

HEREFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWS



HAN 18 June 1970

WOOLHOPE CLUB
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH SECTION

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL.....	2
SUMMER AND AUTUMN PROGRAMME, 1970	2
OFFA'S DYKE – GARNONS HILL TO YAZOR WOOD.....	3
OFFA'S DYKE ASSOCIATION	5
MILLS ON THE ARROW	6
HUNTSAM ROMANO-BRITISH VILLA 1969-70.....	7
ROMAN SITE – STRETTON GRANDISON, SO 640 434	7
FIELD WORK 1970.....	8
HEREFORD 1970.....	8

**HEREFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWS SHEET
WOOLHOPE CLUB
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH SECTION**

No. 18 June 1970

Edited by: Ron Shoesmith

EDITORIAL

Enclosed with this Newsletter you will find a copy of the Summer and Autumn meetings of the Archaeological Research Group. These meetings are the prime purpose for which the group was founded and need your support to carry out the work planned for each day. Although membership of the Group continues to increase, the number at Field Meetings remains rather disappointing.

At the recent central committee meeting of the Woolhope Club it was decided to buy a new roller-type blackboard for the club room — this should be very useful for winter lectures. It was also decided to increase the number of journals and publications in the library which are to be bound. The central committee set up a small committee to deal with archaeological emergencies in the city consisting of the President, the Treasurer and myself, following the disbandment of the Hereford Excavations Committee. A report on recent work can be found in this newsletter.

A list of some local and semi-local excavations over the summer months is appended.

RS

<u>Bordesley</u>	8/7-29/7	Medieval	P Rahtz, School of History, University of Birmingham
<u>Bredwardine</u>	23/8-5/9	Medieval	R Shoesmith,
<u>Hen Domen</u>	4/7-25/7	Dark Age & Med	P Barker, , Worcester
<u>Hentland</u>	weekends	Medieval	N Bridgewater, Abergavenny, Mon.
<u>Midsummer</u>	8/8-5/9	Iron Age	S C Stanford, Luston, Leominster
<u>Usk</u>	28/6-15/8	Roman	W F Manning, Dept.of Arch., Univ. Coll., Cardiff
<u>Wroxeter</u>	8/8-5/9	Late & Sub-Roman	P Barker, As above.

The next Newsletter will be issued early in September and contributions should be sent to the Editor by the 5th.

SUMMER AND AUTUMN PROGRAMME, 1970

Saturday, 25th July

Visit to Hentland and area. This meeting will be led by Mr J G Calderbank and will meet at Hentland Church (SO 543 264) at 2.30 pm.

Saturday, 22nd August

Visit to the current series of excavations at Midsummer Hill, by invitation of Mr S C Stanford. The visit is led by Mr W R Pye and will meet at the gate at 2.30 pm.

Tuesday, 1st September

Meeting to discuss further work on the proposed guide.
If you are interested, please come to 25 Castle Street at 7.30 pm.

Sunday, 20th September

Visit to the Pencombe area with Miss R.Hickling. Meet at Pencombe Church (SO 601 528) at 2.30 pm.

Saturday, 17th October

Visit to the Stretton Grandison and Yarkhill area led by Mrs J O'Donnell. Meet at Canon Frome school gates at 2.00 pm.

Tuesday, 10th November

Indoor Open meeting for members and friends. A display of recent slides and exhibits from the county will be made. If you have any items please let Mr R. Shoemith know before the evening. The meeting will start at 8.00 pm at the Green Dragon (upstairs).

Tuesday, 8th December

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

6.30 pm Business Meeting

7.30 pm Guest Lecture:

The Archaeology and Architecture of Lighthouses

Douglas Hague

The meeting will be in the Woolhope Club room.

In the case of inclement weather for outdoor meetings, please contact the leader or one of the meetings secretaries for confirmation.

Members may take friends to any open meetings.

OFFA'S DYKE – GARNONS HILL TO YAZOR WOOD

Report of Field Meeting (P F Cooper)

On Saturday 22nd March a small party gathered at Upperton Farm, Yazor in order to investigate the line of Offa's Dyke over Garnons Hill and Yazor Wood north of Upperton Farm.

A start was made at 'The Steps' south of Garnons Hill on the line of the Roman road from Kenchester. Offa's Dyke is present adjacent to 'Old Quarry' as a well defined bank with west ditch and proceeds up the hill for a short distance. The dyke degenerates and changes to a bank with an east ditch. Fox refers to "a hedge bank with east ditch, modern in appearance and forming the parish boundary".

On reaching the 700 ft contour it takes a more level course and has a much larger bank and east facing ditching. The course of the dyke at one place passes into and through one of the large shallow quarries with which the top of the hill is pitted. The problem of an east ditch was discussed and it was suggested that a work gang moving south downhill would find it much more practical to dig the ditch throwing the earth downhill. The dyke where it crossed the old quarry had been formed later than the quarry – perhaps the quarry was a source of stone for Roman Kenchester?

The dyke, when it meets the parish boundary west-east over the hill, seemed to disappear, there only being a bank running to the east following the parish boundary, but of different form. The party scouted round, and on an alignment which it would be expected for the dyke to follow, a small bank with shallow ditch to west was observed following a level

contour round the hill. The bank was followed for a short distance downhill but it disappeared in a tangle of undergrowth. On proceeding down a forest track the bank made a reappearance, crossed the ride and ran parallel for a short distance, but this disappeared again.

Nothing further was seen of the bank till the bottom of the hill and wood were reached on the 400ft contour. Following the field hedge, a bank 220 yards long on a larger scale was found with a ploughed-out west ditch, the bank finishing just before Bowmore Wood.

The line of the dyke seemed to follow the hedgerow past Woofall Wood, a square area of old woodland which had a ditch or dyke all round, but the ditch and bank in alignment with the route was on a larger scale. All signs of a dyke fade out in the marshy flat near the Yazor brook, but to the right was a mound showing itself by a stony patch of ground, suggesting perhaps an old watch tower. It was noted that the mound would give a better alignment for the dyke and agrees with Fox who did not like the alignment along the hedgerow from Bowmore Wood to the Yazor brook.

About 50yds on the other side of the Yazor brook the dyke and ditch re-appear on a moderate scale in the direction of a small pond and the crossing point of an old trackway. The line of the dyke can be seen running across to the railway bank, but is much hidden by spoil produced at the time of the construction of the railway. The dyke is present between the railway and the west side of Upperton homestead and must have been on a large scale but is much worn away.

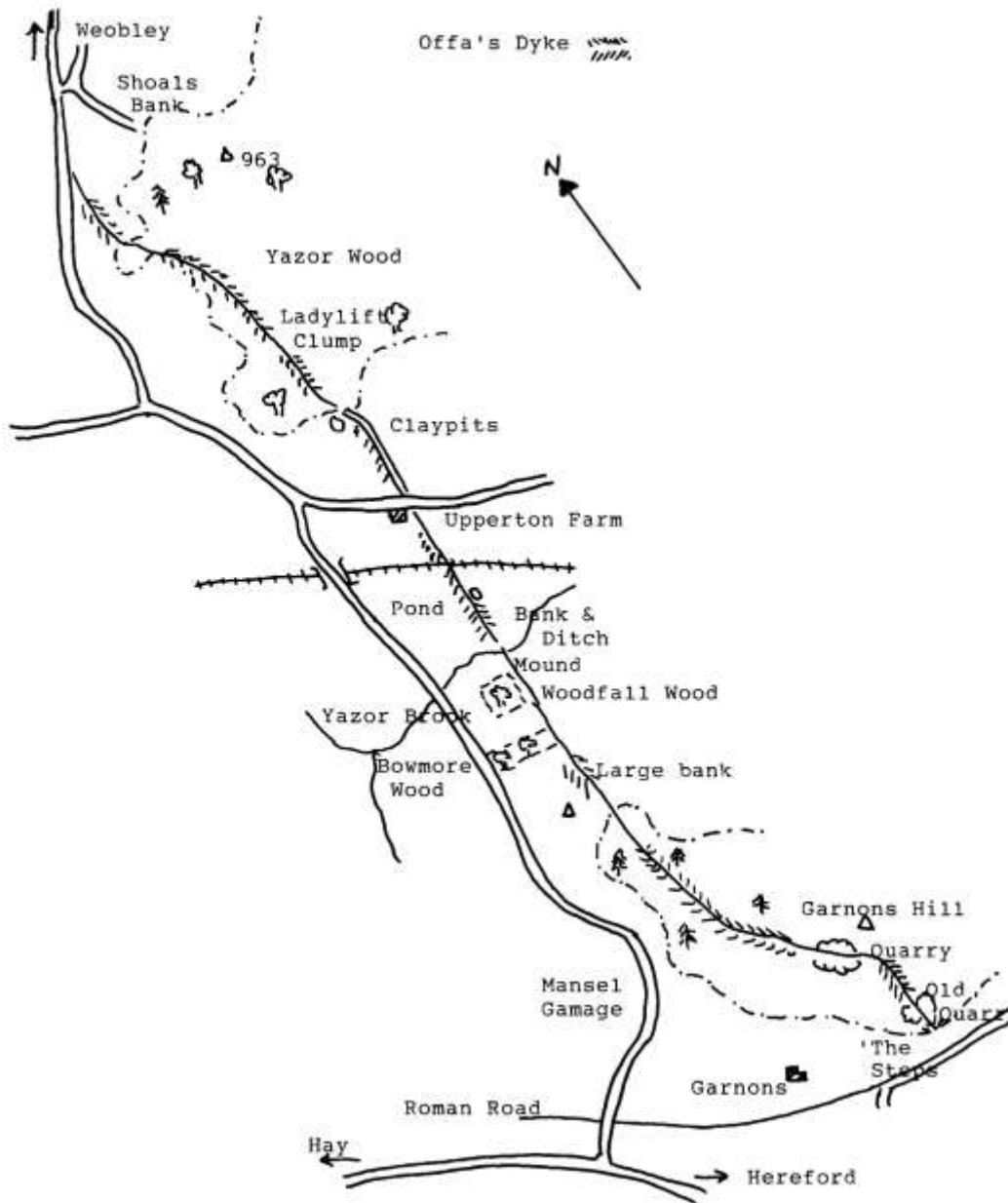
The party then had a late lunch back at 'The Steps' and afterwards proceeded to a point on the Weobley road just south of 'Shoals Bank'.

To the east side of the road there was a bank without ditch visible, running across the field. This was followed to where it entered Yazor Wood where it "became a more typical bank and west ditch. The bank and ditch were followed with some difficulty as an old hollow-way had made use of the ditch which made it difficult to distinguish from other hollow-ways.

On the south flank of Burton Hill below Ladylift Clump it entered the old clay-pits and beyond was a large bank with perhaps traces of a west ditch, but levelled where it coincided with the clay-pits trackway.

At Claypits a large bank, close to and parallel with and extending beyond the dyke to the south attracted our attention. This forms the east boundary of the field. Fox thought it a lynchet due to an old field system with the dyke as a later intrusion. The bank was examined and signs of a west ditch were seen. The suggestion was made that this could have been a parallel approach gap as at Jenkin Allis passageway.

The day's investigations finished here and had been felt worthwhile.



OFFA'S DYKE ASSOCIATION

The Need for a Programme of Archaeological Research

Work on the 10th century Anglo-Welsh frontier laws in the 'Ordinance concerning the Dunsæte' has strengthened the argument that frontiers have to be continuous, and that constructed boundaries which were not intended to be manned would need to be patrolled. Fox's "impenetrable damp oakwoods" have had to be discounted as unproven and unlikely. It is now suggested that in the apparent "gaps" a "pale" rather than a dyke may have been constructed - either because of the plentiful availability of suitable timber, or the presence of clay soils, or both.

If this is so, the most useful archaeological excavations are likely to be those made where the earthwork is weakest, and where timbering may have been on a correspondingly large scale - but some of these apparently insignificant stretches still remain unprotected and unrecognized.

"Traffic gaps" which may well have been constructed timber gates, seem to have been more numerous than Fox thought. It is a daunting prospect that unidentified features of this kind may be exposed to almost complete destruction by deep ploughing - in a way

that Fox's mound at Yazor, postulated as the base of a timber "alignment mark", seems to have been removed from any possibility of archaeological investigation. A single-period timber gateway of the 8th century would be of considerable interest to European archaeologists.

An Archaeological Section of the Offa's Dyke Association, which could coordinate reports of new stretches and features, damage and discoveries, and plan necessary surveys and excavations, may be called for. Mrs Charmian Woodfield, MA, who has been in charge of excavations in Coventry and in Borneo, now living at Knighton has agreed to act as Archaeological Correspondent for the Association, and would be pleased to hear from any members who would be interested in forming a section of this kind.

From Notes supplied by Frank Noble

MILLS ON THE ARROW

On Sunday May 24th, members of the group met at Lyonshall for a short tour of water mills on the River Arrow. Four mills were visited and are listed below with a short note on each. They cover the central section of the River Arrow, and give a cross-section of the various stages of repair which the mills have fallen into since their closure.

Staunton-on-Arrow Mill

This stone-built, stone-tiled, two-storied building probably dates from the 17th century, but could be on the site of an earlier mill. The race runs behind the building for its full length, and there is an overshot water wheel at each end of the building. The western wheel, probably of mid 19th century construction, appears to have been an afterthought, and is enclosed in a late 19th century brick extension. All metal, it has horizontal and vertical wooden axles. In its later life at any rate, it only ran one pair of stones although two pairs are in situ.

The eastern wheel is of early 19th century construction and it too has horizontal and vertical wooden axles, and although, like the western wheel, most of the subsidiary gear wheels etc are cast, both the great gear and hoist wheels are completely wooden, and could therefore be original. There are two pairs of stones here also. On both sets of machinery the bridge-trees are adjusted by levers.

The top storey floor is now not very sound. The building has both a dresser and a wire machine, used for grading the crushed grain, and was last used in the 1940's when it was one of the few mills locally which could grind flour. The miller then was Mr Thomas. The present owner, Mr A Brisbane, is at present repairing the mill-house, and afterwards intends to restore one section of the mill.

Forge Mill, Pembridge

There is a record of a Titley Mill, probably on this site, in the late 14th century when it was recorded as being – "...ruinous condition, but, when it shall be repaired, shall be worth 10/- per year" - . The present building appears to occupy the original site.

The over-shot water and pit wheels have been removed, as has the horizontal axle, but the great gear-wheel is all wooden. The two pairs of stones are of trench type but earlier millstone grit ones are around the building. The dresser has been removed.

The building appears to have been extended to a second floor some time later than the original building and the top storey plastered.

The mill field, the site of the Strangeworth Forge, has iron slag (probably Forest of Dean type) in it, and indeed one of the buildings has been built on iron slag foundations. On investigation of some earthworkings etc in this field, the remains, possibly of a weir, were found in the river bank.

The owner is Mrs J Davies, who tells me that her late husband used to grind animal food here until about 1960.

Hunton Mill

The party viewed the site of a mill for which an estimate was accepted, but never fulfilled, in the mid 18th century.

Titley Mill

This mill, with its stone and timber foundations, and its wooden-framed building, probably dates from the 16th century.

A breast-wheel mill, it has had all the machinery removed, probably around 1900, and has certainly not worked this century. All interior machinery, including the dresser has gone, and both exterior and interior pits filled in and the mill pool silted up.

Much of the timber work and beams have wet rot etc and its general condition is extremely dangerous.

The owner tells me that the mill last worked two owners before his occupation (He has been there since 1930).

Bullocks Mill

A stone building with two wheels, it was an overshot mill. Formerly called Haywards Mill (late 16th century) and Addis' Mills (mid 17th century) it became Bullocks Mill early in the 18th century.

The last millers here were the Duggens who milled until about 1928, when it was let as a barn. At this time all the interior machinery was wooden. It was sold in 1936, when the original building was demolished, and a new building housing an electric turbine was built, but still using the mill race, which had been altered in the mid 19th century, when the railway was built.

The wooden axles were removed, and can still be seen near the building. There are three mill-stones, all millstone grit, which could have been from this mill, to be found near Next End Farm, where the site owner, now lives.

I would be grateful for any information on these or on any of the mills on the Arrow, Lugg or their tributaries and particularly records of prices etc paid for grinding corn.

W R Pye

HUNTSHAM ROMANO-BRITISH VILLA 1969-70

During the 6th season, the eastern end of the villa was investigated. The main feature was a large entrance into the central courtyard, cut through the precinct wall and eastern wing, the flanking "rooms" of which two were fan-shaped, but of unequal lengths. That these structures were probably enclosed rooms was shown by remains of crude flooring.

The commencement of a return wall indicated the possibility of a northern wing parallel to that discovered in 1965.

The other result obtained was the completion of excavation of the eastern side of the precinct wall, this length being 260 feet including two entrances. The other entrance led to the 4th century cottage house discovered and fully excavated in 1964.

The density of finds this season was not so large as usual and suggested that the eastern wing was not an occupation area, but two mid-4th century coins were obtained from the destruction layer.

N P Bridgewater

ROMAN SITE – STRETTON GRANDISON, SO 640 434

At the suggestion of Commdr. Hale, I approached Mr A. Baker for further information about the aerial photographs that he showed at the Malvern Archaeological meeting this year. These were of a Roman fort site at Canon Frome (640 434). He very kindly sent two photographs and several members visited the site on an evening in May, to see if there were any features showing on the ground

It is situated on a slight terrace above the river Frome, on arable land which has just been brought under cultivation. A ring of trees was removed from the centre of the site and

this shows as a ring in the photograph. In May, the young corn was showing some signs of crop marks and there was a very clear rectangular patch which was of a lighter colour and where a wide scatter of pot, oyster shells, stone and tile, were picked up. Other finds on the site included a brooch stone, a sharpening stone with chisel marks, flint and Romano British potsherds which were dated by Mr Stanford to the second century.

A meeting on the site has been fixed for October 17th to explore the whole area more thoroughly when the crop has been cut and the land ploughed. It would be tactful if members kept off the site through the summer as we wish to keep the goodwill of the farmer concerned and other local landowners. A more detailed report by Mr Baker, on the photo survey will appear in the Transactions of the Club. Further information on any Roman finds in this area would be of great interest to us so if you know of any, please let me know.

Jean O'Donnell

FIELD WORK 1970

A major part of our work this year has been to record and survey some unnoted sites. An attempt to make a photographic record of Wigmore Castle on April 25th seemed doomed to failure when it rained hard and the whole site became slippery and treacherous. The ruins are in poor condition although enough building remains to impress one with its size and strength. The trees and undergrowth are damaging the masonry and it cannot be long before there are further falls of stone. We managed to take one set of colour slides and one of black and white prints. These will be deposited in the Woolhope Room as a record (see RCHM for details of castle). The party then had a dry afternoon visiting Mr Griffiths's collection of local pottery at Birtley.

On June 21st the measuring of the aqueduct at Little Hereford, which carried the canal over the river Teme, was finished. Mr Calderbank hopes to continue work on the survey of the whole canal during the coming year, as some features are rapidly disappearing.

Miss R Hickling and I made a start on a plane table survey of the earthworks at Little Hereford. These are between the church and the river Teme. One field was completed and a round, ditched tump plotted at the SW corner, and an unnoticed ditch nearer the church was found. We hope to continue with this project during the year as it is unrecorded in detail.

It would be encouraging to see more of our friends and members on field days, as the useful work being done rests, at the moment, with a handful of people. Your support would be welcomed by an interest in our Open Evening on November 10th at the Green Dragon, when we shall demonstrate what we have been doing in the county since the Archaeology Section began. It will be of general interest, so bring a friend.

**Jean O'Donnell
Chairman**

HEREFORD 1970

The ring-road having been completed, Hereford Excavations Committee no longer exists and its assets have been passed to the Woolhope Club to be used for any excavations in the city which may be undertaken in the future.

Archaeological work is continuing in a small way, however, as new shop premises are erected, and through the courtesy of the contractors it been possible to keep a watching brief on the new Marks & Spencer site and the site recently occupied by Sid Wright's greengrocery shop.

Both these sites are on the line of the early defensive works which follow West St. and East St, and part of the bank was seen in section under the road close to 'The Bunch of Grapes' where a subway is being constructed. Most finds have come from a series of pits in and behind the tail of the rampart, and varying from the 11th to the 19th centuries. In most cases, due to the building work and to the depth, it has not been possible to clear archaeologically or to establish surface levels, and most finds came out on the contractors'

shovels. However it has been possible to obtain some groups of finds from the pits, which are of interest:

Pit 1	14th century	Black cooking pots and Large pottery tray
Pit 2	16th century	Pottery and remains from Bone Knife Handle-making
Pit 3	14th century	Black cooking pots
Pit 4	11th century	Unglazed Chester ware
Pit 5	19th century	Various Iron Objects (probably a well)

Work is still continuing on the site.

RS