

# HEREFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWS



HAN 44      August 1985

WOOLHOPE CLUB  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH SECTION

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**No. 44     August 1985**

**EDITORIAL**

The Craswall Grandmontine Society has been very busy this year in clearing the undergrowth from the ruins of Craswall Priory. Ron Shoesmith, Director of Excavations, City of Hereford Archaeology Committee, has produced an interim report on the work and there is a very useful history of the Order by Carol Hutchison included with it. The Section visited the site in 1978 and News No 35 contains information on that visit and details of the Priory.

The programme of field meetings from March to July was completed, and our thanks to the Leaders for their time and research. The industrial archaeologists were treated to a feast (archaeological of course) during the week of events held in Hereford to celebrate the 150 years of the Great Western Railway.

My thanks to the contributors of the articles in the News, to Richard Kay the Assistant Editor, and the typists Sally Badham and Mike Hemming.

**C E Attfield**  
**Editor**

**ARS OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE FOR 1985**

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**PROGRAMME SEPTEMBER 1985-JANUARY 1986**

Sunday 15 September	Recently discovered Mesolithic/Neolithic/Bronze Age and Romano British sites, Forest of Dean area, including "The Park", Great Howle Farm	Meet at Great Howle Farm 11.00 am. Map Ref 612203, OS Sheet No 162 Hereford (off B4228 Ross-Walford road). Entrance to farm opposite earthwork. Leader Mr B Walters.
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Sunday 13 October	Settlement of the Maescoed area	Meet at The Trout PH, Dulas, 11.00 am. Leader Mr Charnock
Sunday 17 November	Brilley Mountain and Milton Hill – Looking at supposed Roman roads and settlements etc.	Meet at The Boat Inn, Whitney-on-Wye, 11.00 am Joint Leaders M Hemming and R Kay
Tuesday 10 December	Annual General Meeting	The Golden River Restaurant (formerly Golden Eagle), Commercial Street, Hereford. 7.30 for 8.00 pm. Members can enjoy a meal afterwards if they so wish.
Sunday 19 January 1986	Wormsley area, Canon Pyon Church, Butthouse Knapp and Mound. Looking for traces of Priory	Meet at The Plough PH, Canon Pyon, 11.00 am Leader M Hemming

Notes:

1. In case of bad weather contact the leader or Committee member. List of Committee and telephone numbers is included in the News.
2. Guests are welcome.
3. Members are advised to wear suitable clothing and footwear and to bring food and hot drinks.
4. Due to unforeseen circumstances the programme may have to be changed at short notice.

## **AN ANCIENT TRACK IN THE GOLDEN VALLEY**

**By Mary Thomas**

### **Report on an excavation at Mantooth, Vowchurch**

Previous investigations of the track, which runs northwestwards from Abbeydore to Peterchurch and beyond, have shown that a continuous well-metalled road existed on the west side of the River Dore. A Roman dating has been accepted by many for the stretch in the Old Station yard at Abbeydore. This was excavated by G H Jack in 1909 and he claims to have found a portion of a Roman horse-shoe and Roman nails on the road surface. North of Bacton the evidence was slender and the need for a route in Roman times very unclear.

During recent years there have been several new developments in the area.

1. The reporting, by J K St Joseph, of a Roman fort at Clifford<sup>(1)</sup> (SO 249467).
2. The discovery of a horse-shoe, on the track north of Abbeydore, which has been dated by the British Museum as 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Century<sup>(2)</sup>.
3. The retrieval of Romano-British pottery at Penlan (SO 342378) in 1984.

When, thanks to Mr C Davies, we were offered the opportunity of sectioning a suitable stretch of the track at Mantooth, Vowchurch, the Archaeological Research Section of the Woolhope Club decided to carry out a small excavation in order to compare the track at Vowchurch with the Abbeydore stretch. The aim of this study is to report on our findings and

to bring together some thoughts, discoveries and speculations made over the years regarding the track in the Golden Valley.

The Antonine Itinerary, a road list attributable to the early third century, gives the following route for journey XII:

Isca Silurum (Caerleon)  
Burrium (Usk)  
Gobannium (Abergavenny)  
Magnum (Kenchester)  
Bravonium (Leintwardine)  
Viroconium (Wroxeter)

Most of this route is fairly clear, but the uncertain link between Abergavenny and Kenchester is still open to conjecture. The Ordnance Survey Map of Roman Britain (1956 reprint) favours a route via Longtown, Bacton and Kerry's Gate. In 1967 the Archaeological Research Section made a careful study of this alignment and was not convinced of a Roman dating. Dr Michael Jarrett's excavation at Longtown<sup>(3)</sup> in 1965 (SO 322295) revealed no Roman material and, in the absence of any dating evidence, a route to Abergavenny via Abbeydore and Pontrilas is just as viable. This, in fact, is the route favoured by Dr I D Margary.

Perhaps the Golden Valley road is not part of the Itinerary at all. If it is Roman in origin, where is it heading?

The newly discovered Clifford fort has not been excavated, but R Kay (Hereford Archaeological News 42) suggests that, because of its large size (16 acres) and its proximity to the Clyro fort, it could well belong to the early campaigning period and could have been replaced by Clyro which holds a more prominent and commanding position. The recent discovery of a fort at Monmouth (Blestium) provides further possibilities of a military link between these forts though future excavations will have to show whether they are contemporary. The road does not have the solidity of a major military advance route but might pass, by Roman standards, as a hurriedly constructed track, using material which was to hand, for transport of supplies to a more temporary base. If this were so, the Golden Valley road could pre-date the Stone Street to Kenchester branch making a junction rather than a right angle bend or a cross roads at Bacton. The stretch from Bacton to Longtown could then be later in origin.

Both Margary and Taylor stress the wide diversity of dimension and construction observed in the many roads they have investigated and described. These vary from massive thoroughfares, twenty to thirty feet wide and several feet thick, to quite insubstantial tracks sometimes only ten to twelve feet wide and with just one well-laid layer of stone. The main characteristic feature is the agger thrown up from the flanking ditches, but Margary accepts that in some places metalling is merely laid upon the unprepared ground surface. Where, in a wet area, there is little or no agger and the subsoil is of clay the road can sink under its own weight and appear as a shallow holloway.

Buchanan points out that the very excellence of the Roman Road can sometimes lead to its decay. In low lying areas, where culverts were built beneath the roads, later neglect allowed these to become blocked creating ponds beside the tracks which undermined the metalling and eventually destroyed the roads.

### **Tracing the alignment**

Much of the track is clearly traceable and is still in use at least as a footpath, but one or two additions have been made. If the line of the lane to Newcourt, at Bacton, is projected to the south of the B4347 road, stones are visible in the stream bed and in the bank of a small tributary of the river Dore (SO 380323). The meadow in which the present excavation took place is crossed by several banks and depressions. Some are mapped and some may be

old water courses, possibly of Rowland Vaughan dating, but one which runs northwards diagonally across the meadow has a typically "Roman look", with characteristic agger and ditches faintly visible. When this was probed we were able to locate the wheel ruts at a similar gauge and depth to those in the excavated portion. As the lower portion of the meadow was reached, silting had covered the track too deeply for a probe to be effective but we were able to examine stones at a depth of 18 to 24 inches in the bank of a ditch which is associated with the railway construction. These can be seen 40ft south of the hedge boundary (SO 367348) and are at the same depth below the present surface as the road in the old station yard at Abbeydore which is also in the valley bottom at about the same distance from the river. The tithe map (1840) shows this route to be in use until the building of the railway which caused a new track west of the line to be formed. This map also shows a substantial road branching off towards Madley. This presumably fell into disuse when the railway came. It is not clear why there are two changes of alignment here, forming a double bend. If the road is following the bend in the river this is not a typically Roman feature.

Matthew Hale<sup>(4)</sup> describes the lane running southeastwards from Fairfield cross-roads at Peterchurch. When probed, this lane follows exactly the depth, dimensions and wheel ruts found at Mantooth.

### **The Excavation**

A trench 20 feet by 4 feet was laid out across what is now a shallow holloway. At this point the track is running SE-NW having followed a fairly straight alignment from the B4347 at Bacton to a point about 100ft beyond the trench. Here a change of alignment takes it diagonally across the field. Mr Davies remembers a row of pear trees lining the east side of the track near the farm and this is shown as an orchard on the tithe map. In the region of the excavation there is a bank on the NE side of the track. This is too wide to have been just a hedge bank, but could have been a row of substantial trees.

Our permission to excavate was limited to this stretch of the track and to a weekend duration. The SW end of the trench was bounded by a fence and the modern approach track to the farm. We left an option open for extending to the NE if necessary but, in fact, this end of the trench had suffered interference either by the insertion of a fence post or possibly by tree roots, and the metalling, together with any evidence of a ditch, had been disturbed.

Turf and topsoil were removed to a depth of 12 inches at both ends of the trench but the stone surface lay as little as 4 inches below the turf in the centre.

When fully exposed, the roadway was 12 feet wide, the centre being some 8 to 10 inches higher than the edges. The metalling was mainly modules of local cornstone found in bands on the slopes of the valley and sometimes referred to as Golden Valley "marble" because of the effect achieved by polishing. These were interspersed with more angular sandstone fragments probably used for repairs. The stones were larger towards the western end and more carefully packed to form a rough kerb. Wheel ruts, 4 feet 8 inches apart, averaged 9 inches across and were roughly six inches deep. As can be seen on the plans and section, the ruts are positioned towards the right hand (E) side of the road when looking towards Vowchurch and their angle shows that our trench was not cut quite at right angles to the track.

As time was limited it was decided that only the eastern half of the trench could be removed to obtain a section through the road. It soon became obvious that the foundations were not very robust. In places the surface was laid upon the vestiges of an earlier one but there were also places where clay and silt had accumulated in the hollows and more stone had been thrown on top and trodden in by traffic. The upper surface certainly did not seal the lower layer in its entirety.

The North end of the trench must be discounted because of the interference, but at the South end the lower surface seemed to be spilling into a rather ill-defined ditch (see

Section) the fill of which was rather more stony and crumbly than the really hard red marl below it.

### **The Finds**

A scatter of pottery fragments from above and below the upper road surface and from the south ditch proved to be mainly 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century or later. Several pieces of a wide shallow bowl in a powdery red fabric with an internal brown slip could be attributed to the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. Bone, glass and charcoal were also found.

### **Metal**

Two fragments of unidentifiable nails and a small donkey bit were retrieved from the south ditch.

### **Conclusions**

The stretch of road in the old station yard at Abbeydore which was cleared in 1958 was, unfortunately, not reported. It was, however, kept open for twenty years and fenced round. This area has now been leveled and nothing remains to be seen. G H Jack excavated in the same region in 1909 and his report<sup>(5)</sup> leaves little doubt that this is the same road.

"The road surface is of unworked nodular limestone, hand-pitched on virgin soil. Stones vary from three to twelve inches and there is no kerb. The overall width is 12ft 9 inches, with ruts to a depth of 4 to 6 inches running slightly to the right hand side of the road."

We now have a good many pointers to a Roman dating, but other possibilities must not be ignored. I am grateful to R E Kay for his helpful discussion throughout the excavation and for the following neat summary of the alternative suggestions made during the weekend.

1. Roman (early) behind one of the many forward frontiers during campaigns against the Silures.
2. Roman (later) after general pacification of this portion of the province.
3. Norman and Medieval - the need for communication in a fertile valley after the formation of castles, villages, manorial and monastic estates.
4. Tudor and Jacobean - agricultural and general land improvement - e.g. Rowland Vaughan's "waterworks" and the need for supporting communication.
5. 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Century - the growth of lime burning for agricultural use and for the making of mortar etc. created a need for metalled roadways to carry heavily laden traffic.

Ruth Richardson has supplied the following interesting research into the origins of the name of the farm.

### **The Meaning of Mantooth**

The modern spelling of the name of the farmhouse is 'Mantooth', and it is pronounced as an English name. In fact it is an interesting example of the anglicisation of a Welsh name, a process that has taken place in relatively recent times. The 1840 Tithe Map for Abbey Dore gives the name as 'Mantulth', which preserved something of the original pronunciation. The 1832 first edition of the Ordnance Survey Map gives 'Maentwch'. Welsh names are invariably descriptive. The first element 'maen' is relatively common and means 'rock or stone'. The second element 'twch' is far less common. The National Library of Wales,

Department of Manuscripts and Records, whose assistance is very gratefully acknowledged, provided the following information:

“The earliest occurrence of the word 'twlch' is in the old Welsh poem "Y Goddoddin", which deals with events in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. Line 857 reads "bu bwlch bu twlch tand". The word has been taken to mean 'cottage' and cognate with the Irish 'tolc' which in turn has been borrowed into Welsh in the form 'twlc', 'cot'.”

Therefore, it would seem that the original meaning of 'Mantooth' was 'stone cottage', which describes the appearance of the house.

### **Acknowledgements**

The Archaeological Research Section is grateful to Mr C Davies for permission to carry out this excavation.

Thanks are due to Mike Hemming for his excellent photography, to Terry Richardson for help with surveying the site and to members of the Research Section and the Ewyas Harold WEA group who did the "digging", measuring and discussing.

### **References**

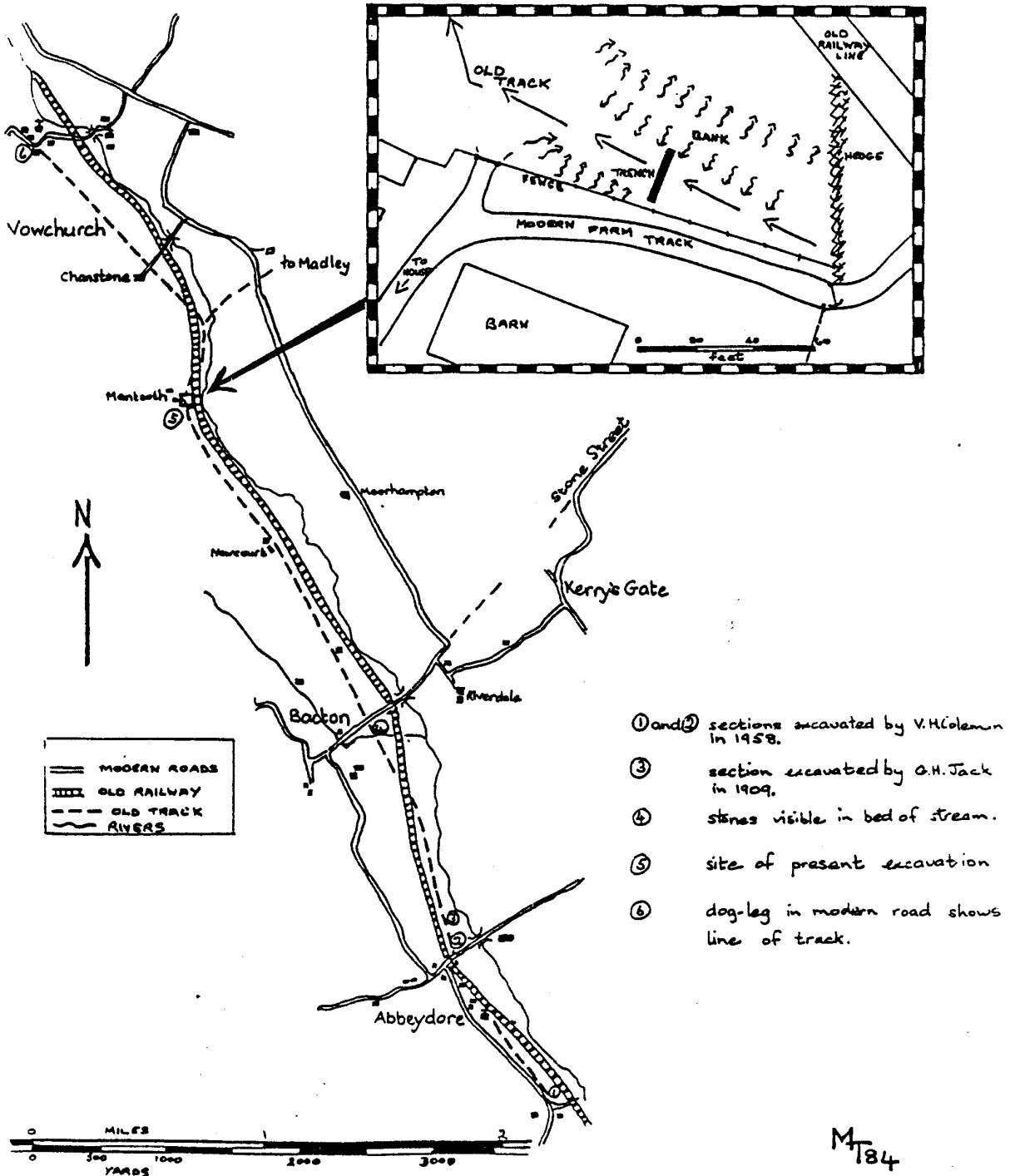
1. J K St Joseph, Roman Fort at Clifford. Journal of Roman Studies Vol LXIII (1973) p.238.  
R E Kay, Herefordshire Archaeological News No 42
2. P Leech, Roman horse-shoe, Woolhope Club Transactions (1969) p 479; British Museum SO 3830; Hereford Museum 9197.
3. M Jarrett, Excavations at Longtown, Medieval Archaeology (1966) Vol 10 p 199.
4. M Hale, Herefordshire Archaeological News No 7.
5. G H Jack, Roman road at Abbeydore, Woolhope Club Transactions 1909 p 70.

### **Bibliography**

I D Margary, Roman Roads in Britain (1967), Phoenix House.  
C Taylor, Roads and Tracks of Britain (1979), J M Dent  
R A Buchanan, Industrial Archaeology (1974), Book Club Associates

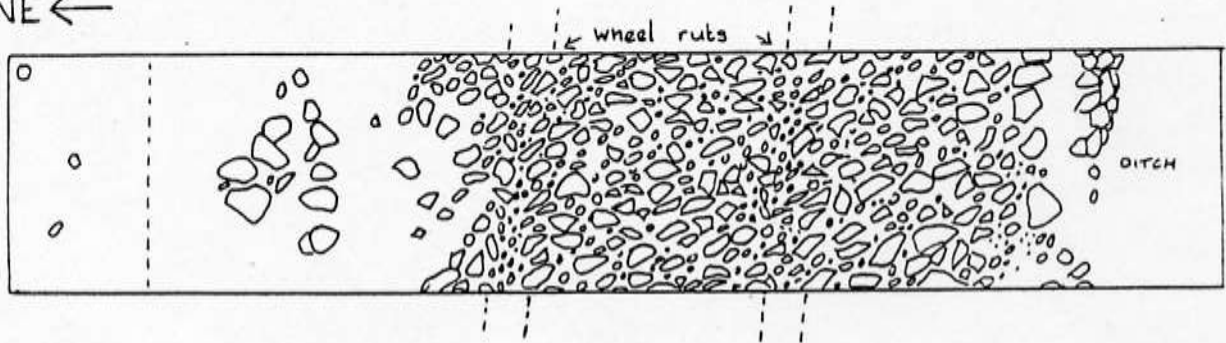


# MAP AND PLAN OF EXCAVATION SITE

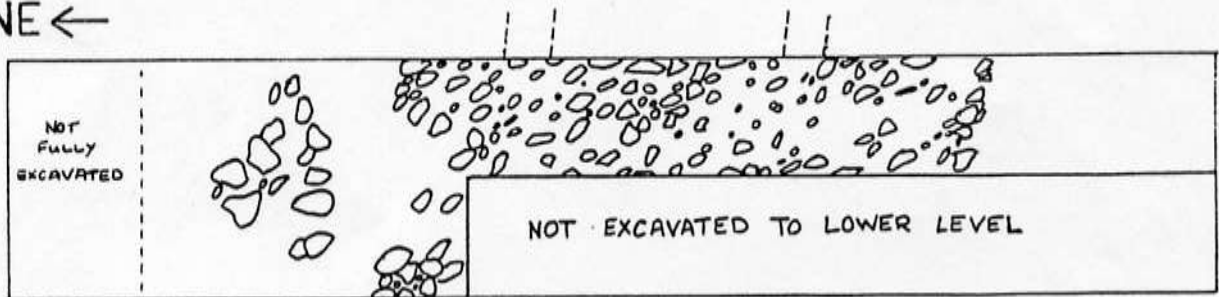


# MANTOOTH 1984

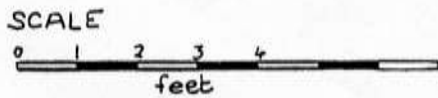
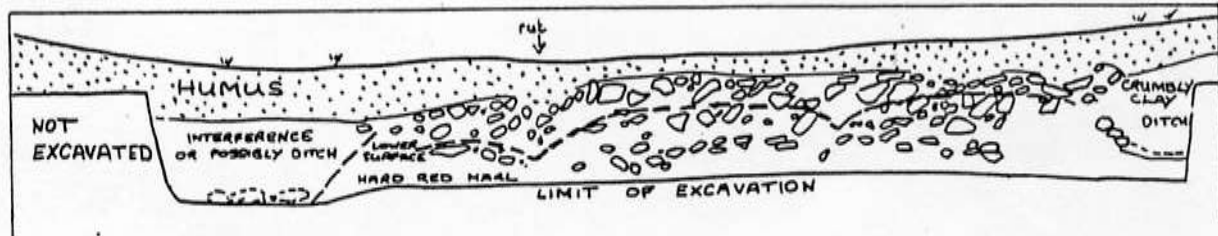
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NE ←



PLAN — LOWER SURFACE  
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SECTION  
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## **FIELD MEETING, SEPTEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup> 1984**

### **A WALK ON CEFN HILL**

A small number of Members met at the picturesquely sited Bridge Inn, Michaelchurch Escley on quite a pleasant day for the time of year. The purpose of the meeting was to walk the length of the ridge and to try and locate the reputed barrows and standing stones and visit the earthwork marked 'camp' on the Ordnance Survey map.

On the first edition of the Ordnance Survey map, a road is shown running the complete length of the ridge from a point near Wain Farm at GR 329310 to a point near Cusop. A spur left this road and went down the hillside to Upper Llanrosser and thence to Michaelchurch Escley.

The walk started near the Forestry Commission plantation at New House to a point a little way from Michaelchurch, a distance of approximately five miles. A vehicle was left near Michaelchurch to ferry drivers back to the starting point to collect their cars.

From a point near Wern-genny Farm we made for the ridge, across open uneven ground with a covering of gorse and bracken, and in the open spaces mushrooms, a commodity of which we found liberal supplies, our ascent of the hillside being watched by a small group of horses silhouetted against the skyline. The ridge, approximately 486 metres above sea level, being reached a suitable spot was chosen and a picnic lunch eaten. We then continued our journey along the ridge passing the ruins of a building which may possibly have been a cottage. A little way past these ruins is the junction with the old sunken road which goes down the hillside to Upper Llanrosser. Further along the track in the area of Cefn Farm, two flints were found, one of which appeared to have been shaped into a small scraper.

From this point the track takes the form of a 'green lane', the hedges of which are predominantly hazel and holly. Apart from stretches reclaimed for agricultural usage, the lane continues until it meets the Craswall road.

At GR 295357 the 'greenway' has been much damaged by what appears to have been an attempt to construct a watering hole. On this site are two recumbent megaliths and numerous stone fragments, the measurements of the two megaliths being 317cm x 58cm x 31cm, and 223cm x 55cm x 42cm. The possibility of these slabs and fragments being the remains of a destroyed barrow should not be dismissed. If this is so, then it would predate the track which passes over the site.

A few metres further along the track and to the left, in an adjoining field, are the remains of the 'camp'. The mound and enclosure are very overgrown with a cover of rough grass, fern, nettles, brambles and scrub trees, e.g. holly, birch, hazel, maple and blackthorn. There is a mature oak in the south bank.

The earthwork is curious, of small dimensions and of slight construction. A rectangular mound with rounded corners perhaps 2 metres high and with a summit dimension of only 10.5 metres by 6 metres has attached to its north-western slope a diminutive 'bailey' defended by a rampart now only 1.5 metres or less in height and with no traces of an external ditch. Part of the bank on this north-western section of the enclosure has been disturbed by soil erosion but the remaining portions are solid with plenty of stone visible.

There appears to have been an entrance through the rampart at the point where it is furthest from the mound. A short distance to the west and to the east of this entrance a low scarp commences against the rampart. This scarp now not much more than 1 metre high forms a defence to a larger outer enclosure which completely surrounds the inner earthwork except for a short portion of its perimeter on either side of the entrance. This outer enclosure is roughly oval in shape, but at some time in the past a cottage or farm building was constructed on the line of these defences on the north-east side. Nothing now remains of this building except one or two footings poking through the grass.

The scarp of the oval outer enclosure is of such slight elevation that it may represent only the vanished hedgerows of the cottage enclosure; however, this is unlikely for several

reasons, i.e. shape, continuance of scarp beyond present hedgerows into the 'green lane', and the manner of its abutment on to the minor earthwork. A quantity of stone is visible under an uprooted tree on the east corner of the mound, but this does not appear to be worked masonry.

The inner earthwork seems to be more or less a perfect miniature of a Norman motte and bailey castle, although actually it possibly represents the site of a Medieval tower house defended by wooden stockades, which have of course long since perished.

At GR 299351 Mr Atfield noticed a disturbance in a nearby field; further examination revealed this to be the remains of a Bronze Age burial cist (a brief description is given by Mr R Shoesmith in TWNFC, Vol XLIV, 1982 page 121). The cist, which is on a north-south alignment, is constructed of four slabs of old red sandstone. One end slab has been pushed out of alignment, probably by agricultural activities.

The measurements of the cist are as follows: length 142cm, width 75cm, depth 58cm; the thickness of the four slabs are all of approximately 15cm. The base appeared to have been of broken pieces of stone. The cist is in the centre of a ploughed out mound approximately 11 metres in diameter, with plenty of broken stone visible.

Lying alongside the hedgerow is a broken stone slab of the following measurements: length 119cm, width 53cm tapering to 48cm. This may be the remains of the capstone. It was noticed that there appear to be slight indications of other ploughed out barrows in the vicinity. Perhaps an aerial photograph would throw some light on the matter.

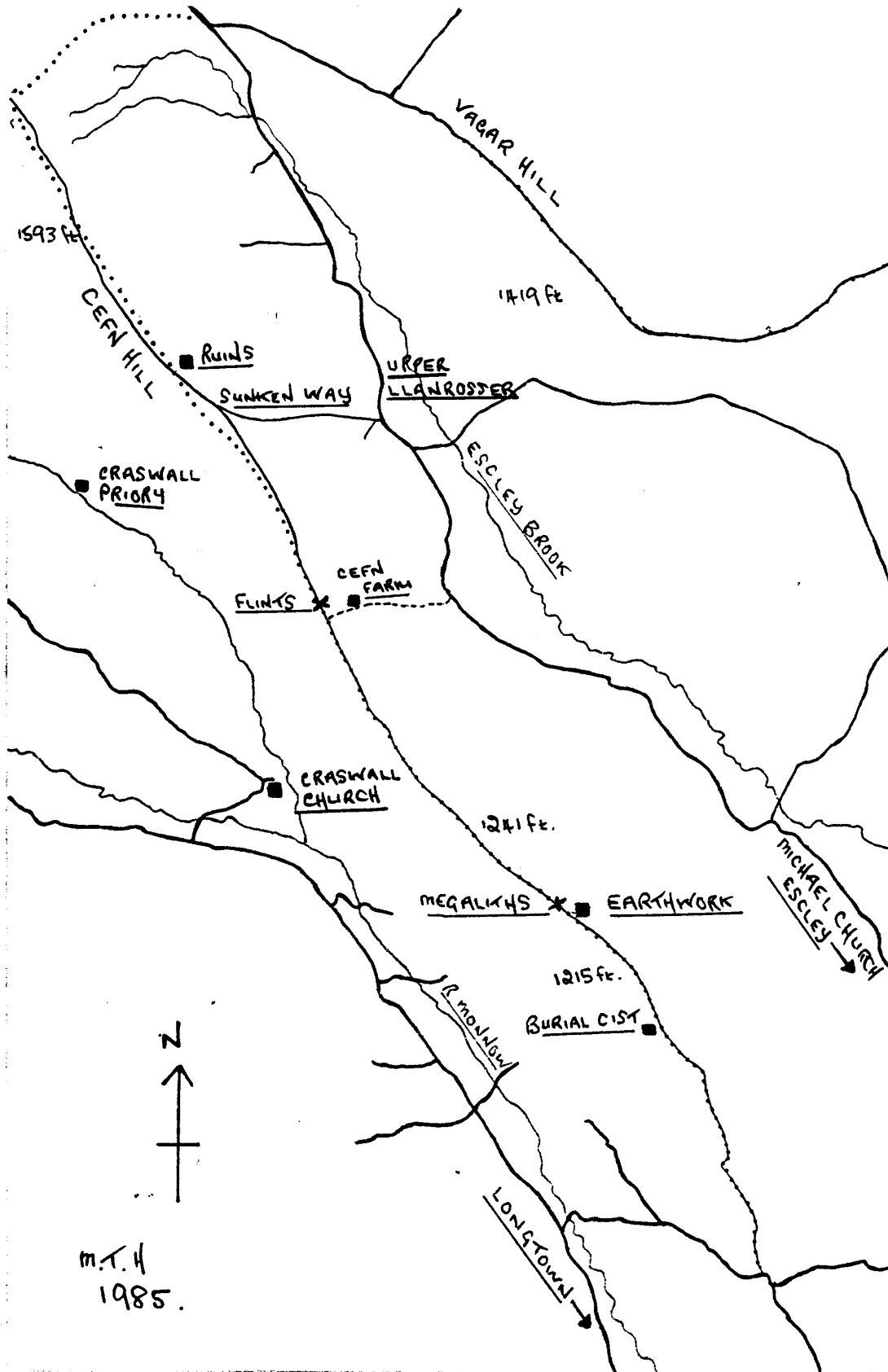
By the Middle Bronze Age cremation had become the dominant burial rite. The ashes would have been contained in a pottery urn. As a rule the urns are found inverted over the ashes, although sometimes they stand the right way up. Grave goods such as flints and beads, etc, were also often deposited.

It would appear that this cist may have contained a cremation urn as it seems a little small to have accommodated a crouched inhumation burial, but no sherds or burnt material were observed within, or in the disturbed soil around the remains of the cist.

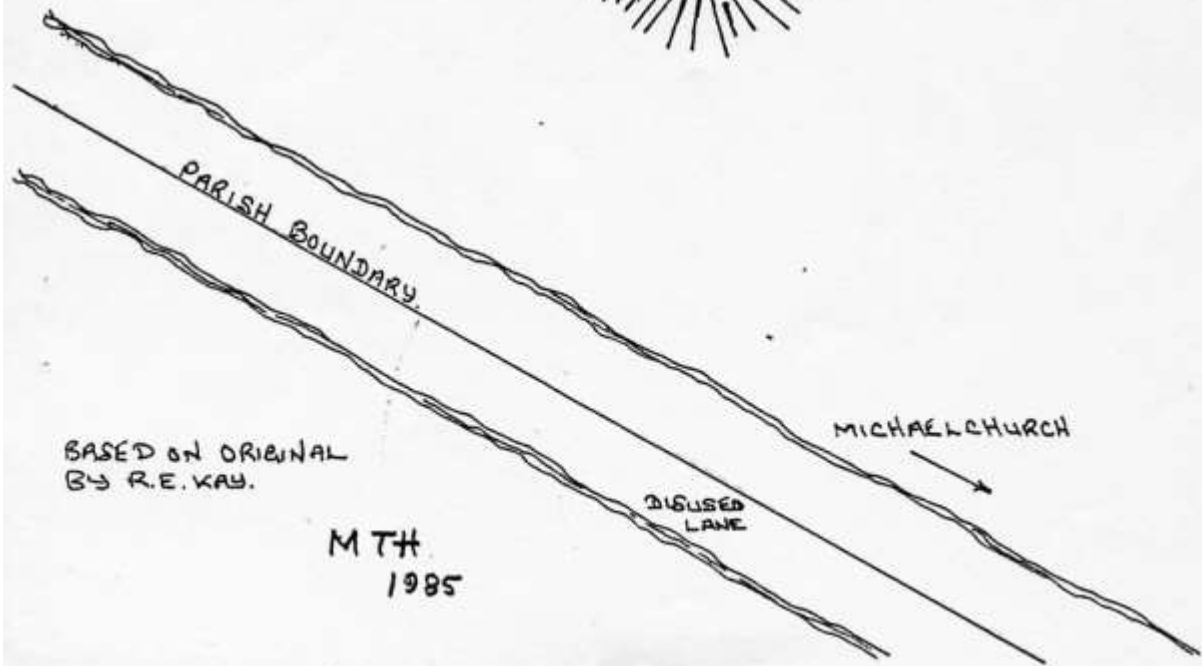
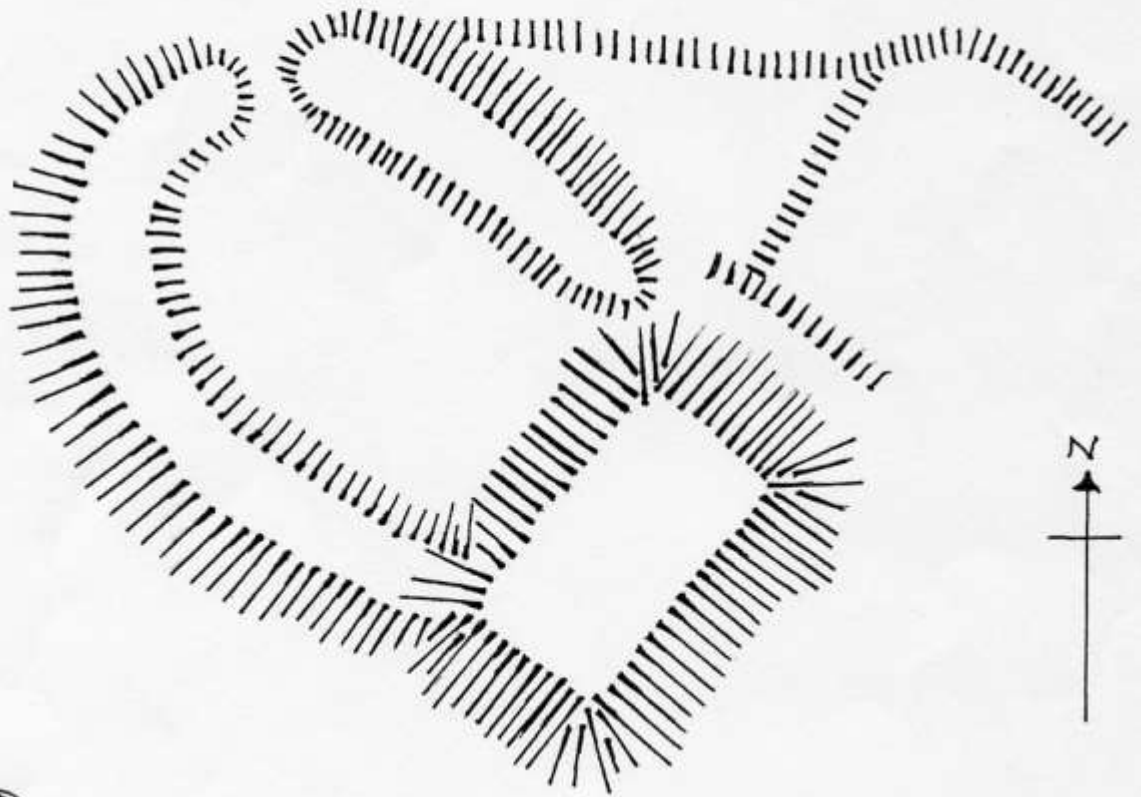
A very informative day was spent in this area of Herefordshire, although unfortunately on this occasion no standing stones were seen.

Thanks are given to Mr Richard Kay for allowing me to use as a basis his original notes on the 'camp', and for help and advice so readily given.

**M T Hemming**



# WHITEHOUSE CAMP



**PRELIMINARY REPORT ON A NEW MESOLITHIC/NEOLITHIC/BRONZE AGE/ROMAN SITE AT 'THE PARK', GREAT HOWLE FARM (In 1282 – The Forest of Dean)**

Key OS Co-ordinates: SO 61381886, SO 61591875 (Prehistoric)  
SO 61281871 (Roman)

Site first visited 9.3.85

The site extends over some 50 acres bounded on the S side by Lodge Grove Brook, the county boundary between Herefordshire and Gloucestershire. It is an area of late 19<sup>th</sup> century forestry clearance to create 'The Park' and is located just one mile from where the Bishopswood hoard of Roman coins (17,000, earliest date of deposition c 361 AD) was found. (BGAS Vol 19 1894/95 pp 399-420). It was reported that at the time of the clearance a rectangular earthwork (fosse and vallum) was levelled by forestry workmen. A scatter of Roman coarse pottery was noted at the spot.

### **Geology**

The northern and highest part of 'The Park' on the 550' contour is Trenchard Sandstone. This area is annually under the plough. The western and southern areas are Lower Limestone shales and can only be rotavated.

### **Finds**

Finds from the site indicate that the locality was a favoured area of settlement from Mesolithic times (c 4500 BC) to at least the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. It is observed that around fifty charcoal-burning pits are located in 'The Park' and surrounding fields. The date of these has not yet been determined (but would be easy to do so with C14 dating of samples from below the plough line), but one must suspect a probable late 16<sup>th</sup> century/early 17<sup>th</sup> century date due to the proximity of blast furnaces and forges on the Lodge Grove Brook near Bishopswood.

The MESOLITHIC period is represented by three microliths or arrow-tips, two truncated flakes and a probable blade core.

A fragment from a polished stone flint axe suggests NEOLITHIC occupation between 3000 BC and 2000 BC, while some of the other implements such as a selection of scrapers and an impressive piercer/perforator (6 cm in length) suggest BRONZE AGE activity up to and around 1500 BC as does a barb and tang type arrow-head.

There is a total assemblage, so far, of more than 100 flints, around 20% of them displaying clear evidence of having been worked. Concentrations of flints were recorded at SO 61381886 and SO 61591875 and around the two spring areas. The rest were scattered over the southern half of the Sandstone area and throughout the Limestone area.

### **Other Finds, Probably Prehistoric**

1. A polished stone pestle (10cm x 3cm) of sandy-fawn colour with black marbling-like effect. The blunt end has two ground-down facets.
2. A quartz-conglomerate pebble (length 10cm, circumference 19cm) used as a grinding/striking tool with a natural depression for a finger grip. The side held against the palm is smooth and polished, contrasting with the rough edges at end and base where shattered quartz crystals are discernible.

### **Roman Occupation Site at SO 61281871**

A surface concentration of Roman coarse pottery plus one fragment of Samian ware was recorded over an area approximately 35m x 12m over Lower Limestone to the N of, and on the edge of, Old Wood, 160m above Lodge Grove Brook.

The pottery is predominantly Severn-Valley ware with some local grey-ware cooking pot with combed, wavy-line decoration. Rim forms indicate a 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> century occupation. Some fragments of roof-tile were present, but no dressed building stone was apparent either on the field or at the field's edge. A timber-framed building is therefore suggested. Several tesserae of square, rectangular and triangular shape were found on the surface.

Throughout the field there is a general scatter of bloomery slag with one concentration close by the Lodge Grove Wood to Ruardean footpath. Blast furnace slag was only noted near to one of the charcoal pits.

Apart from a very worn William IV penny of 1834, a late 19<sup>th</sup> century glass marble (presumably lost at the time of the forestry clearance) and one sherd of mottled, dark-green-glazed pot (18<sup>th</sup> c?), there were no surface finds to indicate occupation or activity on the site from the late 4<sup>th</sup> century to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It would appear from present surface finds that the site reverted to forest after the Roman occupation ceased.

The site is now virtually surrounded by a pheasant shoot.

The owner of the land, Mr George Jones of Great Howle Farm, has been particularly helpful, co-operative and altogether interested in the discovery. Mr Mervyn Freeman of neighbouring Home Farm and Mr Brooks of Bishopswood House along with Mr Hugh Clarke, the gamekeeper, have all been considerably helpful.

With the co-operation of the gamekeeper, an area of woodland in Old Wood was probed and a possible paved track was located running westward from a platform area in the wood, immediately below the occupation site, towards Bishopswood and the River Wye.

The whole site is now planted and further investigation is not possible until at least late September 1985, when I will continue field investigation.

### **Summary**

The Roman occupation site was obviously considerably damaged by the forestry clearance of 1895, but perhaps not irretrievably so as three sides of the rectangular earthwork are still faintly visible in the field, and the possible fourth side more so behind an iron-paling fence dividing 'The Park' from Old Wood, although digging out the holes to erect the fence would have disturbed the interior of the earthwork. There may still be evidence of post-holes.

The area cannot be ploughed because of the quantity of Limestone shale on the surface, and is only shallowly rotavated. Even rotavation, though, is disturbing tesserae which were all found within a square metre. About forty sherds of Severn-Valley ware have been noted scattered throughout 'The Park', which obviously have been collected and scattered by mud and clay adhering to tractor wheels.

It is difficult to determine the depth of solid limestone bed-rock by probing due to the mass of drifting, loosened shales, but it is not far from the surface.

All things considered, an excavation appears desirable to determine the nature and use of the building, which would appear to be more in connection with iron-working than farming. The size of the Bishopswood coin hoard would suggest other Roman occupation sites between this newly located one and the Wye. It would be particularly interesting to determine whether there is evidence for either destruction or desertion of the site during the disturbances of AD 367 (which would be in line with the deposition date of the Bishopswood hoard) and which so affected occupation sites along the Severn estuary (the Oldcroft hoard comes within the same deposition period). A full report with drawings will be submitted for the next transactions of WNFC.



### **Acknowledgements**

Especially to George Jones, Alan Saville (Cheltenham Museum) who examined and commented on the flints, Mark Walters (2nd year student of Archaeology, St David's University, Lampeter) and Alan Jenkins who assisted in the field-walking, Gordon Clissold (Chief Ordnance Surveyor for South Wales and FOD Historical Society) who assisted with the accurate co-ordinates, Mervyn Freeman, Hugh Clarke, Mr Brooks and Bernard and Barbara Rawes who also examined the pottery finds.

**Bryan Walters**  
**1985**

### **Editor's Note**

I understand from Bryan that a further report with flint and pottery rims drawings will be sent to the Editor of the WNFC Transactions. This autumn he hopes to re-check the site after ploughing and lay out 30m grids to better assess flint concentrations. Any assistance will be welcomed. A letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> April, 1985 received by him from Mr A Saville, Archaeological Officer with the Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museums, contains the following information:

#### "Flints from Lodge Grove c. S0614188

The flint finds from the above location represent an important assemblage of prehistoric material, indicating activity at various phases. The earliest phase is Mesolithic, around 4500 years BC, represented by three microliths or arrow tips. A tiny fragment from a polished flint axe gives an indication of Neolithic occupation, probably at some date between 3000-2000 years BC, and some of the other implements, especially the scrapers and the piercer, suggest Bronze Age activity around 1500 years BC. Altogether, therefore, these flints quite clearly show that this locality was a favoured spot for settlement in prehistoric times."