

# HEREFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWS



HAN 32     June 1976

WOOLHOPE CLUB  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH SECTION

## CONTENTS

EDITORIAL.....	3
PROGRAMME – WINTER – JULY-DECEMBER 1976.....	4
FIELD MEETING AT LETTON, WINFORTON & OAKER’S HILL – 4 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 1976 .....	5
FIELD MEETING, 1 <sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY, 1976 – GOODRICH AREA.....	9
“FINDS”, BY ROGER PYE.....	11
WATERWORKS ON THE HUMBER BROOK ABOVE HAMPTON COURT .....	12
NEW MEMBERS, AND OFFICERS OF THE GROUP .....	15
PRELIMINARY NOTES ON A SECTION OF THE HEREFORD & GLOUCESTER CANAL	15
INTERIM REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS AT DRYBRIDGE HOUSE .....	18
RADNORSHIRE SOCIETY, FIELD RESEARCH SECTION.....	19
FINAL INTERIM REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS AT BEWELL HOUSE, HEREFORD.....	20
ROMAN SITE AT BLACKWARDINE.....	24
NOTES ON THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.....	26

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

**No. 32     June 1976**

**EDITORIAL**

It is with regret that I report the sad loss of one of our active members since the last News, namely Pat Moore. Pat was very interested in Roman Military matters and contributed some interesting and at times controversial articles on the subject. We shall all miss him, and extend our sympathy to Mrs Moore.

It is most gratifying that the "Guide to Prehistoric and Roman Sites in Herefordshire", on which certain members of the Group spent many hours, has been produced with the financial assistance of the main Club. Those members deserve a hearty vote of thanks. A free copy of the booklet, which measures 14½ x 20½ cms, contains 35 pages and 3 maps, is being sent to all members of the Club. Additional copies may be obtained from Mrs M Tonkin or myself, price 30p collected or add 10p for postage. These will be on sale after the members have received their copy. It has also been arranged with the Tourist Information Office and the Museum at Hereford to have a few copies on sale.

The Hereford City Archaeological Committee are at present carrying out excavations in Berrington Street, Hereford, just behind the old City Wall. Ron Shoosmith is in charge of operations and an interesting display of clay pipes, bottles and pottery is on display in the Museum window. A report by Ron will be forthcoming for the next issue.

Mr W Attwell is continuing his excavations of a Roman site at Blackwardine, and a letter from him is included in this issue together with a plan of the foundations of the building.

Rosamund Hickling tells me that a revised sketch plan of the Waterworks complex on the Humber Brook above Hampton Court will appear in the next issue, to clarify certain points in her further article on this interesting subject.

Mary Thomas is going on a Course in connection with her work and will be away from Hereford for some months from the end of this year. I have agreed to take on the job of Acting Secretary for that period and members should, therefore, direct any correspondence or enquiries to me after receipt of this News.

The names of several longstanding members were omitted from the last printed list, and these included Mr I Holmes and Mr F Noble. The present County Archaeologist is Mr J P Roberts,.

Roger Pye has sent me details concerning the setting up of a Field Research Section in the Radnorshire Society, and a note on this is in the News.

Once again I record my grateful thanks to Mr R Kay, the Assistant Editor, for his unflinching help.

C E Attfield

**Editor**

Note: The views expressed in the articles are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily of the Group.

**PROGRAMME – WINTER – JULY-DECEMBER 1976**

Sunday, 18 <sup>th</sup> July	LLANVAIR GRANGE	This is a Grange of Dore Abbey which is being excavated by Mr D Jemmett, who has agreed to explain his work. Parc Grace Dieu, site of a chapel and nearby a Jesuit College of 17 <sup>th</sup> Century date. Leader – Mr R Kay Meet 11.00 am and 2.00 pm at Three Salmons Inn, Cross Ash GR 399194.
Sunday, 5 <sup>th</sup> September	AYMESTREY AREA	Investigation of gravel pits to look at glaciation lines and possible pre-historic occupation. Visit to a watermill. Search for a rock shelter used by fugitives after the battle of Mortimers Cross. Leader - Mr R Pye Meet 11.00 am and 2.00 pm at Village Inn, Aymestrey.
Sunday, 3 <sup>rd</sup> October	IRONBRIDGE INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM	Important: Please contact Mr G Warren (Bodenham 278) by 31 <sup>st</sup> July for details if you wish to attend. It is hoped to have the services of an official guide, and advance booking is essential. Leader - Mr G Warren Meet 9.30 am at Leominster Bus Station. Depending on numbers, a Mini-Bus may be hired.
Sunday, 21 <sup>st</sup> November	BRINGEWOOD CHASE	Search for the line of the park pale. Leader - Miss R Hickling Meet 11.00 am and 2.00 pm outside the Castle Gate, Ludlow.
Thursday, 2 <sup>nd</sup> December	AGM	Meet at the Cider Train, Moorfields Railway Sidings (by kind permission of Messrs H P Bulmer & Co Ltd) at 7.30 pm. After the meeting Mr S Webb and Mr G Warren will talk about the Gloucester to Hereford canal and there will be an exhibition of Mr Webb's photographs. Other photos, material or slides on this or other subjects will be welcomed. Note - Access to the rail sidings is off Whitecross Road via the entrance opposite Ryelands St and through the Parking Area where the metal Woodpecker statue is sited.

Note:

1. If any further information is required about this programme, or if in doubt in case of bad weather, please contact a Committee Member or Leader.
2. Guests are welcome at all field meetings.
3. Do not forget to wear suitable clothing and bring sufficient food.

**FIELD MEETING AT LETTON, WINFORTON & OAKER'S HILL – 4<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 1976**

The meeting was planned to visit and examine the village of Letton, the forgotten site of a mediaeval hermitage at Winforton and the summit of Oaker's Hill for traces of Neolithic occupation.

The object of the visit to Letton was to discover whether the present houses etc were a shrunken remnant of a larger Medieval or later village. Near the Swan Inn a brief examination was made of the existing half timbered houses, none of which seem to show structural evidence of a date earlier than the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> C. Immediately S of the present main road and parallel with it, traces of a hollow way lead in the direction of the parish church, but at the crossing of a small brook its course is lost due to the adjacent landscaping of the grounds of Letton Court. This landscaping seems also to have effected the divergence of the brook from its original course. On either side of the hollow way (and present main road) are traces of house platforms, one of those on the N side being occupied by a house of recent construction, another, now overgrown with brambles, once supported a vanished half timbered house which was in existence twenty years ago. Between the brook and the church, the artificially raised and terraced grounds of 19<sup>th</sup> C Letton Court have effectively destroyed any trace of possible further early house and building sites. W of the church, the outbuildings of the Court have effectively obscured any earlier occupation with the exception of one small half timbered house of 17<sup>th</sup> C date with a projecting porch of two storeys.

The church, within the grounds and almost surrounded by outbuildings of the Court, was next visited. Often, the parish church is by far the oldest structure existing in a village and as such often offers valuable dating clues as to its changing prosperity or size, independently of documentary evidence. This is particularly true of the time before the Reformation, when church going on the part of the parish inhabitants was a must!

The edifice is of early Norman origin, it apparently consisted of a small rectangular building constructed of local calcareous tufa and red sandstone. This is represented by the present nave, which in its walls retains remains of the original Norman building, altered by later insertions and rebuildings. The Norman structure, although of small dimensions, shows some decorations and embellishment in its architectural detail, indicating a modest prosperity. Towards the very end of the 12<sup>th</sup> C, or early in the 13<sup>th</sup> C, the church proved to be too small for the needs of its parish. A chancel was extended to the E of the then existing building which was converted into the nave of the new church. In the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> C a S transept chapel was thrown out from the E end of the S wall of the nave, apparently to contain the tombs and effigies of the local lord of the manor. At the same time the pride of the parish demanded the erection of a bell tower, which was built on the N side of the nave. After this time, there were no major structural alterations to the building. Some fenestration was replaced in a later style, woodwork was renewed and late in the 19<sup>th</sup> C the building underwent a major restoration.

Members showed some interest in the church and its furnishings so a brief description of its more salient features should not come amiss.

The present building consists of an aisleless nave and chancel, S transept chapel S porch and a N tower, the base of which forms a N transept.

The narrow Norman nave, built largely of tufa, shows some herringbone masonry in its N wall and also a crude projecting external stringcourse of square section. This portion of the building seems to have had poor foundations, which have settled, necessitating the later supporting buttresses.

The narrow ornamented S doorway, with chip carved lintel and a plain tympanum filling the arch above, is early. It has continuous shallow chevron moulding around both arch and jambs, and would indicate a late 11<sup>th</sup> or early 12<sup>th</sup> C date. This doorway shares a porch with the W doorway of the S transept, an unusual feature. The W doorway, larger and plainer, without ornamentation, is of similar date and also with a lintel (restored) and a plain tympanum filling the arch above. The later window above is a couplet of trefoil headed lights. An early round headed light is obscured by the junction of the W wall of the S transept.

When the chancel was built the entire E gable wall of the original Norman church seems to have been demolished. The chancel and nave, although of differing elevations and widths, are now structurally undivided. There is no chancel arch. There are E lancets in the N and S walls of the chancel, and a priest's doorway and pointed chamfered recesses for piscina and aumbry in the S wall. The piscina may be displaced, as it is now outside the line of the communion rails. There is a shallow cusped and foliated sepulchral recess of Decorated style, which has lost its effigy, in the N wall. Another small pointed recess of problematical usage adjoins the tower arch.

The original arrangement of how the S transept opens to the nave is now obscure. There is no arch, but unfinished or mutilated jambs may indicate a former arch. This and possibly a chancel arch may have been destroyed at some bygone restoration. The 14<sup>th</sup> C, S transept chapel has external diagonal angle buttresses. In its S wall are two tomb recesses, both lacking effigies and whose foliated canopies have been barbarously hacked away, possibly in order to have fitted now vanished panelling to the internal walls. The window above is of unusual design. In the E wall is a recess with "ball flower" decoration on its hood moulding, and nearby a mutilated ogee headed piscina recess.

The N tower, with a pyramidal capped roof, possesses a not very picturesque timbered belfry stage. Its basement forms a kind of N transept, opening to the nave by a low arch; on one of its jambs is a flood mark of 1795. Lying loose on the floor is a fragment of a 13<sup>th</sup> C sepulchral slab. There are three bells, two with Latin inscriptions of pre-Reformation date.

There is an octagonal font on a slender stem, a late 17<sup>th</sup> C or early 18<sup>th</sup> C pulpit, almost in Baroque style, with a sounding board over, and a contemporary communion table. There are a few 18<sup>th</sup> C chairs in the chancel. Near the pulpit are traces of the rood loft approach & its supports.

The architectural history of the church would seem to indicate the existence of a small but reasonably prosperous community by 1100, its steady expansion until about 1200 or beyond. The district seems to have been only marginally affected by the "Black Death", after which the population remained static until the early 19<sup>th</sup> C, followed by steady decline in numbers since.

Members then proceeded by car to Winforton and then walked across the meadows to Court Barn, at GR 303464, to examine the adjoining site of the mediaeval hermitage. Its history may be of interest to members and is given briefly below.

Winforton in the Domesday Survey was in the hundred of Elsedune. Subsequently it was in that of Stretford. Finally, in the reign of Henry the VIII, it was incorporated in the newly formed hundred of Huntington. The land was waste in Saxon times and part of the possessions of Earl Harold. At the Conquest it was granted to Ralph de Toden, who sub-granted the manor to Roger de Mucegros. In the registers of the Augustinian Priory of Wormsley, several members of that family appear as benefactors to the hermitage of St Cynidr at Winforton. After the rebellion of Simon de Montfort, whom the Mucegros family supported, Winforton passed to the Stranges. In 1264 Johannes Extrandos was "Dominus de Monyton and Wynfretton", in which year he granted the hermitage of Winforton to the Priory of Wormsley and the canons there, who in return were to "celebrate divine service for ye Soules of Dom Walter de Mucegros and myne own". A few years later John le Strange, son of Johannes, gave to the hermitage a field. Shortly afterward Winforton passed to the

Mortimers. In 1304 Roger Mortimer, by deed, gave sundry privileges to the hermitage of Winforton. On the attainder of Roger Mortimer in 1330 Winforton was granted by the King to Maurice Berkeley. In 1460 Winforton became Crown property and remained so until 1547 when it was granted by Henry VIII to Edmund Vaughan. He sold the estate in 1570 to John Townsend. During the Civil War it was forfeited to the Commonwealth. After the Restoration it went to the Hillman family, thence to Freemans and Blissets.

The exact date of erection of a parish church at Winforton is uncertain. Domesday makes no mention of it. The earliest remaining structural detail in the present building cannot be dated earlier than mid 13<sup>th</sup> C. Documents mention the existence of a church in the time of Hugh Ffoliot, Bishop of Hereford. The earliest mention of the parish church is incidental and is contained in a deed of Walter de Mucegros, whereby he gives to the Hermitage all the croft next to the chapel adjoining the land of the church of Winforton.

The Hermitage of St Cynidr was one of the most interesting features in the history of Winforton. It was quite probably founded long before the parish was formed. Possibly when Winforton was still the "waste" of Domesday, some pious hermit seeking refuge from the turmoils and temptations of the world took up his abode on a little island in the River Wye about half a mile S of the spot where the later parish church of Winforton was built. In due time there arose on the little island not only a hermitage but a chapel dedicated to St Cynidr, a Celtic Saint of the 6<sup>th</sup> C. From its dedication it would seem that the chapel was founded at some period before the Saxon conquest of the locality. It may indeed have owed its origin to the saint whose name it bears. He was buried at Glasbury, not a great distance away, the church of which is dedicated to him.

The foundation of the hermitage is ascribed by Camden to one Walter, a canon regular of the Augustinian Priory of Wormsley, but this is evidently a mistake. The hermitage had long been in existence, and moreover had been richly endowed by the neighbouring lords with lands and privileges, when in the year 1264 John le Strange, Lord of Monnington and Winforton, with consent of Stephen the Hermit and of Endicus, Precentor of Hereford, granted the hermitage and the right of patronage thereto to the church of St Leonard at Wormsley. The first benefactor of the hermitage was Walter de Mucegros, Lord of Winforton and son of Milo and Petronilla de Mucegros, who with the consent of his wife Iveta and Milo de Mucegros, his son and heir, gave to God & the Blessed Virgin Mary & the Blessed Cynidr and to the servants of God, performing divine service in his chapel of St Cynidr in the Isle of Winforton, the land of Brotheracre, also two acres in his wood next to the land of Steuma (Stowe) called Eximo, two and a half acres next to Brotheracres, one acre and a half next to those of Philip Roxley, all his manor of Vynacres as far as Assarhem Eynan, another acre under Sheama, the site of the mill with all its appurtenances upon the Wye in the Lordship of Winforton, with the grist of the village, that part of the manor that Aluredus now held, and pasture for three cows and for one palfrey in the lordship of Winforton, and the croft next the chapel which adjoins the church land of Winforton, and free egress and ingress to till the said lands, and to receive the profit of the mill. The grant concludes by calling down the wrath of God and the Blessed Virgin and the Blessed Cynidr and of the Bishop of Hereford (Hugh Ffoliot) and all other Christian people, on anyone who shall presume to sell or diminish or otherwise interfere with the grant of Walter Mucegros.

Some years later when the Friar Stephen was the occupant of the hermitage, several more donations were made to it. Walter de Mucegros, son of Milo Mucegros and Margeriede Blenkrundon, confirmed the grants of his grandfather, Walter, to the hermitage and chapel of St Cynidr, and to Stephen, the hermit there, he gave the increase of his land between the chapel and the Wye with all the quick hedge, which by his consent Friar Stephen had placed about the said hermitage, and he also ordained that it should not be lawful for anyone to take anything out of the enclosure so endorsed. Robert de Whitney, Lord of a neighbouring parish, gave to the chapel of St Cynidr and Friar Stephen and his successors in the hermitage more acres of land in the old "Hay" (possibly part of the farm now called Mill Haugh). The grant was afterwards confirmed by Sir Eustace de Whitney.

Another benefactor to the hermitage was Walter de Clifford, nephew of "Fair Rosamund" who granted five acres of land in his manor of Middlewood, wherein one half acre lay next to the chapel of St Oswald (now called Tuswell) and one half towards Gillmeige, also common pasture in Middlewood, with the lands in Winforton, and a tenement by St Oswald's chapel and the lands of Rice ap Philip. The hermitage had thus acquired quite an important position, when, for some reason or other, it suddenly lost its independence and became simply an appanage of Wormsley Priory. It may be that its increasing revenues were being misused and that it was thought better to place it under the control of a respected local religious establishment. Willingly or otherwise, Friar Stephen gave his consent to the arrangement. The register of Wormsley Priory records that in 1264 John le Strange, with the consent of Stephen the Hermit and of Endicus, Precentor of Hereford, granted the hermitage of St Cynidr, with the right of patronage there, to the church of St Leonard of Wormsley and the Canons there serving God, who were in return to say mass for the souls of the donor and Walter Mucegros.

A more attractive site for a hermitage than the former "isle" of Winforton would be difficult to find. Solitude and a comparative safety would be secured by the waters of the Wye around it. Though the river has altered its former course so much that it now flows nearly three quarters of a mile away from the hermitage, its site may almost still claim the name of an island for a deep former wander of the river crossed by the stone Freeman's Bridge of 1811 isolates it on the N, and in time of flood the raised paddock and low mounds marking the site of the chapel, hermitage and other buildings is altogether surrounded by water. The actual remains consist of an irregular oblong mound, artificially raised and scarped, rising some ten feet above the level of the surrounding field and approached by traces of raised causeways to the SW and NW. A few stones crop out here and there, and from the appearance of the ground it would seem as if a building running SW to NE existed at this spot. The mound is here raised to a platform seventy feet by forty feet. The building, the foundations of which were visible in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> C, is said to have had an apsidical E end. All traces of any regular foundation are now beneath the turf. There seems to have been an enclosure to the SW and another to the NE separated from the mound by wide and moat like depressions. The mound to the S has a lower, almost circular extension, at present devoid of any trace of stonework. What it represents could only be decided by excavation. A little distance to the NE, on the edge of the former river scarp of the paddock, a rectangular sinking indicates the site of another building.

SE of the site area are the dilapidated remains of Court Barn and a half timbered cottage of circa 1600 together with the foundations and raised platforms of other now vanished farm buildings. A couple of worked stones, possibly from the chapel site, lie nearby.

Members then returned to Letton, passing through the village of Willersley where the small redundant parish church, now undergoing a conversion to a private dwelling, was pointed out. It is a small, rectangular, structurally undivided building of Norman origin which except for its later fenestration would give the possible appearance of the first church at Letton.

At Letton, Roger Pye guided members to the summit of Oaker's Hill, an eminence giving a wide viewpoint overlooking broad levels, which prior to the last Ice Age formed a vast glacial lake and still is at times liable to extensive flooding. The hill top, at present, is open pasture land but its western slopes have recently been replanted with conifers. Here, near GR 346461, portions of a polished stone axe-head had been found, and a considerable number of flakes indicating some occupation, perhaps of a brief and slight nature, in Neolithic times. Members examined a number of mole casts without a great deal of success, only one or two flakes being found. The prominent hill top shows no trace of later prehistoric occupation or earthworks.

On the return to Hereford, brief halts were made at Staunton on Wye and Byford to examine the architectural detail and history of the two parish churches.

That at Staunton on Wye stands in a very commanding position overlooking the Wye valley and the course of the Roman road running immediately below the hill slope. The massive W tower, with a pyramidal capped roof replacing an earlier timber spire, appears Norman from a distance but is of considerably later date. The nave has a late Trans-Norman S doorway and in its N wall is a blocked two bay arcade of similar date with a heavy capital to its central cylindrical pier. It gave out to a now demolished N chapel. The chancel and chancel arch have been completely rebuilt. The font is ancient, and beneath the tower arch is some Jacobean panelling incorporating six curiously carved medallions.

The church of St John the Baptist at Byford, closely neighboured by the ancient Court, is an altogether more interesting building. The church is a large structure mostly of early 13th C date, with traces of an earlier Norman building existing in the N wall of the nave. The nave and S aisle are long and narrow, as is the chancel. The rather awkwardly placed S transept is probably of late 14<sup>th</sup> C date, but it has an E E arcade of two bays with fine stiff leaf capitals to central column and responds. The W tower, an addition of 1717, partly obscures the E E W front of lancets and pilaster buttresses, and a fine E E W doorway with detached shafts and foliated capitals. Within the porch, the S doorway is similar but with more ornate & better preserved detail. There is a stoup recess within the porch and, lying loose, a remarkably well carved E E capital or respond. A Trans-Norman arcade separates the narrow lean-to aisle from the nave. It has cylindrical columns, some with fluted capitals, others of a more developed E E form. It is of five bays and the arches are of two orders of plain chamfers. The lofty chancel arch shows some traces of the former rood loft arrangements. The rather curious and leaning E E arcade of two bays, forming a continuation of the nave arcade, separates the S transept from the chancel. The S transept has a large S window of five trefoil lights set in a square head. In its W wall is a curious semi-circular headed recess. Large projecting stone brackets on its E wall once supported images. There is a 19<sup>th</sup> C reredos at the E end of the chancel. The nave roof is original and two piscinae recesses remain. The small font of 1638 is of an unusual date and it has a contemporary cover. A blocked doorway and a Norman lancet remain in the N wall of the nave.

R E Kay

### **FIELD MEETING, 1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY, 1976 – GOODRICH AREA Sewers, Secret Passages or Natural Phenomena**

Ten members met at Goodrich Castle on this cold wintry day, with a thin morning snow shower, and spent a very fascinating day with Mr Colin Smith of Lydbrook, who is a highly skilled dowser. He was supported by Mr K Richardson of Bernithan Court.

Following the powerful and very spectacular pressure of his hazel twigs (we saw several actually break in his hands!), Mr Smith showed us the line of 'some underground feature' which runs eastwards from the Castle along the top edge of the steep bank which, at this point, forms the southern limit of the Wye Valley. A few hundred yards from the castle the line turns northwards, descends to the river and can be picked up on the north bank heading for Walford. Walford Church would appear to be some sort of focal point as Mr. Smith has evidence, not yet fully investigated, of similar links with Wythall Cottage, Callow Farm and Walford Court. He has, in fact, second-hand knowledge of entrances to tunnels at two of these sites and plans to substantiate his fieldwork by excavation when time permits.

The afternoon was spent at Bernithan Court, built by William Hoskyns in 1695, where Mr Kim Richardson, also an enthusiastic dowser using metal rods, allowed us to examine the tunnel which once led from the cellar, formerly the dairy, and was blocked some 30 yards from the house by the construction of a stone retaining wall at some later date. A friend of Mr Richardson's, Richard Whittal who lives nearby, was also present and took a keen interest in the investigations, aided by his local knowledge. It was interesting to watch the activation of the hazel twig when Mr Smith walked over this known feature, and he tracked it for us in the field beyond the stone wall to a stream bed, now dry, some 150 yards below the

house. He is convinced that the tunnel continues beyond the watercourse in the direction of Langstone Court and that a branch leads from it towards Llangarren. Unfortunately, excavation in the stream bed has so far proved negative.

Local interest has been roused by Mr Smith's activities and stimulated by a short report in the Hereford Times. He is at present investigating an entrance at a cottage, called Isle of Dogs, which appears to be a feature heading in the direction of Trippenkenet. He also has evidence of a tunnel entrance at Lower Cleeve, and possibly at Doughton Cottage. Another known tunnel at Bolitree Castle leads from the cellar eastwards for about 30 feet, branches off for a further 30 feet where it ends in a drain pipe. This one is almost certainly a sewer.

In spite of the fact that this part of Herefordshire and North Monmouthshire is known to have been an area of 17<sup>th</sup> Century Jesuit and recusant activity, abounding in traditions of escapes and hiding places, Mr Smith is not trying to convince anyone that the district is honeycombed with secret passages. He is convinced by his own evidence that there are tunnels below the ground, some of them as much as 12 feet below the surface, but he is happy to accept that they could be drains, natural fissures in the rocks or dried up underground water courses. He will not accept, however, that they contain water as the reaction to his dowser's rod is 'different' and some of the lines run uphill in places.

### **What is the most likely theory?**

#### Drains

Most of the legendary passages which have been fully investigated in other parts of the country have turned out to be the sewers of large houses, and lead to suitable streams or soakaways. The only one which we have entered, at Bernithan Court, is very well constructed in stone, with flagstones on the floor and overhead. It is about four feet high and two feet wide, allowing adequate space for a crouched adult to turn round. This would appear to be unnecessarily large and elaborate for the sewer of an isolated country house but it could be that a servant was periodically expected to sweep it out. There is no obvious downhill slope for this first 60ft of passage and it is difficult to imagine that it could have carried away domestic waste without the help of permanent running water or at least a very adequate flushing system.

At Goodrich Castle the situation is different. We have, in fact, no proof that a passage exists here but the obvious route for waste would be northwards from the castle, straight down the steep slope to the river, and there would certainly have been no point in diverting it eastwards eastwards for several hundred yards as Mr Smith's dowsing evidence suggests.

The idea of Walford Church as the focal point of general passages does not fit in with a sewer theory – but Mr Smith agrees that he has still a great deal of work to do in this area before even he is convinced that the network exists.

Large country houses are known to have had quite elaborate drainage systems but why, in several of Mr. Smith's examples, do the tunnels seem to lead to, or from, quite small cottages? Some of the known entrances (or are they exits?) are in fact in fields adjacent to the cottages.

#### Passages

Access tunnels, both holes and escape routes, are possibilities but the notion that they could be kept secret for long is difficult to accept. Such passages would have been excavated to satisfy an immediate need, and if they ran underground for half a mile or so, what became of the hundreds of tons of spoil material and how was the enormous task of excavation disguised in times when the "enemy agent" was probably one's neighbour? How could infiltration of ground water be prevented?

Romantic and mysterious passages of legend and tradition are so numerous in Britain that it is surprising that so few have been thoroughly investigated. Where they are known to exist they have often proved to be re-used or adapted sewers in which case the element of secrecy can be viewed with more credulity.

The scientific theory of divining has never been wholly understood or explained. Those who are not skilled or practiced in the art may find some of Mr Smith's convictions difficult to accept, but on 1<sup>st</sup> February we were privileged to share his experience and enthusiasm and even the most hardened sceptics had to admit that they just didn't know. Whatever the outcome of his research, we all admired his tenacity and wish him success in his investigations.

Anyone who is interested and would like to offer practical help can contact Mr Smith,  
**Mary Thomas**

## **“FINDS”, BY ROGER PYE**

### **Bronze Age**

#### **Harpton and Wolfpits, Radnorshire, SO 24245995**

During January 1975, Mr N Hughes found a perforated axe-hammer. Of heater shape, its weight was 1.44 kg, length 170mm x 75mm x 78mm. The perforation was of hourglass type, being 40mm at exterior and 25mm diameter in the centre. In parts being a greyish green, much of its surface showed the reddish tinge of being heated.

The site of the find was a round barrow, and the axe-hammer had apparently weathered from a secondary pit which could be clearly seen in the roots of a fallen tree – one of ten on the barrow. This pit appeared to be part of a larger sub-rectangular pit, probably having a maximum depth of 18". The section in the tree roots was excavated by the writer and some charcoal was found, together with a few tiny fragments of bone.

With the kind permission of the landowner, Mr R Evans it has been presented to the Radnorshire County Museum, Llandrindod Wells. See Rads Soc Trans.

### **Neolithic**

#### **Garway, Herefordshire, SO 45452240**

During the summer of 1975, R Flynn found a fragment of a rough-out stone axe in the earthen section of the farmyard of Church Farm. Presumably of the cutting end of the axe, this poorly made rough-out has dimensions of weight 6ozs, length 58mm x 69mm x 48mm. Of poor quality material, it is black in colouration and appears to be unpolished.

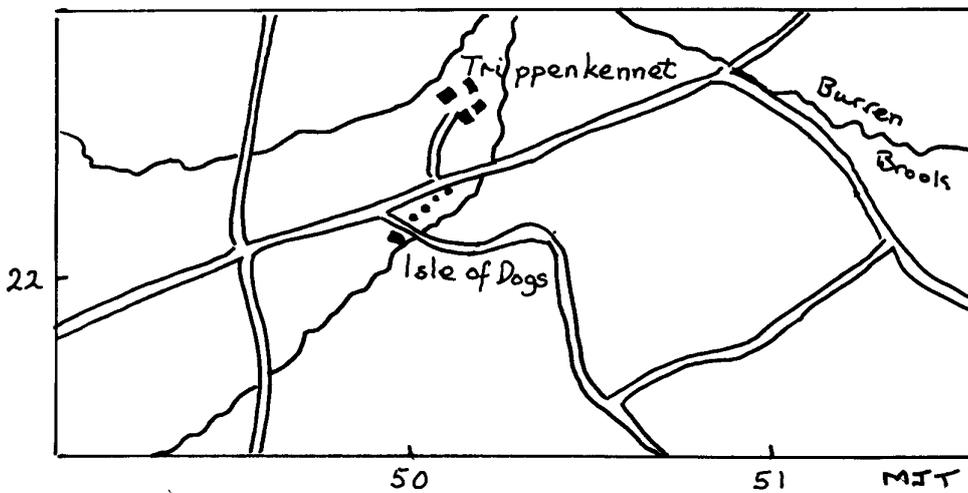
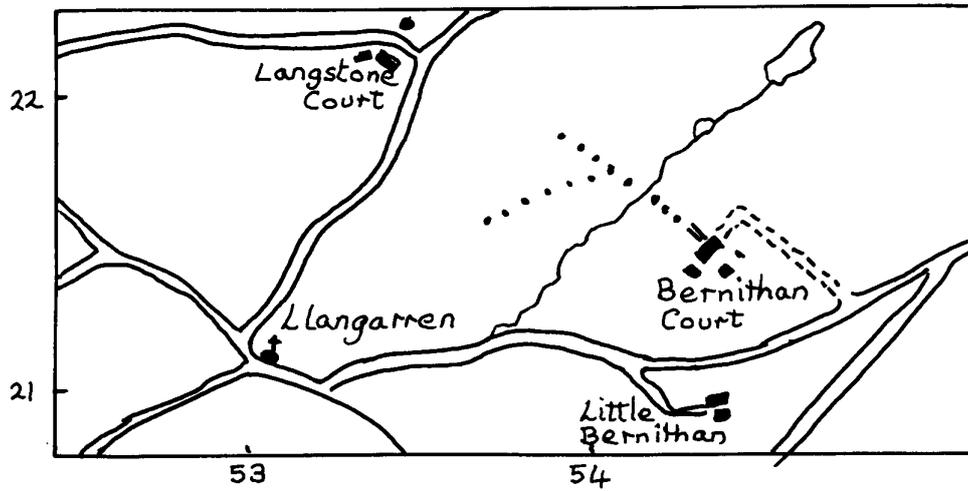
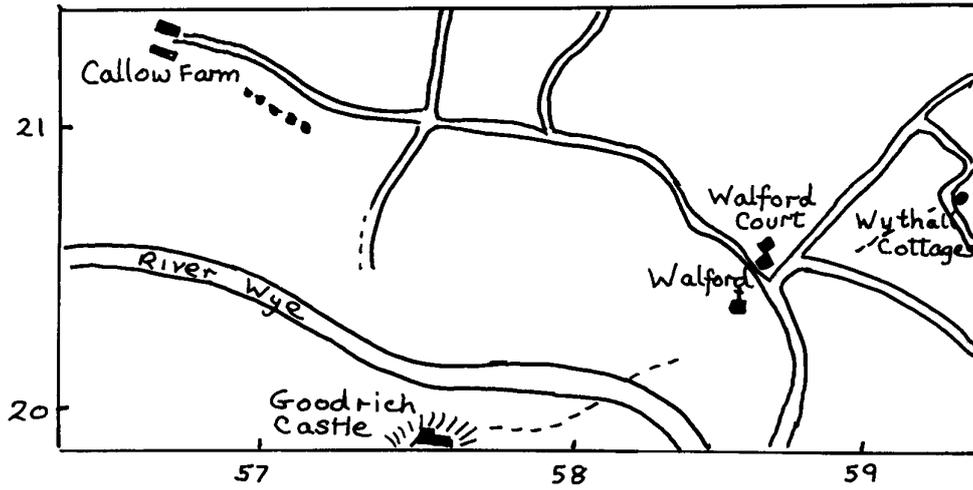
I am grateful to Professor F W Shotton, who has examined it petrologically, for the following:- "Catalogue No He 58/c ... it is not a recognised group ... is of banded hornfels ... though perhaps from South Wales".

It appears, visually to be of similar material to that found in Edgar Street, Hereford, and reported elsewhere in the January issue of ARS News.

The fragment remains in the hands of the finder.

SKETCHED FROM O.S. 2½ INCH SHEETS S042 S052

..... Line of possible underground features.



## **WATERWORKS ON THE HUMBER BROOK ABOVE HAMPTON COURT**

Report of research into the County Records carried out by P J Wride, and report of the field meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> February, 1976.

The following extracts have been taken from the Arkwright Papers kept in the County Records Office. They represent the records of building and repairs on this part of the estate from 1822 to 1878. The references to the various features are set out here in chronological order, but in the papers they appear under different headings, such as Green Farm, Hope and Fishpools, and Game Preserves, etc.

- 1822 Humber Brook - Changing the course of the brook opposite the Deer Park and Mill Ground.  
Hillhole Weir - Heightening weir so as to get a higher level.
- 1823 Humber Brook - Making a footbridge.  
Repairing bolt at the Great Pool and making bolts and tunnels for pools in the sheep park.
- 1824 Building a wall and making a fishpond on the Humber Brook adjoining the Lawn.  
Park Farm – Repairing bridge across the water carriage.
- 1825 Humber Brook - Embanking brook in Lawns.  
Hillhole Weir – Repairs to bolt.  
Making new bolt and weir at the Great Pool.
- 1827 Humber Brook - Repairing Drag and Weir.  
Making a side bolt – repairing bolts, Wellsley Pool.
- 1828 Hillhole Weir – Repairs to bolt.
- 1831 Hillhole Weir – Repairs to weir.  
Taking up Swan Pool weir.
- 1832 Repairing Great Pool. New pool head and altering Weir.
- 1836 Making dam and repairing bridge, Humber Brook.  
Repair Hillhole water carriage and Swan Pool Head.
- 1839 Cleaning Hillhole water carriage. Repairing Swan Pool.  
Putting up wall and repairing Bolt of the Great Pool.
- 1844 Building Weir below the Great Pool to raise the waters to a sufficient level for the watercourse in the Deer Park, deepening the said watercourse and making bridge over it.
- 1845 Repairs to Weir and watercourse. Deer Park.  
Repairing Rabbit Burrow and Wellsley Pools, water carriage and clearing sides of river.
- 1846 Making and fixing floodgates in Great Meadow.  
Deepening watercourse, Deer Park.  
Making weirs and pools, Hillhole.  
Bridle Road, Hillhole – repair road from brook to Park Barn.
- 1847 Fixing floodgates, Paddock.  
Rebuilding weir and pool head, Hillhole. Repairing Swan Pool, Decoy Pool and Great Pool.
- 1848 Widening and repairing Hillhole water carriage. Repair head of Decoy, Rabbit Burrow, Wellsleys and Great Pool.
- 1849 Making culvert and clearing watercourse, Deer Park.  
Bridle Road, Hillhole – Levelling soil for path and bridle road by side of water carriage and making culvert.
- 1850 Draining No 9 Tillage Farm, 10 acres, and park of Chestnut Paddock, 9 acres.  
Raising the head of the Great Pool.
- 1851 Deepening watercourse, Deer Park.
- 1852 Repairing wall, Bowley Drive.  
Making a dam midway in the Great Pool with weir and floodgates.

- 1853 Repairing Swan Pool and repairing Hillhole water carriage injured by flood. Repairing pool head on Wickton Farm. Completing dam and repairing weir of Great Pool. Fixing floodgate, levelling bank and repairing Hillhole water carriage. Repair Wellsley Pool.
- 1854 Green Farm, Hope – Making floodgates and watercourse. Great Meadow and Decoy. Repairing a bridge, wall and fencing. Repair weir and making bolt, Hillhole Pool. Raising weir and head of Great Pool. Making culvert and repair floodgate and fence, Swan Pool.
- 1856 Making weir, pool head, driving way through and footbridge over Hillhole Brook near to Skew Bridge.  
Making drag, Humber Brook near Swan Pool.
- 1857 Making Pool, Humber Brook near to Mill House.
- 1862 Making weir, driving way and footbridge, Hillhole Dingle.
- 1866 Repair waterfall, Swan Pool.
- 1869 Draining water off, mudding and deepening Rabbit Burrow Pool.  
Making Fishpond, Tibbetts Meadow.
- 1870 Repair road, Great Pool Head and Deer Park.
- 1871 Repair road over Great Pool Head and Decoy Bank.
- 1872 Repair road, Deer Park.  
Making Grates, Fishpond, Tibbetts Meadow.
- 1873 Repair Deer Park Road.
- 1874 Repair Deer Park Road.
- 1875 New Drag to Humber Brook.  
Repair road and making bridge, Deer Park.
- 1877 Repair road, Deer Park and Icehouse Park.
- 1978 New Drag to Humber Brook, repairing road fence, wall and road.

In the following comments, the numbered and lettered features referred to are shown on the plan on Page 22 of the last newsletter, No 31. The tithe maps for Hope under Dinmore and Stoke Prior enable the following locations to be identified:-

The Sheep Park lies south of Park Farm and west of Hillhole Water Carriage; The Deer Park lies east of the Humber Brook and leat (d) is the watercourse in the deer park referred to in 1844, the bridge referred to across it appears to carry a trackway down to Swan Pool and is made of stone slabs; Swan Pool lies above dam No 2; the Great Pool lies above dam No 3; dam No 4 is the one built in 1852 midway in the Great Pool; Rabbit Burrow Pool lies above dam No 15 and Weslev (Wellesly) Pool lies above dam No 7; Tibbetts Meadow lies south west of the circular pond, and the fish pond referred to in 1869 is fed by the Hillhole water carriage; the Lawns lie around Hampton Court house itself.

Decoy Pool referred to in 1847 is not certainly identifiable but may lie above dam No 16 as the wood adjoining it to the south is Decoy Grove, and Decoy Meadow lies between the wood and the Humber Brook. Leat (c) may be the watercourse made in Decoy in 1854. Decoy is an early name and appears in this location on Taylor's Map of the county dated 1786. Taylor's Map also indicates that the course of the modern brook follows the line of the leat feeding Hampton Mill in 1786; presumably this is the change of course effected in 1822. This information confirms what is evident at dam No 1 which must be the millpond of 1786, that at this time the mill was on the left bank of the brook and since there is no great difference in levels may well have had an undershot wheel. The present disused mill building was presumably built after this – the building itself appears to be early nineteenth century, and nineteenth century estate maps show it as being fed by leat (b) or (c). Both of these would provide a sufficient head of water for an overshot wheel. Plans indicate that the leat led to a building now demolished on the south side of the remaining outbuildings adjoining the Mill House.

On 29<sup>th</sup> February about 10 members and friends followed the line of leat (b) from the point where it enters a culvert through a circular stone hole through dam No 3, up to the point where it passes through a culvert in dam No 4. Above dam No 4 it is visible for only a few yards, so the leat may have been fed by this dam. Parts of the leat between the two dams have been washed away by erosion when the dam of the Great Pool burst some years ago.

Above the confluence of the Humber with the tributary at dam No 6, there is a line of springs on the left-hand side of the brook which makes the whole floor of the valley very marshy. Here the brook flows about 4ft below ground level between almost vertical banks. About a quarter of a mile above the confluence with the tributary stream a built-up, well paved ford takes a carriage drive across the brook forming at the same time a waterfall about 6ft high, presumably part of the picturesque landscaping of the valley. The carriageway continues on to Bowley Court Farm, which was formerly called Park Farm. West of this ford, the remains of a cast iron mill wheel, which operated a pump which pumped water up to Park Cottages, was found. The wheel used to be driven by water brought down from the Hillhole water carriage above it, in a pipe bedded in concrete. Presumably this was in use until the water carriage ceased to carry water, which I believe was some time in the 1930's. The tail race was an iron trough covered by slabs of stone.

The Section would like to thank the owner, and Mr Mercer of Bowley Court, for permission to look at the works on the Humber Brook. It is hoped that it will be possible to pursue these investigations further and discover the whereabouts of Hillhole Pool and other features on another occasion.

**R E Hickling**

## **NEW MEMBERS, AND OFFICERS OF THE GROUP**

### **Officers of the Group for 1976**

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr P Cooper,
<u>Secretary:</u>	Mr C E Attfield
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Miss R Hickling
<u>Field Secretary:</u>	Mr L Skelton
<u>Committee Members:</u>	Mrs S Warren
	Mr G Parker
<u>Co-opted Members:</u>	<u>Editor:</u> Mr C E Attfield
	<u>Assistant Editor:</u> Mr R E Kay

### **PRELIMINARY NOTES ON A SECTION OF THE HEREFORD & GLOUCESTER CANAL Site at Monksbury Court, Monkhide, Herefordshire**

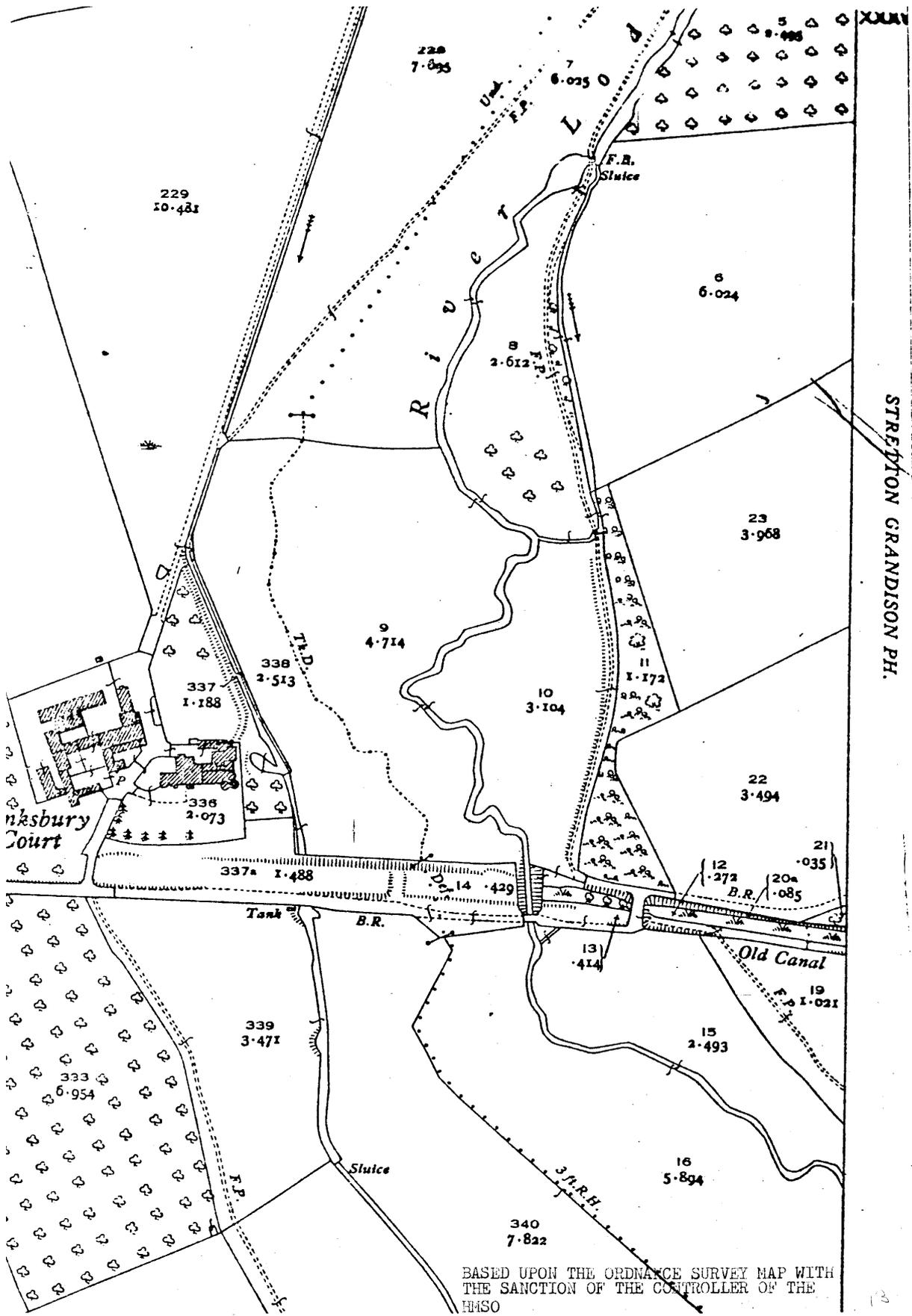
On Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May, 1976 a party visited Monksbury Court and the adjoining land, by kind permission of Mr and Mrs Snell and Mr J Davies to inspect part of the remains of the Hereford and Gloucester Canal between the River Lodon and the canal bridge approximately 50 metres to the East.

The site was very overgrown and considerable soil shifting has taken place, mainly to open up the channel of the River Lodon which used to pass under the canal in a culvert. The site has also been used as a tip for domestic and agricultural rubbish.

The main object of the visit was to inspect the works at this site. A sluice gate in the North bank of the canal admitted water from a feeder off the River Lodon about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile away. The date 1843 was cut into the stonework above the sluice gate. Almost directly opposite this was a channel approximately 1m wide and 2.8 metres long cut through the towpath and leading into the remains of a largely stone-built building approximately 9.75 x 5.94 metres. The West end of the building was sectioned off from the remainder by a brick wall and the water channel led directly into this portion of the building. In the South wall was a culvert leading back into the River Lodon. It would appear that this area, approximately 1.98 x 5.94 metres, could well have been the water-wheel section of a mill, and that the canal itself acted as the mill pond. The width of the canal at this point was 8.7 metres although the width of the navigable channel under the bridge was only 4.2 metres. The towpath between the mill and the bridge, some 32.5 metres long, was stone faced for its entire length. The fact that the mill was on the towpath side of the canal suggests that the mill predates the canal, as this most unusual arrangement of affairs would probably be of some inconvenience to canal users. It is also unusual for a canal which, throughout its chequered history, was always short of water.

The site was measured and a full set of drawings will appear in the next newsletter.

**G E Warren**



BASED UPON THE ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP WITH THE SANCTION OF THE CONTROLLER OF THE HMSO

## **CITY OF HEREFORD INTERIM REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS AT DRYBRIDGE HOUSE**

A trial excavation was carried out in the grounds of Drybridge House between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> July, 1975.

### **The Site**

Drybridge, a Georgian house on the south side of the river, between St Martins Street and Greyfriars Bridge, has been empty for many years; and is now merely a shell. Planning permission was granted on 7<sup>th</sup> April, 1975 to Voluntary Service Housing Association to convert, with additions, into a Day Centre and to erect 36 old people's flatlets in the grounds to the rear. One condition of the approval was that facilities should be allowed for archaeological investigation within the curtilage before the development should commence.

The site is on the line of Rowe Ditch, which can be seen as a bank across Bishop's Meadow, at a point where it would turn to the north if it were to join with the rest of the City's defences.

In correspondence with the developers and their architects, I agreed that proposed trial excavations would not be generally more than 3' 6" deep and would be backfilled on completion. I pointed out that these investigations would indicate if further work was necessary.

### **The Excavations**

Excavations were carried out during the week commencing 14<sup>th</sup> July, using a machine to cut three trenches, two feet wide. After drawing and planning, the trenches were backfilled a week later. The labour force consisted of two students, Eric Smith and myself.

Machine trenches were cut to between 3' 0" and 3' 6", although this was still well above the natural soil on the site. After manual cleaning of the sides of the trench, selected areas were excavated deeper by hand, to resolve particular problems. One side of each trench was drawn and a site plan was made.

### **Results of the Excavation**

It was assumed that stratigraphy on this site would be relatively simple, and that machine trenches would solve the major problems. This did not prove to be the case, and the following interpretation may be incorrect in some details:-

#### Period 1 – Pre-bank occupation

The partially robbed out foundations of a substantial stone building were recovered in two of the trenches. The walls were up to 1.2 metres thick and mortar associated with their construction ran under the period 2 levels. Pottery from this construction level was of late 11<sup>th</sup> or early 12<sup>th</sup> century date, although only 3 or 4 sherds were found. A gully close by contained 10<sup>th</sup> Century Chester ware. To the north of this, a layer of charcoal and iron ore, in parts just above the natural clay, was again sealed by the period 2 levels, but had no dating material. A deep pit, still further north, contained more 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century pottery.

#### Period 2 – The Bank

Earlier levels were sealed over most of the excavated trenches by a clean clay layer, up to 70cms thick. This layer tapered to the south, and tapered and eventually disappeared to the west. Deep pits in the north of the trenches totally removed this level. This layer corresponds in alignment with Rowe Ditch and if it can be equated with it, the taper and disappearance to the west would indicate a turn to the north. A deep deposit of dirty clay penetrating well below natural at the extreme south of the longer trench may possibly indicate a ditch. It contained 13<sup>th</sup> Century pottery, but the bank only had one abraded Roman sherd and a possible 12<sup>th</sup> Century piece only.

### Period 3 – Pitting in the period 2 layer

A number of pits cut through the clean clay of period 2, and robbing of the period 1 wall was encountered. One pit contained more charcoal and iron ore. Roof tile and pottery from this period covers the 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries.

### Period 4 – Later constructions

The top 60cms consisted of building debris from Drybridge House and a topsoil level with some flimsy walls covering the garden period. There was some late pitting, particularly to the north of the trenches.

## **Dating**

### Period 1

10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Century occupation of the site is indicated, although the developers, .restrictions and the time available meant that the lowest levels were only partially examined. Although the stone walling was robbed in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century and this is not definitely sealed by the bank, a mortar level which appears to indicate its construction contained late 11<sup>th</sup> Century pottery and was sealed by period 2 levels.

### Period 2

A date in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century can be postulated from the finds above and below.

### Period 3

14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries.

### Period 4

Up to present day.

## **Discussion and Recommendations**

Limitations on the excavation were such that investigation of the earlier levels was very limited. Occupation south of the river is indicated in the early 12<sup>th</sup> Century from documentary sources, and if sealed by a later defensive bank are obviously of importance.

Foundations for the proposed development, in the form of trenches or piling, will remove most of these levels in a form which is not compatible with archaeological work covering an occupation area.

The excavation described above was only exploratory to determine the importance of the area. It has indicated the most promising areas for further work and the likely depths of deposits. It has shown the probable limits of Rowe ditch, although the dating is still doubtful, and suggested an earlier occupation level.

It is recommended that the DOE be approached for a grant to enable an area excavation to take place during the winter months before development occurs.

**R Shoesmith**  
**Director of Excavations**  
**14<sup>th</sup> September, 1975**

## **RADNORSHIRE SOCIETY, FIELD RESEARCH SECTION**

Roger Pye has sent the following note, which is an extract from Newsletter No 1 of the Radnorshire Society, Field Research Section:-

"Feeling that there was a need for an active group to cover the various aspects of the Society's work primarily in the various aspects of archaeology, a meeting was called at the

Radnor College of Further Education, Llandrindod Wells, on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> March at 7.30 pm by R Cain, M Garner and R Pye. Following a discussion the Section was inaugurated, with R Cain, M Garner, W R Pye and C J Dunn acting as a steering committee until a General Meeting of the Section could be held. It was felt that the Section should hold a very wide brief, and that a series of meetings should be held to visit as wide a range of earthworks and archaeological sites as possible in an effort to familiarise those with no previous experience of fieldwork in its various aspects, and to produce a newsletter from time to time giving any progress of the Section, reports of its Field Meetings and relevant articles.

With this in view a meeting was held on 9<sup>th</sup> May at New Radnor (see under Reports) and a programme has been compiled, meeting on the second Sunday of each month, until October, when a General Meeting will be held.

### **Programme**

New Radnor area	9 <sup>th</sup> May, 2.00 pm	
Rhayader	13 <sup>th</sup> June, 2.30 pm	Outside the Community Centre
Knighton	11 <sup>th</sup> July, 2.30 pm	The Square, by the Clock Tower
Llandrindod Wells	8 <sup>th</sup> August, 2.30 pm	Main Post Office, Station Road
Presteigne	12 <sup>th</sup> September, 2.30 pm	Bottom of Station Road, Lloyds Bank"

## **CITY OF HEREFORD EXCAVATIONS 1975 - NOTES BY R SHOESMITH FINAL INTERIM REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS AT BEWELL HOUSE, HEREFORD**

### **Introduction**

An area of approximately 500 square metres in the north-western corner of the temporary National Car Park, on the site of the Hereford Brewery, was chosen for a large scale exploratory excavation. The site, close to the north-western part of the city defences, is within the five acre development area known as Sectors A and B. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries the site was part of the gardens of Bewell House, now the Committee's headquarters.

The excavation was designed to solve the following problems:-

1. To test the hypothesis that a large Saxon extra-mural settlement existed in this part of the town.
2. To determine the depth and complexity of the archaeological deposits within the redevelopment area.
3. To establish dating sequences for pottery used in Hereford.
4. To examine the tail of the gravel rampart and establish its date of construction.

### **Methods**

A base-line and grid was established which can be used for any future excavation in sectors A and B. A numerical card indexing system for all layers, features and finds can now be used for all future excavations in the City. Standardised boxing and labelling has been agreed with the City Museum for all finds from excavations.

The excavation was split into three parts:-

1. Machine clearance of the car park surface and hardcore underneath, followed by an examination of the post-Medieval levels associated with Bewell House. This is the first time in Hereford that this 200-year period has been investigated in any detail, and the results have proved to be very interesting.
2. Two, two metre wide trenches, at right angles to the rampart, were excavated to the natural surface. The gravel spread at the rear of the

- rampart caused some confusion, but a 12<sup>th</sup> century occupation surface was established, with a sealed earlier level.
3. The western half of the site was stripped by machine, removing the thick level of 18<sup>th</sup> century gardening. The lower levels and rampart were then examined by hand.

The whole excavation lasted from November 1974 to June 1975, with breaks totalling about one month. Interim reports were issued to the Committee in December 1974, February 1975 and May 1975. The area was finally backfilled and consolidated by machine during July 1975.

### **Labour Force**

The labour force has been mainly of paid volunteers, with some children from Haywood and Bishop's Schools. Numbers have varied up to 15, but were substantially decreased during the winter months and towards the end of the excavation.

### **Results of the Excavation**

#### Period 1 – Pre-rampart

Four parallel ditches, cut into the natural gravel, crossed the site in an east-west direction. The southern one was slightly flat-bottomed and about 2 metres wide, and cut 70cms into the natural gravel. Four metres north, running parallel, was a shallower ditch or gully, up to a metre wide and 25cms deep. The third ditch, which ran under the rampart, was similar to the second in size and shape, and was about 8 metres from the second. The fourth ditch, partly filled by rampart-like gravel, was found in the north-eastern part of the site, in one of the trial trenches, and was similar in size to the first. Except for the small area under the rampart, no occupation level survived contemporary with these ditches.

Only one sherd of pottery was found in the fill of the ditches and this was thought to be of Saxon date.

Samples of silt from two of the ditches were taken by DOE scientists for experimental dating by residual magnetic fields. Some animal bone from one of the ditches has been sent to Harwell for carbon-14 dating as a check and comparison.

Several post-holes and small gullies, only in the natural gravel, appeared to be pre-rampart and could be pre-ditch in date. There were no associated finds.

#### Period 2 – The Gravel Rampart

The gravel rampart, which preceded the city wall as a defensive feature, was examined in a small area within the excavation near the north-western corner. It sealed one of the period 1 ditches and approximately 40cms of clean plough soil. The rampart consisted of clean, well-packed gravel, very similar to the natural, and presumably from an external ditch.

Although very little of the rampart proper was within the confines of the excavation, and no pottery was found within its fill, every indication suggested an 11<sup>th</sup> century date. Pottery definitely underneath the rampart included early cooking pot and Chester ware, and levels cut into the rampart contained pottery of a 12<sup>th</sup> century date.

#### Period 3 - Various postholes

Immediate post-rampart levels were confused by two factors: gardening during the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries and the tendency for slipping from the gravel rampart over most of the area. No occupation level survived, but post-holes cut into natural indicated the presence of buildings close to the rampart very early in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

A group of large post-holes, cut some 70cms into natural suggests a building some 3 metres wide by 7 metres long. Other shallower post-holes of the same period were found,

apparently at random, over the site. A large cess pit some 4 metres deep was of the same period and was re-used during period 4.

#### Period 4 – 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> Century Industrial Period

In the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century, the rampart was encroached upon by small timber buildings or lean-to's. They were used for metal working and can be equated with the same period in the 1968 Brewery excavations.

The western of the two buildings found in the excavated area, about 5 metres long by 3 metres wide, was cut into the gravel rampart. The northern postholes, within the rampart, were very slight, suggesting some form of lean-to structure against the rampart. Most of the floor of the building was taken up by a pit cut into natural and used as a furnace. A millstone was re-used as the base of the flue, on level with the hearth and firing chamber. There were two distinct periods of use, shown by re-lining of the furnace bowl. Dirty gravel finally filled the pit about the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

The eastern building surrounded a well-preserved clay floor and was of a sleeper-beam construction. Within the building, the cess pit of period 3 was re-used and clay lined to a depth of about 1 metre. The clay lining was renewed several times and the pit continued in use throughout the life of the building. Impressions and colouration on the clay floor indicated the positions of internal partitions and furniture. The whole of the floor and pit was covered with a thick layer of charcoal, suggesting its final destruction by fire.

The nature of the processes carried out in these buildings is uncertain, but must be associated with metal melting, probably one of the copper alloys. Samples are being examined by the DOE Laboratories.

A rough gravel path joined the two buildings, but was confused by dirty gravel from the rampart which covered the whole area of the buildings and pits.

#### Period 5 – 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries

Gardening may well have taken place in the southern part of the area excavated during the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, and this extended over the furnace area. Although there was some slight pitting, there was no evidence of structures, and relatively few finds from this period.

#### Period 6 – 17<sup>th</sup> Century

Property boundaries running at right angles to Bewell Street, consisting of simple fences, were gradually constructed. The lines shown by these continue in use into the Bewell House period. Gardening continued, and first traces of flower beds and lawns could be seen.

#### Period 7 – Bewell House

Most of the area within the trench was at one time part of the garden of Bewell House. Some early pitting may be associated with its construction, but formal gardens were soon laid out and four periods of landscaping, with paths, lawns and flowerbeds, were identified.

#### Period 8 – Brewery and modern

The small Imperial Brewery which occupied the next plot to the east of Bewell House grounds gradually took over the gardens and house. The fortunes of the Brewery could be traced from the finds as it became The Hereford Brewery, The Hereford and Tredegar Brewery and then the Hereford and Cheltenham Brewery. Disturbances of this period were small and the gardens were gradually concreted over to make a yard.

#### **Future Work**

The excavation of this area is now complete, but work continues with the finds.

In all, 10 boxes of pottery were found and these are now being sorted and classified. The long sequence from this site, together with finds from previous excavations, will lead to a sequence of pottery for Hereford which will be of great value for all future excavations.

Twenty-eight boxes of animal bones await classification and will also give a continuous picture of eating habits and husbandry in the City.

Over 150 plans and sections have to be analysed, and the appropriate ones re-drawn for the final report.

Boxes of metalwork, glass, clay pipes, etc have to be examined, drawn, and compared with previous reports.

Various specialists' reports are awaited and will be included in the final report.

### **Interim Conclusions**

The problems posed at the beginning of the excavation have largely been solved.

1. Apart from the trenches and gullies, there is little sign of pre-rampart occupation in the area excavated.
2. The general depth of deposit is about 4' 6" over the site.
3. A sequence of pottery with some independent dating has been established.
4. The gravel rampart would appear to date from about the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> century and could well be the defence built in 1055 by Harold Godwinson.

These results need a detailed comparison with those from the 1968 excavations in the area to the west of the site and now under the ring-road. The most obvious difference is in the earlier period before the gravel rampart. The 1968 excavation showed ample traces of a pre-conquest occupation which did not continue to the east. Two possibilities are apparent: that extra-mural occupation stretches to the west (and south) of the 1968 excavation, or that there was ribbon development on a pre-conquest road following the line of Edgar Street.

Industrial use in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries occurs in both areas, and follows the common pattern, being just within the defences. Further examples could be expected to the east of the area excavated and just within the line of Wall Street.

The gardening shown in periods 5-7 is consistent with the details shown on Taylor's Map of 1757. It is suggested that buildings of these and earlier periods were close to Bewell Street and Widemarsh Street (as suggested by Speede) with long gardens stretching towards the City defences.

Although the immediate pressure has been taken off sectors A and B now the results of the Pagebar Public Inquiry are known, the whole of the area, together with that of Sector C, is still available and likely to be developed. It is recommended that, as funds are available, further exploratory excavations are carried out in all sectors, particularly along the medieval street frontages. An investigation to determine if the road along the Broad Street line continued to the north before All Saints Church was built should also be high in priority. Part of sector C is known to have been the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century Jewish area, and any remains would be of considerable interest. It will not be possible to carry out a large programme of this nature once planning permission has been granted because of the amount of time involved. Preliminary work, such as the Bewell House excavation, is essential to establish the major problems well in advance of any development. More work is needed over all the areas involved to ensure that a full argument can be presented to any future inquiry or planning application.

**R Shoesmith**  
**22<sup>nd</sup> September, 1975**

## **ROMAN SITE AT BLACKWARDINE**

Warren Attwell writes:

“Dear Clarence,

I apologise for the delay in writing and thank you for the information that you sent in your letter. In reference to the Blackwardine Site we have made slow progress with the excavation throughout the winter months but now that the better weather has arrived, with luck, we shall be able to complete probably by August.

The site has yielded some most interesting finds including a kiln in extremely fine state of preservation and we have learnt much from it.

The most interesting point of the dig is the laying and construction of the building, which is indeed worthy of a detailed report in its own right. What in the beginning we believed to be robber trenches are in fact elaborately constructed sleeper- trenches.

Another point of note is the Coinage, which dates well into the sixth century. One coin in particular of a very small size is as yet unrecorded and is of the greatest importance.

Several pottery sherds found in Room A6, sealed in the demolition area are most interesting and are of a shape and decoration that I can find no comparison to.

In general the Site seems to have been continually occupied from the early second century AD to the late sixth.

I am now in a position where I can submit to you, if you so desire, a preliminary survey of the site together with scale drawings of Rooms A6, 7 and 8, complete, plus outline of existing building area.

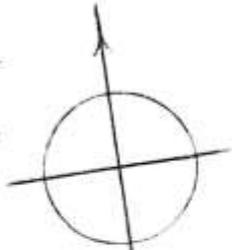
I trust I shall hear from you in the near future. My regards to Pat Moore.

Yours sincerely,

**W R Attwell”**

Note: See overleaf for plan of building referred to. **Ed**

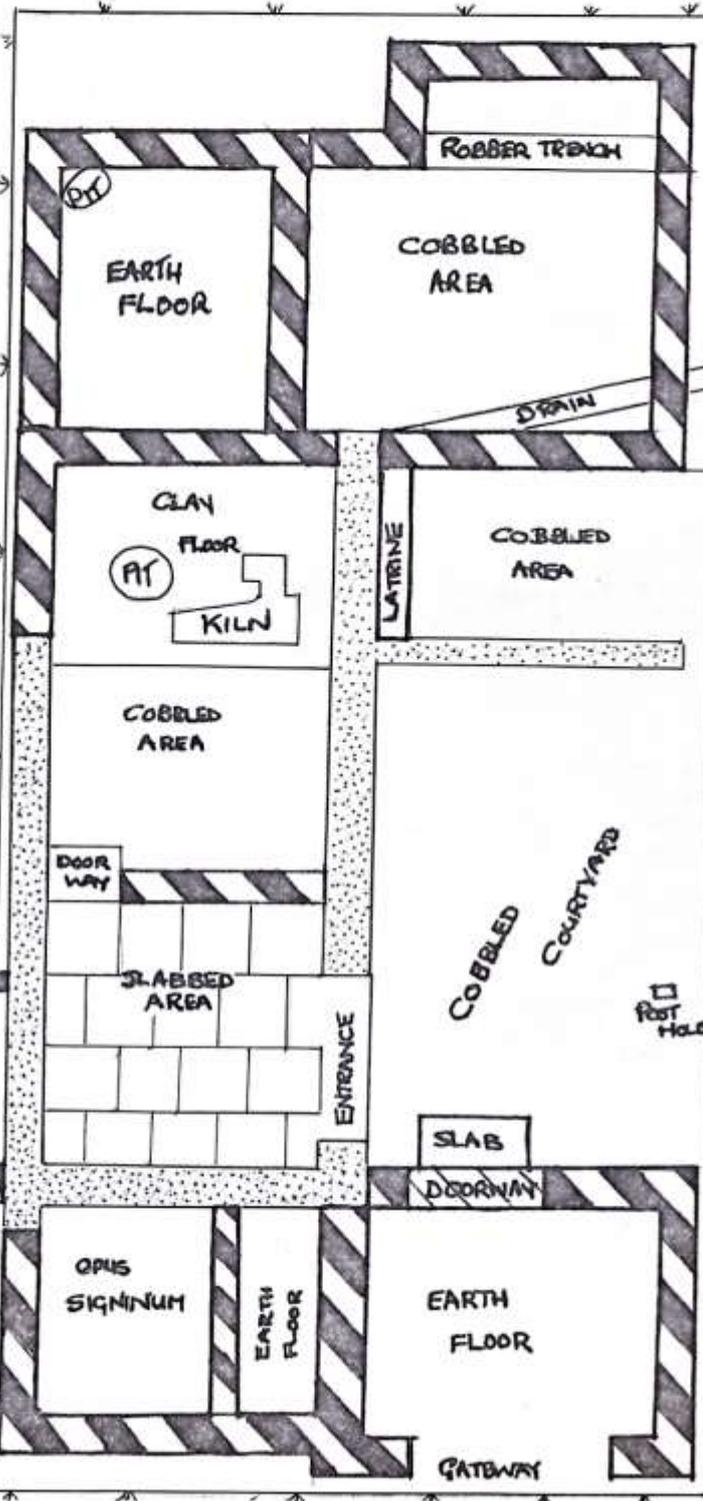
# ROMANO BRITISH BUILDING COMPLEX BLACKWARDINE



SCALE 8:1

UNEXCAVATED

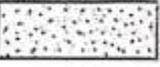
SOAK AWAY



UNEXCAVATED

NO 32  
P. 21

 MORTAR WALL LINE

 TIMBER WALL LINE

W. ATTWELL

## NOTES ON THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Green Dragon Hotel, 7.30 pm, Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> December, 1975

1. Fifteen members attended the meeting, and apologies were received from Mr Hunt and Mr Brightmore.
2. The minutes of the 1975 Annual General Meeting were read and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the proceedings.
3. Matters arising from the minutes

Mr. Attfield reported that neither the City Museum nor the Woolhope Club had a full set of newsletters, and he agreed to obtain copies of the missing numbers so that the library and the Club could hold complete sets.

4. A letter was read from the Secretary of the Monmouth Archaeological Society welcoming our suggestion of a joint meeting. He stated that they would be pleased to exchange newsletters with our section and their publication, "Monmouth Archaeology", was made available for members to borrow. A copy of "Glevensis" had also been received from the Gloucester and District Archaeological Research Group.
5. The Chairman, in his report, expressed his thanks to the officers and committee members. He regretted that he had not been able to attend many field meetings but thanked those members who had organised and led them.
6. The Secretary reported briefly on the ten monthly field meetings and said that there had been an average attendance of six to twelve members. These meetings would be reported in the 1976 newsletters to be issued in January and June, 1976, if a note was given to the Editor.
7. The Treasurer reported that expenses during 1975 had exceeded the income from subscriptions by some £3.00 and she felt that although we had enough money in hand to account for inflated expenses in 1976, it would be necessary to raise subscriptions again in 1977. Paid up members at present totalled 38. The section's account stands at £30.00.  
From this it was agreed that we could pay Mr Attfield £15.00 for the second-hand duplicator he had purchased during the year.  
Mr Attfield generously offered to pay for this item himself, but members felt that this was not necessary.  
Mr Calderbank proposed that the matter of subscriptions and of the duplicator should be decided later by the committee.
8. The Editor wished to thank Mr R Kay who, in his role of assistant editor had helped so much in the production of the newsletter. He said that he had some copy for the next issue but urged members, particularly those who had led the field meetings, to produce their reports in time for the January publication.  
He said that the cost of postage and stationery had increased alarmingly and again suggested that we might sell copies of the newsletter. He was quite prepared to duplicate a number of extra copies and the Museum had agreed to sell them. Other outlets would be explored.  
Mrs. O'Donnell suggested that copies could also be on sale at Woolhope Main Club Meetings. Discussion ensued about the price that should be charged to non-members and it was decided that this could be agreed by the committee in consultation with the Editor.  
The Editor expressed his thanks to those who had contributed articles and also suggested that letters of thanks should be written to The Mayor of Hereford, Councillor Prendergast for arranging a comprehensive display of the City Charters, Ceremonial Swords and Maces and City Silver, together with a Souvenir Brochure to

mark the occasion, and his hospitality to members on 23<sup>rd</sup> October, and to Mr. Brightmore for his excellent report on the Saxon spearhead. The Secretary agreed to do this.

The Chairman's vote of thanks to the Editor and Assistant Editor was carried unanimously.

9. Miss Thomas explained the principle and practice of the Site Inspection Scheme and distributed lists of Ancient Monuments to the 16 volunteers who had agreed to participate. She said that other members who would be willing to join in would be welcome at any time.
10. The Chairman asked for nominations for election of officers and committee. Each member of the 1975 committee was asked to stand for a further year and as all agreed to do this, no election was necessary.
11. Other Business

Mr Calderbank suggested that the section might take over and hasten the publication of a Gazeteer of all pre-historic and Roman sites in the County which has been prepared by a group of our members.

Commander Hale offered to check the typing of the proofs and get a first copy made professionally. Mr Atfield agreed to make enquiries about printing and it was decided that an all-out effort must be made to get the booklet published as soon as possible.

Miss Hickling proposed that only paid up members for 1975 should receive the next issue of the newsletter in January 1976, but not the June issue unless their subscription was renewed. This was seconded by Mr Skelton and carried.

Commander Hale asked whether the new County Archaeologist had taken up his post yet. Miss Hickling said that he had, and that his name, address and telephone number should be noted in the next newsletter.

Mrs Ruth Wride said that she had a typewriter, and generously offered her services to the Secretary and to any member who needed reports typed. This was enthusiastically accepted.

On display at the meeting was a selection of Publications, including The Book of Hereford by J and M Tonkin, The Souvenir Brochure produced by Councillor M K Prendergast for the visit to the Town Hall on 23<sup>rd</sup> October, the latest publication by Anne Sandford and R Shoesmith on Hereford - Archaeology in the City (obtainable at the Museum) and some excellent photographs by J Wride on the Mill and Works at Hampton Court.

The Meeting closed at 9.45 pm, and was followed by slides of Roman and other Archaeological sites taken by Commander Hale and Miss Hickling.