later and extremely interesting account of the devotion that St. Milburga's shrine still inspired in the late 15th century is to be found in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge MS. 433.
7. H. P. R. Finberg, *The Early Charters of the West Midlands* (Studies in Early English History), Leicester, 1961 (pp. 197-216). Independently of Dr. Finberg, I had arrived at very similar conclusions as to the essential authenticity of this document in the chapter of my thesis relevant to the Testament.
8. D. H. Cranage, "The Monastery of St. Milburga at Much Wenlock," in *Archaeologia*, lxxii, pp. 107-131.
9. R. W. Eyton, *Shropshire*, iii, p. 265.
10. The distance from the old monastic church, now in its turn in ruins, to the present parish church (standing on the site of the ancient Holy Trinity church) is about two hundred yards. This could well be referred to in conversation as a stone's throw. I owe this information to the kindness of the Rev. T. E. N. Pennell, Vicar of Wenlock.
11. *Letters of St. Boniface*, ed. M. Tangl, letter 2.
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HERE BEGINS THE PROLOGUE OF THE LORD ATO, CARDINAL BISHOP
OF HOSTIA, TO THE "MIRACLES OF THE INVENTION OF THE
BLESSED VIRGIN MYLBURGA"

The miracles which we know often shine forth at the tombs of the Saints by the power of God, are rightly to be accepted not only as proofs of a life pleasing to God, but they are moreover to be recognised as stays of our virtues, lest they fall. And therefore, he who by his faithful narration of these things works in harmony with the very God who so advantageously ordered them, associates himself with the lot of the Saints ; particularly since our reward increases before God in proportion to the number of faithful who profit by our account, in so far as we avoid the sin of lying, as I have said. For it is obvious that the fault of lying is of the devil—as it is written, "For he is a liar and the father of the lie." For what is written in the book of Wisdom "Seek not to lie with all manner of lying" is not to be understood as giving occasion for lying in anything, but rather it says, "As regards all manner of lying this is my command for you. Not only that you should not do this, but if even your heart consent to it, know that you shall not be sinless." He therefore, who by extolling the Saints whom he loves passes the bounds of truth, shall verily be seen to gain in their sight not thanks but loathing, and will be punished by God with severer penalties in so far as he is condemned for having spoken as a false witness against Himself. And to this the Apostle bears witness when he says, "We are found false witnesses of God ; because we have given testimony against God, that He hath raised up Christ, whom He hath not raised up, if the dead do not rise again." Therefore let us explain why we have put these things first and with God's help come to the wonders which Christ has recently worked to the glory of the holy virgin Mylburga.

Blessed Mylburga, from the time she left this world to the present day, has been declared by the traditions of the ancients to reign with Christ ; and from the statements found in old documents it is not to be doubted that she is indeed holy. That little book which is written of her sister Mildred bears witness to the same fact—a book which I have seen and read, in which her noble life is proclaimed and the fact that through her agency God performed many miracles is briefly touched upon. And further, this same truth is indicated by her most ancient monastery, (still standing to the present day) as we have seen with our own eyes, founded in honour of her memory and called from very early times by her holy name.

I am speaking the truth. Before Christ I do not lie. And here is my justification : on the scrap of parchment which was shewn me—it was eaten up with mildew from age—and which was found where her bones were recently discovered, there was something written, something which I read. In so far as I was able to grasp the meaning, I understood that a dead man was brought back to life by her, and a blind man had his sight restored ; when and how these things were done was not there made plain owing to the damage done to the document. We can however glance at those things which recently occurred in her memory, through the agency of the Lord.

Let no man judge that I am arranging anything in this narration by lying. Even if he carefully watches to see whether I am following the false ones who went before me, yet the fact is that I shall be self-pierced with my own sword if, condemning liars, I do not myself escape the charge of lying, according to the well-known saying of the

Apostle : "In the way in which you judge another you condemn yourself ; for you commit the same fault which you are judging."

Here ends the Prologue and begins the Miracles.

In our very own times, in the year of Our Lord eleven hundred and one, when Lord Pascal, who succeeded Urban, was reigning from the apostolic see at Rome, in the first year of the reign of king Henry of the English, who succeeded his brother William to the throne, the Lord revealed by miracles the resting place of his virgin Mylburga, in a place which is called *Winloc*, and caused her memorable name to be famous throughout the whole of England.

Her holy remains were believed to have been laid in a silver casket which is still today to be seen in her monastery. But as often as that casket was carried from one place to another, as was necessary from time to time, a certain rattling was heard within. Our brethren (they had been sent there by Lord Wilencus, our Prior of *Charity*, at the orders of our venerable father Hugh, Abbot of Cluny. It was Count Roger, now dead, who had given that place of *Winloc* to God and St Mary of Charity for the salvation of his soul), wished to open that casket, and thereby to arrive at some certainty concerning the body of the holy virgin. Which indeed did happen. For when they opened the casket—not without some difficulty—they beheld two boxes, one inside the other, containing ashes, and rags which had previously been wrapped round something. But not a trace of the body of the Saint did they find. And from that day our brethren, as is the way with doubters, began to put forward different opinions about the holy grave. But I personally believe that this was divinely ordained, so that the brethren, being now quite certain that they had not the body which they had thought was in the casket, might not treat the revelation which took place shortly afterwards, as a fraud.

Now not long after this it happened one day that one of the servants of the brethren, Raymond by name, was engaged in restoration work in the monastery of the Holy Trinity which is about a stone's throw from the church of St Mylburga. There he observed, among other objects rotten with age, on top of the altar which was being rebuilt, an old box which jutted out over the altar. In it there was a rather old document which he took out and showed to all the brethren who wanted to look at it. Now that document was written in the English characters so that no-one could read or understand it unless he was skilled in that tongue. Finally, through the offices of a trustworthy interpreter, they learnt from the document that the body of St Mylburga was buried in that church near the altar, and that this fact was attested by the priest Alstan who had written the document. But a long time had passed since that altar—near which the document said her holy bones lay—had been above ground ; for it had either fallen into decay through age or had been completely destroyed in a ravaging of the countryside. (But afterwards, when the Lord revealed more fully that which he had already begun to disclose, the foundations of the altar appeared to everyone quite unmistakably, in the ploughed-up earth.) Now the brethren were encouraged by this, and their hopes of finding the body being revived as it were, they sent a messenger to the revered Lord Anselm, then Archbishop of Canterbury, being mindful of the well-known saying, "Do all things with advice and afterwards

thou shalt not regret it." The messenger was to report to him all these things in due order, and according to his decision they would accomplish that which they were eagerly demanding to be allowed to do. But he, being the kind of man he was, did not think these things had occurred through human agency, and following the instructions of the document he bade them search by digging up the ground so that they might make certain about the body of the Saint.

But the Lord who desired that His beloved should be brought into the light, and that her remains should be set up in a place worthy of the Saints, did not wish the brethren to be wearied by labouring with their hands. For He, as was fitting, had so disposed all things, that through the intermediary of an innocent child, and of one who was virgin, glory might be given to the mortal remains of His pure and innocent virgin. In order that that which was written in the psalms might at this very time be fulfilled—"Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise."

Now on the eve of the feast of St. John the Baptist the brethren were keeping vigil and were diligently performing the night Office according to their custom for such great feasts. That same night something happened in the church of the Holy Trinity (of which we have spoken above), where the document said the holy body lay, an event involving two boys. There they were on the night in question, playing the sort of games natural to their age, when under their feet the earth of its own accord began to gape open and sucked them down, first one, then the other, into a kind of circular pit, which came up to their knees.

For what other reason should this have happened through the mercy of God unless—as though this were possible—the very earth were saying to them "Why do the brethren hesitate so long over the work of God? Approach, for here is what you are seeking. If such is your wish, I will show you where the Saint lies, and I will freely lay the secret wide open to all, without any violence whatsoever. Do not hesitate now. Believe without any shadow of doubt what the document told you. For I myself will open up to you the place where your treasure is. Do not fear the worst on account of the heavy weight which presses me down for that is not heavy but light rather, and although I have been trodden on by a thousand men of very great weight countless times, I have never yet succumbed."

At the sight of this one of those servants who were present, Raymond by name (he of whom I have already spoken) ran off to the monastery of St Mylburga where the brethren were singing matins. There he informed our brother the Lord Richard—who held the office of prior over the brethren—of everything in the order in which it had happened. When he heard this he made his way hurriedly to the spot and kindling a light, peered in through the opening that had been made to see what was within. But since it was too dark for him to be able to make out exactly what was there, he returned to matins. In the morning he returned to the same place with the brethren and to their joy carefully explained to them what had happened.

Somewhat encouraged by this to have fresh hope—because it accorded with what was said on the document—the brethren laid hold of tools and began to excavate. While they were thus engaged, the bones, beautiful and luminous, together with some iron bands partly eaten away with rust, appeared to all.

In my opinion her sacred limbs had been buried in a wooden coffin, according to the ancient custom of that people. The latter had, in the course of time, quite

rotted away from the surrounding iron bands, but these, from the evidence, had not been completely destroyed.

The brethren were still a little at a loss, on account of the possible remains of the altar which had not yet appeared, near which the ancient document said the Saint lay. As a temporary measure they gathered up the bones into a shrine, reverently, but not yet with the full reverence due. The following day the brethren had begun to dig throughout the whole church, to see if they could perhaps discover another holy body, when lo and behold, so that they might be quite certain about the holy virgin and that the truth of the document which had been found might be demonstrated, the foundations of that altar—which we have so often mentioned—appeared beyond any shadow of doubt. It was next to this altar that the holy body was universally known to have been found the previous day.

On account of this the brethren were completely convinced, and on the third day, fittingly clothed in white, with feet bare, they most reverently approached the holy bones and having washed them in purest water with all solemnity, relaid them in that same shrine. Later they washed them again and enclosed them in a new shrine. They remained there upon the altar of that same church, until the day of their translation, that is the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

But lest my audience should be pricked by any doubting thought, it so happened that our loving Lord wished her virtues to be made manifest not only through the discovery of the relics of his beloved but through the agency of those who touched those holy relics.

Now there lived in a village called Petelia a certain woman who for five years had been languishing from the disease with which she was afflicted, as was obvious to all from the pallor of her countenance and the abject state of her body. And to this not a few of our brethren of good repute who had frequently seen her before have most certainly testified to me. A member of our congregation, Ramelmus by name, a most excellent brother, skilled in the art of medicine, had often advised her and had supplied her with many medicines ; but these remedies which she had taken on his recommendation had done her no good at all. For the Lord had deliberately reserved the occasion of her cure in order to reveal his Saint. When she had drunk some of the water in which the holy bones had been washed she immediately vomitted a rather horrifying worm and from that moment was completely restored to full health, so that to this very day both the bloom of her complexion and the vigour of her whole body testify to how much merit the Saint whose bones were discovered enjoys in the sight of God. As for the worm, her husband, Oddo by name, brought it to the monastery in a wooden box carved to the size of the worm. This wooden box I have myself seen and handled. Many of the brethren came together to look at the worm for it was quite unlike any reptile they had ever seen : it had twin horns on its head, crawled on six feet and had another two horns also on its tail.

This was the beginning of the wonderful signs of blessed Mylburga, by which her reputation began to spread far and wide. Meanwhile the sick began to come in from distant towns and villages, some on horseback, some indeed carried in litters from all over the country, so that the crowd of sick could hardly be contained within that church and cemetery.

Not far from the monastery, in a village called Hea, there lived a young maiden, by name Amelia, aged about twelve. She was ravaged by a most terrible out-break of leprosy and since her whole body was decomposing she was completely bed-ridden. She had a mother and a step-father, for her father, who was called Radulfus, having been seized by the very same disease which brought him to his end, was now dead. Now when the news of the miracles which Christ was daily performing through the glorious virgin Mylburga, travelled through the surrounding country-side, it reached the knowledge of the mother of this girl, who lived not far from the church. And the mother, having pity on her daughter for her double affliction, her illness on the one hand, her neediness on the other (for they were poor) began to importune her husband, telling him that it was his duty to carry the girl to the tomb of the blessed virgin ; since not only was her illness a cause of grief to them but she was also in distress by reason of her poverty. They did not so much believe that she would find any cure for such utter prostration as that she might obtain something to keep body and soul together, either from the brethren serving God or the people who flocked there. He therefore laid the girl across his shoulders and began to hasten to the tomb of the blessed virgin.

When they arrived at Wenlock the Sunday evening was drawing to a close. The brethren, according to their custom, were singing vespers in the greater church before the outer altar, and there the unhappy man laid down his sad burden. The pitiable girl lay there without any hope of recovering her health, lamenting the pain of her disease, bemoaning the straits of her poverty. For want increased her pain—she who was in such need that she lacked the very necessities of life. Had she been in good health her penury alone would certainly have been sufficient penance for her : her sickness would have sufficed had she had means. But the Almighty and merciful God had pre-elected to manifest the holiness of his virginal spouse through another pure and innocent virgin. And He wished to demonstrate through the speedy healing of this maiden how great was the worth of the blessed virgin Mylburga in His sight.

When the office of vespers had been sung the man returned to his sick charge whom he had left before the altar, for he wished to carry her to the other church which was dedicated in honour and in the name of the Holy Trinity, where the body of the venerable virgin was lying. But lo and behold ! She whom he had carried thither as a leper, completely paralysed, he now beheld suddenly recovered. There she sat, full of joy, relieved of the terrible pain, and to the glory of God and the praise of the blessed virgin, having regained for the most part complete bodily strength. The sole traces of her leprosy being the renewed condition of her skin, she proclaimed the good news of her recovery to all and sundry. Had you been there you could have seen this maiden offering up praise with rejoicing and thanksgiving to the virgin ; you could have seen the people running together from all sides, amazed at such a great miracle, unheard of in our times.

Casting aside her garments, the girl showed everyone the restored flesh of her breast and arms, without dissimulation, and she drew the attention of all to her skin which that self-same day had been blotched with all sorts of colours and furrowed with ulcers, according to the nature of her infirmity, and which was now so restored by the divine power that it was like the skin of a child. And in her complexion the reality of her good health was obvious to all.

Thereupon there assembled together certain of the brethren who were not sufficiently trusting in the popular talk, in order to test with greater certainty the truth of that which they had heard. The maiden was therefore brought into the midst of them and those things which were said of her were proved to be true, by her own word of mouth and by the testimony of her neighbours and relatives.

Now when these happenings came to the notice of the prior of that place, that is, the lord Richard, (of whom we have spoken before) who happened to be away at the time, he was astounded at the unheard-of nature of the miracle. He ordered the girl to be brought before him, together with her parents and friends. But since he was far from being the sort of man who was easily satisfied with a tale of miracles unless he could offer the testimony of his own eyes, or knew that it was true from the faithful testimony of many others, he began to make careful enquiries about the girl : who she might be : how it had happened that she was first ill and then a little later cured. In due order they relate what they know of her previous illness ; with joyful excitement they tell him what they see has happened—her unhopèd-for cure—through the mercy of God and the merit of the blessed virgin. Then the prior himself rejoices, overcome at this recent and unwonted miracle. And finally the maid rejoices too, cured through the intercession of the blessed virgin, and the clergy and people comforted by a divine visitation, give praise.

Moreover the mother had come to hear of that which had been wrought on her child's behalf by the divine pity, and she hastened swiftly to her. She did not notice the weariness of the journey for joy, longing as she did to see her child, whom she had sent forth a sick girl, with grief and anxiety, now recovered.

Eventually the prior ordered the girl not to retire from the church and the tomb of the blessed virgin, so that she might show to all comers the truth of her cure, and might so proclaim the power of the divine majesty, manifested in our very own times by such an extraordinary miracle. Now she was among the first of those who were cured at the shrine of the holy body of the virgin, but she is the very first leper who is known to have received healing there. And I think that it was fitting, that in healing the ailing of either sex and all ages, the virgin should commence with the healing of a humble guileless maiden.

In that same province there was a peasant, living about ten miles from the church, who had a son born blind, now about fifteen years old. And since the news of the miracles which Christ was daily performing through his beloved virgin Mylburga was spreading through the surrounding countryside, and a great number of people of either sex and all ages were visiting that same monastery of Wenlock, this loving father (mentioned above) made his way thither with his son.

When he reached Wenlock on a Saturday evening, the solicitous father gently led his sightless son into the church where that Saint of God, Mylburga, lay ; there he would keep vigil that same night with the rest of the multitude of the people. Now when Sunday morning dawned, a certain woman (who had been deprived of the use of her eyes for ten years, and who that same night had piously kept vigil before the tomb of the holy virgin) was granted the sight of which she had been bereft for so long, through the mercy of God and the intercession of the glorious virgin. And when she began to render due thanks to God for her sight, many people who had known her before as blind, and had seen her still blind that previous night, at once gathered

together, rejoicing, from all sides. When the truth of her healing was established the bells were rung by the guardians of the church in joy at the miracle, and all came together to render praise in common to God.

Lord Richard, prior of that same place, had left that church a little while ago and had returned to his bed after matins. Awakened by the ringing he rose swiftly, and rejoicing at the number of such great miracles, arrived at the church. Entering, he beheld the woman returning thanks to God for the restoration of her sight, and he heard the clergy and people paying their tribute of praise to God.

When the prior was returning from the church, the service of praise being finished, the young boy who had been born blind was still sitting at the threshold of the church racked with great pain. But fearing that he might be crushed under the feet of the passers-by, hampered as he was by his infirmity, he was protected from danger by his father who stood in front of him with hands and stick outstretched. When the prior saw him, in such a painful situation, he began to make inquiries of those around as to who the boy was, where he came from and what the nature of his affliction was. The father declared that the village in which he had been born was quite near Wenlock and was fairly well known and on the evidence of his neighbours testified that his son had been blind from his birth. Having heard all this the prior left them and went forth from the church. But when he wished to return to his own part of the monastery he chanced to come upon a certain man in the cemetery of that church. This man had been dispatched as a messenger to him from a certain noble of that region. When, according to custom, he had offered the prior the friendly greetings of his lord, he said, "I have been sent in haste to you most dear lord, from my master, to know whether I may report as the truth (truth attested by letters dictated by your own lips to my lord) the rumour of these great miracles which are said to be performed by the blessed Mylburga, and of which the whole countryside is talking. So that when he receives definite information from you, my master himself may come to pay his devotions, and together with his wife and sons implore the help of the virgin and honour the holy place with worthy gifts." Hardly had he finished speaking when suddenly one of the clergy came leaping towards them in his haste and, full of wonder, cried out to those talking there that the boy who had been born blind could now see. At this the lord Richard, dazed with joy, hastened to the church together with those who were with him. Kneeling down he bent over the boy, for he wished to make a careful investigation in order to see whether it were possible that a person whom he had left blind but a little while ago, could now so soon afterwards be able to see. Eventually he asked the boy, whose head was still quite bowed with pain, to stand upright, and showing him his hands and fingers one by one he questioned him closely as to whether he could recognise them. Other people, to put him to the test, held out stones and leaves to him, but as far as he was concerned, recognition depended upon a preliminary tactile interpretation of material. Previously there used to hang down before the lids of his eyes what appeared to be lumps of flesh, and copious of streams blood used to course down either cheek. And up to the present time a great deal of effused blood was still covering the pupils of his eyes.

He therefore ordered the boy to stand upright, and he encouraged the lad to follow him, without any guide whatsoever, to the major altar upon which lay the bones of the most blessed virgin, through whom he had received the gift of sight.

Thereupon he rose, and following the prior who went before, proceeded to the body of the most holy virgin to render thanks for his recovery, the people close behind ; and he who hitherto had been obliged to go before his son dragging him on a stretcher, now a happy father, followed behind full of thankfulness and mirth.

This recent action of God on the one hand commands our grateful thanks to Him, and on the other calls forth the tears of great spiritual fervour. For in the space of a single hour God performed these two wonderful miracles to manifest to all men the worth of His beloved spouse, two miracles that were to some extent alike in the granting—although as far as human judgement goes the cases were entirely different. For men are much more impressed when something new is created which had no existence before, than when something which has quite failed to function for some time is given a new lease of life. For in the case of the woman the sight which had been lost was restored by the grace of God ; but in the case of the boy it was not that something which had been forfeited was restored, but rather that that which had had been denied him from birth was divinely granted.

And last of all a reply was given to the messenger, still waiting to know what answer he should carry back to his lord. There was no further need for him to demand the evidence of letters for the truth which he had proved with his very own eyes. For if the lord did not wish to believe what his messenger himself had seen, perhaps he would have also refused all credence to what was recounted in a document.

The matters of which we have written are established on such truthful foundations that no Christian ought to doubt them. For they are taken down from the word of mouth of a thoroughly reliable person—of whose evidence, we believe, there should be no doubt at all. "For he who gives testimony witnessed these things and we know that his testimony is true."

In the neighbouring village called Wig there was a certain girl called Moruid—about twelve years old I should say. Our brethren the monks, as much as lay-persons in the world who testified that they often saw her in the neighbourhood, have faithfully reported to me that she was terribly afflicted with leprosy. It so happened that when she came piously to pay her devotions at the blessed body, and lingered there a little while, she left so completely healed that no sign whatsoever of any leprosy appeared on her body. The skin of her face and body, of a now pleasing youthful colour, had recovered its normal colour. The fateful mistiness of the pupils of the eyes associated with her former illness had now disappeared and her eyes shone as with a new brightness. In speaking, her voice, which she had almost lost during her illness, now rang forth clearly in our ears.

Such was the girl I saw, and my word must stand unless anyone, testifying of his own eye-witness experience shall put me to the proof. That she was leprous before I can in no wise vouch for, but it seems to me that there is a certain matter which I should not pass over. Before I had come to Wenlock and had examined the evidence for the miracles of the holy virgin from the disclosures of witnesses, I had heard certain people prating in utter foolishness. Among them a certain woman—whom I do not wish to name—speaking, in my opinion, in the spirit of Jezabel, "I have seen the Saints perform many miracles, but it is very rarely that they heal lepers," To these wretches I will make this answer : it may be read in the orthodox and inspired writings that lunatics and those possessed have been cured at the tombs of the Saints,

and blind persons who have never seen, or not for a long time, have recovered their sight. Now it seems a greater thing to any wise man that lunacy which is of the soul, should be healed, spiritually, than that leprosy, which is on the material plane, should be healed by the merits of a Saint. However, that we may make an end of their sayings, we add this : we have read that the Saints performed even these things in their own life-times ; for Severus writes that a leper was healed at St Martin's kiss, and in the city of Milan (of which I am a citizen) we know that blessed Ambrose once cleansed a leper.

THE NORMAN EARLS OF SHREWSBURY :
THREE NOTES

by J. F. A. MASON, M.A., D.Phil., F.S.A.

*THE DATE OF THE DEATH OF MABEL,
COUNTESS OF SHREWSBURY*

It is a curious coincidence that two of the earliest historical characters associated with Shropshire should have been women, and masterful ones at that : the first was King Alfred's daughter Æthelflæd, the second was Earl Roger of Shrewsbury's first wife Mabel de Bellême. Mabel died far away from Shropshire in dramatic circumstances, for she was murdered in Normandy at the castle of Bures-sur-Dives, while resting after a bath, by her former vassal Hugh de la Roche d'Igé and his three brothers, as a reprisal for her action in depriving him of his castle at that place. Ordericus Vitalis of St. Evroul, whose father was one of Earl Roger's clerks, gives a circumstantial account of the murder ; unfortunately he does not give its exact date, for he says only that on 5th December, three days after the murder, Mabel was buried at the Abbey of Troarn, then ruled (1059 to 1088) by abbot Durand.¹ However, some twenty pages further on in the standard printed edition of his work, Orderic mentions that the murder occurred during a visit to South Italy of Earl Roger's vassal William Pantulf,² who in Domesday Book (some years after the murder) appears as Roger's vassal at Wem and elsewhere. Attempts to date the murder have been made on the strength of hints given in this second passage about it. Such attempts have also been made on the strength of a charter in which Roger makes gifts for the soul of his wife Mabel then 'lately dead' (*nuper defuncte*).³

There is no need to go over all the opinions expressed by past writers on this minute point, though it may be noted that the date 1082 long accepted for the murder in many quarters was originally nothing more than the marginal date for it unwarrantably inserted in Duchesne's early 17th century edition of Orderic.⁴ This date was first questioned in 1893.⁵ In 1913 H. W. C. Davis argued that the Italian visit of Pantulf mentioned by Orderic took place in 1077-8, and that Mabel's murder therefore occurred in 1077 or 1078, probably in 1077.⁶ In 1940, however, Mr. G. H. White (acting on a suggestion made by the late Lewis Loyd) argued that the charter which refers to Mabel as lately dead must come from the summer of 1080, and that therefore (unless *nuper* is rather generously interpreted) the murder must have taken place on 2nd December, 1079.⁷ The *Complete Peerage* accepts this date.⁸ It is not the purpose of this note to challenge the date suggested by Mr. White for the charter, but to look again at the second passage in Orderic which refers to Mabel's death: for Davis' view has more arguments in its favour than its author had space to cite.

Orderic's second passage is a whole paragraph which describes a visit to Normandy made by Robert de Grandmesnil, formerly abbot of St. Evroul and then abbot of Sant' Eufemia in Calabria, a daughter-house of St. Evroul—obviously a person in whom Orderic some decades later would feel considerable interest. The paragraph in question goes on to describe abbot Robert's return to South Italy,

accompanied by Pantulf. Orderic's very next paragraph begins by saying that meanwhile (*interim*), i.e. during Pantulf's visit to Italy, Mabel had been murdered : *Interim Mabilia comitissa mucrone animosi militis Hugonis de Jalgeio perempta est*. On his return from Italy Pantulf was accused of the crime by Mabel's husband and sons, and had to purge himself by the ordeal of hot iron. According to Orderic, Pantulf and the murderer Hugh had been friends; and Mabel had treated Pantulf just as she had treated Hugh, by taking a castle away from him, so that bad blood had arisen between them. Pantulf and his family took refuge for a long time (*diu*) at St. Evroul—another reason for Orderic's later interest in the story. The whole thing must indeed have looked most suspicious : there had been *magna familiaritas et crebra collocutio* between William and the murderer, and Orderic also tells us that after their crime the murderers fled to Apulia. Apulia was a natural place of refuge for any refugee from Normandy; but it was also the very place to which Pantulf had gone with abbot Robert. Moreover abbot Robert's kin of the Giroie family had long been at feud with Mabel's family.

Orderic's passage on abbot Robert's and Pantulf's movements must therefore be studied with care to discover its chronology. Orderic begins it by saying that Robert went to Normandy to meet King William in 1077, in the 15th indiction. The indiction is correct for 1077, and William was indeed in Normandy in that year: thus he was at Rouen on or about 25th July, and at Caen on 13th September.⁹ The next indication of time given is the statement that Philip I of France had summoned Robert because he wished to make him Bishop of Chartres; Robert, the simoniac Bishop of Chartres, was deposed in 1076,¹⁰ and the See was vacant until 30th July, 1077, though in fact Robert could not be offered it. Orderic's third indication of date given in this passage is the statement that abbot Robert was present at the dedications of the churches of Caen, Bayeux, and Bec. The dates of these dedications have given a certain amount of trouble, but those of Bayeux and Bec took place in 1077, on 18th May and 23rd October respectively. (A ceremony at Caen seems to have followed that at Bec.)¹¹ Next Orderic says that after an *amicabile colloquium* with the king and with his own friends and relations Robert went back to South Italy, taking with him William Pantulf. Orderic gives no date for the departure, but his next sentence says that at that time (*tunc*) Duke Robert Guiscard was conquering Calabria and was gaining the duchy of Gisulf duke of Salerno. The citadel of Salerno surrendered in summer 1077.¹² (Robert had left South Italy before this surrender, so that Orderic's statement, in the imperfect tense, that Guiscard was subduing Gisulf's duchy probably represents the information given to St. Evroul by Robert after his arrival in Normandy, information still available to Orderic years later).¹³ Orderic's fifth and last indication of date is that Robert Guiscard received Pantulf honourably, made him sit by his side at the Easter feast, and promised him three *civitates* if he would stay in Italy.¹⁴ Unfortunately Guiscard's published charters are few and far between, and do not help this enquiry.

What happened was in all probability this. Robert de Grandmesnil and William Pantulf were still in Normandy on 23rd October, 1077, but before 2nd December 1077 they had left for South Italy, after the *amicabile colloquium* which Orderic mentions. The next Easter was that of 1078, in which year the feast fell on 8th April. Robert and Pantulf had ample time to reach South Italy by that date, though if they stayed

in Normandy for some little time after 23rd October (as apparently they did) they could hardly have reached South Italy in time for Christmas. It is in fact a point in favour of Orderic's reliability that he makes Pantulf arrive in South Italy not in time for Christmas but for Easter. The Alpine pass most in use at this time was still the Mont Cenis, which could be crossed in winter by normal civilian traffic. There are reliable accounts of its passage in winter by various prominent figures ; indeed as recently as January 1077 it had been traversed by the Emperor Henry IV himself on his way to Canossa.¹⁵ The journey from Normandy to Guiscard's dominions, in good weather and at the sedate pace of twenty miles a day appropriate for an abbot, can probably be reckoned at about eight weeks.¹⁶

Davis thus had good reason to date Pantulf's visit to South Italy to 1077-8. Mr. White, however, says that this date 'may easily be a year or so out' ; but this is very difficult indeed to accept. Orderic gives 1077 for the visit to Normandy of abbot Robert, a visit which preceded Pantulf's visit to Italy. This date of 1077 is borne out by Orderic's references to the vacancy of the See of Chartres, to the Norman dedications, and to Guiscard's progress in South Italy. There cannot really be any doubt that abbot Robert came to Normandy in 1077 ; the only question for doubt is whether he returned to South Italy before the end of 1077, or tarried in his native duchy until 1078 or even 1079. Whether he left in 1077 or 1078 or 1079, he must surely have left just before 2nd December, otherwise the suspicions of Mabel's family seem very odd ; yet Orderic's reference to the *amicabile colloquium* which Robert had before departure for Italy does not sound as though he tarried in Normandy for a further year, let alone a further two years. On the evidence of Orderic, Mabel cannot have been murdered before 2nd December, 1077 ; very probably she was murdered on that date, while it is just possible that she was murdered on 2nd December, 1078, and improbable that she was murdered on 2nd December, 1079.

There is one argument, but an unsatisfactory one, in favour of 1078 or 1079 rather than 1077. According to Orderic, the murder took place on a dark night (*tenebrosa nox*) ; in 1078 the new moon fell on 8th December, and in 1079 on 27th November, whereas in 1077 the full moon fell on 4th December. But a nearly full moon and a dark night are by no means necessarily inconsistent. At present no evidence is known which makes the date 1077 impossible.¹⁷

Not 1077 but 1079 is, however, the date suggested by Mr. White on the basis of a charter. Is there then a conflict here between chronicle and charter evidence? Probably not : for *nuper* need not necessarily mean so short a period as six months. What other word could be used to describe a period of even eighteen or (more probably) thirty months? *Olim* would err in the opposite direction by suggesting that the death had occurred at too remote a date. Without a full glossary of uses of *nuper* one cannot be dogmatic, but the word cannot be regarded as necessarily meaning a period of less than one year.¹⁸ If two and a half years seems a long period after which to effect gifts for the soul of a deceased wife, it may be rejoined that the charter of 1080 may have been only the last and formal stage in the making of those gifts.

One other possible way of fixing the date of Mabel's death fails on examination. In an early passage Orderic says that Mabel lived almost fifteen years (*fere xv annos*) after an incident following one of her visits to St. Evroul. The monks, tired of her oppressive and over-frequent visits, appear to have doctored her food, so that for

the rest of her life she never dared visit the abbey again. Mr. White writes that the incident must have taken place in 1064, i.e. fifteen years before his date for Mabel's death ; but Orderic says quite plainly that the visit took place during the abbacy of Theodoric, and indeed that Theodoric was personally present at it.¹⁹ Theodoric became abbot in 1050, he left for the Holy Land in 1057, and he died on pilgrimage in 1058 ; Mabel therefore lived for more than twenty years after the incident. In fact Orderic made a very common mistake in this passage, thanks to the confusing character of Roman numerals : xv is a slip for some other figure, possibly xxv. In any case, the incident does not fix the date of Mabel's death.

The suggestion that Mabel was killed in 1077, not in 1079, affects some small points in Orderic's work. The two additional years give more time for the long refuge of Pantulf and his family at St. Evroul (*diu . . . demorati sunt*) ; though on the other hand Pantulf had certainly emerged by 1086 when he was a Shropshire under-tenant. Secondly, as pointed out on an earlier occasion, more time is given for Earl Roger's second marriage and for the train of events leading to the dedication of Quatford Collegiate Church in 1086.²⁰ Thirdly, there are two small matters affecting the son of that second marriage, Everard. His attestation (with his father and mother) of a charter issued by the Bishop of Hereford in 1085 remains an example of attestation by a child, as Everard could not then have been more than six years old.²¹ Orderic's remark that Everard had remained among the royal chaplains in the palaces of Rufus and then of Henry I may have been strictly accurate : ²² for if Mabel was killed in 1077 Everard could have been born in or before July 1079, and if he was born as early as that he could have been in sub-deacon's orders (on entering his twenty-second year) before the death of Rufus. He certainly was later in orders.

One thing, however, is not to be learnt from this chronological enquiry : whether the countess Mabel ever came to Shropshire. She had ample opportunity to visit her husband's earldom, but she was of course the holder in her own right of an important Continental fief ; and it was in Normandy, as a result of a Norman grievance, that she was killed, very probably in 1077.

NOTES

1. Ordericus Vitalis, *Historiae Ecclesiasticae Libri XIII*, (ed. A. Le Prevost), ii. 410-12.
2. Orderic, ii. 431-2.
3. R. N. Sauvage, *L' Abbaye de St. Martin de Troarn*, (Rouen, 1911), Preuves, no. 111 ; calendared by J. H. Round, *Calendar of Documents preserved in France* (1899), no. 465, and H. W. C. Davis, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, i (1913), no. 97.
4. *Historiae Normannorum Scriptores* (ed. A. Duchesne, 1619), p. 578.
5. G. W. Watson, 'The Seize Quartiers of the Kings and Queens of England', *Genealogist*, n.s., x (1893), 142, n. 3 ; of. *Complete Peerage* (ed. G. E. C.), vii (1896), 135.
6. Davis, *Regesta*, i, no. 97 (note).
7. G. H. White, 'Date of the Death of Mabel de Bellême . . .', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 1940, p. 97. Round and Davis had dated the charter to 1079-82.
8. *Complete Peerage* (ed. H. Doubleday etc.), xi (1949), 686.
9. Davis, *Regesta*, i, p. xxii.
10. I. B. Gams, *Series Episcoporum Medii Aevi*, i (1873), 536. Le Prevost's footnote here seems irrelevant.
11. A. J. Macdonald, *Lanfranc* (1926), pp. 182-3.
12. F. Chalandon, *Histoire de la Domination Normande en Italie et en Sicile* (1907), i.246-8.
13. Orderic did, however, also make direct use of South Italian literary sources.

14. If Robert Guiscard knew on 8th April, 1078, of the death on the 5th of his fellow Norman ruler Richard of Capua, he had ample reason to foresee difficulties which would have made the aid of Pantulf useful. Whether William the Conqueror himself approved of this possible drain of knights away from England to South Italy is doubtful. Domesday Book mentions the case of William (Bigot), brother of the tenant-in-chief Roger Bigot : when William came back from 'Apulia', the King gave his brother another manor. There is also Bishop Odo's disgrace in 1082 to suggest that the King opposed the 'export' of knights.
15. W. A. B. Coolidge, *The Alps in Nature and History* (1908), p. 164 ; J. E. Tyler, *The Alpine Passes* (1930), pp. 27-8, 64. The travellers could even have crossed the pass before the onset of winter in December.
16. There are many discussions of the daily rate of medieval road travel. The distance from Normandy to Rome was something under one thousand miles and Guiscard's dominions over 100 miles further on ; twenty miles is a reasonable daily rate for a distinguished traveller in no great hurry (M. Bloch, *Feudal Society* (1961), p. 62).
17. For instance, no firm information is given by the history of the English lands which Mabel held as a tenant-in-chief. The pursuit of the murderers on 2nd December 1077 by Mabel's son Hugh presents no problem : he had already campaigned against the Welsh.
18. Cf. D. C. Douglas, *Domesday Monachorum of Christ Church, Canterbury* (1944), p. 39. In Cicero's Latin *nuper* could sometimes mean a period of over a century. The problem of the difference between *olim* and *nuper* as used by the Papal Chancery arises over the Fourth Crusade (H. Gregoire, ' . . . An Old Controversy solved by a Latin Adverb', *Byzantion*, 1940-1).
19. Orderic, ii 52-3 ; White, *loc. cit.*, p. 87, n. 1.
20. *Trans. Shrops. Arch. Soc.*, lvii (1) (1961), 40.
21. Professor Galbraith's comments on Everard's attestation (*English Historical Review*, xlv (1929), 359) have now become outdated.
22. Orderic, ii.412 ; elsewhere (iii. 426) Orderic mentions him in connexion only with Henry I's chapel.

SOUTH-EAST SHROPSHIRE IN 1086

Many places are entered in Domesday Book under counties to which they did not afterwards belong,²³ and a particularly curious group of such places is found in S.E. Shropshire. Domesday Book enters under Staffordshire the following four places which were afterwards, as now, in Shropshire: Claverley, Nordley Regis, Alveley, and Worfield. In 1086 Claverley, Nordley and Alveley were all held in demesne by earl Roger (*D.B.*, i. 248 a); Worfield was the only manor in England held by Roger's son Hugh (*D.B.*, i. 248 c). Under Warwickshire, apparently in Stoneleigh Hundred, Domesday Book enters the following four places which were afterwards, as now, also in Shropshire: Quatt, Romsley, Rudge and Shipley. These four were in 1086 all held of earl Roger by various tenants; they are entered at the very end of his small Warwickshire fief (*D.B.*, i. 239 c). Staffordshire and Shropshire were and are adjoining counties; but of course Warwickshire and Shropshire are not. It has therefore been supposed that the four places entered under Warwickshire were so entered by error, and should have been assigned to Staffordshire (Seisdon Hundred). This argument was put forward by Eyton in 1881, and was later accepted by Round, Tait, and more recently by Mr. C. F. Slade.²⁴ On the face of things this seems a reasonable enough supposition, particularly as neither group of four manors formed a compact whole: Quatt and Romsley, said to be in Warwickshire, were separated by intervening portions of Nordley and Alveley, both in Staffordshire, and Quatt and Romsley were alike separated from Rudge and Shipley, also said to be in Warwickshire, by intervening portions of Worfield and Claverley, both in Staffordshire.

This is not the only confusion affecting Staffordshire in Domesday Book. The Staffordshire Domesday contains one Oxfordshire manor, and another Oxfordshire manor is entered under both Staffordshire and under Oxfordshire itself. Three Staffordshire manors are entered under the Northamptonshire Domesday. One Staffordshire manor (Essington) is entered under both Staffordshire and Warwickshire; another Staffordshire manor (Chillington) is entered under Warwickshire. We can be quite sure that this last entry is misplaced, and that Chillington was not really in Warwickshire, for it is entered under that county under the rubric of 'Colvestan' Hundred; this Hundred was definitely in Staffordshire.²⁵ These and other confusions could take place because, apparently, the four counties just mentioned (Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire) were, with Leicestershire, all in the same Domesday Circuit, that is, they were all visited by one of the several sets of commissioners who collected the information set out in Domesday Book in the respective areas assigned to them.²⁶ These confusions are most likely to have taken place when this particular set of commissioners caused to be prepared a local Domesday return (which has not survived) for their own group of counties; any errors then made would be reproduced in the final version of Domesday Book as we have it. One Staffordshire manor, Chillington, was clearly placed in Warwickshire by error. Did the same error occur in respect of Quatt, Romsley, Rudge and Shipley so that at some stage they became separated from other manors held of Earl Roger by tenants in Staffordshire?

In what county did Quatt, Romsley, Rudge and Shipley really lie in 1086? There is one piece of evidence which may suggest that they were, after all, in Warwickshire.

This evidence is the description of the eastern boundary of the diocese of Hereford made well before 1086 at some time during the episcopate of Bishop Æthelstan (1012-56). The object of this self-styled *discretionem* seems to have been to define the boundary between the diocese of Hereford and that of Worcester. The description certainly fulfils this function for almost all its length.

The boundary which is described begins at Monmouth and ends by following the line of the Severn for several miles (probably from its junction with the Dowles Brook) until it comes to Eardington, and then crosses the Severn to include Quatford, which in 1086 was still part of Eardington. At that point the boundary stops.²⁷ From this two things may be deduced. First of all, the boundary does not recross the Severn to include firstly Oldbury and then Morville, the second of which appears at this time to have included the site of the later Bridgnorth and so to have stretched right up to the Severn; it would therefore seem to follow that the manor north of Quatford on the east side of the river, facing Oldbury and Morville on the west, was not in the diocese of Worcester. The manor in question was Worfield, which seems then to have reached the Severn, and Worfield must have been in the diocese of Lichfield, as all Staffordshire and part of Shropshire always have been. As we have seen, it is in Staffordshire that Domesday enters Worfield.²⁸

For our second deduction we must transfer our attention a mile or two to the south, and ask why the boundary should mention Quatford at all. If the nature of the boundary has been correctly understood, it must mention Quatford because some place on the east side of the Severn adjoining Quatford was then in the diocese of Worcester. Worfield to the north-east, and Claverley to the east of Quatford are entered under Staffordshire in Domesday Book; but to the south-east of Quatford lies Quatt. It may be suggested that it was Quatt which was in the diocese of Worcester, and this suggestion is quite consistent with the attribution of Quatt to Warwickshire in Domesday Book, for numerous parishes in the south of Warwickshire did once belong to the diocese of Worcester.²⁹ It is true that there is a difficulty of sorts in the boundary itself, for the parish east of the Severn immediately to the south of Quatt was Alveley, which according to Domesday was in Staffordshire and so in Lichfield diocese; but the description gives no details of that section of the boundary, which in any case was, after all, a boundary with another diocese. Since the description makes a point of going on to Quatford, Quatford must have adjoined some parish in the diocese of Worcester and therefore not in Shropshire or Staffordshire. That parish can only have been Quatt, and, if so, Domesday Book was correct in assigning Quatt to Warwickshire. What was true of Quatt may also have been true of Romsley, Rudge and Shipley. As to Quatt itself, it must not be forgotten that (as Eyton noted) in 1130 a portion of Quatt was regarded as part of Warwickshire, although three years before it had been attributed to Staffordshire.³⁰ Ordinarily one might regard the 1130 attribution as just another tribute to the authority of Domesday Book, but it may well have been correct in itself, though there was apparently some doubt. There is no evidence, apart from Domesday Book, that Romsley, Rudge and Shipley were regarded as part of Warwickshire; but according to Eyton they are not mentioned again until well after 1130, i.e. until a period when they were all three certainly in Shropshire.³¹ Romsley and Shipley are usually identified with the 'Hremesleage' and the 'Sciplea' mentioned in the will of the North Mercian thegn Wulfric

Spott (c. 1001-4), but that will does not mention the shire in which those two places then lay;³² Wulfic left them to Burton Abbey, but no connexion can be proved between that house and the two Englishmen who held Romsley and Shipley in 1066.

What objections are there to the suggestion that Quatt, Romsley, Rudge and Shipley were in Warwickshire in 1066? One objection, at least, is not a serious one. It seems difficult to believe that the four places can have been part of Stoneleigh Hundred (which was definitely not the Warwickshire Hundred nearest to them); but it is not certain that Domesday did in fact assign them to it. Quatt is the first of the four places entered; and it is the place before Quatt which is assigned to Stoneleigh ('Stanlei') Hundred. Quatt and the three following estates may have been in a nearer hundred than Stoneleigh, and the hundredal rubric may have been omitted.³³ A more important objection arises from the reconstruction of the Staffordshire hidage made by the late C. G. O. Bridgeman and G. P. Mander in 1919,³⁴ a reconstruction rightly dubbed 'valiant and systematic' by Tout.³⁵ Bridgeman and Mander found ample evidence for the apportionment of hides in South Staffordshire in large groups of 30 hides often made up of smaller groups of five or multiples of five. The thirty hides of Worfield itself formed one such large group; the three hides of Quatt combined with the two of Nordley Regis (Staffs.) to form five hides which with the twenty of Claverley and the five of Bobbington made another group of thirty hides; the hide at Romsley combined with that at Alveley and other hides at Arley and Kinver to form a group of ten hides within another large group of thirty hides; and the five hides at Rudge combined with the one at Shipley and others at Seisdon, Trysull and Crockington to form a group of fifteen hides within yet another group of thirty.³⁶ That is, on this reconstruction the four places now in Shropshire assigned by Domesday to Warwickshire combined with the four places now in Shropshire assigned by Domesday to Staffordshire and with various places which were already in Staffordshire in 1086 in a manner which suggests that at the time of the apportionment all the places involved were part of Staffordshire. It may be pointed out that Quatt, Romsley, Rudge, and Shipley together form a scattered group of exactly ten hides; but if we take those ten hides away from the remainder the symmetry of the three groups of thirty hides to which they belong is destroyed. The groups must surely be older than Bishop Æthelstan's day,³⁷ but there is no difficulty in believing that they had temporarily been broken up for some unknown reason to give the patchwork effect under examination here. If we can rely on the diocesan boundary description, it must have been some English predecessor or predecessors of Earl Roger who temporarily took Quatt, and quite possibly the other three places as well, out of Staffordshire into Warwickshire for some unknown purpose of his or their own.³⁸

Despite appearances to the contrary, it is therefore not impossible that Domesday Book was after all right in assigning Quatt, Romsley, Rudge and Shipley to Warwickshire instead of Staffordshire, though this state of affairs cannot have ante-dated the Norman Conquest, or survived the Domesday period, by many decades. The difficulty is, of course, that the places involved lie some distance from the nearest parts of Warwickshire, but there is ample evidence for the fluid character of English shire boundaries in the eleventh century; what is now S.-E. Shropshire may provide additional examples of this fluidity.

NOTES

23. Cf. Round in *V. C. H. Warwicks.*, i (1904), 295 : 'In the midlands we have always to be on our watch for that strange transposition of manors, which is one of the puzzles of Domesday'.
24. R. W. Eyton, *Domesday Studies : . . . Staffs.*, (1881), 2-3 ; Round, *loc. cit.* ; J. Tait, *V. C. H. Salop*, i (1908), 286, 349 (n. 150) ; C. F. Slade, *V. C. H. Staffs.*, iv (1958), 59 (n.21).
25. These and other discrepancies affecting the shires named were discussed by Eyton, *Staffs.*, pp. 1-4 ; Round, *loc. cit.* : F. M. Stenton, *V. C. H. Oxon*, i (1939), 392.
26. In 1878 Eyton assigned Staffs. to the same Welsh border circuit as Shropshire and Cheshire ('Notes on Domesday', *Trans. Shrops. Arch. Soc.*, i (1878), 108), but later he assigned it to the same midland circuit as Warwicks. etc. (*Staffs.*, pp. 3-6). In 1947 the late Carl Stephenson went back to Eyton's original idea on this point ('Notes on the Composition and Interpretation of Domesday Book', *Speculum*, xxii (1947), 3-4, 6-7). More recently Galbraith (whose views on Domesday are followed here) began by following Stephenson, but seems really to place Staffs. with Warwicks. etc. (*The Making of Domesday Book* (1961), pp. 8, 200 (n. 2)). The transpositions of manors mentioned above are one reason for thinking that the second thoughts of both Eyton and Galbraith are right.
27. *Of Carc-dune in Eardig-tun, of Eardigtune est in Safern in Quatt-ford* (M. Förster, *Der Flussname Themse und Seine Sippe* (Munich, 1941), p. 775; translation and discussion of document by H. P. R. Finberg, *The Early Charters of the West Midlands* (Leicester, 1961), pp. 225-7.
28. This view of the exact line of the Salop-Staffs. boundary north of Quattford in 1086 rests, of course, on the assumption that Bridgnorth did not then exist. Tait (*loc. cit.*, p. 286) reasonably assumes that the Severn was the boundary from Newton southwards.
29. The first volume of G. Miller, *The Parishes of the Diocese of Worcester* (1889) was devoted to "The Parishes of Warwickshire".
30. Eyton, *Antiquities of Shropshire*, iii (1856), 175.
31. *Ibid.*, iii, *passim*. The histories of Quatt Jarvis and of Romsley are marked by one further anomaly : both were later part of the 'Liberties' of the Borough of Bridgnorth.
32. Dorothy Whitelock, *Anglo-Saxon Wills* (Cambridge, 1930), pp. 48-9, 157.
33. For the Warwicks. Hundreds, cf. B. Walker, 'The Hundreds of Warwickshire', *V.C.H., Warwicks.*, iii (1945), 1-2.
34. C. G. O. Bridgeman and G. P. Mander, 'The Staffordshire Hidation', *Staffs. Historical Collections*, 1919, pp. 154-181.
35. T. F. Tout, review in *E. H. R.*, xxxvi (1921), 154.
36. Bridgeman and Mander, pp. 170-2. Seisdon Hundred contained in all six such groups of thirty hides each.
37. Slade (*loc. cit.*, p. 5) suggests that the hidation of S. Staffs had been assigned at least by the middle of the tenth century.
38. Eyton, *Antiquities*, ii (1855), 262 thought it was the Domesday tenants of the places in question who 'put' them into Warwickshire ; cf. note 25 above for his later view. The entries for Quatt etc. follow the usual Warwickshire pattern ; but too much cannot be made of this, as the clerks responsible for the final form of Domesday Book would have taken care to achieve the necessary uniformity.

QUATFORD CHURCH AND THE ABBEY OF LA SAUVE MAJEURE

In the last issue of these *Transactions* it was said that it was difficult to account for the little known grant by earls Hugh and Robert to the abbey of La Sauve Majeure (near Bordeaux) of their father's collegiate foundation at Quatford, 'except on the supposition that one of the Montgomery family had visited the abbey on a visit to Spain or a pilgrimage to Compostella', journeys which none of the family is known to have made.³⁹ For some further light on this question I am indebted to a former pupil, Mrs. Jane Martindale, who points out an important passage in the second life of St. Gerard, the founder (in 1079) and first abbot of La Sauve. Gerard came from Corbie, near Paris; he died in 1095 (one year after earl Hugh's succession to the earldom) and was canonised in 1197. A passage in the account of Gerard's miracles tells how many people used to come to La Sauve from Normandy in particular and from other places in general, bringing chains to offer at Gerard's tomb as a sign of subjection to the Abbey, and stating that they had been delivered by calling on Gerard's name (*Plures quoque de partibus Normanniae specialiter, et generaliter de diversis aliis locis, ad ipsum saepius monasterium accesserunt; trahentes secum atque portantes diversa genera catenarum, quas ad ejus tumulum offerentes humiliter, asserebant se ad invocationem illius mirabiliter liberatos; et praedicto modo constituebant se monasterio censuales*),⁴⁰ Obviously the two earls never signalised their devotion to La Sauve in this manner; but the passage may suggest that Gerard of La Sauve had a wide following in Normandy, and at the least shows that his name was well-known there. In the light of this, it is not altogether surprising that the two Montgomery brothers, alone among the leading Anglo-Norman barons of their day, should have singled this abbey out for a benefaction in England.

39. *Trans. Shrops. Arch. Soc.*, lvii (1), (1961), 41. One later English benefactor of La Sauve certainly did visit and endow the abbey en route from Compostella (Round, *Calendar*, no. 1239).

40. *Acta Sanctorum*, April, i (5 April), p. 430.

A DOCUMENT CONCERNING THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION
AT SHREWSBURY IN 1478

by K. N. HOUGHTON, M.A.

Although medieval parliaments have attracted a good deal of attention from scholars in recent years, little is known about electoral procedure employed by the boroughs returning burgesses to the pre-Tudor Commons. The difficulties are many, for there is an almost complete absence of description of the electoral process. Less than half of the one hundred or so returning boroughs possess records reaching back to the fifteenth century, and few of those which have survived supply even the most scanty details about the conduct of parliamentary elections. Shrewsbury is typical in this respect: the borough records for the period give names of a number of parliamentary burgesses not found elsewhere,¹ but reveal no information regarding the way in which the representatives were chosen. The Chancery returns are similarly barren, and so stereotyped as to cast doubts on their authenticity.² Moreover they cannot be taken safely at their face value. They were not intended to provide descriptive accounts of individual elections, but merely certified that an election was conducted according to the terms laid down by law.

In view of this, the survival of a document relating to the election at Shrewsbury in 1478 gains in significance; alone among the Chancery returns for the Yorkist period, it provides a description of the actual procedure employed in a borough election. For the 1478 parliament there is an indenture for Shrewsbury, one of the earliest surviving examples of a borough return in English,³ between 106 free burgesses and the bailiffs, certifying that the election took place in the borough court on 7th January, 1478. One of the bailiffs was presumably dissatisfied with the result, and refused to certify it, so a second document was drawn up the following day. This time 69 more names are added. Although it may be rightly doubted whether such a large number actually chose the burgesses, it is interesting to note that Shrewsbury was remarkable for having a relatively wide franchise one century later, while as many as 1,300 voted in an election there in 1722⁴.

The document, notable for its graphic description, is appended below. It shows that the election was made in the first place by acclamation, the freemen selecting their candidates 'with a hoole voyce' before making out their 'presentement & verditte'. There are indications in other contemporary sources that parliamentary elections were made orally, and it was probably usual for the general sentiment of the assembly to be first sounded. In 1472 the Maldon bailiffs were asked that they 'shold geve your voyse to . . . Sir John Paston . . . I prey yow labor all syche . . . to geve ther voyces to . . . Sir John'. Earlier, Sir John's supporters at the Norfolk election were told by his brother that Sir John 'wold have noo voyse as thys day', while in 1461 Paston's father was one of three who 'had grettyst voyse' at the Norfolk shire election⁵. In 1447 or thereabouts Viscount Beaumont asked the Grimsby burgesses for their 'good will and voys' for his nominee⁶, and in 1469 the Exeter corporation decreed that no citizen should attend the shire election held at the castle 'nor to geve any voyce vnto the same⁷'.

What is more interesting, however, is that the document indicates that there was probably a contested election, in which the recalcitrant bailiff, John Horde, may have been concerned, for he had represented Shrewsbury in the previous parliament and at least six times in all⁸. There is continual insistence in the document that the members-elect '& non othur' were the choice of the 'grettur nowmbur' of the burgesses. Although information regarding contested elections in this period is generally lacking, it is possible to discern the beginning of an application of the majority principle in electoral procedure, explicitly recognised for the first time in the 1429 statute regulating the shire elections⁹. Some shire elections were being contested by the middle of the fifteenth century at the latest,¹⁰ and it is probable that before the sixteenth century there was at times a choice of candidates in the larger towns also, a situation which was already normal at the annual elections for municipal office.

A description of the parliamentary election at Hull in 1463 shows that it was customary for the freemen there to select two members from four candidates chosen by the mayor and aldermen,¹¹ while the Salisbury borough records indicate that in 1460 and 1463 the members may have been chosen from an original short-list of six.¹² The evidence for Salisbury is not definite, and only occurs on these two occasions, but it is probably significant that earlier in the century the corporation there decreed that 'every person be at liberty to nominate whom he pleases so that no-one be elected by the nomination of a single person definitively'.¹³

There certainly appears to be a growing recognition by the end of the fifteenth century that the electors might be faced with a choice of candidates, to be determined by a majority decision. As early as 1452 the Cambridge corporation ordained that its representatives should be chosen by a majority of the burgesses in the Guildhall,¹⁴ and at Worcester in 1466 it was decided that 'citizens for . . . parliament . . . be chosen openly in the Geldhall . . . and by the most voices'.¹⁵ In 1485 the York city members were chosen by 'the more part' of the electorate,¹⁶ and the earliest surviving minute-books at Exeter show elections to parliament being decided by a poll; there were no less than five candidates in 1510, and seven in 1512.¹⁷ Even Lynn reverted to a straight-forward majority vote in 1525, dropping an elaborate system which it had probably employed for more than two centuries.¹⁸

As few examples of contested borough elections have been found for the Elizabethan period,¹⁹ it would be dangerous to over-estimate the extent to which the phenomenon had developed as part of the normal procedure in borough parliamentary elections by the end of the fifteenth century. Its appearance resulted from the growing realisation of the importance of a seat in parliament, and it may be only the absence of documentary evidence relating to boroughs in general which hampers a true appreciation of the extent of its development, for in the later fifteenth century the scramble for a seat in the Commons was hardly less urgent, if less obvious, than one century later.

In the following transcript, capitals and punctuation have been retained as they occur in the original. Editorial insertions are placed in round brackets.

P. R. O., Writs and Returns, C. 219/17/3, part 3, mem. 141.

To all trewe Cristen peple to whom this present wrytyng Schall come to see othre Here (then follow the names of 7 'Squiers & burgesses of the towne of Shrowesbury', and 151 other names) inhabitant Burgesses of the seyd towne of Shrowesbury with the grettir nowmbur of all Burgesses therin Send gretyng in oure lord god evirlastyng. Forasmuche as hit is merotory & a dede of Charite to every trew man to testyfy all matiere of trewth & to wittenes the same and in especiall as of a matier of the whiche the circumstaunce in trewth herafter folowith. Fust wher that hit pleasid the Kyng our soueryn lord to ordeyne his hie courte of parliement to be holden & bygon at his palice of Westmyenster the xvijth day of Januare the xvijth yer of his regne for the welfare of his realme of England and theruppon send his comaundement by writte vnto his Shiref of Shropshire as hit pleasyd hys goode grace to send all othur Shireffs of his realme for to warne the inhabitants of the seyd Shire and all Cities & Burrowis within the same as for to choose & electe knyghts for the Shire Citesyns for Citees & burgesses for Burrows as hit hath byn vsid & accustomed of oold tyme by acomyn & free Elleccion for to chuese of the most abylyst & discretyst with (in) the same for to come vnto the seyd parlement. Wheruppon the seyd Shiref send his precete with the tenore of the seyd writte vnto John Hoorde & Roger Knyght baylyffs of the seyd towne of Shrowesbury affor to chouse ij burgesses of the towne to come to (the) seyd parlement. Then the seyd Baylyffs made open proclamacion within the seyd towne that all burgesses schuld come to the bothehall at a certeyne oure appoyntyng. And when we the seyd burgesses with mony othur were comyn to the bothhall the seyd commaundement by writte was puplissed & openly declaryd vnto the seyd burgesses & uppon that declaracon the seyd burgesses went to ther free eleccion and ther all we burgesses byfore namyd & mony othur herafter namyd. the whiche were ther the grettur nowmbur choese & Ellecte Robart Beynyon & John Guttens burgesses for the seyd parlement affore the towne of Shrouesbury & non othur. And then John Horde the oon baylye see & vndirstod that the grettir nowmbur of burgesses in that Eleccion was contrary to his entent with a hoole voyce and sodenly the seyd John Hord baylye avoydyd out of the bothall & wold (not) abyd ther for to receyve the presentement & verditte of that eleccion of the grettir nowmbur of all burgesses of the seide towne. But Roger Knyght that is the othur baylye he tarried there & there recyvyd the presentement & verditte of that eleccion that is to seye Robart Beynyon & John Guttens & non othur. In wittenes of all thees premysses the seyd Roger Knyght baylye of the seyd towne-to (interlined)-thes present lettur testimoniall hath putte his Seale with the Sealys of all the burgesses byfore namyd and of mony othur burgesses ther beyng present at the seyd Elleccion that is to sey (then follow 17 more names) have putte ther Sealys. Yevyn at Shrowsbury the viij day of Januare in the yere of the kyng our soueryn lord Edward the fourth after the counquest the xvij.

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1. e.g., those for the parliaments of 1445, 1461, 1463, 1467, and 1469. M. McKisack : *Parliamentary representation of English boroughs during the middle ages*, (Oxford, 1932), pp. 151-4.
2. 'As a guide to the details of domestic procedure employed in borough elections, the indentures of return are . . . unreliable and . . . inadequate', (J. S. Roskell : *The commons in the parliament of 1422*, (Manchester, 1954), p. 37). L. Reiss : *History of electoral law in the middle ages*, (1885, translated by K. L. Wood-Legh, Cambridge, 1940), p. 63, concluded that, as far as borough electoral procedure was concerned, 'there remains nothing for us but to establish the point that here a gap in our knowledge exists'.
3. P.R.O., C.219/17/3, part 3, mem. 142. Only one earlier example, that for East Grinstead in 1472, is known to exist. It is reproduced in J. C. Wedgwood : *History of parliament 1439-1509* ; *Register*, (H.M.S.O., 1938), facing p.cii.
4. J. E. Neale : *Elizabethan House of Commons*, (London, 1949), p. 168 ; L. B. Namier : *The structure of politics at the accession of George III*, (2nd. edn., London, 1957), p. 240.
5. *Paston letters*, ed. J. R. Gairdner, (Library edn., London, 1904), iii. p. 36 ; v. pp. 148-50. There are other similar examples in this collection. See also H. G. Richardson : 'The commons and medieval politics', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 4th series, xxviii, (1946), p. 40, n. 2.
6. *Hist. Mss. Comm. Report*, XIV (viii), p. 250.
7. *Description of the Citty of Excester*, ed. W. J. Harte and others, (Devon & Cornwall Rec. Soc., Exeter, 1919), iii. p. 910.
8. In 1445, Feb. 1449, Nov. 1449, 1455, 1467 and 1472. Horde is not to be confused, as in J. C. Wedgwood : *History of parliament, 1439-1509* ; *Biographies*, (H.M.S.O., 1936), p. 468, with the Bridgnorth M.P. of the same name. There were two distinct branches of the family.
9. *Statutes of the realm*, ii. p.243. Reiss : *op. cit.*, p. 82, points out that from this date the election writs repeat that those elected shall be those '*qui habuerint majorem numerum*'.
10. Richardson : *op. cit.*, p. 39, n. 3, found that in three of nine disputed shire elections between 1404 and 1472 there were four candidates, and three contestants in each of the six others.
11. Wedgwood : *Register*, p. 312, n. 4, citing Hull Bench Book iii :—'the comon bell rong and the comons assembled in the Gyldhall and the Mayr and the Aldermen after the custom of the said town made 4 lytes the comons to chose two of the sayd 4 to goo to the said parlement'.
12. Salisbury city archives : Ledger Book B, (1452-1567), ff. 41, 64.
13. R. Benson & H. Hatcher : *Old and New Sarum*, (London, 1843), pp. 122-3.
14. C. H. Cooper : *Annals of Cambridge*, (Cambridge, 1842), i. p. 205.
15. V. Green : *History of Worcester*, (London, 1796), ii. appendix, p. xcvi.
16. *York civic records*, ed. A. Raine, (Yorks. Arch. Soc., Wakefield, 1939), i. p. 127.
17. J. J. Alexander : 'Exeter members of parliament', *Trans. Devon Assoc.*, 1x (1928), p. 200.
18. *Hist. Mss. Comm. Report*, XI (iii), pp. vii-ix, 146-8. See also M. McKisack : 'The parliamentary representation of King's Lynn before 1500', *E.H.R.* xlii (1927), pp. 583-4.
19. Neale : *op. cit.*, p. 255. See also articles by the same author in *E. H. R.*, xlvi, (1931), p. 209 *et seq.*, and lxi, (1946), p. 18 *et seq.*, where only one of the six contests described is a borough election.

AN INCIDENT OF THE REFORMATION IN SHROPSHIRE

by J. FINES

Although the early Lollards were active in Shropshire and along the Welsh Marches, we have very little evidence of heresy in this area during the early sixteenth century in the crucial years immediately before the Reformation. Hence great interest attaches to a hitherto unnoticed reference in the Register of Bishop Blyth of Coventry and Lichfield to the activities near Shrewsbury of one of the chief assistants of William Tyndale.

On Sunday the 31st May, 1528, Richard Cotton, curate of Atcham, some four miles from Shrewsbury, abjured his heresies in the consistory in Lichfield Cathedral. His heresies were not startling, he had spoken against pilgrimages and images, and believed that the children of Christian parents needed no baptism. What is interesting is the source of these heresies : he was accused of reading Lutheran books, and of holding frequent disputations and conversations with disciples of the Lutheran sect, "et maxime cum quodam Georgio Constantino in villa de Whitchurch' et Atchum' ".¹

George Constantine had graduated Bachelor of Civil Law at Cambridge in 1524, and shortly afterwards had gone over to Antwerp to join Tyndale and Joye to assist them in the preparation of an English version of the New Testament, and a variety of tracts, for shipment to England². Some time later he was put in charge of the distribution of these works. More says, in the preface to his *Confutation of Tyndale's Aunswere* "Then haue we the examinacion of Thorpe put furth as it is said by George Constantine (by whom ther hath been, I wot wel, of that sort great plentie sent into thys realme)".³ Early in 1527 he seems to have come over to England to organise the receipt and distribution of Tyndale's works, for Robert Necton confessed in May 1528 to the commissary of Bishop Tunstal, that he met 'Vicar Constantine' about a year and a half before. At his urging, Necton stocked up with English New Testaments from 'Mr. Fyshe'⁴ of London, who had them "of one Harmond," of Norwich and London. Constantine himself purchased copies from Necton in batches of fifteen or sixteen, so it seems that he was distributing them as well in the same area.⁵

Heretical literature was now being imported on a large scale, and the movement was to grow to such an extent that c.1531 one of the 'christian brethren' engaged on this work could assert "that they had already 2,000 books out against the blessed sacrament in the commons' hands, with books concerning divers other matters".⁶ The ecclesiastical authorities were not, of course, blind to these dangers, and in 1527 Tunstal initiated an extensive persecution in his diocese, which was most probably the cause of Constantine's shifting the centre of his activities westward into Shropshire.⁷

His stay can only have been short, and was ineffective, for there are no other records of heretical literature in this area during the period. The West of England as a whole seems to have been but little affected, as witnessed in the reply of the Bishop of Hereford to the Archbishop's mandate ordering a search for translations of the New Testament, late in 1527, saying that none at all could be found.⁸ At any rate, Constantine was soon back in Antwerp, for on the 2nd September, 1528, friar West

writes from the convent there to Ambassador Hacket for assistance in capturing "another priest, come out of England, called Constantinus, who dresses like a secular."⁹

Sometime after March 1530, Constantine returned to England with the latest batch of tracts, and was caught and imprisoned by the Lord Chancellor, Sir Thomas More.¹⁰ One person who received this news badly was Cromwell's agent in Antwerp, Stephen Vaughan, who was terrified that Constantine would denounce him to More, knowing how pleased the Lord Chancellor would be to gain information against his enemies. Vaughan writes anxiously to Cromwell that he understands Constantine's position only too well, worrying about his wife in Amsterdam, and yet, chained by the leg, unable to get to her—he will confess anything, denounce anyone to gain his release. Cromwell remained suitably unperturbed.¹¹

More writes at some length about the imprisonment of Constantine, though there are several oddities about his account, and it lacks circumstantial detail. He seems to have believed that Constantine was completely converted, and was quite taken in by his protestations of penitence. Perhaps it was this that made him relax the conditions of his imprisonment to such an extent as to allow him to escape. Certainly Constantine made every effort to please his captor. He sent to his old acquaintance Necton, telling him to deliver up all stock of books, but Necton, on the advice of John Birt, replied that his wife had burnt them all. Birt wrote to Constantine a letter which was intercepted by More, urging him to withdraw his confession, and "euen as a man armed with faith, go forth in your matter boldly, and put them to their proues." Constantine was not interested in his own martyrdom, and instead, by his information, Necton was taken and imprisoned in Newgate, "wher," says the delighted Lord Chancellor, "except he hap to die before in prison, he standeth in great perill to be, ere it be longe, for hys falling againe to Tyndalles heresies, burned." Even further, Constantine "studied & deuised how those deuilshe bookes which hymselfe and other of hys felowes had broughte and shipped, might come to the Bishop's hands to be burned. And therefore, he shewed me the shipmans name that had them, and the markes of the ferdelles, by which I haue sence his escape receiued them."¹²

So, much to More's distress, Constantine broke prison and fled back to Antwerp, where he arrived on the 6th December, 1531.¹³ He was later to return to England once more, when his views were more acceptable to the authorities, and begin to make a career for himself in the new Church of England, rising by 1549 to the position of Archdeacon of Carmarthen. The discreditable part he was to play in the accusation of Bishop Ferrar need not detain us here, except to note that he learnt no tolerance in the household of Sir Thomas More.¹⁴

Though there was nothing heroic, and much that was distasteful in the career of George Constantine, he was one of the most important agents in a most important movement. The significance of that flood of heretical literature from abroad in the years immediately preceding the Reformation has not yet been sufficiently emphasied. By the middle of 1530 there were so many people reading in the diocese of Norwich that Bishop Nix had to write to Warham confessing his complete inability to stamp out the movement, describing them as those "that cracketh in the king's name that their false opinions shall go forth, and will die in the quarrel that their ungracious opinions be true, and trusteth by Michaelmas day there shall be more that believe of their opinions than they that believeth the contrary."¹⁶ It is all the more interesting

to note, then, that a movement that achieved such great proportions in the East of England, should have penetrated as far to the West as Shrewsbury.

1. Lichfield Episcopal Register 14, ff 51. b.-52.
2. See Venn, J. & J. A. , *Alumni Cantabrigiensis*, part one, Cambridge 1922. Thompson Cooper, in his D.N.B. article on Constantine (vol.XII) says that he practised as a surgeon, the discipline in which he had been brought up, for a year in Brabant after he had arrived in Antwerp. It may have been so, but he spent some time at least in Paris. In June 1528, one Francis Dynamis confessed to Wolsey his association with Constantine, Fische, and Bilney, who had employed him as a translator, during a ten-month stay in Constantine's house in Paris (*Letters and Papers foreign and domestic, of the reign of Henry VIII*, edit. Brewer, J. S. Gairdner J., & Brodie, R. H., 1862-1932, vol. 4 pt. 2, 4396.) Note also the ascription to Constantine by Bale and Tanner of an English version of one of Wyclif's sermons (D.N.B.)
3. *The Workes of Sir Thomas More Knyght sometyme Lorde Chauncellour of England, wrytten by him in the English tonge*, London 1557 p. 342
4. For Simon Fish, and Richard Harmon see Mozley, J. F. *William Tyndale* London 1937, pp. 348-9.
5. Strype, J. *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, Oxford 1822, vol. 1. pt. ii pp. 63-4.
6. *Letters and Papers*, Addenda pt. 1, 752. For other accounts of the movement see Strype, op. cit., 1, i. 255, & ii 54-5.
7. For this see Strype op. cit. 1, ii 113-33.
8. *Registrum Caroli Bothe* edit. Bannister, A. T., Canterbury and York Society vol. 28, p. 189.
9. *Letters and Papers* vol. iv pt. ii 4693. Note here that Constantine appears in a list of arrears owed to the Cardinal for faculties expedited for three years ending 23rd October, 1529. He is called 'Vicar of Sodgeley'. It is odd to find the papal legate assisting an active heretic in this way, but Wolsey was a notoriously bad judge of orthodoxy, and had made much worse errors before. (*Letters and Papers* iv pt. 3 3048.)
10. More suggests that Constantine was instrumental in distributing Tyndale's edition of "The Examination of William Thorpe", in the preface of which is a mention of the burning of Thomas Hitton, which took place in March 1530. Foxe gives two dates for this, but the significavit of excommunication for Hitton is dated February 16th, 1530. See Mozley, J. F., *John Foxe and His Book*, London 1940, p. 166.
11. *Letters and Papers* v. 532 & 574.
12. More, op. cit. pp. 346-7. He talks of Constantine's abuse of "the kynges graciouse remission and pardon geven him before", but we have no record of a previous conviction, and if there had been one he would have incurred the penalty of relapse. More insists that there "was nothyng towarde hym", and that so long as he continued in his conversion to orthodoxy, positively no harm would come to him.
13. *Letters and Papers* v 574.
14. see the D.N.B. article on Constantine.
15. The fullest treatment to date is to be found in Rupp, E.G., *Studies in the making of the English Protestant Tradition*, Cambridge, 1947.
16. Quoted in Gairdner, J. *Lollardy and the Reformation in England*, London 1908, vol. 2 pp. 238-40.

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OBITUARY

MR. E. M. RUTTER

Mr. Edward Montagu Rutter, of "Eversley", Kennedy Road, Shrewsbury, who died suddenly at his home on 5th October, 1963, aged 73, came to live at Shrewsbury on his retirement in 1949 from the post of area superintendent of the L.N.E.R. at York, where he had taken an active interest in both natural history and archaeology, and where he had been closely associated with the Yorkshire Archaeological Society and the Yorkshire Museum. During service in the 1914-18 war he took part in the Battle of the Somme, and later was on the staff of General Plumer in Italy. For his services there he was awarded the St. Michael and St. George Medal, and the Italian Government awarded him the Merito di Guerra Cross.

On retiring to Shrewsbury, Mr. Rutter was able to devote more time to his natural history interests, which were equally divided between botany and ornithology. He became an active member of the Caradoc and Severn Valley Field Club, which he served as a vice-president from 1951 to 1953, and as Botanical Recorder from 1954 until his death. In this capacity his annual reports were admirable summaries of the advancing knowledge of the Shropshire flora, which he did much to stimulate. He was joint author with L. C. Lloyd of *A Handlist of the Shropshire Flora*, published by the Club in 1957, and was the honorary adviser in botany to Shrewsbury Borough Museum, where he reorganised the herbarium with excellent results. Joining the Shropshire Archaeological Society in 1950, he became a member of the Council of the Society in 1955.

Mr. Rutter was the virtual founder of the Shropshire Ornithological Society, which was established in 1955, and its success was largely due to the untiring efforts which he put into its organisation. He was its chairman from 1955 until 1959, and editor of its annual reports from No. 1 (1956) to No. 5 (1960). From 1954 onwards he was the Shropshire representative of the British Trust for Ornithology.

When the foundation of the Shropshire Conservation Trust was proposed, Mr. Rutter at once became one of its most active supporters, and played a leading part in its establishment. He was appointed joint editor of the *Bulletin*, and was a valuable member of the Lands Committee. His enthusiasm for the cause of conservation and his wise counsel will be sadly missed.

A keen cricketer in his younger days, Mr. Rutter was a life member of the Free Foresters, as his father had been before him. He was a regular worshipper at St. Chad's Church, Shrewsbury. A widower, he lived with his sister, Miss J. B. Rutter, and he also leaves two married daughters.

MISS E. M. MACKENZIE

The Council has, with deep regret, to record the death which occurred on 20th October, 1963, of a member whose quiet and unostentatious services were rendered to this Society, as to others to which she had belonged.

Edith Mary Mackenzie was born in Much Wenlock, the daughter of Dr. A. G. Mackenzie, who was in practice there; she had lived in Shrewsbury since 1913. To the St. John Ambulance Brigade she gave sterling service during and after the war of 1914-18, carrying out the many duties of quartermaster, and she received the award of Serving Sister. In her work for St. Giles' Church she had just entered her fiftieth year as a Sunday school teacher. In this she was appointed Superintendent, and she had also for some years been Secretary of the Parochial Church Council. The British and Foreign Bible Society was one among various other bodies in whose activities

she had taken unfailing interest, and in all that she undertook, would always give careful and painstaking attention. In our own Society she had been a member of the Council for several years, and for some while before that had given valued help as regards the Parish Registers.

Our loss is of one who would in no way spare herself if she could help forward any work in which she had become concerned.

L.H.

MR. THOMAS WILLIAM ROGERS

Tom Rogers died on 17th December, 1963, aged 77 years. He was born in Knighton, Radnorshire, and became an officer of H.M. Customs and Excise, serving at Liverpool, Oakengates, London and finally in 1937, at Oswestry. He retired in 1951.

With a life-long interest in history, he took up Pre-History in 1949, when he was one of the founder-members of the Offa Antiquarian Society in Oswestry. He was Chairman of that Society from 1954 to 1962, and from April, 1962, was its Honorary Secretary. He joined the Shropshire Archaeological Society in 1950, and was elected in 1954 to the Council, of which he was at the time of his death, Vice-Chairman. He contributed an article to the Society's *Transactions* on page 343 of Volume LVI, part III (1960); but his chief usefulness was as a Council member and in arranging details for visits, especially in the Oswestry area. He did similar work for the Cambrian Archaeological Society, of which he was also a member. He helped in obtaining people to work on various excavations around Oswestry, and did some excavation himself on the Copper/Bronze Age Burial Mound at Ysgwennant, near Llansilin, Denbighshire, and on Llanymynech Hill. In 1955 he was appointed to represent the Shropshire Archaeological Society, along with Mr. J. D. K. Lloyd, when the Society agreed to help in the late Dr. Wainwright's proposed excavation at Chirbury. He represented the Society, too, on the Executive of the recently formed Avon-Severn Valley Research Project.

This help of his in so many unobtrusive ways will be greatly missed.

W. DAY.



