

HEREFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWS



HAN 11 December 1968

WOOLHOPE CLUB
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH SECTION

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HEREFORDSHIRE NEWS SHEET
WOOLHOPE CLUB
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH SECTION
No. 11 December 1968
Edited by: Ron Shoesmith

FUTURE PROGRAMME

Saturday 25th January 1969, 2.00 pm in the Woolhope Room

Working meeting to continue transferring the details onto the Club's maps that was started this year. This work, when completed, will be of great value to the Group. It is hoped to finish the task at this meeting.

Saturday 8th February 1969, 2.00 pm in the Woolhope Room

Completion of the work of the last meeting, if necessary, or visit to DMV site in the area near to Hereford. Please telephone Mary Thomas 9923-205 for final arrangements.

TREASURER'S NOTE

Subscriptions for 1968/69 are now due and should be sent to Mr L Skelton. Please note that this is still, despite rising costs, only 5/-.

OTHER PROGRAMMES

HEC and WEA exploration of the Castle Green area resumes in March. Anyone who is interested is asked to contact Mr Peter Leach at the City Museum. A report of activities so far is included in this Newsletter.

EDITORIAL 1 – From Siraf, Iran

This seems the appropriate time to write an editorial to England – we are rained off by the first appreciable amount of rain for some nine or ten months. Winter is now with us and instead of temperatures of over 100 degrees F, we now have the high 70's and 80's.

The excavation at Siraf is now in full swing, with something like 150 labourers on five different sites. Two 11th century houses, extensions to the early mosque and a 15th-17th century mosque are all being excavated. Walls of these buildings are buried some 12 feet deep in debris and the remains of later buildings on top. Pottery fragments come out in apparently inexhaustible quantities of perhaps a hundredweight or more a day.

The excavation team, which is eighteen strong, lives in the Sheik's Fort on a rocky outcrop in the middle of the bay. On one side is the modern village of Taheri and on the other the very rough small fields which cover the remains of the city of Siraf. Less than half a mile inland the ground rapidly rises to a rugged range of hills. We live in comparative comfort considering that we are some 150 miles from the nearest town, Bushire, and that the road is mostly unsurfaced, with several ruined bridges.

This area, along with the rest of Iran, is showing rapid improvements, and within 20 miles there are several schools and a small hospital. The road, although unsurfaced, replaced a cart track only three or four years ago. The larger towns such as Shiraz and Isfahan show a high degree of civilization – whilst Teheran is to all intents and purposes a modern metropolis, with more, faster and noisier traffic than London.

I would like to express my gratitude to Allan Greenhill for editing this copy of the Newsletter in my absence, and ensuring its continuity, and would like to send all members of the Research Group all my best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. I expect to be back in England during the latter half of February and look forward to seeing you all shortly afterwards.

Ron Shoesmith

EDITORIAL 2 – From Staunton-on-Wye

Last week we held a meeting of Area Correspondents here at Staunton-on-Wye – only a few managed to get to the meeting. Some other correspondents have sent me their reports, but many have not yet done so. As many visits to monuments were unable to be made last season due to Foot and Mouth which was then rampant, it is very important that we make every effort to inspect the monuments, both scheduled and unscheduled, in our areas. Some areas are without correspondents at present and some changes have had to be made and these are noted later in this newsletter.

I am sure that you would like me to wish all the best to Mr and Mrs Slocombe, who are moving to Wiltshire, and I hope that we will hear from them from time to time.

Having read the Editorial from Iran, I think we can look forward to an interesting talk from Ron Shoesmith on his return.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who have sent contributions for this issue – it makes my task a great deal easier. I would also like to add my wishes to all of you for Christmas and the New Year to those of our current editor.

Allan Greenhill

HEREFORD CASTLE EXCAVATIONS October-November 1968

The area for excavation is situated below the Castle Green immediately to the north of Castle Cliff, and bounded on the north by the new bandstand. The work has been financed with the aid of a MPBW grant by the Hereford Excavation Committee. Being a winter season activity, the work was planned in two phases, the first having been completed while the second it is hoped will finish the operation in March 1969. The principal aims in excavation were first to keep alive the interest stimulated during the 1968 season of work in Hereford, and second to implement a policy for taking advantage of any sites available in the city for excavation.

In this case the area being so small it is probable that most if not all the site will eventually be exposed. At present four trenches are open: three 6ft x 20ft and the fourth 10ft x 20ft. Medieval evidence has so far not been very forthcoming. The very disturbed nature of the deposits suggests extensive robbing of earlier remains in the 16th and 17th centuries. From the available indications it appears that the Keep Moat was bounded on the east side by a gently-rising platform of natural gravel. The original outer profile of the moat is at this point quite obliterated by disturbance. This disturbed material is associated with the moat filling and contains a considerable quantity of medieval and post-medieval pottery. Also within this disturbance is a well-built wall, evidently re-using worked stone from the Castle. A machine-cut trench in March 1968 first revealed this line of wall further south along the edge of the moat. The latest section of wall is undoubtedly the continuance of this, but its precise position and sequence within the later deposits awaits fuller excavation. From documentary evidence it seems possible that the walling represents building activity during the Civil War.

The main tasks awaiting completion seem to be the full excavation of the 16th-17th century robbing in the hope of finding underlying medieval strata, and a more extensive look at the later walling. As mentioned, this it is hoped will be possible by March next year and I hope for a continuation of the encouraging response and voluntary help so far given.

P J Leach

MIDSUMMER CAMP

At Midsummer Camp (SO 760375) the southern gateway proves to have eighteen phases of construction associated with the inturned entrance. What was probably a temporary closure of the corridor during the construction of the defence was followed by two phases with timber guardrooms inside a double gate. Following two further phases without guardrooms the corridor was narrowed and a single gateway employed for the last thirteen phases. The earliest inturned rampart was revetted at the front only with timber and probably stone but

was later faced with stone alone. On the terraces within the camp, further evidence of small timber buildings was obtained.

S C Stanford
On behalf of Malvern Hills Archaeological Committee

BROMFIELD

At Bromfield (SO 483775) a short excavation in advance of quarrying fixed the southwestern side of the Marching Camp showing its dimensions to be 1060 feet by 845 feet (323m x 258m), an area of 20½ acres.

S C Stanford
On behalf of the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works

DESERTED MEDIEVAL VILLAGES

Report on two field days by R Hickling

The Study Group has visited a total of nine sites but reports are given only on those not previously recorded either by the Deserted Medieval Villiage Research Group or by S C Stanford in a forthcoming article in the Woolhope Club Transactions.

There is a widespread scatter of documentary evidence in the county for the existence of the Common Open Field system of agriculture, and it is intended to visit sites in various areas.

The initials after the grid references of the site indicate whether there is a reference to it in any of the following documents:-

DS Domesday Survey	NV Nomina Villarum 1316
LS Lay Subsidy 1334	PT Poll Tax

The figure given after the Poll Tax indicates the number of people who paid the Tax in 1377.

Bishopstone (SO 416439) NV, LS, PT 48

R H Wilmot commented on the earthworks in the Woolhope Club transactions of 1962 (?). They are well marked and lie in the field east and south of the church, along the lane towards Bridge Sollars. There is a rectangular moated site north of the Court Farm.

Garnons Hill, Bishopstone (SO 408437)

Also mentioned by R H Wilmot. Stone walls are still to be seen in the wood marking the site of dwellings. Ten are shown on the 1886 edition of the Ordnance Survey, of which six are Almshouses, but Wilmot mentions fifteen. This curious settlement is set at the back of a ledge of level ground halfway up the hill. There is so far no evidence to indicate how old the site is.

Brinsop (Church) (SO 442448) DS, LS, PT 48

Slight earthworks north of the church and west of the rectangular moated site. The large rectangular rampart enclosing the church is probably pre-medieval.

Brinsop (Court) (SO 443464)

Field known as "Old Town Pasture" contains numerous linear earthworks and slight hollows. Again no evidence of age, although Brinsop Court, an inhabited moated site with two large fishponds, lies to the south east.

Dinedor (SO 534367) DS, NV, LS, PT 51

A shrunken site with thirteen scattered dwellings in 1947, now being repopulated. Hollow-ways and house platforms clearly visible in field south of church.

Kenchester (SO 434432) DS, LS, PT 51

Substantial house platforms visible adjacent to road east of church.

Moreton Jeffreys (SO 604485) DS, LS

A second visit revealed a chain of three fishponds, now dry, south west of Court Farm, forming a continuation of the hollow-way, with house platforms in the field east of the farm.

Stretton (SO 469429) DS, NV, LS, PT 36

Site of village has migrated south to the crossroads on the Roman Road. Plan of 1757 indicates eleven dwellings in the fields west of the Court Farm, which have gone, only vague earthworks and an exceptionally stony field remain. The plan shows the three open fields of Stretton. There are two ponds near the Court and other defunct waterworks in the field west of the main road.

REVISED LIST OF MEMBERS' AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

	<u>Member</u>	<u>OS 2½" sheet</u>
1.	F Noble	37, 47
2.	S C Stanford	46
3.	E M King-King	36, 26
4.		56, 57
5.		45
6.	Mr & Mrs Perry	65, 66, 75
7.		55
8.	E Crooks	44
9.	P Leach	54
10.	Mr & Mrs Jones	64
11.	A T Colley	73, 74
12.		32
13.	R Hickling	33, 43
14.	M Thomas	41, 42
15.	P A Elkin	53
16.	L Skelton	63
17.	M B Hale	61, 62
18.		23
19.	R Pye	25
20.	A R Greenhill	35
21.	J Calderbank	51, 52
22.	R Shoemith	24, 34

There have had to be some alterations to the original list published in November 1966.

New correspondents are required for several areas. If anyone is willing to undertake responsibility for an area would they please contact the Secretary at Staunton-on-Wye.

Several new monuments have been scheduled and it is hoped to include a list in the next News Letter.

This annual inspection of monuments is of great importance as damage can occur at any time. A report has been received of turf removing at one unscheduled site, which proves the necessity for regular inspection.

On September 29th Mr King-King, at very short notice, organized a most interesting and well planned afternoon visiting pottery sites in the Lingen area. The eight members present were able to discuss the afternoon's activities over an excellent and much-appreciated tea provided by Mrs King-King. Mr King-King has submitted the following report:-

Having met at Mortimer's Cross, we first stopped near Brinsop Farm, Wigmore, where points of interest in that area were pointed out.

From there we proceeded to Oakley Hill and looked down up the remains of the Dickendale pottery site. This is now largely destroyed by bulldozing and cultivation.

Next we moved to Grove Head and searched that pottery site, where many specimens were collected in the stream bed.

After that we walked along the lane past the White House to the mysterious earthwork known as "The Churchyard" or "The Graveyard".

Finally we went to look for the pottery site at the Ridges, Birtley, which is mentioned in the Transactions for 1931, but without much success.

VERNACULAR BUILDING

by J W Tonkin

It is hoped in future to include reports on this subject in the News Letter. My policy will be to mention buildings looked at since the last newsletter. As these will be included in the report in the next issue of the 'Transactions' I do not propose to include notes about them, but hope to write up one house in each newsletter which will probably not be covered in detail anywhere else.

Court Farm, Preston Wynne (SO 558470)

Medieval. Base cruck central truss. Spere truss. Four bay house.

Yew Tree Cottage, Wigmore (SO 411690)

This at first appearance is a two room plan house of early 17th century date with an outbuilt chimney at one end, the roof raised in the 18th century and the chimney included to make a cupboard. However, when examined whilst stripped for restoration a number of points showed up.

The south, ground floor unheated room had close-set timber framing on the south wall which faced down Castle Street. This type of construction was sometimes used for the "best" room in houses which were otherwise completely of square panels. This and the fact that it was unheated show it was the parlour of the original house.

The upper storey was originally of attic type and the wall-plates of this building remain. The roof was raised about three feet late in the 18th century and some of the original timbers were re-used.

The original entry appears to have been in the west gable north of the chimney. This is of interest for it carries on the long house tradition which also appears in Wigmore at Ford Farm and Ford Street Cottage. Unfortunately, the lean-to at the northern end had disappeared before the house was examined, but was apparently of fairly recent date.

Although the truss outside the chimney is obviously late and apparently of the same period as the raising of the roof, the main truss five feet east of it does not seem to be weathered, which raises the problem of what was sheltering it for most of the first two hundred years of its existence. It certainly seems to have had something west of it, and it could be that the late truss and lean-to replaced an earlier bay. If this is the case it would make the house very much like Ford Street Cottage which has a service end, screens passage with fireplace backing on to it, hall and parlour running from west to east as here. The doorway into the cupboard at the north west corner is chamfered and stopped in the cupboard and was apparently the main entrance to the hall before the insertion of the present lateral entrance.

The chimney is of well cut ashlar almost certainly taken from the castle only a short distance away.