HEREFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWS

HAN 27 March 1974

WOOLHOPE CLUB
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH SECTION

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HEREFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWS SHEET
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No. 27 March 1974

Edited by: Ron Shoesmith

SECRETARY'S NOTE

We continue at a membership of around 50 - some of whom live out of the county - but we do wish that a few more would come on our field days. We know that you have many calls on your time but if you could remember to keep open the first Sunday in each month for the ARS Field Day an interesting and refreshing day out would be your reward.

On behalf of our Treasurer, Peter Cooper, may I remind you that our subscription continues at 40p a year and that he is already happy to receive your contribution in good time
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John Lewis, Secretary

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Group was held in the Green Dragon Hotel on Thursday, 6th December, 1973.

The following officers were elected:

Chairman:	Miss R Hickling
Secretary:	S B Webb,
Treasurer:	P Cooper, (To whom your subscription of 40p should be sent for 1974.)
Committee Members:	L Skelton, J G Calderbank
Newsletter Editor:	C E Attfield, (To whom contributions for the next issue should be sent.)
Field Sec:	Miss M Thomas,

RESEARCH SECTION MEETING AT ST DEVEREUX, March 1973

This meeting was planned, as an experiment, in order to test the possibilities of making an archaeological and historical survey of the development and decline of an area from earliest times to the present day. St. Devereux was chosen because of its many interesting features together with a certain amount of available documentary evidence.

Eleven members met near the church and a brief investigation was made of nearby fields for evidence of medieval house platforms and tracks. There appears to have been possible settlement in the area to the west and north of the church. Monuments within the church

present interesting 17th & 18th Century inscriptions which could also prove of use in a survey.

Later we visited the moated site at Trelough, the line of the old tramway, and the Motte and Bailey site at Didley. Here, in a field a few hundred yards south of the motte, we noted what appear to be quite well defined fish ponds which do not seen to have been recorded previously.

Crizely, lying to the west of Didley, proved to be an interesting area of small cottage holdings and enclosures, mostly derelict, linked by numerous tracks. Some of these were undoubtedly connected with the brickworks of which little trace remains.

Although this was a very interesting day it was generally agreed that most of the sites were isolated in time and position, not forming a unit for study as had been originally envisaged. A detailed survey would be a very time consuming exercise and would probably add little to existing knowledge. We decided that, as a research section, our time could be more profitably spent upon more urgent projects.

Mary Thomas

INVESTIGATION OF A POSSIBLE ROMAN ROAD IN THE GOLDEN VALLEY
June 1973

The original aim of this investigation was to prove or disprove, by excavation if possible, the long accepted theory of a Roman dating for the track running northwestwards from Abbeydore to Peterchurch and beyond, following the valley of the River Dore.

A preliminary sortie ruled out the hope of excavation, as the one or two possible stretches of the alignment were either under cereal crops or in the hands of unsympathetic landowners. Therefore, we spent the day re-assessing, and, we hope, adding to the conflicting ideas already put forward. Eight members attended the meeting in a mood of accepting nothing short of a Roman coin embedded in the foundations of the track! It had been hoped to work, from the known to the unknown, westwards from Abbeydore. One or two members cast doubt upon a Roman dating for the generally accepted excavated section in the station yard, and this, of course, in spite of its classically Roman character has not been proved by any 'finds'.

Problem 1
Where, in the Roman period, would such a road be leading to? Clyro? This is an early military site, occupied for a short period only, and no civil settlement has been discovered as yet. Clifford? There is a possible river crossing here and, although a fort site would fit in with the military pattern, there is no evidence for one.

Problem 2
The valley bottom has been subject to centuries of flooding and silting. It is also good agricultural land and has been heavily cultivated in parts. The construction of the Golden Valley railway involved much cutting, embanking, and diversion of the river making investigation difficult. In the early 17th century Rowland Vaughan trenched and irrigated the valley as reported in his Waterworks (1608). This could well have obliterated some stretches.

Problem 3
The track follows the very lowest lying part of the valley. Roman roads, on the whole, tend to run on slightly higher ground above the flood level.

Parts of the alignment investigated (nos. refer to map)

1 & 2. Sections excavated by Mr V H Coleman in 1958 show substantial metalling, curb stones, and deeply worn ruts in the road.

3. During exceptionally dry weather the track can be seen crossing a meadow and lining up with ...

4. … a well-used straight lane which is well sited above flood level.

5. Dogleg bend in modern road suggests line of the track.

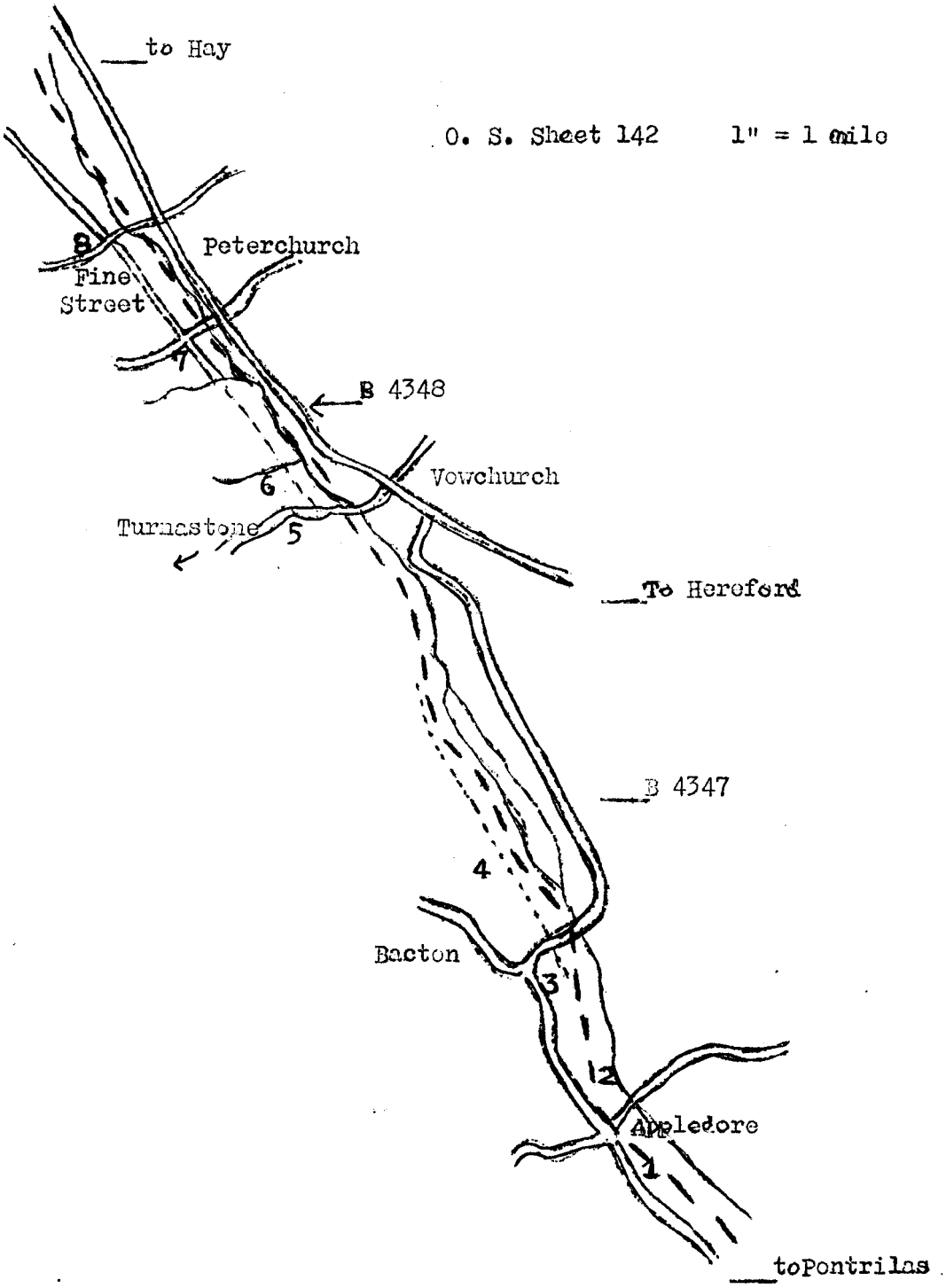
6. Here there is a suggestion of metalling in the bed of a small stream. The footpath runs along the bank of Vaughan's 'Trench Royal' and lines up with …

7. … a grassy lane. Probing shows metalling at a depth of about 8 inches.

8. The 'back road' at Peterchurch crosses Fine Street, which could suggest Roman origins.

The discovery of a 'new' Roman site or the opportunity to section the track may someday reveal the origins of this route. Our field meeting added little to existing knowledge, but stimulated interest and discussion with local people and this could well lead to or aid future research.

Mary Thomas


to Hay
O. S. Sheet 142 1" = 1 mile
8
Peterchurch
Fine Street
7
B 4348
6
Vowchurch
Turnastone
5
To Hereford
B 4347
4
Bacton
3
2
Appledore
1
toPontrilas

FIELD DAY ON HEDGEROW ANALYSIS IN MOCCAS AND BREDWARDINE PARISHES

Seven members braved the rain to carry out analysis on hedgerows in Moccas and Bredwardine Parishes with the object of establishing the local validity of Dr Max Hooper's theory that a hedgerow initially planted with only one species will acquire additional new species, at a rate of approximately one every 100 years. The County Record Office has the enclosures plans, dated 1819, for land on top of Bredwardine Hill, and 1798 for Moccas Common around the present day Moccas Crossroads. In addition, there is an estate plan of the Cornewall Estates dated 1772. The Section would like to thank the Moccas Estate and Mr Price of Snodhill for permission to survey the hedges in their ownership.

The results of this survey show that while in some areas the composition of the hedges support the theory (i.e. in the area west of Arthur's Stone on Dorstone Hill, northwest of the area of Moccas Court), elsewhere (i.e. east of Arthur's Stone and in the enclosures of 1798 and between1772-1798 around Moccas Crossroads), it appears that the hedges were planted with a variety of species in the first place. This, of course, makes it impossible to draw any conclusions as to the date of the hedges existing before 1772 in this area. It is an interesting fact that Sir Humphrey Repton was advising the Cornewalls of the Moccas Estate on the landscaping of Moccas Court in 1796 and it may be possible that this had an influence on the type of hedge planting carried out at this period. Certainly the variety of species in the hedges of that period is exceptional.

Whether or not Dr Hooper's theory is accepted as a reasonable hypothesis, the survey did show that some combinations of species occurred in every, or nearly every hedge of the same age in the same area. Hawthorn was a universally occurring species in every sample but the area northwest of Arthur's Stone was the only place where it was the only common species in hedges of every period. Ash and field maple occurred as frequently as hawthorn only in hedges of 1798 in the area around Moccas Crossroads. Elder occurred frequently only in the samples west of Moccas Court but in periods dating from before 1772 right up to l886. Hazel occurred frequently in the samples from before 1772 up to 1886 but only in areas east of Moccas Crossroads and south-east of Arthur's Stone. Holly occurred frequently only in hedges before 1772 southeast of Arthur's Stone, while blackthorn occurred frequently only before 1772 in the area west of Moccas Court.

A simple explanation for these variations would be to assume that hedges containing one or two other species besides hawthorn were quite frequently planted in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and it is therefore not safe to assume that a hedge can be dated by the number of its species in this area.

'A'	-	Area north west of Arthur's Stone	850-900' OD
'B'	-	Area south east of Arthur's Stone	850-900' OD
'C'	-	Area west of Moccas Court	250' OD
'D'	-	Area west of Moccas Crossroads	250' OD

Period	1798	1819		1772-1886		Pre-1772			
Areas	**D+C**	**A**	**B**	**A+B+C**	**D**	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**
No of hedges	7	11	15	22	12	12	19	5	14
Ash	7	3	8	6	9	3	3		9
Beech			1						
Blackthorn	4	1	2	5	7	8	4		13
Bullace			2						
Damson		1		1	1		2		
Dogswood	1		1	1					2
Elder	4	3	7	16	3	9	3	4	9
Elm		1	2	5	4		3	2	2
Field Maple	7	2	5		8	3	2	3	10
Gooseberry			3						
Guelder Rose									
Hawthorn	7	10	14	20	12	12	9	5	13
Hazel	4	2	13	2	10	9	10	3	13
Holly		3	3	4	2	6	7		3
Oak	5	1	1	1	3	1	1		3
Privet	2			2					
Spindle				1	2				
Sycamore	2	3	1		1	1			
Whitebeam					1				
Willow	2	1			1	3	1		
Wych Elm			2					1	
Yew							1		
Total No of Species	45	31	65	67	64	55	46	18	77
Average No per Hedge	6.4	3.0	4.2	3.0	5.3	4.5	4.6	3.6	5.5

R E Hickling
November 1973

FIELD DAY AT THE LEOMINSTER CANAL

My last report appeared in the WARS Newssheet No. 25 published in June 1972. This reported an examination of the stretch of the canal between Wooferton and Putnal Field near Orleton when the derelict lock-keepers cottage and remains of a lock (both at Wyson) were recorded. It should be noted that the cottage has subsequently been demolished to ground level, presumably for the bricks which have been largely removed.

On Sunday, 6th August 1972 a small party of members, augmented by canoeists from Staunton-on-Wye Youth Hostel, met to explore and record the interior of the Putnal tunnel. In order to conserve time and effort it was agreed that the party should split and work independently until lunchtime; the hostellers, led by Ron Shoesmith, taking the north portal and the reminder, led by myself, working from the south portal. The detailed findings will eventually be published, but it can be mentioned that the tunnel was confirmed as having suffered roof-collapse, the brickwork was found to be very poor, and the alignment decidedly erratic. The photography was unsuccessful, but a subsequent return to the tunnel (Saturday,

3rd March, 1973) enabled us to rectify this when a useful set of flash photographs were taken by Rosamund Hickling.

These photographs, together with various plans and drawings, were later displayed at the Technical College on the occasion of the CBA (West Mid) meeting as part of the exhibition staged by the WARS.

A further field meeting on Sunday, 18th March was allocated to the recording of the canal feeder sluice near Stockton Cross, previously discovered by Les Skelton and myself in the course of investigating the canal feed system as a whole. At this field meeting the whole complex of weir, sluice, and channels was recorded in plan by members of the section working in small groups, but only after considerable effort had been put into clearing the vegetation and silt away from the channel and sluice. The site was later re-visited, datum lines established, and relative levels taken over the entire complex. This additional data was plotted straight onto the original plan and I was thus able to prepare an isometric representation of the sluice complex in time for the aforementioned CBA meeting. The alignment of the feeder has now been traced as far as Tick Bridge, at which point there are the remains of another weir which provided water from Stockton Brook.

This was reputedly demolished to alleviate flooding but the remains are probably sufficient for us to record the feature and conjecture the probable modus operandi. A further field meeting has been fixed for the 3rd February next with this objective in mind.

J G Calderbank

FIELD MEETING TO EXAMINE THE LUGG NAVIGATION

On Sunday, 4th November1973, a party of members and guests assembled at Mordiford Bridge preparatory to an examination of the remains of the Lugg navigation in the vicinity of Hereford. 'Recovery' vehicles were left at the bridge and the party then concentrated into a few cars and drove to Lugwardine bridge before disembarking to walk back along the banks of the Lugg to Mordiford. Firstly we examined the bridge at Lugwardine, but noticed little of any significance other than the greater depth of water flowing between the centre arch as opposed to the side arches. We deduced that this centre arch was probably used as the boat channel during the period of active navigation of the river.

About half a mile downstream we came across the remains of the lock which served to bypass the old mill at Tidnor where there was formerly a weir obstructing the river. The arrangement can be studied by reference to the OS six inch map of the area, and I have subsequently discussed the feature with people who remember the arrangement before it was demolished. So far as I am aware, there is no detailed record of the lock and it is intended to re-visit the site and record the principal dimensions.

Continuing downstream, we next examined the area just above the confluence of the Frome with the Lugg where several navigational features were noted by Les Skelton and myself during the course of canoe trips on the Lugg. These features comprise a fine triple arched bridge giving access across the river from Hampton Bishop to the Longworth/Tidnor area, and an artificial cut on the right bank of the river bypassing a series of shallows in the .- main course of the Lugg. There can be little doubt that the artificial cut is later than the bridge, and that it incorporated a stone-lined feature built almost certainly from masonry robbed from the superstructure of the bridge. The present superstructure has been replaced in brickwork, and this is taken in confirmation of the conjectured sequence of the navigational remains hereabout. The stone-lined feature is taken to be the remains of a multi-purpose wharf/passing place and (possibly) lock; the probable purpose of which was to serve the community at Hampton Bishop. No further features were observed on the remaining course of the Lugg as we continued back to Mordiford.

Retracing our drive to Lugwardine, we were met by a further member for lunch before proceeding to Lugg Bridge, Wergins Bridge and finally to Mordiford. At Lugg Bridge are substantial and complex remains of the extensive milling operations once conducted there

when mill buildings and water wheels used to extend practically across the alignment of the present river. Period representations of these are extant, although they have been subsequently demolished to foundation level, presumably in the interest of flood alleviation. In similar condition is to be seen the slight remains of a lock which served to bypass the weir and mills at this point. The bridge widening operations at present in hand seem likely to destroy or, at best, obscure the remains of the lock which was located on the right (Hereford) bank of the river.

The final visit to Mordiford Bridge provided the most impressive and substantial remains of the Lugg navigation to be seen that day. The feature is well known and documented, although there is probably no record preserved. It consists of a probable overflow channel, flood channel and lock, the latter still retaining iron hinges where the lock gate(s) had been located. The Section could well devote some future time and energy to recording these various features since experience shows that such remains are steadily being lost with the passage of time, accelerated by the need to improve road bridges and alleviate flooding on the river.

The visit to Wergins Bridge revealed no definite evidence of the navigation, the present bridge being quite modern, although slight remains of the original bridge are to be seen under the present arch at foundation level and partially under water.

Enough has been seen of these remains to persuade me that the navigation of the River Lugg was probably far more extensive than has sometimes been suggested.

J G Calderbank

EXCAVATION AT CASTLE GREEN, HEREFORD

Excavations were carried out in advance of re-scarping and revetting the riverside bank of the bailey of Hereford Castle. Previous excavations to the north of the site had established the position of a church, considered to be that of St Guthlac, associated with Saxon and Medieval burials. To establish the occupation of the site, two areas were excavated behind the raised footpath which ran along the top of the river bank, in an area where drains and electricity cables were likely to be laid. Machine cut trenches joined these areas through the raised footpath to the river bank, in an attempt to find traces of the original river defences.

The raised footpath was long supposed to reflect those defences, but pottery finds established that the bank was constructed in the 18th century solely as a landscaping feature. A series of revetting walls, at the southeast corner of the bailey, one of which had already been made apparent by riverbank erosion, are presumably connected with this landscaping.

The almost complete disuse of the castle between the 14th and 18th centuries was reflected in the pottery finds. However, beneath the footpath enbankment, an undisturbed layer of brown soil and mortar spread produced 12th and 13th century potsherds, arrowheads, and animal bones.

Stretching beneath the medieval layer, and encompassing the whole of the main area of excavation was a burial ground, from which, in all, the remains of 87 bodies were recovered. Further skeletons were exposed by the contractors working on the riverbank. Some of the burials may be medieval, but it would appear that the main use of the burial ground was in the Saxon period. All articulated burials were aligned east-west, but there were no finds at all associated with the skeletons.

Different burial techniques were used, and in the upper levels one of the skeletons was buried in a stone-lined cyst. Four burials were provided with packing stones at either side of the skull.

Many iron nails and iron coffin fastenings were found in situ, and these clearly delineated the coffin shapes, although it was impossible, except at the lowest levels, to find the original grave cuts due to the constant re-use of the site.

Among the earlier burials, eight were found associated with quantities of charcoal. These would seem to be similar to burials found at Winchester, York, Oxford, and Exeter. In four of these cases, associated coffin nails were found, and in one case the coffin impression was clearly visible. Two of the charcoal burials had stones on either side of the head. In all cases the bodies were laid on a bed of charcoal, although in one or two cases the charcoal seems to have covered the body as well.

Four of the charcoal burials were within the limits of the corner of a loose stone built structure which was presumably the support for a timber framed building. The stonework had one re-building phase and was roughly oriented east-west. One charcoal burial was cut into the re-built stonework.

Lack of time and finance and the activities of the construction workers made it impossible to remove all the earlier burials.

R Shoesmith

WORK IN THE REAR YARD OF THE LAMB HOTEL

At a point where the City Wall becomes part of the structure of outbuildings in the yard of the Lamb Hotel, St Owen's St, excavations were carried out by workmen to strengthen and provide a solid foundation for the wall. Three trenches approximately a metre wide were dug, each extending for some 2½ metres from the wall, and each undercutting the wall to a maximum distance of 10 cms. The trenches varied in depth from 75-90 cms. immediately under the wall to about 50 cms. at the end away from the wall.

Observations throughout the period of excavation indicated:

1. That the area adjacent to and underneath the wall had been previously excavated, probably more than once.
2. That timber structures had previously existed adjacent to the wall, and these may have continued under the wall line.

It is assumed that the previous excavations and undercutting were associated with previous attempts to stabilize the wall on this section, and fragments of brick indicate that the work was post-medieval and possibly 19th century.

Ron Shoesmith

A SKELETON AT SUTTON WALLS CAMP

Excavations were carried out for two days in August 1973, when a human skeleton was revealed in section during machine activities. The skeleton was reported to the Department of the Environment as the section was liable to fall.

The skeleton, evidencing many fresh breaks resulting from bank settlement, was laid on its left side, with hands at left hip and lower legs (lost in machining) bent back. The head was thrust forward to accommodate the body in the 50 cm. deep hollow, scooped from the occupation level of the primary embankment.

The skeleton is probably that of a male of advanced age.

One sherd of iron age pot was recovered from the grave.

Ron Shoesmith