

HEREFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWS



HAN 5 September 1967

**WOOLHOPE CLUB
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH SECTION**

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**WOOLHOPE CLUB
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH SECTION
NEWS SHEET**

No. 5 September 1967

Edited by: Ron Shoesmith

FUTURE PROGRAMME

Saturday 28th October 1967 at 2.30 pm

Examination of possible Long Barrow at Lower Lyde, and other features in the area. Meet at Pipe and Lyde Church (NGR 503 441). Tea to follow. In case of bad weather ring Pontrilas 205 for possible postponement.

Tuesday 7th November 1967 at 7.30 pm

Discussion on Roman Roads

At Staunton-on-Wye Youth Hostel (NGR 365 450)

General discussion on the results of the Abbey Dore meeting, and talk by Cdr Hale. Future policy on the problem of Roman roads.

Thursday 14th December 1967 at 7.30 pm

Deserted Medieval Villages in Herefordshire

At 85 Beaufort Ave, Hereford (NGR 501 377)

Talk and discussion on DMV's led by Rosamund Hickling.

Please make a note of these dates as the next News Letter will probably be in late November.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

A Research Group Committee was held on 12th September and arrangements were made for the above programme. If you have any ideas for the programme in 1968, please let Mary Thomas or I know.

A meeting of the Woolhope Club Committee was held on Tuesday 19th September which, amongst other things, discussed the question of Junior Membership. A scheme is to be put to members at the AGM in favour of this.

Copies of the Hereford Excavation Programme have been received and are appended to this News Letter.

MEETINGS' SECRETARY'S REPORT

23rd September: Abbey Dore

On 23rd September 10 members met at Abbey Dore to try to trace the Roman Road which runs southwards from Kenchester. The route is recognized as far as Bacton but from here to Longtown it is mapped as a supposed Roman Road in only three short stretches.

The objectives of the meeting were:

- a. To try to determine whether the route from Bacton to Longtown was indeed Roman in origin.
- b. To attempt to link up the three supposed sections.

The party divided into three groups, each covering a mile or so of territory. Their findings will be reported in more details at the meeting on 7th November.

Although everyone agreed that it was a splendid way of spending a glorious September afternoon, it must be admitted that archaeological success was rather limited. In fact, when the groups met again at the end of the afternoon the general opinion seemed to be that without cutting a section across the track there was no real evidence for supposing the route to be Roman at all.

ADDITION TO THE SCHEDULED LIST

No 165 (previously U 69) Edvin Ralph – Moated Site GR 644 575

This is a moated site, possibly of the twelfth century, a circular area of 100ft diameter surrounded by a 12 foot wide wet ditch.

VISITS TO MONUMENTS

The one or two reports that have come through in the few weeks since the last News Letter have been of some interest, but further data is needed before they are reported in a future issue.

***** AREA CORRESPONDENTS PLEASE NOTE *****

Each year, the scheduled monuments in your area should be visited and a report on their state sent to me. This year it is hoped that many of the unscheduled monuments will be visited as reports on their present state and condition are of great importance.

Please, if possible, arrange to visit the monuments in your area before Christmas, and let me have your report by the New Year.

If you find that changed circumstances mean that you cannot arrange to make these visits, please let me know and I will make all possible efforts to find another member who is able to do so.

R Shoemith

POSSIBLE ROMAN ROAD IN THE GOLDEN VALLEY

I think there has always been some idea of a road up the Golden Valley – as the name Fine Street (332 395) suggests. When driving along the road at Fairfields (345 382) I was struck by the appearance of a green lane continuing to the south where the present road turns east. I followed this lane down, sounding with an auger, and there is a solid foundation about eight inches to a foot below the present level. Eventually you come to a brook with a solid stone ford and part of an old bridge or culvert. In the field to the south there is evidence of a solid foundation by the hedge for some distance. I didn't follow this right through but it looks as though it rejoins the modern road near Turnastone. I think this is well worth following up in due course.

Extract from a letter from Cdr M B Hale

The subject of Roman roads both in this area and in other parts of the county will be the principle item for discussion during the meeting on 7th November. Members' slides on this subject will prove to be of great interest, and the set of six-inch maps will be available.

REPORTS ON EXCAVATIONS

Bromfield Quarry, Salop (SO 481 776)

The first campaign of rescue excavations in advance of quarrying ended in May. They revealed two cemeteries about 150ft apart, both of Middle Bronze Age date. The southern cemetery consisted of a round barrow 32ft in diameter within its ditch, and containing a single central cremation. Nearby were a number of cremations, some of which had been

contained in upright urns. There is reason to think that this site may be contemporary with a large cremation pit area to the north. Here only two inurned burials were found, as well as two other pits containing only burnt bone in the manner of the urn-less burials of the southern cemetery. About 130 other pits containing various fillings – charcoal; charcoal and broken pots; charcoal, bone and pots; and charcoal and bone alone. These were generally disposed in a semi-circle. From them it has been possible to restore the form of 20 Middle Bronze Age vessels, most of which have affinities with Wessex biconical urns, and may well all date to around 1400 BC. They form the largest collection of pottery of this date in the Welsh Border, and mark the most northerly occurrence of these Wessex traditions.

The excavations have been directed by Mr S C Stanford, University of Birmingham Department of Extra-Mural Studies, on behalf of the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works, and have been aided by grants from that Ministry and from Ludlow Museum. The Earl of Plymouth, who has helped the excavation in many ways, has generously donated the finds to Ludlow Museum. It is a great pleasure to record thanks here to several members of the Woolhope Club's Archaeological Research Section who assisted in this meticulous and often tedious work, sometimes in driving rain, hail and snow.

Leintwardine (SO 403 742)

During the summer it was possible to complete the Club's excavation of the Roman Fort bath house south of Mill Lane. The recent work has produced additional evidence of the enlargement of the bath house contemporaneously with the construction of the massive fort defences in the late second century. At this time a timber-laced rampart was built to protect the annexe in which the bath house stood; its structure is similar to that of the main fort rampart built at this time to enclose 12 acres. The additional room recently excavated was crossed by a deep, stone-floored masonry drain. The area between the bath house and annexe rampart has been used as an ash and rubbish tip, from which a quantity of pottery and some metal-work was recovered. Research members again took a very active part in the work, which was made possible by the continued kindness of Mr C Griffiths and a Ministry of Public Building and Works grant. The excavation was directed by Mr S C Stanford of the University of Birmingham Department of Extra Mural Studies.

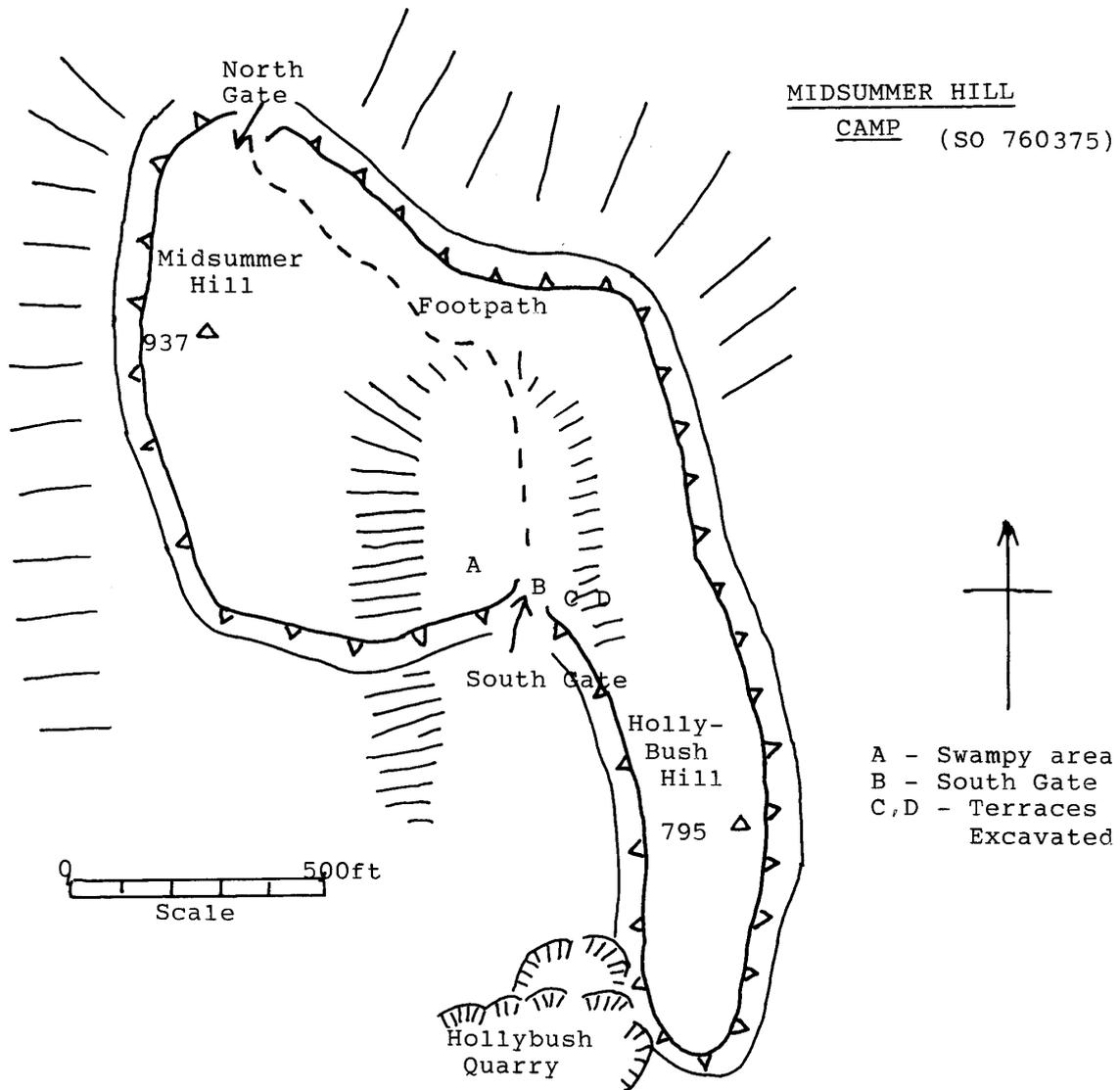
Midsummer Hill Camp (SO 760 375)

The third season of work organized by the Malvern Hills Archaeological Committee in co-operation with the Woolhope Club and the Worcestershire Archaeological Society proved most successful. In the southern entrance it has been possible to demonstrate a long succession of gateway repairs comparable to the record obtained in the Club's own excavations at Croft Ambrey. The excavation is still not completed, but already there is evidence of some nineteen successive gates. The same remarkable parallelism of gate development at Croft and Midsummer that was established last year to the tenth gate down has been shown again, with both sites having their last double entrance fourteen gates from the top. At present it appears that the whole Iron Age hill-fort sequence is present at Midsummer's southern entrance, the earliest gates probably belonging to a timber-framed box rampart of which some evidence began to emerge in the last two days of the dig.

Inside the rampart an extensive excavation of the swampy area showed how stone-lined sumps had been used to collect water from a shallow Iron Age pool and revealed the two major rampart-building episodes that are now suggested by the gateway evidence. On the steep hillside above the gateway we have seen that even a 1 in 3 slope could be terraced and used for timber buildings. It must be reasonably certain that Midsummer was closely built over, as were Croft Ambrey and Credenhill. Again, the buildings are small rectangular ones, many times rebuilt. On one site four phases of such building were recorded overlying earlier terraces. On the higher of the two sites, the earliest buildings were about 15ft by 12ft and raised on sleeper beams set in slots neatly chiseled in the Malvernian rock. Such construction is extremely rare in the British Iron Age record (it was

used on the Heathrow Temple site), and its recognition here at Midsummer is of immense interest.

Finds from the house sites were plentiful, and included two complete iron knives, a bronze spindle, a padlock key and various beads and rings. The excavation was directed by Mr S C Stanford, University of Birmingham Department of Extra Mural Studies.



NEXT NEWS LETTER

The next News Letter should be issued in early December. Please let me have as much information as possible for inclusion by 27th November 1967.