

HEREFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWS



HAN 54 September 1990

**WOOLHOPE CLUB
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH SECTION**

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No. 54 September 1990

PROGRAMME SEPTEMBER 1990-FEBRUARY 1991

Sunday 16 th September	Field Walking at Brampton Abbots (615259)	Meet at Traveller's Rest, End of M50 and A449(T) Leader: Elizabeth Taylor
Sunday 14 th October	Field Walking (depends upon conditions)	Contact Elizabeth Taylor Venue as yet undecided
Friday 26 th October	Lecture on Herefordshire place names by John Freeman	Hereford Education Centre, Blackfriars Road, 7.30 pm
Saturday 10 th November	The Second Annual Shindig (Mini-Conference) will be held at the Larruperz Centre (Old Grammar School), Grammar School Close, Off Station Approach, Ross-on-Wye. Commencing at 6.00 pm, bar opening at 5.30 pm. Tickets £4.50 from Committee Members or Treasurer (sae please).	
Monday 10 th December	AGM and Annual Dinner	Golden River Restaurant, Commercial Street, Hereford 7.30 for 8.00 pm

1991

Wednesday 23 rd January	Excavation and the public interest	Meet at Llanwarne Village Hall, 7.30 pm Talk by Charles Mundy
Wednesday 13 th February	Sites & Monuments Record and Air Photographs	Meet at Llanwarne Village Hall, 7.30 pm Talk by Hilary White

Programme Notes

1. All Sunday field meetings start at 10.30 am.
2. In case of bad weather please contact Leader or Committee Members.
3. Guests are very welcome.
4. Please wear suitable clothing and footwear, and bring food and drinks.
5. Llanwarne Village Hall is opposite the old ruined church; the car park is next to the ruin. There will be a small charge to cover hire of the hall and refreshments.
6. Hilary White and Charles Mundy are on the County Archaeology staff.

MEETING OF COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUPS, 8TH SEPTEMBER 1990

This was organized by Malcolm Cooper, the County Archaeological Officer, to introduce his staff to local groups. Thirty people representing thirteen groups attended; the ARS and the Woolhope were represented by Marianne Lelieveld and the writer. The day opened with coffee and a general get-together, followed by staff members introducing themselves and their duties.

Malcolm Cooper explained the setup of his section. They were part of the Museum Branch of the Libraries Service. The Archaeology Section was responsible for the preparation and classification of artifacts, but the eventual display and storage was the responsibility of the County Museum.

He outlined the work of the section, which was to maintain the SMR database and to give archaeological advice to members of the public. They tried to protect sites, and once a site was added to the SMR some measure of protection could be afforded. Development control was an important factor and planning applications were checked. Rescue archaeology, where a site was to be destroyed by developers, and salvage archaeology, mainly from trenches cut by public utility organisations, are also important.

Funding of the section was a problem. Last year only £580,000 was available, and the county only paid for two and a half posts. There were no funds for field work, which was generally paid for by developers and English Heritage. Worcester City District has its own Archaeologist, and Hereford City District has Ron Shoesmith and the Hereford Conservation Committee.

A talk followed by Hilary White on the SMR. All known sites with site numbers were plotted on 1/10,000 maps, and information was on computer with the old files retained as backup. There were Parish Files, which contained general information. The importance of strict control and procedure in adding to the database was emphasised in order to make it compatible with others. The database contains sites, soil marks, crop marks, scatters, individual finds, documentary and cartographical evidence. Each entry contains a basic description, grid reference, status etc.

There are 3,500 air photographs. It is hoped in future to buy air photographs annually. There are other collections of air photographs to which the section can have access.

There is a need for amateurs to help in the checking of existing records at Warndon, and to report new finds and changes in existing sites. The SMR is a public record to which the public have access by arrangement. The one million acres of the county contain an estimated 50,000 sites of which only 10,000 are presently listed. It was put together from the old records of the two counties, plus work done since amalgamation, and at present there is very little in the way of Industrial Archaeology. The western upland areas (West Herefordshire) are poorly represented. The SMR is linked with the National Archaeological Record of the Ordnance Survey, and in future it is hoped to have compatible computer links. There is no clear cut-off date for sites: even World War II pillboxes and red telephone boxes are included.

James Dinn, who spoke to us last January (report in HAN 53) then talked about survey work, especially in the Herefordshire Valleys Survey. The problem is of sites hidden by river silt. Iron Age Hill Forts are obvious, but the picture would be incomplete without the valley farms presently buried. Most of what he said was contained in his talk to us.

He talked about the various techniques used, air photographs, geophysical, magnetometer and resistivity surveys, field walking and earthwork surveys, and the need to integrate with documentary evidence. He stressed the need to publish results.

Charles Mundy, the Project Officer for the (Worcester) Deansway Archaeological Project, talked about the need to get the public interested in archaeology. He mentioned how "Rescue" had come into being, largely as the result of Phil Barker and the 1860 problems of earlier unsatisfactory Worcester City development.

This was followed by a pleasant buffet lunch where representatives had the opportunity to talk to staff members and admire the exhibition put up by the section.

After lunch the various group introduced themselves and gave short talks on their aims and activities, which took us up to teatime. Malcolm Cooper then introduced the idea of the Friends of the County Archaeology Section as a vehicle to keep interested groups in touch and to publicise events both county and local by a quarterly newsletter. The meeting broke up at almost 6.00 pm.

PRH

ARS OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE FOR 1990

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr P Halliwell
<u>Secretary:</u>	Mr M Hemming
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Mr J Harding
<u>Field Secretary:</u>	Mr M Hemming
<u>Editor:</u>	Mr P Halliwell
<u>Assistant Editor:</u>	Mr J Kirkwood
<u>Committee Members:</u>	Mrs R Richardson Mrs R Skelton Miss M Thomas Mrs B Harding Mrs E M Taylor Mr R E Kay Mr G Sprackling Mr C R Attfield Mr W T Jones Mrs M U Jones

Subject Recorders

The following are subject recorders for the main Club:

Mrs B Harding	Ornithology
Mrs R Skelton	Deserted Medieval Villages
Mr G Sprackling	Parish Field Name Survey

Subscriptions 1990

These are now due and should be paid to the Treasurer, Mr J V Harding. Cheques should be made payable to Woolhope Club/ARS. The current subscription is £2.50 per year, and prompt payment would be very much appreciated by the Treasurer.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in articles represent the opinions of the writers, and not necessarily those of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club or the Archaeological Research Section. The accounts of Field Meetings are as faithful a record as possible of events and what was discovered.

CBA Group 8 – West Midland Archaeology Day, Saturday 22nd September, 1990

The Council for British Archaeology Group 8, West Midland Region is organising a West Midland Day on 22nd September, 1990 at Worcester. No further details are available at the time of publication of this Newsletter. It is hoped that the Parish Field Name Survey group will put on an exhibition at the event.

Editor

EDITORIAL

This issue is not as large as normal for the second issue of the year because it was necessary to try to beat the postage increase on 17th September. Several articles have had to be held over till the next issue.

The editor has been made aware of criticism about typing errors which have not been corrected in the Newsletter.

The constraints of production are such that when the programme of events expires, a new programme must be circulated. This is done in conjunction with the Newsletter, to save the additional postage charge.

It is not practicable to return manuscript copy to the authors for the typing to be checked unless it is received several months before production. In any case damage is often caused to fair copy in the post, rendering it unsuitable for electronic scanning.

Typed copy is normally duplicated as it stands. In most cases the editor's typewriter does not match the face of the writer's typewriter, so corrections are usually not possible. As it is, the editor himself has to type copy received in manuscript.

The editor wishes to thank all contributors, especially those who submit typed copy, for their contributions and is always looking for new blood.

Editor

Resignation of Committee Member

It is with great regret that the resignation of Richard Kay from the Committee has been accepted. Richard has been trying to resign for some time, but had with difficulty been prevailed upon to postpone it.

Richard Kay has been an institution in the ARS, and his advice and help on the Committee will be sadly missed although we still hope to see him in field meetings when he feels able. For many years Richard was the Assistant Editor of the Newsletter, and there is rarely an issue of the earlier Newsletters without a contribution from him. We sincerely hope that this will continue in the future.

Mr W T Jones

Tom Jones is, unfortunately, still in hospital and regrettably little improvement can be reported. We all miss Tom at our field meetings, for his dry humour and fund of unassuming archaeological knowledge, and we hope that some improvement will be forthcoming. We are all pleased that Margaret is still able to attend some of our meetings during this very difficult time.

Chairman

ARICONIUM – MILITARY SITE EXCAVATION – INTERIM REPORT

By Bryan and Mark Walters

The 1989 aerial photographic survey by Mark Walters produced the first evidence for the siting of Roman military installations which have for long been suspected as existing at or near the Bury Hill settlement of Ariconium which lay just within the ancient bounds of the Forest of Dean.

A cereal crop, while still green, showed parts of the outlines of at least four squarish and rectangular ditched enclosures with rounded corners. They were located exactly 1km north of the known Ariconium settlement site. The parish tythe map of 1838 named the field as The Great Woulding. Immediately to the east of the field, the B4224 Mitcheldean to Hereford road dips through a hollow way to cross the Rudhall Brook in a northerly direction. At this point the road is an ancient parish boundary for more than one mile. Margary's Roman road, Route 613, is closely identified with it as far as Mordiford, just south east of Hereford.

After ploughing, the field was surveyed on the ground. Field walking on the crop mark area produced a large quantity of pottery, all early Severn Valley Ware forms and fabrics of the 1st century AD. The surrounding area contained fairly heavy deposits of tapped bloomery slag, smithing slag, crushed ore fragments and vitrified clay. The surface evidence did not prove a military site so permission was sought (and kindly granted by Mr John Pugh of Porch Farm) to excavate a section through the ditches in order to determine their nature and construction and to seek stratified, datable evidence.

A provisional assessment of the visible crop marks is shown in Fig 1. The geophysical survey will, no doubt, modify and clarify this initial assessment. A Temporary Bench Mark was established for surveying purposes and, on October 1st, a 40 metres by

2 metres north-south traverse was laid down which would provide us with a section through ditches 1x, 2x, 3x and 4x. Ditch 5x appears to be an extension or annexe of 4x.

The Features

The numbers quoted henceforth refer to our context numbering – See Figs 2 and 3.

Ditch 20, judging solely from the aerial photographs, would appear to overlap ditch 10 and therefore be the later of the two fortlets. It was rock-cut just 72.5cms deep to the bottom of the slot and was 160cms wide at the top. At the point of excavation it was V-shaped in the west section but had opposing shelf-like features adjacent to the east section. The ditch fill (21) contained several sherds of vesicular, black native-ware pottery, cattle bone, smithing slag and, towards the top of the fill, a large fragment of the upper part of a rotary quern.

Ditch 10 belonged to the earlier of the two fortlets and was 1.012 metres deep to the bottom of the slot. However, its top southern edge had been cut away by the later wide, shallow ditch (3). Its projected width at the top might have been 155cms. Below the cut, the undisturbed, stratified ditch fill (8) contained early Severn Valley Ware rims and sherds and a generous selection of 'native ware' rims.

Ditch 14 belonged to the larger, rectangular enclosure (4x) which lay parallel to the two fortlets and on their southern perimeter, separated by 3. It was a perfectly-cut V-shape with a narrow, flat bottom, 112cms deep and with a width of 190cms across the top. The top fill (12) contained a large quantity of crushed and broken sandstone, probably from rampart levelling. Mixed in were sherds of very abraded, vesicular, 'native-ware' pottery. The undisturbed, stratified fill (13) contained only 'native-ware' pottery, a small quantity of tapped bloomery slag and a larger quantity of highly magnetic smithing slag associated with vitrified clay, some of which was fused to a glassy black slag.

Ditch 3 was problematical and remains an enigma. The aerial photograph shows that it cut ditch 10 along the length of the southern side of that fortlet (2x). It ran parallel to ditch 14 of enclosure 4x without cutting it and extended beyond it in an easterly direction for a few metres. At bottom centre a slot (31) was revealed, above which were redeposited layers of dense slag (6). The question must be asked: Does slot 31 represent all that is left of a normal V-shaped ditch that was otherwise completely cut away by intrusive ditch 3? The aerial photographs show a just-discernible ditch to the east of 5x which may be a continuation of one from which only the slot remains at the point of the excavated traverse. The alternative is that a wide, shallow ditch was cut with a slot at the bottom for which no explanation can presently be offered. Ditch 3 was a little more than 7 metres wide and rock-cut, except where it had cut away the top of ditch 10. For the first 2 metres on each side it was only 25cms deep. For the next 1.5 metres it descended to a depth of 45cms. The bottom of the slot was 74cms deep, a similar depth to ditch 20. At the extreme west end of the slot (31) was a pointed stake hole (33) with a sandstone block (34) to its side at the top. Context 17 was a red/brown to orange/brown sandy silt, looser on top, more compacted closer to bedrock (11). At the bottom of 17 was a lens of hard, compacted clay. The fill of the stake hole was silty but of different texture to 17. Fill 2 had not intruded into it.

The Internal Features

The traverse was widened at its northern end in an attempt to encompass and interpret gully 25, which was cut 13cms deep into the sandstone bedrock. It was edged, in places, by randomly chosen blocks of sandstone up to 25cms in diameter (See Fig 2). It was filled with a dark, reddish-brown silty sand. It contained no artefacts. Context 23 was a rock-cut post-hole 30cm deep. 27 was a post-hole cut 25cms deep. Contexts 41-44 contained no finds. The appalling gales and torrential rain during December and early January, plus a rapidly-approaching deadline for back-filling made further investigations impossible in this area; however, Context 18 had been partially revealed south of ditch 14, a gully 20cms deep at the point where it entered the section of the traverse.

The Finds, and Tentative Dating of the Features

Ditch 20, as previously stated, contained sherds of only 'native-ware' pottery, cattle bone and smithing slag. The upper part of the rotary quern had been manufactured from a fine-grain local sandstone. When complete it would have been close to 29cms in diameter with an internal hopper of 4mm depth. The diameter of the hopper would have been 18cms. The maximum thickness of the quern at its rim was 56mm.

Ditch 10 contained a jar of Kingsholm fabric, TF213, similar to No 22 (See Darling in Hurst 1985). It is illustrated in Fig 6, No 10. Bowl No 9 was fully oxidised Severn Valley Ware and slightly vesicular. Gritted Severn Valley Ware rims and sherds were also present, similar to Gloucester Type Fabric 220 which was found in Kingsholm Phases 3.2-4.3. Other artefacts included three whetstones of different fabrics and a shaped, roughly circular stone disc of c 5cms diameter. There were no less than seven different 'native-ware' rims in the ditch fill.

Ditch 3 Compressed into the fill of gully 31 were sherds of both gritted and vesicular Severn Valley Wares along with thick 'native ware' sherds from a 'hammer rim' vessel, two whetstone fragments and bovine teeth. Context 17, immediately above the gully, contained a badly corroded, but identifiable, Aucissa-type brooch, generally accepted as being introduced into Britain by the Roman military and usually found on Claudio-Neronian sites although on occasions it is found in early Flavian contexts. Also from 17 were rims and sherds of gritted storage jars, thick vesicular sherds of 'native-ware' and a Class A rim. A little-worn lower 3rd molar of a pig, possibly 2½ years old at death, was also present. The fill (45) of pit 30 also contained early SVW fabrics including GTF 220 type, and several large body sherds of a Dressel 20 amphora, a southern Spanish type used for transporting olive oil. A notable find from the pit, and fused to iron slag, was a broken iron spear/javelin tip of a socketed type, readily paralleled in the British Museum collection as a Group 1A produced for/by the Roman military in the mid-1st century. See Manning pp 163-165 and Plate 77.

Slag Layers (6) contained many sherds, all of SVW and sand gritted. Several were fused to slag. No pottery was encountered definitely later than 1st century. The upper layers of fill 2 produced a few sherds of main production SVW (GTF 11B) and a few fragments of Central Gaulish samian. Early BB1 was also found in the upper layers of 2.

Ditch 14 of enclosure 4x contained the lugged, 'native-ware' cooking pot, see Fig 6, No 11. It is of a type that is rare in Gloucs/Herefs, and may derive from the Durotrigian tradition. Apart from the smithing and smelting slag aforementioned, the ditch contained only 'native-ware' material at the point of excavation. SVW was notably absent.

Discussion

The two fortlets represented by ditches 20 and 10 were almost certainly pre-Flavian and may date to the early 50's. Ditch 3 may be pre or early Flavian. Later in the Flavian period it apparently ceased to serve its primary function and began to fill. The slag was probably re-deposited in the later 1st century. In view of the quantity of pottery retrieved from ditch 10 it is reasonable to assume that this fortlet was occupied for some considerable time. The mass of slag, much of it smithing waste, lying on the field surface above and beyond enclosure 5x strongly suggests this as a major production area and therefore probably contemporary with fortlets 1x and 2x. The fortlets (1x and 2x) are both small. If square, they would each enclose around 2,500 square metres, about .6 of an acre. Their ditches might possibly satisfy the minimum requirements for the briefest of stays but the quantity of pottery from 10 belies a short stay. Ditch 20, especially, can hardly be described as satisfactorily defensive. What purpose, then, might these fortlets have served?

Firstly, I do not believe that Silurian territory extended east of the Wye. There are opposing hill fortifications on both sides of the Wye, from Svmonds Yat to Chepstow. Throughout the historical period Foresters have been notably independent, even isolationist. Although trading with the Dobunni, and possibly allied to them, it is quite probable that the Foresters of Dean had developed as a small, independent tribe, rich in resources and skills which were drawn on, but not necessarily exploited by, both the Dobunni and the Silurians. If, as most historians believe, part of the Dobunni 'treated' with the Roman commander Aulus Plautius shortly after the invasion began in AD43, then it is possible too that the Foresters were negotiated into the treaty. For certain, Plautius would have foreseen the eventual need to control the iron resources of Dean. No major Roman military site has yet been identified in Dean, this despite extensive field walking and aerial survey. Apart from Ariconium, the nearest sites lie just south of Monmouth adjacent to the Usk road, and at a re-occupied site at Sudbrook. It is reasonable, and possible, that a fort-site may lie beneath Chepstow close to the river crossing. These sites are just west of the Wye. The theory that the Romans did not encounter aggression between the Severn and the Wye during their advance into Silurian territory is further strengthened by recent archaeological discoveries of modest-sized, native iron-working sites of the 1st century within Dean and in the Wye valley.

Returning to Ariconium and the limited evidence from our excavation, the fortlets may now be seen as representing more an administrative centre than a policing post, staffed with a minimum of man-power and supervising the production, supply and distribution of iron ingots and artefacts to advance military posts further west. The need for replacement weaponry at the Usk fortress (established c 55AD) is obvious. The military requirement for millions of various sized nails for more permanent fort construction is even more obvious. A nominal military presence suggests a compliant, non-aggressive British workforce, in all probability receiving benefits from the Romans in return for their skilled labour. Many examples of pre-Flavian decorated samian sherds have come from the civilian settlement site a kilometre away.

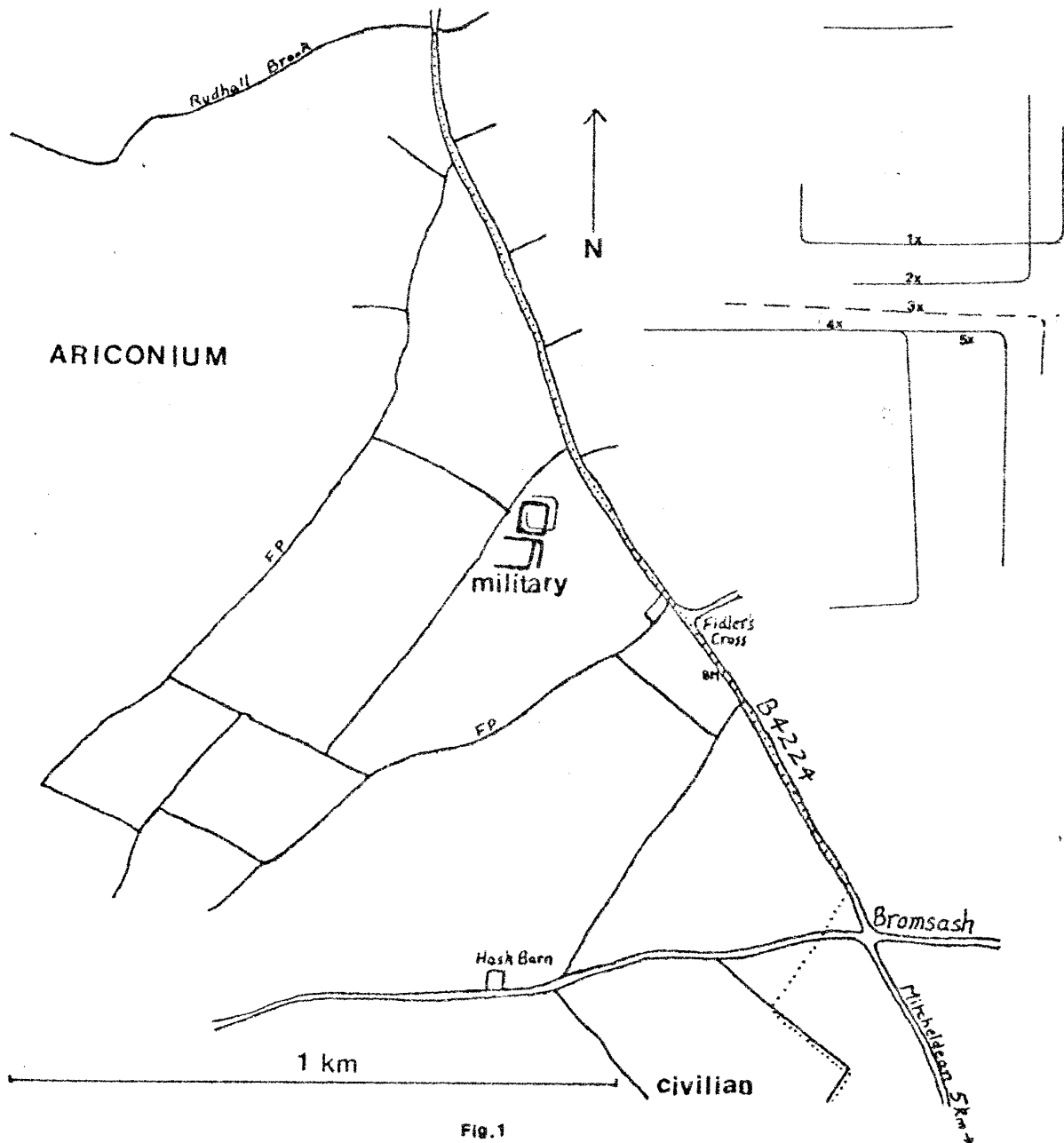


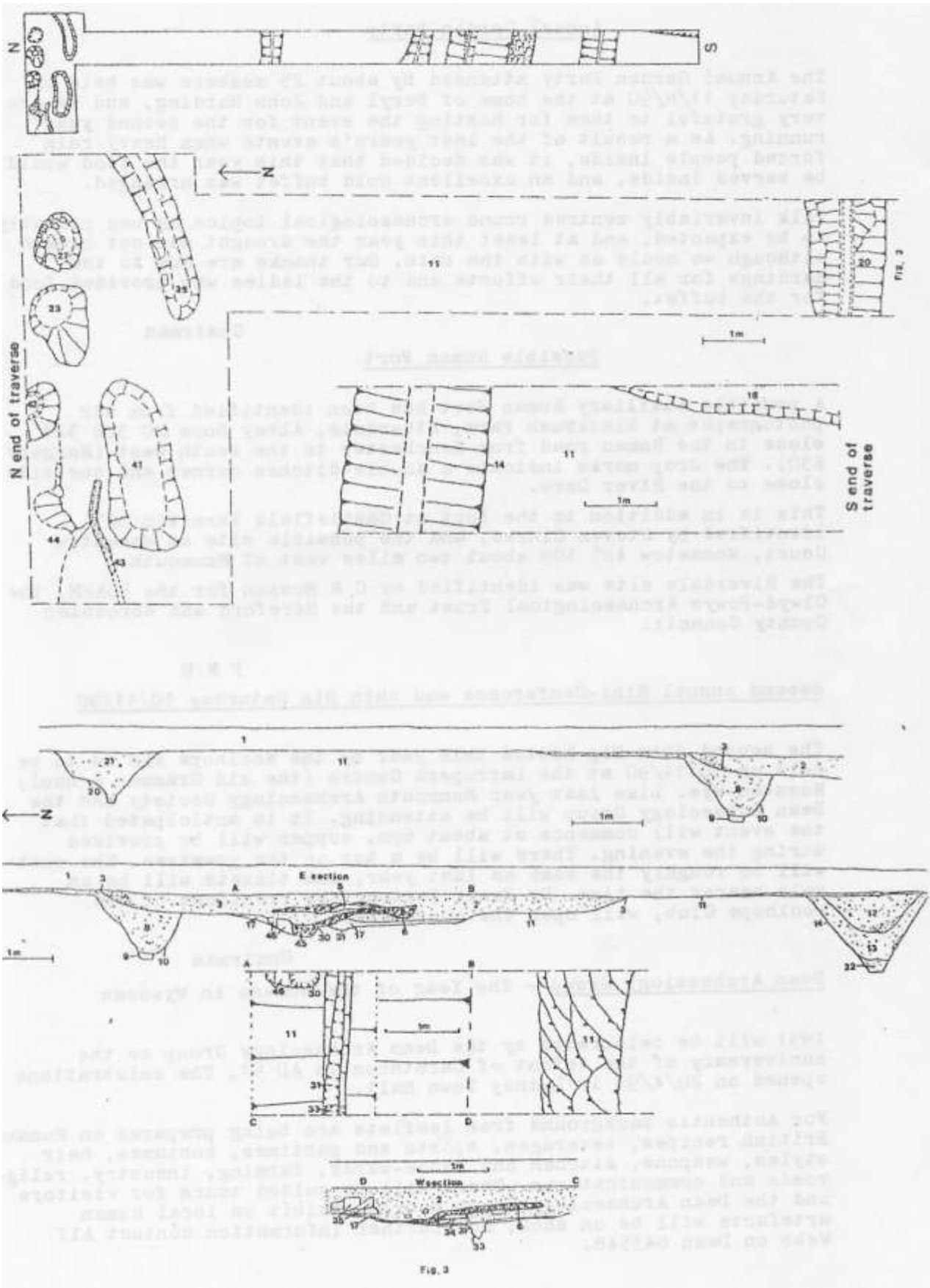
Fig.1

Plan of the Bromsash area showing the relative positions of the Ariconium military site centred on SO 6428 2388 and the Bury Hill settlement site centred on SO 645 229.

The B4224 is a Roman military road, Margary Route No 613, which continues south through Mitcheldean as the 'Dean Road' (Margary Route No 614), eventually to join with Margary Roman road No 60A close to the Severn estuary.

Inset top right: The site plan as deduced from the aerial photograph taken by Mark Walters on 24th June, 1989 at 6.00 pm from a height of 1,500 feet.

This has been extracted and condensed from an article in the 'Dean Archaeology Magazine' by kind permission of the Editor.



Annual Garden Party

The Annual Garden Party, attended by about 25 members, was held on Saturday 11/8/90 at the home of Beryl and John Harding, and we are very grateful to them for hosting the event for the second year running. As a result of the last year's events, when heavy rain forced people inside, it was decided that this year the food would be served inside, and an excellent cold buffet was arranged.

Talk invariably centred round archaeological topics, as was probably to be expected, and at least this year the drought was not broken although we could do with the rain. Our thanks are due to the Hardings for all their efforts and to the ladies who provided food for the buffet.

Chairman

POSSIBLE ROMAN FORT

A possible Auxiliary Roman Fort has been identified from air photographs at Blackbush Farm, Riverdale, Abbey Dore SO 382327, close to the Roman road from Kenchester to the south west (Margary 630). The crop marks indicate a double-ditches corner and one side close to the River Dore.

This is in addition to the fort at Castlefield Farm 428327, identified by Steven Clarke, and the possible site at Wonastow Court, Wonastow 485109 about two miles west of Monmouth.

The Riverdale site was identified by C R Musson for the RCAHM, the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust and the Hereford and Worcester County Council.

PRH

Second Annual Mini-Conference and Shindig, Saturday 10th November, 1990

The second Shindig, hosted this year by the Woolhope ARS is to be held on 10th November, 1990 at the Larruperz Centre (the old Grammar School), Ross-on-Wye. Like last year, Monmouth Archaeology Society and the Dean Archaeology Group will be attending. It is anticipated that the event will commence at about 6.00 pm; supper will be provided during the evening. There will be a bar on the premises. The cost will be roughly the same as last year, and tickets will be on sale nearer the time. Dr Frank Pexton, the President of the Woolhope Club, will open the conference.

Chairman

Dean Archaeology Group – The Year of the Romans in Wydean

1991 will be celebrated by the Dean Archaeology Group as the anniversary of the defeat of Caractacus in AD 51. The celebrations opened on 20th April, 1990 in Lydney Town Hall.

For authentic background, free leaflets are being prepared on Romano-British recipes, beverages, sports and pastimes, costumes, hairstyles, weapons, kitchen and table wares, farming, industry, religion, roads and communications. There will be guided tours for visitors and the Dean Archaeology Group mobile exhibit on local Roman artifacts will be on show.

“GOYTRE” MOTTE AND BAILEY EARTHWORK

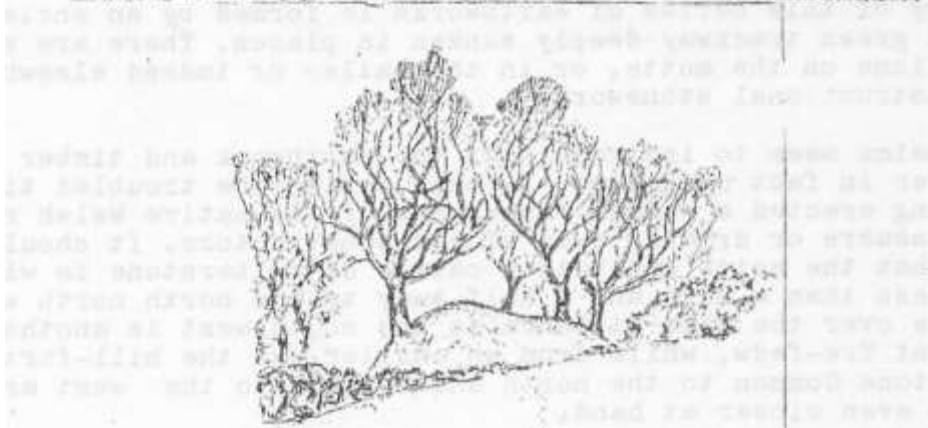
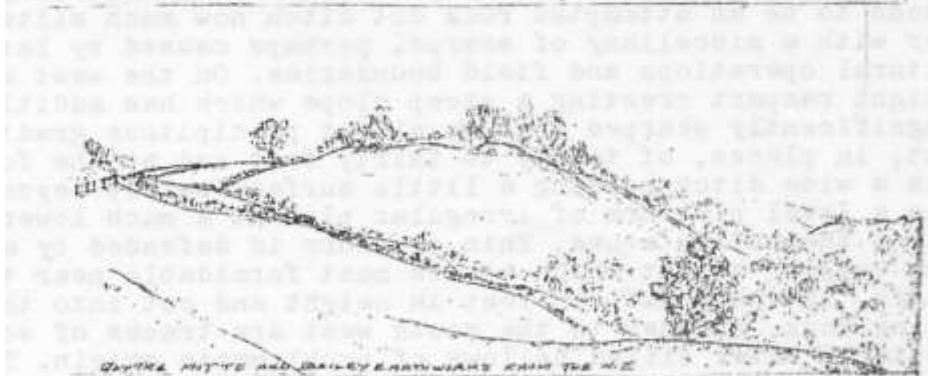
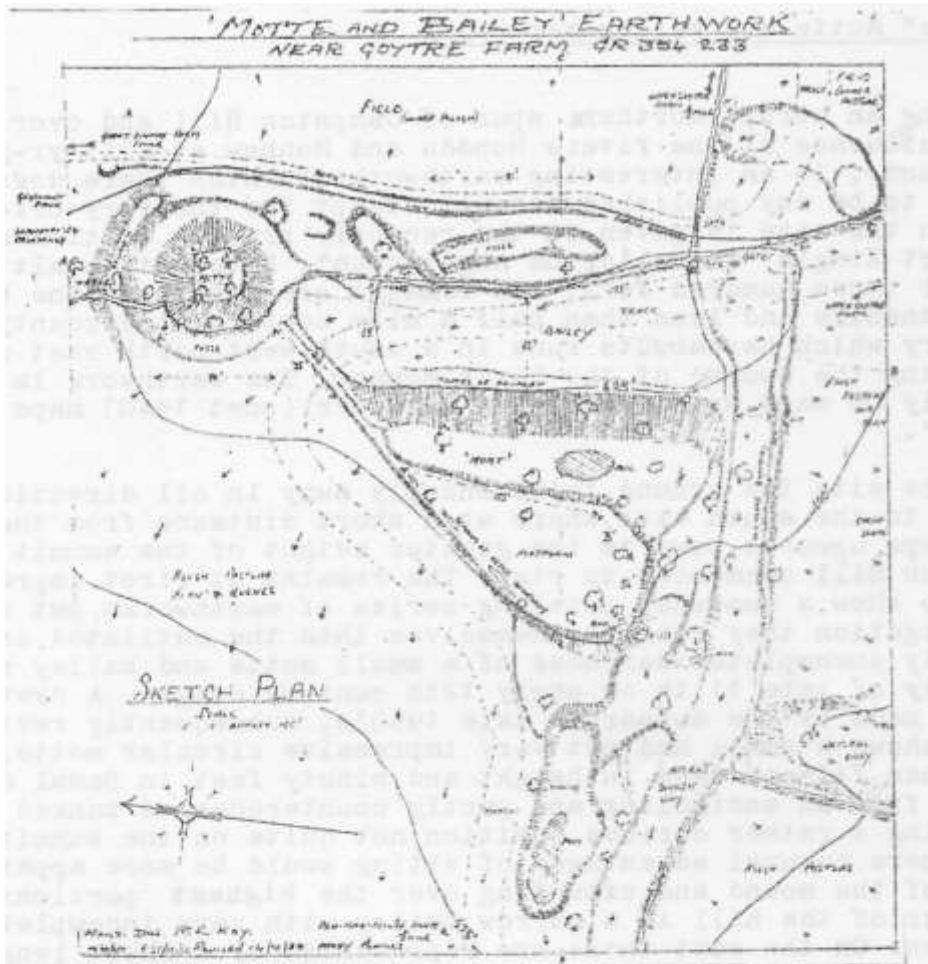
Crowning an abrupt northern spur of Campston Hill, and overlooking the confluence of the rivers Honddu and Monnow at Allt-yr-ynys near Pandy, is an interesting earthwork of which there does not appear to be any published account except for the very brief mention the site is given in the recently printed edition of Cathcart-King's "Castellarium Anglicanum". Sited at an altitude of over three hundred feet, its remains are just over the border in Monmouthshire and less than half a mile south of the county boundary which hereabouts runs in a south

west-north east direction following the course of the River Monnow. The earthwork is shown on early OS maps as a 'moat' but on later (post 1940) maps as a 'motte'.

From the site, the ground falls sharply away in all directions except to the south east, where at a short distance from the defences the slope upwards towards the greater height of the summit of Campston Hill commences to rise. The remains at first impression seem to show a somewhat puzzling series of earthworks, but on closer investigation they resolve themselves into the mutilated or possibly uncompleted defences of a small motte and bailey castle, probably of late 11th or early 12th century origin. A sketch survey made by the author in the late 1950's, subsequently revised in 1989, shows a small and not very impressive circular motte, not more than fifteen feet in height and ninety feet in Basal diameter, rising from an encircling and partly counterscarped banked ditch occupying a rather curious position not quite on the summit of the spur, where natural advantages of siting would be more apparent. South of the mound, and extending over the highest portions of the spur of the hill, is a narrow bailey with very incomplete defences. On the east these are represented by a short length of what seems to be an attempted rock cut ditch now much silted up, together with a miscellany of scarps, perhaps caused by later agricultural operations and field boundaries. On the west are traces of a slight rampart cresting a steep slope, which has additionally been magnificently scarped into an almost precipitous gradient for a height, in places, of twenty to thirty feet and at the foot of which is a wide ditch holding a little surface water. Beyond the ditch is a level platform of irregular plan at a much lower level to that of the bailey above. This platform is defended by another scarp of varying height which at its most formidable near the southwest angle is about fifteen feet in height and cut into the underlying rock. Further to the southwest are traces of scarps and partially water filled hollows of problematic origin. The south boundary of this series of earthworks is formed by an ancient disused green trackway, deeply sunken in places. There are no surface indications on the motte, or in the bailey or indeed elsewhere, of any constructional stonework.

The remains seem to indicate that the earthwork and timber fortress was never in fact completed. Perhaps during the troubled times in which it was being erected a sudden resurgence of the native Welsh resulted in a massacre or driving away of its constructors. It should be noted that the motte and bailey castle of Walterstone is within sight less than a mile and a half away to the north-northwest and a little over the same distance to the southwest is another motte castle at Trefedw, while from an earlier age the hill forts of Walterstone Common to the north and Pentwyn to the west are visible even closer at hand.

R E Kay
13th March, 1990



AIR PHOTOGRAPHY

On Tuesday 17/2/90 at 7.50 pm Mr Howard Dudley of the Hereford Sixth Form College, an enthusiastic flyer, showed us slides of some of the photographs he had taken from the air with special reference to archaeology. Mr Dudley, while not an archaeologist, has a very keen eye for landscape and had some excellent pictures of archaeological interest. 27 members of the ARS and the Llanwarne Local History Group attended the evening at Llanwarne Village Hall. This was an excellent turnout, despite the high winds and the dire warnings on radio and TV not to travel unnecessarily. Howard is a man of many parts: as well as being a lecturer at the Sixth Form College, a keen flyer and a good photographer he is also an organist, often playing at Ludlow Parish Church.

His wide interests were reflected in his talk, which accompanied the excellent choice of slides, an accomplished blend of information, anecdotes and informality. He flies from Shobdon airport and his first slide was of the plane he normally uses, a high wing monoplane, to be followed by a shot of Arthur's Stone near Dorstone, which we visited in July of last year. Then came a series of Iron Age Hill Forts, which members found difficult to recognise being, like the writer, more used to hachures to illustrate the ditches and ramparts. Included was a view of Capler Camp visited in our April field meeting.

This was followed by a series of shots of castles, which members were able to identify more readily. It included most of the old favourites we know so well. Ludlow and Stokesay were also shown, which the ARS may not be so familiar with. Then followed some very good shots of Hereford, Leominster and Ludlow, the infilling of the old Ludlow market place being particularly striking.

Next were some churches and bridges, the bridges were particularly noteworthy by their clarity. Howard Dudley had put together a series of shots of the various types of housing developments in and around Hereford, from Victorian, Inter War, Post War and the very recent estate at Belmont.

Some shots were of bypasses, especially Leominster, and also reservoirs, some well illustrating the effects of last year's drought. Also included were two impressive shots of the fire at the Army Ordnance Depot at Moreton-on-Lugg, which were the pictures shown on BBC 1 Midlands Today.

The slides ended with views of Transmitters and Radar Stations, and the Nuclear Power Station at Oldbury. Of interest was a fine view of the new fibreglass spire at Peterchurch; in the Hereford Times of 1/3/90 it was reported that the weather cock had been blown down in the recent gales.

Of great interest was the penultimate shot of a possible unidentified DMV between Weobley and Shobdon, which we propose to investigate. Howard had promised us a copy of this particular slide.

The talk, lecture, entertainment – it was such a successful blend – ended at 9.00 pm, to be followed by light refreshments organised by Beryl Harding, who must also be thanked for arranging the venue. During and after the refreshments members questioned Howard about the problems of photographs (oblique) from the air and how archaeological sites can be recognised. The evening broke up at about 9.30 pm.

VISIT TO SOUTH RADNORSHIRE CASTLES

11 members assembled at the church in New Radnor on 3rd June, 1990 at 10.30 am on a very wet and windy morning which did not auger well for the day ahead. We were joined by Brian Lawrence and Dai Hawkins of the Radnorshire Society Field Survey Section. The recce for the visit was carried out on 19th March, 1990.

The field meeting was to have been led by Richard Kay, but he did not feel up to attending so it was led by the writer. Richard had produced some notes on the sites to be visited and copies of these were distributed.

New Radnor Castle and town defences were examined in heavy rain, and members speculated about the origin of New Radnor and whether the usual view that it was an Anglo-Norman planted town replacing Old Radnor is correct. One view is that New Radnor was a Saxon Burh and indeed may antedate Old Radnor; there has been some confusion in Medieval documents over the names. The Burh could have been the basis of the Anglo-Norman Borough. The area to the east of Dingle Brook also may represent a later enlargement of the Borough. There is some doubt as to whether the town "wall" was a wall or an earth bank, or even a wall backed by earth.

A quick stop was made to look at the bank and ditch which crosses the Summerhill Brook valley about one mile west of New Radnor. We also stopped for a quick view from the road of Tomen Castle, known locally as Castell Cae-banal. A little time was spent at Castell Crugerydd, the "Castrum Crukeri" of Giraldus Cambrensis in 1188, and "Crug Eryr" (Eagles Mount) of Medieval writers.

The weather was so bad, and at this stage showed every sign of continuing so all day, that we decided Cefnlllys was unsuitable as there is no shelter of any kind from the wind and rain. Instead we visited Cefnlllys No 2, Old Castle Mount (Dinyetha Castle?) 092 630. This is a ringwork 5 metres high and partly encircled by a ditch 0.9 metres in depth. To the south it is protected by a steep natural slope dropping to the flood plain of the Ithon. The flat summit is enclosed, except on the south side, by a bank 1 metre high. A bank 7 metres wide, 20 metres long and 1.2 metres high to the west is probably the remains of a bailey. It may be the castle of Din Iethon built by Ralf Mortimer circa 1100, and the predecessor to Cefnlllys Castle.

Lunch was taken at Penybont, where members took advantage of the local hostelry, and as the weather had improved it was decided to visit Cefnlllys after all. We examined the possible remains of the hill fort and the two castle sites, and the Llys (Court), and looked for the remains of the house platforms and sunken roads, etc of the Borough of Cefnlllys by the church and between the two castle sites, but it was most inconclusive. It was not possible to examine the church as a service was about to take place. Unfortunately, one member of the group became separated from the party, and so much time was lost that it was decided to leave out Castell Cwm Aran, though Richard's notes are included for interest.

We called at the fortified Grange of Abbey Cwmhir at Mynachdy, and then proceeded to Castell Foel Allt at Pilleth which we examined, and members also took the opportunity to look at Pilleth Church. We also stopped for a moment to look at the Castle Mound at Bleddfa 209 682.

It was now nearly 7.00 pm and we decided to call it a day, but did pause for a moment at Presteigne to view from the road the site of Presteigne Castle. All grid references are in square SO. Richard's notes have been kept separate because of their special unique character.

PRH

NEW RADNOR CASTLE, 212 610

A large outer ward or bailey defended by a good rampart and ditch, to the south of which overlooking the town an enormous steeply scarped mainly natural 'motte' falls sharply on the south and south east to the level of the town 150 feet below. It is separated from the outer bailey by two formidable ditches with a high intervening bank expanded to a club shaped hornwork on the southwest. The summit of the 'motte' was apparently occupied by a strong stone castle of a comparatively small area. It seems likely to have had, perhaps, six mural towers and interior buildings built against the inner face of the curtain wall, one large rectangular structure projecting well into the presumed courtyard. All masonry has gone, leaving nothing above ground; the site of the former walls, towers etc being mainly outlined by the depressions of deep robber trenches. It is a truly remarkable site, the earthworks like many of the Radnorshire castles being on a particularly grand scale. Radnorshire seems to

be, generally speaking, unfortunate in its lack of a good building stone, most of that which is available is of poor quality, shaley, loosely bedded sedimentary rock, poor to work and prone to fairly rapid weathering. There is hardly a castle within the county showing more than the slightest fragments of an upstanding wall.

New Radnor was a de Braose stronghold and they seemed to have founded a small walled borough below their castle before the end of the 12th century. Its ramparts, stone revetted and ditched, are reasonably well preserved for the greater part of its circuit. It can be seen descending the hill from the southwest angle of the castle's outer ward. It enclosed a rectangular area south of the castle hill. As a borough it was never a great success and the area enclosed seems never to have been fully taken up by burgage plots. Nearly a mile to the west, a bank and ditch across the valley of the Summergill Brook seems to have formed a linear boundary or defence across the approach to the borough from this direction. It is probably Medieval and not Saxon nor Dark Age, and certainly not Pre-Roman.

TOMEN CASTLE, 172 589, LLANFIHANGEL-NANT-MELAN

Above the farm of Cae-banal is the upturned basin shaped motte of Tomen Castle, sited on the crest of a precipitous sided promontory of high ground above the junction of two small streams forming the headwaters of the Summergill Brook. There are no outworks or bailey, and the ground commences to rise on the north west side of the mound from its ditch. This ditch is dispensed with on the steeper slopes descending from the mound. There are vestiges of a slight sinking in the otherwise flat summit of the circular mound, but no trace of any masonry. It seems likely that any structure that may have stood on this motte would be of timber.

The "castle" was supposedly the residence of Einon Clyd, a prince of Elvael, who died in 1176 at Princes Stone, Maen-serth about one mile north west of Rhayader.

CASTELL CRUGERYDD, 158 593

Small motte and bailey castle sited in a very isolated and exposed position with commanding views over the headwaters of the Edw Valley, the Llandegley Rocks and the distant mountains beyond. The heights of Radnor Forest rise immediately behind the natural hillock on which the earthworks stand. A small, inverted, bowl-shaped circular motte once crowned by a few storm-shattered pine trees, rises from an encircling ditch at the south west "angle" of a vaguely rectilinear bailey defended by a relatively weak rampart and shallow external ditch. A break in the rampart on the north may mark an entrance but a second break in the rampart on the south, adjacent to the motte ditch, which appears to have been widened at some uncertain time, is a more likely choice. The top of the motte is slightly domed, but faint indeterminate foundations in the bailey are probably of some slight construction of a later date. Traces of a stone revetment seen in places on the circumference of the rampart, by an earlier observer of the site in the past, can no longer be definitely traced. The castle is mentioned in Giraldus Cambrensis 'Tour in Wales'.

CEFNLlys, 088 614

The approach to the winding valley of the River Ithon from the east gives an impressive view of the fantastic castle site of Cefnlllys, crowning its steep terminal ridge south of Neuadd Farm. The end of this ridge forms a high, elongated hill with a steep, precipitous fall on all sides, even to the north where it drops to the lower portion of the basal ridge. The River Ithon runs around the three sides of this steep termination of the ridge, and beyond it to the south across its narrow wooded gorge are higher hills. It is a remarkable site! A fairly strong rampart around the top of the hill forms a large elongated enclosure. This is possibly, even probably, the defences of an Iron Age hill fort, although specific dating must await trial excavation.

At the north end of this enclosure are the scanty remains of a stone castle with a walled semi-circular bailey and a keep or small inner ward of some kind, defended by a rock-

cut series of ditches. The remains are very disturbed and difficult to interpret, especially on the south where mounds of debris, partly grass-grown from bygone robbing operations, obscure other structures. They would seem to represent the remains of the first stone castle at Cefnlllys, which was perhaps constructed on top of the adapted earthworks of an earlier motte and bailey timber castle.

At the south end of the large enclosure (or hill fort), where it narrows and forms the apex of the ridge, there is the wreck of a second, and smaller, stone castle, very compact in plan and cut off from the large hilltop enclosure by a strong and deep cut rock ditch fronting a short straight curtain wall of the small squarish ward beyond. At its east end is a small square projecting gatehouse. Within is a large heap of debris masking the base of the keep, apparently D-shape in plan but possibly round or even rectangular. Below it on the south, at the very end of the ridge, is a small walled triangular bailey.

The entrance to the large enclosure or hill fort is between inturns of the rampart in the middle of its west side, approached from below by a long winding ramp from the lower slopes on the ridge. Between the gate which must once have existed at the rampart entrance and the later stone castle are traces of a rectangular enclosure and a large rectangular building, perhaps the Llys (court) of the commote? The rampart surrounding the hilltop and connecting the two castles (early and later?) is very stony in appearance and may disguise the base of a masonry wall or revetment. The area defended is large enough to contain the documented small borough which existed here in Medieval times. Slight indications of platforms, etc may represent the sites of habitations and other buildings of the former "failed" borough. All walls of both castles, and elsewhere, are reduced to grass-grown debris or footings.

The hill on which the remains stand forms a peninsular, almost surrounded by a winding loop of the River Ithon, and at its foot close to its banks is sited the Medieval parish church of Cefnlllys, a small aisleless building of nave, chancel and west tower with a broach spire of late 13th or early 14th century origin but much restored in Victorian times and later.

CASTELL CWM ARAN, 152 703

This remarkable and interesting motte and bailey castle became the most important stronghold of Maelienydd (Melenith) during the 12th and early 13th centuries.

There is at Cwm Aran a large and high motte of a rounded rectilinear plan formed by cutting off the end of a spur of high ground above the ravine of the River Aran. The motte, being formed out of the scarped end of the ridge, is heightened by material from an encircling but irregular contoured rock-cut ditch, giving the mound a decidedly domed profile. North of the motte, extending down the ridge, is a compact and strongly defended bailey, almost square in plan and an acre or so in area with formidable and massive ramparts all round, even on the south where they form part of the counter scarp to the motte ditch. They almost vie in height with the motte! On the east they rise from the edge of a steeply scarped slope above the Aran while on the west where the ground slope is less advantageous the rampart rises steeply from a deep rock-cut ditch which southwards makes a junction with that of the motte. Beyond this ditch is a high and massive counterscarp bank, which on the south becomes continuous around the motte ditch to terminate in a high bastion-like mound on the southeast to form an extra flanking defence on the castle's most vulnerable side. Beyond the motte to the south west the ridge is almost level before sloping gently upward to higher ground, which in turn is overlooked by even higher ground across the ravine of the river to the east and south east. The entrance to the bailey is near the middle of its north rampart. It seems to have been recently mutilated and widened to give easier access to the farm now occupying the interior of the bailey. The external ditch to the northern rampart of the bailey, except for the portion to the east of the entrance, seems to have been largely filled in by the construction of the farm access track. Beyond it to the north are slight remains of scarping, bounded by the present road, of what appears to be an outer lower bailey.

Although the sharp profile of the ramparts of the main bailey gives an impression of buried masonry footings, their possible existence is probably illusory. Where the entrance of the bailey has been recently widened, a section through the rampart shows no trace of constructional stonework. However there is a persistent tradition that the lower walls of the farmhouse overlie, and possibly incorporate, the footings of a building of Medieval origin.

The castle was the scene of much contention, siege, capture, and counter siege during the 12th and 13th centuries. It can probably be identified with the castle of Gemaron, first built by a follower of Philip de Braose not later than 1096, and mentioned as being repaired by Hugh Fitz Ranulph of Chester in 1144. The Brut-y-Tywysogion also mentions further repairs by Hugh Mortimer in 1145. It seems to have been abandoned in the mid 13th century when a masonry castle in a stronger position was built at Castle Dinboeth, 090 755, a few miles away.

MYNACHDY, 230 697 – GRANGE OF ABBEY CWMHIR

The site lies in the trough of the upper valley of the River Lugg, a little to the south of the farm of Griffin Lloyd in the parish of Llangunllo. The situation chosen was a reasonable level riverside meadow alongside a small tributary stream of the Lugg. A sizeable area forming a regular rectangle in plan is marked out on three sides by the grass grown remains of a low but fairly substantial rampart or boundary bank with a shallow external ditch of comparative proportions, now dry and silted up. The fourth side, on the west, was formed by the aforementioned tributary brook, which had apparently been straightened to run between revetment walls of roughly dressed masonry, several courses of which in places remain in situ. There is now no visible bank on this side, a recent track obliterating all but a few traces. Elsewhere the bank rises to a maximum height of six feet with a fall of nearly eight feet to the ditch, some fifteen feet wide. The "rampart" ditch and the eastern parts of the north and south "ramparts" are in the best state of preservation. The enclosure is traversed near its west (brook) side by a well-used track to a neighbouring farmstead, which has recently been widened to take extra traffic to Forestry Commission plantations. The western portions of the north and south "ramparts" or boundary bank have been nearly leveled, making indication of the site of the original entrance(s?) difficult. Within the enclosure are grass-grown foundation mounds of a sizeable building aligned north and south with porch-like projections to the west at either end and a cross-wing at the north end. There are slight indications of other building foundations to the north, west, and east of those described. An aerial photograph of the site in Rev D H Williams "The Welsh Cistercians" gives a good general impression of the site from above but is somewhat lacking in presentation of finer detail. Until the early 1950's the foundations of the grange buildings and the chapel were more clearly visible within the earthworks.

CASTELL FOEL ALLT, 259 676

South of Pilleth, the imposing earthworks of a motte and bailey castle are visible across the fields from the Whitton Bleddfa road B4356. Occupying a moraine-like bank or drumlin rising from the floor of the Lugg Valley is an abrupt circular tree clad mound, with an encircling ditch to which is attached a small straight sided bailey with a strong rampart and ditch in the west and a further irregular ovoid-shaped outer bailey with defences of slighter strength. No visible trace of any masonry.

Further up the valley of the Lugg towards Bleddfa, close to the river, are a number of upstanding mounds of circular and more irregular plan which reputedly cover the slain of the Battle of Pilleth, AD 1402, but they are probably natural foundations of glacial drift. (The site of the battle on the OS maps is 253 679).

PRESTEIGNE CASTLE, 309 645

On Warden Hill, crowning a natural knoll, are the rectilinear earthworks of a motte and bailey castle. The ring-motte has a rampart about eight feet high maximum externally. The bailey

to the east forms a level platform with scarp and partly ditched defences, which are well positioned but not very substantial earthworks for what was once a fairly important castle. There are no visible traces of any masonry. An attractive position, now a public park commanding a wide view over the town and Lugg Valley.

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR PAPERS – A SENSE OF BELONGING – ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE COMMUNITY IN TOWN AND COUNTRY

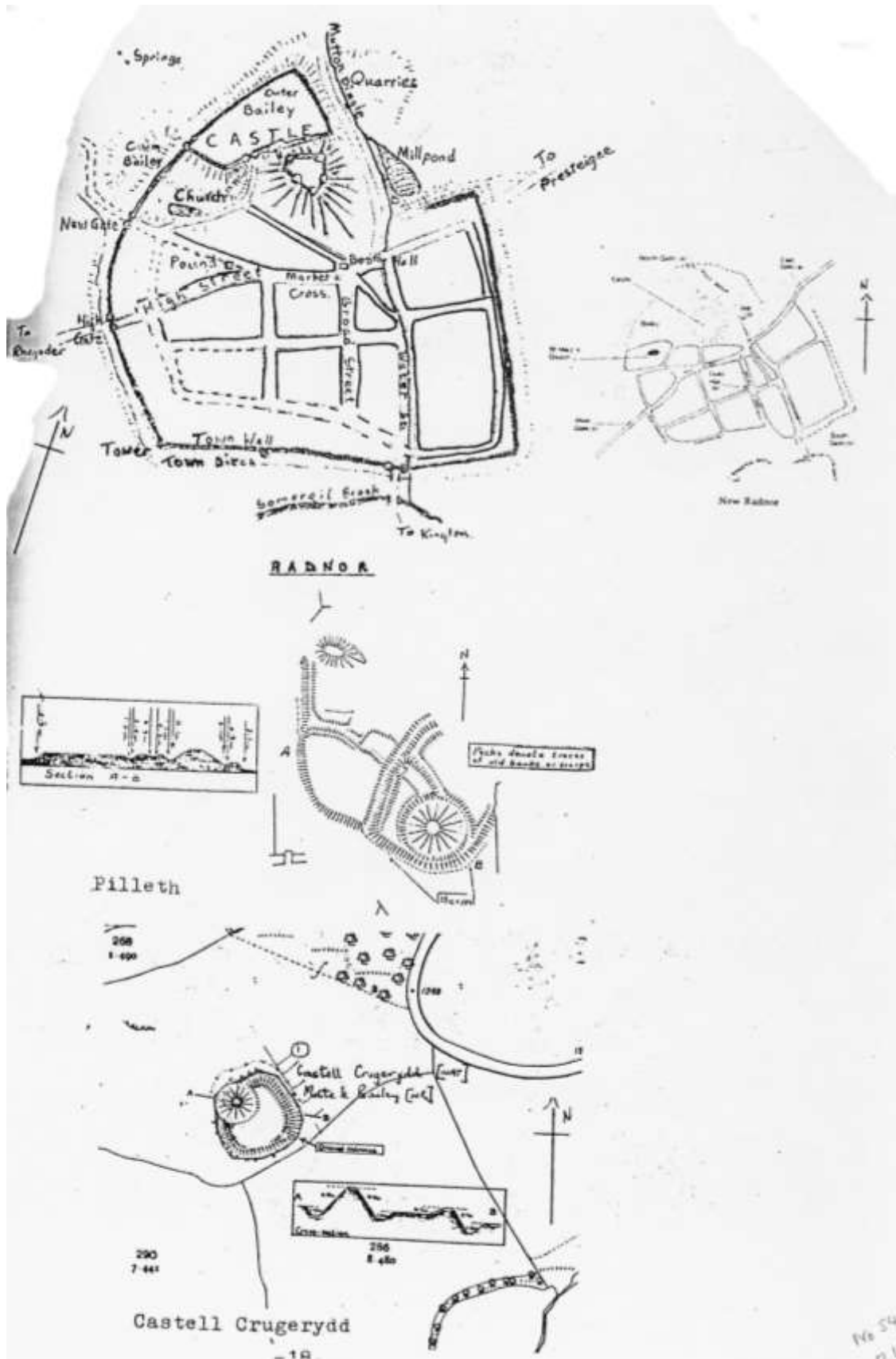
This is a call for papers for a major conference to be held in Worcester in September 1991. The title of the conference reflects the desire of developing an archaeological practice that integrates research goals with an awareness of its social and cultural context – its role in the community. The major theme will be the dichotomy between urban and rural archaeology: its causes, its implications and future developments. The Organising Committee look forward to receiving offers of contributions which address the themes outlined below:

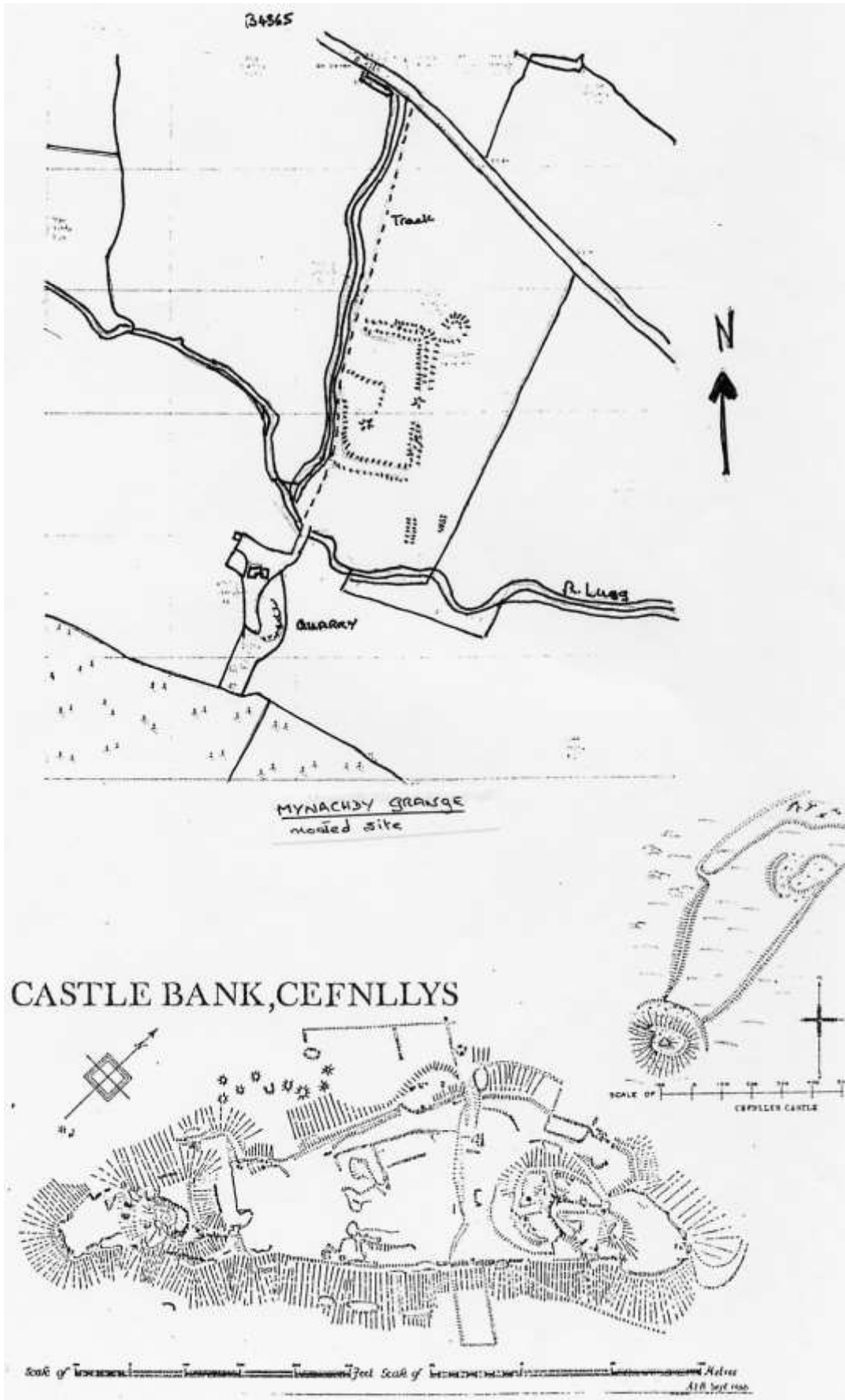
Session One: Archaeology in the Market Place: In the current environment, the funding of rescue archaeology is more dependent on the capital value and profits margins of development schemes than on resources supplied from external bodies. This creates an imbalance between the level of rescue provision in town and country, further compounded by the relative weakness of rural planning controls, particularly over changes in agricultural practices compared to those in urban areas. The first session will explore the implications of this imbalance and seek to address the question whether “market forces” should be allowed to continue to dictate both the nature and direction of archaeological work at the expense of professional principles and academic integrity.

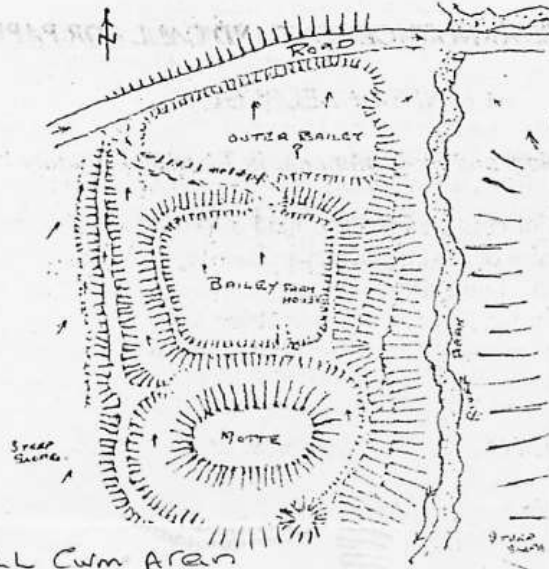
Session Two: Breaking Down the Barriers: In recent years there has been a great deal of research into urban archaeology, prompted by the 1980’s development boom. New techniques for data recovery and analysis have been developed to deal with the theoretical potential, and the sheer volume, of the excavated data from urban context. At the same time, research into “off site” archaeology has been developing and much work has been done on small towns and rural settlements. The potential for synthesising the results of all this research is great, but there are real and imaginary barriers that prevent its realisation: the lack of a strong theoretical framework, the training and background of archaeologists and the specialization of archaeological organisations. The second session will attempt to break down the barriers between “urban” and “rural” archaeology. It will outline the results and future of artefact and environmental research, the utility of existing theoretical frameworks and the importance of co-ordinating rural and urban research designs in the future.

Session Three: Archaeology in the Community: The last two decades have seen a massive growth in the level of presentation of British archaeology. There is a lively debate running through the profession as to how the commercial world is helping and hindering archaeologists in their educational role, not least around the methods used to present rural and urban sites. The third session will explore public attitudes to the presentation of archaeology by contrasting the presentation of urban archaeology to a captive audience with that of rural archaeology to a very different one, and exploring the cultural and educational role of archaeology in modern society.

Conference Details: The conference will be held in Worcester in September 1991 (Friday 6th to Sunday 8th). Full details will be circulated in early 1991; currently offers of papers, poster sessions or subsidiary workshops are requested. It is hoped that the proceedings of the conference will subsequently be published. Please send details of proposed papers to: Conference Organising Committee, c/o HWCC Archaeology Section, Tetbury Drive, Warndon, Worcester WR4 9LS, Tel: 0905 58608.





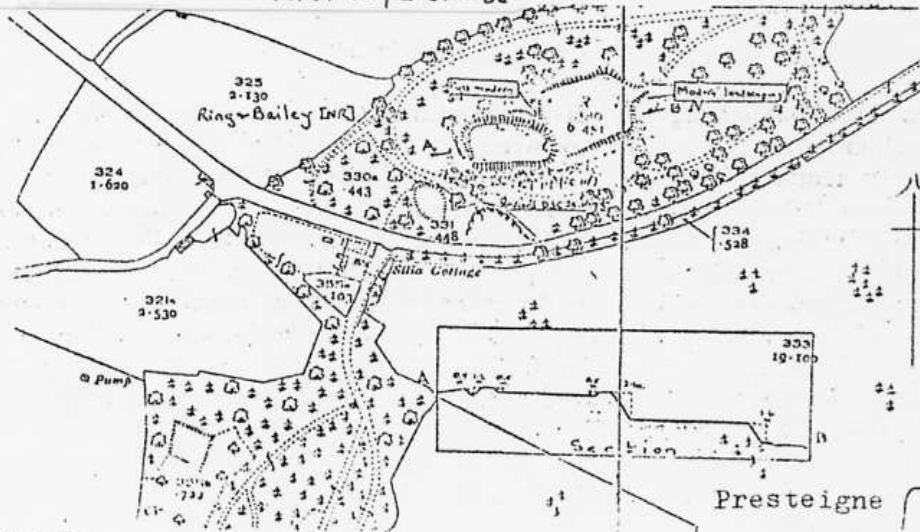


CASTELL Cwm Aran

Rough Sketch Plan
 (unmeasured & uncoloured)
 Manor & Farm omitted

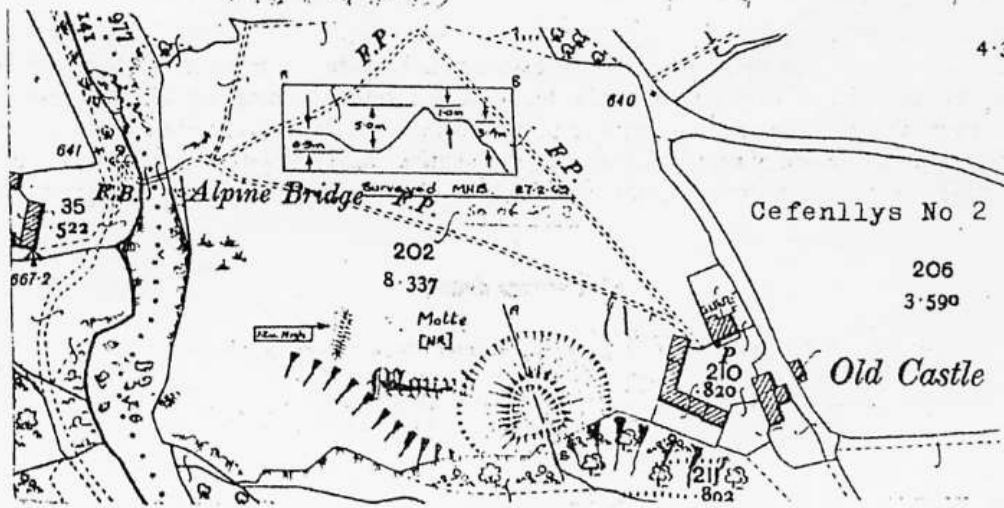
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Old Castle

BOOK REVIEWS

Castles of Shropshire, by M J Jackson

Shropshire Libraries, 91 pp and numerous photographs and plans

This contains not only plans and photographs of many of the Shropshire castles, but also a brief historical resume where this is known. It also has a valuable list of references for each entry. Virtually all castles are included in the gazetteer, as well as rejected sites. It is a masterly presentation within a reasonable size, format and price, and can be recommended to all interested in castles. The author has just produced a similar volume on the 'Castles of Cumbria' published by Caryl Press, Carlisle. A volume on the Castles of Hereford and Worcester is anticipated in the future, and if it lives up to the Shropshire book it is to be eagerly anticipated. The Cumbria volume is to be recommended for anyone visiting the Lake District. Mr Jackson has plans to try and cover all of England with this series.

Herefordshire Churches, by Mike Salter, Folly Publications, 77 pp

This was briefly mentioned in the Book Review in HAN No 53 before a copy had been received by the reviewer. This latest offering by Mike Salter is of the same standard as the previous six booklets on the Castles and Churches of Shropshire, Staffordshire and Worcestershire, and contains entries for all the older Herefordshire churches together with plans of many of them.

No further booklets in this series can be expected till 1991, when possible subjects are Welsh Churches and the Antiquaries of the Forest of Dean.

PRH

HERMITAGE SITE, WINFORTON SO 302 464

The Hermitage was visited by the ARS on 4/4/76, and in Newsletter No 52 there was a description of the site by Richard Kay.

Gp Capt and Mrs Whittingham have recently visited the site again and report that it is virtually unchanged from the 1976 visit. They also give the following interesting information – the landowner, Mr Andrew Cameron has an Enclosure Map dated 30th December, 1778.

The site is in the field marked "Mount Close", with a rectangular building marked in red, long axis northwest – southeast. Another site of interest in Winforton on the same map is "Chapel Mead" (SO 295 456) where the landowner recalls ploughing up many worked stones, though all is now flat. Stones do not occur there naturally.

The 1778 map shows the rectangular outline of a building, long axis northeast – southwest. Dots around may indicate the old "team track" and current bridle way, which runs from Winforton to the ford at Clock Mill.

H W Whittingham

The editor welcomes such reports on sites previously visited by the ARS on field meetings. I am also sure that the County Sites and Monuments Record will be grateful.

Editor

FIELD MEETING IN THE FOREST OF DEAN, 19TH MAY, 1990

A smaller group than usual met to continue looking at the industrial archaeology of the area. Members will remember the first field day in the Forest of Dean, held on 15th October, 1989 and written up in HAN No 53. This time the object was to visit some of the larger furnace sites where iron was smelted.

Parkend Furnace was our first stop. There have been furnaces here since the early seventeenth century. The large, levelled 'village green' effect gave little indication of past activity, where a tinsplate works and three blast furnaces produced iron and steel in the last century and three-storey terraced workers' houses surrounded The Square. In the seventeenth century furnaces here were using charcoal. In 1799 a furnace was built using coke and by 1807 it was worked by a steam engine and run by Mr Perkins and then the Protheroes, who leased it to the Forest of Dean Iron Company (Montague Whitehouse and Moses Teague). In 1825-7 the Lower Cannop Pond was built to feed the leat and power a 51 foot undershot wheel 6 feet wide to provide blast. It was nearly the largest in the country and built at Gloucester.

In 1826 Teague built a second furnace 45 feet high with a diameter of 9½ feet at the top and 14 feet in the bosh, fed by a wooden aqueduct over Brockale Ditch. This wheel proved both inadequate and unreliable so a new steam engine of 90 horse power was erected. The blast was provided by water in the summer and steam in winter, and the furnace produced 60 tons of iron a week in 1840. The coal was transported from Fetterhill and Prothero Parkend pits by rail to the upper levels behind the furnaces. After three years of disuse, Mushet wrote that 'the Parkend hot-blast iron possesses amazing strength'. By 1852 the iron forges, rolling mills and a tinsplate works were built. The peak of productivity was reached by 1864 with 280 tons of pig iron produced a week using 350 tons of coke and 600 tons of iron ore from the Oakwood and China Engine mines. 300 men were employed, many travelling some distance to work. In 1871 three furnaces were in blast, producing Bessemer-steel rails and tinsplate.

Decline set in once competition with South Wales increased, and by 1895 the furnaces were demolished and in 1908 the last stack was thrown. The three-storey engine house became a forestry school and now is the Dean Field Studies Centre.

We walked up behind the engine house to compare the buildings seen today with those in an old photograph, then crossed the track of the Severn and Wye railway line to the junction of converging rail lines that brought iron ore, coal and limestone from nearby mines and quarries. The line of the leat and the reservoir basin are still clearly visible and we walked part of the former. This is the lower end of the leat visited last October from Cannop Ponds. In the surrounding woods are many hummocks which could be due to old workings, or dumping, or Medieval bloomeries.

Darkhill Iron Works have been excavated as part of a community project and the walls topped to prevent further weathering. After a sunny picnic lunch the site was explored as we attempted to piece together the design. (It is a pity that the site lacks an official lay-out plan.)

It was originally built by Mushet in 1818 as an experimental works after he left Whitcliff Furnace. It was later revised and enlarged by his son Robert Mushet, covering a site of more than five acres. In 1815 Mushet had taken out a patent and was able to produce excellent quality iron, free from phosphorus and sulphur, thus needing no further refining before making into wrought iron and also cheaper to refine into steel. It is recorded that in 1845 the site contained:

- i. A blast furnace with a steam cylinder of 24 inches and a blowing cylinder of 60 inches diameter - the steam engine would have been a Bolton and Watt Beam type.
- ii. A small cupola blast furnace of approximately 1,000 cubic feet capacity 'much worn and wasted'.

- iii. A casting house, a water regulator, a bridge or filling loft above the furnace.
- iv. An office in the yard and a round boiler.

Fire bricks were made on the site in an adjoining brickyard. The blast furnace had three tuyeres instead of the normal two, to increase output, and 50-70 tons of refined iron was produced weekly. It was sold in 1845 and not working in 1847. A 1866 plan shows a long smith's shop to the north and two extensive ponds to the south. By mid 1874 the sand bed and ancillary building south of the furnace were obliterated by the building of the embankment for the Severn and Wye railway, which opened in July 1875. After this the site was dismantled.

Whitcliff Furnace This site is currently being excavated and the furnace building has a Preservation Order on it. A coke-smelting blast furnace was built by Thurstens Brook in 1798 and invested in by a Quaker, Samuel Botham. Deep snow followed by flooding of all the buildings wrecked much of the plant so Botham withdrew by 1801. Halford and Teague took over the works and completed them by 1806, as the date stone shows. The blast furnace was steam operated, raised by coke. David Mushet came to Whitcliff in 1809, moving into Forest House, Coleford in 1810. However, Mushet withdrew from the enterprise 'for grave reasons' and Halford went bankrupt in 1816. The works were then dismantled except for the furnace and in 1827 a large quantity of the castings, including blast apparatus, was taken to the Coleford blast furnace. In 1852 there was still a covered forepart to the hearth and an adjacent warehouse with a small building east of the casting floor, a pattern shop and engine house – still present today. The furnace had a capacity of 1200 cubic feet with two tuyeres. It was 40 feet high with a highline approximately 50 feet above the casting floor – this beautifully brick lined floor has been exposed in the excavation.

The day concluded with a visit to the Inclined Plane at Redbrook. This carried the tramway from the railway to the tinsplate works at Lower Redbrook, wide enough to take two trolleys on chains operated by gravity, and bringing in iron, coke and limestone. Below the inclined plane a stone lined leat carried water to the works from a reservoir further up the valley. While casting about to find remains, we were lucky enough to meet a local enthusiast who was able to explain the site and show photographs of the flourmill and tinsplate works before their demolition. Near stone walls on the side of the leat are the remains of a flourmill built on a site used since 1250. The last mill on the site belonged to the Wye Valley Flour Mills, was six stories high, 90 feet long and 21 feet wide, built in 1824. It made use of the water power from the reservoir using a large overshot wheel to operate the machinery and later to generate electricity for this purpose. The flourmill burnt down in 1925, a few months after a slump in grain prices! Little remains visible now apart from wall bases and the tall stone-lined wheel cavity.

By 1825 the tinsplate works were in a state of neglect, and repaired by B Whitehouse of Monmouth. In 1827 he had a stone culvert built, 3 feet in diameter, around the hillside to another reservoir in Lower Redbrook, at the same time as the work on Cannop Ponds. The photograph showed rolling mills with three tall chimneys. The works made some of the finest and the thinnest steel plate in the world, exporting to America, and still functioned up to 1965. Little is visible today apart from retaining walls and the reservoir.

B H & R S

WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION AND THE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETIES OF HEREFORDSHIRE

The 13th Annual Day School was held on Saturday 16th June under the auspices of the Weobley and District Local History Society, at the Hopelands Village Hall, Weobley. The theme was the Civil War in Herefordshire.

At least 10 members of the ARS attended, and the Field Name Survey was one of the groups which had an exhibition on show. The day followed the usual format of these Annual Day Schools, lectures before lunch and alternative excursions in the afternoon. The two morning lecturers complemented each other, the first was a formal lecture by Mr Charles Hopkins on the events of the Civil War with particular emphasis on Herefordshire, which set the scene. The second by Dr Ronald Hutton was about the social consequences of civil war. He dealt with the way that the war had affected the lives of people, especially civilians who had no direct part in the war, and how the first gentlemanly conduct gradually disintegrated under the harsh realities of a civil war.

In the afternoon there were four alternative excursions – Weobley Village; Burton Court; Monnington Court and Church; and Kinnersley Castle and Church together with Sarnesfield Church.

PRH

Herefordshire Place Names

Members of the Archaeological Research Section are invited to a meeting on Friday, 26th October at which Mr John Freeman will speak on 'The Pattern of Herefordshire Place Names: A Provisional Look'. This will take place at the Hereford Education Centre, Blackfriars Road, Hereford, and is arranged by Friends of Herefordshire Record Office.

Mr Freeman has been working on Herefordshire Place Names for many years, with the hope of contributing to a Place Name Society publication on the subject. His MA dissertation was on 'Some Herefordshire Place Names in Domesday Book, with special reference to Anglo-Norman Influence'. Working in London, he has been particularly active in collecting place names from sources in London repositories.

FIELD MEETING IN THE GOLDEN VALLEY, 22ND JULY, 1990

We were very pleased to welcome members of the South Worcestershire Archaeological Group to our monthly field meeting in July, when we visited sites of interest in the Golden Valley.

The day began with a guided tour of Dore Abbey which was founded in 1147 as a Cistercian Monastery, a daughter house of the Monastery of Morimond in the South of France.

We began the tour at the South door entering the lofty spacious area which comprises the South transept, crossing and North transept. Here it was explained that the existing building is the seventeenth century restoration of a small part of the former monastery which was re-dedicated for parish worship by the Bishop of Hereford in 1634. The man responsible for this restoration was John Scudamore, later to become the first Viscount Scudamore, whose descendants still live in the neighbouring parish of Kentchurch.

On the west side of the crossing the massive blocked arch of the nave can be seen, with two smaller, flanking arches which would have led into the North and South aisles. Each transept has a chapel, and the two tall arches which open into these, together with the two beside them leading into the ambulatory, are fine examples of Early English architecture, bearing a simple design derived from the Norman dog-tooth pattern. Between these pairs of arches, over the entrance to the presbytery, is the heavy, elaborately carved screen, attributable to John Abel, then the king's carpenter. Opposite the screen, on the West wall of the crossing, there is a minstrels' gallery which is also thought to be his work.

High in the West corner of the North transept another blocked arch marks the entrance to the monks' night stairs.

The plaster on the transept walls has been decorated with many texts and paintings, notably Father Time with his scythe and hour glass, the coat of arms of Queen Anne and, high above the minstrels' gallery, David playing his harp. These date from the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Our tour continued round the ambulatory where two stone effigies of knights in their crusaders' armour were described by Ruth Richardson. Roger de Clifford lies in the North aisle and the knight in the South aisle is thought to be the founder of the Abbey, Robert of Ewyas, the weighty head of this carving was stolen about four years ago.

The Eastern length of the ambulatory is divided into five bays, each one forming a small chapel with the remains of dividing walls and altar bases. The roof is of fine ribbed vaulting and the floor is strewn with rescued, carved stone fragments. Some of the bosses are particularly note-worthy and include one which was transported to London in 1987 for the Age of Chivalry exhibition. The stained glass at the East end is modern except for some Medieval fragments behind the wooden altar but there are also a number of re-used Cistercian fragments in the westernmost window of the South aisle and in the Hoskyns chapel.

In the presbytery, which is now used for parish worship, it is easy to see by the different design of the pillars and capitals from which point the building was extended eastwards in the late twelfth century. Attention was drawn to the carved wooden roof supports, pews, and the pulpit – all the work of John Abel. On the North wall, close to the organ, is a small effigy from a heart burial of John de Breton, Bishop of Hereford in 1275. The massive altar stone, supported by three re-used pillars, was rescued from a nearby farmhouse in the seventeenth century, where it was being used for salting meat.

A walk round the outside of the church gave some idea of its proportions before the dissolution. The original length of the nave, the scars of former roofs on the North wall, the site of the chapter house and cloisters provide visible evidence but much more lies beneath the pasture of the glebe land to the North.

After lunch we made our way up the Golden Valley to Peterchurch. The line of the ancient track, possibly of Roman origin, was noted in several places. By kind permission of the Hancorn family we examined part of Rowland Vaughan's sixteenth century irrigation system at Trenant and the overgrown remains of Trenant Mill. These sites have already been investigated and reported as listed below.

Rowland Vaughan

R E Kay, Some notes on R Vaughan's 'Waterworks' in the Golden Valley, Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, Vol XLI, 1974, Part II, p 253.

Mary Thomas, Rowland Vaughan's Waterworks, Herefordshire Archaeological News, Number 43, p 15.

Roman Road

Mary Thomas, Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, Vol XLV, 1985, Part I, p 186, An Ancient Track in the Golden Valley.

Readers will find a plan of the Abbey in HAN No 52, page 29.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ABOUT WWII DEFENCES

I have received a request from the Fortress Study Group for any information about World War II defences, mainly concrete pillboxes, in Herefordshire and adjacent areas. If any reader knows of any that still exist, I would be grateful to be informed, together with the Grid Reference. Even if the defences have since been removed, please let me know, especially if you can still give a grid reference.

Mr Henry Wills, the authority on World War II defences, thinks that "islands" of defence could have been formed at Craven Arms, Tenbury Wells, and also at possible crossing points along the River Wye.

PRH

FIELD MEETING TO LOOK FOR CHAPEL SITES AT MIDDLEWOOD

11 Members assembled at the Pandy Inn at Dorstone on Sunday 1/4/90 at 10.30 am for a field day to look for chapel sites in the Middlewood area. The meeting was led by Rosamund Skelton, and the records had been researched by Elizabeth Taylor.

First we went to Middlewood House, a late Georgian House, to see if the 'tower' there was any connection with the chapel of ease mentioned by the late Rev T W Walwyn Trumper in the 1889 Woolhope Transactions, quoting from Silas Taylor in 1657 and also indicated on the 1786 map of Herefordshire by Isaac Taylor. We were very kindly received by the two Jones brothers who farm the land.

It was a most interesting building, but we felt that in no way was it the converted remains of a church. Several periods of construction were in evidence and the farm buildings had obviously been subject to much change and alteration. The general consensus was that the tower represented an ornamental tower, for prestige purposes, with possibly a viewing platform on the top with a roof overhead. We also examined the numerous 'waterworks', which appeared to feed a fishpond north of the house and a pond on the south side of the walled vegetable garden. Ducks had been kept on the pond, and there were stone nesting boxes provided for them in the dwarf south wall of the kitchen garden. The walls on the other three sides were red brick on the inside and stone on the outside. It was completed by a gazebo in the north wall. The leats and water channels were also examined. Whether the water was also used for agricultural purposes, a la Vaughan, we could not say. We also admired the outside three or four seater wood-panelled water closet which had been flushed by one of the leats.

Lunch was eaten at the farm, with a quick drink at the Castlefields Inn at Clock Mills which was across the road from the possible site of St Oswald's chapel. We visited the small holding of Mr and Mrs Glyn Jones of St Oswald's Bungalow, and although we examined the barns we could only find examples of reused older masonry in the walls. We admired Mr Jones' collection of Hereford cattle winning rosettes. The opportunity was taken to look at the excellent view of the River Wye and the swans at rest on the banks.

We went to Newton Tump, where we were joined by another ARS member, and looked at the excellently preserved motte and bailey castle. We also looked for a possible enclosure to the west of the castle which was shown on an aerial photograph belonging to Roper Stirling-Brown.

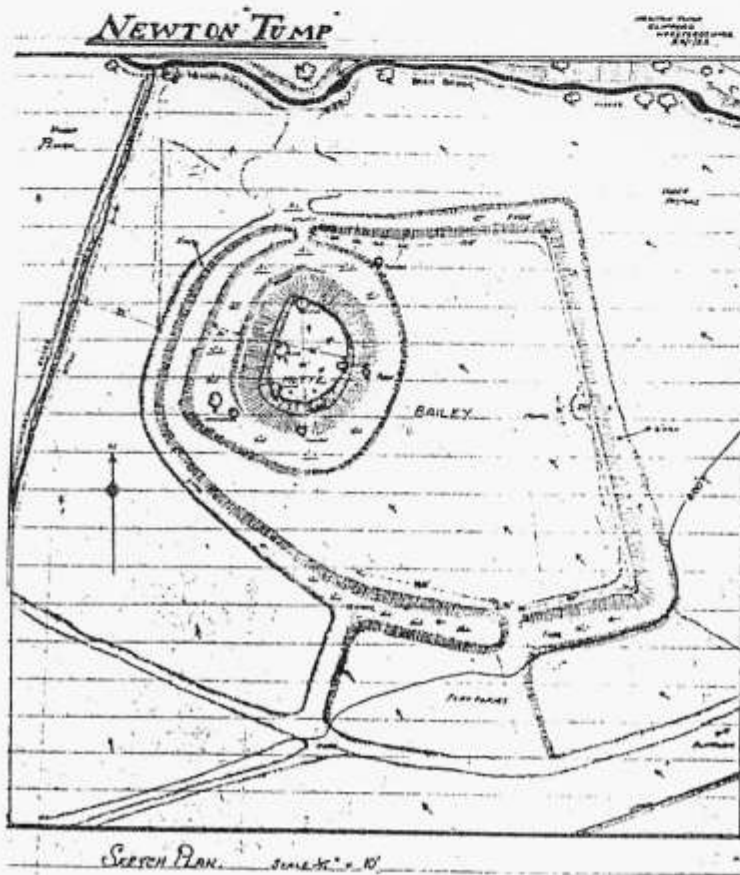
We again looked for a possible chapel site to the northeast and east of the motte, but apart from an old road shown on the 1786 map nothing was discovered. Some members felt that the small field between the road and the castle might represent the chapel garth.

Some members walked by the side of the small tributary stream of the Wye to look at further possible agricultural waterworks on the other side of the valley from Middlewood House, and found evidence of a stone-lined spring in the ditch of one field, and in the field to the south a stone-lined culvert channelling water towards the duckpond.

The meeting broke up at 5.00 pm.

RS & PRH

Extract from Map of Herefordshire by Isaac Taylor 1786



G R 293 441

A LIST OF FINDS IN THE SOUTH OF THE COUNTY PREVIOUSLY UNRECORDED FOR HEREFORDSHIRE

The Monmouth Archaeological Society has kindly given permission for the publication in HAN of a list of finds which they have made in the south of Herefordshire. The list has been compiled from issues of 'Monmouth Archaeology' (1981-1985), the newsletter of the Society, and from the finds marked on the 25 inch OS maps in their possession.

LLANROTHAL

Church area

Flints:

- 26.9.82 Eight flint flakes centred on 4703 1863. Flints at 4694 1860 and to the northwest. A general flint scatter along the higher ground towards Llanrothal Farm.
- 11.11.83 Six flints at 4708 1863. A large flake at 4719 1869 and a flake at 4737 1878.
- 25.3.84 A calcinated bifacially worked leaf-shaped arrowhead at 4700 1859.
- 9.10.84 Bifacially worked leaf-shaped arrowhead fragment at 4723 1921.
- 7.2.84 Light flint scatter NW of the church: 18 flints including blades and 3 convex scrapers at 469 186.
- 12.2.84 In ploughed land west of the church: 21 flints including three end scrapers and a large knife, 470 185.

Roman:

A Samian base sherd was found just east of the church at 4708 1863.

Medieval Pottery:

- 12.6.82 Medieval pottery was widespread in the field east and south of the church, 470 185. The pottery scatters were in distinct areas, suggesting house sites, with a good selection of cooking pot rims and jug sherds including some Monnow Valley ware with complex rouletting. Nearly all the sherds were Medieval, probably pre-1400. Cooking pot sherds were found 30 metres north of the church wall, beside a hedge at 4705 1864.
- 26.9.82 The Medieval pottery finds were centred at 4703 1863, of types as before. The scatter extended SW of the church, lessening towards the river. The scatter ended at about 4704 1854. Sherds were recovered from as far as 4694 1860 to the west. In the field to the NW more Medieval pottery was recovered near the orchard hedge at 4690 1874.
- 12.2.84 Field walking on ploughed land west of the church recovered a sherd of MV ware with running leaf complex rouletting; 22 rim and 6 base sherds of cooking pottery in a wide range of forms; jug sherds: 3 rim, 3 base, 3 handle and 15 body sherds; 3 ridge-tile sherds; a single post-Medieval base sherd from a local kiln.
- 25.3.84 A 'twirled leaf' MV ware sherd was found at 4704 1864 and other Medieval pottery here and at 4700 1859 where a Monmouth 'running leaf' sherd was found.

Upper Skenchill Farm area

A good scatter of flints marked on the OS map between 4810 1838 and 4822 1821 with 'pottery' marked at 482 183. Flints also marked at 4849 1835 and at 4860 1851.

A Neolithic arrowhead of dark grey flint with lighter flecks at 484 185.*

Two Early Bronze Age barbed and tanged arrowheads, translucent grey to off-white at 4840 1850 and another, similar but dark grey with lighter flecks, at 484 185.*

A Roman weight was found near to the two EBA arrowheads.

Lower Buckholt Farm area

Neolithic arrowhead. Light to dark grey unpatinated flint found at 494 161.*

Parkside Farm area

The butt end of a Neolithic polished flint axe, broken and subsequently reflaked. Off-white to grey flint with creamy grey patination. Found at 4938 1839.*

A rich scatter of flints are marked on the OS map between 4909 1850 and 4949 1820. They are numerous and include an arrowhead and the above axe. Medieval pottery was found in two places in this area.

Immediately to the NW of this group of flints an axe was found in 1973 at 4904 1855. This is a Cornish Neolithic axe head of the small type with flattened oval section and rounded butt that appears to be rather early 4th millennium rather than 3rd.* To the SW between 4899 1819 and 4910 1801 is another, smaller scatter of flints.

Flints are also marked at 4918 1860 and at 4929 1860.

Another axe was found at 4923 1905 in 1971. This is an ovate Acheulean hand axe made of chert found on the edges of the South Wales coal basin and is Lower Paleolithic.*

In November 1988 a fine plano convex flint scraper was found below the farm. A large flint knife was also found.

WELSH NEWTON

Parkside Farm and Elephant and Castle area

Flints including an arrowhead are also marked just north of the parish boundary between 4869 1872 and 4899 1870. Pottery was also found here.

A short distance to the NE a flint is marked at 4906 1899 and another scatter of flints between 4919 1914 and 4948 1898 including a large scraper. This area also produced an Iron Age bead, a Roman bead and an 11th century sherd.

Gwenherrion Farm and Welsh Newton Common area

A small scatter of flints are marked on the OS map just south of Gwenherrion Cross at 503 184. Others were found at 5135 1828. At 5172 1819 west of Great Hall a ? mound or earthwork is noted. Two flint flakes and a light scatter of post-Medieval pottery were found at 506 177 in 1983.

In 1981 Roman pottery was found in association with iron furnaces at 511 184. Further Roman pottery was recovered from this site including two sherds of decorated early Samian in 1983.

LLANGARREN

Llancloudy area

At 493 207 near to the place where two pots containing 3,000 Roman coins were discovered earlier this century.

In August 1979 considerable amounts of iron slag were found, especially lower down in the south of the field below Sheep Cot. Furnace wall clay was found below the ridge above the stream.

WHITCHURCH

A fine Neolithic tree felling axe was discovered in 1969 under the roots of a yew tree in the garden of Cherry Tree Cottage, Great Doward. The stone is Scandinavian and its appearance in Britain is of considerable interest. (Now in the Monmouth Museum.)*

DIXTON

English Newton

1984 – Two steeply backed end scrapers similar to forms from King Arthur's Cave, Paviland Cave, etc, attributed to the Upper Paleolithic. Both scrapers and five waste pieces found in the same vicinity all have unusually heavy white patination. Found at 5175 1544.*

At 520 157 a Neolithic Group VI polished axe from the Great Langdale/Scafell Pike group of axe factories. This one was found inside a Medieval house during excavations in 1978.*

At 5173 1528 an Early Bronze Age barbed and tanged arrowhead was found in 1983, washed down from the ploughed field above. Heavily patinated, milky white.*

GARWAY

Church Farm

A Neolithic polished stone adze was found at 455 224.*

A Neolithic knife of grey-brown flint was found nearby in ploughed land in 1971.*

Cocksheath 471 207

An aerial photograph taken by Brian Walters in 1989 showed a circular ditch inside what appears to be a double ditched rectilinear enclosure. A corner and parts of two straight sides showed well in the photo. Another ditch appeared to leave the circle at a tangent.

Field walking in late Autumn produced one Iron Age rim sherd and two flint flakes. No banks or ditches are visible on the ground. The SW of the circular ditch is near to a very steep wooded slope.

*All the finds marked with an asterisk are illustrated and described in the Monmouth Archaeological Society's publication 'The Stone Age Around Monmouth' (1984).

GOODRICH

Penraig, Harbour Farm

Since compiling this list a flint arrowhead has been found at 564 208. A lead spindle whorl (? Roman) has also been found in the field NW of the farm buildings.

Harbour Farm is thought locally to be a Roman site. A deed dated 1692 deals with land bordering 'the highway called Pencrecks Streete' (HRO AW28/13/18).

Elizabeth Taylor

SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

Two sites identified by members have been reported to the County Sites and Monuments Record and have been numbered and recorded.

Moated site at 455 534 opposite Birley church – this moat has progressively been filled in, but one section can still be identified. There is also a possible, already recorded moated site at 456 553 at Lower Hyde, and a possible settlement site.

Moated site at 383 723 on the A 4113 between Walford and Brampton Bryan – this is in addition to the nearby "tumulus" at 386 724.

The 'moated' site at 383 723 is rather large for a moated site and could possibly be something more substantial, as could the site at 456 553.

Members are encouraged to report any site or find that they discover or that is drawn to their attention, together with a grid reference. This can be done either directly to the county SMR, or through the ARS. The reporting and checking of sites was of course one of the main duties in the early days of the ARS.

Elizabeth Taylor's list of finds in South Herefordshire is a very good example of what can be done in this respect.

PRH

'CURRENT ARCHAEOLOGY' MAGAZINE

This popular archaeological magazine is to be revamped as a bigger and "better" publication. The page size will be slightly shorter and slightly wider, and the number of pages will be increased by 50%, as will the price from £8 to £12. Current Archaeology is prepared to accept the lower subscription rate till the end of July 1990.

The publishers informed me that they would still be prepared to accept the lower subscription rate even after July 1990 if subscribers were members of local archaeological societies, and made this clear when renewing their subscriptions. I am not sure how long this period of grace will extend.

Current Archaeology has published a list of local Archaeology Societies; it will be issued in parts. So far only Part 1 'Central and Southern England' has been published. The Woolhope Club and the Archaeological Research Section are included, but the details are not correct. The editors have been informed and hopefully the entry will be corrected in future parts that are issued.

Editor

NEWS FROM THE COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGY SECTION

The Sites & Monuments Record: Progress continues to be made on the record; by the time you read this it will have grown to over 10,000 sites, over 90% of which are computerised. Work still proceeds on updating and enhancement in weak areas.

Negotiations between English Heritage and the County Council to fund a permanent SMR Officer have currently resulted in the county establishing the post on a yearly renewable basis. English heritage responded with the generous offer of over £5,000 worth of computer equipment for the SMR including a new, speedier 110M hard disk computer to aid the work of the record. A printer has also been provided for the first time, so printouts of data can now be provided.

Fieldwork in the county continues. The first phase of the Herefordshire Valleys Survey is now complete and negotiations are underway to provide funding to widen this work and to start a survey of the Uplands as well. The Herefordshire Bypass Environmental Impact Assessment included an archaeological assessment carried out by the Section, funded by the Department of Transport. After fieldwork, the number of recorded sites on the route rose from 9 to 37.

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on the site of the Medieval village of Lower Bullingham and identified good surviving deposits. If you read the local newspapers (and The Times) you all know the rest.

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Leominster Buttercross to assess the quality of the surviving archaeology in the core of the Medieval town. Negotiations are now underway to secure excavation on the site before development takes place.

At Wellington Quarry the watching brief was renewed. This multi-period site showed Roman features extending even further south with some human burials, no grave goods,

that are Roman or earlier. Other finds included unstratified flintwork that may be Mesolithic and thus represents the earliest activity on the site to date.

A watching brief was carried out at Aylton Church during the recent works there.

The first English Heritage Farm Survey was carried out in the county at Clothiers Farm, Urishay, prior to a small museum opening there. The farmland itself, being largely pasture, produced little archaeological evidence, but the buildings were of interest.

Work has also continued on the preparation of the report on the Old Priory, Leominster. A report is underway on the Medieval floor tiles from the Priory Church, which have proved on inspection to be of particular interest. It has been suggested that a major conference on the archaeology of Leominster be organised for late 1991 or early 1992 and negotiations about this will start shortly.

Hilary White, SMR Officer
Archaeology Section Tetbury Drive, Warndon WR4 NLS

FIELD MEETING, 4TH MARCH, 1990

Eighteen members met at Fownhope on a bright, sunny morning. As we drove out of Fownhope on the lane running from the church to Capler, members were asked to notice the earthworks at Tump Farm (581 338). These are clearly visible from the road on the north side of the farmhouse perched on top of its hill. They are also present on the south, and others appear in the field on the east of the lane. It was considered that these earthworks are worthy of investigation at some later date. They have not been recorded by the RCHM, nor have I found them mentioned elsewhere.

Cars were parked at the summit of the road near Capler Lodge. The steep drop to the river 300 feet below is impressive. The Gentleman's Magazine for 12th April, 1793 gives an eye witness account of a landslip which occurred after a season of heavy rains similar to the weather we have just experienced. The road up which we had just driven was then described as 'the new road' and on April 4th about 5 acres of land just to the west of it dropped vertically for 50 feet before spreading to cover the narrow riverside meadow and burying 100 yards of 'the horse road'. After hearing about this, some members wondered if our cars would still be there when we returned.

CAPLER HILL FORT (593 329) – Multivallate

The public footpath through the wood led us to the south ramparts of the hill fort. The western half is covered by young trees and undergrowth following the felling of the mature wood a few years ago but the eastern part is grazing land and the whole of that end, with its enclosing banks and the heavily defended eastern gateway, can be experienced unimpeded. Capler is very beautiful as it is now, sheltered from the wind by the woods on its steep north and west sides with the added attraction of daffodils, it is one of the few hill forts which seem desirable places to live in. The enclosed area covers 10.25 acres, the total area being 15.5 acres.

The method for estimating the population of a hill fort by multiplying the number of enclosed hectares by 180 gives a possible population of 745 for Capler. With the neighbouring hill forts of Cherry Hill only 1.60 miles to the north and Oldbury 2.5 miles to the east, Capler's population was probably supported by the land which now comprises the parishes of Brockhampton, How Caple, Kings Caple, Sollershope and perhaps a quarter of Woolhope. It is interesting to note that the combined population of this area in 1971 totalled 787. (Fownhope and the rest of Woolhope are here presumed to have been the territory of Cherry Hill whose own territory was in turn limited by the proximity of Backbury to the north.)*

Capler was 'excavated' in 1924.* Fifteen trenches were dug 0.6m wide by labourers who would not have recognised a post-hole even if they had been looking for them. The trenches were presumably dug with the aim of finding stone walls and artefacts. Nothing

was found except for 'one square inch of dark grey gritted ware'. However, the excavators did discover that the southern ditch had been cut down through the rock. Various farming operations and the energetic work of the excavators have disturbed much of the gateway defences.

Rosamund Skelton drew our attention to a bank running through the arable fields to the south which might have been an annexe. This was visible from about midway on the southern side running eastwards and getting lost by the old farmhouse and buildings south of the gateway. The Field Name Survey shows that the field was called Walboro on the Brockhampton Tithe Apportionment and Wyeberry on the Woolhope one. The boundary between these two parishes is extremely complex and interlocking adjacent to the hill fort. It can best be explained by different strips in the same field having been owned by men living in the areas which were later divided for the collection of tithes into the two separate parishes, the very precise nature of the parish boundary being determined by the existing ownerships. Tithes were 'strongly enjoined' by the Synod of 786 and enforced by law in 900.

The accompanying map (made from information given in Geoff Gwatkin's maps made for the Field Name Survey for Woolhope, Brockhampton. and Fownhope) shows the close connection of these parishes with Capler. This perhaps implies some focal role played by Capler during the post-Roman – pre-Conquest era. The names How Caple, Kings Caple and Capelfore (the earlier, Domesday name for Brockhampton) also suggest a territorial link continuing through that era.

BROCKHAMPTON OLD CHURCH (598 316)

Our next visit was to Brockhampton's old church which is no longer marked on the later OS maps. A new church was built in about 1906 and the 15th century Holy Trinity church was left to become a roofless ruin.

The Woolhope Club Transactions for 1918 (p XVI) record that the west window still contained 15th century stained glass. Later, in 1952 (p VI) the Transactions record receiving a letter from Basil Butcher deploring the state of the church, with the Medieval glass lying on the ground and the shaft of the 14th century churchyard cross broken. The Woolhope Club wrote to the Archdeacon and to the churchwardens to express their concern. The effect of this gentle reproach was clear for us to see.

The churchyard gate on the path from the road being chained up, we were obliged to enter from the Brockhampton Court Hotel side with its notice warning of the danger of falling masonry. Half an old yew tree had fallen across what remains of the churchyard cross; the 16th century porch has almost disappeared; the interior of the church is a tangled jungle of brambles and saplings, including an ash with a trunk of 6 inch or more diameter. Someone has energetically tried to prise the lead lining out of the font and a section of the north wall has collapsed during this last winter.

We were all distressed to see the condition of this small parish church and particularly concerned because, apart from the published descriptions in the RCHM volume and in Pevsner, the Sites and Monuments record at Worcester has no other record, not even a photograph. Unless something is done the church will soon become a pile of tumbled stone – unrecorded and lost for ever.

All members present were both willing and anxious to do anything in our power to clear the vegetation and photograph and make some record of the church. (See note below.)

BROCKHAMPTON SHRUNKEN VILLAGE (599 315)

Nearly opposite to the Brockhampton Court lodge and drive, the pasture land SE of the road has a strongly marked holloway heading SE. Several house platforms are clearly visible near to the road between the holloway and the two or three existing houses. This shrunken village site has not previously been recorded.

OLDBURY HILL FORT (632 326)

Following lunch at Gurneys Oak, we drove on to Oldbury. This is a univallate hill fort with an estimated total acreage of 17.5 acres on the south-facing slope below the southern end of Marcle ridge. The whole area is on arable land and is so ploughed out that it is now scarcely noticeable except from the west. From the north, the line of the rampart can be seen in a hedge bank.

The area was under a well advanced corn crop so field walking was not possible.

Previous finds recovered from Oldbury include:

A Bronze Age tanged and barbed arrowhead.

A microlith.

Scrapers, knives, chips and waste pieces of flint.

Iron Age sherds of 'duck pottery' similar to those found at Sutton Walls.

CAERSWALL FARM (640 335)

The name of this farm is interesting. It is doubtful if the 'Caer' element in the name refers to Oldbury which is almost a mile to the SSW. The 'wall' element could refer either to a wall or a well (spring). My hypothesis being that farms and fields containing the element 'Caer' which are not obviously related to a hill fort may indicate the court and hall of one of the leading men of the pre-Conquest society, it seemed worthwhile to see if anything relevant could be found at Caerswall Farm.

The difficult problem of finding Welsh occupation sites of the post Roman – pre-Norman era are well known. A society which used neither pottery nor coinage and did not build stone houses leaves little trace of itself for archaeologists to find. Nevertheless, this society did exist and did live somewhere and its leaders – as shown in the earliest Welsh literature – lived in a hall within a court sometimes called a 'caer'.

Although it is known that Archenfield was a Welsh area which only became a part of the county and diocese of Hereford in the 12th century, evidence is slowly coming together which shows a continuity of Welsh society also in the south Herefordshire area east of the Wye, part of which includes the hilly areas of Woolhope and Marcle hill. The Saxon presence here was not a dominant one until the second quarter of the 10th century after King Athelstan's creation of a boundary using the River Wye. Previously both races seem to have lived in reasonable amity and even after the division was made by Athelstan, Saxon dominance was probably largely political with little effect on ordinary life, at least in the hilly areas of less interest to the Saxons.

In these circumstances we might expect to find some evidence of continuity in the area. This is perhaps supported by the occurrence of names such as Welsh Court and Welchston and the survival of field names which still have an obvious Welsh derivation.

The site

A high bank was noticed just outside the SW part of the farmyard but this could have been the remaining side of a former holloway. The lynchets of some small fields show up well in the grassland of the field to the west. The most interesting feature was an embankment built across the steep valley of the orchard which slopes down on the south side of the farm. At first this appeared to be modern as it had been repaired with concrete and broken quarry tiles and is in present day use. The orchard drops steeply to where two springs rise making the valley bottom of the orchard very soft and wet; the built up causeway is an excellent way of getting across an awkward piece of land. However, as we walked further we were surprised to find the embankment narrowing until there was barely sufficient width to walk in single file. The dwindling width was explained when seen from the field on top of the bank, west of the hedge. From here it could be seen that the west side of the embankment was inside the hedge dividing the field from the orchard.

Both the OS map of 1904 and the Tithe map of about 1840 show that the hedge line has not altered, which rules out a modern construction. We then considered the possibility

that the south end of the bank at least might be a man-made enclosure bank. No ditch would be needed on the east and south because the land falls away so steeply that the east end of the field is virtually on a promontory. A lot of loose stone is present in the bank which might have been stone thrown out of the way during cultivations of the field. However, the only stone which had been turned up by this season's ploughing lay more or less in one curving line as shown on the sketch plan. This was not bedrock caught by deep ploughing, and the lie of the land allows no natural explanation for the presence of the stones.

Field walking produced a thin scatter of coal, nails, broken brick and sherds of pottery of all periods from the 14th century, mainly from the end of the field nearest to the farm. This was the type of scatter produced by muck spreading, not by occupation. It suggests that the field has been under cultivation since Medieval times, hence any ditch and bank across it would have been ploughed out.

Our findings were inconclusive but the general opinion was that the site looked promising enough to try to get some aerial photography done when the conditions are right.

Further up the valley leading to Nuttal Farm there are some interesting banks near the brook, and a possible dam. Although this is a very small brook it appears that use has been made of it at some time. Curiously, all the banks are on the north side, the land on the south side of the brook looks quite undisturbed.

EARTHWORKS AT MUCH MARCLE (651 333)

Most members gave up at this point, but led by the indefatigable Roger Sterling-Brown a few of us searched for the unidentified earthworks mentioned in the RCHM entry for Much Marcle, their method for location being annoyingly imprecise. Eventually we thought we had located the site at the above grid reference, just behind the Slip Inn. Our investigative enthusiasm was defeated by hunger and weariness and we left it at that.

Notes

* The method for estimating the population of a hill fort is fully explained in S C Stanford's 'Archaeology of the Welsh Marches' p 107.

+ Excavation by Jack & Hayter in WNFC Transactions 1924 pp 83-88 and 1941 p LXXIII.

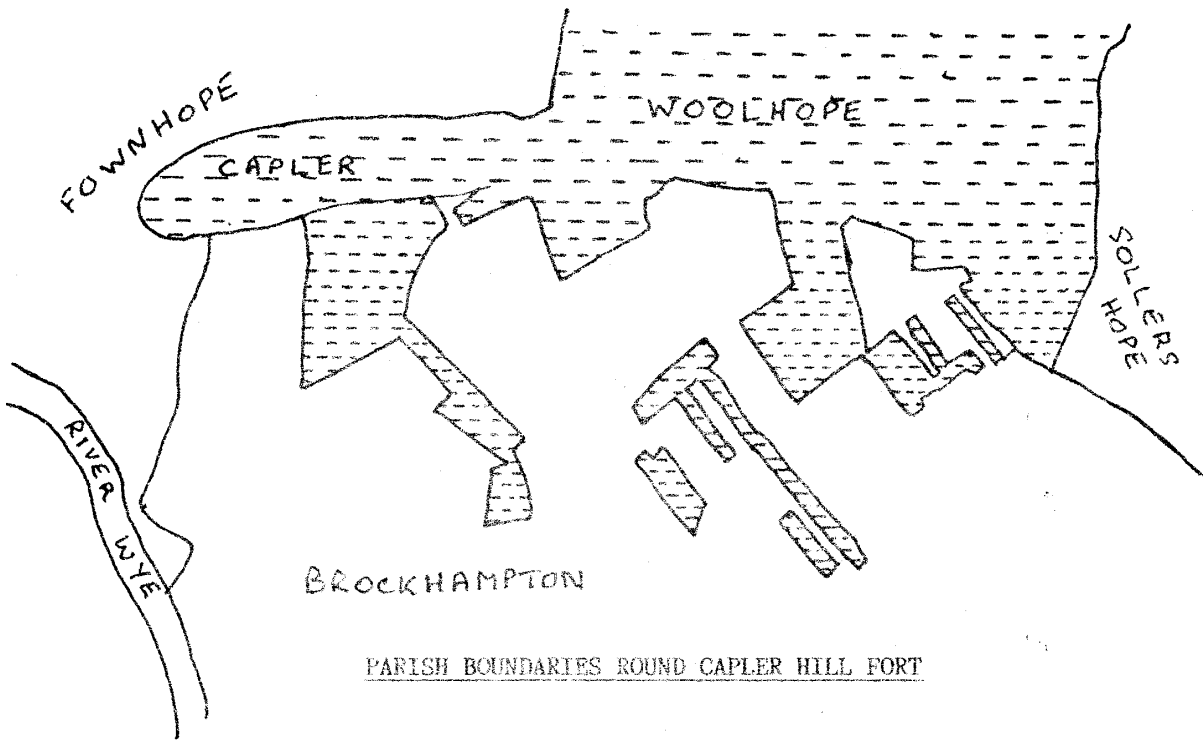
Brockhampton Church – Following our visit, I find that the vigilant Ron Shoesmith and his team had photographed the exterior last August but the interior was too obscured by vegetation. On hearing that the north wall has begun to collapse he thought that the case for taking some action might be strong enough to get some results. The difficulty lies in the status of the church, which has never been made officially redundant. Therefore its maintenance is still the responsibility of the vicar (of Fownhope) and the PCC of Brockhampton. The very small population of the parish already has a heavy responsibility with the care of the modern church.

Ron Shoesmith noted our willingness to help and further news is awaited.

Acknowledgements

Our thanks are due to the Lawrence family for their kind permission for our visit. Our thanks also to Ruth Richardson for providing us with information on Capler and Oldbury from her thesis showing the relationship between the hill forts and the better quality farming land in their vicinity. Her information has been used freely in this report.

Elizabeth Taylor



PARISH BOUNDARIES ROUND CAPLER HILL FORT

CAERSWALL FARM

