Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society

Volume LXIV 1985

ISSN 0143–5175

Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society

with which is incorporated the Shropshire Parish Register Society

VOLUME LXIV, 1983–4

edited by R.A. Preston

SHREWSBURY

1985

Produced by Alan Sutton Publishing Limited, Gloucester
Printed in Great Britain

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TRANSACTIONS OF THE SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME LXIV *1983–4*

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BROMFIELD EXCAVATIONS – FROM NEOLITHIC TO SAXON TIMES:
the first Fred Reeves Memorial Lecture 1981[1]

By S.C. STANFORD

Like so many others I had a great affection for Fred Reeves. He popularised archaeology in Ludlow and profoundly influenced my own research since my first major task in adult education was a tutorial course on the British Iron Age for the Ludlow WEA class which met, with Fred in the chair, in the old Grammar School Library. Although he was fascinated by archaeological techniques capable of making the stones speak, he retained a friendly scepticism for the wilder imaginations of archaeologists. I suspect that what attracted him most to excavations was its uniting of people with varied skills and experience in a common intellectual pursuit.

When Lord Plymouth opened the Bromfield quarry in 1965 it was Fred's idea to seize the chance of examining the whole of the threatened area, whether marked by known monuments or not. With the minimum of correspondence we came to an arrangement whereby, on the call of the quarry staff, I would excavate, on behalf of the then Ministry of Works, any ancient features uncovered when the topsoil was removed in readiness for gravel extraction. What followed depended entirely on this cooperation, the interest and keen observation of the quarry staff, especially Mr Fred Ellis, and the skill and hardiness of a small group of volunteers. I welcome this opportunity to summarize the many exciting discoveries made in the sixteen years since 1965 and offer this note as a tribute to the far-sightedness and gentle diplomacy of Fred Reeves.

The upstanding Bronze Age burial mounds beside the golf course, which were partly excavated by Charles Fortey in 1885, mark the Bromfield terrace as an area of special interest. Since the 1950s aerial photographs by Professor J.K. St Joseph, Mr Arnold Baker and myself have recorded other barrows, revealed by the higher growth of corn over their buried ditches. When to these are added the barrows cut through by the railway line in 1852 and two others exposed in the course of gravel quarrying in recent years, there is a total of twenty barrows, a concentration unparalleled in the Welsh Marches; I have referred to it as the Bromfield necropolis. Other cropmark sites include the ditch of a Roman marching camp and that of a native farmstead. With a large Bronze Age cemetery, many scattered graves of the same date, and an Anglo-Saxon cemetery as well, Bromfield has a claim to be the foremost rural archaeological site in the border (fig.1).

Working in heavy rain and almost freezing temperatures in April 1978 we found the earliest evidence yet for Man's interest in this area. Charcoal from one of two shallow pits gave a carbon-14 date of 2730 bc (*i.e.* a calendar date of *c.* 3500 BC). With the charcoal were carbonized shells of hazel nuts and grains of barley and wheat. There were also sherds of several Neolithic pots, crumpled by the weight of earth-moving machinery but restorable as plain round-bottomed bowls similar to those found in Neolithic

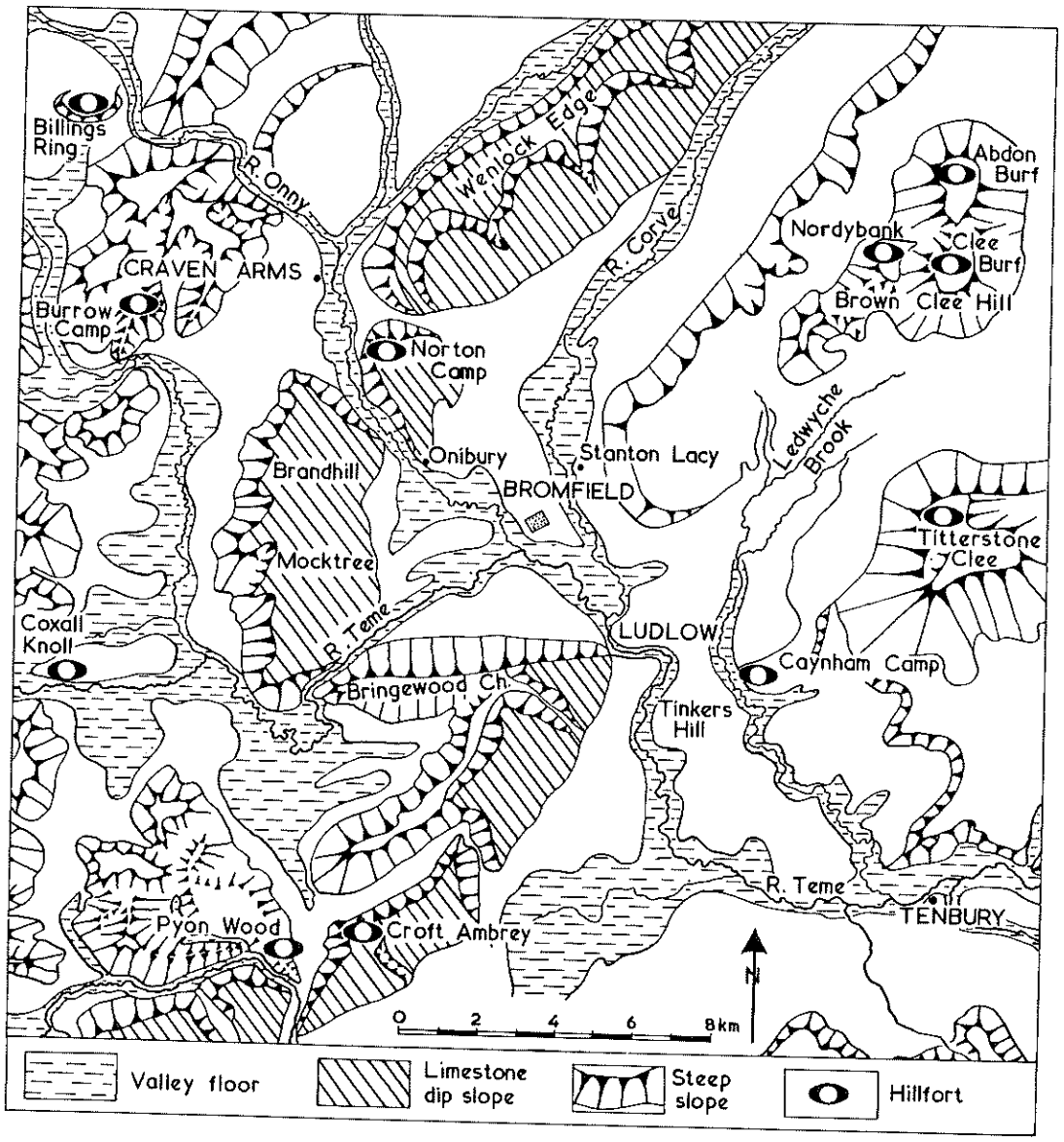


FIG. 1 THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE BROMFIELD DISTRICT

contexts elsewhere. After two days of soggy digging we had established that the first farmers were here by *c.* 3500 BC, only 800 years later than the first Neolithic colonists in Britain as a whole.

From some nearby pits came sherds of Beakers, the vessels used by our first metallurgists in the Copper Age from *c.* 2500 BC till 2000 BC. The Bromfield vessels would have been comparable with those from the cist graves of the Olchon Valley in the Black Mountains of south-west Herefordshire. More Beaker sherds were later found in a shallow hollow predating the barrow B15 (the position of barrows is shown in fig.2). These were accompanied by many cracked boiling stones, probably used for domestic cooking. There may have been huts nearby.

We do not yet have a carbon–14 date for the barrow that was built over this Beaker occupation but it is unlikely to be much later than *c.* 2000 BC. In its centre the charred traces of logs marked the square base of the funeral pyre, and burnt turf in the two graves that were cut through the ashes suggests that the dead had been laid on a bed of turf on top of that pyre. It is tempting to suspect that the cremated bones found in these graves were those of a married couple. About 8.5m. to the east and roughly aligned on them, two similar grey-green sandstone slabs had been set up just inside the barrow ditch but were reduced to broken foundation pieces by the time we discovered them. Though I fancy I can hear Fred's sceptical murmur in the background may I offer an imaginative explanation of the reason for the stones? With their cremated remains set secure beneath the barrows, the souls of our two distant relatives would have been trapped in earth forever without some guidance to heaven. The greatest physical power close to the earth, then as now, was the sun which daily appeared to rise from the earth and scaled the heights of heaven

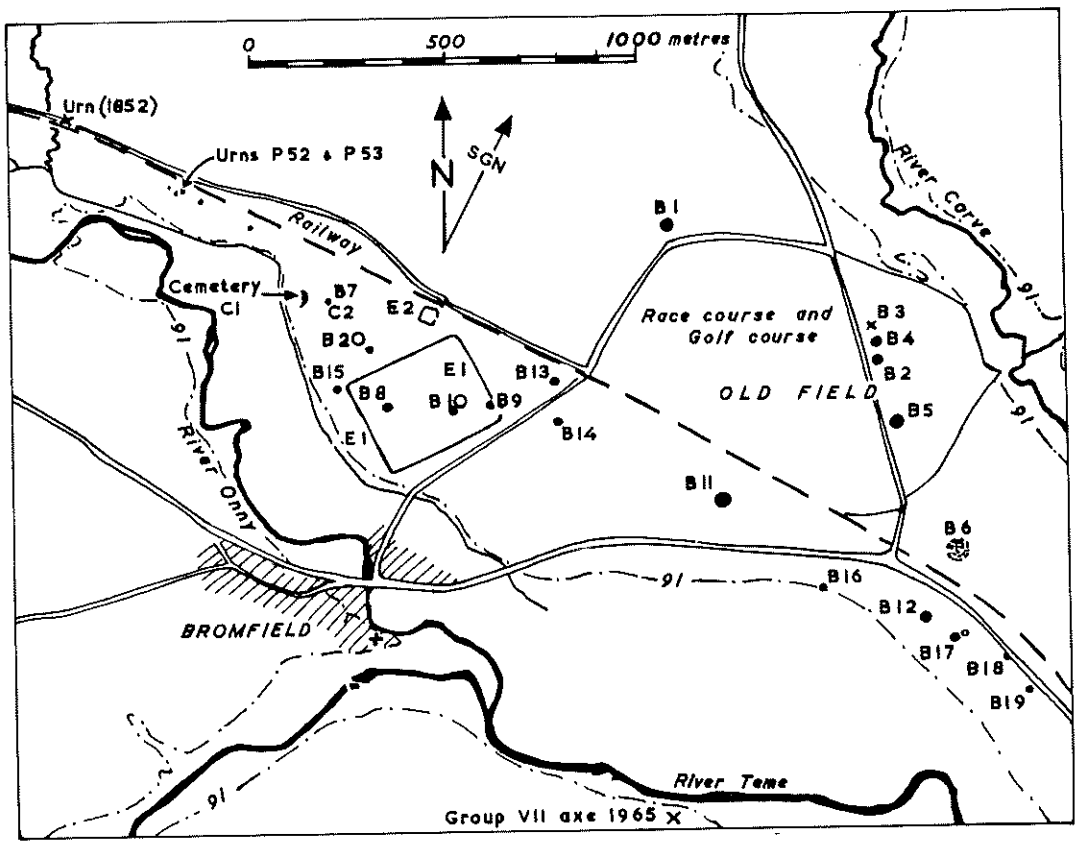


FIG. 2 THE BROMFIELD TERRACE: BARROWS (B), CEMETERIES (C) AND ENCLOSURES (E)

each day. The stones pointed the way the souls should go, – 101° and 103° E, towards Titterstone Clee Hill – to get a lift on the rising sun. Half a dozen cremation graves had also been dug a few yards east of the barrow, almost surely sited to share the hallowed status of the burial mound. Two of them contained sherds of early Bronze Age pottery still decorated with Beaker motifs.

The two other barrow ditches so far excavated were probably not much later than this one. One, B20, found by Mr Ellis, was deeply eroded and no grave survived. The other, B7, was about 200 yards to the west and had no pottery in its central cremation grave but several satellite burials had been made around it, mostly to the south and east; four of them contained urned cremations. About this time or a little earlier, two cremations were buried side by side at the western end of the quarry, not far from the barrow that had been cut by the railway line. They were contained in similar urns resembling some enlarged food vessels of the early Bronze Age and it is once again tempting to suppose that marital unity was perpetuated by funerary proximity.

The first site to be excavated, in 1966, was the Bronze Age cemetery C1 about 30 yards west of barrow B7 and containing over 130 cremation graves. From it came sherds from 40 urns or accessory vessels, the largest collection of such material in the Welsh Marches and Wales. For want of room or desire to display it in Ludlow, most of it has been on display in Birmingham City Museum since it was restored in 1967. From studying the filling of the two urn burials from this cemetery and the others around B7 we have seen that the urns were not used for transporting the ashes from the pyre. Instead, they were set in the grave to form an earthenware cist into which the ashes were poured. The clues to this practice were little trickles of clean sand that must have fallen from the grave side while the interment was in progress and occasional pieces of bone that had gone into the grave after much of the upcast had already been put back over the bones.

Most burials in this cemetery were simply token deposits of pyre materials – sometimes only charcoal and sooty soil, sometimes charcoal and flecks of cremated bone, or a mixture of charcoal and bone. Often there was no pottery; sometimes a few sherds; and on occasions the greater part of a pot in many pieces. It is clear that the pots were smashed before reaching the grave and in several cases they had been burnt – probably indicating that they were thrown on the glowing remains of the pyre after their final service which may have been a toast to the dead handed round the communicants at the pyre-side. Three carbon–14 dates were obtained from the charcoal in these graves. An early grave is thus dated 1556 bc (or

1910 BC in calendar years), a later one 850 bc (1030 BC) and a late grave 761 bc (936 BC). It looks as though the cemetery was in use for about 800–1000 years – as long as many churchyards in England. Despite its long use, there were very few cases of graves cutting earlier ones. The ant-hill size mounds formed over the graves by the spare upcast seem to have been sufficient to mark them for a very long while. Altogether Bromfield has shown over 150 Bronze Age burials of one sort or another and with the Neolithic and Beaker activity the record thus far extends to about 2650 years. However, after about 850 BC there is a gap for several centuries, probably because the local population moved, about then, to the hill-tops to establish fortified villages like Caynham Camp, Titterstone Clee Camp and possibly Croft Ambrey. They may have continued to bury their dead on the plain at Bromfield; but it is more likely that new cemeteries would have been started in the vicinity of the hillforts (fig.1).

Although there is uncertainty as to which of the two ditched enclosures, E1 and E2, was the next site to be utilized I shall refer first to the Roman marching camp E1 which encloses 20½ acres within its single ditch and could have accommodated a legion of about 4500 troops under canvas. It should belong to the Roman conquest period between AD 48 and AD 75 and may have only been occupied overnight as the legion marched westwards into the hills. First discovered from the air by Professor St Joseph, it was trenched by Dr G. Webster in 1956 with the assistance of Lord Plymouth and others, and has since been examined at the north and west corners and in the middle of the south-west side. No finds have been made to date it more precisely. Only yards from the north angle of the marching camp and so probably beside or close to the line of the presumed Roman road to Craven Arms, the squarish enclosure E2 was that of a farmstead comprising only two four-post buildings and a cluster of posts probably for drying racks or hay-trees (fig.3). Great quantities of cracked boiling stones were found in the tops of the postholes and in the ditch; they probably reflect the importance of meat (for boiling) in the economy of the farm, and an accompanying interest in hides. There was also iron-working, as shown by buns of slag in the ditch. All the pottery found is Iron Age, much of it made in the vicinity of the Clee Hills though some was imported from the Malvern Hills area. This, along with the clay salt containers in which salt was brought from Droitwich, suggest that the farm was occupied during the Iron Age or shortly after the Roman conquest.

The posts of the farm buildings were not replaced once they had rotted, so the occupation is not likely to have lasted more than 50–90 years. Of itself therefore it cannot have run parallel to the hillfort occupations which in this area lasted for centuries. Two four-post buildings were excavated just outside this enclosure, one of them of two phases of construction. They show that either before or after the defended phase represented by the enclosure the local farmers felt safe to live in the open. The contrast of this with the hillfort people's concern to maintain their defences over hundreds of years provides a further reason for not dating this farm to the Iron Age. I am inclined to think that the most likely explanation is that our farm was founded, probably as a defended (moated) farmstead, when the local population was moved down from the nearby hillforts of Caynham or Norton Camp following the Roman conquest. The Cornovii, the tribe whose territory probably covered Shropshire, were favoured by the Romans and a licence to defend their new homesteads, or at least for their leaders to do so, may have been a mark of Roman friendship, a guarantee of safety against raids by any guerilla elements still at large in the anti-Roman territories of Herefordshire and Wales. The move out of the enclosure to undefended buildings would be appropriate to the more settled conditions of the 2nd century AD.

There is once again a break in the Bromfield sequence, this time until *c.* AD 700 when the abandoned farm enclosure was used as a conveniently defined graveyard by an Anglo-Saxon community (fig.4). The 23 graves were oriented east-west and set out roughly in rows over the western half of the enclosure, furthest from the single eastern entrance. The orientation and general absence of grave goods indicates its Christian character; but the five objects found in three of the graves point to pagan times and make an initial date later than AD 700 unlikely. In an isolated grave just inside the entrance was found an amber bead and the perished remains of a bronze penannular brooch, both in the presumed chest area of the grave. The skeleton had dissolved completely in this acid, permeable soil and could not even be recognized from replacement silt, though this was done with some success in other graves by patiently removing thin spits of the infilling and allowing the surface to dry before scraping deeper. In the main part of the cemetery two graves yielded small iron knives similar to others from Anglo-Saxon sites elsewhere in England. Close to one of them were traces of an iron buckle; and the shadow of silt that marked the dissolved, presumably male, skeleton showed that it had been laid on its right side, knees up, facing south. Just beside this grave to the south was another, clearly paired with it. I like to think that this was the grave of the knife-man's wife, sheltered by her husband from the north wind.

With another pair of graves there is different evidence for the custom of burying wives south of their husbands' graves. The southern of two other graves had the ghost silt of a baby across the centre of an

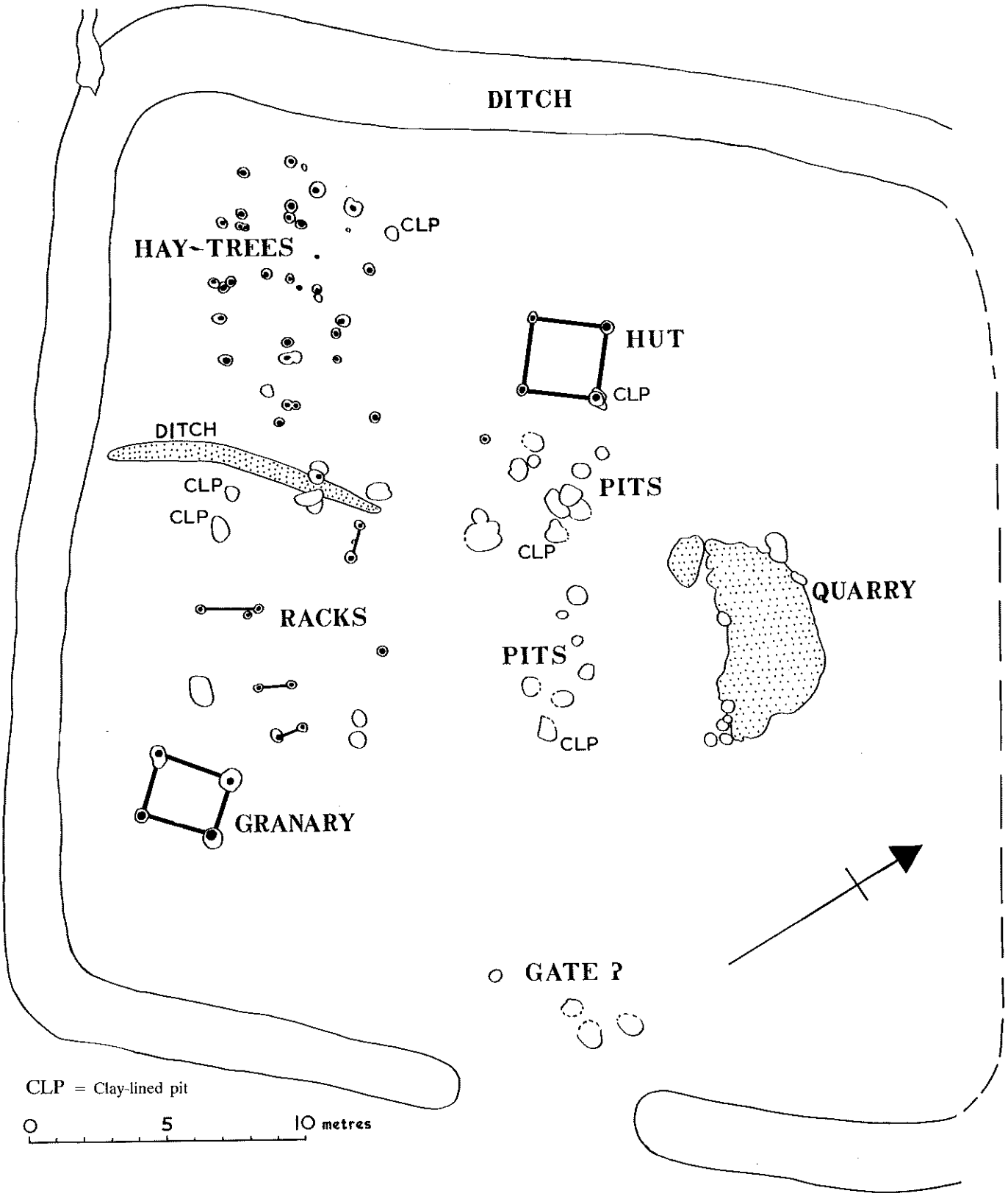


FIG. 3 THE NATIVE FARM ENCLOSURE (E2), SHOWING POSTHOLES AND PITS

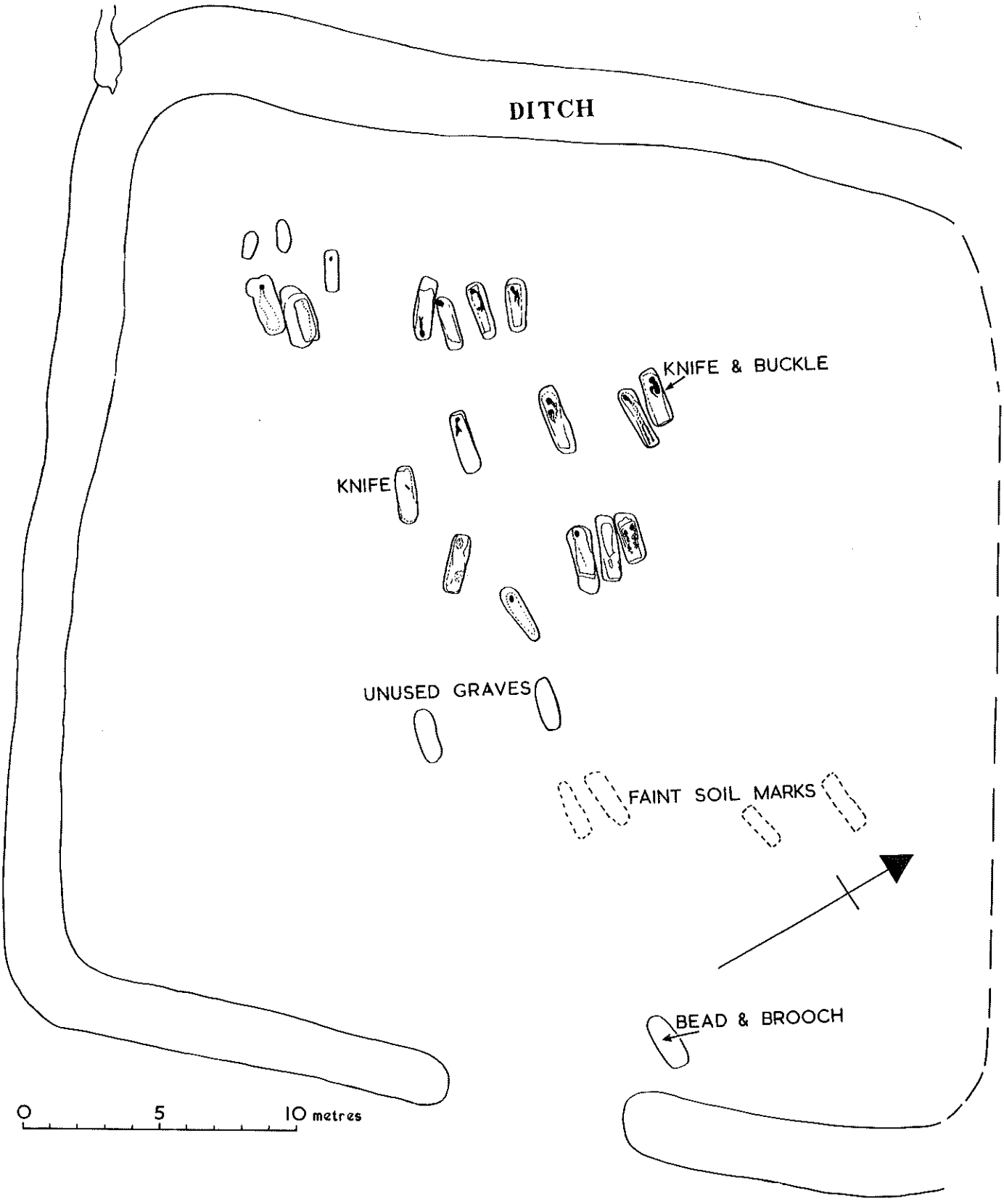


FIG. 4 THE SAXON CEMETERY, SHOWING THE GRAVES WITHIN THE ENCLOSURE DITCH

adult grave which presumably was that of the female of the two. There were other examples of such pairing though without evidence of sex; and there were one or two small graves of child size. There was one unusual adult grave where, instead of being at the west end, the skull silt was at the east end. Priests were buried with their heads to the east, facing their flock and it is likely that we had here the grave of one who had been among the first to take part in the 7th century revival of Christianity in this area.

After some 21 interments had been made, two more graves were dug parallel to each other, nearer to the gate than any others except that of the bejewelled lady by the gate itself. These graves were never used but simply left open to silt up with the dark brown soil washed in from the surrounding surface of the old farmyard, now graveyard. Did the patients recover? Or was the grave-digger hard of hearing and a bit behind the times? Or had the priest forgotten to tell him that now, perhaps some time in the 9th or 10th century, interments were to be made beside the church across the river at Bromfield itself?

This is as far as we can take the story that has been uncovered by the bulldozer and dragline and coaxed from the unyielding gravel matrix by the trowel. There must be more to come, both to fill in the gaps and extend the coverage at either end. Meanwhile, I am reminded of something Fred Reeves said to me twenty years ago when I was explaining how just one more season or two at Croft Ambrey would really elucidate the problems of the local Iron Age : 'Young man, don't imagine you can sort out the history of the world in a couple of seasons'. True, – but Fred himself was thrilled with the account of Man's activity in this little patch of gravel, starting with Neolithic farmers and extending to Anglo-Saxon immigrants, from 3500 BC until about AD 800. It has indeed taken more than a season or two but then we have found far more than either of us imagined. Now, as ever, the dragline is poised over the treasure-house of local history. It is my earnest hope that those responsible for our ancient monuments will ensure that Fred's idea of surveying 75 acres of ancient landscape is eventually achieved.

[1] This series of lectures was instigated by Ludlow Civic Society, of which Fred Reeves was a founder member and former chairman.

The prehistoric features excavated at Bromfield between 1966 and 1979 are published in *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, **48**, 1982, 279–320. The excavation of the marching camp ditch appears in *T.S.A.S.*, **lviii**, 1968, 195–6. Barrow B15 and enclosure E2 with its Saxon cemetery are being prepared for publication.

The Primary Record Numbers in the Shropshire Sites and Monuments Record relating to the Bromfield excavations are: B1: SA 1172; B2: SA 3056; B3: SA 1173; B4: SA 3039; B5: SA 1174; B6: SA 1175; B8: SA 2576; B9: SA 3955; B10: SA 3954; B11: SA 2035; B12: SA 2034; B14: SA 2017; B15: SA 3953; B16: SA 3951; B17: SA 3950; C1 & C2: SA 3060; E1: SA 192; E2: SA 488; Group VII axe: SA 2699; Urn: SA 3037.

EBURY HILL CAMP – EXCAVATIONS 1977

By S.C. STANFORD

Ebury hillfort lies 6 km. north-east of Shrewsbury at SJ 546164 on an outcrop of Longmyndian rock, locally represented by a hard andesitic tuff which forms a tongue of high ground northwards from Haughmond Hill. It is a little over 90m. above OD and only 30m. higher than the nearby tributaries of the Severn. The natural strength of the position is negligible, particularly on the south-west where the single line of defence crosses the almost flat top of the ridge. A ditch accompanies the rampart on the south-west and south-east sides but is not apparent elsewhere, although it may be assumed to exist round the rest of the circuit since there is no obvious internal quarry-ditch to provide spoil for the rampart. There are now four gaps in the defences, of which the two in the south-west sector are clearly modern, postdating the 1889 Ordnance Survey plan and certainly enlarged, if not cut, during the Second World War when the roads were laid. The two gaps at the north-east corner are both on the 1889 plan and one must have been the site of the original entrance. Dr Ian Burrow's search of the Shropshire County archives has further revealed that the quarry, which before 1939 had removed about a third of the 3.6 hectare enclosure, had not started in 1777, according to a Corbet Estates map, but was probably under way by 1841 when the Haughmond Demesne Estate map shows two small pools at the north-east end, approximately at SJ 547165, and a disposition of property boundaries indicative of quarrying having begun.

The only previous archaeological excavation, unpublished, was an examination of the defences by the late Mr R.S. Sims in advance of the wartime road building. According to a letter to Miss L.F. Chitty (14 January 1944) he planned to cut the southern rampart and to take another section across the ditch in the south-west corner. A report in *Antiquaries Journal*, **xxviii**, 1948, 30 mentions a hearth under the rampart, but no artefacts were found. What was probably Sim's rampart trench is still visible 3 or 4m. north-west of the road through the south-eastern corner of the hillfort.

On 7 June 1977 the writer was invited by the Department of the Environment to undertake a rescue excavation in advance of the construction of three concreted service areas for the Camping and Caravanning Club who have taken over the hill as a camp site. The statutory notice expired on 24 June and the work was carried out mostly by the writer and Mrs Yvonne Stanford over thirteen days with welcome help on occasions from Messrs R. Allington, G. Gartside, E. and P. Jenks, D. and A. Milsom, W. Preen, C. Stanford and P. Thrussell. It was facilitated by the cooperation of Mr B. Moore, architect for the Camping Club, Mr B. Powell and other staff of the Economic Forestry Group, and Messrs P. Gosling and J. West of the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments. To all these and to the late Miss L.F. Chitty, Dr I. Burrow and Mr G.C. Guilbert who have helped me with background information on the site's history, my grateful thanks are recorded, as also to Miss E. Morris for identifying the VCP and to the Society's treasurer Mr N. Mutton who administered the grant received from the Department of the Environment. The Primary Record Number of the site in the Shropshire Sites and Monuments Record is SA 113.

EXCAVATIONS

Most of the pipe trenches (dotted on fig.1) had been cut and were open when the excavation began on 13 June, and were scanned for structures and finds. Only two sherds of VCP[1] were found in the side of the trench halfway between T2 and T3; and the only structural evidence was an area of red clay in place of bedrock showing in section east of the pond. The clay must almost certainly be the filling of the hillfort ditch, which would therefore be aligned under the old concrete base on which the Camp Reception Hut has been built. The sides of the presumed ditch were 24.7m. and 29.4m. from the camp gatepost at A and 2.2m. from the roadside. No sign of any other ditch was seen in the pipe trench between the council road splay and the quarry floor.

The excavation of T1, 3.8m. x 5m., showed that the area here outside the defences had been trimmed down to a shattered bedrock horizon when the roads were laid. The spoil from this levelling had been pushed into the hillfort ditch, so narrowing it by a metre or more along this sector. This spoil was only removed far enough in T1 to confirm the start of the prewar turf slope to the ditch, 3m. from the road. No artefacts were found, nor any structures encountered. It should be noted that the 1: 2500 OS plan shows the south-west defences about 4m. too far north-east in relation to the roads and the present southern boundary of the site. This has been roughly corrected on fig.1, although no fresh overall survey has been attempted. The importance of this correction is that it shows at least 4m. of undisturbed intervallum space immediately inside the rampart whereas the OS plan shows the road right at the rampart tail.

Over about a third of T2, also 3.8m. x 5m., the bedrock was at or just below the modern surface. The wartime upcast from road cutting, up to 150 mm. thick, covered the lower parts of the area, sealing a thin black prewar bracken humus over a subsoil of glacial clay with occasional pebbles. Pockets of boulder clay occur sporadically over the areas traversed by the pipe trenches but are rarely more than 500 mm. deep. In T2 there were numerous small root holes in the subsoil and two small tree holes which bottomed on bedrock 228 mm. and 310 mm. below the prewar surface. No prewar structural features nor artefacts were found.

In T3, which was enlarged to 6m. square, the road upcast, which was 300 mm. thick at the roadside, covered all but the north-western metre and a half. The glacial clay subsoil below was riddled with roots including the cut-off stumps of two trees but was mostly clean enough to have permitted the discovery of any post or stake holes there may have been. None were found, but at two widely separated points in the subsoil two tiny sherds of VCP were recovered.

T4 was excavated following the contractor's decision to abandon T2 as a service area because of the rock. The new location, 3.8m. x 5m., was likewise covered by road upcast, 350 mm. thick at the roadside and thinning to nothing 3.5m. from the road. The underlying thin, black-surfaced humus was little disturbed by roots and conditions were excellent for the detection of any structural features. The only one recorded was a modern posthole containing a piece of coke and a wire nail bent over a piece of rotten softwood. In the road upcast and the underlying humus were found nineteen very small abraded sherds of VCP and about twenty carbonised seeds, probably corn. Nothing else likely to be earlier than the present century was found.

POTTERY

The VCP sherds from the recent excavations are in a buff brick-red fabric containing rounded grains of sand up to 0.8 mm. diameter and have been tempered with an admixture of broken rock up to about 5 mm. in maximum dimension. All are abraded with no certain original surfaces; none is more than 20 mm. across. They have been identified by Miss Elaine Morris as stony tempered VCP or briquetage, probably from disposable salt containers, similar to that found at Fisherwick[2] and the Berth. The angular rock inclusions are rhyolite, microgranite and possibly micaceous sandstone. These sherds could not have been made from local clay and rocks found at Ebury itself. Similar VCP was found in the inner camp of the Wrekin[3] but only one such sherd came from the outer camp excavations of 1973. The rest of the Wrekin sherds have many more larger fragments of a more obviously crystalline rock than used at Ebury. A few small sherds found by Mr Andrew Rogerson on Bury Walls hillfort and shown to me were equally different, being uniformly tempered with a dark grey shale-like rock save for one small sherd tempered with sand.

DISCUSSION

There is no direct evidence for the date of Ebury's defences, and since the entrance was destroyed without record it is not even possible to argue comparability of its form with other dated hillforts. The

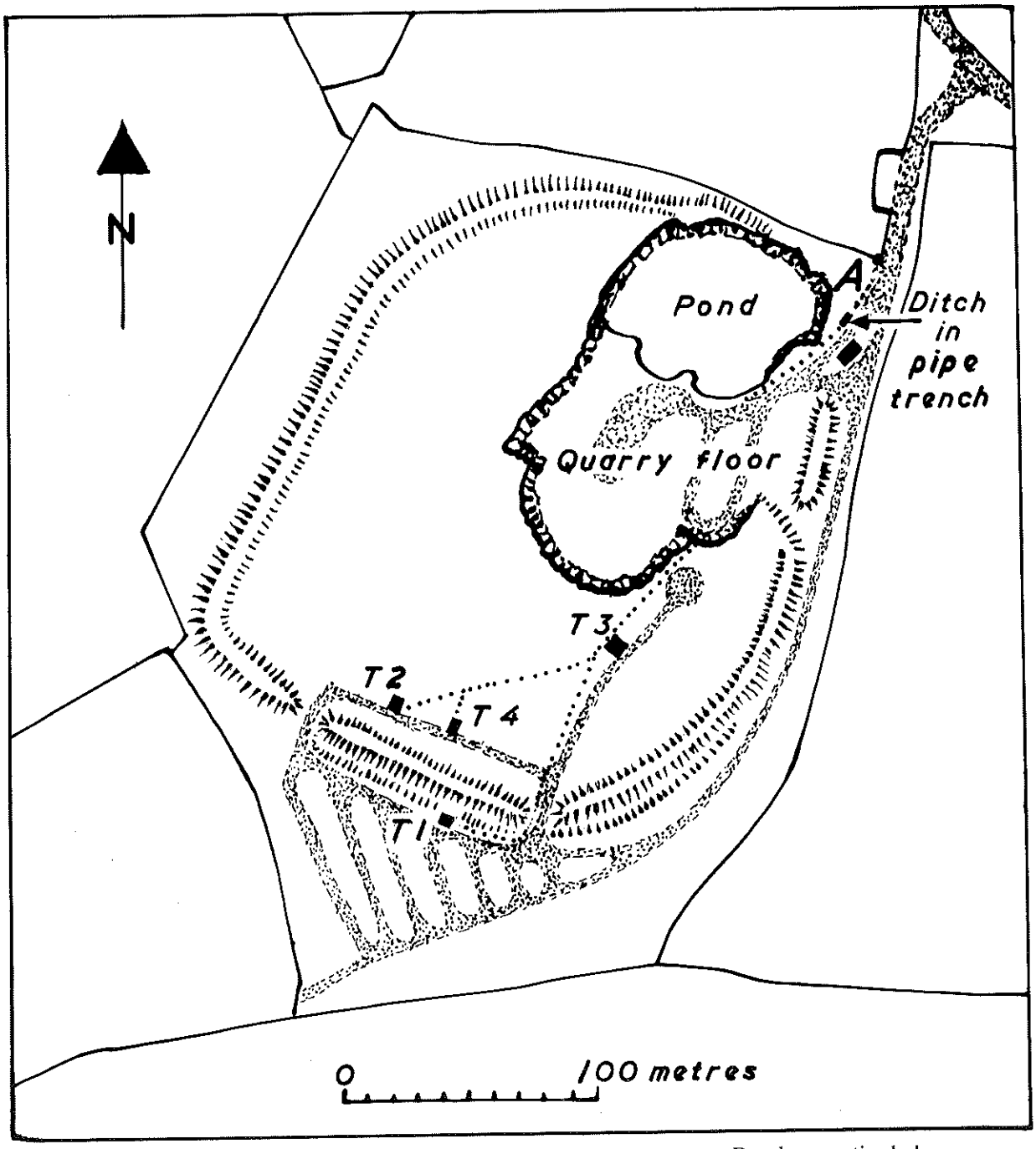


FIG. 1 PLAN OF EBURY HILLFORT SHOWING SITE OF EXCAVATIONS 1977 Roads are stippled.

curvilinear course of most of the rampart, along the contours, and the presence of an ancient entrance on only one side of such a large enclosure precludes a Roman military function and if the place had been occupied as a village in the Roman period some Roman sherds must surely have been found in the excavations of 1944 or 1977 or reported during the extensive prewar quarrying operations. Even this negative conclusion is of some interest since it places Ebury along with the Wrekin as a Severn valley hillfort that was not occupied in the Roman period.

Since the hillfort is comparable in siting, size and form with other lowland hillforts of what may be called the Hillfort Period, *i.e.* Late Bronze Age – Iron Age, it is probable that it belongs to that time, and was either abandoned before or at the time of the Roman conquest. Either way its lack of Roman occupation must modify my general conclusions regarding the local Romano-British population and its fate at the hands of the Romans[4] and make it unlikely that any Shropshire hillforts were occupied intensively in Roman times. Note must be taken here of the longstanding contention that one or more of the hillforts in this area was built, or at any rate used, in the Dark Ages as a centre of British resistance

against the Saxons. Part of the interest of Ebury lies in the possibility that it may have such a history, though so far there is no evidence for it.

Ebury is particularly interesting as a lowland site near the north-eastern limit of frequent hillforts in the Welsh Marches. Most of its interior is almost level and the gently sloping area between T3 and the east rampart would require the minimum of terracing for buildings. Its altitude and gentle topography leads us to expect permanent occupation, especially after the discovery of rebuilt huts in 1973 on a 1 in 6 north-east slope on the Wrekin, 396m. above sea level, only 12 km. away. The three small areas excavated are of course tiny samples of the interior and the lack of structural evidence from them should be regarded as inconclusive rather than pointing to an unoccupied hillfort. Nevertheless it is surprising that no prewar structural features were found and tempting to conclude that the buildings were of a different kind and density from the close-set four-posters, often in lines, found on the Wrekin, and the Herefordshire forts of Credenhill,[5] Croft Ambrey[6] and Midsummer Hill.[7] On none of these sites has there been a comparable failure to discover prehistoric structures in undisturbed areas. Beyond this any further comments must be even more speculative. Ebury may not have had permanent buildings, but it is probably more likely that our trenches have fallen between postholes, either because as at Moel y Gaer, Rhosesmor, Clwyd[8] there are fairly extensive empty areas between hut groups and/or that the huts were round, about 6m. or more diameter. With such buildings, whether the walls were stiffened with posts or stakes, the chances of our trenches falling within a hut or between huts would be very high. If the walls were of turf with door postholes as the only subsoil features there would be little chance of trenches less than 10m. square collecting a posthole.

The excavation, though abortive, has served to draw attention to the relatively well-preserved state of much of the hillfort interior, adequately intact to justify future work in advance of any further planting, building or trenching.

[1] P.S. Gelling and S.C. Stanford, 'Dark Age pottery or Iron Age ovens?', *Trans. Proc. Birmingham Archaeol. Soc.*, **82**, 1965, 77–91.
[2] C. Smith (ed.), *Fisherwick*, 1979, 52–7.
[3] K.M. Kenyon, 'Excavations at the Wrekin, Shropshire', *Archaeol. J.*, **99**, 1942, 99–109.
[4] S.C. Stanford, 'Native and Roman in the central Welsh borderland', in *Roman frontier studies 1969* (eds. E. Birley *et al*), 44–60.
[5] S.C. Stanford, 'Credenhill Camp, Herefordshire – an Iron Age hillfort capital', *Archaeol. J.*, **127**, 1970, 98–109.
[6] S.C. Stanford, *Croft Ambrey*, 1974, 122–30.
[7] S.C. Stanford, *The Malvern hillforts*, 1973, 24–9.
[8] G.C. Guilbert, 'Planned hillfort interiors', *Proc. Prehist Soc.*, **41**, 1975, 204, fig.1.

WHITLEY CHAPEL AND WEIR MEADOW – A ROMANO-BRITISH SITE NEAR SHREWSBURY

By GEOFFREY TOMS

A report dated 17 February 1893[1] gives the first published information of an undoubted Roman building in the field known as 'Chapel Field' at Whitley immediately south of the Rea Brook. Excavations undertaken by 'W.P.' at that time on the 'chapel' established the foundations of a Roman building 38ft (11.6m.) long by 31ft (9.4 m.) wide. The writer described building material of red sandstone and brick tiles of Roman type together with stone roof tiles and 'mortar'. There was little evidence for the interior of the building except for at the east end 'several layers of charcoal in a horizontal position . . .' A second note dated 14 April 1893,[2] this time by 'Cantab.', alias G.E. Fox, F.S.A., gives the orientation of the building as north-east to south-west with a longer side of 34½ft (10.5 m.).

Both writers discuss the tradition of the building being a medieval chapel in view of the name of the field; indeed it is not unique to find a ruined Roman building in the Middle Ages given an ecclesiastical origin.[3] Certainly by 1893 nothing remained of the building above ground, but field walking on the site by the writer and Mr W.E. Jenks confirmed without doubt the Roman date of the building. In September 1976 this was exactly located at SJ 457096 and appeared to be the sole masonry building in Chapel Field. In an area about 20 m. square there was an intense concentration of sandstone blocks, Roman tile and stone roof-slabs (but no mortar) on the surface. It was possible to identify this spread as being on a slight platform.

The field immediately to the east of Chapel Field attracted attention in the summer of 1976, when the northern part was ploughed for the first time in living memory. In an indenture of 1624[4] it appears to be referred to as 'The Burned Ground'; after the late 18th century construction of a weir across the Rea Brook it changed its name to Weir Meadow. The field slopes sharply down from the plateau on which Whitley Grange is situated and its northern half becomes a flat river terrace.

Two known Roman buildings lie west of Whitley at Lea Cross[5] and Cruckton,[6] respectively 4 and 3 km. distant. To the north of the Rea Brook on high ground a Roman road from Wroxeter to Westbury has been observed from the air running beneath Lower Edgebold Farm[7] and the course of the straight track from Cruckton to Meole Brace, known as 'Thieves' Lane', may also be of Roman origin[8] (fig.1). Cropmarks of enclosures and farmsteads, of probable Iron Age or Roman date, have been observed from the air at Upper Edgebold,[9] Lower Edgebold,[10] Day House[11] and Lythwood Hall.[12]

The removal of the turf cover of Weir Meadow after ploughing in May 1976 revealed at SJ 458097 a marked spread of jet-black soil in which there was considerable clinker: around the apparent edges of this black area large numbers of worked sandstone blocks and cobbles mixed with fragments of Roman tiles and pottery lay on the ploughed surface in markedly straight lines, giving the impression of walls of buildings and metalled tracks. The area covered by this spread was approximately 60 m. by 25 m., and it

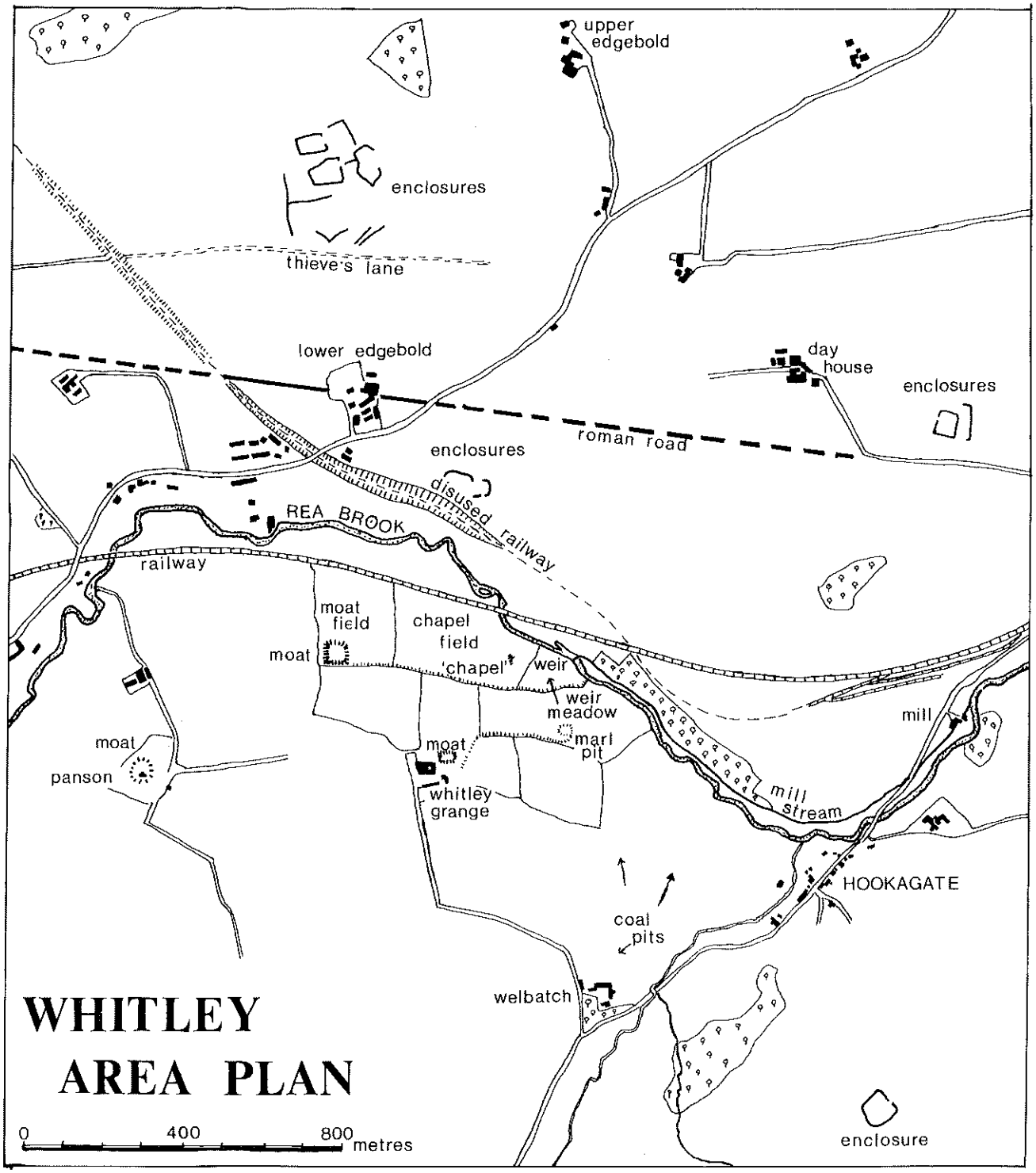


FIG. 1

seemed reasonable to assume that these features represented adjacent buildings of a complex associated with 'Whitley Chapel', possibly followed by later industrial activity. There were also two other subsidiary areas of black soil. It was therefore decided to evaluate the site by trial excavations and a survey on behalf of the Shropshire Archaeological Society.

Three areas were selected for excavation on the evidence of surface material (fig. 2).

Area 1 and 2, 25 m. by 10 m. in extent, produced no other feature than field drains probably of the early 19th century. Two drains in approximately straight courses had been filled with cobbles and two fragments of 18th century brick to a depth of 1 m. and were clearly designed to carry off surface water at the foot of the meadow; running along the contour of the foot of the hill was another remarkably shallow

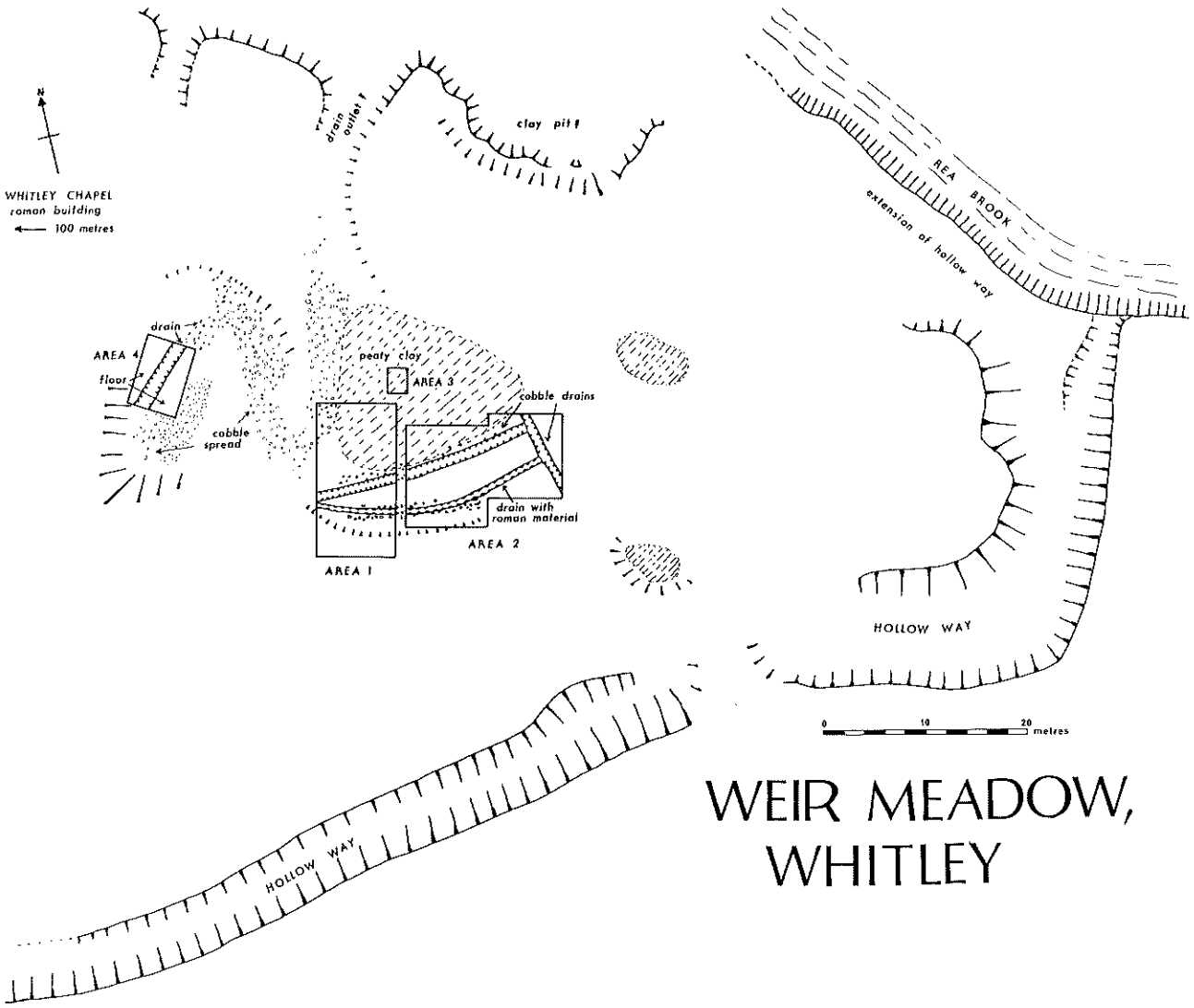


FIG. 2

drain (40 cm. deep and 40 cm. wide), whose fill was almost entirely of broken sandstone masonry and Roman tile. However, two 18th century bricks and a junction of this drain with the rest of the system demonstrated its late structure. A few sherds of late Roman pottery were found scattered on the surface, but other finds were not earlier than the 18th century.

Area 3, the dense black soil immediately to the north of Areas 1 and 2, proved the failure of the drainage system;[13] this was a peaty-clay deposit which had accumulated in a waterlogged state beside the drains. A modern pipe drain backfilled with clinker was inserted in this.

Area 4, which lay 18 m. west of Area 1, was tested by a trench 7 m. long by 5 m. wide with more promising results. Forty cm. below the surface was a laid floor of small cobbles, pebbles and fragments of limestone and tile with 94 sherds of late Roman pottery in the build-up and its surface. The sherds were either of Severn Valley Ware or a soft red ware of crude fabric. The unweathered floor, perhaps of a covered yard or a dwelling, spread over the whole area of the trench and there were thin patches of clay overlying its surface. Another field drain was cut through this floor, filled with Roman masonry. Surface finds included 22 sherds of similar pottery and a pipe bowl of *c.*1660–80.[14]

This floor suggests a late Roman building or yard ancillary to 'Whitley Chapel' and it would be unusual for a Roman building in a rural setting to stand in isolation. The filling of two of the drains with large quantities of Roman building material implies that this material was visible and ready to hand at a time when it could be supplemented with 18th century brick. It would seem likely from the available evidence that this came from 'Whitley Chapel', and that this building therefore was still partly standing above ground as late as the early 19th century; even after robbing its site was remembered and at the time of excavation in 1893 the foundations were intact.

Acknowledgements Thanks are due to the land owner, Mr G.T. Davies, for his permission to excavate and many other forms of cooperation; to Dr I.C.G. Burrow for a survey of the site; and to Mr J.E. Andrews, Mr C.R. Baily, Dr A.W.J. Houghton, Mr W.E. Jenks, Mr P. McLoughlin, Mrs J.M. Miller, Mr R. Oulton, Mr C.J. Toms, Mr E.J. Wells and Mr J.H. White for their work on the site.

The finds and field drawings are deposited in Rowley's House Museum, Shrewsbury. The Primary Record Numbers of the sites in the Shropshire Sites and Monuments Record are SA 6 (Whitley Chapel) and SA 352 (Whitley Weir Meadow).

[1] *Shropshire Notes and Queries*, 21 April 1893.

[2] *Ibid.*, 28 April 1893. Further correspondence appears in April to June 1913.

[3] For example, the Roman building at Stow, near Knighton, is in 'Church Field', some way distant from the probably pre-Conquest village and church. *T.S.A.S.*, 4th ser., x, 1925, misc.iii, iv–vi.

[4] Discharge certificate *re* lands at Whitley in possession of Shropshire Record Office: S.R.O.49/474. I am grateful to Mrs M.T. Halford for drawing my attention to this and other documentary material.

[5] *Shropshire News Letter*, **40**, June 1971, 7–10. SJ 417085.

[6] *J. Roman Stud.*, **xli**, 1951, 130, from 'Roman Britain in 1950', information from Miss E. Sladdin. SJ 432102.

[7] Discovery by Mr W.E. Jenks. *Shropshire News Letter*, **42**, May 1972, 15. Identified on the ground at SJ 465123: *Shropshire News Sheet*, **17**, 1983, 4.

[8] I.D. Margary, *Roman roads in Britain*, **ii**, 1957, 75 and *V.C.H. Salop*, **i**, 1908, 271–2.

[9] Discovery by Mr W.E. Jenks. SJ 453107.

[10] Discovery by Mr A. Baker: photograph in National Monuments Record. SJ 454101.

[11] Discovery by Mr A. Baker: photograph in National Monuments Record. SJ 470105.

[12] Site excavated by Mr W.E. Jenks. *Shropshire News Letter*, **41**, September 1971, 9–11.

[13] An early 19th century date is given to these drains on the corroboration of Mr G.T. Davies that, in comparison with other known drains of later date on his farm, these are of a distinctly crude and primitive construction.

[14] Stamped with gauntlet flanked by the letters 'F' and 'B', *c.f.* A. Oswald, 'Clay pipes for the archaeologist', *Brit. Archaeol. Rep.*, **14**, 1975, plate iii no. 7. I am grateful to Mr J.E. Andrews for this identification.

THE ENIGMATIC NORMAN CHANCEL OF THE CHURCH OF ST JAMES, STIRCHLEY

By BOB MEESON

The Church of St James, Stirchley, has a Norman chancel, a brick nave and west tower of *c.*1740, and a brick north aisle of 1838.[1] The apparent simplicity of this sequence disguises an extremely complex structural development which could only be fully elucidated by careful excavation. The present floors of both nave and chancel are raised above the earlier levels, and with the exception of the cellared north aisle, there is no evidence to suggest that the medieval floors have been substantially disturbed. Hence it is almost certain that this unassuming little church has very high archaeological potential. There are remnants of medieval masonry hidden behind the Georgian brickwork in the nave,[2] but these are unlikely to belong to the first phase of building since the character of the stonework is not Norman and there was clearly a nave for at least part of the Norman period. It is the superficially simple chancel which, on detailed analysis, presents contradictory evidence of possible structural sequences. This paper is intended to offer a detailed architectural description of the Norman chancel masonry and a short discussion of the conflicting information.

Cranage suggested a date for the chancel arch 'probably not before 1160' and believed it to be the same date as the chancel.[3] In 1979 the redundant church was restored by Telford Development Corporation. When post-medieval plaster was stripped from the west side of the chancel west wall it was found that the small chancel arch was set into the blocking of a larger, earlier aperture (fig. 1). This discovery led to a detailed inspection of the masonry since it became clear that there are at least two phases of Norman work in a chancel which was previously thought to be of one build.

The chancel is relatively small. The internal dimensions are 5.87m. (19ft 3in.) long x 5.22m. (17ft 1½in.) wide (fig. 2). There is an 0.23m. (9in.) step up to the eastern third of the chancel and the altar is further slightly raised.

The north wall is apparently of one build and relatively undisturbed, though the internal elevation is partly obscured by plaster. Externally (fig. 3) it can be seen that the wall is built of roughly squared but neatly coursed sandstone blocks of Norman character. Two original, small, round-headed windows with internally splayed reveals pierce the wall. An incised radiate pattern is chiselled into the lintel of the western window. Putlog holes for the scaffolding are visible at three levels. A slight gap in the masonry near the east end is the result of subsidence and does not represent the abutment of two phases of masonry. The wall stands on a neatly chamfered plinth.

The south wall (fig. 3) is Norman to its full height, with the possible exception of the top course, but it has been disturbed more than the north wall. At the west end is the blocking of what may at some stage have been an external door into the chancel. The western of the two windows is of Norman character but the masonry around the window is re-set. It is likely that there was a second Norman window near the east end of the south wall. This has been replaced by a window of two lights with quatrefoil head, early

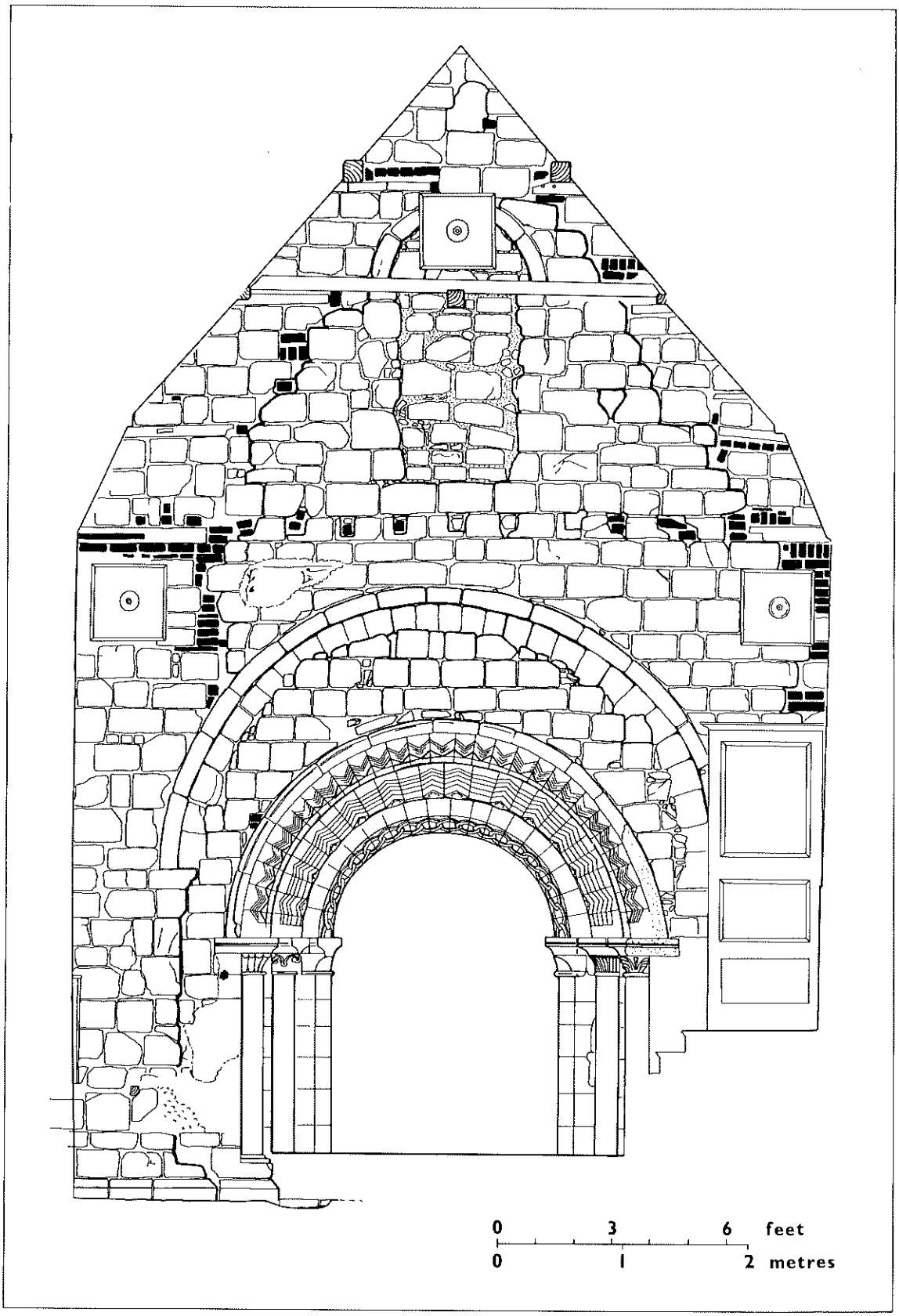


FIG. 1 THE WEST ELEVATION OF THE CHANCEL WEST WALL

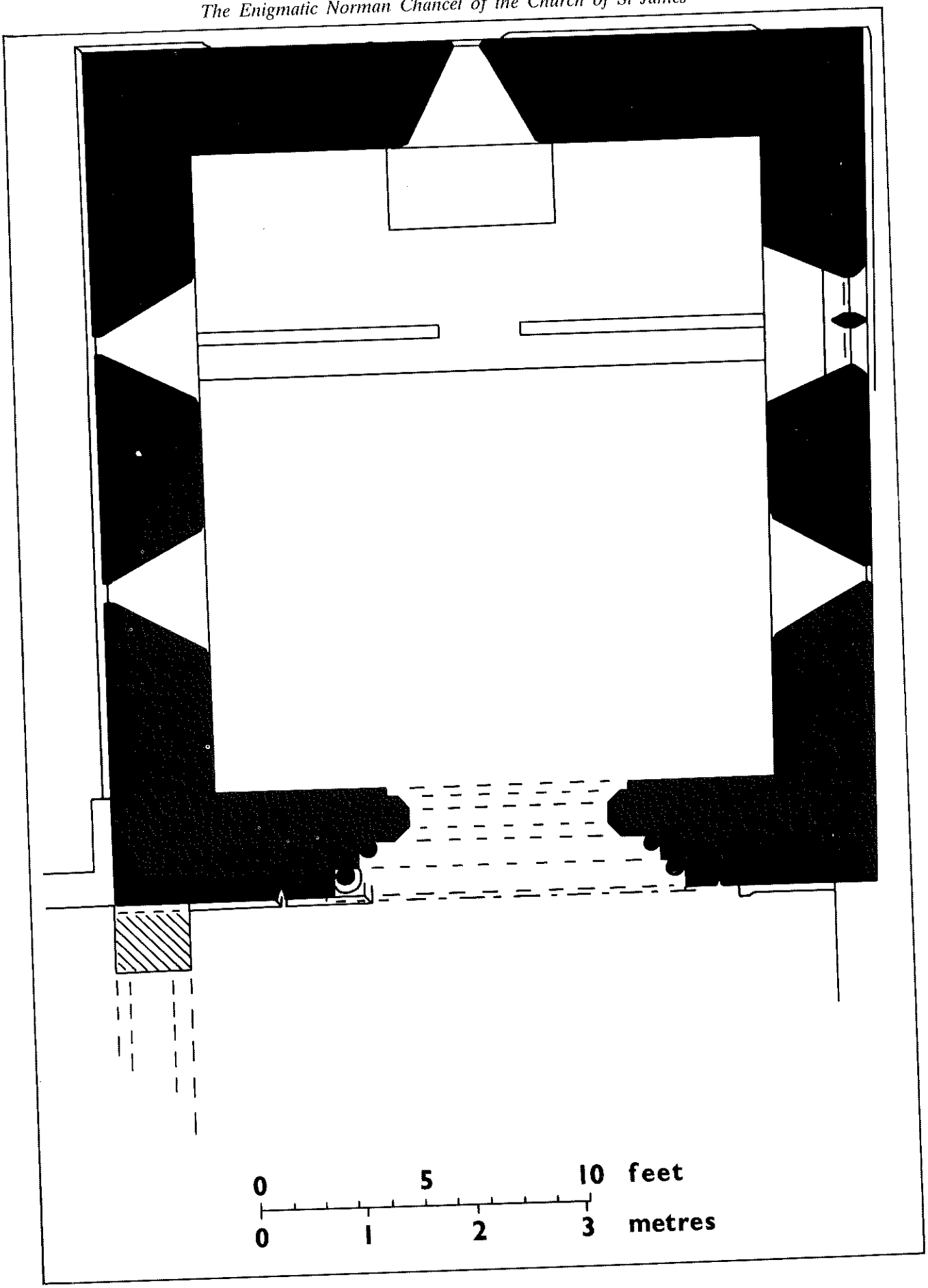


FIG. 2 PLAN OF THE NORMAN CHANCEL: THE EAST END IS AT THE TOP OF THE DRAWING

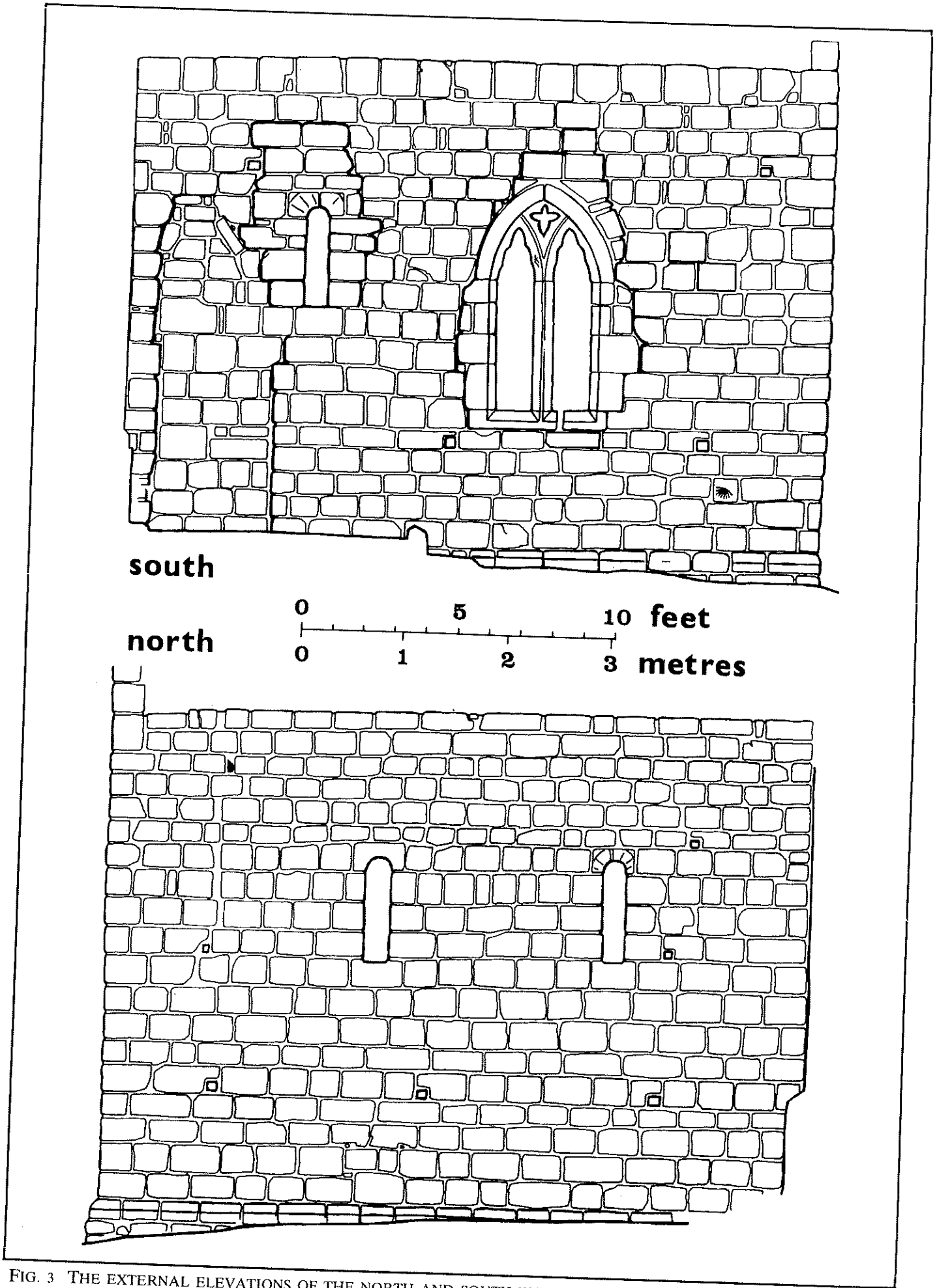


FIG. 3 THE EXTERNAL ELEVATIONS OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH WALLS OF THE CHANCEL

Decorated in character, not very tidily inserted. Putlog holes have been observed at only two levels on the south side. There is a badly worn scratch-sundial on the third course above the chamfered plinth near the east end.

The east wall (fig. 4) is Norman almost to the full height of the gable. The upper of the two window openings is probably original. The lower window is set into the blocking of an earlier, larger arch, but it is possible that neither the window nor the arch is Norman. Internally (fig. 5) the inserted masonry can be distinguished from the Norman work. Internally again, the arch of what may have been a Norman window is visible above the blocking masonry. The internal arch is both higher and narrower than the large external arch. It is possible that the Norman window was replaced by a post-medieval enlarged opening with straight reveals to improve the lighting of the chancel. In an attempt to restore the original appearance a window of Norman style was re-inserted, with splayed and chamfered reveals. Internally, the head of the new window is too low in relation to the earlier arch: the original Norman window may have been taller, or set higher in the wall.

There are putlog holes at five levels on the outer face of the east wall (fig. 4). Some stones in the lower courses of the wall may be re-set. Again, the wall stands on a chamfered plinth.

Although alterations have clearly taken place, most of the external masonry appears to represent a neatly proportioned Norman chancel with one main phase of construction. The problems of interpretation begin with a close analysis of the west wall. The small chancel arch of three orders appears too squat because the floors have been raised (fig. 1). The inner order comprises chamfered responds supporting cusped cushion capitals with square hollow-chamfered abaci: the north capital has been slightly mutilated. A studded chain ornament rises directly from the abacus on the chamfered west face of the arch. The middle order is more complex. Plain round shafts support, on the north a capital with a simple foliate design, and on the south a multi-fluted capital. Again the north abacus has been slightly cut back. On both the face and the archivolt of the arch three plain rolls zig-zag on alternate stones. There are tiny nail-head studs between each roll. A rosette is incorporated at the arris of alternate stones. A small trench cut through the post-medieval raised floor on the north side of the arch revealed two small plain rolls at the base of the outer shaft on the north side. The outer order has plain round shafts: the north capital is scalloped, but that to the south is foliate. The arch has chevron decoration on both the face and the archivolt, pointing to a bowtell at the arris. All the abaci have hollow chamfers and a single quirk. The abaci of the outer order extend to form imposts. There is a hood moulding with plain chamfer and quirk, and a leaf-shaped label stop. The size of the arch and the nature of the decoration point to a late Norman date for this work.

The late Norman arch is set into the blocking of an earlier, larger arch. If the latter was ever decorated it has all been cut away, so there is little evidence upon which to base a firm date. However it appears to belong to the same build as the bulk of the chancel, which is Norman rather than Anglo-Saxon. On the north side, at the foot of the respond to the earlier arch, is a chamfered plinth which extends across the west face of the wall, continuing north behind the end of the medieval and later nave north wall. This west chancel wall plinth is at the same level as the external plinth on the chancel north wall (fig. 3). Because the internal plinth has been observed extending behind the butt end of the medieval nave north wall it is almost certain that it connects with the external plinth on the north side of the chancel. This raises the possibility that the first Norman chancel might have been built in stone as an independent single-cell structure. A neatly chamfered plinth would not have returned across the west face of this wall if a stone nave had been intended at the outset. Contrary to this possibility, the earlier arch is much too big for a west door and was surely intended as a chancel arch at the outset.

Four courses above the top of the earlier chancel arch is another early aperture *c.*0.91m. (3ft) wide and ,2.13m. (7ft) high at the centre. It pierces the original chancel masonry and has a semi-circular head. Some of the masonry used to block this aperture was dressed with a chisel rather than a toothed hammer, so the balance of probability is that it was blocked after the Norman period.

Reused medieval masonry, later stones, bricks and timber have been employed at various times to patch up the chancel west wall. Flecked white lime mortar used for the major repair can be clearly distinguished from the pale brown lime mortar employed in the original masonry joints.

The west face of the chancel wall retains fragments of medieval painted plaster. One section of plaster extends across the abutment between the north respond of the large chancel arch and the blocking into which the small chancel arch is built, indicating that the smaller arch is not a post-medieval insertion.

The east wall of the chancel is reduced in thickness internally at eaves level (fig. 5). Although obscured by plaster, a number of stone-blocked holes can be seen at that level. There are corresponding holes at the same level on the east face of the west chancel wall. These indicate that the chancel has at some stage been floored or ceiled over.

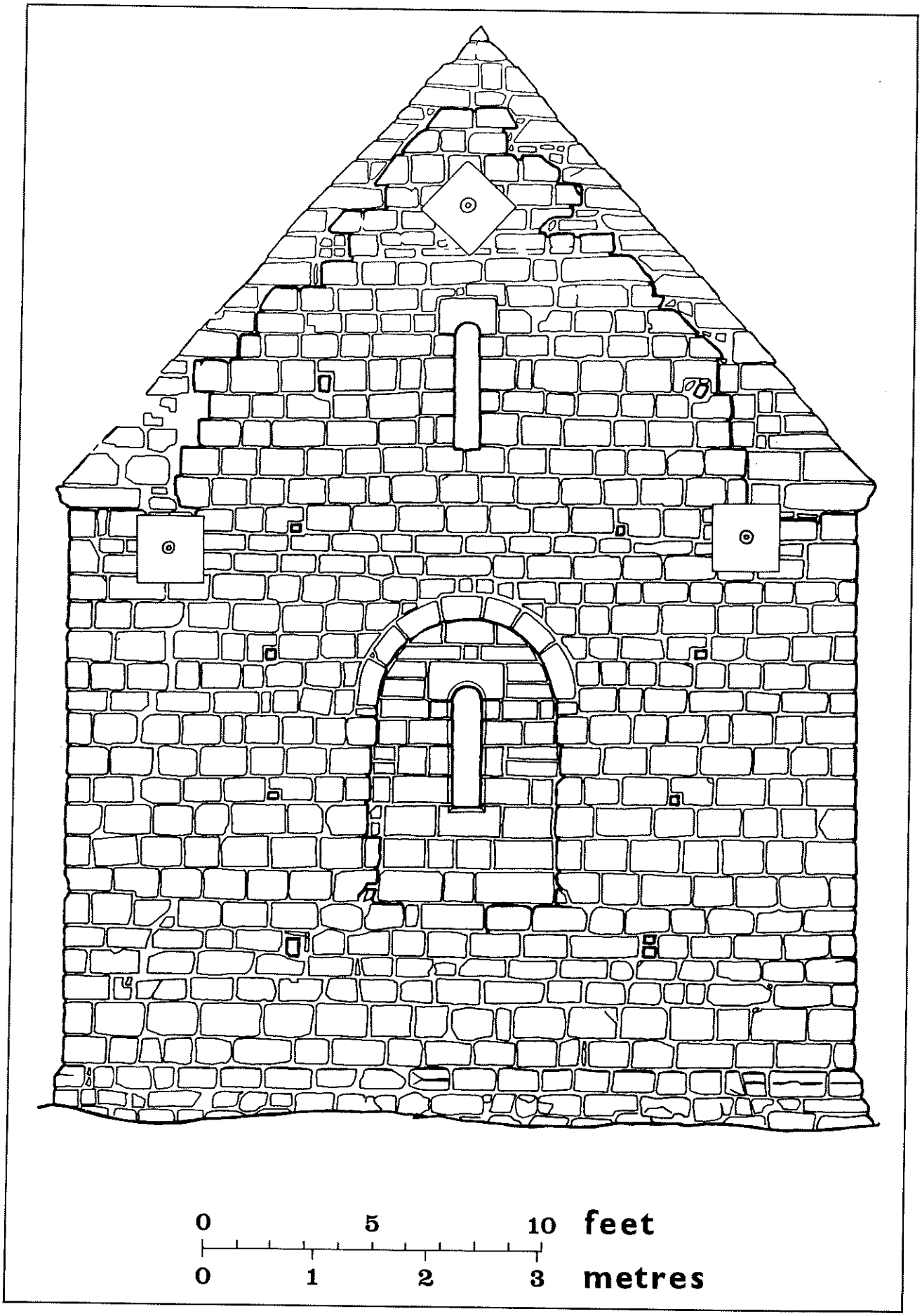


FIG. 4 THE EXTERNAL ELEVATION OF THE EAST WALL OF THE CHANCEL

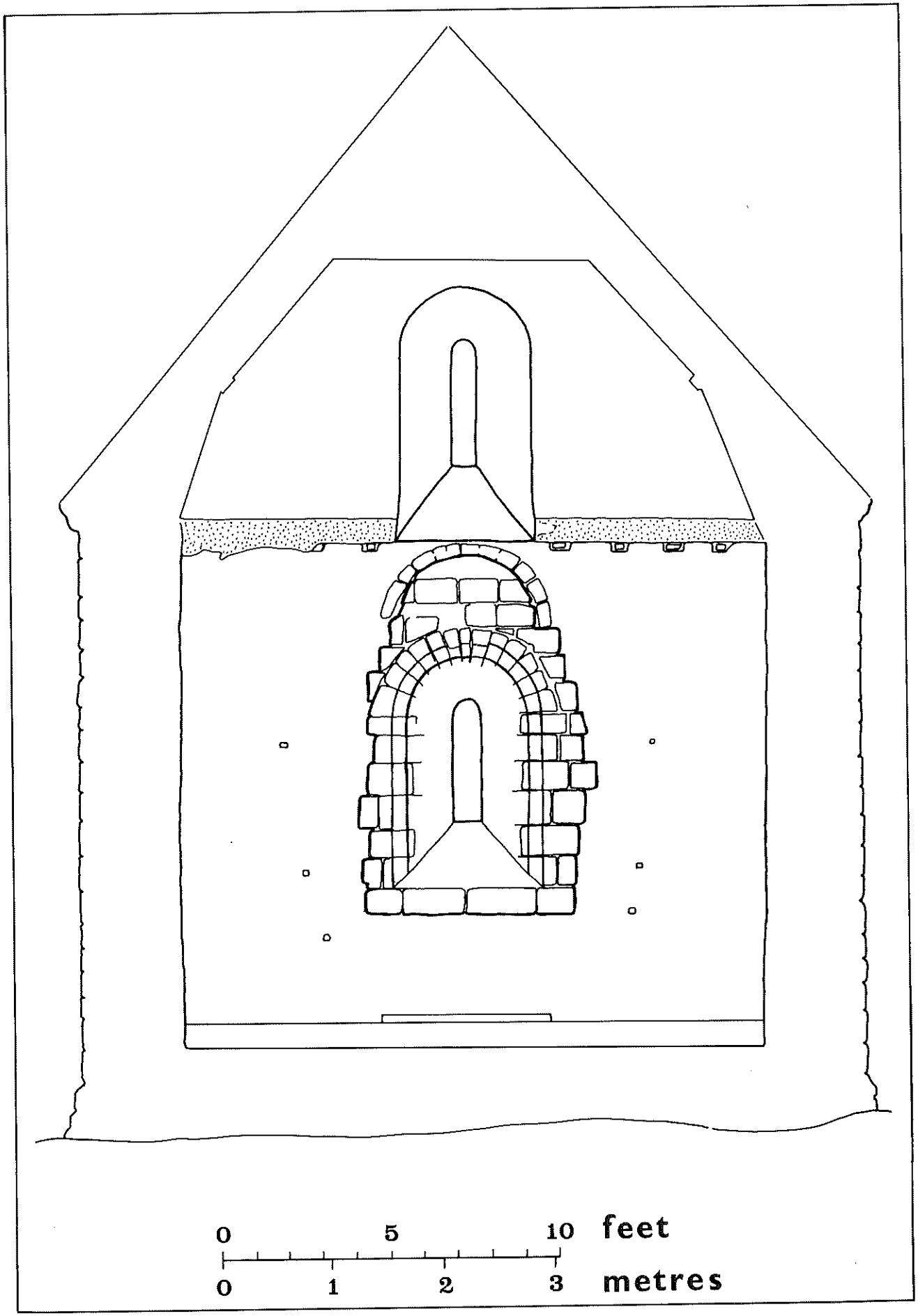


FIG. 5 SIMPLIFIED INTERNAL ELEVATION OF THE EAST WALL OF THE CHANCEL

A detailed consideration of the architectural characteristics described above highlights the enigmatic nature of the chancel. The aperture over the chancel arches is one of a number of problems. If it was a window intended to light what is now the chancel, and the plinth at the foot of the wall below was a return from the chancel north wall plinth, this might suggest that the chancel was first intended as a single cell structure, but the size of the earliest surviving west arch militates against such a suggestion. The large arch is much too big for a door. The possibility that the upper aperture was a door cannot be ruled out at present, particularly in view of the evidence of a former first floor or ceiling within the chancel. If the Norman chancel contained no first floor the blocked beam slots may indicate a post-medieval ceiling since removed, and the upper aperture may be a Norman window. However, if it was intended as a window, why is it so much larger than the surviving first-phase windows elsewhere in the chancel?

It is not clear where the small chancel arch fits into the overall pattern of development. It might have been inserted as a separate phase of building, or it could have been part of a general programme of alterations or additions. If a two-cell church was at some stage reduced to a single cell, a portal arch or door surround might conceivably be re-sited to block a former chancel arch at the new west end, as at Heythrop Church, Oxfordshire.[4] However no evidence has been found to suggest that the inserted arch at Stirchley was first intended for a doorway and such a sequence would still leave the chancel west plinth unexplained.

If the very large aperture is a first-stone-phase chancel arch the church must have been conceived as a two-cell unit with a nave at the time when the arch was built, but two factors would then require explanation. Why is there an internal window or door above the earlier of the two chancel arches, and why does the external chamfered plinth apparently return across the face of the west wall? One possible explanation is that all or part of the original church was timber-framed. If this was so, a variety of sequences can be suggested. The timber chancel of a two-cell timber-framed church might have been dismantled and replaced by a new stone chancel. It is equally possible that a Norman stone chancel was erected as an independent structure before a timber-framed nave was abutted to it. Alternatively, a stone chancel was erected as an independent structure before a contiguous stone nave was built. Other sequences are possible in addition to the variety of possibilities outlined above.

Though detailed, the architectural description and the short discussion do not comprise a fully exhaustive account of the chancel, or of the variety of interpretations which can be suggested from the conflicting evidence. The account highlights some of the complicated problems of interpretation in a superficially simple building which proves, upon detailed analysis, to be a highly complex church. Despite the survival of two chancel arches, one within the other, the most remarkable feature in the chancel wall is the possible first-floor door.

Conserved for the future in the new town of Telford is a tiny Norman church, architecturally tantalizing, and archaeologically of extremely high potential.

Acknowledgements

The generous support for the recording project by Telford Development Corporation is sincerely acknowledged and particular thanks are extended to Sula Rayska for her enthusiastic liaison and help in many ways. Simon Ward and Richard Sulima assisted with the site survey. George Baugh, Richard Morris and Lawrence Butler kindly read the penultimate typescript and suggested improvements, though I would not wish them to be held responsible for any remaining errors in the text. Angus Winchester is thanked for allowing access to the results of his documentary research upon Stirchley for the Victoria County History prior to publication.

[1] A. Winchester, personal communication.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] D.H.S. Cranage, *An architectural account of the churches of Shropshire,* **iii**, 1905, 621.
[4] D. Kahn, 'The Romanesque sculpture of the Church of St Mary at Halford, Warwickshire', *J. Brit. Archaeol. Ass.*, **133**, 1980, 69n. and plate xix b.
The Primary Record Number of St James Church in the Shropshire Sites and Monuments Record is SA 694.

TWO 13TH CENTURY STEELYARD WEIGHTS FROM SHROPSHIRE

By Y.J.E. STAELENS, R. BROWNSWORD and E.E.H. PITT

The recent discovery of a steelyard weight in Much Wenlock Museum provides an opportunity to describe not only that weight but another, discovered sometime before 1938, in Oswestry. The latter is in the collection of the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, and the authors are grateful for the permission of the museum to publish it. These are the only known examples from Shropshire.

The steelyard is an unequal-armed balance. A hook, or hooks, hung from the shorter arm from which goods to be weighed were suspended and the opposing long arm was marked with a graduated scale. A weight was suspended from the long arm. This could be moved along it until a balance was achieved with the goods at the opposite end. The scale could then be read, revealing the weight of the merchandise.

Medieval steelyard weights are approximately spherical in shape with a triangular extension at the top, pierced for suspension from the steelyard. They were made of a relatively thin casing of copper alloy (latten) produced by the *cire perdue* process, and filled with lead. An important feature of the casings is their decoration of arms, which have been the means of dating the weights to the latter part of the 13th century.

Drury, in his pioneering study of steelyard weights in 1926,[1] lists those known to him at the time, giving details of their arms and other decoration, describing the method of manufacture and discussing the arms and their significance. Drury[2-5] and Grove[6] supplemented the original study as other weights came to light. More recent accounts in a variety of publications have increased the number known to about 80. Drury appreciated at an early stage that not all the weights were finely produced examples of the metal-workers art and introduced a broad classification on the basis of accuracy of reproduction of the details of the arms. The two Shropshire weights are examples of his class I with clearly distinguishable details.

Much Wenlock Weight (fig. 1)

Description

This exhibits the usual globular shape, although somewhat flattened at the base. There is a triangular suspension loop perforated with a round hole. The weight comprises a solid lead core with a latten casing embossed with three shields of arms:

1 Double headed eagle displayed (Hansa)
2 Three leopards (England)
3 Lion rampant (Poitou)

Shields 1 (Hansa) and 3 (Poitou) are close together and opposite 2 (England). Above, untidily executed, is a wide border of incised triangles, points downwards, with hatched infill of three or four lines. Two horizontal lines border the triangles, the lower line touching the top edges of the shields.

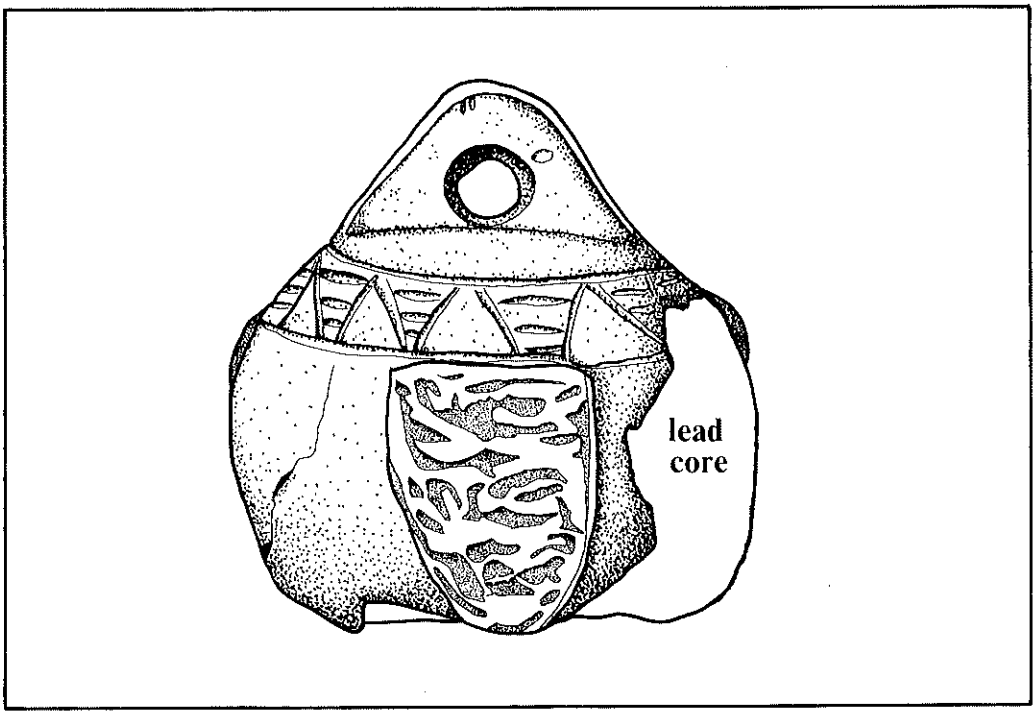


FIG. 1 MUCH WENLOCK STEELYARD WEIGHT (1:1)

Dimensions
Maximum height: 70 mm.
Height of body to loop hole: 51 mm.
Greatest circumference: 235 mm.
Average thickness of latten: *c.* 1.5 mm.
Present weight: 1578.8 gm. (3 lb. 5 oz.)

Condition
The weight is incomplete, with approximately one third of the latten casing missing; this completely exposes the base of the lead core. Cracks in the casing run upwards between shields 1 (Hansa) and 2 (England), and between 2 (England) and 3 (Poitou). Part of shield and a large portion of casing between shields 1 and 3 are missing.

Discussion
It is unfortunate that this artefact is wholly unprovenanced and undocumented. However, its presence in Much Wenlock Museum within a local collection makes it tempting to postulate that it originated from the town. Certainly it is important evidence for a commercial centre of later 13th century date in the locality and Much Wenlock is the obvious candidate. Although the town was not granted borough status until 1468, it was a local market centre throughout the medieval period, and a lease of 1256 witnessed by Thomas the Merchant attests the town's mercantile role at this time.[7]

Oswestry Weight (fig. 2)

Description
This weight is somewhat smaller than that from Much Wenlock and is of the usual globular shape. The suspension loop is U-shaped and is perforated with a round hole. The weight has been made in the usual manner with a latten casing enclosing a lead core. Three shields of arms are embossed in relief, and match those on the Much Wenlock example, although they are differently arranged:
1 Double headed eagle displayed (Hansa)
2 Lion rampant (Poitou)
3 Three leopards (England)
Shields 1 (Hansa) and 2 (Poitou) are close together and oppose the arms of England (3), as on the Much Wenlock weight. Above the shields is the same border of hatched triangles, each infilled with two lines.

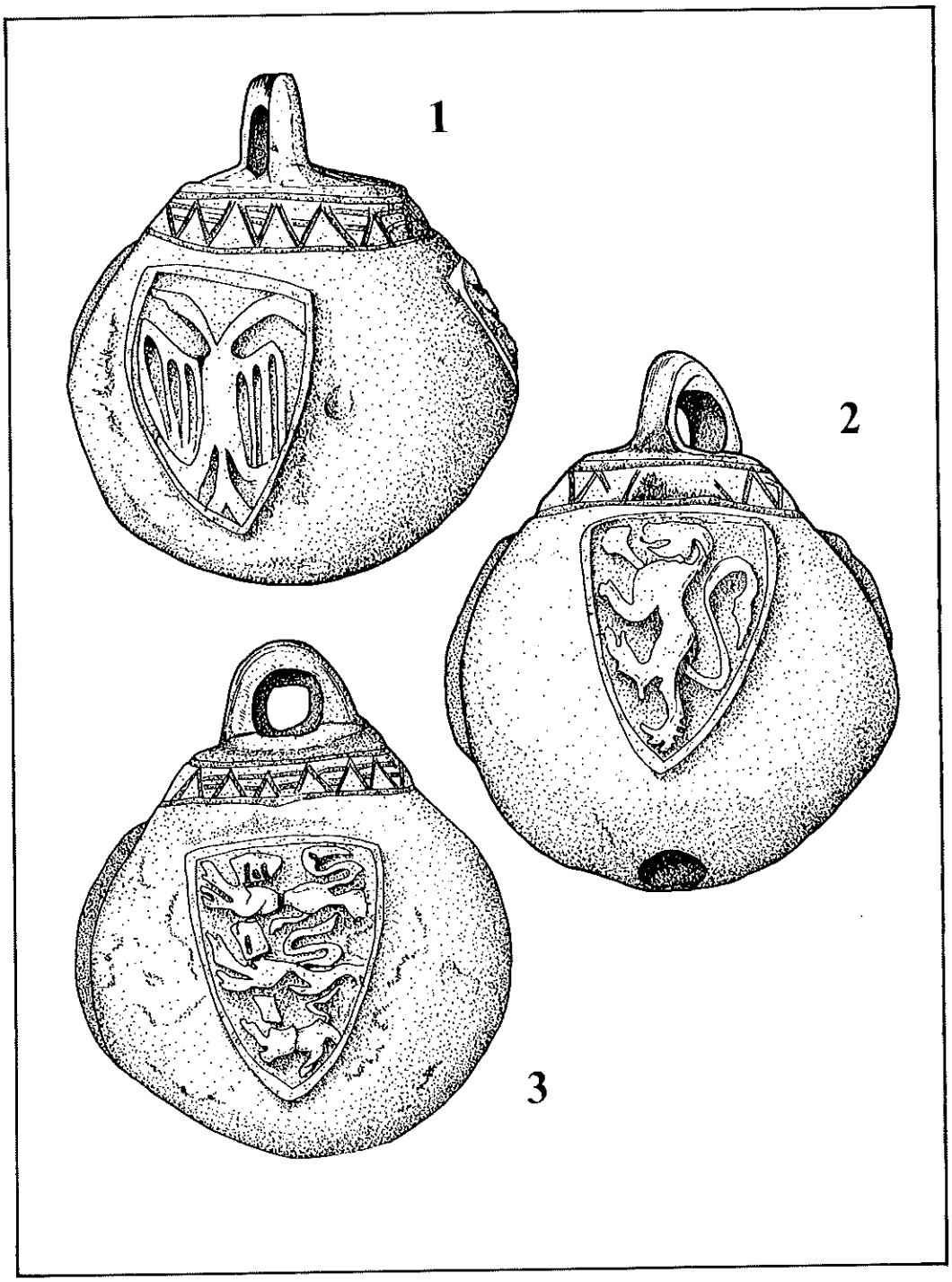


FIG. 2 OSWESTRY STEELYARD WEIGHT (1:1)

This border is narrower and more delicately executed than on the Much Wenlock weight, and is totally separate from the shields.

Dimensions
Maximum height: 72 mm.
Height of body to loop hole: 58 mm.
Greatest circumference: 200 mm.
Average thickness of latten: *c.* 1.0 mm.
Present weight: 1241.1 gm. (2 1b. 7 oz.)

Condition

The Oswestry weight is in good condition and is complete, apart from a basal perforation in the latten shell (fig. 2.2). It was through this hole that the molten lead was poured to fill the shell. The artefact exhibits patchy green patination.

Discussion

Found in the market place at Oswestry, this weight was presented on loan to the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, by Lord Harlech in 1938 (accession number 38/375). Exact details of the discovery are unrecorded, but an original label attached to the weight attests its provenance, but not the date or nature of its discovery. Oswestry was a fortified medieval town founded in the late 12th century by William Fitzalan. A borough charter granted in 1228 mentions a market, and that Oswestry was an important commercial centre is indicated by the fact that at least six major roads converge on the town.

Metallurgical Analysis

The two weights, together with 34 others, have been sampled for analysis of the copper alloy used in their manufacture as part of a survey of medieval alloys at Lanchester Polytechnic, Coventry. Alloy compositions of the outer casings are divisible into two groups. One group contains alloys with zinc in the range of 10–20% and tin and lead in smaller amounts (up to 4% and 7% respectively) and should be referred to as 'latten'. The other group has a wider variety of compositions (in one case in excess of 30% lead) but negligible amounts of zinc and should therefore be referred to as 'leaded bronzes'. The majority of weights analysed are in the latter category, but the Shropshire examples, also those from Montgomery,[8] Coventry, Clipstone in Northamptonshire,[1] Cambridge[1] and Reading,[6] are of latten. It is interesting that all these latten weights share the same arms, with the addition of the arms of Cornwall in the case of weights with four escutcheons. They also share the same decorated band around the top of the weights. In contrast, the leaded bronze weights carry a variety of arms and decoration, usually less well executed.

Origin and Distribution

In the light of these distinctions of style, material and sophistication of workmanship, it seems likely that the better quality latten weights were official issues. These date from the second half of the 13th century and were probably manufactured and distributed under the control of Richard, Earl of Cornwall. A detailed argument for this attribution has been made by Drury[1], modified later only to the extent of suggesting that the double-headed eagle displayed may relate to the Hansa traders rather than the Holy Roman Empire as Drury originally proposed.

It is suggested that the leaded bronze weights, being of inferior composition, widely varying standard of workmanship, and so debased versions of the latten weights, are probably later copies from the later 13th and early 14th centuries. The use of such weights and the steelyard as standards was prohibited in 1350.[9]

Research is continuing at Lanchester Polytechnic on medieval steelyard and other weights. It is anticipated that further analytical results may confirm the suggested relationship of the leaded bronze types.

[1] G.D. Drury, 'Thirteenth century steelyard weights', *Proc, Dorset Natur. Hist. Antiq. Fld. Club,* **xlvii**, 1926, 1–24.
[2] G.D. Drury, 'A thirteenth century steelyard weight', *Proc. Dorset Natur. Hist. Antiq. Fld. Club,* **xlviii**, 1927, 68–9.
[3] G.D. Drury, Notes in *Proc. Dorset Natur. Hist. Archaeol. Soc.,* **lii**, 1930, xlix–li.
[4] G.D. Drury, 'A further series of thirteenth century steelyard weights', *Proc. Dorset Natur. Hist. Archaeol. Soc.,* **lviii**, 1936, 35–42.
[5] G.D. Drury, 'A further series of four thirteenth century steelyard weights', *Proc. Dorset Natur. Hist. Archaeol. Soc.,* **lxiv**, 1942, 21–4.
[6] L.R.A. Grove, 'Three additional thirteenth century steelyard weights', *Proc. Dorset Natur. Hist. Archaeol. Soc.,* **lxiii**, 1936, 30–43.
[7] W.F. Mumford, *Wenlock in the Middle Ages*, 1977, 111.
[8] J.D.K. Lloyd, 'A medieval steelyard weight from Montgomery Castle', *Archaeol. Cambrensis,* **xxi**, 1972, 70–3.
[9] 25 Ed. III *c* 9.

THE SEVERN NAVIGATION AT DOWLES

By BARRIE TRINDER

The navigation of the Upper Severn has always posed problems for historians. Upstream from Stourport the Severn has in modern times been a 'free' river, with no navigational authority to produce the accumulations of bureaucratic paper on which historians of canals and railways feed so avidly. The only 'authorities' of any kind were the trustees of the towpaths between Bewdley and Coalbrookdale and between the latter and Shrewsbury, but they did not take up their powers until the navigation was on the verge of decline, and their detailed records are not available for study. Understanding of the history of the river has been based on a limited range of 'literary' sources : the much-quoted account by George Perry published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1758, the various writings of the 19th century historian John Randall, and occasional references in newspapers.[1] It is likely that the next five years will see revolutionary changes in our understanding of the Severn barge traffic. A computer-based project at Wolverhampton Polytechnic is intended to analyse the evidence concerning the Upper Severn in the Gloucester Port Books. It is already clear that this study will provide a remarkably detailed picture of trade on the river, posing questions about many aspects of social and economic life in the West Midlands in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Within the next year it is likely that an analysis of the probate inventories of the parishes of Madeley, Broseley, Benthall and Little Wenlock will be published, which will provide important information about the largest barge-owning community on the river.[2] A forthcoming history of Bridgnorth in the 17th and 18th centuries will provide a vivid picture of another important riverside community. Each of these works is the product of an adult education class, and a third class, working on the port of Bewdley, should also produce important new evidence about the river trade in due course. The records of the Coalbrookdale Company and most Shropshire newspapers have now been thoroughly combed for references to barge traffic, and the findings systematically recorded. Transcription of references to bargeowners in census enumerators' returns continues slowly.[3] It should thus be possible within five years to gain a far more thorough understanding of the history of the Severn Navigation than has previously been possible.

This article is intended to throw some light upon the role in the barge traffic of the smaller riverside settlements, a problem which is unlikely to be dealt with in any of the studies mentioned above. The question is defined in George Perry's census of barges and owners taken in 1756.[4] The information which the census provides about the balance between different communities seems to be true for much of the 18th century, although it may have been rather different before 1700, and it certainly changed as the river faced canal competition in the 19th century. Perry shows that there were 313 barges owned by 182 owners at work on the Severn at Bewdley and places upstream. Of these, 6% of both owners and barges were to be found in Shrewsbury, 46% of owners and 44% of barges in the Severn Gorge, 30% of owners and 28% of barges in Bridgnorth, and 10% of owners and 15% of barges in Bewdley. There remained fifteen

owners and 21 barges in the smaller settlements, four of each at Pool Quay, three owners and seven barges at Cound, and eight owners and ten barges between Bridgnorth and Bewdley. Perry listed no owners between Broseley and Bridgnorth, although boats certainly operated from the Roving in Barrow parish. The present article is concerned with Dowles, one of the smallest riverside parishes, consisting of just over 1000 acres on the edge of Bewdley. Dowles was part of Shropshire until 1895. Its population in 1801 was only 57,[5] but the community was probably larger in the late 17th century since 25 households were recorded in the Hearth Tax of 1672. Several probate inventories for the period between 1666 and 1750 give some indication of the role of the parish in the river trade.[6] These are printed in the appendix.

William Wakeman, whose will was proved on 19 March 1666–7, was a Dowles ropemaker, who left goods and chattels to the value of £23 8*s*.2*d*., including ropeware worth four shillings. Like many craftsmen of the time he gained part of his living from farming, and had cattle and fodder worth £5 2*s*.4*d*. and implements of husbandry worth three shillings. His will shows that he had property in Belbroughton (Worcs.), occupied by Richard Parker, a nailer. The community at Dowles evidently included ancillary workers serving the river trade as well as the owners of vessels.

Francis ap Owen, whose will was proved on 20 February 1668–9, was described by his appraisers as a trowman, and his possessions were valued at £217. His appraisers listed 'one Trowe, one Barge & one Boat', showing, as do many other inventories of bargeowners, that contemporaries saw a real difference between a trow and a barge, the most likely distinction being that a trow was a vessel which could safely negotiate the lower, tidal sections of the Severn. The 'boat' was probably a small vessel of no more than two or three tons used for short distance traffic, similar to those depicted in many 18th century engravings of the river. For Owen, owning barges may have been a means of augmenting a living made from the rich timber resources of the Wyre Forest. His three vessels were valued at £100, exactly the same value as the total of his 'timber and Sawed Stuff' and his 'Wood and ffaggotts'. The former was obviously wood prepared for use by builders, cabinet makers or boatbuilders. The wood and faggots were possibly intended as fuel. Probate inventories show that faggots were the normal fuel used by bakers in this period, even in areas where coal was cheap.[7] Owen left five shillings each to his workmen, William Lowe and Henry Griffin, and, apart from various other small cash legacies, left the rest of estate, including land, houses, his trow and barge and his 'saw'd stuff, timber, wood and faggots' to his brother, Griffith ap Owen, who was probably the same Griffith ap Bowen recorded as having two hearths in 1672.

Edward Pearce (or Plearce), whose inventory was made in 1671, had possessions worth £70 14*s*.0*d*., of which £60 was money owing to him. He had dressed and undressed tow (short lengths of flax extracted from the longer strands by combing) worth fourteen shillings, as well as a piece of woollen cloth and some wool, which suggests that some spinning was done in his household, although no spinning wheel is mentioned on a fairly detailed inventory. The only indication of Pearce's source of income is the mention of fishing gears worth one pound, which might have included a boat. There was a fish weir at Dowles, but an almost contemporary valuation of the 'Materials for the Weare or fishing garth' at Little Shrawardine puts their value at only five shillings.[8]

Francis Preen, whose will was proved on 17 February 1692–3, was, like ap Owen, described by his appraisers as a trowman. His possessions were worth £140 18*s*.0*d*., of which £60 was reckoned as the value of his vessels. Like ap Owen, he had a trow, a barge and a boat. He also owned a beam, chains and weights, doubtless a kind of steelyard used for weighing, of the type shown in use on the riverside in an anonymous watercolour of the Iron Bridge.[9] Preen made part of his living from farming, although not on a large scale, for his crops of corn and hay were valued, even in October, as worth no more than £5, and he had just one cow and three pigs. His household furnishings were described in some detail in the inventory, although they were by no means remarkable. Preen left to his eldest daughter Joyce a bond of £30 due from Thomas and Edward Waldron, which had been assigned in trust for her until she reached the age of sixteen to his kinsmen Edward Bickerton and Francis Oakes the elder of Bridgnorth. The former was probably Edward Bickerton who died in 1715, leaving goods and chattels worth £189 6*s*.0*d*. He was described as a dyer on his will, and as a gent by the appraisers of his inventory. The latter was probably Francis Oakes, senior, a trowman who died in 1707 with possessions worth £192. The Oakes family had many branches and many of them included members involved with the river trade.[10] Preen also left to Joyce a feather bed, a bolster, a joined chest, a silver spoon and a 'bewgle purse', probably one made from glass beads. He left to his younger daughter Frances £10 when she should marry or reach the age of 21, a flock bed and bolster, a joined press cupboard, two 56lb. weights, a joined box marked with his initials, his holland shirt and the rest of his clothes, together with his passage boat, doubtless a ferry, at Dowles. The remainder of his estate went to his wife Mary.

The final inventory in this group is that of Edward Whittingham, not of Dowles but of Bewdley, which was appraised in November 1750. Whittingham made his living from several sources. He had a shop in

which he sold hops, cheese, butter, salt and bacon, as well as pottery. The reference to 'Some Broseley wares and other white and delf wares' confirms that, as recent archaeological investigations have suggested, fine quality white earthenware was being made in the Ironbridge Gorge in the mid 18th century.[11] Whittingham was concerned in the Severn Navigation and had a barge worth £17 at the quay in Bewdley. He was also a dealer in timber and had more than £12 worth of boards and planks on his premises in Bewdley. Some of this may have come from Dowles where he had 25 shillings worth of timber waiting at the 'Load' or wharf. This inventory, like that of ap Owen, demonstrates the importance of the trade in timber from the Wyre Forest.

These few documents do not provide a complete history of the Severn Navigation at Dowles. They do establish that Dowles was one of the Shropshire parishes where bargeowners were resident, that there were also living there ancillary workers like ropemakers serving the navigation, that fishing on the river was still an important activity in the late 17th century, and that trade in timber from the Wyre Forest was of considerable importance, necessitating the use of a specific 'load' in the parish. Directories suggest that bargeowners no longer lived at Dowles in the 19th century, but that the timber trade continued to be of considerable significance, three timber merchants being listed there in 1861.[12] Dowles was obviously of much less importance in the history of the Severn Navigation than Shrewsbury, the Ironbridge Gorge, Bridgnorth or Bewdley, but its role and that of other small riverside parishes should not be neglected as our understanding of the larger communities increases.

[1] For recent surveys of the navigation see Charles Hadfield. *The canals of the West Midlands*, 1966, 17–18, 53–5, 115–27 and 282–90; Barrie Trinder, *The Industrial Revolution in Shropshire*, 2nd edn, 1981, 61–70 and 154.

[2] Barrie Trinder and Jeff Cox, *Miners and mariners of the Severn Gorge*, (forthcoming).

[3] An index of bargemen compiled from these sources is kept at the Institute of Industrial Archaeology at the Ironbridge Gorge Museum.

[4] *Gentleman's Magazine*, **xxviii**, 1758, 227. 277-8.

[5] *V.C.H. Salop*, **ii**, 1973, 222; W. Watkins-Pitchford (ed.), *The Shropshire Hearth Tax roll of 1672*, 1949, 230.

[6] These wills and inventories are in the Herefordshire Record Office. Permission to reproduce them is gratefully acknowledged. For discussion of the value of probate inventories as historical evidence see Barrie Trinder and Jeff Cox, *Yeomen and colliers in Telford*, 1980, *passim* and Nancy and Jeff Cox, 'Probate inventories: the legal background – Part 1', *Local Hist.*, **16**, 1984, 133–45.

[7] Barrie Trinder and Jeff Cox, *op. cit.*, 64–5 and 388.

[8] Orders made by the Commissioners of Sewers for the County of Salop, 1575, *T.S.A.S.*, 1st ser., **xi**., 1887, 425–6; David Pannett, 'The River Severn: some historical observations', *Shropshire Conservation Trust Bulletin*, **xxix**, 1973, 2–6.

[9] Stuart Smith, *A view from the Iron Bridge*, 1979, 64.

[10] Probate inventories in the Lichfield Joint Record Office.

[11] J.P. Malam, 'White salt-glazed stoneware manufactured at Jackfield', *West Midlands Archaeol.*, **xxiv**, 1981, 45–50.

[12] Harrison Harrod, *Directory & gazetteer of Staffordshire and Shropshire*, 1861, 629.

APPENDIX

(i)

The inventory of Edward Pearce or Plearce of Dowles appraised by Thomas Weaver and Thomas Hale on 22 October 1671.

Impris. his weareing aparill	00 10 00
It. one fflocke beed two boulsters and beed steed	00 10 00
It. one Chest three coffers one deske	00 08 06
It. Linnings of all sorts	00 12 00
It. Tow drest and undrest	00 14 00
It. one peece of wolling Cloth	00 16 00
It. one Table bord and two fframes	00 02 06
It. one ffether beed and steeds with rest belonging to it	01 00 00
It. wooll	00 04 00
It. one fflocke beed and all that belongs to it	01 10 00
It. one press one Cobberd	00 16 00
It. one Iron pott and brase of all sorts	01 00 00
It. pewter	00 05 00
It. three Chayers one Coberd one peece of waynescott one forme	00 10 00
It. Couprye stufe	00 05 00
It. bookes	00 05 00
It. ffishing geres of all sorts	01 00 00
It. all Iron ware	00 06 00
It. money owing	60 00 00
total	70 14 00

(ii)

The inventory of Francis Preen, trowman, of Dowles taken by Nicholas Ward and John Ward on 24 October 1692.

Imprimis. his wearinge Apparell rated at	05 00 00
Item. in the Chichen	
one Joyne screen six chaires one tabol boord and shelves rated at	00 17 00
Item. In the parlor	
one press and Cupbord one tabel bord and form fouer Cheirs one Joyn Stull one Iorn great fire shuvel and tongues rated at	01 10 00
Item. In ye back rome	
one Cupbord one tabel bord and frame rated at	01 00 00
Item. In ye Chamber over ye parlor	
one bedstid one truckel bed one Chest two trunks one Coffer one box & to Cheirs rated at	01 10 00
Item. In the Chamber over ye Chichen	
one bedstid one tabol boord one Chest & one Cubbert rated at	02 10 00
one Iorne great hand Iorns & one paire of Ballows rated at	00 16 00
Item. In the Chamber over the back rome	
one bedstid to Chests one box & one Cheir rated at	01 05 00
Item. In pewter of all sorts vallued at	03 00 00
Item. In Brass of all sortts vallued at	01 10 00
Item. In Iorn ware of All sortts valued at	01 00 00
Item. In Beding and Curtins valued at	05 00 00
Item. In Linings of all sortts valued at	03 10 00
Item. In mony and platt valued at	03 00 00
Item. in good and bad debts	35 00 00
Item. In the Brewing House and Buttry	
drink and provision one furnice tubbs and barrels and other matterials all rated at	05 00 00
Item. In Shipping	
one trow one Barge & one Boot rated at	60 00 00
Corn and hay valued at	05 00 00
one Cow & three piggs rated at	03 00 00
one beame Chaings & waight & all other odd lumber valued at	01 10 00
Total	140 18 00

(iii)

The inventory of Edward Whittingham of Bewdley taken on 8 November 1750 by Jacob Smith, Thomas Milward and Rowland Bowen.

Wearing apparell and money in purse	03 00 00
In the Kitchen of the Dwelling house	
A Grate a Crane and some Brass and Copper things on the Mantleshelf	00 15 00
A Dresser of Drawers fframe and Pewter	02 02 00
Two Tables and three Chairs	00 05 00
In the Parlour	
Some Delfwares and other odd things	02 00 00
In the Chamber over the Kitchen	
One ffeather Bed Bolster Bedsteads & ffurniture	02 02 00
Two Chests One Table Two Looking Glasses and a Cupboard	00 16 00
Three Chairs and a Clock Case	00 18 00
Thirteen Old Cheeses	02 10 00
Ten Thin Cheeses	00 08 00

In the passage Chamber	
ffive Chairs and a pair of Bedsteads and some odd things	00 17 06
In the Garrett	
ffifty Cheeses	02 14 00
a Chest and Joiners Tools	03 00 00
A Bed Bedstead Coverlett & other odd things	01 12 06
In the Closett at the Stair head	
A parcell of whiteware and some Delf	00 10 00
In the Cellar	
One Barrell	00 01 00
In the Shop	
Some Broseley wares and other white & delf ware	00 07 06
A Counter and schelves	00 02 00
A parcell of Hops	01 05 00
Eight fflitches of Bacon and some odd pieces of Bacon	04 00 00
A parcell of Cheese	01 10 00
Salt Butter	00 07 06
Two Old Chests and some Salt	00 02 06
Scales Weights and Beam	00 09 06
In the yard	
Inch Oak Boards	06 16 00
Oak Boards Quarter Inch	00 16 00
Ditto – half Inch	01 01 00
Ceiling Boards	00 12 00
Offold Timber and Two Grinding Stones	01 10 00
In the Storehouse Chamber	
Half Inch Oake Dale and Walnutt Plank	02 02 00
At the Dowles Load	
Timber	01 05 00
At the Key in Bewdley Rideing upon the River Severn	
One Old Barge or Vessell with the Riggin and Appurtenances belonging	17 00 00
In a piece of Ground near Bewdley	
One Old Mare Broken Wind	01 01 00
	64 00 00

Note on transcription

Except for the summarising of the preambles and the rendering of the figures into a standardised six-digit format, the inventories have been transcribed precisely as written. Definitions of unfamiliar terms can be found in the glossary of Barrie Trinder & Jeff Cox, *Yeomen and colliers in Telford*, 1980. The inventories of Wakeman and ap Owen are insufficiently detailed to merit reproduction.

THE SHREWSBURY LAY SUBSIDY of 1525

By W.A. CHAMPION

Introduction

The relatively comprehensive nature of the Lay Subsidies of 1524–5 has produced a number of studies which have used them to probe such questions as the distribution of taxable wealth, population size and local social structures. Analyses devoted to towns have tended to reiterate the obvious facts of wealth inequality and the pyramidal form of wealth distribution. This emphasis is undoubtedly simple, even arid in analytic terms, although it is difficult to advance to more interesting questions until sufficient studies exist for various comparisons to be made. In this respect, an examination of the Shrewsbury returns for 1525 can assist in this process. At the same time, while this article does not neglect the older approach (proposing some modifications to it where necessary), it also touches upon some other subjects where the Subsidy can be of use, and whose investigation may also prove enlightening.

Returns for the Shrewsbury Lay Subsidy have not survived at the Public Record Office. However, a number of local assessments exist among the borough archives. Two of these concern the first instalment of 1524; one listed the names of 173 taxpayers, the other of 122.[1] A preamble to one of these lists reveals that three sub-collectors were employed to levy the tax, and it is fairly certain that these extant lists represent the assessments for which two of the sub-collectors were responsible – an indenture at the base of one of the rolls specifically stated that the roll encompassed the 'stret' for which William Rollys, one of the sub-collectors, was responsible.[2] It is clear, therefore, that one of the assessment rolls has since been lost. The assessment for the second instalment of 1525, however, has survived intact, containing the names of taxpayers in both Shrewsbury and the townships in the rural liberties – although the Abbey Foregate suburb was not included since it still remained under the separate jurisdiction of the Abbey.[3] Apart from an insignficant number of taxpayers from Coton township, who were incorporated into the tax list for the town, taxpayers from the rest of the liberties are not considered here.

The composition of the 1525 assessment was unusual. The names of the taxpayers were inscribed in a book, according to their affiliation to the fifteen craft fellowships of the town. In addition, the Journeymen of the Shermen were assessed separately, while three other returns were made for those described as 'Oute of craft' – *i.e.* who were not members of any craft fellowship – residing within the three wards of the town (the Stone, Welsh and Castle wards). The eight commissioners responsible for the overall collection of the tax were also listed separately. Individual entries in the book often, but not invariably, stated whether the taxpayer was assessed on lands, goods or wages, followed by a note of his or her payment according to the schedules of the Act. Another interesting feature was the fact that the servants of a number of taxpayers were also listed, usually beneath the names of their masters. For example, the entry for the corvisor (shoemaker) John Fox was followed by that of his servant ('famulus suus'), William Browne.

The manner in which this book was composed makes it possible to identify another tax document of uncertain date.[4] The latter was also arranged according to craft affiliation, and a comparison of the names given in each list reveals that it must be closely related to the 1525 assessment. In fact, there is little doubt that this document represents the equivalent book for the 1524 instalment. It is not as comprehensive since the returns for the Shermen and their journeymen are missing, and that for the Drapers is incomplete. It can be used, however, for supplementary information, or to confirm certain points of interpretation. For example, in 1525 not all servants had the names of their masters noted, particularly in the Glovers' and Corvisors' crafts. In several cases, this information can be obtained from the 1525 assessment, at the same time confirming that servants were normally listed immediately beneath their masters. In rare instances where this did not happen, the masters were invariably named in any case.

The existence of these books implies that at the local level, the assessments were first drawn up according to craft affiliation – a sensible procedure, since this would have facilitated the levying of the tax. The lists subsequently sent on to the Exchequer would have been in a more simple form – typically a straightforward nominal roll, arranged according to ward residence.

Population

Deriving population size from the totals of taxpayers turns upon a number of assumptions, including the rate of evasion. The latter has been estimated at about a third, or as low as 10–20%.[5] Such estimates have been based upon comparison of names in the tax lists of 1522 and 1524–5, and assumptions about the internal relationships between them. It is disconcerting to find that in Coventry, the one case where the Subsidy has been checked against a completely different source (the 1523 census), the proportion of householders omitted from the tax exceeded 50%.[6] Without becoming enmired in technical detail, the particular form of the Shrewsbury assessment can be used to throw some light on this issue, while enabling a rough estimate of the town's population to be made.

The tax was intended to be levied on all persons over the age of sixteen, although in practice women were excluded except where they appear to have been householders. In Shrewsbury, 523 persons were taxed, including 423 masters and other self-employed or semi-independent artificers, and 96 servants. Four other cases are ambiguous. Of these 523 persons, 27 were women. This figure indicates substantial evasion among women householders as can be demonstrated in the following fashion.

The exact number of householders taxed in 1525 is uncertain since it is not known how many of the servants (probably journeymen as we shall argue) were in-servants or lived out as separate householders. A letter beside the name of each taxpayer (S, W or C) indicated in which ward he or she resided, from which it can be shown that, with two exceptions, every taxed servant resided within the same ward as his master. A presumption might, therefore, be made that all these servants lived in, but this is probably unlikely. Many may have simply lived nearby in the same ward as their masters.[7] At any rate, depending on how many of these servants were themselves householders, something between 423 and 519 householders were taxed in 1525, of which women constituted between 5.2 and 6.4%. This proportion is clearly too low, since at this time the proportion of households headed by widows and single women was typically between 15 and 20%.[8] The actual number of female householders avoiding tax depends upon the scale of evasion among other groups – see below.

Evasion among male householders can be calculated on a different basis. I have shown elsewhere that a comparison between the 1525 assessment and the Shrewsbury view of frankpledge taken in November 1525 (which listed adult male householders, excluding nearly all servants) reveals that the assessment was deficient, particularly in listing the out-of-craft.[9] The number of male masters and out-of-craft in the 1525 assessment (396) was 11.6% less than the number of males given in the view of frankpledge (448). The inaccuracy of the assessment is also suggested by a comparison between it and a local tax assessment of 1522/23 recording the 'nomina illarum personarum qui non onerantur cum occupacionibus ville Salop . . .', *i.e.* equivalent to the out-of-craft of the 1525 assessment.[10] The names of 93 contributors were recorded, whereas the 1525 assessment listed only 63. Excluding women, the comparable totals were 74 and 58 respectively. Such comparisons suggest that at least 50 additional males should be added to the number of taxpayers in 1525.

Evasion among servants is more difficult to assess. It is virtually certain that apprentices were omitted. This is indicated by the manner in which all servants of master shermen or clothworkers were listed separately under the heading 'Jornamen of Shermen' (27 in number). The master of each journeyman was named, *e.g.* 'Robert howells servant to Roger barton'. By inference, 'servants' in the other craft fellowships were also journeymen, although some domestic servants may have been included.

This hypothesis receives some confirmation from existing craft records. Between 1525 and 1530, eight apprentices of the Drapers' and Mercers' companies were admitted as masters, yet none of these had

appeared in the 1525 assessment.[11] By contrast, Philip Derby, who appeared in the assessment described as one of the two servants of the mercer Thomas Keneston, was admitted to the Mercers' fellowship very shortly afterwards, 'beyng a stranger and was prentes in Worcestre as a forreyner made freeman with Pewterers only for xxxvis viiid.'[12] That is, Derby, having served his apprenticeship in Worcester, must have been employed as a journeyman in Shrewsbury prior to his admission as a master to the Pewterers' section of the combined Mercers' company. Since his apprenticeship had been served in another town, he did not qualify for the lower admission fee of 16s. 8d. paid by those apprenticed to Shrewsbury mercers, but was admitted instead at the higher fee paid by 'foreigners'.

There is no doubt that evasion was extensive among other servants as well as apprentices, since many of the richest taxpayers (including the eight commissioners) were listed without mention of any employees, whereas servant-keeping among the rich was virtually universal.[13] Among journeymen, however, the scale of evasion is problematic since little information exists about the typical ratio of journeymen to masters, a ratio which undoubtedly varied between crafts. At Coventry, the overall number of journeymen may have been smaller than the number of masters, perhaps 600 to 780 households respectively.[14] By contrast, the Shrewsbury assessment of 1525 enumerated only 95 'servants', excluding one out-of-craft, compared to 361 putative masters. This suggests a considerable shortfall in proportionate terms – equivalent to perhaps 185 journeymen. However, this calculation is very speculative. Since the number of journeymen could depend upon both the nature and prosperity of their trades, considerable variation could have existed between towns. For Shrewsbury, the actual numbers of masters and 'servants' recorded in each craft fellowship is given in table 1.

Craft Fellowship	No. masters	No. servants	No. masters with servants	% of masters with servants
Drapers	45	6	4	8.9
Butchers	17	3	3	17.6
Bakers	21 (None)	3	3	14.3
Mercers etc.	40	12	9	22.5
Glovers etc.	18	4	3	16.7
Fletchers, Bowyers and Coopers	6 (None)	1	1	16.7
Tanners	15 (None)	3	3	20.0
Saddlers etc.	11	1	1	9.1
Tailors and Skinners	24	8	7	29.2
Corvisors	28	19	11	39.3
Barbers	10	1	1	10.0
Weavers	29 (14)	4	4	13.8
Carpenters and Tilers	16 (13)	–	–	–
Shermen	70 (None)	27	24	34.3
Smiths	10	3	3	30.0
Other	1	–	–	–
Totals	361	95	77	21.3
(Out-of-craft	62 (26)	1	1	1.6)
Totals	423	96	78	18.4

Table 1 Number of masters and 'servants' assessed in 1525 according to craft affiliation.
Bracketed totals indicate number of constituent masters assessed on wages, where data is adequate.

Note: Several of the craft fellowships were in fact amalgamations of different trades. Thus, the Mercers also included ironmongers, goldsmiths, pewterers and cappers. The Saddlers included glaziers and painters, and the Glovers included other leatherworkers. The Shermen were in fact comprised of various clothworking trades.

If the majority of 'servants' were indeed journeymen, living out as separate householders (which would be compatible with the common observation that the subsidy was largely levied upon householders) then it is impossible, unfortunately, to compare the information in the table with the Coventry data delineating the distribution of households containing male *in-servants* according to occupation.[15] The immediate significance of these figures is therefore difficult to interpret. For some of the crafts the relative

proportion of journeymen to masters may be quite accurate – particularly among the Shermen, since they had a separate listing for their journeymen. Significantly, the percentage of journeymen to masters in this case was relatively high (38.6%). Another list of journeymen shermen of *c.*1560 gave 40 names, which may be compared with the 85 master shermen enumerated in a craft assessment of 1553 (including seven widows and four 'halfe bretherne').[16] The relative percentage – 47% – was higher than in 1525 but not unduly so, and could be ascribed to changing economic circumstances. Among the Corvisors, the large number of 'servants' may be connected to a phenomenon observed at Coventry – namely, the unusually high proportion of male servants employed in that trade.[17] Here too, the ratio of journeymen to masters may be reasonably accurate. Paradoxically, the fact that the Carpenters were recorded without any servants may also be some reflection of reality, for, at this humble level, 'the distinction between master and journeymen may have been slight and the numbers of journeymen correspondingly few.'[18]

Among other crafts, however, it is difficult not to suspect considerable evasion among journeymen. For example, the 29 master weavers were listed with only four 'servants'. By contrast, in Coventry in 1522–3, there were approximately 37 master weavers to 45 journeymen.[19] Moreover, journeymen weavers in Shrewsbury are also known to have had a separate fellowship, with at least four wardens and two stewards.[20] On the other hand, since so many master weavers (14) were assessed on wages, owing, no doubt, to the prevalence of piece-work, it could be argued that some journeymen were concealed among their number. In this craft too, it may not always have been easy to distinguish between the two groups. But it is then difficult to understand why some men should have been described as servants, while others were not. Moreover, the total of 29 putative masters in 1525 hardly appears too small, compared to a number of 44 master weavers in 1435 and 32 in 1565.[21]

It is possible that journeymen mercers also had an organization, yet only twelve 'servants' were recorded for this fellowship in 1525.[22] In fact, servant-keeping as a whole (*i.e.* including apprentices and domestic servants, as well as journeymen) among the distributive crafts was badly under-represented. Of 85 master drapers and mercers, only thirteen (15.3%) were listed with any servants – an improbably low proportion in view of the fact that at Coventry over half of merchant households contained male in-servants alone.[23]

The preceding analysis has assumed that if 'servants' are excluded, the residue of taxpayers represent a reasonably accurate total of masters in each fellowship. This assumption is justified by a comparison with extant craft records. Thus the number of 45 drapers can be compared with an enumeration of the company in 1497 which listed approximately 49 masters. Similarly, the total of 40 mercers in 1525 can be compared with a total of 38 masters in 1497 and about 36 in 1534.[24] Or again, the 70 shermen can be compared with a total of about 69 masters given in an undated list of approximately the same time.[25] More tentatively, one might contrast the total of 29 weavers listed in 1525 with the 32 masters enumerated in 1565.[26] There are grounds, therefore, for believing that among craft masters at least, evasion was minimal. Not surprisingly perhaps, evasion seems to have been more typical of males outside the craft system.

Altogether, we may conclude that at least 50 male householders escaped tax, together with perhaps 185 journeymen. Adding these to the number of male taxpayers (496) produces a total of 731. Since, as we have noted, the proportion of female householders was typically between 15 and 20%, it is possible to calculate that some 100–150 women escaped, and that the true total of householders liable to tax was approximately 860–910 persons. This in turn suggests an evasion rate among householders alone of about 40%. Conventionally, however, the rate is often estimated once women taxpayers are excluded. This makes it easier to calculate population size, since one then only requires an understanding of the proportion of the population aged less than sixteen and of the prevailing sex-ratio. On this basis, an evasion rate of about 32% can be obtained. It may be objected that such figures are too high because the rate of evasion among journeymen is exaggerated. But it must be remembered that these figures relate to householders only, and make no allowance for the exclusion of apprentices and other domestic servants over the age of sixteen. Even if we assumed that *no* journeymen avoided the tax, and that only 72, or one fifth, of all craft masters employed a single male in-servant, we would still be left with an evasion rate of about 20%. With this in mind, a rate of at least one third does not seem unlikely.

If this is accepted, together with the other assumptions about the proportion of the population aged less than sixteen and the prevailing sex-ratio (which favoured women),[27] a total population can be calculated of approximately 2750 persons. Elsewhere I have argued that by calculating the probable size of Shrewsbury's population from the Diocesan survey of families in 1563, and the Muster returns of 1580 and 1587, as well as the intermediate rate of population growth from the numerous views of frankpledge between 1525 and the late 16th century, it is possible to estimate a population in 1525 of slightly less than 3000 persons.[28]

This result establishes that in the long term Shrewsbury's population had almost certainly declined to

some degree since the Poll Tax of 1377 – J.C. Russell's figure of 3100 persons resident in the town at that date being based on an estimate of evasion which is generally regarded as too low.[29] Of equal interest is the evidence demonstrating that the population level of 1525 was not exceeded until the 1560s. In fact, Shrewsbury's population probably fell slightly between 1525 and 1540, after which a tentative recovery began. However, the dramatic demographic advance of the 16th century did not begin until after 1560.[30]

In terms of population size, both Hoskins and Patten have suggested that between the 1520s and the 1660s/1670s, Shrewsbury's ranking in the hierarchy of provincial towns rose from about 26th to about 12th or 13th.[31] In each case, however, the earlier ranking was based upon an estimate of the tax yield derived from the Lay Subsidies. The locally preserved return of 1525, on the other hand, shows that in terms of the actual *number* of taxpayers, Shrewsbury's ranking was approximately 15th. With some 523 taxpayers in 1525 (a total which excluded the Abbey Foregate), Shrewsbury had a similar number to Reading and Cambridge, ranked 15th and 16th respectively in a provisional list of the largest towns in late medieval England.[32] Thus, in terms of its size, Shrewsbury's ranking may not have changed too radically over this period – although the precise significance of rankings derived from the number of taxpayers in 1524–5 has yet to be firmly established, since the assessments may have penetrated to different depths among these taxpayers, particularly among wage-earners.

The distribution of taxable wealth

The distribution of taxable wealth is recorded in table 2. It is impossible to count precisely those taxed on wages, since not all the craft returns gave this information. Accordingly, this group is incorporated with those who also paid 4d., but on goods of £1 rather than wages. Taxpayers who paid 6d. occupy an anomalous position. Strictly speaking, a payment of this size was not allowed for in terms of the Act. But in Shrewsbury this sum was paid on assessments of £2 in the 1524 instalment; and on assessments of £1 in goods in 1525, as can be observed from the entries for a weaver and another taxpayer out-of-craft in the Castle Ward, as well as many others in the Liberties. In fact, according to the schedules laid down in the Act, 4d. was owed on assessments of £1 in goods, and 12d. on £2 in goods. Whatever the reason for this misunderstanding, it is clear that these taxpayers fell within the lowest tax bracket which is conventionally set at 0–£2.

Tax group	Number	% of all taxpayers	Taxable property to nearest £	Payment	% of total payment
Untaxed ('nullus')	14	2.7			
£1 (4d paid on goods or wages)	205	39.2	Unknown	£2 11s 8d	3.7
£1 (6d paid on goods)	113 (1)[1]	21.6	£114	£2 16s 4d	4.1
£2	22	4.2	£44	£1 3s 0d	1.6
Over £2 and under £10	90 (2)	17.2	£349	£10 1s 6d	14.5
£10–19	43 (5)	8.2	£549	£16 3s 4d	23.3
£20 and over	27 (6)	5.2	£750	£36 9s 8d	52.7
Not given	9	1.7			
Totals	523[2]			£69 5s 6d[2]	

Table 2 Distribution of taxable wealth in Shrewsbury in 1525.

Notes: 1. Includes two payments of 8d. on goods worth £1 6s. 8d., and one payment of 12d. on lands. Bracketed totals indicate constituent number assessed on lands.

2. Excludes three surrogate payments worth 13s. 8d. The total for payments is slightly smaller than that calculated by the clerk.

The inequalities of taxable wealth in Shrewsbury are clear enough from the table; some 5% of taxpayers; for example, paid over half the total subsidy, and must have owned approximately 40% of the

value of taxable goods and property. By contrast, taxpayers assessed on £2 or less – 67.7% of the total – paid less than a tenth of the whole subsidy. Figures such as these have encouraged a tendency to group those assessed on £2 or less among the desperately 'poor'. But this view must be heavily qualified by recent evidence from Coventry, where a comparison between the 1522 military survey and the 1523 census has shown that, 'nearly three quarters of all those households successfully correlated and assessed at £3–5 in goods, contained in-servants; forty-five percent of those assessed at £2 or less also comprised servant keeping households; while seventeen percent of those with nil assessments similarly contained servants – despite the fact that the city was currently experiencing a major economic crisis involving unemployment and depopulation.'[33] Such taxpayers were in fact made up of small masters and self-employed or semi-independent artificers. Few in ordinary circumstances could be described as indigent paupers.

The Shrewsbury evidence relating to this issue is of a slightly different form, since, as we have argued, most of the 'servants' listed in 1525 were journeymen rather than in-servants. Nevertheless, the relevant figures are instructive. Of the 78 taxpayers listed with 'servants' in 1525, the assessments of all but two are known. Their number can be supplemented by eight masters whose servants were listed in 1524 but not in 1525. Consequently, it can be shown that among masters and the out-of-craft, 38.8% of taxpayers assessed on £3–5 possessed 'servants' (26 out of 67), while 13.6% of those assessed on £2 or less also employed 'servants' (36 out of 265). Of the latter group, nine paid 4d. on an assessment of £1 in goods. Among wealthier taxpayers, 23.2% in the £10–19 category possessed 'servants' (10 out of 43) and 25.9% in the £20 and over category (7 out of 27).

Needless to say, since these calculations exclude apprentices and other domestic servants, and take no account of evasion among journeymen, they cannot provide an accurate reflection of the servant keeping population among different taxable groups. It is, therefore, still impressive that a significant number of taxpayers employing servants should appear among those assessed at the lowest rates. Thus, from a different perspective, the Shrewsbury evidence confirms the theory that the majority of those assessed at the lowest rates were small masters or self-employed or semi-independent workers (a fact, of course, which is also indicated by the composition of the assessment according to craft affiliation), many of whom undoubtedly employed servants, even if the exact proportions are uncertain because of tax evasion among journeymen and other servants.

Phythian-Adams has argued that this result underlines the artificiality in the assessment of goods generally – a point which can also be extended to the assessment of wages. Prevailing wage-rates must have entailed a higher annual income than the assessments imply.[34] Serious doubt is therefore thrown upon Hoskins' earlier claim, after wage-earners and the untaxed are also taken into account, that 'fully two-thirds of the urban population in the 1520s lived below or very near the poverty-line, constituting an ever-present menace to the community in years of high food prices or bad trade.'[35] This somewhat apocalyptic view must be revised in view of the fact that the servant keeping population obviously extended into the lowest rated groups of taxpayers. The likely proportion of the truly vulnerable, the majority of whom must have fallen outside the tax net, depends on considerations which cannot be dealt with here – but 20% has been suggested as a possible figure.[36]

The pattern of wealth distribution can also be examined by observing the distribution of taxpayers according to craft affiliation, excluding servants (table 3). The figures can then be shuffled to display the distribution of taxpayers according to occupational categories (table 4). Since several craft fellowships were amalgamations of different trades, some adjustment is neccessary to account for artisans whose trade fell into a different occupational category than the parent or senior constituent of their fellowship. For example, eleven cappers must be allocated to the Clothing category, although they were members of the Mercers' company – otherwise placed among the Merchants. Twenty similar allocations can be made, based on craft records and internal ascriptions. Were the information available, other transfers could be made, particularly among the out-of-craft. Sporadic references show that the latter included chapmen, labourers, paviers, doctors, waits and a drover. Their allocation would certainly produce a 'professional' category, while the proportion of those employed in the building trades would undoubtedly be increased by the addition of labourers outside the craft system. Table 4 should, therefore, be regarded as only a rough guide to the relative size of occupational categories in the town.

Despite this imprecision, there is no doubting the unambiguous and characteristic prominence of the distributive trades. On average, merchants paid over three times as much per head as other craftsmen, and contributed over half the total subsidy, despite contributing less than 20% of all taxpayers. In fact, this dominance is probably understated. Disputes between the Drapers and other craft fellowships between 1515 and 1517 over access to the informal cloth staple at Oswestry, show that other crafts were involved in the trade, including the Mercers, Shermen and Tailors.[37] Significantly, the richest members of

Craft Fellowship	Taxable Group 0–£2	£3–5	£6–9	£10–19	£20+	Total	Total payment	Average Individual payment
Drapers	8	8	4	12	13	45	£22 12s 4d	10s 1d
Mercers etc	18	4	4	8	6	40	£16 10s 10d	8s 3d
Bakers	10	7		3	1	21	£3 1s 8d	2s 11d
Butchers	14			1	2	17	£2 4s 6d	2s 7d
Tanners	7	3	2	3		15	£1 14s 8d	2s 4d
Tailors and Skinners	17	3	2	1	1	24	£2 14s 4d	2s 3d
Shermen	44	15	4	6	1	70	£7 0s 8d	2s 0d
Fletchers, Bowyers and Coopers	3	1	1	1		6	11s 10d	2s 0d
Barbers	5	3	1	1		10	19s 2d	1s 11d
Glovers etc.	11	3	1	3		18	£1 10s 4d	1s 8d
Smiths	7	3				10	9s 4d	11d
Corvisors	19	8		1		28	£1 0s 8d	9d
Saddlers etc.	9	2				11	7s 2d	8d
Weavers	26	3				29	17s 0d	7d
Carpenters and Tilers	16					16	6s 4d	5d
Out-of-craft	51	4	2	3	3*	63	£5 16s 2d	1s 10d
Totals	265	67	21	43	27	423	£67 17s 0d	

Table 3 Distribution of taxable wealth among masters and other self-employed or semi-independent artificers, according to craft affiliation, 1525.

*Includes the commissioner Hugh Philips (hewster, *i.e.* dyer), whose craft is unknown.

Occupation	0–£2	£3–5	£6–9	£10–19	£20+	Total	%	Total payment	Average Individual payment
Merchants	21	13	8	20	18	80	18.9	£38 4s 6d	9s 7d
Victuallers	24	7		4	4	39	9.2	£6 6s 2d	3s 3d
Wood	3	1	1	1		6	1.4	11s 10d	2s 0d
Clothing	25	4	2	1	1	33	7.8	£2 18s 10d	1s 9d
Textiles	70	18	4	6	2	100	23.6	£8 11s 0d	1s 8½d
Metal	7	4	1	1		13	3.1	£1 1s 2d	1s 7½d
Leather	45	16	3	7		71	16.8	£4 13s 2d	1s 4d
Building	19					19	4.5	7s 6d	5d
Out-of-Craft	51	4	2	3	2	62	14.7	£5 2s 10d	1s 8d
Totals	265	67	21	43	27	423		£67 17s 0d	

Table 4 Distribution of taxable wealth according to occupational categories, 1525 – based on table 3. (Categories derived from Hoskins, *Provincial England,* 1965, 80, with a separate category for Merchants.)

the Shermen's and Tailors' crafts, John Barton and Maurice Mynton, whose assessments in 1525 were £40 and £30 respectively, were both active in the Oswestry markets. Only the victuallers remotely compared in wealth with Shrewsbury's merchants – due to a disproportionate number of masters assessed on more than £10.

Two other features stand out from the tables. First, it is clear that despite their relative lack of wealth compared to the merchants, most crafts could supply at least one or two moderately substantial masters

(*i.e.* worth £10 or more). As we shall see, this influenced the pattern of civic office-holding, and indicates that avenues to prosperity and status were not totally restricted to the distributive trades. Weavers and building workers, however, were a notable exception. Secondly, the largest proportion of taxpayers was taken up by 276 small masters assessed at 0–£5. Their predominance in virtually all the crafts other than the Drapers and Mercers, is obviously the principal explanation for the fact that average payments in most categories fell within a narrow range of between about 1s. 6d. and 2s. Even allowing for overall tax evasion, these masters must have comprised a substantial proportion of householders in the town – perhaps one third. Moreover, as mentioned above, many of these (62, or 22.5%) employed 'servants' – a figure which excludes apprentices and probably most other domestic servants. In view of these facts, the conventional pyramidal metaphor for social structure, based on the Lay Subsidies, should be understood in a more subtle fashion. The large number of households comprised of small masters should be seen not as part of a broad, homogeneous base made up of the 'poor', but as a group of independent craftsmen lying between a much smaller number of households headed by more substantial citizens on the one side, and a larger number comprised of journeymen, the out-of-craft labourers and the indigent on the other.

* * *

Since the subsidy represents a snap-shot of wealth distribution at a particular moment, it conceals the fact that inequalities were to some extent (at least among the distributive fellowships) a function of the working life-cycle. However, by estimating the average length of time spent as a master for taxpayers in each group, it is possible to search for correlations between wealth and age among the Drapers and Mercers, for whom sufficient records still exist.[38] For a number of reasons, such estimates can only be approximate. First, admission records did not always specify the exact year of entry for a new master, but rather the year(s) of the serving wardens of the fellowship. In the Mercers' case, this was divided between two calendar years (*e.g.* 1520–1), and in the Drapers' case, between three (*e.g.* 1519–21). In these instances, I have arbitrarily taken the second year for the Mercers, and the middle year for the Drapers to signify the year of admission. Secondly, the Drapers' records of admission are missing for the period 1509–17. A number of drapers identifiable from the 1525 assessment must have been admitted in these years, since their entry is not otherwise recorded. The best that one can do is to assign them a value of between eight and sixteen years for the time spent by them as masters. Three other drapers are also known from craft lists to have been alive in the last two decades of the 15th century, yet fail to appear among the records of admission which begin in 1485. It is assumed that they had been masters since at least that date. For these reasons, estimates for the average term of occupancy by master drapers can only be expressed as a range. Thirdly, since we are concentrating upon 'working' masters, it is necessary to exclude a few semi-honorific admissions – *i.e.* of important civic figures who can be shown to have had other means of livelihood in the form of lands or rents, and to have joined the fellowships for their socio-religious benefits. These include the mercers Robert Dudley and George Harebrowne, represented by his widow, and the drapers Edmund Colle and Adam Mytton. Finally, the occupancy of the few sisters in these fellowships is calculated according to the date of admission of their deceased spouses, on the assumption that the wealth of these widows was largely founded upon the stock left to them by their husbands.

While such considerations underline the fragility of this procedure, its results can be offered as a speculative example of the kind of work that could be done on this subject (table 5).

	Mercers		Drapers	
Tax group	No.	Approx. average length of mastership (yrs)	No.	Approx. average length of mastership (yrs.)
0–£2	16 (6)	15.1 (21.5)	8	14.5–16.5
£3–5	4 (3)	6.75 (5.3)	8	18.25–21.25
£6–9	3	14.0	3	20.7–23.3
£10–19	6	19.7	9	15.1–16.9
£20+	5	23.6	11	15.9–17.4
Totals	34 (23)	16.1 (18.4)	39	16.3–18.3

Table 5 The relationship between wealth and approximate length of mastership, expressed in years, among identifiable mercers and drapers in 1525.
Bracketed totals indicate figures if cappers are excluded.

The table indicates that the average length of time spent as a master by identifiable mercers and drapers living in 1525 was about seventeen years. One way to proceed is to ask what proportion of merchants under and above this average figure were notably prosperous, *i.e.* worth £20 or more. The respective percentages can be calculated as 15.0 and 33.3 (or 19.3 and 35.5 if cappers are excluded). This result indicates that while several of the oldest masters were among the least prosperous masters of their fellowships (such as the drapers John Baxter and William Hochekes who paid just 6d. each in 1525, yet had been masters for some 37 and 35 years respectively), and conversely, wealthy men could be found whose membership was relatively recent – nevertheless, some connection did exist between longevity and increasing wealth.

It is obvious, however, that this association held most strongly among the Mercers. Identifiable mercers had on average been masters for about sixteen years, while masters in the £10–19 and £20 or more tax brackets had respectively been masters for some 3.6 and 7.5 years longer than the mean. In this case the correlation between length of mastership and the most notable fortunes may be interpreted in part as a function of the regulations, typical of the craft system, which sought to share work out fairly among active masters. For example, with the exception of an adjoining premise for iron and salting wares, mercers were forbidden to possess more than one shop.[39] Employment of servants intended to supplement the domestic workforce was also strictly controlled.[40] With these restrictions, amassing a substantial fortune in a short time must have been relatively difficult; the accumulation of stock and working capital depended to some extent upon biological success allied to personal diligence.

Age and wealth were much less closely associated among the Drapers. Involvement with the cloth trade may have made it easier for young, enterprising drapers to succeed relatively quickly. Three men, for example, were already assessed on £20 in goods, despite having been masters for six years or less. Here, at least, there were no craft regulations restricting the scale of purchase and subsequent resale of cloth pieces at the London and other markets.

In fact, the correlation we have sought to make was probably most apparent at the most exalted levels of personal fortune. This can be illustrated by examining the careers of eight of the nine wealthiest men in Shrewsbury, *i.e.* of those assessed on property whose value exceeded £20 (table 6; the rentier John Stury, out-of-craft in the Castle Ward and assessed at £30 in lands, is not included here).

Individual	Assessment (to nearest £)	Approximate length of mastership (years)
Roger Luter, mercer (alderman)	£67	38
Thomas Hosier, draper (alderman)	£67	24
David Ireland, mercer (alderman)	£53	34
Randle Beyston, draper (alderman)	£40	27
John Barton, sherman (common councillor)	£40	33+ (admitted burgess in 1492)
John Baynes, draper	£30	5
Maurice Mynton, tailor (common councillor)	£30	20+ (admitted burgess in 1505)
Hugh Phillips, hewster (alderman)	£27	40+ (admitted burgess in 1485)

Table 6 The wealthiest taxpayers in Shrewsbury, 1525.
(Civic positions based on the council lists at Michaelmas 1525, although Mynton was in fact elected common councillor shortly afterwards; Guildhall, Shrewsbury Borough Records, 75, paperbook 2.)

The average period spent as a master by these eight men was at least 27.6 years, *i.e.* more than ten years longer than the mean. Yet even here, the example of the draper John Baynes, with only five years of mastership behind him, provides an exception to the rule.

* * *

Since five of the eight individuals listed in table 6 were aldermen, and two were common councillors, it is easy to suspect a similar relationship between increasing wealth and the acquisition of civic office. While this subject cannot be treated in detail here, it can be shown that a reasonably close correlation did exist. For example, the twelve aldermen serving at the close of 1525 were assessed on an average value of £31, while the more junior common councillors, of whom there were 24, were assessed on an average value of £14. The contrast between the two groups is also disclosed by the relative distribution of taxable wealth (table 7).

Taxable Group	Common councillors	Aldermen
0–£2	2	
£3–5	3	1
£6–9	3	
£10–19	10	1
£20+	6	10

Table 7 Distribution of taxable wealth among common councillors and aldermen in 1525.

Similarly, the average assessments of all those who had served as one of the two bailiffs of the town was £32, while the coroners, auditors and sessors were worth on average approximately £25, £19 and £13 respectively – a ranking which corresponded to the *cursus honorum*.[41] The more humble civic sergeants were taxed at much lower levels; the average assessment of the 32 sergeants known to have served between 1510 and 1525 was about £5.[42]

Such correlations in turn obviously imply an association between increasing age and civic advancement. For instance, the average craft occupancy of eight of the aldermen was at least 33 years; figures for the remainder are problematic since they were either out-of-craft, or their admissions had been semi-honorific in nature. At least one, however, Roger Thornes, had served as bailiff as long ago as 1497. By contrast, common councillors were younger. Twenty councillors can be traced, and they had been masters for an average period of approximately 21–23 years. These too represent minimum figures, since the length of mastership of five councillors can only be estimated on the basis of their admissions to the burgess-ship, which must have occurred subsequent to their acquisition of master status. Thus John Barton (sherman) was admitted a burgess in 1492, George Spurstowe (sherman) in 1495, John Coton (barber) in 1492, and David ap Reignald (baker) in 1507.

The institutional structure, however, was not a strict gerontocracy since civic office was not automatically associated with increasing age. Advancement depended upon a combination of increasing personal prosperity and biological maturation. Even this combination could be split by extreme conditions of the life-cycle. Only two aldermen were assessed at less than £20, and significantly they were the oldest among the élite. The drapers Robert Wotton and John Lloyd had been masters since at least 1485. Lloyd had even served as one of the wardens of the fellowship in that year, and his unusually low assessment of £4 in 1525 may reflect the more straightened circumstances that could arise with exceptional age.

On the other hand, because it was so difficult to leap-frog the customary sequence of civic advancement, wealthy young masters were never found among the conciliar élite. Apart from the anomalous cases set by semi-honorific admissions, not one of the seven drapers and mercers assessed at £12 or more in 1525, and who had become masters within the previous seven years, had yet become councillors – including John Baynes, one of the wealthiest men in Shrewsbury (see table 6).

Such considerations are relevant to the issue of the relative 'openness' of urban institutions. It has been argued that town government in this period constituted a 'porous oligarchy'; at Oxford at least, political responsibility was shared among a fairly large proportion of adult males, and the rate of conciliar turnover was such that new blood was continually being injected into the élite.[43] Moreover, analysis of the 1524–5 subsidies suggests that while the most important offices were reserved for the wealthiest citizens, 'membership in the Council in one capacity or another dipped fairly deeply into Oxford society.'[44] Here we can only touch upon this latter aspect, so far as it relates to Shrewsbury.

The Shrewsbury Council, comprising the twelve and twenty four, was smaller and less complex than the Oxford conciliar membership of some 60 men. This alone would make it less likely that the élite could include poorer citizens whose wealth was more representative of the town as a whole. While a few humble

individuals did sit on the Council, the great majority were assessed at the higher rates (see table 7). However, nine of the fifteen craft fellowships were represented on the Council, and it is clear that provided he attained a sufficient degree of prosperity, a master from even a quite lowly craft could aspire to the councillorship. Thus, the richest masters in the Barbers', Shermen's, Butchers' and Glovers' fellowships were all common councillors. So too were the second most prosperous masters among the Barbers, Shermen, Corvisors and Bakers. It is true that the Mercers and Drapers provided the great majority of aldermen and common councillors (25 out of 36), but for the simple reason that they provided the lion's share of affluent tradesmen (see table 3). Thus, although conciliar office was largely confined to the rich, the structure was 'open' in the sense that there was no overt, occupational discrimination; sufficient 'auncience' and means were often rewarded with office. Of course, structural dispositions of this kind towards a modified 'openness' do not necessarily mean that every voice on the Council had equal weight. In practice, political alliances, graft and intimidation (for which there is some evidence) could all be employed to the advantage of a few.

* * *

Finally, we can briefly consider Shrewsbury's contribution to the Lay Subsidy in comparison with other towns. As we have noted, in terms of its total payments, the town was ranked about 26th in the urban hierarchy. In terms of the number of taxpayers, however, it ranked at least fifteenth. In fact, several towns, including Leicester, Northampton, Worcester, Gloucester and Southampton, all contributed higher sums to the subsidy, even though they possessed fewer taxpayers. In this respect, Shrewsbury appears to have been relatively poorer than elsewhere. The precise relation cannot be known until systematic comparisons have been made, allowing for variations in tax penetration. But the conclusion is not implausible. For example, Shrewsbury does not appear to have been particularly well-endowed with those exceptionally prosperous citizens who owned such a disproportionate amount of taxable wealth. The percentage of taxpayers assessed on £20 or more was 5.2, compared with 5.9 in Hereford, 6.2 in Leicester and Worcester, 7.1 in York (excluding incomes on land), 11.2 in Exeter and 11.4 in Norwich.[45] Equally, there is no sign of those 'super-rich' merchants assessed on over £100 in goods who, as Dyer has noted, could supply between 1–3% of all taxpayers in ports such as Bristol, Exeter or Yarmouth, and cities like Salisbury or Norwich.[46] The welsh cloth trade in particular had yet to create the substantial personal fortunes encountered in later decades – for example, that of the draper Thomas Jones, whose personal estate in 1638 was valued at between £30–40,000.[47]

Nor could Shrewsbury's prosperity have been assisted by its location within one of the poorest counties in England, and by the fact that it had only recently begun to recover from the exceptionally severe marketing contraction between 1450 and 1500.[48] These are the kind of factors which will need to be invoked to explain the town's relatively low standing in the urban hierarchy of taxable wealth.

[1] Shropshire Record Office, accession 3365, Shrewsbury Borough Records (hereafter S.B.R.) 169 and 170.
[2] S.B.R. 169.
[3] S.B.R. 172.
[4] S.B.R. 193.
[5] J. Cornwall, 'English population in the early sixteenth century', *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, 2nd ser., **xxiii**, 1970; Bruce M.S. Campbell, 'The population of early Tudor England: a re-evaluation of the 1522 Muster Returns and 1524 and 1525 Lay Subsidies', *J. Hist. Geog.* 7, 1981.
[6] C.V. Phythian-Adams, 'Urban decay in Late Medieval England', in P. Abrams and E.A. Wrigley, *Towns in societies: essays in economic history and historical sociology*, 1978, 170.
[7] Evidence for one ward in the Coventry census of 1523 indicates that few journeymen lived in their masters' houses. C.V. Phythian-Adams, *Desolation of a city: Coventry and the urban crisis of the Late Middle Ages*, 1979, 99.
[8] *Ibid.*, 202; P. Laslett, 'Mean household size in England since the sixteenth century', in P. Laslett and R. Wall (eds.), *Household and family in past time*, 1972, 147, table 4.9.
[9] W.A. Champion, *Population change in Shrewsbury, 1400–1700*, unpublished typescript, 1983 (copy deposited in Shrewsbury Local Studies Library, MS 6821), 46, 57. For the view of frankpledge, see S.B.R. 1842, part I, paperbook 3.
[10] S.B.R. 985, assessments of various dates for the payment of wages to the parliamentary burgesses. The term 'Occupaciones' was often used to denote the craft fellowships.
[11] Rev. W.A. Leighton, 'The Guilds of Shrewsbury. Mercers, Ironmongers, and Goldsmiths' Company', *T.S.A.S.*, **viii**, 1885, 309–10; I.M. Rope (ed.), 'The earliest book of the Drapers' Company, Shrewsbury', *T.S.A.S.*, 4th ser., **iv**, 1914, 215–27. (For earlier admissions, see 4th ser., **iii**).
[12] Rev. W.A. Leighton, *loc. cit.*, 309.
[13] See, for example, Phythian-Adams, *Desolation of a city*, 205–9.
[14] *Ibid.*, 103–4 and 131, table 9.
[15] *Ibid.*, 208, table 18.
[16] National Library of Wales, Castle Hill MSS, 2641, part 2. Dates can be inferred from internal evidence.
[17] Phythian-Adams, *op. cit.*, 210–11.
[18] *Ibid.*, 104.
[19] *Ibid.*

[20] See the agreement between master weavers and the journeymen's fellowship over the provision of recreational facilities in 1475, National Library of Wales, Castle Hill MSS, 2637.

[21] Local Studies Library, Shrewsbury (hereafter S.P.L.), MS 4274, fos. 3^{v}–7^{r}; 9^{r}–13^{v}.

[22] A note in the Mercers' records for 2 June 1518 refers to a meeting '. . . for the reformacon of dyvers articles betwixt the masters and the Jorneymen.' S.P.L., MS 4260, book 4, fo. 51^{r}.

[23] Phythian-Adams, *op. cit.*, 208, table 18.

[24] L.F. Chitty (ed.), 'The earliest book of the Drapers' Company', *T.S.A.S.*, 4th ser., **ix**, 1923–4, 261–2. The total is derived by excluding a small number of apprentices and individuals listed twice in error. For the Mercers, see S.P.L., MS 4260, book 4, fos. 91, 62. Virtually every mercer identified as a master and listed in 1525 can be found among entries of admission to the fellowship before that date.

[25] National Library of Wales, Castle Hill MSS, 2641, part I (temp. wardens George Ryland and Richard Bulgh). Forty six names in this list can be found in the 1525 assessment.

[26] S.P.L., MS 4274, fos. 9^{r}–13^{r}.

[27] W.A. Champion, *op. cit.*, 5–6.

[28] *Ibid.*, 69–76.

[29] J.C. Russell, *British medieval population*, Albuquerque, 1948, 142; John Hatcher, *Plague, population and the English economy, 1348–1530*, 1977, 13–14.

[30] A full analysis can be found in W.A. Champion, *op. cit.*

[31] W.G. Hoskins, *Local history in England*, 2nd edn, 1972, 239; J. Patten, *English towns, 1500–1700*, 1978, 42, table 2.

[32] Phythian-Adams, *Desolation of a city*, 12, table 3.

[33] C.V. Phythian-Adams, 'The economic and social structure', in *The fabric of the traditional community*, Open University third level course in English Urban History, 1500–1780, unit 5, 1977, 34.

[34] Phythian-Adams, *Desolation of a city*, 132–3.

[35] W.G. Hoskins, *Provincial England*, 1965, 84.

[36] Phythian-Adams, 'The economic and social structure', 35.

[37] I.M. Rope (ed.), 'The earliest book of the Drapers' Company, Shrewsbury', *T.S.A.S.*, 4th ser., **iii**, 1915, 145–6. See also the Star Chamber case, *c.*1517, Public Record Office, Stac. 2/25/275.

[38] Based on records of admission; see sources cited in footnote 11.

[39] S.P.L., MS 4260, book 4, fos. 84^{v}, 105^{r}.

[40] *Ibid.*, fos. 25^{v}, 100^{r}.

[41] The figures have been calculated using data on officers known to have been elected about 1525; *i.e.* for coroners, 1519–26; for auditors, 1524–8; for sessors, 1522–7. Guildhall, S.B.R. 68 and 75, paperbook 2.

[42] *Ibid.*

[43] Carl I. Hanmer, jnr, 'Anatomy of an Oligarchy: the Oxford Town Council in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries', *J. Brit.Stud.*, **xviii**, 1978.

[44] *Ibid.*, 14.

[45] P.R.O. E179/117/94 (Hereford, 1524); D. Charman, 'Wealth and trade in Leicester in the early sixteenth century', *Trans. Leicestershire Archaeol. Soc.*, **xxv**, 1949; A. Dyer, *The City of Worcester in the sixteenth century*, 1973, 175; D.M. Palliser, *Tudor York*, 1979, 136; W.T. MacCaffrey, *Exeter, 1540–1640*, 1975 edn, 248; J.F. Pound, 'The social and trade structure of Norwich, 1525–1575', *Past Present*, **34**, 1966.

[46] A. Dyer, 'Northampton in 1524', *Northamptonshire Past Present*, 1979, 74.

[47] *Calendar State Papers Domestic*, **12**, 1637–8 (1869), 306.

[48] John Sheail, 'The distribution of taxable population and wealth in England during the early sixteenth century', *Trans. Inst. Brit. Geogr.*, **55**, 1972, 120. For Shrewsbury's commerce in the late middle ages, see my forthcoming study on this subject.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS AND STANDING BUILDINGS SURVEY AT 36/37 THE WHARFAGE, IRONBRIDGE

By JULIAN C. TEMPLE

The chance discovery of 17th century pottery and clay tobacco pipes at the garden entrance to a group of late 18th/early 19th century buildings within the Ironbridge Gorge Conservation Area led to investigation of the site by the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust Archaeology Unit during August and September 1983, in advance of demolition and redevelopment. The full archaeological report, together with a supporting archive of further related material, is deposited in the IGMT Library. A shortened version is presented in this article.

Known as 36/37 The Wharfage (SJ 66690373), the site is located on the north bank of the River Severn approximately a third of a mile ($\frac{1}{2}$ km.) upstream from the Iron Bridge (fig.1). On the east side lies the Severn Warehouse Visitor Centre and Car Park, while to the west is the Merrythought Ltd toy factory, on the site of an early 20th century foundry operated by the Coalbrookdale Company. The Madeley parish tithe map (1847) shows the property alongside the main plateway from the Coalbrookdale ironworks, where it crossed the street before reaching the wharves and loading areas of the Severn Warehouse. The close proximity of the site to the Coalbrookdale plateway network is well illustrated in a photograph published in *The Locomotive*, 19 December 1917, 224. Recently the site has been changed drastically with the construction of Westgate House by Galliers Homes of Shrewsbury, to provide a number of self-contained flats. The area of land between the site and river is owned by Merrythought Ltd but no longer slopes gently down to the Severn, as it was raised by about 3m. a few years ago to provide a car park for the adjacent factory.

Before redevelopment began, the owner of the site (Telford Development Corporation) gave permission for archaeological excavations behind the standing buildings, and initially two trial trenches were excavated to determine whether the chance finds of 17th century material represented any earlier use of the site, perhaps connected with a developing waterfront. Unfortunately it was soon proved that there was very little stratigraphy over much of the site and relatively few dateable archaeological contexts out of a total of 59 recorded. Altogether nine trial trenches were dug which suggested overall that there had been very little past activity on the site prior to the 18th century, and also the trenches which had some stratigraphy were those nearest to the standing buildings where the archaeological contexts were the result of 18th and 19th century building construction.

The 17th century clay pipes and pottery originally evident at the garden entrance were in fact soon confirmed as having been recently dumped by builders renovating a cottage at 9 Severn Bank, Ironbridge

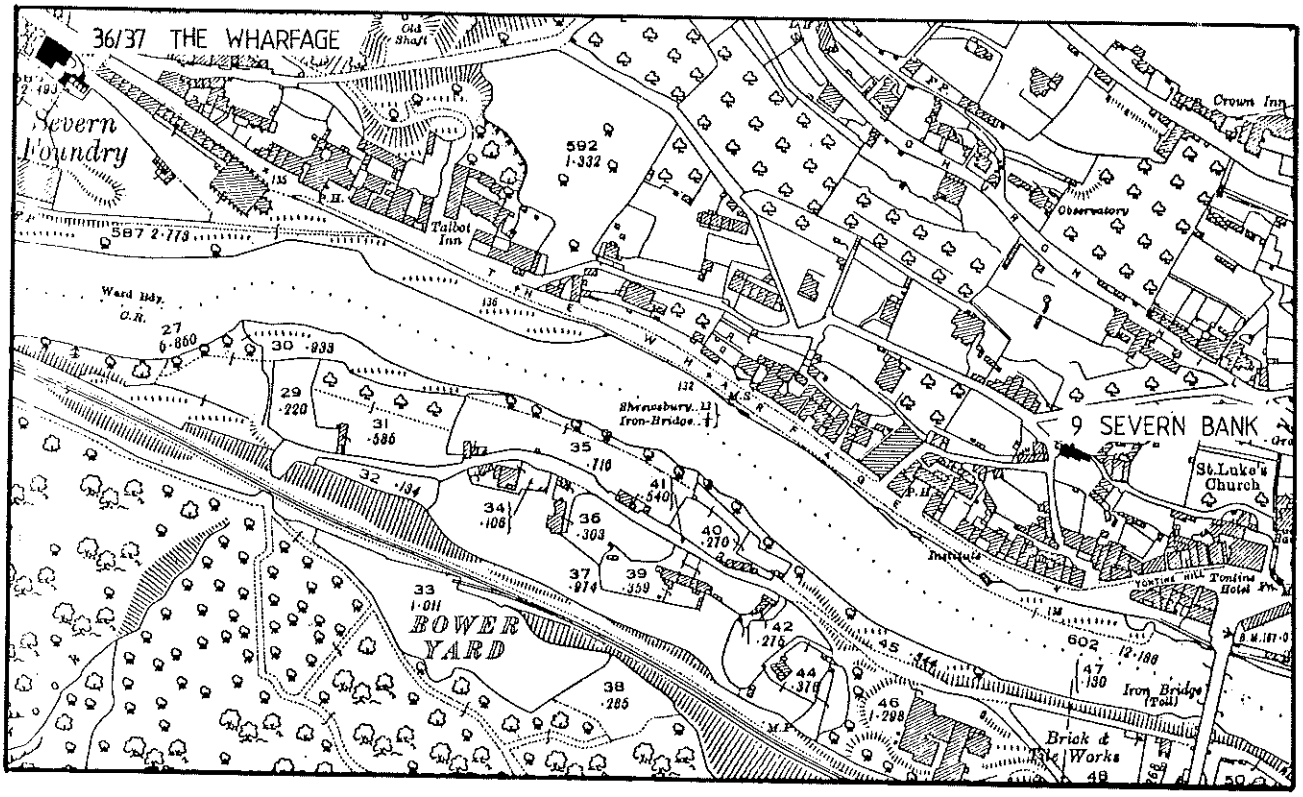


FIG. 1 LOCATION MAP SHOWING 36/37 THE WHARFAGE AND 9 SEVERN BANK, IRONBRIDGE (OS 25in., 1927, SHEET 43:14)

(SJ 67160351). Nevertheless, despite having no direct relevance to 36/37 The Wharfage, these 17th and 18th century finds did provide useful information on local pottery types, and the clay tobacco pipes provided a wealth of new information on the important local Broseley clay pipe industry. The clay pipe report by D.A. Higgins is included in full in this article. The pottery was subjected to comprehensive analysis by J.P. Cotter, and predictably it consisted of a varied and representative selection of predominantly 17th–20th century pottery both of local and imported origin. The majority of the pottery finds came from disturbed topsoil layers, and particularly from the earth dumped in the garden from 9 Severn Bank. Owing to this fairly unusual situation, with the lack of pottery from excavated contexts and the relative unimportance of the pottery in comparison to the clay tobacco pipes, the pottery report is omitted from this article, except for the pottery catalogue and illustrations together with a short summary.

It became clear by mid August 1983 that the derelict buildings on the site were soon due for demolition in spite of their listed building status. Accordingly, the Unit carried out a detailed buildings survey, which is given below. Perhaps the most interesting discovery was that of a pair of possibly early 19th century cast iron columns incorporated into the shopfront of No. 36. The history of the site from the earliest record of 1792 was revealed by subsequent documentary research. This is presented below as the first part of the report.

The author acknowledges the work done by many members of the IGMT Archaeology Unit, especially J.P. Cotter for the pottery report and finds drawings, D.A. Higgins for the clay tobacco pipe report, and H. Farley for documentary research.

KNOWN HISTORY OF THE SITE

The earliest documentary sources relating to 36/37 The Wharfage – and for neighbouring No. 35 which still stands (1984) – are the deeds kept by Telford Development Corporation (TDC Deed Pkt nos 104 and 495). These go back to 9 September 1792 when a 99 year lease was signed between the owner Richard Reynolds and Thomas Fletcher, the lease to come into effect from the previous March. Thomas Fletcher agreed to maintain the buildings and any others yet to be erected, as well as to look after the outside of the property.

The earliest form of the standing buildings was most likely as a single dwelling and shop, yet the earliest historical evidence for any retailing activity here is Pigot's trade directory of 1822–3, which states that a Mary and Sarah Fletcher were grocers. Sarah Fletcher was the wife of Thomas Fletcher, and she took over the lease after her husband's death in June 1817.

According to the deeds, by 1838 the property had been divided into two parts by Thomas Owen at his own expense, following his marriage to Sarah Fletcher's daughter Jane in 1824. This subdivision may perhaps have been achieved without any significant alterations to the exterior, and it is recorded that Thomas and Jane Owen lived in the western end of the converted property, occupying rent-free a kitchen, brewhouse, cellar, two parlours, a passage-way, two first-floor bedrooms and an attic. Jane Owen became responsible for the lease after the death of her mother in March 1839. Several trade directories of the 1840s as well as the 1841 census record Thomas Owen's occupation as a grocer/shop-keeper in Coalbrookdale. Slater's directory of 1850 also refers to him as a maltster, and other directories from 1849 to 1875 include him among the 'nobility, gentry and clergy'.

More extensive alterations had occurred by 1872 when the dwelling house had been extended to include a third part in the occupation of a William Jones and a William Horton. This development could well account for the addition of extra rooms at ground and first floor level, built out over the yard, and over a 15ft deep well to the rear of No. 36.

Thomas Owen died in March 1875 and left one part of his property to his second wife Elizabeth, and the other to his sister Sarah Lloyd. The latter's son, John Owen Lloyd, gained full control of the property by the 1890s and sold it to the Ketley Brothers for £84 in 1892. They were already running the grocer's shop according to Kelly's directory of 1891, and also lived in part of the buildings. The Ketley brothers had broken away from family tradition in starting their own grocery business; the great grandfather of Mr Percy Ketley Roberts, the last owner of Nos 36/37, had been manager of the Stirchley Ironworks. This area of Ironbridge is also known as Dale End, Coalbrookdale – which possibly may not be due to its situation between Ironbridge and Coalbrookdale but to Raymond Ketley's training in the grocery trade at Dale End in Birmingham. Dale End as a road appears never to have existed.

The shop itself in No. 36 apparently remained a grocer's and general store for much of its life. Although the last of the Ketley brothers died in 1923 and bequeathed the business to his brother-in-law, William Percy Charles Roberts, the store continued to be known as Ketley's Shop. An advertisement from the 1950s still referred to 'Ketley Brothers, Family Grocers, Tea and Provision Merchants'. However by the time of the shop's closure in 1965, it had become more of a general store under the 'VG Foodstore' tradename.

It is not known precisely when the property was last used as a dwelling, but its last real function was as a social and recreational area for a local rowing club who rented the main part of No. 36 from Telford Development Corporation in the mid 1970s. However this did not stop the decline of the buildings, as planning consent for their demolition was obtained by 1978, and their Grade II listed building status was simply overruled by the declaration that the property had become dangerous and structurally unsafe. After almost five years of further dereliction, the buildings were demolished largely between 29 September and 3 October 1983, to be replaced by Westgate House, a block of self-contained, one and two-bedroomed apartments, by the summer of 1984.

STANDING BUILDINGS SURVEY

A comprehensive record of the interiors and exteriors of 36/37 The Wharfage was made by means of black and white photographs, colour slides, and measured plans and elevations. A set of plans was later obtained from Telford Development Corporation, and an independent photographic record was made on 24 August 1983 by the RCHM National Monuments Record (England). A room by room analysis of the buildings' architectural features was carried out in early September by Philip Parker, an architect on the Institute of Industrial Archaeology Diploma course. This record is available in the IGMT Library. The plans of the buildings are reproduced here as figs 2–6.

Despite the 19th century alterations connected with the subdivision of the interior, the construction of this group of buildings is fairly straightforward. The eventual three dwellings together formed one single structure (plus several outbuildings), and this was of conventional brick and mortar construction throughout, with a timber roof-framework and timber floors. The bricks were of local manufacture (precise manufacturer unknown), and the roof was clad with red 'Broseley – type' plain rectangular roof tiles – but in room SF2 the roofing tile laths were sawn and not split, indicating the replacement of laths at a later date. Nos 36/37 The Wharfage was essentially a three-storey building with the main part alongside

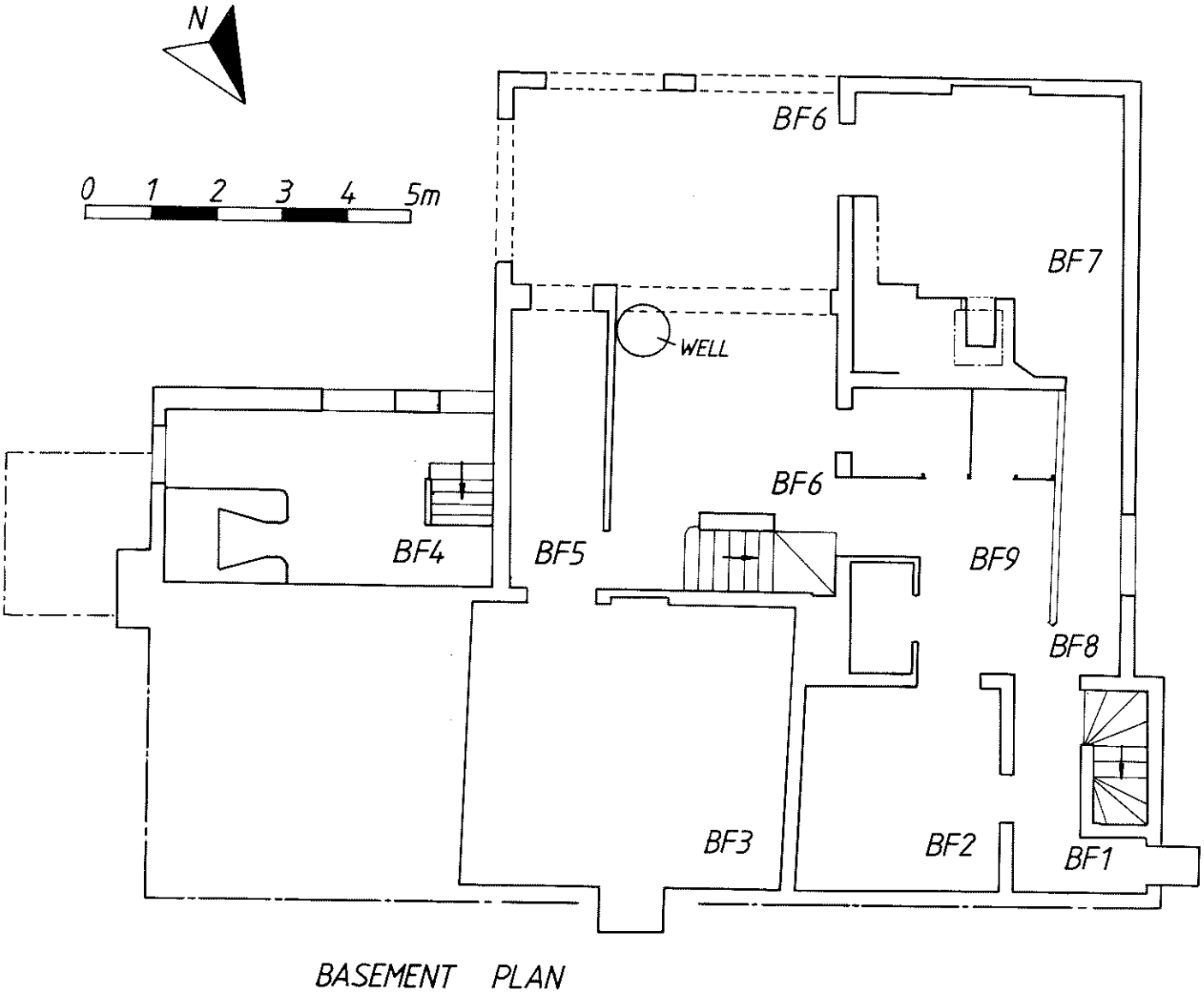


FIG. 2 36/37 THE WHARFAGE, IRONBRIDGE. BASEMENT PLAN

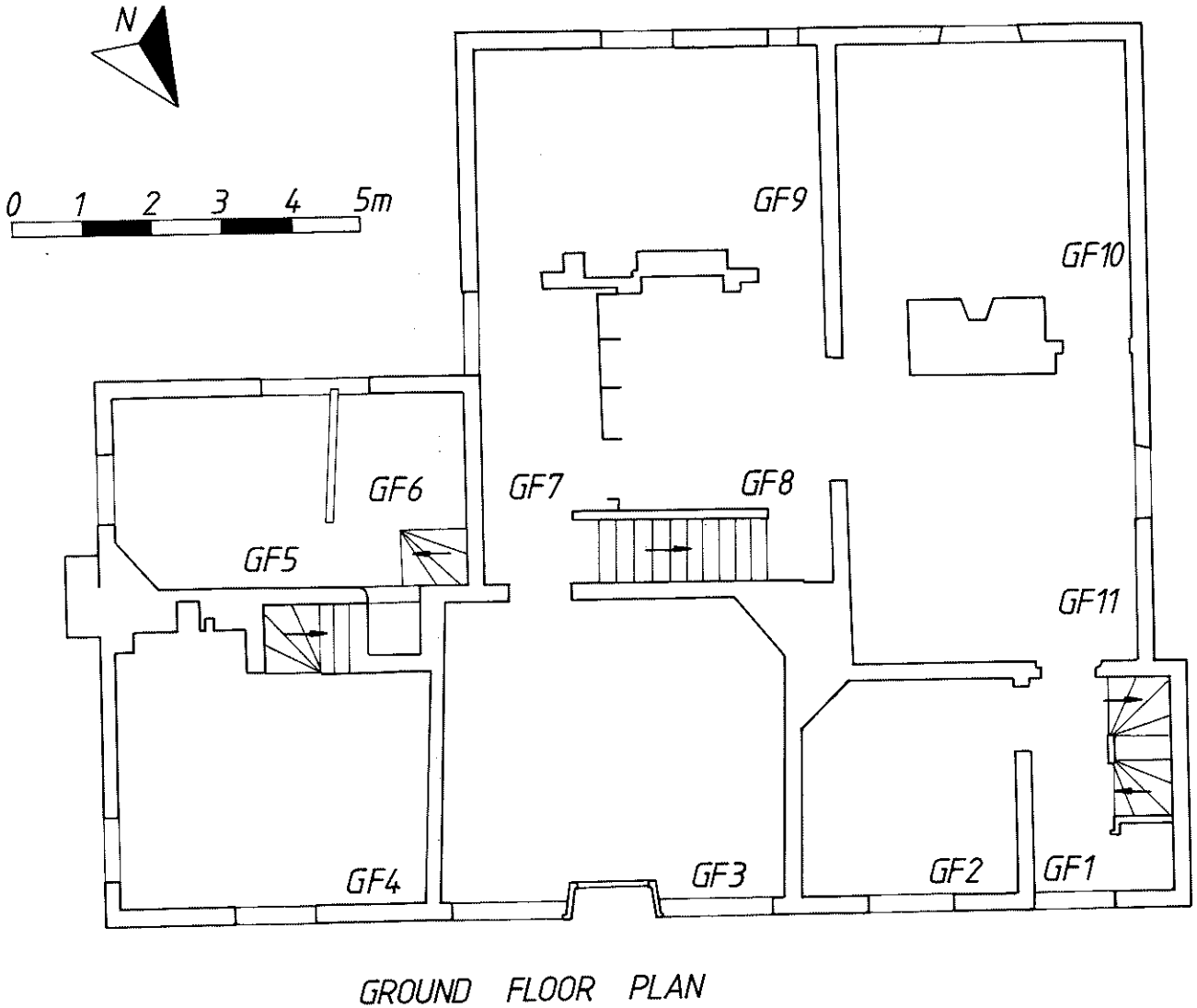


FIG. 3 36/37 THE WHARFAGE, IRONBRIDGE. GROUND FLOOR PLAN

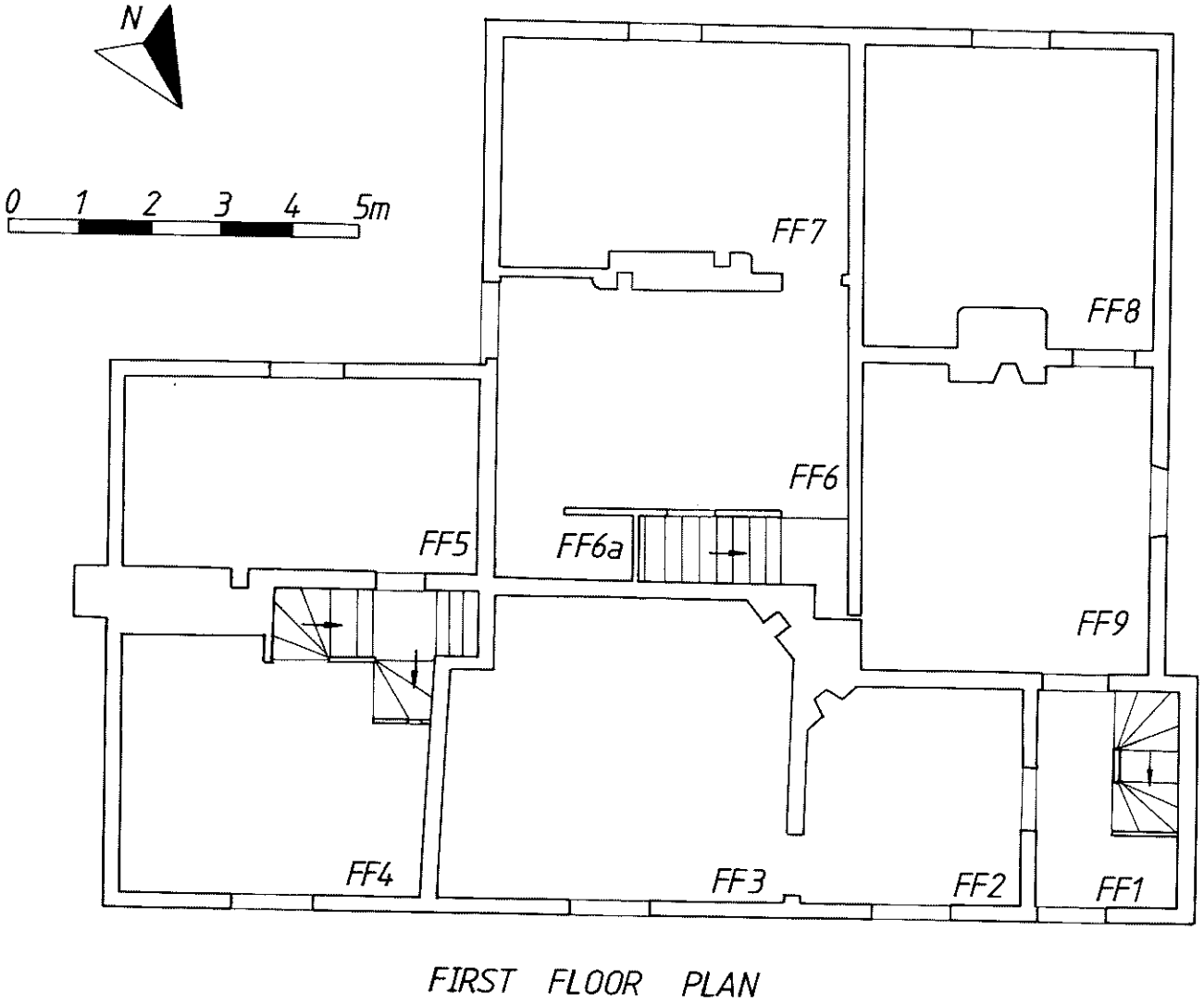


FIG. 4 36/37 THE WHARFAGE, IRONBRIDGE. FIRST FLOOR PLAN

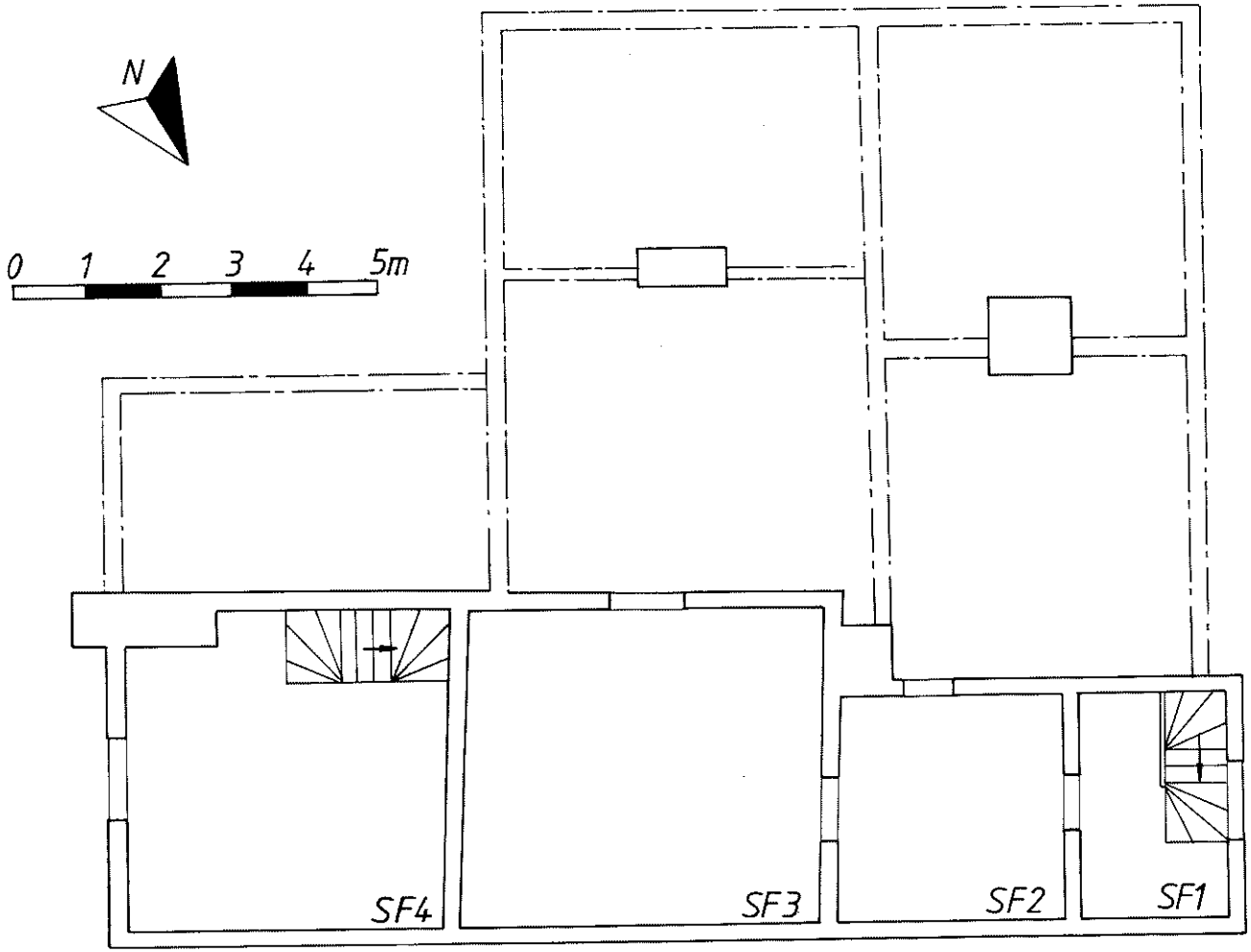


FIG. 5 36/37 THE WHARFAGE, IRONBRIDGE. SECOND FLOOR PLAN

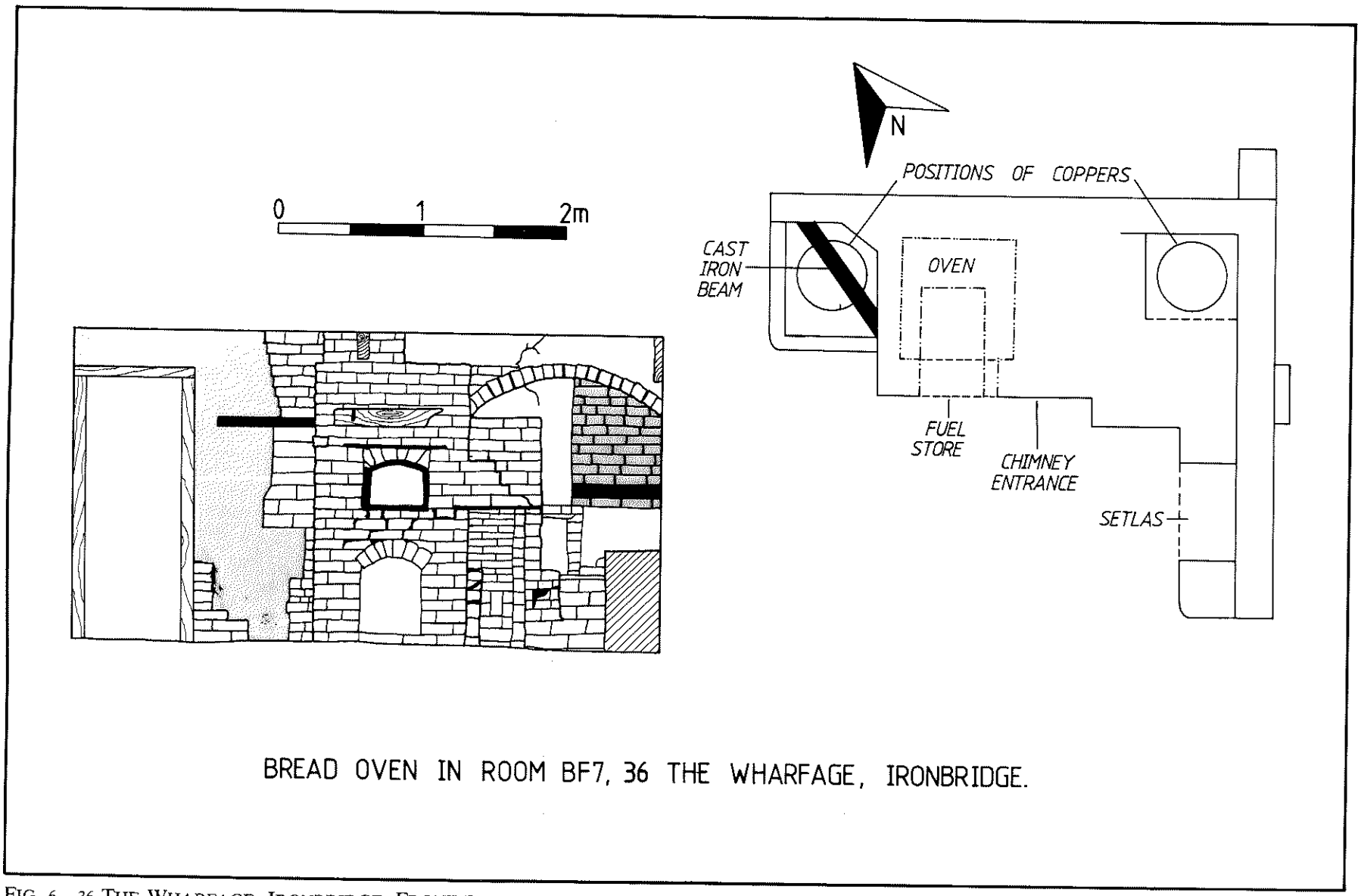


FIG. 6 36 THE WHARFAGE, IRONBRIDGE. FRONT ELEVATION AND PLAN OF BREAD OVEN

and parallel to the main street. Three extra wings lay to the rear, though only one of these is likely to have been original and contemporary with the main building. Each wing had a gabled roof and the central one was supported at basement level by three brick arched entrances. A suggested theory of interpretation of the whole layout is given at the end of this section.

There were three main entrances to the properties; the shop entrance and front door to No. 36 being in the centre and extreme right of the street frontage respectively, and the principal access to No. 37 through a side door in the east gable end. The front entrance to No. 36 had a tiled floor made by the Craven Dunnill Co. in the hallway. All windows were of wooden construction, one or two with iron bars, and at least five of the rear ones were sash windows complete with either 7lb. lead, and 7lb. or 9lb. cast iron weights at each side. An interesting find was the discovery of a fragile lead-framed window panel with diamond-shaped panes at the rear of rooms GF5 and GF6. This was probably the oldest surviving window in the building; it indicates their original external appearance and had been accidently preserved through being boarded over on the outside, and lath and plastered on the inside. The surviving example of what were once three panels was carefully photographed *in situ* and then removed for conservation.

In the basement, most of the cellars appeared to have been disused for some time, but after the clearance of refuse and rubble, two domestic bread ovens were found in separate rooms. One of these, beneath No. 36 (fig.6), had brick supports for two large coppers on either side of the oven itself, and a small 'setlas' was positioned alongside an adjacent wall too. This larger oven could once perhaps have been a communal brewhouse, unless the coppers were only used for heating water for washing clothes. Besides their obvious use for brewing ale, brewhouses were also sometimes used for hanging up a freshly-killed pig before it was dressed. Another basement room did contain a large rectangular broken stone slab with a shallow groove along two edges running to a drainage groove, the whole slab being mounted on a brick plinth. Perhaps this was connected with the slaughtering of pigs to produce bacon which was later hung up to cure on the many hooks in the ceiling of room FF6, behind and above the shop.

Other significant features include a pair of identical decorated cast iron columns found built into the shop front of No. 36. These are likely to be Coalbrookdale Company products but are of unknown date. So far, there is insufficient evidence to assign them definitely to the late 18th century, and the fact that their form displays a combination of features influenced by a taste for both Egyptian and Gothic styles might suggest an early 19th century origin instead. Examining one column in detail (fig.7), its engaged shafts owe more to the Gothic style than to the clearly classical and 'Egyptian' inspiration of the capital. Each column is tall and slender, widening slightly towards the base, and composed of four engaged semi-circular shafts producing a Quatrefoil cross section. Two moulded rings or annulets occur at intervals along the column equidistant from the capital and the base. The capital is complex; resting on a prominent moulding (bead above concave fillet) are four elongated and feather-like palmettes in high relief with intervening filaments, all around the column. Above these the four shafts terminate in simple Doric-style capitals which support a series of plain and moulded architraves and cornice. The base is splayed and rests on a flat square plinth identical to the cornice, and on both columns a casting line is visible dividing them into two symmetrical halves.

Also important is the unusual double-floor in room FF8. Here a long tapering wooden pole of circular cross section ran north-south across the length of the room and was built into the wall at each end to a depth of 100mm. It had been used to support one set of floor joists. The appearance of this beam, with rope marks and a slot cut to house a pulley, suggests possible architectural reuse of a mast from a river barge. Even so, apart from acting as an extra brace to strengthen the floor, its proper function remains uncertain.

Based mainly on structural evidence (especially features such as straight-joints between the main body of the buildings along the street frontage and the wings extending to the rear), it would seem a likely theory that the original building first recorded in the deed of 1792 had an L-shaped plan consisting of the street frontage and a wing to the rear at the west end nearest the factory. When the property was altered to create two dwellings by 1838, the extra wing on the east end was built to provide more accommodation with rooms GF5 and GF6, FF5 and BF3. Between then and the early 1870s, an open yard existed between the two wings at the rear. The 15ft deep well there may also have been in use by this date. The third, final suggested structural phase was when this yard area was roofed over (but not totally enclosed) by means of three large brick arched entrances, and two extra floors were added above this : rooms GF7, GF8, GF9, FF6 and FF7.

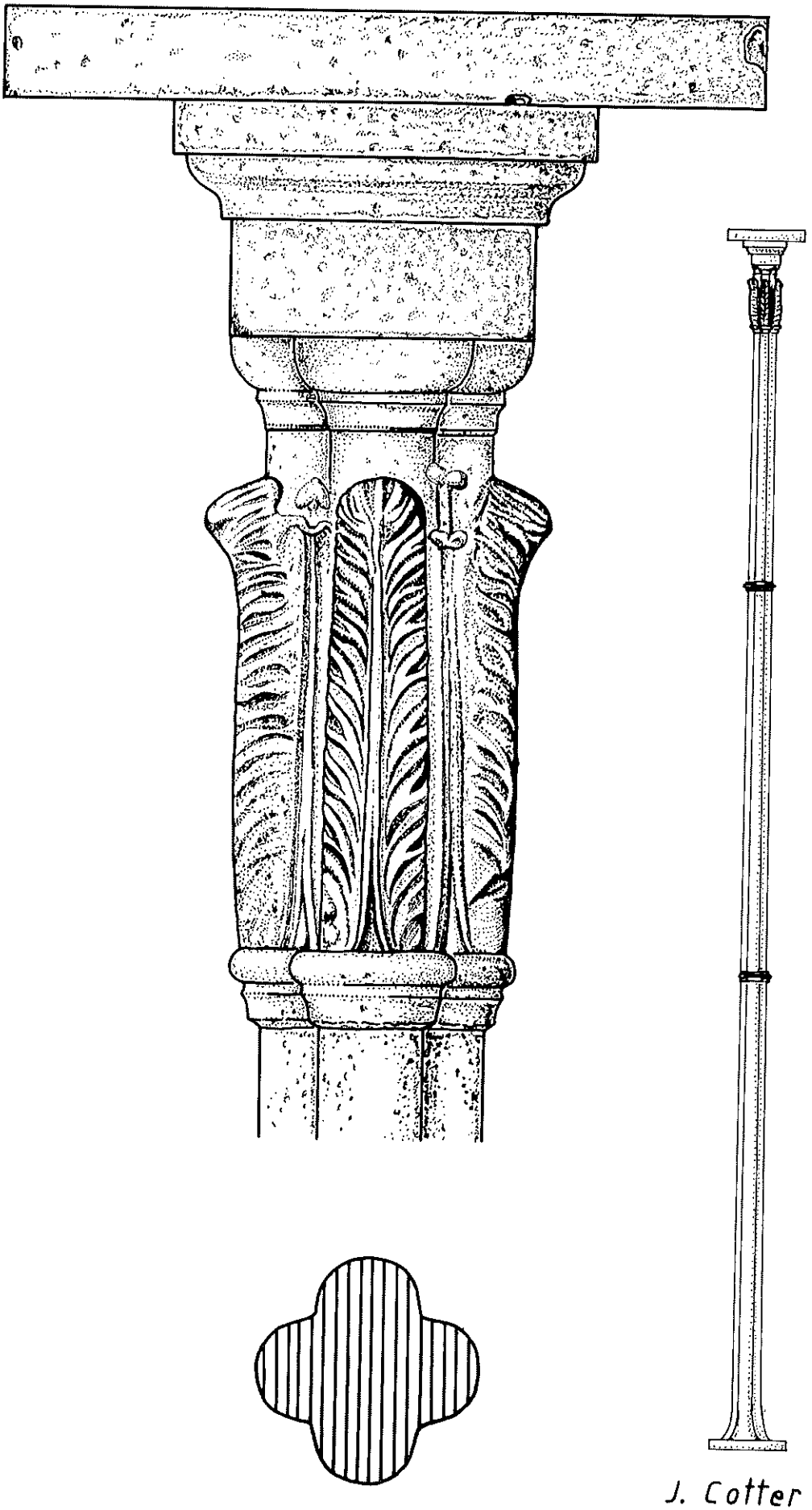


FIG. 7 CAST IRON COLUMN FROM SHOPFRONT OF 36 THE WHARFAGE. (Detail of capital drawn at 1:1; column at 1:10). Drawn by J. P. Cotter.

THE CLAY TOBACCO PIPES, *by* D.A. Higgins

In May 1983 the author collected a group of pipes from a builder's ramp thrown up alongside the derelict buildings at 36/37 The Wharfage. Since these were predominantly 17th century in date, and thought to have come from behind the buildings, trial excavation was carried out in advance of redevelopment to find if they represented early use of the waterfront area.

The excavation produced 822 pieces of pipe (112 bowl, 795 stem and 5 mouthpiece fragments) from 24 contexts. The vast majority of these (603 fragments) came from context 8 – the builder's ramp. It was soon realised that this material did not match any other on the site, and was found to have been tipped there from building work at 9 Severn Bank in Ironbridge.

The material has been examined in detail and information on the date, markings and decoration of each piece is given in the archive report, together with details of burnishing, milling, *etc.* From this has been drawn the context summary (also in the archive) in which the total number of pieces from each layer with their overall date range is given. In addition casts have been made of all the stamps and these are housed in the Museum's pipe stamp reference collection. Forty-four of the pipes have been illustrated at 1:1 and where the stamp impression is good details have been drawn at 2:1. Burnishing lines have been shown on all pipes so treated. These illustrations are reproduced here as figs 8–10.

Only contexts 10 (topsoil), 53 and 57 seemed to contain only 18th century material, and of these only 57 contained more than one piece of pipe. No contexts were exclusively 17th century and apart from context 8 only 28 pieces were attributed to that century. This suggests that a very low level of activity is represented on the site prior to the 18th century, and that almost all the layers found on the site have been disturbed by or are the result of the late 18th century building work. This seems surprising considering the site's position between Ironbridge and Coalbrookdale where at the very least domestic tipping would be expected.

All the marks on these pieces (excluding context 8) are stem stamps. Unfortunately the 19th century Broseley industry lacks the diversity of earlier periods as pipemaking became centred on a few large concerns. The marks of the Southorn family are most numerous (six examples of incuse stem marks, W., J. or E. Southorn/Broseley), but they are notoriously difficult to date. Production using old moulds continued until the 1950s and has been started on occasion since. Other 19th century marks include Samuel Roden, I. Bradley (nos 39 and 40) and R. Tonkies (41 and 42), and these provide useful dates amongst the other undiagnostic 19th century bowls. Context 17, although merely topsoil, contained three marks, which would seem most likely to have been deposited 1830–50, perhaps towards the end of this period. Context 40 (subsoil) likewise contains two stamps, and again a mid 19th century date for deposition seems most likely. The only other contexts of any note are 28, which seems to contain mainly 18th century material, and 32, which contains many badly burnt fragments. These may indicate domestic tipping, since it is not uncommon to find pipes thrown onto the fire after smoking, producing burnt fragments such as these.

The 19th century bowls are usually plain and being thin rarely survive intact. The forms change little (32, 33 and 34) making dating difficult, especially since Broseley was one of the few areas in which stem rather than spur marking was the normal practice. One unusual piece however (context 32) has a moulded W on the surname side of the spur. Unfortunately the other side is damaged, but it is important to note this rare occurrence of a moulded mark in the area. Equally rare was moulded decoration – again common in other areas. One piece from context 1 (35) has a rather poorly moulded band of shamrock leaves with a central panel depicting a square and compass above open flute decoration. These motifs are common on mid 19th century pipes in the Midlands and northern England and the piece is not necessarily local. One other decorative piece (44) consists of a curved piece of stem. This would have come from a coiled pipe, produced for special occasions. Examples are found occasionally over most parts of the country and date from the 18th and 19th centuries. This example is probably 19th century and may well be an example of local manufacture.

In contrast to those layers which relate to the use and development of this site in particular, context 8 produced a wealth of information about the local pipe industry in general. Since its source in Ironbridge is known, the material maintains its importance as a group despite being disturbed. The majority of the pipes date from the 17th and early 18th centuries, one of the most diverse and productive periods in the Broseley industry. At least 20 to 30 different makers' products are represented, generally with only one or two examples of each type. This suggests domestic tipping rather than anything to do with production or trade, and indicates that settlement on the sheltered northern bank of the gorge was well established long before the bridge was built in 1779.

The most significant pipes are undoubtedly a group marked PF. In all, eighteen bowls so marked were

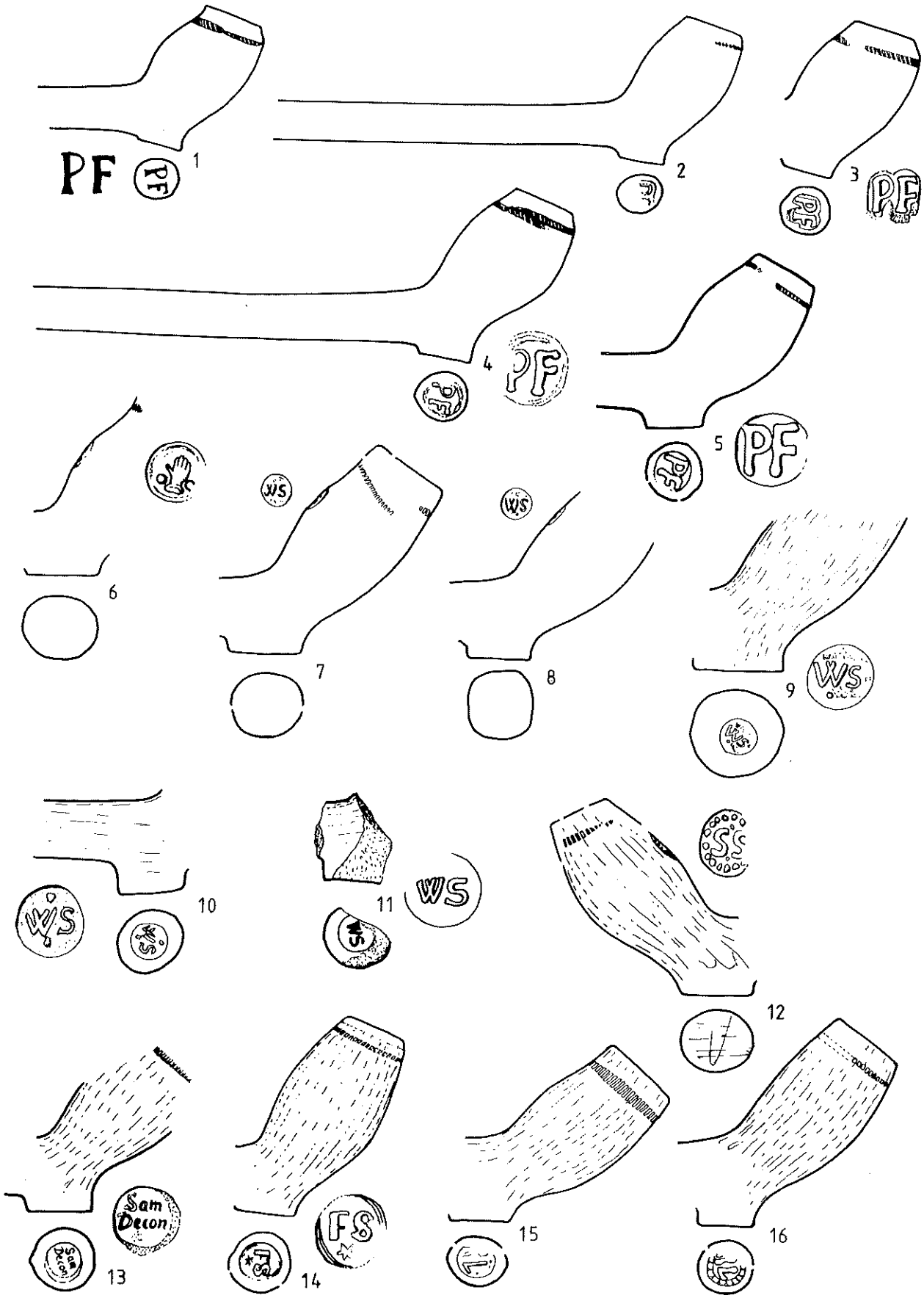


FIG. 8 36/37 THE WHARFAGE, IRONBRIDGE. CLAY TOBACCO PIPES FROM CONTEXT 8: NOS 1–16. (Drawn at 1:1, with stamp details of 1, 3–6, 9–14 at 2:1)

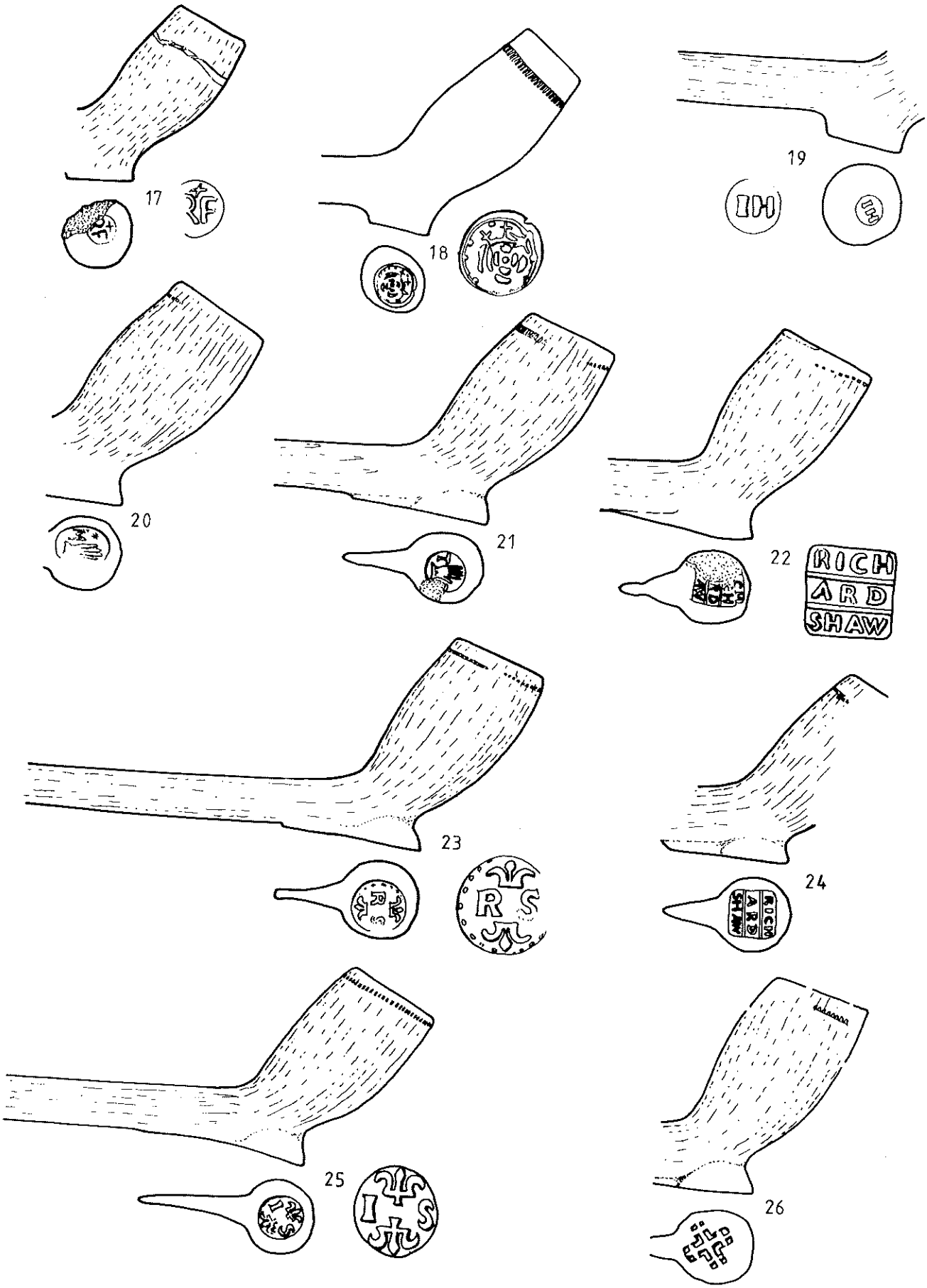


FIG. 9 36/37 THE WHARFAGE, IRONBRIDGE. CLAY TOBACCO PIPES FROM CONTEXT 8: NOS 17–26. (Drawn at 1:1, with stamp details of 17–19, 22, 23, 25 at 2:1)

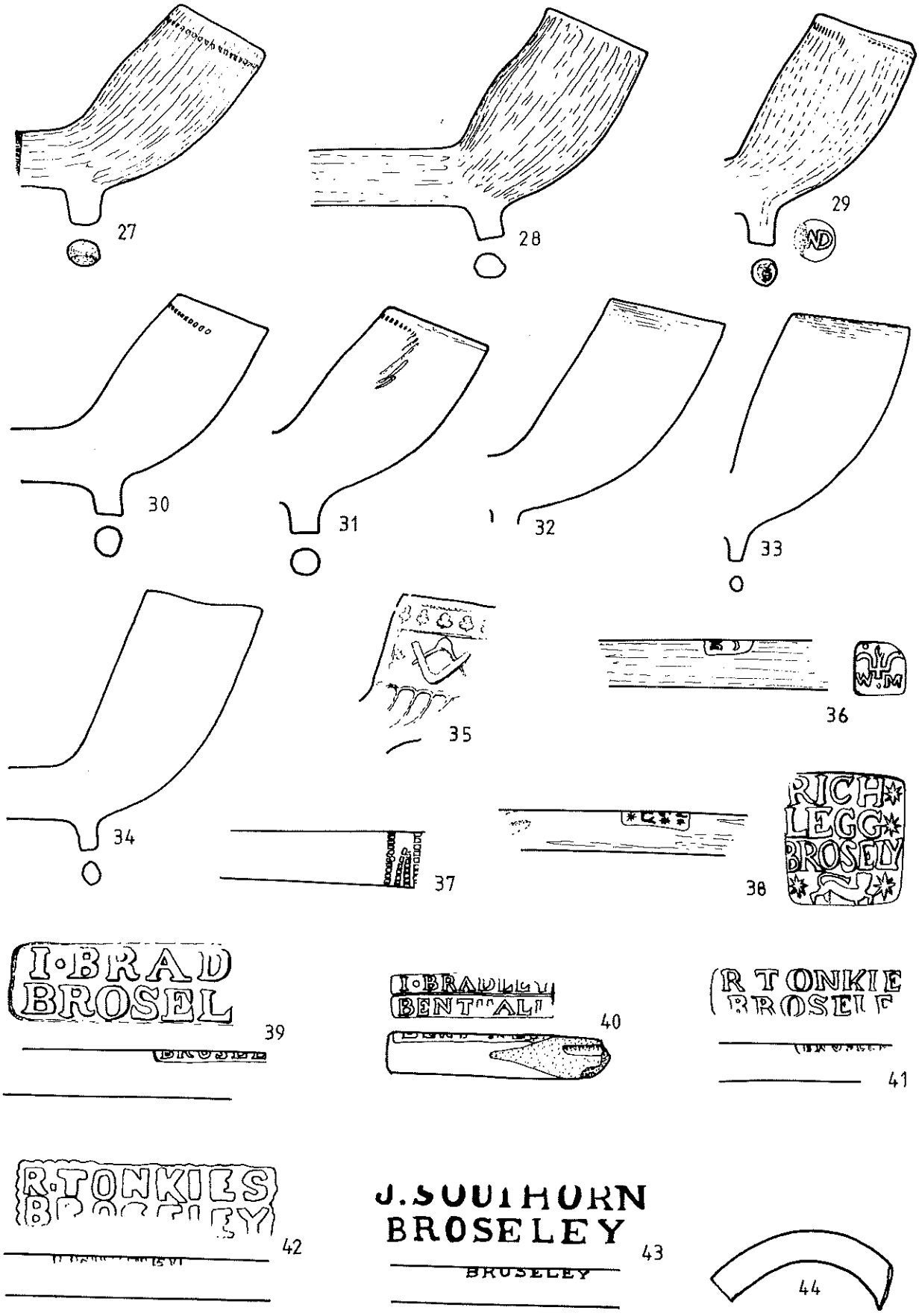


FIG. 10 36/37 THE WHARFAGE, IRONBRIDGE. CLAY TOBACCO PIPES, ALL FROM CONTEXT 8 EXCEPT 32, 35 (CONTEXT 1), 39, 42, 43 (CONTEXT 17) AND 41 (CONTEXT 40). (Drawn at 1:1, with stamp details of 29, 38, 39, 41 – 43 at 2:1)

found on the site with four stamp types and four mould types represented. The bowls date from the early period of the Broseley industry just when pipemakers were first becoming established and distinctive forms, characteristic of the area, were developing. Only one example of these stamps has been previously recorded,[1] and no makers with the surname initial F are known from Shropshire or the surrounding areas.

Bowls of this date are usually unmarked in this area so it is important at least to have established the initials of one of the earliest Broseley makers. The bowl forms range in date from *c.*1630–60, giving a good working life, and are of four types:

Bowl A Nos 1 and 2. A small compact bowl of *c.*1630–40 based on contemporary London styles. This is the earliest form produced in this area[2] and is not common. Fifteen examples were found on the site with three stamp types on them (see table below), suggesting the mould was in use for some time. Differences in profile are due to distortion during the finishing processes.

Bowl B No. 3. A similar small bowl, but with much fuller, rounded body, perhaps dating a little later than type A.

Bowl C No. 4. A much larger, more bulbous bowl forming a distinctive Broseley shape. It falls somewhere between Atkinson's 1B and 2B types and dates to the middle of the 17th century.

Bowl D No. 5. A very similar profile to type C, but with a more globular body. While C and D are clearly Broseley styles their origin in the London form A is clear.

On these bowls were found four types of PF stamp:

Type 1 No. 1. Incuse, unbordered letters PF. This is an extremely unusual mark in the Broseley area. With the exception of mid 19th century full name marks and one odd single letter H stamp,[3] all other known Broseley marks are in relief. It is significant that this unique incuse double letter mark is an early example, perhaps representing the movement of ideas to this area with the establishment of the industry. By the mid 17th century specifically Broseley styles of bowls and marking were becoming established which were to last until this century.

Type 2 No. 3. Relief letters PF in an irregular border. This is by far the most common type on the site. Eleven examples have been found. The border which attempts to follow the letter outline is also unusual, and perhaps represents an attempt to transform the incuse type 1 mark into relief letters without the conception of a field and border around them.

Type 3 No. 4. Relief letters PF in a bordered circular stamp. Although there were five examples of this mark, none are very clear.

Type 4 No. 5. Relief letters PF in an unbordered circular stamp.

The relationship of the stamps to mould types can be expressed best on a table:

	Mould A	Mould B	Mould C	Mould D	Total
Stamp 1	1				1
Stamp 2	10	1			11
Stamp 3	4		1		5
Stamp 4				1	1
TOTAL	15	1	1	1	18

With the exception of the rather sharp cut letters in stamp 1 there is a stylistic similarity between the marks. The Fs in particular have rather rounded, globular ends with no attempt at sharp serifs, and they may all be the product of one die cutter. The PF maker seems to have consistently marked his products. Only one bowl which is possibly from one of the four moulds (mould B) was found without a mark on it.

The fabric of these pipes is also distinctive. Almost all of them have a very highly fired yellow/brown to brown fabric with a sharp, glassy fracture, and numerous coarse inclusions. It is undoubtedly a local fabric and I am grateful to Mr A. Simpson at Bradford University who carried out X-ray fluorescence tests on some samples.

Quantitive analysis was carried out to compare the early PF fabric with a local 18th century fabric and an imported 19th century fabric. All of these samples were taken from stamped pipes in context 8 so the results can be applied to specific dates/makers. In all the samples the levels of three principal elements (titanium, iron and zirconium) were measured. The iron was found to be the most useful in differentiating the samples and in the PF sample the value was over twice that of the other two. This confirms that the

yellow/brown coloration is due to iron in the fabric, and suggests that more pure, iron-free clays were either not known or not readily available in the 1630s. It would be useful to carry out a fuller programme of analysis, looking particularly at early clay sources exploited, and for example comparing clays used in slip trailed earthenware during the 17th century.

PF's later products (bowl types B, C and D) tend to have a much better fabric. It is better mixed, although still containing inclusions, and fires to the more typical creamy yellow of 17th century Broseley fabrics. As with his fabrics the quality of the pipes improves rapidly with time. Although almost every bowl has complete milling round the top, the mould A pipes tend to have a very uneven, lumpy surface with air bubbles and distortion clearly visible. With the later types and improved fabrics the general appearance is much better, although none of the examples show any signs of burnishing. On all the pipes the milling tends to be very fine, with small closely spaced segments and low dividing bars.

This group of pipes forms an important indication of the early Broseley industry. It shows outside designs coming to the area and developing into the earliest Broseley styles. As with many 'local' pipe industries the early products are comparatively coarse and crude, but rapidly develop with new techniques and designs being introduced. The PF maker was clearly an important element in the foundation of the industry here. Although there is no kiln waste present, it is tempting to see this concentration of (often highly fired) material as representing a kiln in the close proximity, and on the north bank of the river rather than in Broseley.

The remaining pipes in context 8 follow through the developments of the Broseley industry during the rest of the 17th and early 18th centuries. The overall evolution of styles and marks is well known but many new marks or die variants continue to be found. The rest of the marks here seem to indicate domestic waste, since there is a good range of different types with few duplicates, although there are several WS and RL varieties. The illustrated examples (6–26, 29, 36, 38–43) show most of the main stamp types of the Broseley industry (Gauntlett, fleur-de-lys, lion, stem stamps, *etc.*) with several new marks/makers. There is, for example, a previously unrecorded maker, Richard Shaw (22), together with two bowl types (22 and 24) used by him.

One bowl of particular interest (12) has an SS stamp on the back, but is unusual since the maker has burnished the underside of the heel. A second, poor example also has this arrangement which is a notable idiosyncrasy of this maker. Stem milling and 'twist' decoration is also represented (27, 37, 38). Stem milling tends to be a few bands near the bowl (27) although admittedly the data is poor at present for Broseley. There are two or three examples of stem 'twist' decoration, but only one associated with a mark. This is the fine Rich. Legg stamp (38) which is placed *c.*15mm. from the end of a stem spiral on the bowl side.

This collection of pipes adds much detail to our knowledge of the Broseley industry and reflects the 17th and 18th century background to it. Pipes from many workshops were clearly circulating freely in Ironbridge enabling the styles to develop which became so characteristic of the area.

[1] T.H. Thursfield, 'Early Salopian pipes', *T.S.A.S.*, 3rd ser., **vii**, 1907, plate 2, no.104.
[2] D.R. Atkinson, *Tobacco pipes of Broseley, Shropshire,* 1975, type 1A.
[3] *Ibid.*, 38, fig.17.

THE POTTERY

This is a brief summary of the pottery based on the full archive report by J.P. Cotter. In all, 1736 sherds were recovered from the excavation. Of these 51% came from the dumped layer (context 8) and a further 37% were from topsoil or disturbed deposits. Only 12% could be associated with stratified deposits on site.

There was a wide range of post medieval types represented including delftwares, stonewares and porcelain. The majority reflected local production with earthenwares, stonewares, Jackfield ware, mocha ware (including wasters), porcelain and probably creamwares and whieldon wares, all coming from the local industry. The particularly high incidence of porcelain (157 sherds) shows the influence that these works had on local assemblages.

Perhaps the most important finds were the eight sherds of medieval pottery recovered from the dumped soil. The sherds vary in form and fabric but can be dated to the 13th/14th centuries. Originating in the heart of Ironbridge they provide the first evidence for a medieval origin to this settlement on the banks of the Gorge. The medieval sherds and other representative illustrations from the pottery catalogue are shown in figs 11 – 14.

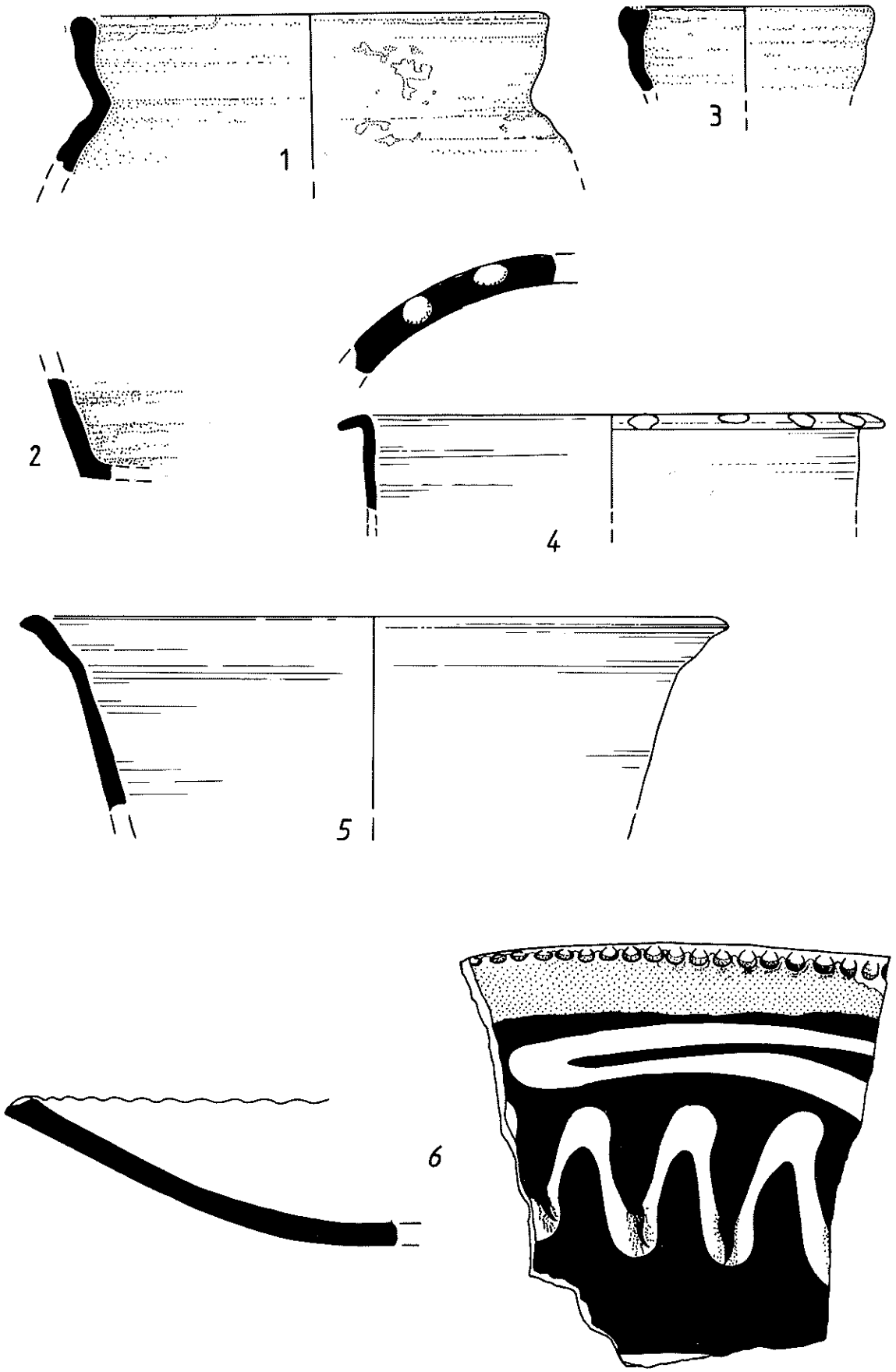


FIG. 11 36/37 THE WHARFAGE, IRONBRIDGE. POTTERY FINDS: NOS 1 – 6 (1:2)

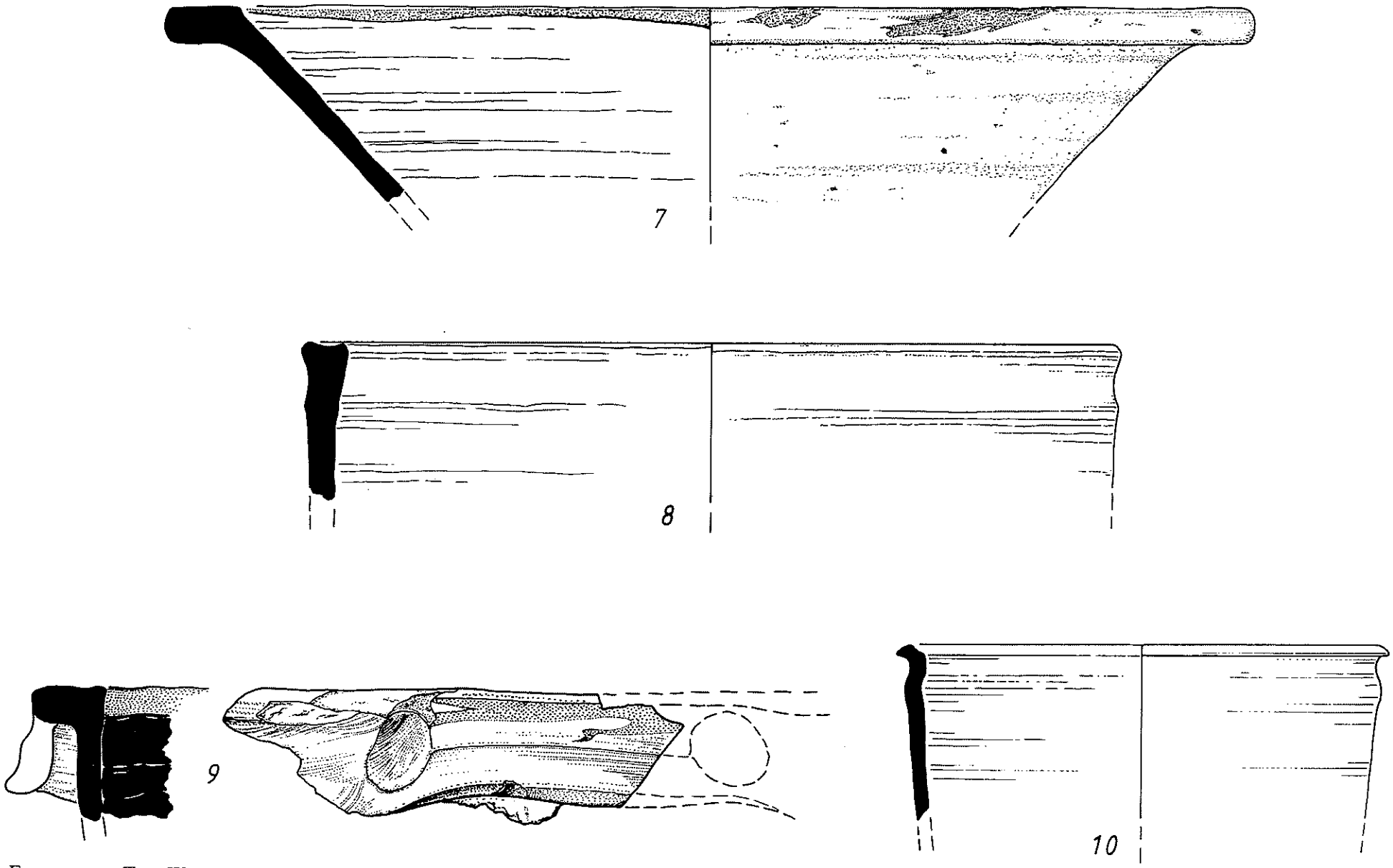


FIG. 12 36/37 THR WHARFAGE, IRONBRIDGE. POTTERY FINDS: NOS 7 – 10 (1:2)

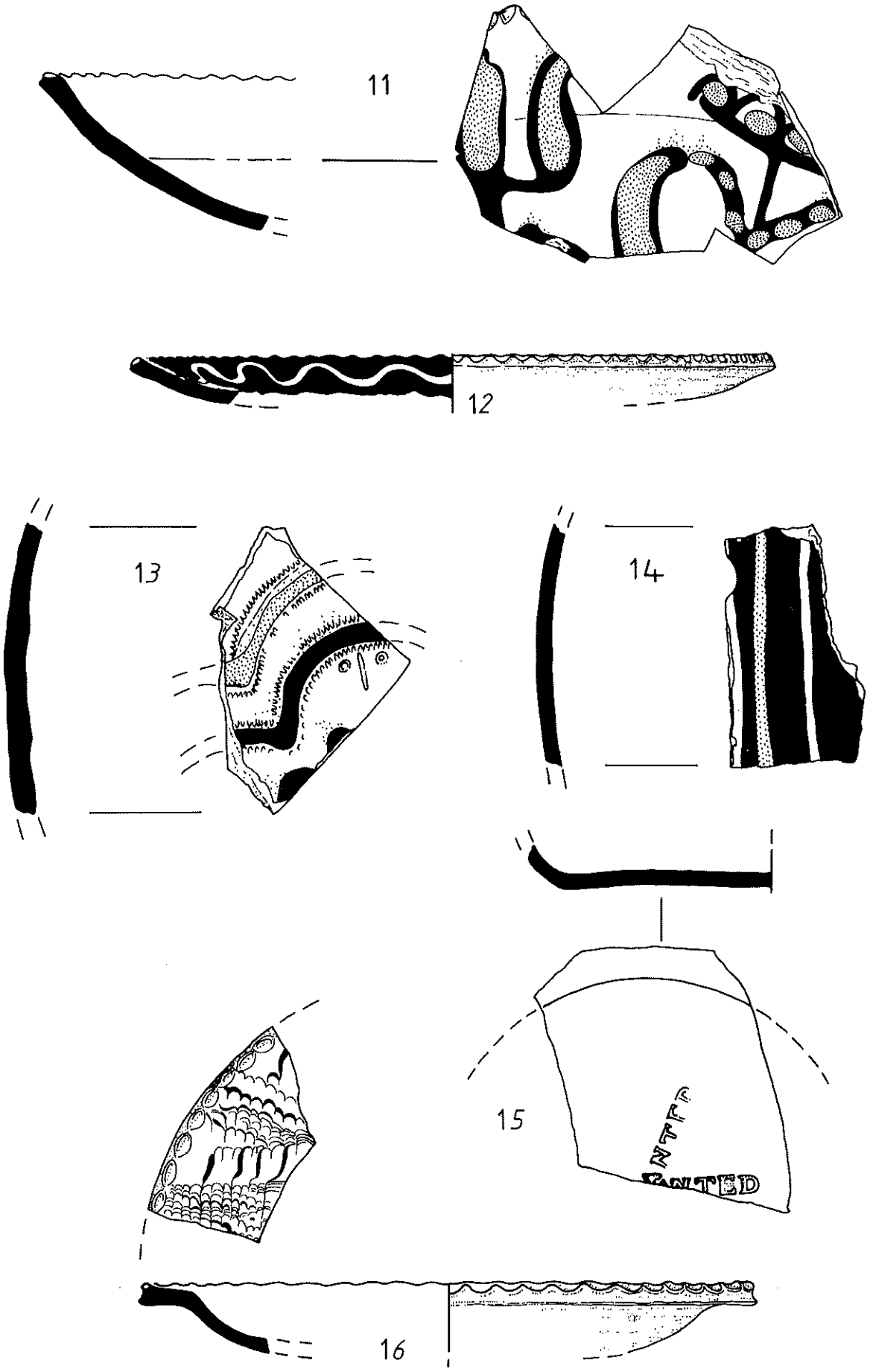


FIG. 13 36/37 THE WHARFAGE, IRONBRIDGE. POTTERY FINDS: NOS 11 – 16 (1:2)

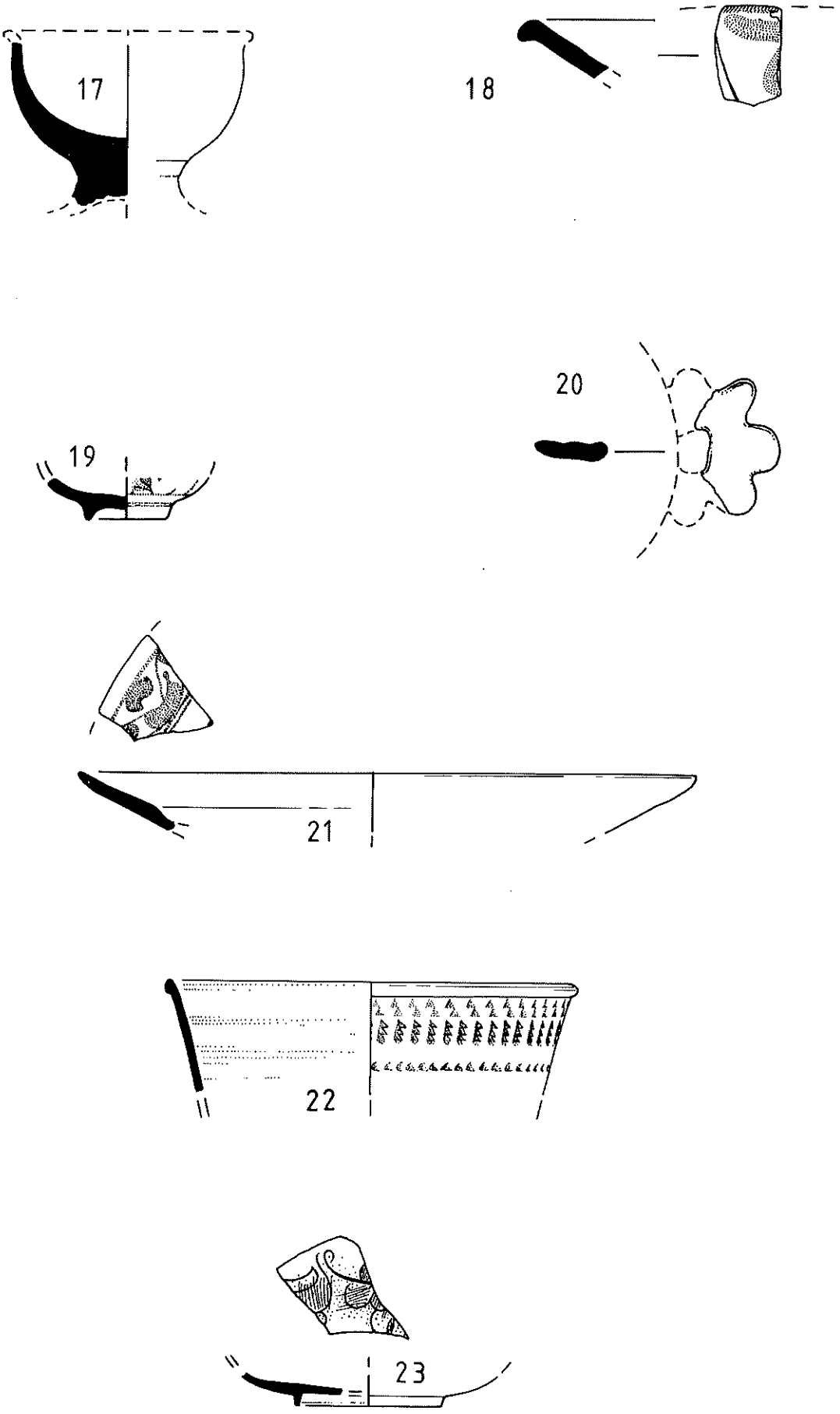


FIG. 14 36/37 THE WHARFAGE, IRONBRIDGE. POTTERY FINDS: NOS 17 – 23 (1:2)

List of illustrated pottery

Fig. 11
No. 1 Context 8
Medieval. Rim of cooking pot. Di. 162mm. Possibly 13th century.
No. 2 Context 8
Medieval. Base of cooking pot. Di. indeterminate but could be as great as *c.*200mm.
No. 3 Context 8
Medieval. Jug rim. Di. 87mm. Possibly 13th century.
No. 4 Context 8
Iron/lead glazed rim of jar or chamber pot with slip-jewelled rim. Di. 184mm. 18th – 19th century.
No. 5
Unstratified. Recovered from sub-topsoil layer of open passageway between houses. Manganese streak glazed rim of jar? Di. 240mm. 18th – 19th century.
No. 6
Unstratified – as No. 5. Slip decorated. Possibly from a large sub-rectangular baking dish. Di.? 18th – 19th century.

Fig. 12
No. 7
Unstratified – as No 5. Iron/lead glazed pancheon. Di. 400mm. 18 – 19th century.
No. 8 Context 8
Iron/lead glazed rim of storage jar. Di. *c*300mm. 18th – 19th century.
No. 9 Context 56
Iron/lead glazed rim of storage jar with horizontal strap handle. Di. *c.*500mm. 18th – 19th century.
No. 10 Context 8
Iron/lead glazed rim of jar. Di. 180mm. 18th – 19th century.

Fig. 13
No. 11 Context 8
Slip decorated dish fragment. Di? 17th– 18th century.
No. 12 Context 8
Slip decorated rim of dish/plate. Di. 230mm. 18th – 19th century.
No. 13 Context 8
Slip decorated dish fragment. Di? 17th – 18th century.
No. 14 Context 8
Slip decorated body sherd. 18th – 19th century.
No. 15 Context 8
Creamware. Base of a baking dish? 'WARRANTED' mark. Di. 148mm. 19th century.
No. 16 Context 8
Combed slip decorated dish. Di. 218mm. 18th – 19th century.

Fig. 14
No. 17 Context 8
Delft. Fragmentary 'salt'. Di? 18th century.
No. 18 Context 8
Delft plate rim. Di? 18th century.
No. 19 Context 8
Delft footring of small cup. Di. 27mm. 18th century.
No. 20 Context 8
Delft. Horizontal lobed handle. Probably from a "bleeding bowl". 18th century.
No. 21 Context 8
Delft plate rim. Di. 209mm. 18th century.
No. 22
Unstratified – as No. 5. Brown salt-glazed stoneware jar or deep bowl. Di. 140mm. 18th – 19th century.
No. 23 Context 8
White salt-glazed stoneware (Jackfield). Footring of shallow bowl or dish. Di. 49mm. *c.*1730 – 60.

THE OLD SHOP, SOMERWOOD (SJ 553155)

By MADGE MORAN, with drawings by ALAN SNELL

The Old Shop, a smallholding at Somerwood in Upton Magna parish, about four miles (6.5 km.) east of Shrewsbury was, until its sale in May 1977, part of the Sundorne Castle estate. The western end of the building abuts one of the minor roads which connect Upton Magna to the B5062 Shrewsbury to Newport road.[1] A nondescript external appearance concealed a rare survival in the field of vernacular architecture: a small, late, single-cell open hall of the type which would be described as 'houseplace' in probate inventories of the 16th and 17th centuries. The main body of the house had been floored over completely at about 8in. (20 cm.) below wall-plate level, and a stairway gave access to the upper floor, but a detailed analysis of the structure left little room for doubt that The Old Shop had passed through at least four main phases of development (fig. 1).

DESCRIPTION (as at September 1977)

a) *The Houseplace*

Basically, The Old Shop consists of a timber-framed unit measuring 18ft. 2in. (5.5m.) by 14ft. 4in. (4.3m.). All the surviving main structural timbers appear to be original with the exception of a floor-beam at B–B1 (fig. 2) which is a reused tie-beam inserted, in reversed position, to support the joists for a later floor across the houseplace. On the north side it is tenoned into an original mortice, but on the south side it is supported by a crudely fashioned post while the mortice for an earlier beam remains empty. The mortices suggest that a partition of some kind was intended, but the method of flooring the western end took little account of these mortices.

There is no evidence for an intermediate transverse truss which might have divided the house into two bays.

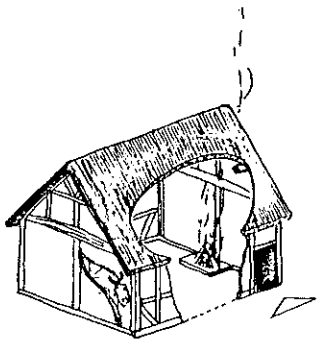
At the eastern end of the houseplace a wattle-and-daub smoke hood survives against the original end truss, and an inserted staircase occupies the north-eastern corner.

Post D (section C–C1, fig. 2) functions as the northern jamb of the fireplace. It stands on the bottom step of the stairs and supports the bressumer which in turn supports the smoke hood. It is neatly chamfered and stopped on the two edges which are visible from the houseplace, the detail matching that on the bressumer. Joist E (section C–C1) is continuous from the floor-beam (B–B1) to the end truss (C–C1) and serves as a bearer for the smoke hood. The floor boards fit well, appear to be contemporary and the trimmer to the stairs is tenoned into a post in the north wall and into joist E.

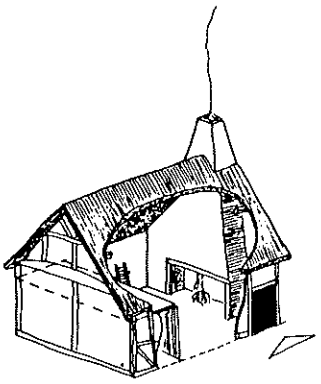
These details may suggest that the floor is an original feature but several factors combine to present

THE OLD SHOP SOMERWOOD SHROPSHIRE

O. S. REF. SJ 553155

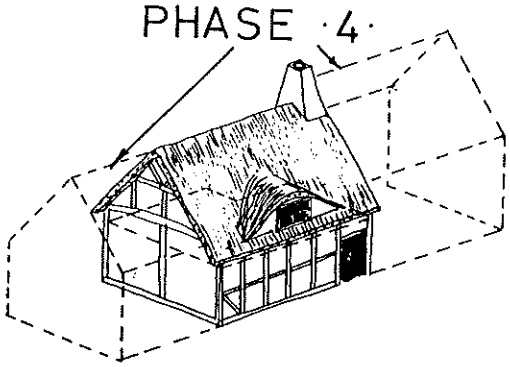


PHASE ONE

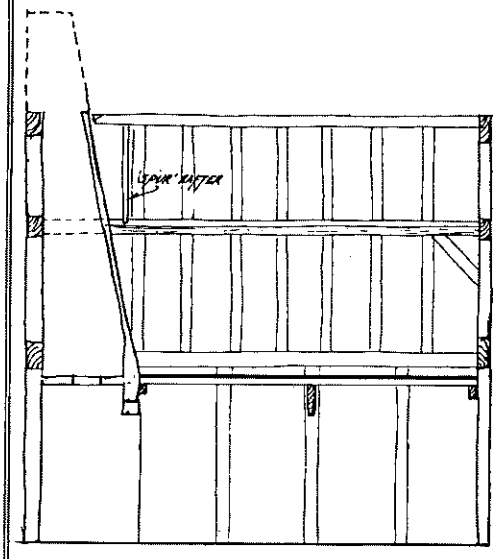


PHASE TWO

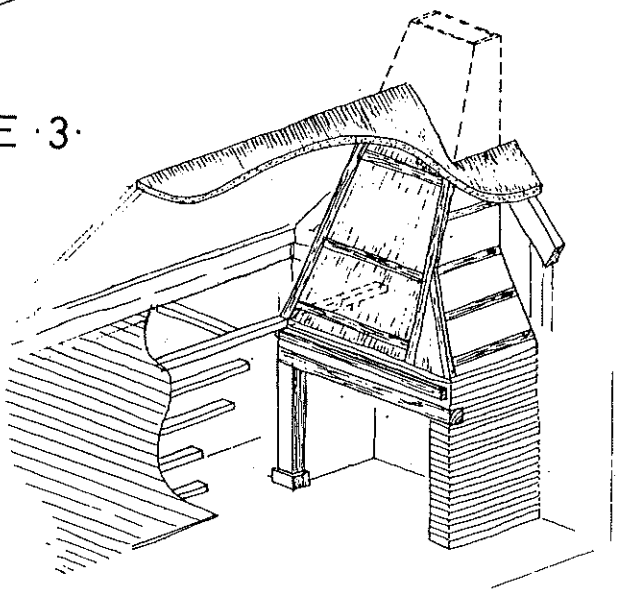
PHASE ·4·



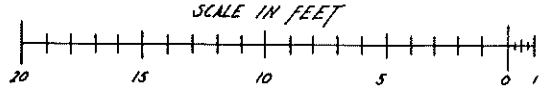
PHASE ·3·



LONGITUDINAL SECTION ·J·



DETAIL ·H·



ALAN SNELL SEPT 77

FIG. 1

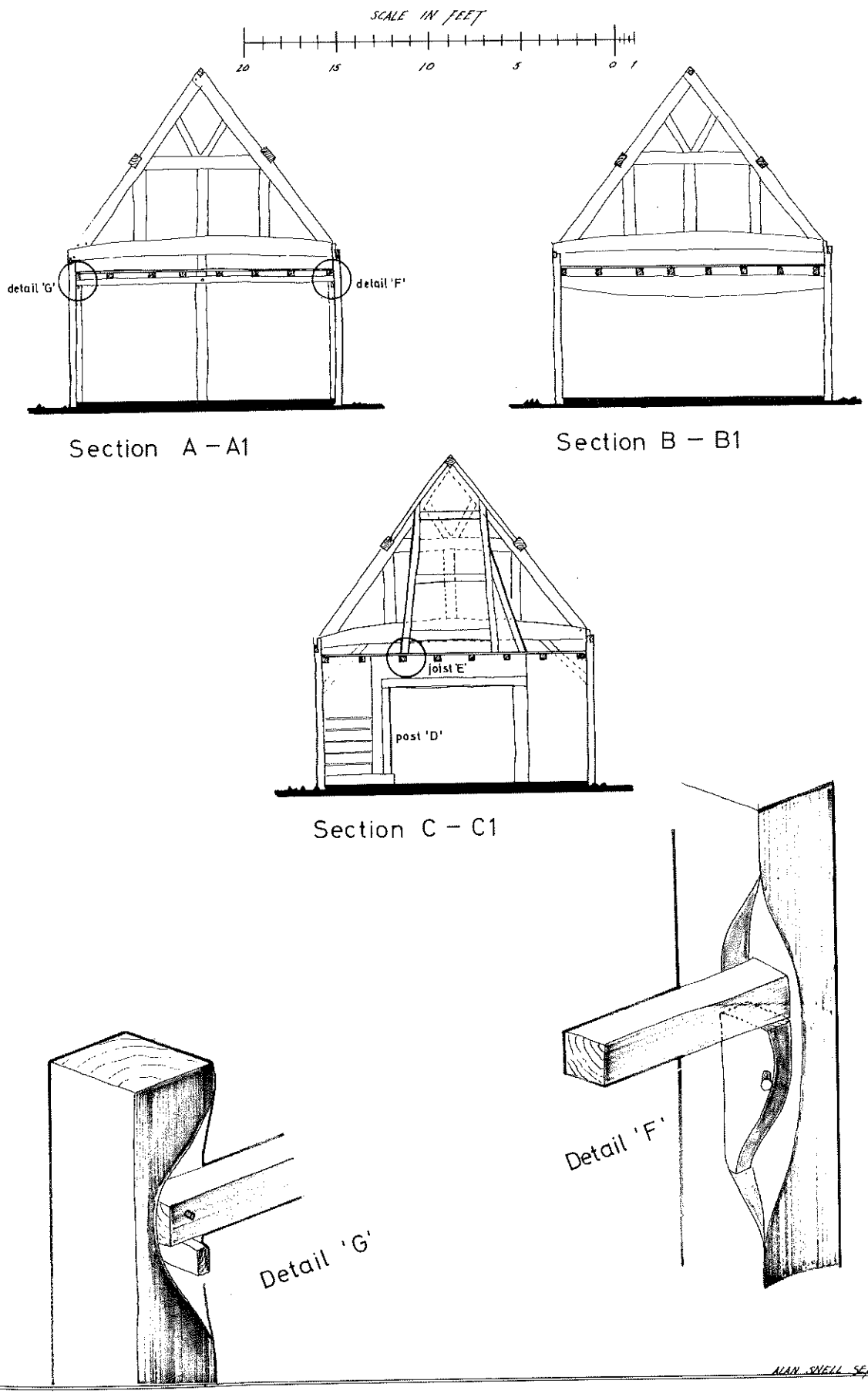

THE OLD SHOP SOMERWOOD SHROPSHIRE
O.S. REF. SJ 553155
SCALE IN FEET
20 15 10 5 0 1
detail 'G'
detail 'F'
Section A – A1
Section B – B1
joist 'E'
post 'D'
Section C – C1
Detail 'F'
Detail 'G'
ALAN SNELL SEPT 1977

FIG. 2

contrary evidence. Joist E is not properly housed into the stud on the end truss but is secured by some kind of lateral pegging. This implies that the joist is an insertion related to an alteration of the smoke hood, probably when the stairs were introduced. Apart from the two tenoned joints of the trimmer, mentioned above, none of the suspected inserted timbers has properly carpentered joints. The post in the north wall which receives the stair trimmer is not an integral part of the frame. Internally it is lapped over the middle rail, nailed to the wall-plate and very crudely trimmed at both ends.

Post D has no integral connection with the stairs. It is possible that the ground floor level has been lowered by about 6in. (15 cm.), in which case the post would have stood on the floor itself. Undoubtedly there has been much alteration around the fireplace area. A horizontal beam which rests on the bressumer and is pegged through to the smoke hood supports the floor joists at the eastern end. If the floor was an original feature, normal practice would be to employ the bressumer itself to support the joists. The northern upright angle member of the smoke hood is connected to the bressumer, but the joint is concealed by the horizontal beam.

b) *The Croglofft*

Structural details at A–A1 (fig. 2) indicate that the dwelling had a lofted western end.

A raised platform at one end of a houseplace is known as a croglofft and is a simple method, common in Wales, of doubling the sleeping area of a house without making external additions.[2] Despite the two mortices mentioned in connection with the inserted floor-beam (B–B1) which might be thought to relate to a croglofft, it is clear that the house received the sleeping platform at a later stage.

The rail which supports the joists for the croglofft on the western gable truss is not an integral part of the framing of the gable. It is half-lapped across the central post and held with one large peg which has been driven right through the post. At the north end the rail is supported by a bracket which is pegged to the main corner post, and the rail itself is also pegged through to the corner post (see detail F, fig. 2). At the south end of the gable truss the rail rests on a wooden peg measuring 3in. by 1½in. (7.6 cm. x 3.8 cm.) which serves as a bracket. The peg has been driven in from underneath right through to the post (see detail G, fig. 2).

The original corner post on the north side is not now a squared timber. It would have been necessary to cut part of it away in order to insert the rail at the north end. The amount of reduction was less on the southern corner post because the rail simply rests on the bracket peg.

If the croglofft was an original feature of the house none of this rather clumsy contrivance would have been necessary. A strong integral rail would have been incorporated and the joists either tenoned into it or half-lapped over it. The present joists are half-lapped over the inserted rail.

The croglofft would be reached by means of a ladder from the floor of the houseplace, and one of the joists near the north wall protrudes about 2ft (61 cm.) into the houseplace. This might relate to the siting of the ladder, but the access arrangement is not immediately apparent.

The space beneath the croglofft in the traditional Welsh cottage was used as sleeping accommodation. At The Old Shop the equivalent area was in use as a dairy. Its original use is not known but if there was just a simple partition of the houseplace, as the incomprehensible mortices suggest, with no proper croglofft over, then it is possible that this end of the house was animals' quarters.

It is worth noting that in order to effect a support using the two mortices a post must have been used somewhere on the section line between them. Otherwise it would have been impossible to span the space with a single beam. It follows, therefore, that there must have been a screen of some kind below the croglofft.

c) *The Smoke Hood*

This is illustrated as section C–C1 (fig. 2) and detail H (fig. 1).

The survival of a wattle-and-daub funnel-shaped smoke hood in a Shropshire cottage is a rare phenomenon. In Herefordshire and possibly elsewhere similar smoke hoods are known as fumbrells; the term occurs frequently in 17th century court rolls for Wigmore. They were, of course, a type of chimney very liable to fire risk and therefore closely regulated in bye-laws.[3]

At The Old Shop the fumbrell against the eastern gable seems to have replaced an open hearth at that end. Evidence for the original means of smoke extraction was noted in the heavy carbon deposit on the *outer* side of truss C–C1, indicating a smoke void between the V-struts, and in provision for a continuous ridge-piece. At present the ridge-piece terminates about 2ft (61 cm.) short of the principal rafters on the east gable.

The struts from the smoke hood into the timbers of the eastern gable frame are joined with bare-faced

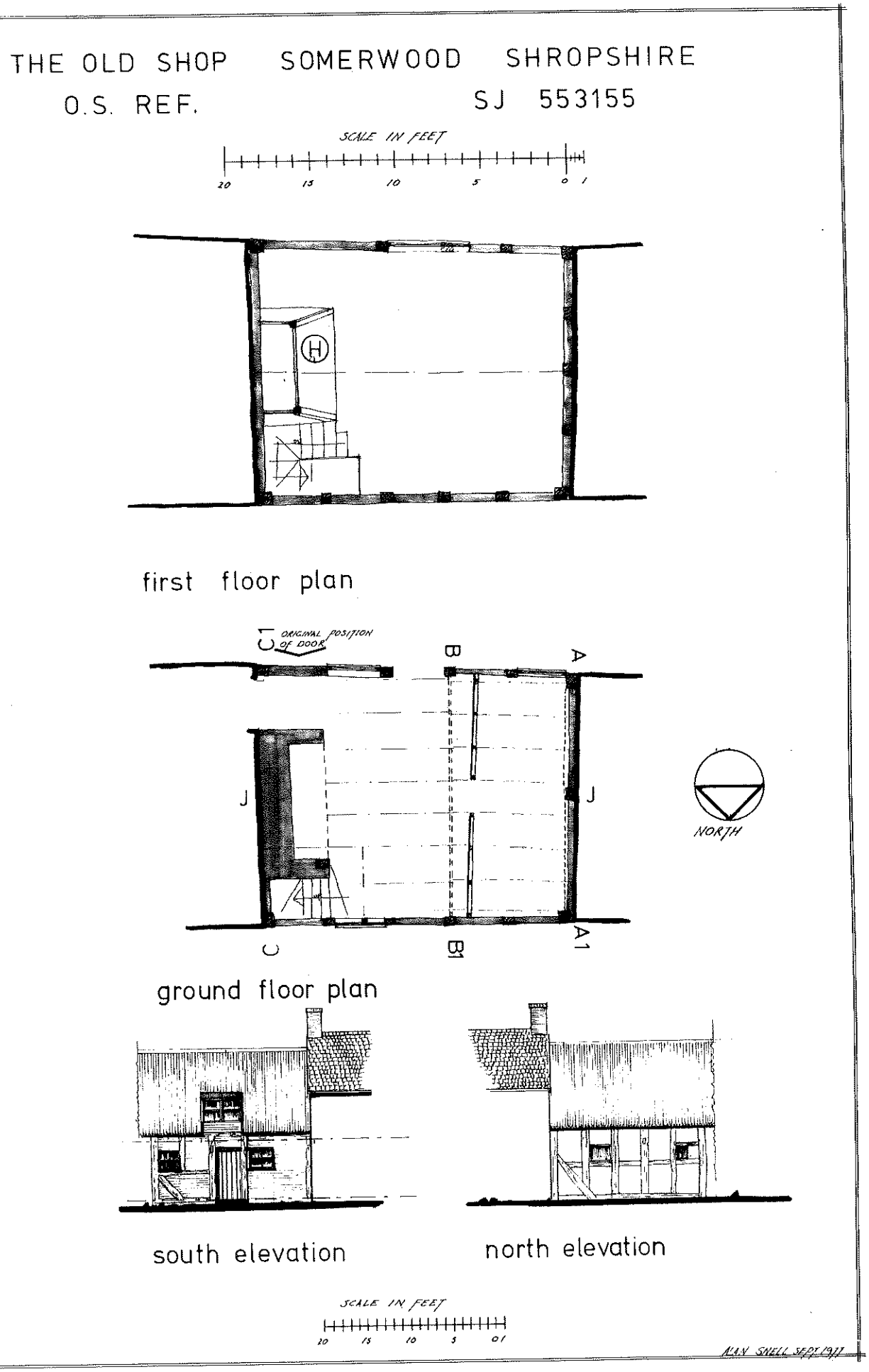

THE OLD SHOP SOMERWOOD SHROPSHIRE
O.S. REF. SJ 553155
SCALE IN FEET
20 15 10 5 0 1
H
first floor plan
C ORIGINAL POSITION OF DOOR
B
A
J
J
C
B1
A1
NORTH
ground floor plan
south elevation
north elevation
SCALE IN FEET
10 15 10 5 01
ALAN SNELL SEPT 1977

FIG. 3

tenons, each joint correspondingly numbered with chiselled carpenters' marks from V to II. Presumably joint number I was above the roof level where the wattle-and-daub chimney has been replaced by a brick stack.

Movement in the smoke hood, subsequent failure of the joints, the absence of corresponding joints on the northern side of the fumbrell and its present asymmetrical form indicate that the smoke hood originally extended right across the gable wall and was reduced in size when the stairs were inserted. Supporting evidence for this sequence was noted in the presence of smoke blackening on the rafters and frame timbers on the northern side of the hood but not on the southern side.

To the west of the smoke hood are two spur-rafters (see longitudinal section J, fig. 1), connected to the upper faces of the purlins and the ridge with bare-faced tenon joints. They serve no purpose at present and were probably used in the belief of substituting the support given by the principal rafters to the ridge when the introduction of the smoke hood apparently weakened the frame at the eastern end. Alternatively they may relate to a smoke vent which preceded the fumbrell.

The infilling on the smoke hood and on the house frame seems to be identical; a mixture of mud, straw and dung.

Allied to the open hearth and later smoke hood at the eastern end was the original entrance position, marked on the ground floor plan. Pegs for the door lintel and the absence of an angle brace confirmed the position and put the cottage into the 'end baffle-entry' category.

d) *The Rafters*

Compared with the other structural timbers in the house the rafters are of poor quality although they appear to be contemporary with the basic framing. There are corresponding pegs and peg-holes on the ridge-piece and on the rafters, and each rafter is bird-mouthed and pegged to the wall-plate.

Only one of the rafters on the north slope is continuous, the others are interrupted at the purlin.

On the south slope the remaining rafters are all continuous but the insertion of a dormer window on the south side has resulted in an incomplete set.

The roof is now covered with corrugated tin but there is thatch beneath it.

e) *Additional Features*

In alignment with the house at the west end there is an added weather-boarded bay which is subdivided into cow-shed, hay-store and general store.

The extension to the east consists of a 19th century brick-built two-storied four-roomed cottage.

Evidence was noted on the north side for a small, low, lean-to addition which may have been an early pigsty or a hen-coop. There are brick-built pigsties away from the house on the north side and on the south side, about 20ft (6m.) away from the house, is a timber-framed combined privy and wash-house complete with a chimney and a copper. These facilities were obviously shared by the two cottages.

The infill of the frame of the outhouse consists of soft handmade bricks measuring on average 6in. by 3in. (15 cm. x 7.5 cm.).

Plans and elevations are given as fig. 3.

SUMMARY OF THE BUILDING SEQUENCE (fig. 1)

Phase 1 A single-cell timber-framed unit with an open hearth at the east end and accommodation for a cow at the west end.

Phase 2 The addition of a croglofft over the west end of the houseplace with access by a ladder. A smoke hood constructed at the east end, supported on a bressumer beam and extending across to the north wall. Original entrance position retained.

Phase 3 The remaining open part of the houseplace floored over, stairs inserted and the smoke hood remodelled. When it was decided to extend the floor over the whole of the living area a redundant tie-beam was acquired and brought into service. In order to obtain a flat surface on which to rest the joists the beam had either to be used upside down or the camber trimmed away. Obviously the former involved less work. A dormer window inserted, the animal(s) rehoused in an extension to the west.

Phase 4 The holding generally enlarged, but not the cottage. Another cottage added and the brick privy/wash-house and pigsties built. This seems to have been the zenith of the development.

CONCLUSIONS

This small dilapidated cottage posed many questions relating to structural form and building sequence. If the interpretation of the evidence is correct, and the cottage is basically a small, late, single-cell unit with the addition, fairly quickly, of a croglofft at one end and a fumbrell at the other then it represents the provision of a permanent home for a member of the cottar class in the late 16th century with improvements following at fairly frequent intervals during the 17th century and the peak of development reached in the mid 19th century. No documentary material was available. Observations in the area between Haughton crossroads (SJ 552157) and Upton Magna showed a number of isolated smallholdings which probably began in an identical fashion. The establishment of small isolated farms would logically follow the great woodland clearances of the late 16th and early 17th centuries in Shropshire when landowners realized their assets.

[1] I am grateful to Mr and Mrs M. Talbot, the present owners of The Old Shop, for permission to publish this paper, to Andrew Arrol for drawing my attention to the building, to Alan Snell for the drawings and for his help and cooperation. Eric Mercer and Richard Harris also gave help and advice and my thanks are extended to them. Since this report was written, the property has been extensively modernised although the original bay with its fumbrell has been retained and the inserted floor removed. The house is not open to the public. The Primary Record Number of the house in the Shropshire Sites and Monuments Record is SA 13327.

[2] Among others the following have discoursed on croglofts:
Sir Cyril Fox, 'Peasant crofts in north Pembrokeshire', *Antiquity*, **xi**, 1937, 427–40
Sir Cyril Fox and Lord Raglan, *Monmouthshire houses*, 1951, part 1, 95
I. Peate, *The Welsh house*, 3rd edn, 1946, 85–111
R.W. Brunskill, *Illustrated handbook of vernacular architecture*, 1971, 107, 110 and 164
In Shropshire, 38 Watergate, Whitchurch is a two-bay 17th century framed cottage where one bay was originally lofted over and the other, containing a fumbrell, was open to the roof.

[3] I am grateful to J.W. Tonkin of Wigmore and Miss E.M. Jancey, Deputy County Archivist of Hereford and Worcester, for information on this point. *The shorter Oxford English dictionary* gives 'Femerell' ME. (ad. OF. *fumeraille* altered f. *fumerole*:– L. *fumariolum*, dim. of *fumarium*, f. *fumus*) A lantern, louvre or covering placed on the roof of a kitchen, hall, etc. for ventilation or escape of smoke. In Shropshire, evidence for smoke hoods exists in a wide range of supra-vernacular buildings. At vernacular level, in addition to 38 Watergate (*supra*), 15 Holly Road and Fairfield, Little Dawley (SJ 684059) each have the remains of a fumbrell. The latter buildings are intended for re-erection at Blists Hill Open Air Museum.

THE SHROPSHIRE SALT INDUSTRY

By J.M.B. STAMPER

The production of salt in the British Isles is pre-eminently associated with the Cheshire salt field.[1] It seems probable that during the Roman period salt was extracted from brine there, to be used as a condiment and a preservative. For many centuries Welsh traders obtained salt from Cheshire. With the development of modern industrial processes, salt was in increasing demand as the basis of the alkali trade. Larger quantities of salt became available from Cheshire during the late 17th century through the extraction of salt in its rock form. As transport facilities improved in the 18th century, so Cheshire salt found a wider market in England, reaching areas previously served either by coastal saltworks utilising evaporated sea water[2] or by small works exploiting local brine sources. It is with the small local works within Shropshire that this article is concerned.

British deposits of rock salt occur mainly in the New Red Sandstone of the Permian and Triassic periods. The worked deposits of rock salt in Cheshire form part of the upper-but-one division, the Keuper Marl. These beds extend as far north as Wilmslow, and to the south they occupy a considerable area around the Shropshire towns of Wem, Whitchurch and Market Drayton. It is, therefore, not surprising that salt was produced within this part of north Shropshire. It was certainly manufactured in Whitchurch by the 13th century and it was distributed by pack horse to Loppington and Shrewsbury.[3]

The Red Sandstones and Marls of the Trias occur widely across the rest of Shropshire, and salt working was not restricted to the north. A letter of the early 16th century containing a bill from Roger Bedall of Donnington saltworks to Lilleshall Abbey accounting for the charge of making salt suggests that the Abbey was in possession of a saltworks there.[4] Several saltworks operated in Shropshire during the 18th century. At Pitchford a saltworks leased in the previous century to Samuel Harrison and William Constantine of Droitwich had ceased working by 1715 as water from nearby coalpits had spoiled the brine.[5] At the Dissolution, Wenlock Priory's extensive holdings in Broseley included *Saltemeadowe* in Jackfield,[6] and by the 18th century salt was produced at Broseley from water extracted from the coalpits.[7] The salthouses were probably situated near the River Severn at the downstream end of Jackfield;[8] after the closure of the saltworks the coalpits here were known as 'Salthouse Pits' well into the 19th century.[9]

Little is known about any of the above works. This gives added interest to the survival of detailed records of salt production at Kingley Wyche in the parish of Preston upon the Weald Moors, north of Wellington (SJ 676148). Rentals, accounts and leases deriving from the estates of the Charlton family of Apley Castle show that the saltworks here was worked during the 18th century.[10] It was one of several subsiduary industrial enterprises, like brick and tileworks, on the estate, although the Charltons were mainly agricultural landlords with interests in coalmining.[11]

The earliest documentary evidence for saltworking at Kingley Wyche is in 1707 in Articles of

Agreement concerning the right of access through the Charlton saltworks to the adjacent Charity saltworks, then owned by Preston Hospital.[12] Five pounds was paid every half-year for this right until about 1735, although the Charity works probably ceased to operate soon after 1736.[13] It seems likely that the roadway led to the works from the common highway 100 m. to the south. Overall, an acre of ground was covered by the Charltons' Kingley Wyche saltworks. The focal point of Kingley Wyche was a brine-pit which, according to oral tradition, was not a natural spring but a well.[14] This was lined with wooden planks and about 20 ft deep, requiring a collier to descend in order to make repairs in 1730. The brine extracted amounted to as much as 4–5000 gallons every 24 hours.[15] The amount of salt taken out daily is, however, unknown as there is no indication of the strength of the brine.

The equipment recorded at Kingley Wyche suggests the use of the 'open-pan' method of manufacture. This appears to have been the universal method of manufacture for several centuries.[16] The earliest detailed description appears in Georgius Agricola, *De re metallica*, 1556,[17] from which fig. 1 is taken. The first step of the process was to extract the brine, which was then put into a cistern. Evidence from contemporary saltworks suggests that the cistern at Kingley Wyche was made of wood, oblong in shape and framed like a ship, It would be lined on its bottom and sides with planks, the whole structure being strengthened by numerous bolts running from end to end and from side to side. The cistern may have been reinforced with pitch, a quantity of which was purchased for Kingley Wyche in the summer of 1731. The cistern would hold enough brine for a few days. From here the brine was drawn into pans made from plates of iron. These would have been joined together with nails, the points of which were filled with strong cement made from lime. The latter was frequently purchased at Kingley Wyche. The pans typically had a large surface area but little depth, and a fire played uniformly over the bottom. Within the pans five or six strong beams of iron may have been fixed to their opposite sides at equal distances about 8 in. apart, and to the bottom of the pan. Strong iron hooks would have hung down, linked to other hooks or clasps of iron. These hooks were firmly fixed to the bottom of the pan, thus giving support and preventing a change in shape. Two pans were in use at Kingley Wyche in 1721, and the scale of operations suggests that these were small in comparison to those in the major production centres of Cheshire.

During evaporation a little blood, purchased in barrels from butchers in Shrewsbury, Newport and Wellington, was added to the brine as the albumen within it coagulated and rose to the surface carrying impurities. These were then skimmed off. An ounce of blood was sufficient for 800 gallons.[18]

In order to prepare loaf, lump or basket salt which, as the whitest and finest of all salt, was esteemed at the table, the brine was generally boiled briskly and stirred continuously. In Cheshire only the second and third draughts of every pan were taken, as these produced the purest salt. The salt was skimmed off every 24 hours. Common salt, such as that used in soaperies and chemical works, was taken out of the pans every 48 hours. Fishery salt, a coarse salt of larger and firmer grain, was formed by a milder heat. It was taken at one draught after remaining in the pan for six to fourteen days.

Salt boilers had long used a variety of substances known as 'additions' or 'seasonings' to add to the boiling brine. Wheat flour and resin gave the salt a small grain while egg white helped to clarify the brine. Other additions included tallow, butter, nutmeg, allum, new or stale beer, vegetable mucilage and animal jelly. At some saltworks, dog fat was especially valued as an additive.[19] However, none of these appear to have been purchased for Kingley Wyche and this suggests that the salt manufactured was coarse grained. Other indications point in this direction. A determinant of the type of salt produced was the quality of the brine. At Kingley Wyche this was described by Robert Townson as 'impure'.[20] In Cheshire, salt makers involved in the production of fine salt were known as 'lumpmen' or 'lumpers' while those engaged in the manufacture of coarse salt were known as 'wallers'.[21] At Kingley Wyche the saltmakers were known as wallers.

Scum rose to the surface at the point in the process when the brine reached boiling point. This was removed with a 'skimmer', a kind of perforated shovel. As the salt crystallised it was important to remove as much sodium chloride (common salt) as possible whilst leaving the other salts intact. The pans became encrusted with an increasing body of massed crystals after they had been in use for a few weeks. This scale hampered boiling and was removed manually. At Kingley Wyche the pans were frequently repaired with iron plates purchased from Cornellius Hallen, a Coalbrookdale forge master.[22]

On removal from the pans the salt was moulded in conically shaped open-bottomed baskets, known as 'barrows', which held approximately a bushel of salt. During the half-year between Michaelmas 1731 and Lady Day 1732, 62 dozen barrows were purchased for use at Kingley Wyche. The salt was usually left to drain for about 24 hours, and was then either dried by long exposure to the open air or put in a moderately heated room. The flue gases which escaped from the furnace were generally available for drying the salt. When dry, the salt was ready for sale. Kingley Wyche salt was sold both retail and wholesale as far afield as Bishops Castle and Welshpool, as well as to customers in Shrewsbury. The salt

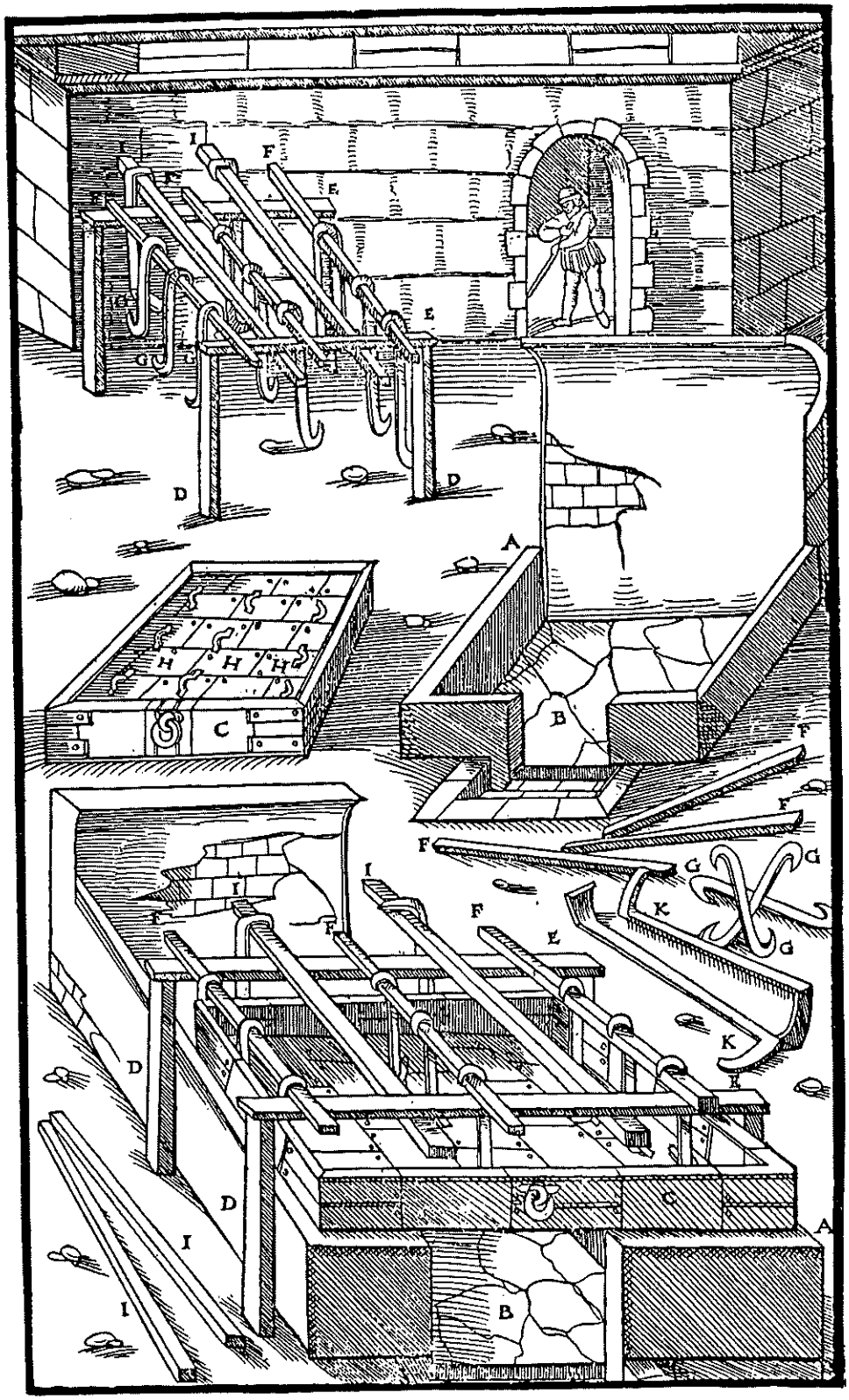


FIG. 1 AN EARLY SALTWORKS

was transported by donkey and cart and a composition of £5 was paid to the Watling Street Turnpike Trust every half-year.[23]

The buildings at Kingley Wyche probably had walls of brick and roofs thatched with straw. The two brine-boiling pans were housed in a 'pan-house' which underwent alteration in 1738. Eaves under the roof allowed the steam to pass freely away. Long wooden benches known as 'hurdles', situated by the side of the pans, received the salt after it had been put into barrows. The accounts for the winter of 1731–2 mention that a chimney was swept, probably at the back of the 'hot-house' which may have abutted the pan-house. Funnels from the fires conveyed the smoke through the hot-house where the salt was set to dry. At Kingley Wyche this building was repaired in 1732. Barrels of blood were stored in the 'blood-house', repairs to which were noted in the same accounts. The 'gin-house', containing apparatus for drawing the brine from the well, was re-thatched during the same year. Normally the gin would consist of a large ventral drum or barrel made of timber around which a rope was wound, from which it was conducted to pulleys over a shaft. A horse provided the motive power. Gin ropes and gears were frequently replaced and payments for horses, presumably a hire charge, feature in the accounts nearly every half-year. A 'pump' was also referred to at Kingley Wyche. This was perhaps used to transfer brine from the cistern to the pans.

The smith's shop recorded at Kingley Wyche was probably used for repairs to the equipment. An inventory in the lease of 1721 to Samuel Stringer lists the implements which the shop contained.[24] These include one broken anvil, four lutes (probably a type of skimmer), four hammers, three scopes (a type of basin with a handle used for ladling water), four pairs of old tongs, one ladder and three coffers (probably a type of chest). In the lease of 1736 to John Briscoe, a salt proprietor of Middlewich, Cheshire, a dwelling is referred to at the site; this may be a later addition to the buildings as it is not mentioned previously. A warehouse associated with the saltworks, where salt was certainly being stored in 1731, was situated in Shrewsbury.

By the end of the 18th century all the saltworks in Shropshire had closed. Townson remarked in 1799 that the brine well at Kingley Wyche had been 'formerly used', although the salt pans and buildings still stood.[25] The well itself was still open and the brine was used for making 'soda' at a works on the banks of the canal at Wombridge.[26] It has been suggested that another use of the saltworks after their closure was by neighbouring farmers who raised the water for use as liquid fertilizer.[27] By 1919 the brine pit appeared to be about 4 ft deep to the surface water, which was 'weedy, muddy and foul'; evidentally the well had been disused for a long time and the flow of water had come to a standstill.[28] The remains of the well were finally infilled *c.* 1970.[29]

Between 1707 and 1730 the saltworks at Kingley Wyche had three tenants, after which the works were administered by the Charlton estate. This period saw a general increase in the quantity of salt produced at Kingley Wyche, but nevertheless by 1731 the saltworks had begun to make a loss. Production costs increased from £132 2s. in the summer of 1731 to £377 12s. 2d. in the same period in 1735. The quantity of salt manufactured rose only by 8.6%. This increase was despite the fact that the price of coal used to fuel the fires fell, while both the rent for the saltworks, £50 a year, and the wallers' wages remained roughly stable. Undoubtedly the greatest expenses during 1731 were incurred through alterations at Kingley Wyche. This clearly imposed a great financial burden, especially when added to the high cost of maintenance. However, the saltworks continued in production for at least another 37 years, the last recorded tenants, John Briscoe of Wellington (lessee of the adjoining Kinley Farm) and William Ball (described as a salt proprietor of Middlewich), taking a lease in 1768.

It has been suggested that even in the 13th century the saltmakers of Whitchurch were in competition with the salt producing areas of Cheshire.[30] In 1813, while describing a field in Lyth (Condover) where the soil was 'impregnated with salt', Archdeacon Plymley gave his opinion that the commodity could be produced in Shropshire, although its proximity to the extensive and established saltworks in Cheshire might prevent any profit from such an adventure.[31] Nevertheless, despite this competition, salt was produced wherever opportunity arose until the 18th century. It is likely that in most cases its production was a side-line rather than the whole source of income. During the 18th century, the salt industry in Cheshire experienced several changes which had drastic repercussions on smaller saltworks elsewhere. Until the end of the 17th century, the salt industry in Cheshire had been closely regulated, with a limit on the number of shares in the common brine pit and on the supply of brine to each owner. Output was restricted and prices maintained. The system broke down towards the end of the century around Northwich with the discovery of five new brine pits outside the town which were not subject to regulation.[32] Although no records of salt prices in Cheshire survive for the 18th century, it is accepted that they fell dramatically. This produced unstable conditions in the industry and one result of competition was that supply exceeded demand.

Improvements in transport were integral to the expansion of the Cheshire salt industry. Until the 18th century salt had been carried in carts or by pack horse. By 1705 improvements to the road system had begun with the opening of the turnpike road from Chester to Whitchurch. By 1759 the whole length of the road had been turnpiked. Further developments in transport came with the improvement of the Weaver Navigation, previously navigable only within its tidal reaches. Coal had hitherto been brought either over land from the Staffordshire coalfields or up the River Weaver from the south Lancashire coalfield to Frodsham, Cheshire, and thence by cart to the mid-Cheshire saltworks.[33] An Act of Parliament was obtained for improvements to the river in 1721, and this was open to trade in 1732. Cheap coal further stimulated the salt industry, and brine shipments from Northwich rose sixteenfold in the period 1760–1800.[34] The river also provided a cheaper means of transport for rock salt, which was discovered at Marbury in 1670. Shipments of this increased sevenfold during the latter half of the 18th century. Furthermore, discoveries of deeper, richer, rock strata in 1779–81 added another source for salt production in Cheshire.[35] In 1770 the opening of the Trent and Mersey Canal, the Wardel Lock Branch of which forms part of the cross canal between Middlewich and Barbridge, Cheshire, led to further reductions in transport costs.[36] Coal was brought more cheaply from north Staffordshire, and salt was taken on to Northwich for onward transportation via the Weaver Navigation.

Similar developments stimulated the growth of the salt industry in Worcestershire. In March 1731 a barge waterway was opened between Droitwich and Hartford alongside the River Severn. This provided better transport facilities for the salt which was previously taken by land to Worcester.[37]

It has been suggested that the lack of adequate transport facilities in Shropshire was one of the most severe impediments to the continued growth of industry in the county at the end of the 18th century.[38] Shropshire had only one link with the national canal network before 1835 and that, by way of the Severn, involved at least two transhipments. As late as 1760 many of Shropshire's raw materials were carried by road within the coalfield districts. Certainly, the produce of the Kingley Wyche saltworks was still transported by road at the time of its closure.

By the end of the 18th century the salt industry in general was in serious difficulty. More salt was being made than was required, despite an overall increase in demand for commodities at this time, and salt production costs rose while the market price remained stable. Matters were compounded by the continued imposition of the salt tax, originally introduced as a temporary expedient in the reign of William III but levied throughout the 18th century. By 1790 the Cheshire salt manufacturers were receiving only 4d. a bushel for their salt, while the customer paid over 4s.6d.[39] In 1798 and 1805, in times of war, the duty was increased to a very high level. It is estimated that the price of salt to the customer was almost 30 times its value at the works. As proprietors had no control over the cost to the customer, they could not stimulate demand by reducing their prices. There can be little doubt that such a tax was a severe disincentive to many saltworks. Small firms found it difficult to survive because the tax had to be paid before salt could be removed from the warehouse. The time-lag before this outlay was recouped required substantial working capital. Many small firms were eliminated at this time and the heavy tax doubtless discouraged the exploitation of newly discovered sources. In 1727 a strong salt spring was noted at Church Preen. No salt had apparently been manufactured there previously, but nonetheless manufacture was thought a viable proposition. Church Preen lay four miles from the nearest coal source, which its proponents noted was less than the twelve miles distance at which the Droitwich industry was supplied. It is doubted, however, that the lease offered in 1727 was ever taken up, with the salt tax later being blamed for this lack of enterprise.[40]

Although output of salt in Shropshire was small, quantities had been sufficient for some local consumption and were marketed until the late 18th century. At this period changes within the salt industry in the larger production centres led to the decline of scattered and smaller saltworks. Throughout the centuries some markets in Shropshire had been supplied with salt from manufactories in Cheshire and Worcestershire and, as production increased and transport facilities improved in these two counties, more salt of a better quality found its way into neighbouring counties. If the Shropshire saltworks survived such competition, it is likely that their final collapse was due to the imposition of the heavy salt tax throughout the 18th century.

[1] This article is based on J.M.B. Humphrey, 'Salt in Shropshire: with special reference to the 18th century', unpublished B.A. dissertation, Department of Archaeology, University of Southampton, 1983.

[2] D. Sylvester, *History of Cheshire*, 1971, 66.

[3] T.C. Duggan, *History of Whitchurch, Shropshire*, 1935, 50.

[4] G. Griffiths, *History of Tong and Boscobel*, 1894, 148.

[5] *V.C.H. Salop*, **viii**, 1968, 122.

[6] *Calendar Patent Rolls*, 1549–51, 213.

[7] *V.C.H. Salop,* **i**, 1908, 417.
[8] S. Smith, *A view from the Iron Bridge*, 1979, 53.
[9] B.S. Trinder, *The most extraordinary district in the world,* 1977, 53.
[10] Shropshire Record Office (hereafter S.R.O.), 625/1–22; 676/2–27. The Primary Record Number of the site in the Shropshire Sites and Monuments Record is SA 1369.
[11] B.S. Trinder, *The Industrial Revolution in Shropshire*, 2nd edn, 1981, 30.
[12] S.R.O., 625/10.
[13] *V.C.H. Salop,* **xi**, (forthcoming), 180.
[14] T.H. Whitehead *et al, Geology of the country between Oakengates and Wolverhampton. Memoirs of the Geological Survey,* 1928, 13–14.
[15] R. Townson, *Tracts and observations in natural history and physiology,* 1799, 179.
[16] A. Calvert, *Salt in Cheshire,* 1915, 932.
[17] The translation by H.C. and L.H. Hoover, 2nd edn, 1950, has been used.
[18] A. Rees, *Manufacturing industry,* 1819–20 (reprinted 1972), 396,
[19] E.W. Holden and T.P. Hudson, 'Salt making in the Adur Valley, Sussex', *Sussex Archaeol. Collect.* **cxix**, 1981, 125.
[20] R. Townson, *op. cit.*, 179.
[21] R. Samuel, *Miners, quarrymen and saltworkers*, 1977, 146.
[22] B.S. Trinder, *Industrial Revolution*, 32.
[23] *V.C.H. Salop,* **xi**, 180.
[24] S.R.O., 625/24.
[25] R. Townson, *op. cit.*, 179.
[26] J. Plymley, *General observations on the agriculture of Shropshire,* 1813, 73.
[27] T.H. Whitehead, *op. cit.*, 14.
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] *V.C.H. Salop,* **xi**, 180.
[30] T.C. Duggan, *op. cit.*, 50.
[31] J. Plymley, *op. cit.*, 72.
[32] *The growth of the salt industry,* n.d. Copy in the Salt Museum, Northwich, Cheshire.
[33] M. Rochester, Transport in the salt industry, in *Salt in Cheshire,* 1975, 20.
[34] D.A. Iredale, 'The rise and fall of the Marshalls of Northwich, salt proprietors: a saga of the industrial era of Cheshire 1720–1917', *Trans. Cheshire Hist. Soc.*, **cxvii**, 1965, 66.
[35] D.A. Iredale, 'John and Thomas Marshall and the Society for Improving the British Salt Trade: an example of trade regulation', *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, 2nd ser., **xx**, 1967, 81.
[36] C. Hadfield, *The canals of the West Midlands*, 1969, 21.
[37] *Ibid.*, 18.
[38] B.S. Trinder, *Industrial Revolution*, 92.
[39] D.A. Iredale, 'John and Thomas Marshall', 83.
[40] A. Sparrow, *History of Church Preen*, 1898, 124–5.

INDUSTRIAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN SHROPSHIRE IN THE 1820s

By P.E.H. HAIR

In a previous paper I discussed deaths from violence (accidental death and suicide, but not homicide) in Shropshire in the period 1780–1809, in terms of an analysis of the county coroners' returns in the published abstracts of the Quarter Sessions rolls. The appearance of Miss Hill's edition of abstracts for the 1820s has enabled me to repeat the analysis for that decade;[1] but for brevity, in the present paper I shall concentrate on new points and will refer the reader to the previous article for discussion of general issues (numbers in square brackets [ ] refer to the pagination of that article). There is some evidence that the county coroners had improved their efficiency by the 1820s: their returns include a substantial proportion of inquests held on deaths which had occurred in slightly ambiguous circumstances but which were subsequently held to be 'natural',[2] and they also include larger proportions of deaths of women and children, which may confirm my suspicion [74] that the violence affecting these was previously under-represented at inquests. The annual totals of inquests show reasonable consistency throughout the decade, except that 1824 was reduced by a considerable shortfall in one quarter. Though the total for the next year suggests that delayed returns may have accounted for some of the loss, it is almost certain that a number of returns is missing and that about 40 deaths in 1824 are not recorded. As a result the rates I will give for 1820–4 are about 8% and those for 1820–9 about 3% too low.

The size of the population dealt with by the county coroners is again difficult to estimate [64]. The population of the county (which then included the Black Country enclave of Halesowen) was 206,000 in 1821 and 223,000 in 1831. Almost no deaths were recorded from the boroughs and liberties of Shrewsbury, Ludlow and Wenlock, which had their own coroners. But the less-populated liberties of Oswestry, Bishops Castle and Ellesmere appear to have been attended by the county coroners.[3] Returns from the borough of Bridgnorth are included in the rolls, separately or otherwise, but only irregularly: and since it is known that local coroners were operating there [64, n.5] I have thought it best to exclude the Bridgnorth returns. Thus the area to which the county coroners' returns are taken to apply is that of the county, less Shrewsbury, Ludlow, Wenlock and Bridgnorth. I estimate the population to have averaged 160,000 in 1820–4 and 166,000 in 1825–9, or 163,000 in 1820–9.

The returns are superior to the earlier ones in that they more often clearly distinguish between adults and children. Not only is the term 'playing' regularly used to indicate a child victim but his or her age is not uncommonly stated. This enables us to distinguish at least broadly between child mortality and adult mortality [65].

Table 1 compares five-year periods, to check consistency, and generally to follow table 1 in the previous paper [65]. The incidence is given in *pMa* (per one million living per annum). The increased incidence shown between 1820–4 and 1825–9 is of course in some part due to the loss of the 1824 deaths. If we allow

40 more deaths, then the 1820–4 incidence becomes 661. This fits much better the trend shown in the earlier paper, which finished at 628 in 1805–9: we now have a continuing trend, reaching 742 in 1825–9.

Table 1

	Deaths	*Incidence*	*% of deaths by various causes*					
			drowning	*horses/ carts*	*coal-pits*	*falls*	*burns/ scalds*	*suicide*
1820–4	489 (97.8 p.a.)	611 *pMa*	15	17	19	18	24	6
1825–9	616 (123.2 p.a.)	742 *pMa*	15	13	22	21	24	5

Table 2 summarises both the earlier and the present data, and it re-arranges the category of accident slightly.[4]

Table 2

	Deaths	*Various causes: number, % of total, pMa*					
		drownings	*horses/ carts*	*mines*	*other falls, etc.*	*burns/ scalds*	*suicide*
1780s	474 (390 *pMa*)	112	100	73	110	30	49
		24%	21%	15%	23%	6%	10%
		92	82	60	91	25	40
1800s	801 (585)	159	141	255	134	51	61
		20%	18%	32%	17%	6%	8%
		116	103	186	98	37	45
1820s	1105 (678)	165	159	297	155	268	61
		15%	14%	27%	14%	24%	5%
		101	98	182	95	164	37

Table 2 shows that overall mortality from violence (other than homicide) increased sharply over the five decades. The increase in the rate between the 1800s and the 1820s was forecast [73–4]; and the later rate, which may be taken as about 700 *pMa* to allow for the missing inquests, is what was estimated for the county for the year 1840. Turning to specific forms of violence, the rate of suicide fell off in the 1820s (even if we allow for missing records): following the logic of a previous argument [66], this may indicate that the population at risk has this time been rather over-estimated. Industrialisation provides an easy explanation of the 1820s general increase. But was it really due to industrial violence, in the sense of occupational violence ? In the obvious categories of occupational violence – accidents involving horses and carts, accidents in mines, quarries and pits, and accidents mainly due to falls, of or from objects, mainly at work; these being categories where very few of the victims were identified as children and where probably the vast majority were adults – in these categories both the proportions of total deaths and the incidences fell off. What was previously said about horse/cart accidents still broadly applied in the 1820s: almost all victims were male; over half had fallen off carts, often when acting as drivers, sometimes allegedly drunk; most of the remainder had fallen off horses; a few adults and children had been run over. The miscellaneous category of 'other falls, etc.' also requires little additional comment [71]. Accidents with machines ('engines') made up a smaller proportion of these miscellaneous accidents – presumably the cautions of a mechanical age were being learnt – but about half the accidents were with a new machine, and that a 'non-industrial' one, the threshing machine.

Mining accidents again mainly involved males and adults, but a small proportion were cases of passers-by falling down open mine shafts, and some of these were women and children. Of those killed in mines who were stated actually to work there, a few had worked on bank and fallen down the shaft, and these included almost all the female mine-workers.[5] But over two thirds of the mining deaths occurred to

underground workers (including two females, QR 290/93 and 318/182), one third of these in shaft accidents, the remainder in roof falls, the commonest form of mining death, or in explosions (the proportion of mining deaths from this cause being the same as previously). It is not apparent that between the 1800s and the 1820s the dangers of mining had either increased or diminished. Estimating the total average number of miners at risk in the 1820s to have been about 4500, I calculate that the incidence of violent death at work was almost exactly the same as in the 1800s, 5600 *pMa* [69].[6]

If it was not occupational violence that caused the general increase between the 1800s and the 1820s, what was it? In the 1820s industrialisation and mechanisation were still expanding, yet it seems that violence at work had ceased to increase: this must mean that individuals and society at large were learning to cope with the new techniques and their dangers, and were, in short, bringing the machines under control. The unexpected feature of the new analysis is the apparent sudden outburst of domestic violence, in the sense of deaths caused by accidents in the home, mainly affecting children, and mainly in the form of burns and scalds. Beginning with those deaths where the record makes it clear that the victim was a child and not an adult (it will be convenient to refer to these hereafter as deaths of 'ascertained' children), whereas earlier only 15% of Shropshire deaths from violence brought to inquest were those of ascertained children (under the age of fifteen), in the 1820s the figure rose to 25%. Apart from these deaths, a proportion of the other deaths from drowning and from burns and scalds were certainly those of children, though this was not clearly distinguished in the record: this raises the proportion, at a guess by as much as a third, bringing it to 33%. However in 1840 38% of all deaths from violence in the East Midlands were deaths of the younger children, those under ten; and this may indicate that even in the 1820s not every child death from violence was being brought to inquest. Be that as it may, a much larger incidence of child deaths was being brought to inquest in the 1820s than earlier. Why? Perhaps a larger *proportion* were being brought to inquest – I did suspect previously [74] that many child deaths from violence were avoiding inquest, and it may be significant that for a category of accident where little environmental change can have occurred, drowning, the proportion of ascertained children rose from one fifth to a third.[7] But the logical possibility remains that at least part of the apparent increase was due to an actual increase in child mortality; and the very steep increase in mortality from burns and scalds, a category of accident predominantly involving young children, makes it very difficult to believe that all these deaths were passed over previously. It seems easier to accept that some new peril had arisen.

Over nine tenths of the ascertained children dying from burns or scalds had their fatal accident in the home. Ages were given for a third of the victims, and the vast majority were aged six or under, with two thirds under five. From the description of the accidents to the other children, it is likely that this age-distribution applied to all the domestic victims, who were therefore mainly infants and toddlers. A few were scalded with kettles or brew-pans, but the typical accident occurred when a toddler was left in a room or a house, alone or only with other children, and its clothes caught fire.[8] Of course such accidents must have occurred earlier. Is it therefore likely that in the early decades of the 19th century the incidence dramatically increased ? Burns and scalds accounted for two thirds of the deaths of ascertained children (four fifths of the deaths of girls); but also for over a third of the deaths of females other than ascertained children. In each case, the predominant fatal accident was one of clothes being set on fire. The long clothes of women and children in the period, and the general open fires, were obviously major factors. Yet why the apparent chronological trend ? It is conceivable that in the 1820s mothers were leaving their children alone more frequently, and perhaps the increased demands of industrialisation might somehow be blamed? But in detail the charges seem difficult to substantiate. Female employment outside the home was probably not on the increase in Shropshire. Wives did take meals to their husbands at works and mines, but wives had probably always taken meals to their husbands in the fields.[9] A slightly more plausible explanation is that, because of an increasing birth rate and declining death rate, family size was increasing and mothers more commonly found themselves with more infants and toddlers than they could efficiently attend to. Finally, though I must leave this explanation to be pursued by experts, attention might be directed towards any changes in the shape and, perhaps especially, in the material of domestic clothes of women and children, on the supposition that the changes made it easier for the clothes to catch fire and blaze.

The more detailed records of the 1820s allow a fresh dimension of analysis, by age. Using the age-distribution figures for the county in the 1821 census,[10] I have calculated a few age-specific rates. In table 3 these are compared with rates calculated from data supplied by the Registrar General in his earliest analysis of violence, referring to the year 1840.[11] This analysis does not go down to county level, but, as previously [73,n.19], I argue that the Shropshire experience must have been near that shown for the West Midlands. Finally, for further comparison, I give the Shropshire rates for the 1870s, a period when registration was more complete than it was in 1840.[12]

Table 3

Deaths from violence at various ages per 1,000,000 living at each age

	All ages	*Ages 10 and over*	*Ages 0–9*	*Ages 0–4*
1820s	678	706	586	993
1840	739	637	1037	1220
1870s	696	688	723	1003

In the 1820s calculation I employed the assumption that the distribution of ages among children whose ages were not recorded was the same as that among children whose ages were recorded. This means that almost all child victims were under ten, and the majority under five. I then divided the population at age ten and calculated rates for those under (children) and for those over (broadly adults).[13] The incidences at all ages in the three periods are fairly similar, though allowing for the records becoming more complete chronologically, it is possible that the real trend should be a slight decline. However, whereas in the later periods the child rate is higher than the adult rate, the 1820s child rate is lower. In my view this confirms what I suspected, that as well as the ascertained child deaths there were other child victims among those I have counted as adults. Probably the real balance in the 1820s was like that in 1840, with children much more exposed to risk than adults. But there is a further difficulty in taking the 1820s figures at their face value. If a rate for ages 5–9 is calculated it is absurdly low compared with those in the later series, and this must mean that the assumption I employed was not wholly correct. There were more older children than I supposed, presumably because the ages of older children were more frequently omitted than those of children under five. Thus the division between the two age-groups of children is not trustworthy, and even the division at age ten may have led to some slight under-estimate of 'adult' mortality (if there were more deaths at ages 10–14 than I supposed). However this under-estimate would almost certainly have been outweighed by the over-estimate arising from the previous consideration.

In all three periods the highest rate shown in table 3 is that for toddlers and I have no doubt that this correctly represents what was happening. Again I think that the 1820s rate is an under-estimate and that the true rate was nearer that shown for 1840. In that year, throughout the nation, more than half the toddlers and more than two thirds of the children aged 5–9 who died from violence died from burns or scalds;[14] and since the age-specific rates from all violence of the West Midlands were very close to those of the nation, we may assume that the experience of Shropshire was close to the national average in relation to child deaths from burns and scalds. Though I cannot supply separate trustworthy rates for the two age-groups of children, two thirds of the children of all ages who died from violence in Shropshire in the 1820s died from burns or scalds. Thus, in this respect, the Shropshire experience appears to have changed little between the 1820s and 1840. And it is clear that in these decades the high mortality of younger children from burns and scalds was more than a Shropshire problem. One hundred and fifty years later, this particular form of domestic tragedy has been almost entirely eliminated. In the most recent year for which figures are available (1983), throughout England and Wales only 60 children under five died from burns in the home – as compared with 1200 in 1840; and only three of these children died from their clothes catching fire.[15] If Shropshire had its fair proportion of these 1983 deaths, rounded to a whole number, it may well be that in each case it had nil.

[1] P.E.H. Hair, 'Accidental death and suicide in Shropshire 1780–1809', *T.S.A.S.*, lix, 1969–70, 63–75; *Abstract of Quarter Sessions rolls 1820–1830*, [Salop] County Records Committee, 1974.

[2] All deaths found 'natural' (explicitly or by implication) at inquests are omitted from the calculations that follow. These include accidents involving apoplexy or 'fits'; deaths attributed to 'Visitation of God'; cases where individuals were 'found dead', including the new-born, but where the inquest stated no unnatural cause; and deaths attributed to 'over-drinking' but without involving violence.

[3] For one inquest held at Ludlow, see QR 314/122. Inquests relating to Oswestry, Bishops Castle or Ellesmere may conceivably have related to the parish outside the liberty. But one Ellesmere death is specifically stated to have occurred 'within the liberties', QR 316/85. At Oswestry, the mayor was also styled 'Coroner', but the town books only show him acting judicially, and there appear to be no records of local inquests (I am indebted to the Area Librarian for information and access). If it subsequently transpires that separate inquests were in fact held in these three liberties, so that their population should also have been excluded from my calculations, then the rates I give should be increased by about 10%.

[4] The category 'mines' includes deaths in coal and other mines, and also a small number of deaths in quarries and gravel and marl pits. But the rates I give for 'miners' relate to deaths in mines only, not to those in quarries or gravel and marl pits. Most miners were in fact coalminers, and the rate for 'miners' can stand in for that for coalminers.

[5] As before, I assume that of those who fell down open shafts without it being made clear in the record whether they were bank-workers or passers-by, half were one and half the other.

[6] The parish records of Madeley record 35 deaths from pit accidents 1789–1812, according to B. Trinder, *The Industrial Revolution in Shropshire*, 1973, 351. If the incidence I have estimated for the 1800s is applied to this figure, it produces an average

total of mineworkers of just under 300, which is probably of the right order for this parish, but perhaps a little high. However the deaths may include those of non-miners who fell down open shafts.

[7] It is also possible that a larger proportion of the deaths from violence of women were being brought to inquest [70, 74]. Mortality from burns and scalds to females other than ascertained children rose to 104 *pMa*, a more likely figure than that obtained from the earlier data; and domestic accidents accounted for a large part of the adult female deaths from violence.

[8] See for descriptions of child burns and of such an accident, QR 301/153 and 155. As shown later, the problem was a national one. In Yorkshire in this period one of the eccentricities of the Rev. Patrick Bronte was his dread of household fires; and in a letter to the *Leeds Mercury* in 1844 he explained that in 24 years at Haworth he had performed funerals over 'ninety or one hundred children burnt to death in consequence of their clothes having taken fire, and on enquiry in each case I have found that the poor sufferers had been clothed in either cotton or linen'. J. Lock and W.T. Dixon, *Life, letters and times of the Rev. P. Bronte*, 1965, 365–6.

[9] Dr R.H. Trainor of the University of Glasgow, who is researching on the Black Country in the 19th century, has pointed out to me that in the Halesowen enclave of Shropshire there was probably some extension of domestic industry in this period, particularly in the form of nailers' workshops attached to houses, and has suggested that this might account for some of the burns and scalds to women and children. But this explanation would not seem to apply to most of the county.

[10] I calculated the 1821 population by ages for the area of the county covered by the county coroners, and then estimated figures for later years based on the general county increase 1821–31.

[11] *Seventh annual report of the Registrar General*, 1845, 75 [73, n.19]. Age-distribution figures were taken from the 1841 census. Violent deaths in Coalbrookdale and also in the Black Country parts of South Staffordshire in a slightly earlier year, 1838, were analysed in the *Children's Employment Commission, Appendix to first report, Mines, part I (Parl. Papers, Reports*, 1842, **xvi**), 14–16, 36–7, the data having been supplied by the new local registrars. The lists are not complete and the extent of the populations at risk is not made clear. But the general picture is similar to that in 1840, the majority of deaths of children under fourteen being due to burns suffered by children under six, in South Staffordshire specifically by clothes catching fire.

[12] *Supplement to the 45th annual report of the Registrar General*, 1885, 29. There is a snag about these Shropshire incidences. By the 1870s the county had lost the Black Country enclave of Halesowen and was generally less industrial. Hence, whereas in the earlier decades I have supposed that the county incidences were near those of the national average, in the 1870s they are much below the national average, whose incidences are as follows : (all ages) 735, (10 and over) 701, (0–9) 824, (0–4) 1215. It will be seen that the improvement between 1840 and the 1870s shown by the latter county incidence is much less marked if the national incidence is instead compared; therefore the improvement was mainly due, not to the relative reduction of industrial violence, but to the decline of industry.

[13] I would have preferred to divide at age 15, but the 1840 breakdown only distinguishes 10–19.

[14] It is of interest that whereas more boys than girls died from this cause under the age of five, girls much predominated at ages 5–9, thus making it even more likely that a major factor was the long, loose clothing which boys abandoned in their later childhood but girls continued to wear. But it may also have been because older girls were expected to stay at home and even help their mothers in cooking while boys went out to play – or work.

[15] *Office of Population censuses and surveys, 1983 mortality statistics, accidents and violence, table 4, nos E890, 893, 898, 924.*

A GAZETTEER OF PASSENGER RAILWAY STATIONS IN SHROPSHIRE

By RICHARD K. MORRISS

This gazetteer is a by-product of the author's *Railways of Shropshire: a brief history* published by Shropshire Libraries in 1983. It has been compiled from a variety of sources, including railway plans, Acts of Parliament, newspapers, Ordnance Survey maps, rule books, timetables, photographs, periodicals, word of mouth and site visits. Where sources conflict, the most likely version has been taken. The author is aware that such a gazetteer is by its very nature tentative and he would be grateful if omissions or any inaccuracies could be notified to him, via the editor. The main missing dates are those of the ubiquitous inter-war 'Halts' built to combat the threat of road traffic.

The format of each entry is:

LAST NAME OF STATION OWNERSHIP AT OPENING; CHANGES OF OWNERSHIP Dates of opening-closure Date of closure to goods Notes – including changes of name	Brief description of site and facilities.

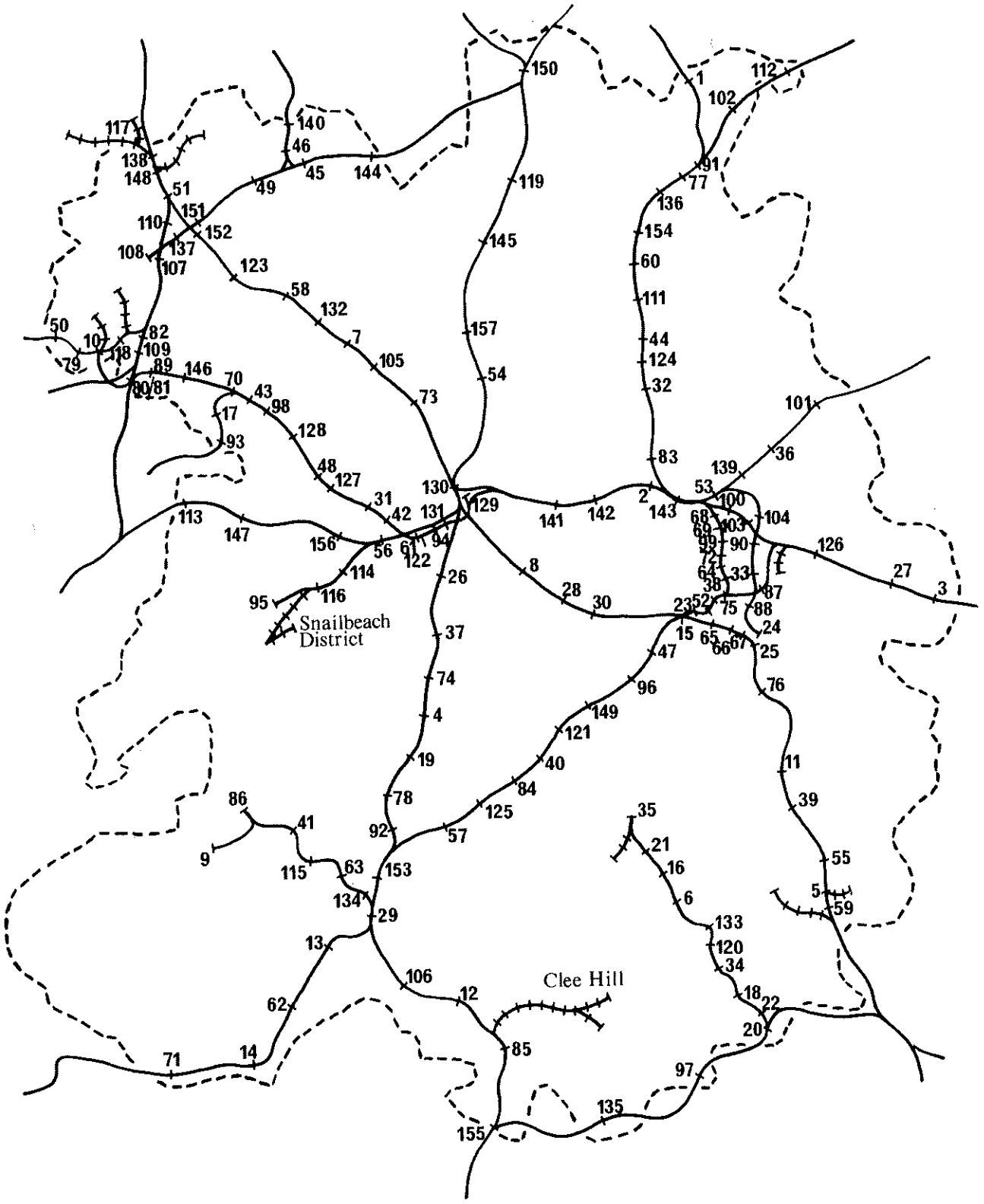
Notes:
The company that opened the line is not necessarily the company that built it.
Joint ownership or joint running is shown thus: S&B/SUR
In cases where goods traffic continued long after the cessation of passenger traffic, as on the Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Railway, the ownership of the line could change; goods only ownership is not included.
The opening date of the line is usually taken as the ceremonial opening. Regular traffic usually started a day later.
The closing date of passenger service usually means the first day on which advertised services did not run.
In the text, an overbridge is a bridge that crosses the railway; an underbridge denotes that the road goes under the railway.
The information in the gazetteer is believed correct as at October 1984.

Key to railway companies:

BCR	Bishops Castle Railway
BR	British Railways (later British Rail)

CM&DPR	Cleobury Mortimer & Ditton Priors (Light) Railway
CR	Cambrian Railways
GVT	Glyn Valley Tramway
GWR	Great Western Railway
KR	Knighton Railway
LMS	London, Midland & Scottish Railway
LNWR	London & North Western Railway
MW&SJR	Much Wenlock & Severn Junction Railway
N&MDR	Nantwich & Market Drayton Railway
NSR	North Staffordshire Railway
O&N	Oswestry & Newtown Railway
OE&WR	Oswestry, Ellesmere & Whitchurch Railway
PS&NWR	Potteries, Shrewsbury & North Wales Railway
S&B	Shrewsbury & Birmingham Railway
S&C	Shrewsbury & Chester Railway
S&H	Shrewsbury & Hereford Railway
S&M	Shropshire & Montgomeryshire (Light) Railway
SR	Shropshire Railways
SUR	Shropshire Union of Railways & Canals
SVR	Severn Valley Railway Preservation Society
T&B	Tenbury & Bewdley Railway
TR	Tenbury Railway
TVR	Tanat Valley (Light) Railway
W&E	Wrexham & Ellesmere Railway
W&SJR	Wellington & Severn Junction Raiway
WMR	West Midland Railway
WRNo.1	Wenlock No.1 Railway (Much Wenlock, Craven Arms & Colebrook Dale Railway)

1	ADDERLEY N&MDR;GWR;BR 20/10/1863–9/9/1963	Two platformed station just S of overbridge with the main buildings, signal box and goods yard on W side; waiting room added to E platform *c.*1900s.
2	ADMASTON S&B/SUR;GWR/LNWR;GWR/LMS;BR *c.*1850–7/9/1964. 'Spa' added by 1855; unstaffed 'Halt' from 30/6/1952	Two platformed roadside station with few real facilities; small booking office on the S platform and shelter added later on the N. It was not quite ready for the opening of the line in 1848. Station house actually at road level N of line.
3	ALBRIGHTON S&B;GWR;BR 12/11/1849–OPEN	Two platformed station E of underbridge with its own access road. Simple brick buildings with the main ones on the S platform. Canopies and ornate GWR-pattern footbridge added 1888. Goods yard and shed to E and S.
4	ALL STRETTON HALT GWR/LMS;BR *c.*1930s–4/1/1943;6/5/1946–9/6/1958	Simple Halt of two wooden platforms and shelters just E of village. Closed for three years as a wartime economy. Unstaffed.
5	ALVELEY COLLIERY HALT GWR;BR *c.*1939–1/1/1969 Workmens Halt: not usually on timetables	Short single platform with iron shelter to cater for workers at nearby colliery. The sidings to the N were the northern limit of BR workings on the Severn Valley branch after the end of 1963.
–	ASHFORD BOWDLER S&H / /1854– /10/1855	Opened for a trial 6 months in 1854, and extended for a further 6 months. Called Ashford Level Crossing in company minutes.
6	ASTON BOTTERELL CM&DPR;GWR	The original 1ft high earth platform W of the line was raised and edged in concrete by the GWR after it took over the line in 1922. Other equipment



THE RAILWAYS OF SHROPSHIRE
The numbers refer to stations in the gazetteer

	19/7/1908–26/9/1938 Goods 19/7/1908–11/9/1939	consisted of a siding, a nameboard, a lamp post and a corrugated metal goods shed.
7	BASCHURCH S&C;GWR;BR 12/10/1848–12/9/1960 Goods till 5/7/1965	Large country station to E of village. Two platforms with large goods yard to S and E. Main station house of deliberate picturesque cottage style with steep roofs and elaborate barge-boards. Smaller cottage for crossing keeper at N end of W platform opposite signal box. Waiting room added to E platform *c.*1900.
8	BERRINGTON WMR;GWR;BR 31/1/1862–9/9/1963 Goods till 2/12/1963	Station on crossing loop with two platforms and standard yellow brick 'Severn Valley' station house on E platform. Signal box on S end of W platform. Waiting room added to W platform c.1890s.
9	BISHOPS CASTLE BCR 24/10/1865–20/4/1935 No regular traffic till 25/1/1866	Terminus of BCR; single platform N of lines with plain brick building boasting a decorative wooden canopy; slightly enlarged in 1914. Goods shed to E, combined locomotive and carriage shed to W. Usual sidings and cattle pens.
10	BLODWELL JUNCTION PS&NWR;TVR;GWR;BR 18/4/1870–22/7/1880 ('Llanyblodwell') 5/1/1904–15/1/1951 To goods 6/1/1964	Opened by PS&NWR as only passenger station on the Nantmawr branch; single platform W of overbridge with small station building. Reopened by TVR on building of the new line in 1904 and renamed; signal box and new building added.
11	BRIDGNORTH WMR;GWR;BR;SVR 31/1/1862–9/9/1963 Goods till 2/12/1963 Reopened by SVR for seasonal traffic 23/5/1970	Two platformed station to W of the town. Given fine neo-Jacobean building in rusticated stone on E platform with refreshment facilities. Connected to High Town by a lattice iron footbridge (dismantled in 1976). Goods yard to W. Small waiting room on W platform. Refurbished by SVR with enthusiasts bar and shop etc. New locomotive shed built in goods yard.
12	BROMFIELD S&H;GWR/LNWR;GWR/LMS;BR 21/4/1852–9/6/1958 Goods till 15/6/1964	Single platform W of line originally, with E platform added after the line was doubled in the 1860s. Main buildings W of line. Extra platforms added to the south later to serve Ludlow Racecourse – and footbridge added as well.
13	BROOME KR; LNWR; LMS; BR 1/10/1860–OPEN Unstaffed since 28/9/1964	Two platformed station S of underbridge with the main buildings on the N platform and a later waiting room on the S. Small goods yard; had a signal box (closed 1965). Buildings now demolished and only N platform is used.
	BROSELEY	See IRONBRIDGE
14	BUCKNELL KR;LNWR;LMS;BR 1/10/1860–OPEN	Two platformed station just W of level crossing with fine neo-French buildings on S platform. Was a terminus until 6/3/1861. Small goods yard. Signal box closed 1965. S platform only now in use. Unstaffed now.
15	BUILDWAS WMR;GWR;BR 31/1/1862–9/9/1963	Station served main Severn Valley branch line and also lines to Coalbrookdale and Craven Arms. Main 'Low Level' part consisted of two platforms with small waiting room on E. Main 'Severn Valley' style station house on W between the two levels. 'High Level' consisted of single platform E of the lines, with waiting room, for the trains to Craven Arms. Extensive sidings built in the 1930s to serve power station. Site obliterated by new power station in mid 1960s.
16	BURWARTON CM&DPR; GWR 19/7/1908–26/9/1938 Goods till 11/9/1939	The original 1ft high earth platform W of single line was raised and edged in concrete by the GWR after the 1922 take-over. Had a siding, a name board, a wooden shelter and a lamp post.
17	CHAPEL LANE HALT S&M /8/1920–6/11/1933	Unstaffed Halt with very basic facilities just N of Melverley on a minor country lane on the Criggion branch line.

18 CHILTON SIDING
CM&DPR;GWR
19/7/1908–26/9/1938
Goods till 11/9/1939

Simple raised earthen platform – not even a real Halt but a request stop which caused the CM&DPR problems when they tried to close it. Survived to GWR days, but was never modernised like the other stations and was probably rarely used after the 1920s.

19 CHURCH STRETTON
S&H;GWR/LNWR;GWR/LMS; BR
21/4/1852–OPEN
Unstaffed Halt since 3/7/1967

Original station was N of overbridge with two platforms 170 ft long. The main buildings were on the W platform, built in the 'Modern English or villa style', in rusticated stone. A new station was opened S of the overbridge on 23/5/1914; buildings on both platforms were quite large to cater for tourist traffic. A covered footbridge was also added. Today, bus shelters have replaced the demolished buildings.

20 CLEOBURY MORTIMER
T&B;GWR;BR
14/8/1864–1/8/1962
Goods till 6/1/1964

Station on crossing loop with two platforms; main buildings on S platform. In 1908, the N platform became interchange point for trains on the CM&DPR. Was some distance from village.

21 CLEOBURY NORTH CROSSING
CM&DPR;GWR
19/7/1908–26/9/1938

The only station actually near to a sizeable village on the line. Earthen platform W of line raised and given concrete edging by GWR after 1922. No siding. No shelter until 1917.

22 CLEOBURY TOWN HALT
CM&DPR;GWR
19/7/1908–26/9/1938
Goods till 11/9/1939

The main intermediate station on the line where the company offices were established. Usual earth platform raised and given concrete edging by the GWR after 1922. Unusual in that station buildings were built a few yards to the S of the platform; they consisted of a wooden shelter and a small goods shed. The building contractors huts were kept by the company for use as offices and as a loco shed. Only replaced by prefab concrete structures in 1917.

23 COALBROOKDALE
GWR;BR
1/11/1864–23/7/1962
Goods till 6/7/1964
Unstaffed after 1/10/1956

Not a large station, but substantially built. Two tiled platforms on the Dale-side W of the village, with neat bungalow building of red, blue and yellow brick on W platform reached by its own access road. Another access road led to the Dale. Waiting room added to E platform later, made of wood. A signal box controlled the junction with the private Coalbrookdale Company railway to the NW.
See also LIGHTMOOR HALT

24 COALPORT (EAST)
LNWR;LMS;BR
17/6/1861–2/6/1952

Terminus of branch line from Wellington. Single brick platform N of line and W of overbridge with plain, but neat, bungalow brick building and small canopy. Loco shed and sidings E of overbridge; large goods yard.

25 COALPORT (WEST)
WMR;GWR;BR
31/1/1862–9/9/1963

On opposite side of Severn to above. Single platform originally, N of line, but loop added in the 1890s, and S platform built. Main buildings of 'Severn Valley' pattern in yellow brick on N side, with later red brick waiting room on S. Small goods yard to E.

26 CONDOVER
S&H;GWR/LNWR;GWR/LMS; BR
21/4/1852–9/6/1958
To goods 7/10/1963

Two platformed station with main buildings on E side of the line. Goods yard to NE. Station was N of overbridge with its own access road from E, and step access for foot passengers. Platforms lengthened in the 1860s after the line was doubled.

27 COSFORD
GWR;BR
*c.*1938–OPEN
'Cosford (Aerodrome Halt)' until 28/10/1940

Built to serve the aerodrome, and expanded in WW2. Built entirely in wood, although quite large shelters on each platform. Reached by steps from ground level. Surrounded by the airbase. Sidings to the W controlled by signal box.

28 COUND HALT
GWR;BR
4/8/1934–9/9/1963

Primitive Halt consisting of a wooden platform with shelter S of the single line, although it survived until the line closed.

29 CRAVEN ARMS
S&H;GWR/LNWR;GWR/LMS; BR
20/4/1852–OPEN
'& Stokesay' added /7/1879– /5/1974

Original single platform E of line had Tudor style station house and was 170ft long. By 1860 and the opening of the KR, a second platform was added. Bays added on W platform for BCR(1866) and on E platform for MW&SJR(1867). Fitted out with fine ornate canopies and footbridge and had a refreshment room. Large goods yard. Carriage and loco sheds to N and W. Most original buildings have been demolished and replaced by bus shelters.

30 CRESSAGE
WMR;GWR;BR
31/1/1862–9/9/1963
Goods till 5/11/1962

Crossing loop station with two platforms. Main station buildings of typical 'Severn Valley' style in yellow brick on E platform with later (*c.*1890s) waiting room on W. Signal box on W platform as well. Station just N of level crossing.

CROSSGATES

See FORD & CROSSGATES

31 CRUCKTON HALT
S&M
/10/1913–6/11/1933
Goods till 2/5/1949

Very simple wooden roadside Halt N of underbridge with siding descending steeply to minor road from the S. Had wooden shelter.

32 CRUDGINGTON
GWR;BR
16/10/1867–9/9/1963
Goods till 8/5/1967

Simple two platformed station S of overbridge and just E of the River Tern. Main buildings of plain brick on E platform, and later waiting room on W. Very large goods yard for size of village to E.

33 DAWLEY & STIRCHLEY
LNWR;LMS;BR
17/2/1861–2/6/1952
Goods till 6/7/1964
'Stirchley (for Dawley)' until 9/7/1923

Single platform W of the single line N of overbridge. Standard plain brick LNWR station house with basic facilities. Goods yard with shed to E, and goods platform E of track served by loop line.
See also HORSEHAY & DAWLEY.

34 DETTON FORD SIDING
CM&DPR;GWR
19/7/1908–26/9/1938
Goods till 11/9/1939

Simple earthen platform E of line raised and given concrete edging by GWR after take-over. Given 8ft x 6ft prefab concrete shelter in 1917. An aerial ropeway led to quarries on Titterstone Clee.

35 DITTON PRIORS
CM&DPR;GWR
19/7/1908–26/9/1938
Goods till 11/9/1939

Northern terminus of the line, but still only given standard earthen platform. Raised by GWR and given concrete edging. Also had fairly large shelter. The private Abdon Clee quarry railway went W from the goods yard to the quarry incline.

36 DONNINGTON
SUR;LNWR;LMS;BR
1/6/1849–7/9/1964
Goods till 4/10/1965

Two platformed station with the main buildings of plain brick on the S platform. Just W of level crossing with small goods yard to W. Private siding of the Midland Iron Works to S.

37 DORRINGTON
S&H;GWR/LNWR;GWR/LMS; BR
21/4/1852–9/6/1958
Goods till 3/5/1965

Two platformed station with fairly simple brick station buildings on E platform and basic waiting room on W. Not quite ready at the opening of the line. Goods yard and large dairy to N and E, with signal box on junction of sidings.

38 DOSELEY HALT
GWR;BR
1/12/1932–23/7/1962

Basic wooden shelter on basic wooden platform W of single line. N of level crossing.

39 EARDINGTON
WMR;GWR;BR;SVR
31/1/1862–9/9/1963
Unstaffed 'Halt' from 1/4/1949. Reopened for 'specials' 23/5/1970

Single platform with brick building S of single line E of overbridge. Original goods sidings N of line now used as storage areas for SVR rolling stock. Not a regular stopping place for most SVR passengers.

40 EASTHOPE HALT
GWR;BR
4/4/1936–31/12/1951

Simple Halt in woods below Wenlock Edge. Wooden platform and shelter S of the single track.

41 EATON
BCR
/3/1866–20/4/1935

Single platform station and station building N of the line – a modest bungalow building in brick given a canopy *c.*1900s. Station just to W of level crossing.

42 EDGEBOLD
PS&NWR;S&M
13/8/1866– /12/1866;
/12/1868–22/6/1880;
14/4/1911–6/11/1933

PS&NWR station a mile from Hanwood S of underbridge. Originally two stone-faced platforms on double track, but W platform removed after the line was singled *c.*1867. Original wooden buildings had disappeared by 1900, replaced by wooden S&M shelter. Steep siding led down to roadside dairy.

'Hanwood Road' till 5/1921
Goods till 1/8/1953

43 EDGERLEY HALT
S&M
/7/1927–6/11/1933
Goods till 2/5/1949

Simple single platform of wooden sleepers W of line in dense pine wood. Few other facilities; last Halt opened on the S&M.

44 ELLERDINE HALT
GWR;BR
/6/1930–9/9/1963

Single two platform wooden Halt S of overbridge with few facilities.

45 ELLESMERE
OE&WR;CR;GWR;BR
4/5/1863–18/1/1965
Goods 20/3/1863–29/3/1965

Two platform station E of overbridge with quite substantial brick buildings on S platform. Until 27/7/1864 it was terminus for traffic from Whitchurch. Goods yard to E was very large. After becoming junction station for W&E in 1895 it became the company HQ. Footbridge added around this period. Platforms remained low until closure, and portable wooden steps were often needed to help passengers on and off trains.

46 ELSON HALT
GWR;BR
/2/1937–10/6/1940;
6/5/1946–10/9/1962

Very basic one platformed Halt by overbridge to the N of Ellesmere on the W&E. Wooden. Closed for military reasons in WW2 as an Army depot was built nearby.

47 FARLEY HALT
GWR;BR
27/10/1934–23/7/1962

Simple wooden platform with shelter N of single line in pretty setting E of Much Wenlock. Just E of road crossing. Underground petrol depot built by RAF in nearby quarry in WW2.

48 FORD & CROSSGATES
PS&NWR;S&M
13/8/1866–21/12/1866;
/12/1868–22/6/1880;
14/4/1911–6/11/1933
'Ford' till 12/1866;
'Crossgates' till 6/1880;
'Ford & Crossgates' from 1911

Station N of underbridge kept both its stone-edged platforms after the singling of the line *c.*1867, being on a loop. Original wooden buildings replaced by new wooden ones by S&M. Given three sidings. Peculiar raised section at N end of each platform. Large WD marshalling yard built to the N in 1941.

49 FRANKTON
CR;GWR;BR
*c.*1867–18/1/1965
Goods till 6/7/1964
Unstaffed after 1/3/1956

Station was not ready for opening of line and although it bears the date 1866 it did not appear on timetables until the year after. Single platform N of the line just E of overbridge. Fine imposing neo-Jacobean station house in glazed red brick with magnificent Cambrian crests in three of the gable ends. Goods yard to W.

50 GLANYRAFON HALT
GWR;BR
/6/1928–15/1/1951

Simple earthen platform buttressed by timber with wooden shelter N of single line. Always unstaffed. Access from the road was over a footbridge crossing the River Tanat and a footpath to the halt itself.

51 GOBOWEN
S&C;GWR;BR
12/10/1848–OPEN
Goods till 2/11/1964

Junction station for the S&C branch to Oswestry. Two long platforms S of level crossing with bays on both for branch traffic. Fine asymmetric station house in Italianate style situated on W platform and designed by T.K. Penson. Smaller buildings on E. Given covered footbridge and long platform canopies later. Large goods yard and spacious sidings. Signal boxes N and S.

52 GREEN BANK HALT
GWR;BR
12/3/1934–23/7/1962

Small Halt at the top of Coalbrookdale, just E of underbridge and reached by footpath from the road. Two wooden platforms with wooden shelters, with the usual lamps, nameboards and fences.

53 HADLEY
SUR;LNWR;LMS;BR
1/6/1849–7/9/1964

Two platformed station W of underbridge with the rather plain main buildings N of the line. Waiting room added to the S platform *c.*1900.

54 HADNALL
LNWR;LMS;BR
1/9/1858–2/5/1960
Goods till 2/11/1964

Two platformed station N of overbridge to W of village; substantial main buildings on E platform with waiting room added to W side *c.*1900. Only Shropshire station on this line to have closed so far.

55 HAMPTON LOADE
WMR;GWR;BR;SVR

Picturesquely sited crossing loop station near W bank of the River Severn and reached from E bank by ferry. Station S of underbridge with main

31/1/1862–9/9/1963
Open for 'specials' since 23/5/1970

'Severn Valley' style yellow brick station house on W platform. Waiting room on E side added later. Well restored to 1930s condition by the SVR.

56 HANWOOD
LNWR;LNWR/GWR;LMS/GWR;BR
14/2/1861–12/9/1960
Goods till 4/5/1964

The junction station for the Minsterley branch which was opened before the rest of the main line to Welshpool. Two platforms on a stagger with the N one slightly W of the S. Plain brick station house on S side. Goods yard to E and S, signal box to W.

HANWOOD ROAD

See EDGEBOLD

57 HARTON ROAD
WRNo1;GWR;BR
16/12/1867–31/12/1951
'Harton' till 7/1881

Single platform roadside station W of road and N of village with its own access path. Simple bungalow station building.

58 HAUGHTON HALT
GWR;BR
22/9/1934–12/9/1960
Called 'Houghton' on some timetables to avoid confusion with LMS station of same name.

Two wooden platforms with shelters E of overbridge. Sidings to the W served nearby airbase and were guarded by signal box S of the line.

59 HIGHLEY
WMR;GWR;BR;SVR
31/1/1862–9/9/1963
Goods till 6/7/1964
Open for 'specials' since 18/5/1974

One platformed station near the Severn and to E of village. Typical 'Severn Valley' style station house, but in rusticated stone rather than yellow brick. Small goods yard and sidings for local pits – especially Lansdale Pit and Highley Pit, the latter reached by a rope-worked incline. Footbridge and signal box. Restored to 1930s condition by SVR.

60 HODNET
GWR;BR
16/10/1867–9/9/1963
Goods till 10/8/1964

Two platformed country station S of overbridge to E of village. Plain brick buildings with arched windows on W side with smaller waiting room on E. Platforms of brick as well. Goods yard and shed to S – as well as signal box.

61 HOOKAGATE & REDHILL
S&M
14/4/1911–6/11/1933
'Redhill' till 5/1921

Simple single wooden platform with wooden shelter S of single track replacing original PS&NWR 'Red Hill' station approx. 100 yards to the W. Short siding. Site obliterated in 1941 by the building of WD marshalling yard.

62 HOPTON HEATH
KR;LNWR;LMS;BR
1/10/1860–OPEN
Unstaffed from 28/9/1964

Two platformed station S of overbridge with main, and quite substantial, buildings of brick on E platform. Waiting room added to W later. Small goods yard. Only E platform now in use and the station is a 'conditional stop'.

63 HORDERLEY
BCR
/3/1866–20/4/1935

Single platform W of the line – and plain brick bungalow station building to E. By level crossing N of road and river crossings. Small shed built on brick platform later.

64 HORSEHAY & DAWLEY
W&SJR;GWR;BR
1/5/1857–23/7/1962
Goods till 6/7/1964

Single platform E of line under overbridge with plain brick bungalow building. Sidings to N and W with signal box. Private Horsehay Company system to W. Now HQ of Telford Horsehay Steam Trust.

HOUGHTON

See HAUGHTON HALT

65 IRONBRIDGE
WMR;GWR;BR
31/1/1862–9/9/1963
Goods till 2/12/1963
'& Broseley' till 9/11/1895

Large station just E of the Iron Bridge which provided access from the town. Two platforms E of the level crossing with main buildings of brick N of line and smaller waiting room on S. Lattice iron footbridge added later at W end. Signal box N of crossing. Goods yard and shed to E.

66 JACKFIELD HALT (I)
GWR;BR
3/12/1934–1/3/1954

Simple wooden platform with shelter E of the single line abandoned because of subsidence. Just N of Maws Tile Works.

67 JACKFIELD HALT (II)
BR

Replaced original Halt but was of identical construction – a single wooden platform with shelter E of the line, N of underbridge. Oddly, the only

1/3/1954–7/9/1963

station built by BR in the county. Was approx. 400 yards to the S of the first Halt.

68 KETLEY
W&SJR;GWR;BR
2/5/1859–23/7/1962
Goods till 6/7/1964

Single brick platform with largish brick buildings E of the line, equipped with a loop line; just S of the A5 level crossing.

69 KETLEY TOWN HALT
GWR;BR
6/3/1936–23/7/1962

Short platform with wooden shelter on E side of single line. SW of Ketley, reached by cul-de-sac.

70 KINNERLEY
PS&NWR;S&M
13/8/1866–21/12/1866;
/12/1868–22/6/1880;
14/4/1911–6/11/1933
Goods till 29/2/1960

Shortly after the reopening of 1868 it became the junction station for the Criggion branch. Kept both its stone platforms after the 1867 singling of the line. Small brick building on S platform and wooden shelter on N. Bay added to S platform for Criggion traffic. Both platforms had raised sections near the E end. Original wooden PS&NWR signal box replaced by S&M ground frame on N platform. The S&M established their HQ here, and built locomotive sheds and repair shops to the W; also HQ of Royal Engineers running the line in WW2. Station to W of overbridge, over ½ mile from village.

71 KNIGHTON
KR;LNWR;LMS;BR
6/3/1861–OPEN
Unstaffed since 28/9/1964
'Halt' between then and 5/5/69

The station is N of the town, and within Shropshire. Was terminus of the line from Craven Arms until Central Wales section completed to Swansea in 1871. Two platforms W of overbridge. Large station house in mock-Tudor with very high steep pitched roofs on S platform and smaller waiting room on N. Peculiar footbridge added, with one side clinging to the roadbridge. Had a small goods yard, and a loco shed (opened in 1870 and closed 1/1/1962). S platform only now in use.

72 LAWLEY BANK
W&SJR;GWR;BR
2/5/1859–23/7/1962

Single platform E side of the line S of level crossing with combined station building and signal box.

73 LEATON
S&C;GWR;BR
12/10/1848–12/9/1960
Goods till 15/3/1965

Two platformed station W of level crossing in farming area. Small station house in brick on N platform. Additional waiting room added on this platform *c.*1900s in brick; curious rusticated wooden shelter on S platform. Signal box and goods yard to E.

74 LEEBOTWOOD
S&H;GWR/LNWR;GWR/LMS;
BR
21/4/1852–9/6/1958
Unstaffed after 2/7/1956

Originally a single platform just N of underbridge; another platform added on the doubling of the line in the early 1860s. Small station building on E platform, and shelter added later on W. Small goods yard to N.

75 LIGHTMOOR HALT
S&B;GWR;BR
2/5/1854–1/1/1864;
12/8/1907–23/7/1962
often called 'Coalbrookdale' until 1864; 'Lightmoor Platform' between 1907 and 6/2/1956 when it became an unstaffed 'Halt'

Originally the terminus of the S&B branch from Shifnal; later joined by line of W&SJR from N. Early station site used later as goods yard. New 'Platform' consisted of two long wooden platforms each with a pagoda-type shelter W of underbridge and reached by steps from road level.

76 LINLEY
WMR;GWR;BR
31/1/1862–1/1/1917;
2/4/1917–9/9/1963
Goods till 10/9/1957
Unstaffed 'Halt' after 10/9/1951

Isolated station built largely through pressure from nearby Apley Park. Given commodious 'Severn Valley' style station house and long platform W of the line. Reached by a ferry across the River Severn until the neat suspension bridge was built in the 1900s.

77 LITTLE DRAYTON HALT
GWR
17/9/1935–6/10/1941

Simple two platformed Halt just W of Market Drayton with usual wooden construction. Closed as a wartime economy and never reopened.

78 LITTLE STRETTON HALT
GWR/LMS;BR
*c.*1930s–9/6/1958

Simple two platformed Halt with wooden shelters N of overbridge next to main Shrewsbury-Ludlow road in the shadow of Ragleth Hill.

LLANYBLODWELL (PS&NWR) See BLODWELL JUNCTION

79 LLANYBLODWELL HALT
TVR;GWR;BR
5/1/1904–15/1/1951
Closed to goods /5/1941

Very basic unstaffed Halt S of the village just W of level crossing consisting of earthen mound buttressed by timber and a small shelter S of the single track.

80 LLANYMYNECH (O&N)
O&N;CR;GWR;BR
1/5/1860–18/1/1965
Goods till /7/1964

Two platformed station just N of overbridge to E of this border village. Main buildings on W side. Became fairly important country junction. Bay added to W platform in 1863 to take Llanfyllin branch trains – which until 1896 reversed out of the station to the N and into a shunting neck before heading W in the normal manner. PS&NWR station built adjoining E side in 1866. Waiting room on E platform and iron footbridge added later, and station also had refreshment room until 1957.

81 LLANYMYNECH (PS&NWR)
PS&NWR;S&M
13/8/1866–21/12/1866;
/12/1868–22/6/1880;
14/4/1911–6/11/1933
Goods till 29/2/1960

Originally the W terminus of the PS&NWR; two curving platforms adjoining the CR station, with wooden buildings on stone platforms. Loco shed to N demolished by S&M. S&M replaced ruined PS&NWR buildings with a wooden shelter and mock canopy on the E platform. S of the station, the PS&NWR branch to Nantmawr crossed the CR in a complicated double junction which remained until the 1950s.

82 LLYNCLYS
O&N;CR;GWR;BR
1/5/1860–18/1/1965
Goods till 13/7/1964

Two platformed station just N of overbridge to E of the main road. Fairly substantial buildings on W platform and later waiting room added on E. To the N was Llynclys Junction, originally for the Porthywaen branch, later the TVR.

83 LONGDON HALT
GWR;BR
*c.*1930s–9/9/1963

Basic two platformed Halt of wooden construction S of overbridge, slightly to E of village. Just given shelters, nameboards and lamps.

84 LONGVILLE
WRNo1;GWR;BR
16/12/1867–31/12/1951
Goods till 2/12/1963

Single platform N of the single line with a short siding N of the line to the E. Bungalow building in brick under a slate roof was quite elegant. After 1951 Longville became the goods terminus for traffic from Much Wenlock, the line to the W having been lifted.

85 LUDLOW
S&H;GWR/LNWR;GWR/LMS;
BR
21/4/1852–OPEN

The two platformed station was built just N of a 250 yard tunnel. Original platforms were 200ft long but were extended soon afterwards. Buildings on W platform in 'Perpendicular Gothic', with smaller waiting rooms on the E side. Large ornate metal and glass canopies, with large footbridge as well. Large goods yard and sidings to N, plus small engine shed for locos on the Clee Hill mineral branch which left main line just N of station. Most original buildings demolished and replaced by bus shelters.

86 LYDHAM HEATH
BCR
24/10/1865–20/4/1935
No regular traffic till
25/1/1866

Originally to be the junction station on the 'main' line for the short Bishops Castle branch. However, main line to W was never built. Trains usually had to reverse to Bishops Castle from here, or the locomotive would run round its train before carrying on. Single stone platform S of the line with small wooden shelter; loop line. Station building rebuilt in 1906.

87 MADELEY (SALOP)
S&B;GWR;BR
1/6/1854–22/3/1915;
13/7/1925–21/9/1925
Originally 'Madeley'; 'Court'
/10/1884–4/6/1897
Goods till 6/7/1964

Single platform just W of overbridge with small bungalow station building. LNWR Coalport branch crossed over the line just to the W. Private freight line to the S and E.

88 MADELEY MARKET
LNWR;LMS;BR
17/6/1861–2/6/1952
Goods till 5/12/1960

Originally a two platformed station on a crossing loop with the main buildings in brick on the W side fairly neat and substantial. The loop was removed in the 1900s and the W platform only remained.

89 MAESBROOK
PS&NWR;S&M
13/8/1866–21/12/1866;
/12/1868–22/6/1880;
14/4/1911–6/11/1933
Goods till 29/2/1960

Original station had two stone platforms just E of level crossing. N platform removed *c.*1867 when the line was singled. Wooden shelter on S platform had disappeared by *c.*1900s and was replaced by S&M.

90 MALINS LEE
LNWR;LMS;BR
17/6/1861–2/6/1952
Goods till 1/5/1967

Single platform W of the single line just S of the overbridge. Plainish station buildings in usual branch pattern. Colliery sidings to the S and W.

91 MARKET DRAYTON
N&MD;GWR;GWR/NSR;GWR/LMS;BR
20/10/1863–9/9/1963

The station became a fairly important junction with the arrival of three separate lines. Although the NSR (later LMS) used the station, it was under GWR control. Two long platforms E of overbridge to N of the town, with the large main brick buildings on the S platform, fitted with large ornate canopy. Long bungalow buildings on the N platform which became an island platform connected to the S by a large covered footbridge. Goods yard, goods platform and large goods shed to S. NSR had its own loco shed.

92 MARSHBROOK
S&H;GWR/LNWR;GWR/LMS;BR
21/4/1852–9/6/1958
Goods till 2/12/1963

Originally a single platform E of the track until the line was doubled in the early 1860s and the W platform added. Large brick station house on E platform. Station just S of level crossing, with signal box to N. Waiting room added to W.

93 MELVERLEY
PS&NWR;S&M
2/6/1871–22/7/1880;
22/7/1912–6/11/1933

Main station on the PS&NWR Criggion branch, built just N of unique seven arched brick overbridge carrying a minor country lane. Small brick bungalow for station offices. Platform was E of the line; short goods siding.

94 MEOLE BRACE HALT
S&M
14/4/1911–6/11/1933
Goods till 29/2/1960 officially, but sparse traffic if any

Single cindered platform S of the line under the road overbridge. Small wooden booking office and shelter. Became the ticket examining point of the line.

95 MINSTERLEY
LNWR;LNWR/GWR;LMS/GWR;BR
14/2/1861–5/2/1951
Goods till 5/1967

Terminus of branch line built before the main Shrewsbury-Welshpool line was opened completely. Single platform S of the track with plain brick building embellished with a canopy. Large sidings to S. Served nearby dairy until final closure.

96 MUCH WENLOCK
MW&SJR;GWR;BR
1/2/1862–23/7/1962
Goods till 2/12/1963

First station was a terminus near to later goods yard E of a rebuilt through station ready for traffic 1/8/1884. New station had oversize station buildings on a single platform N of the line. A loop line was constructed as well. A small loco shed to W was closed 31/12/1951. Station was to E of the town.

97 NEEN SOLLARS
T&B;GWR;BR
14/8/1864–1/8/1962
Goods till 6/1/1964
Unstaffed from 31/7/1961

Single platform N of single line given substantial station buildings of the 'Severn Valley' pattern in brick.

98 NESSCLIFFE & PENTRE
PS&NWR;S&M
13/8/1866–21/12/1866;
/12/1868–22/6/1880;
14/4/1911–6/11/1933
Goods till 29/2/1960
'& Pentre' from 1/6/1913

Originally had two stone platforms S of level crossing of minor lane quite a distance from Nesscliffe village. E platform removed after 1867 singling of the line. Brick station building renovated and reused by S&M. Crossing keeper's cottage to E. Small yard and cattle pens to S. Retained loop line.

99 NEW DALE HALT
GWR;BR
29/1/1934–23/7/1962

Wooden shelter on short wooden platform on single line in rather isolated area of industrial E Shropshire. Appears closed on 1946 OS map, but no available record of such closure. Possibly a wartime economy measure.

100 NEW HADLEY HALT
GWR:BR
*c.*1930s-OPEN
Scheduled to close September 1983, but open till at least 1985

Very basic Halt, unusual in having its two wooden platforms at a stagger, with S platform W of the N connected by pedestrian level crossing. Even shelters have now gone, but it did get new-style BR signposts.

101 NEWPORT
SUR;LNWR;LMS;BR
1/6/1849–7/9/1964

Two platformed station just E of overbridge to the S of the town. Main station buildings on N platform, substantial but plain with small canopy. Overbridge replaced original level crossing *c.*1880. Former crossing

Goods till 1/7/1968

keeper's house incorporated in station buildings on S platform. Covered footbridge added at same time. Fairly large goods yard to E and N.

102 NORTON HALES
NSR;LMS;BR
1/2/1870–7/5/1956
Occasionally called 'Norton-in-Hales' – the proper name of the village

Two platformed station that kept both platforms when the line was singled towards the end. Main station buildings S of the line with smaller waiting room on the N. Goods yard to S with usual cattle pens etc. Signal box on S platform. Station was just W of underbridge to NW of village.

103 OAKENGATES (WEST)
S&B;GWR;BR
1/6/1849–OPEN

Was the terminus of S&B until line to E was opened 12/11/1849. Station was just W of the tunnel. Main buildings on N platform in dark yellow brick and decorative arches. Smaller waiting room on S platform now replaced with modern bus shelter. Two footbridges – one for passengers, the other for a public footpath crossing the station site. Sidings and yard to W and N now used by cement company.

104 OAKENGATES (MARKET STREET)
LNWR;LMS;BR
17/6/1861–2/6/1952
Goods till 6/7/1964

Two platformed station on crossing loop on the LNWR Coalport branch, just S of level crossing. Fairly plain brick station buildings on S side, with later waiting room on the N. Signal box and goods yard to S.

105 OLDWOODS HALT
GWR;BR
*c.*1930s–12/9/1960
Goods till 6/4/1964

Simple Halt of two wooden platforms and shelters opened next to existing goods station in rural area. Just to the N of overbridge carrying country lane.

106 ONIBURY
S&H;GWR/LNWR;GWR/LMS;BR
21/4/1852–9/6/1958

Originally a single 150ft platform E of the line; W platform added after the doubling of early 1860s. Main station buildings on E platform built to harmonize with nearby vicarage. Station just S of level crossing and next to River Onny. Present signal box replaced older one. Sidings to S.

107 OSWESTRY (O&N)
O&N;CR;GWR;BR
1/5/1860–7/11/1966

Original O&N station greatly expanded after the finishing of the route to Whitchurch. Large, but plain, station buildings in brick on N platform were CR head offices. Ungainly collection of buildings added with a S platform in 1893, plus a covered footbridge. Had refreshment rooms. Platforms extended to N after 1923, and bay added for Gobowen traffic E end of N platform. Large goods yard to S. Cambrian carriage and loco works to E, plus loco sheds. GWR shed built further to E. Large cattle pens siding. After 18/1/1965 Oswestry was a terminus again, for shuttle link with Gobowen by DMUs. HQ of Cambrian Railway Society, a preservation group, is in former goods siding W of main station block.

108 OSWESTRY (GWR)
S&C;GWR
23/12/1848–7/7/1924
Goods till 6/12/1971

The original temporary terminus of the S&C branch was rebuilt *c.*1866. Single platform N of the line with a simple brick building with wooden canopy. Main goods yard was to the N and W in the area that is now the main car park and bus station. The station was closed after grouping and branch traffic was re-routed to the former O&N station.

109 PANT
O&N;CR;GWR;BR
*c.*1864–18/1/1965
Goods till 6/7/1964
'Salop' added 1/7/1924 to avoid confusion with another GWR station

Originally a single platform W of the line, with the E added after the line was doubled. Main station building W of line, with small shelter and signal box on E side. Station was just N of level crossing next to the canal wharf. An old tramway ran underneath the platforms to the canalside.

110 PARK HALL HALT
GWR;BR
20/9/1926–7/11/1966

Single cindered wooden platform under an overbridge and reached by its own access path. Small shelter. Built to serve nearby Orthopaedic Hospital.

PENTRE

See NESSCLIFFE & PENTRE

111 PEPLOW
GWR;BR
/3/1873–9/9/1967
Goods till 5/5/1967

Two platformed station N of overbridge in fairly remote rural area. Main station house on E side, with later brick waiting room on the W. Steps down from the road for foot passengers.

112 PIPE GATE
NSR;LMS;BR
1/2/1870–7/5/1956

Two platformed station just W of underbridge with the main station buildings unusually placed off the platform to the E and N of the line. Fairly large buildings in brick. Small waiting room actually on the S platform. Large sidings with goods shed N and S of line to the W.

113 PLAS-Y-COURT
GWR/LMS;BR
3/11/1934–12/9/1960

This small Halt of two wooden platforms was built approx. 100 yards E of the Welsh border, perhaps accounting for the inaccurate mix of Welsh and English in its name. It served isolated rural areas at the N end of the Long Mountain.

114 PLEALEY ROAD
LNWR;LNWR/GWR;LMS/GWR;BR
14/2/1861–5/2/1951
Goods till 31/12/1962

Small roadside station on Minsterley branch, S of level crossing. Consisted of small brick building on single platform N of the single line.

115 PLOWDEN
BCR
/3/1866–20/4/1935

Station not quite ready for start of regular traffic on the line, but probably used unofficially. Overlarge station buildings (the biggest on the line) on a single platform S of track. Had small goods yard and crane.

116 PONTESBURY
LNWR;LNWR/GWR;LMS/GWR;BR
14/2/1861–5/2/1951
Goods till 15/3/1965

Single platform station just E of level crossing N of the large village. Fairly large brick station house on platform S of the line. Goods yard and goods shed to E and S. Just to the W were the exchange sidings with the narrow gauge Snailbeach District Railways.

117 PONTFAEN (CHIRK)
GVT
1/4/1861–*c.*1888

A passenger service was introduced in 1861 on this horse-drawn railway and a station of sorts was built at Pontfaen, where the company stables were sited. The 1886 OS map shows a platform with a small shelter N of the track just E of a level crossing S of the River Ceiriog. The line was later extended to Chirk and converted to steam, but the original passenger service had all but ceased by then.

118 PORTHYWAEN HALT
TVR;GWR;BR
5/1/1904–15/1/1951
Goods till 6/1/1964

Single concrete clad platform E of the single line just N of level crossing. Just to N was the start of the TVR proper as it left the original Porthywaen branch line of the O&N. A signal box controlled the considerable traffic from nearby quarries.

119 PREES
LNWR;LMS;BR
1/9/1858–OPEN
Unstaffed since 19/9/1966

Two platformed station N of level crossing some distance from the village. Main buildings on the E side of the line, with waiting room added on the W platform later.

PREESGWEENE

See WESTON RHYN

120 PRESCOTT
CM&DPR;GWR
20/11/1908–26/9/1938
Goods till 11/9/1939

Simple unstaffed Halt; the single earth platform was raised by the GWR and given concrete edging after the 1922 take-over. Had usual name-board, lamp, and corrugated iron goods shed.

121 PRESTHOPE
WRNo1;GWR;BR
5/12/1864–31/12/1951
Goods till 2/12/1963

Apparently opened before the rest of the line to the W was opened (16/12/1867) and was thus the terminus for a while. Single platform N of track reached by its own access road. Small station building, loop line, and sidings; lime works siding nearby.

122 RED HILL
PS&NWR
13/8/1866–21/12/1866;
/12/1868–22/6/1880

Originally had two stone platforms with wooden station buildings; served local villages of Red Hill and Hookagate. Red Hill was popular for outings. N platform removed after singling of 1867. Platforms were just 60 yards long, with steps at each end rather than a slope. Buildings had disappeared by 1900s. Replaced by new S&M station approx. 100 yards to the E.
See also HOOKAGATE & REDHILL

123 REDNAL & WEST FELTON
S&C;GWR;BR
12/10/1848–12/9/1960
Goods till 7/10/1963
'& West Felton' added 16/10/1907

Two platformed station 100 yards S of double underbridge of road and canal. Fine neo-Tudor station house on W platform reached by its own access road. Waiting room added later to E platform. Goods yard was quite large to the N, and given large wooden goods shed later. For a short while in the early 1850s a packet boat express service of the SUR&C ran from Newtown (Montgomeryshire) to the nearby canal wharf, connecting with the trains. Signal box to N, W of line.

124 ROWTON HALT
GWR
*c.*1930s–9/9/1963

Simple two platformed Halt with usual wooden platforms and shelters, S of overbridge. Actually nearer to the larger village of Waters Upton.

125 RUSHBURY
WRNo1;GWR;BR
16/12/1867–31/12/1951
Goods till 2/12/1963

Single platform N of the line just E of overbridge to the S of the village. Quite elegant brick bungalow station building; small goods yard to the E.

126 SHIFNAL
S&B;GWR;BR
12/11/1849–OPEN
Goods till 7/9/1964
'Shiffnal' on some early timetables

Two platformed station just E of magnificent viaduct overlooking the town centre. Plainish brick buildings, with the main ones N of the line. Platforms reached by steps from road level. A simple shelter on the S platform. Footbridge added *c.*1890s. Original canopies have been removed. Elegant cast iron overbridge of 1849 to W was removed in 1954 and replaced by present girder bridge.

127 SHOOT HILL HALT
S&M
/9/1921–6/11/1933

Very basic Halt – a single platform N of level crossing on E side of line. Crossing keeper's house to S. Also had water tank. The crossing gates were later replaced with continental style 'barber pole' barriers.

128 SHRAWARDINE
PS&NWR;S&M
13/8/1866–21/12/1866;
/12/1868–22/6/1880;
14/4/1911–6/11/1933

Originally a two platformed station N of level crossing on minor country lane to NE of village. E platform removed *c.*1867 on singling of the line. Original wooden station building had gone by *c.*1900s. Rebuilt by S&M. Given one loop and one siding. Crossing keeper's cottage E of line badly damaged by fire in 1941; repaired by the Army who had requisitioned it at the time. WD 'Halt' S of level crossing.

129 SHREWSBURY ABBEY
PS&NWR;S&M
13/8/1866–21/12/1866;
/12/1868–22/6/1880;
14/4/1911–6/11/1933

Terminus of the line, built because PS&NWR failed to reach agreement with GWR and LNWR to use the General station. Single bungalow brick building with mock wooden canopy S of Abbey Foregate, opposite Abbey; two low platforms. Original loco sheds etc. demolished by SR, and bridge over River Rea widened by them. S&M replaced original low platforms with a higher, longer island platform. Water tower, goods sheds, sidings etc.

130 SHREWSBURY
S&C/S&B/S&H/SUR;GWR/LNWR;GWR/LMS;BR
12/10/1848–OPEN
Previously known as 'Shrewsbury General'

Built jointly by the four companies – but main buildings were not quite ready for the opening of the S&C in 1848. Main station buildings are considered some of the best in the country; designed by T.K. Penson of Oswestry to complement nearby Shrewsbury School (now the Library) and built in 'Tudor Gothic' using Grinshill stone. Originally a two storey building 150ft long with a 70ft central tower with clocks. Had two platforms initially, with a third added after the arrival of the LNWR line from Crewe. The Dana acted as a footbridge for passengers. Became important rail junction, and importance increased in early 1860s. Little expansion though, and it became cramped. Rebuilt 1899–1903 at a cost of £100,000; extra floor added underneath main station buildings, with more buildings on other platforms. Bridges over River Severn to E, and road to W, radically widened with girders. At the E end of two main platforms double bays were built, increasing no. of passenger platforms to seven. Northernmost platform relegated to goods only. Platforms also extended westwards over the Severn, and original wrought iron roof extended by new cavernous girder and glass affair. Large glazed footbridge added at E end of platforms. In 1924, W end of overall removed; in 1964, S end of roof removed, replaced by concrete and glass canopy shelters. Minor alterations to platforms in early 1960s. Renovated in 1984. Goods yards were at Coton Hill, Howard St., Abbey Foregate and Old Coleham. Loco sheds were to the S at Coleham. The large signal box at E end of station is now the largest manual signal box in the UK. Shrewsbury has lost some of its earlier importance; it is on a minor Inter-City route to London (Euston), with most other local services operated by DMUs.

131 SHREWSBURY WEST HALT
S&M
/9/1911–6/11/1933

Short cinder platform S of the line near where it met the main Shrewsbury-Welshpool line. It was sited under the overbridge carrying the main road to Ludlow, using the arch as shelter. The exchange sidings with the Welshpool line were just beyond the footbridge to the W.

132 STANWARDINE HALT
GWR;BR
*c.*1930s–12/9/1960

Basic two platformed Halt serving small village in rural area N of Baschurch; situated S of overbridge, reached by steps from road level.

STIRCHLEY — See DAWLEY & STIRCHLEY

STOKESAY — See CRAVEN ARMS

133 STOTTESDON
CM&DPR
19/7/1908–26/9/1938
Goods till 11/9/1939
Originally 'Stottesden'

Original earthen platform E of the line was raised and given concrete edges by the GWR after 1922 take-over. Also had standard pattern wooden shelter with usual nameboard, lamps etc. A loop line too.

134 STRETFORD BRIDGE HALT
BCR
24/10/1865–20/4/1935
Sometimes 'Strefford'

Temporary E terminus of BCR at official opening, because junction with S&H to E had yet to be finished. Plans to make this an important junction station came to nothing, despite talks with the S&H and WRNo1 companies. When regular traffic did start on 25/1/1866, Stretford was never well used and became a request stop, sometimes not even on the timetables. It consisted of a simple earth platform buttressed by timber N of the line.

135 TENBURY WELLS
TR;GWR/LNWR;GWR/LMS;BR
1/8/1861–1/8/1962
Goods till 6/1/1964
'Tenbury' till 14/11/1912

The town is in Worcestershire, but the station is to the N, over the Shropshire boundary. Two platformed station just W of overbridge with its imposing main station buildings on the S side. Waiting room on N side with a rather peculiar signal box of stone-edged brick under a steeply pitched roof. Smallish goods yard.

136 TERN HILL
GWR;BR
/ /1899–9/9/1963
Goods till 10/8/1964

Two brick edged platforms a few hundred yards S of overbridge in then fairly remote rural area; really served Bletchley 1 mile to W. Main station building E side, with small waiting room added to W later; large goods yard to S. Large airbase built nearby.

137 TINKERS GREEN HALT
GWR;BR
16/10/1939–18/1/1965

Single platformed Halt built to serve Army base at Park Hall. Platform was N of the line just S of main Oswestry-Whittington road near entrance to main drive. Siding crossed road to enter the base.

138 TREHOWELL HALT
GWR;BR
27/7/1935–29/10/1951

Simple two platformed Halt in wood with usual shelters S of overbridge in between Weston Rhyn (ex-Preesgweene) and Chirk.

139 TRENCH (CROSSING)
SUR;LNWR;LMS;BR
1/6/1849–7/9/1964

Two platformed station, just W of a level crossing N of village; main building was a small brick bungalow on S platform.

140 TRENCH HALT
GWR;BR
/12/1914–10/9/1962

Basic wooden platform Halt on the single track Wrexham to Ellesmere line, S of overbridge.

141 UPTON MAGNA
S&B/SUR;GWR/LNWR;GWR/LMS;BR
1/6/1849–7/9/1963
Goods till 4/5/1964

Small two platformed village station E of a roadbridge and W of a canal bridge. Main buildings on N platform 'neat and unpretending, yet commodious'; shelter added to S side later, as well as signal box.

142 WALCOT
S&B/SUR;GWR/LNWR;GWR/LMS;BR
1/6/1849–7/9/1964

Small two platformed station similar to Upton Magna. S of the village just E of underbridge. Main buildings on N side, with waiting room and signal box added to the S side later.

143 WELLINGTON
S&B/SUR;GWR/LNWR;GWR/LMS;BR
1/6/1849–OPEN

Originally a single low platform S of the line, but rapidly expanded in the early 1860s into an important junction station. Main buildings on original platform in rather plain dull red brick. Platform added to N, which soon became an island platform catering for branch and through main line trains. Double bay also added at E end of S platform. Buildings on N platform were in simple blue brick. Both sets of buildings were given elaborate iron and glass canopies, and a footbridge was added *c.*1890s. Between the two platforms are four running lines. There was also a loco shed by the station. The main goods yard was ½ mile to the W beyond a steep cutting in Queen Street. Wellington is no longer a passenger junction.

144 WELSHAMPTON

Single platform N of the single line just W of an overbridge. Rather plain

OE&W;CR;GWR;BR
4/5/1863–18/1/1965
Goods till 4/5/1964

station house in brick. Short siding and goods yard.

145 WEM
LNWR;LMS;BR
1/9/1858-OPEN

Two platformed station S of level crossing to E of town centre. Main buildings of plain brick on W side with later waiting room on E. Also given footbridge later. Signal box N end of E platform. Goods yard and shed to S and W. Most buildings have now gone and have been replaced with bus shelters. Station is unstaffed.

146 WERN LAS HALT
S&M
/12/1919–6/11/1933
Goods till 29/2/1960

Simple Halt miles from anywhere; single platform N side of track. Booking office was housed in crossing keeper's cottage, S of the track. Station was to E of level crossing of minor road. S&M erected the misleading sign 'Wern Las – for Melverley'.

WEST FELTON

See REDNAL & WEST FELTON

147 WESTBURY
LNWR;LNWR/GWR;LMS/GWR;BR
27/1/1862–12/9/1960
Goods till 15/3/1965

Two platformed station on crossing loop just E of level crossing almost 1 mile to the N of the village. Main station buildings on N side, together with the signal box. Waiting room added to S side later. Today this is the only crossing loop between Shrewsbury and Welshpool, and the only operational signal box. Small goods yard to E.

148 WESTON RHYN
S&C;GWR;BR
12/10/1848–12/9/1960
Goods till 4/11/1963.
'Preesgweene' until 2/9/1935

Two platformed station S of level crossing with the main station buildings W of line including separate station master's house and waiting room. Waiting room added to E platform later, as well as a goods shed for the bay platform for goods only. Signal box N of level crossing. Colliery sidings to N, abandoned *c.*1900. Exchange sidings with GVT to N as well until *c.*1888. A mineral branch was built from just N of the station to collieries near St. Martin's in 1921.

149 WESTWOOD HALT
GWR;BR
7/12/1935–31/12/1951

Basic single platformed Halt at N end of Wenlock Edge a few miles W of Much Wenlock. N of line; reached by small lane from main road.

150 WHITCHURCH
LNWR;LNWR/CR;LMS/GWR;BR
1/9/1858–OPEN

Originally an intermediate two platformed station N of underbridge E of the town centre. Main station buildings were on the W side. In 1863, it became E terminus of OE&W – later CR – and the E platform soon became an island platform to cater for the extra traffic. New buildings added. Branch to Tattenhall opened in 1872, and bay added to N end of W platform to cope. Canopies added to buildings in late 1880s. Also a loco shed and large goods yard. Tattenhall branch closed to passengers 1957, and CR in 1965, so station is again an intermediate one. Only buildings on E platform survive relatively intact.

151 WHITTINGTON (HIGH LEVEL)
CR;GWR;BR
27/7/1864–6/1/1960
Goods closed 10/1937
'High Level' after 1/7/1924

Originally single platformed station just E of where CR line crossed the former S&C NW of village. Originally S of line, but apparantly moved later to the N – but why? Buildings quite insignificant; steep siding led to dairy S of station – but no connection with S&C line. Station rebuilt slightly to NE with two platforms in 1898.

152 WHITTINGTON (LOW LEVEL)
S&C;GWR;BR
12/10/1848–12/9/1960
Goods till 7/10/1963
'Low Level' after 1/7/1924

Two platformed station S of level crossing at W edge of the village on the Oswestry road. Elegant main buildings probably designed by T.K. Penson, and situated on E platform. Waiting room added to W side later. Also had a signal box and a small goods yard.

153 WISTANSTOW HALT
GWR/LMS;BR
*c.*1930s–11/6/1956

Basic Halt of two wooden platforms with shelters just N of overbridge to E of village; sited under 1 mile N of junction for BCR.

154 WOLLERTON HALT
GWR;BR
*c.*1930s–9/9/1963

Simple Halt in rural area of two wooden platforms just S of overbridge, with usual shelters etc. Footpath from road level to W side.

155 WOOFFERTON JUNCTION
S&H;GWR/LNWR;GWR/LMS;BR
1/8/1861–31/7/1961

Two platformed station opened as the junction station for the new Tenbury Railway. Just N of overbridge. Main buildings in rather plain brick on E side, with a waiting room on the W. Small goods yard.

156 YOCKLETON
LNWR;LNWR/GWR;LMS/GWR;BR
27/1/1862–12/9/1960
Unstaffed from 2/7/1956

Single platformed station S of the track and just E of overbridge. Fairly large plain brick station buildings; goods yard, platform and cattle pens to E and S.

157 YORTON
LNWR;LMS;BR
1/9/1858-OPEN
Unstaffed since 19/9/1966
Goods till 6/4/1964

Two platformed station S of underbridge serving surrounding villages as well as Yorton. Main station buildings E of line in red brick decorated with yellow given decorative wooden canopy. Later waiting room on W side in blue and red brick. Both platforms are low, and steps are available to help passengers on and off trains. Bus shelter on E side replaced former waiting room which is now part of private dwelling. Goods yard and platform to S – and signal box.

OTHER STATIONS

(i) Drop Stations – for disembarking only.

SHREWSBURY ABBEY FOREGATE
S&B/SUR;GWR/LNWR
*c.*1850–30/9/1912

Single platform S of line near Underdale Road.

SHREWSBURY ENGLISH BRIDGE
S&H;LNWR/GWR
*c.*1851–2/5/1898

Single platform W of the line on W segment of the Abbey 'triangle' junction – with footpath and steps leading down to road level by what is now the Shrewsbury Town F.C. car park.

(ii) War Department Halts on the S&M – built to cater for the personnel working nearby ammunition dumps, and largely replacing the derelict S&M stations.

FORD WD HALT — Single concrete platform N of Ford station, E of line

KINNERLEY WD HALT — Single platform of concrete E of Kinnerley station, N of line.

LONSDALE
(Unofficial but well used name) — Four platformed terminus on spur off main line E of Nesscliffe station. Just S of minor road. Serving Willcot Barracks complex.

NESSCLIFFE WD HALT — Single concrete platform E of the line nearly 1 mile N of Nesscliffe station.

PENTRE WD HALT — Single concrete platform E of line – which here was doubled during the war – 1 mile S of Nesscliffe station.

SHRAWARDINE WD HALT — Single concrete platform E of the line just S of level crossing at Shrawardine station.

Each of these Halts (except Lonsdale) consisted of prefabricated concrete sections for the platforms, built on brick columns and given a nameboard and tubular steel fencing.

NOTES

A COPPER ALLOY CASTING JET FROM WROXETER IN THE COLLECTIONS OF ROWLEY'S HOUSE MUSEUM, SHREWSBURY

By BRUCE BENNISON AND J.P. NORTHOVER

A casting jet (fig.1) was rediscovered amongst the bronzework collections from Wroxeter in Rowley's House Museum, Shrewsbury during curatorial work in spring 1984. The object was labelled L.169/1914 and is probably the 'large ingate of bronze having two runners' mentioned but not illustrated in the 1914 Wroxeter excavation report.[1] It provides further evidence for metalworking at Wroxeter, formerly indicated by the discovery on Bushe-Fox's Site VI of five crucibles and a completely unworked casting of a bronze fibula.[2]

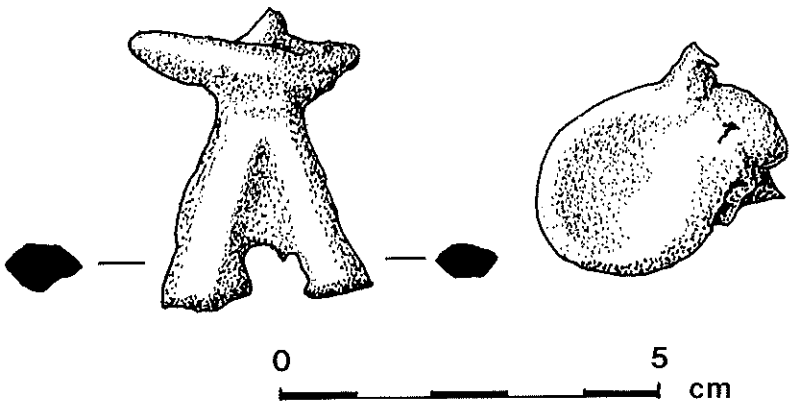


FIG. 1 COPPER ALLOY CASTING JET FROM WROXETER

An analysis of the copper alloy casting jet was made by Dr J.P. Northover of the Department of Metallurgy and Science of Materials, University of Oxford. His report follows.

The object (reference Sh 31) is a two-pronged casting jet for an object cast vertically in a two-piece mould. The air-cooled surface at the top of the mould shows little shrinkage and a trail of metal as if the metal to be poured was rather cool. It is probable that the metal was poured slowly into a preheated mould. A sample was taken from the metal trail at the top.

Composition

9.99% Sn; 0.20% As; 0.12% Sb; 5.4% Pb; 0.01% Co; 0.39% Fe; 0.04% Ni; 0.27% Ag; 3.24% Zn; balance Cu; copper sulphides present.

Metallography

The microstructure is typical for a slowly cooled alloy of this type in the as-cast state and requires no further comment. In general, the alloy could be of any date from the Roman period onwards and, given its probable context, there is no reason why it should not be Roman. It is probable that the casting was made from scrap bronze with a small proportion of scrap brass. However, recently, another possibility has become apparent from the analysis of Iron Age furnace remains at Llanymynech. It is just possible that the metal in this casting jet is a bronze made from a zinc-rich copper such as could be produced by a copper-lead-zinc source such as the mines at Llanymynech. No more can be said at present but much more thought should be given to the manufacture of Cu-Sn-Zn alloys in Roman and Saxon times and the factors which controlled their composition.

[1] J.P. Bushe-Fox, 'Third report on the excavations on the site of the Roman town at Wroxeter, Shropshire 1914', *Society of Antiquities Research Committee*, iv, 1916, 65.
[2] *Ibid.*, plate XXI, fig. 2, no. 6.

A FRAGMENT OF PRE-NORMAN SCULPTURE FROM THE RIVER MORDA, NEAR OSWESTRY

By MICHAEL D. WATSON

During November 1983, a stone[1] decorated with interlace ornament of pre-Norman type was discovered in the River Morda 2km. SW of Oswestry (SJ 27612812). When found the stone was lying, carved face upward, on the bed of the river, *c.*1.5m. from the river bank and *c.*10 m. downstream from a stone bridge carrying the minor road known as Penylan Lane which runs from Oswestry to Coed-y-go. The stone was found by Mr Davies-Sage of Oswestry, who on noticing the interlace carving removed it from the river.

DESCRIPTION (fig.1)

The stone is of a coarse grained Carboniferous sandstone found locally in the Oswestry area, and containing particles of quartz. It measures 0.3m. high by 0.5m. tapering to 0.36m. broad, and is 0.24m. thick.

Only one carved face now survives but it is clear that it is a fragment of a once larger stone. This is evidenced by the carved interlace pattern which is interrupted and cut through at the edges of the stone, the edges themselves being rough and irregular. Indeed, the stone appears to have been used as building material prior to its deposition in the river, for its undecorated face and bottom edge have been trimmed off to form a flat surface. They have also been scored by diagonal chisel marks, presumably for decorative effect and/or to facilitate bonding.

The decoration consists of a simple, coarse pattern of double beaded plaitwork, loosely knit and crudely carved. The plaitwork design extends downwards from the top of the stone for *c.*0.2m., later damage having probably removed the remainder of the pattern. The overall design of the plaitwork, however, suggests that it never covered much beyond its present area, probably terminating at its upper and lower edges just beyond the point at which it now ceases. It must therefore have originally been a decorative panel measuring *c.*0.26m. by 0.45m.

There is no trace of any carved decoration on the other face and edges of the stone, but this, had it ever existed, will have been removed by its breaking and trimming for use as a building stone.

DISCUSSION

The interlace decoration on the stone is of a type common to pre-Norman sculpture,[2] and is frequently found on carving of this period in both England and Wales. In this case the loose design and coarseness of the plaitwork probably indicate a late pre-conquest date, and a late date is also in keeping with the overall crudeness and clumsiness of the carving.

The plaitwork on the stone is closely paralleled by similar interlace decoration on the Maen Achwyfan cross shaft near Whitford, Clwyd,[3] and also on a cross shaft fragment from Rhuddlan, Clwyd,[4] while in northern England the design can be seen, for example, on a cross fragment from Kirkby Wharfe, North Yorkshire.[5] All of these are dated to the late 10th – early 11th century and a similar date for the River Morda fragment is likely.

Unfortunately, due to the fragmentary nature of the stone it is not possible to be certain as to whether it was part of an architectural carving or a free standing cross shaft, although the latter is perhaps the more likely in view of the plaitwork decoration being of a type commonly used on this type of monument.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the stone is its unusual findspot. At the point where it was found in the River Morda is the remains of a weir, and from its positioning in the bed of the river it appears that the stone had probably been laid as part of it. This weir was presumably built to serve Pen-y-llan Mill, sited 220m. further downstream. The mill was in existence by 1837,[6] and on an estate map dated *c.*1790[7] part of the mill race which served it is depicted, although the map does not extend to cover the actual site of the mill. The earliest cartographic representation of the weir itself is on the 1st edition 6in. OS map

FIG.1 A FRAGMENT OF PRE-NORMAN SCULPTURE FROM THE RIVER MORDA, NEAR OSWESTRY.

1888, sheet XIX NW, but it is likely that it was in existence by *c.*1790 in order to feed the mill race whose sluice gate, of which there are still remains, is sited *c.*8m. downstream from it. It seems probable therefore that the stone had been deposited in its findspot by *c.*1790 but prior to this, as already mentioned, it had been used as building material. Where, when and in what circumstances it was used as building material is not possible to determine, but the size of the stone suggests that it is unlikely to have been moved very far.

The geology of the stone indicates a local provenance for the complete carving, of which the stone is only a fragment. Of some possible significance with regard to its original provenance is the nearby hamlet of Llwyn-y-maen, situated 0.45km. WNW of the findspot. The place-name Llwyn-y-maen means 'grove of the stone'[8] and the element 'maen', or stone, is sometimes given to pre-Norman crosses and other early stone monuments in Wales, of which the above mentioned Maen Achwyfan cross in Clwyd is an example. It may be therefore that Llwyn-y-maen is the site of a pre-Norman free standing cross of which the only known surviving remnant is the fragment found in the River Morda.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the finder Mr Davies-Sage of Oswestry for allowing me to examine and record the stone; Mrs Carol James of Oswestry for drawing my attention to the find in the first instance; and Dr P.A. Stamper, Victoria County History, for commenting on this article in draft form.

[1] The stone has been allocated the number SA 3779 in the Shropshire Sites and Monuments Record.
[2] G. Adcock, The theory of interlace and interlace types in Anglian sculpture, in *Anglian and Viking Age sculpture and its context* (ed. J.T. Lang), *Brit. Archaeol. Rep.*, **xlix**, 1978.
[3] V.E. Nash-Williams, *Early Christian monuments of Wales*, 1950, no. 190.
[4] *Ibid.*, no. 188.
[5] W.C. Collingwood, *Northumbrian crosses of the pre-Norman age*, 1927, 158–9.
[6] 1st edn OS lin. map, 1837, sheet LXXIV SE.
[7] Estate map of Llwynymaen, *c.*1790, Shropshire Record Office 800/(88).
[8] Ordnance Survey, *Place names on maps of Scotland and Wales*, 1973.

BURIALS FROM BARROW STREET, MUCH WENLOCK

By Y.J.E. STAELENS

In October 1983, extensive restoration work commenced on the property known as 23 Barrow Street, Much Wenlock (SO 62379990). This building incorporates a timber-frame structure of base-cruck construction and exhibits an unusually large arched-brace truss in the rear portion. Architecturally it dates back to at least the mid 14th century, although parts of the building may be earlier (pers. comm. A. Snell). The building is constructed gable-end on to Barrow Street, extending along the narrow passage adjacent to its north side which is known as Mutton Shut. Work on the property involved digging new foundations, particularly at the rear of the premises and in the yard area. The location of this building at the heart of the medieval town meant that any excavation work would be likely to disturb early remains. Therefore regular visits to the site were necessary to record any significant discoveries.

Burials 1 and 2

On 13 October, a labourer on the site inadvertently disturbed an articulated skeleton whilst using a pick axe in a foundation trench. In the absence of the local Museum Curator (Yvette Staelens), Mr Miles Taylor (a temporary employee with the Museum Service) visited the site and carefully collected the bones which workmen had laid on the side of the trench. The following day a second burial was found, adjacent to the first, and the site foreman agreed to leave this *in situ* until museum staff were available to record and recover the remains.

Conversation with site workers revealed that burial 1 was articulated, extended and orientated NE (feet) – SW (head). It lay at a depth of approximately 90 cm. from the original ground surface. The right femur of this skeleton was fortunately left *in situ* and thus the relationship of this burial with burial 2 could be ascertained. No distinct grave pit was recorded and there were no grave goods.

Burial 2 was aligned with burial 1 at a depth of approximately 110 cm. (thus 20 cm. below burial 1), again orientated NE (feet) – SW (head). Both burials lay directly under one of the exterior walls of the building. Limited time allowed only the rapid recovery and salvage retrieval of burial 2 which was plotted and photographed. Excavation revealed that the body had been laid in the grave fully extended with the right arm resting on the pelvis, but with the left arm, strangely, beneath it. Both burials lay in a thick clay deposit. A bent iron nail was discovered between the femurs of burial 2 and traces of other ferrous objects encircling the body presumably indicated the original presence of iron nails. It may therefore be inferred that this body was interred in a long since decayed wooden coffin. The clay layer in which both burials lay was very damp at the bottom. Burial 2 was wet and brittle; the skull was crushed and many of the bones were compressed.

Burial 3

Some six months later a third burial was discovered in the rear yard. The skeleton was again articulated, extended and orientated NE (feet) – SW (head). However this burial was incomplete, having been disturbed at some previous date, with the left arm and part of the left side of the body missing. The depth recorded was approximately 30 cm. below the top of the step of the new double doorway at the back of the building. The burial was plotted and photographed. The contours of the site (sloping gently uphill away from its frontage on Barrow Street) meant that the skeleton was buried 1.7 m. below the original ground surface, again laid in the same sticky clay layer. A stone-lined well was also discovered nearby.

Skeletal Evidence

The bones were examined by Dr P.E. Nicholls of the Department of Histopathology at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital. His conclusions are outlined below.

Burial 1 is a female whose living stature (based on standard formulae applied to the right humerus and left femur) is estimated at 161.5 – 163 cm. (5ft 3½in. – 5ft 4in.). Her age at death is not easy to determine,

but the degree of dental wear and the presence of moderate osteo-arthritic lipping of the vertebral bodies suggest that she died at least in late middle age (*i.e.* older than 50 years).

Burial 2 is a male skeleton of which only the right femur is sufficiently intact to attempt an assessment of living stature and thus the estimate of 179 cm. (5ft 10½in.) can only be approximate. The degree of dental wear is as great or greater than burial 1; however no intact vertebral bodies are present to allow an estimate of spinal arthritic degeneration. Age at death is estimated to be not less than burial 1, thus at least 50 years.

Burial 3 is determined as female mainly on the evidence of the skull and mandible and on general stature (unfortunately the pubic bones were not present, rendering the pelvis a less useful guide than usual). Stature is estimated at 165 – 169 cm. (5ft 5in. – 5ft 6½in.) with the lower figure more likely. This height is derived from standard tables using the lengths of both femora and tibiae, the left fibula and the right humerus and radius. No ageing changes are seen in the spine or major joints, and the fusion of all epiphyses indicates that this is the skeleton of a mature adult. However the cranial sutures are not fused and the degree of attrition of molar teeth in the lower jaw suggests an age of 25 – 35 years (probably closer to 25 years). In the lower jaw, the right third molar is impacted, the left third molar is absent (unerupted or possibly undeveloped) and there is caries of the right first molar and first incisor, and the left second premolar, and first and second molars. The left incisors have been lost *post mortem* but their sockets are normal.

In conclusion, it can be said that, apart from the arthritic changes in the spine of burial 1 and the relatively poor state of dental health of burial 3, there is no significant skeletal disease or trauma. The cause of death in each case remains a mystery.

Discussion

The absence of grave goods or secure stratigraphic relationships means that none of the burials can be precisely dated; suffice to say that burials 1 and 2 predate the construction of the rear portion of the building and are thus medieval or earlier in date. The lack of grave goods and the orientation seems to indicate that these are Christian interments. However, their location outside the boundaries of the known graveyard of Holy Trinity Church causes a problem. It seems unlikely that the town's burial ground traversed one of the main medieval routes out of the town (Barrow Street) and thus it appears that these inhumations should not be linked with the churchyard proper.

It is possible that these burials were once attached to a hospital, chapel or religious institution of some description. A variety of sources indicate that three such foundations were once located in the town proper, although in each case details are unclear. A leper hospital was traditionally sited where Ashfield Hall now stands in High Street (SO 62219984),[1] but there is no firm supporting evidence. St John's Hospital supposedly stood on the site now occupied by the Corn Exchange (SO 62309991), and indeed this thoroughfare was formerly named 'Spital' or 'Spittle' Street. During demolition work in the 1850s prior to the erection of the Corn Exchange, remains of the Hospital were apparently revealed.[2] However, there are no details of what was uncovered. Little documentation survives apart from a grant of protection made in 1267 by Henry III and a further grant of 1275 made by Edward I.[3] Almshouses are first noted in 1485, in the will of Hugh Wolmer, a Wenlock burgess who had helped to promote the borough charter in 1468. They were located in Barrow Street, possibly near the corner of Mary Lane (*c.* SO 624998).[4]

The burials found at 23 Barrow Street may be associated with any, or indeed with none, of the above. With regard to location, the almshouses seem to be a possible candidate, although their late date makes this link unlikely. The leper hospital is probably not to be associated with the discovery since it is likely that leprous people would be required to live some way from the medieval town centre. However, it is possible that the Hospital of St John may be linked with the burials, especially as so little is known of the remains revealed under the Corn Exchange. It would be difficult to identify a medieval hospital without a good indication of general layout and floor plan, and a limited excavation would fail to reveal this. Perhaps the hospital lay somewhat closer to the junction of Spital (High) Street and Barrow Street. The further possibility remains that these burials are not associated with any of the above institutions and may be earlier in date. The recent discovery of a Roman building on the site of the Priory, with its probable post-Roman reuse as a place of Christian worship, means that these inhumations could conceivably be of Roman or post-Roman date.[5]

The close proximity of three formally laid-out skeletons suggests that this was a recognised burial place. It may be that the cemetery is larger, with only a few of the burials having been disturbed.

In conclusion it must be noted that none of the burials can be dated and thus all interpretation

regarding their context is speculative. It remains for further archaeological investigation and observation to reveal the true nature of this final resting place of these early Wenlockians.

Acknowledgements

Thanks must go to the following: Paul, Shaun and Mark (Onions & Rowley), Hugh Cantlie (Monument Historic Buildings Trust Ltd), Arrol and Snell (Architects), P.C. Coles, Miles Taylor, Gill Bradley and Mark Wojcicki. I am grateful to Dr Nicholls for allowing me to reproduce his report and also to Mr W.F. Mumford for his comments on the interpretation of the cemetery. Finally the warmest of thanks to Derek Beamond and his class at Much Wenlock Primary School for 'washing the bones'.

[1] H.E. Forrest, *The old houses of Wenlock*, 1915, 23.
[2] W.F. Mumford, *Wenlock in the Middle Ages*, 1977, 143.
[3] H.E. Forrest, *op. cit.*, 26.
[4] W.F. Mumford, *op. cit.*, 106.
[5] H. Woods, *Excavations at Wenlock Priory*, (forthcoming).
The Primary Record Number in the Shropshire Sites and Monuments Record is SA 3768.

HUMAN REMAINS FROM THE SITE OF ST AUSTIN'S FRIARY, SHREWSBURY

By BRUCE BENNISON

On 6 April 1984 the discovery of human bones, by workmen digging a trench to take a gas pipe at Shrewsbury Sixth Form College, was reported to Rowley's House Museum. Investigation by the writer and Yvette Staelens of the County Museum Service revealed that the trench had disturbed the graves of at least two, possibly three, individuals orientated along the axis of the pipe trench which was running roughly east to west. Associated with the human bone was a gold, inscribed, finger ring. Fragments of decorated medieval floor tile and other building debris were also recovered from the trench. Both the human remains and the gold ring were reported to the Coroner's Office and West Mercia Police.

THE SITE

The remains were discovered at SJ 48751264 in the base and sides of a trench, 0.6m. wide, being dug by hand, running east to west in a pathway between two of the college buildings. They lay at a depth of 1.0m. to 1.5m. below the present ground surface. It was clear that the remains originated from burials cut from above and through a rough mortar floor which lay at a depth of 1.4m. below the surface. It was not possible to follow the relationship of the burials with the material overlying the floor. This material consisted of a homogeneous sandy soil with fragments of decorated floor tiles and other building debris. At a depth of 0.4m. below the present ground surface this soil was overlain by modern pathway make-up material, presumably connected with the construction of the adjacent buildings. These burials join earlier discoveries on the same site, specifically those of 1910 when six skeletons and a body enclosed in lead sheeting were discovered during construction of the school buildings in an area within metres of the recent discoveries.[1]

REPORT ON THE HUMAN REMAINS

I am grateful to Mr D. Wedgewood, Consultant Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon, and to Dr P. Leedham, Consultant Pathologist, of the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital for their examination and subsequent report on the remains, from which the following is extracted.

Burial 1: The specimen consisted of the skull and pelvis, together with various fragments of arm bones. The skull is that of a male, probably aged between 25 and 30. On the frontal region of the skull there is a long crack commencing above the left eye socket, near the mid-line and passing laterally to extend upwards and backwards almost to the vertex of the skull. The nature of the crack makes it extremely unlikely that this is a fracture produced by pressure on the skull after burial. The appearance of this fracture therefore suggests that a sharp bladed instrument has struck the individual across the brow and split the anterior part of the skull. The finely incised character of the wound suggests a sharp but thin bladed weapon swung with considerable force carrying enough momentum to inflict such damage to the bone.

Burial 2: These specimens consisted of lower limb bones which included two femora which are particularly long. Using statistical tables to predict the height of the individual, from the length of the femur, the evidence suggests that this individual would have been at least six feet tall and almost certainly male.

Burial 3: The specimens again comprised of lower limb bones, this time of average length and again probably belonging to a male.

GOLD FINGER RING

The ring was discovered in a disturbed context but still encircling one of the finger bones belonging to Burial 1. Its slightly concave outer surface is inscribed AVE + MARIA + GRACIA + PLENA (fig. 1). This represents one of the most common medieval quotations and occurs widely on bronze, leather and other objects. The ring has been examined by John Cherry, Deputy Keeper at the Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities, British Museum, who suggested that the style of the lettering, which shows traces of black enamel or niello inlay, indicates a date in the first half of the 15th century. I am grateful to John Cherry for his comments.

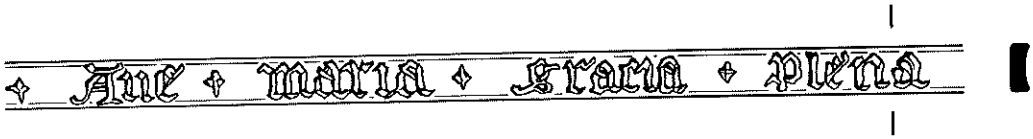


FIG. 1. INSCRIPTION ON THE FINGER RING FROM ST AUSTIN'S FRIARY, SHREWSBURY

CONCLUSION

The discoveries in 1984 add more evidence to that already existing for the location of a burial ground associated with St Austin's Friary. The rough mortar floor cut by the burials adds the possibility that the burials were originally located inside a building connected with the Friary. Until planned excavation can take place on the site, however, the discoveries remain in isolation, individual pieces from a largely unknown jigsaw. The finger ring indicates an early 15th century date for the burials and evidence from the medical examination of the human remains makes it tempting to connect the discoveries to the events of the Battle of Shrewsbury, as did Thomas Auden in 1910. But without firm documentary and dating evidence such speculation is purely imaginative.

The archive and material remains are held at Rowley's House Museum, Shrewsbury under the accession number A84/008. The Primary Record Number in the Shropshire Sites and Monuments Record is SA 1466.

[1] T. Auden and J.A. Morris, 'Human remains found at Shrewsbury', *T.S.A.S.*, 3rd ser., x, 1910, misc, xi and xii.

HARNAGE SLATES AND OTHER ROOFING MATERIALS IN SHREWSBURY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD IN THE LATE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN PERIOD

By J.B. LAWSON

During research for Condover Hundred for *V.C.H.* it was discovered that stone slates from quarries in Cound parish near Harnage Grange were being used locally for roofing in the later Middle Ages and until the mid 17th century.[1] The references in the volume are scattered and uncorrelated and in the light of further research and recent excavations in Shrewsbury at Pride Hill and Castle Gates a short note seems appropriate.[2]

The quarries occur along an outcrop of Ordovician rock lying south of Harnage Grange and on Grange Hill and in Shadwell Coppice. The stone is a hard, flaggy, calcareous sandstone with numerous shelly bands. They have sometimes inaccurately been described as Wenlock limestone and as Hoar Edge slates;[3] the latter is nearer the truth but the beds do not extend from Shadwell Coppice to Hoar Edge. Lime was being made from much the same strata in the vicinity of Bull Hill near Harnage Grange as early as 1232.[4]

The earliest reference to roofing materials in Shrewsbury is to oak shingles used to cover the new guildhall in 1312. The accounts are unsatisfactory but there are purchases of 'shyngel pinnes', 'schyngel pinnes' or 'singel pinnes' as well as of 300 'singles'.[5] As this was one of the principal buildings in the town, wooden shingles were probably in common use. The price paid of 2s. for 300 is high for 1312 and it may be that the increasing price of timber noticed elsewhere in England during the 14th century led to the use of cheaper and more durable materials.[6]

The first mention of Harnage slates occurs in 1367 and 1368 when Robert de Harley, lord of the manor of Harley, sold the 'pieres de Harnegge' from the roof of his kitchen and gatehouse at Harley.[7] This suggests that the slates were already in use for high grade buildings near the quarries by the mid 14th century. By the mid 15th century stone slates, very probably Harnage slates, were in common use in Shrewsbury. An exhaustive search of the borough baliffs' accounts might possibly yield an accurate chronology but lacking this the published accounts of the Shrewsbury Drapers' Company provide useful, if a little confusing, detail.[8] Stone slates required heavy laths usually referred to as 'stone laths' and these are mentioned in 1463 and 1489. Stone slates occur in 1468, but in 1489 a house in the Corn Market (the Square) was covered in 'shyngull' but laid on stone laths and using stone nails. These shingles must have been stone slates, but in the same year 'tyle' was used in Dog Lane (Claremont Street) and 'shyngull' elsewhere with no indication whether the 'tyle' was stone or clay or the 'shyngull' wood or stone. When the same house in Corn Market was repaired in 1523–4. 'brand tyle', clearly clay tile, was bought from one 'Medlycott', probably John Medlicott, a Shrewsbury brickmaker, and this was used side by side with new and old 'shyngll' laid on stone laths. The same tiler, Thomas Wright, was laying 'schynguls' in 1529–30 and almost certainly these were of stone.

Harnage slates have been found in an archaeological context at both the Pride Hill and Castle Gates excavations in Shrewsbury alongside smaller quantities of other stone slates from Corndon Hill, and from an unknown source at Pride Hill where a micaceous sandstone slate was found, similar to that used at Uriconium. The latter and the Corndon slate from Pride Hill are not mentioned in the published account of the excavations.[9] Corndon slate was celebrated in Welsh verse by the Welsh bard Guto'r Glyn in the later 15th century [10] and tenants of Montgomery lordship had rights to quarry tile there in 1489.[11] The Shrewsbury Drapers purchased 1000 'Corden tyle' for 15s. 4d. inclusive of carriage in 1523–4.[12] It must have been an expensive material but by weight it probably had a much greater covering capacity than the more bulky and irregularly quarried Harnage slate. Cost comparisons are possibly invidious as the various roofing materials differ considerably in size and covering capacity. In 1523–4 'shyngll', probably Harnage slate, cost 6s. 8d. a 1000, clay tiles were then 3s. for 500, and Corndon slate 15s. 4d. a 1000, inclusive of carriage.[13]

In the later 16th century the archives of both the Drapers' Company and Shrewsbury School demonstrate that Harnage slate continued to be used side by side with clay tile. Harnage slate was specified for roofing at the Drapers' Hall in 1577 and 1580,[14] and was used at the grammar school in 1595 as well as for repairs to Rigg's Hall on the same site.[15] It could still be seen on Lloyd's Mansion (1570) in the Square in 1895 (fig. 1) and may still be seen on the 'barn' at Whitehall, Abbey Foregate. Other slates

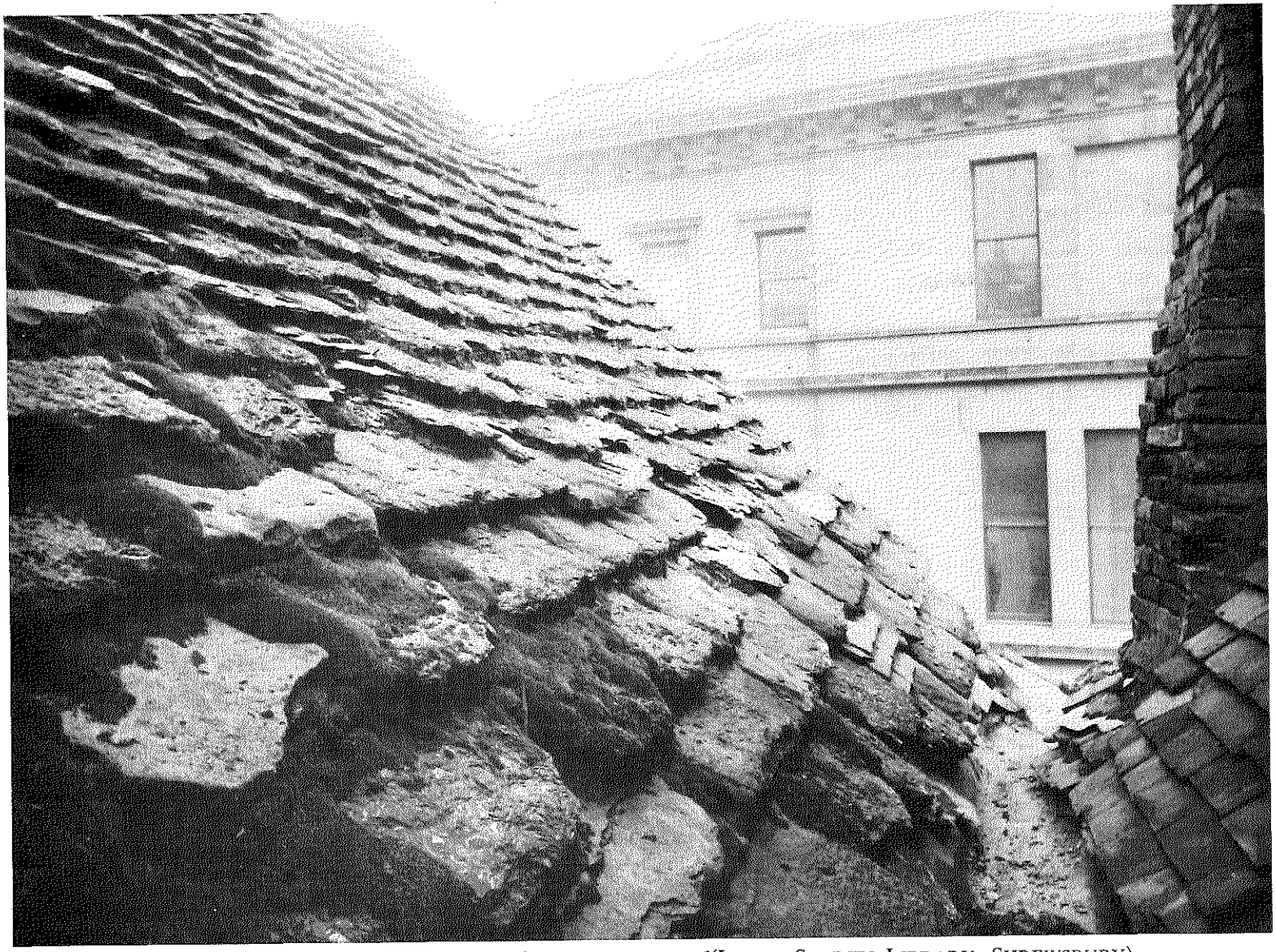


FIG. 1 HARNAGE SLATES ON LLOYD'S MANSION, SHREWSBURY, ~~1985~~ 1895 (LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARY, SHREWSBURY)

were, however, sometimes used, for in 1580 the churchwardens of St Mary's, Shrewsbury, bought 13,000 slates at 7s. 6d. a 1000 from the Bristol area and paid water carriage at the rate of 13s. 4d. a ton for 9 tons from Bristol.[16] By comparison, 9500 Harnage slates cost 13s.4d. a 1000 at the quarry in 1595, amounting to 38 loads, with carriage at 3s.8d. a load to Shrewsbury.[17]

Amongst those who quarried slate at Harnage in the late 16th century were William Bragger and John Counde, who provided slates for Condover Hall 1587–92.[18] John Counde was of Acton Pigot where both he and his father Thomas were tilers from at least 1575.[19] Nicholas Counde followed his father in the occupation and is mentioned in 1618.[20] Tilers can be identified in Shrewsbury from the later Middle Ages, and in the late 16th century Thomas Bould of Pulley laid Harnage slates not only at the Drapers' Hall[21] but also at Condover Hall.[22] The slates are heavy and require a relatively steeply pitched roof and the use of sturdy timbers. They are normally laid in graded sizes, slimming as they near the apex of the roof.

Outside Shrewsbury Harnage slates had a wide geographical range.[23] They may still be seen on houses and buildings in parishes adjacent to the quarries. On the gazebo at Harnage Grange, at Bull Farm on Grange Hill in Cound; at Acton Burnell Castle, Langley chapel and gatehouse; Pitchford Church and Hall, and at the now demolished 22 Pitchford, in Pitchford; Old Hall, Cressage; Manor Farm, Berrington (1656) as well as on the church tower there. Further afield they occur at the Prior's House, Much Wenlock; Plaish Hall; Madeley Court, Telford; on cottages and a dovecote at Eyton-on-Severn; and at All Stretton. They were formerly used at Great Ness church tower, Old Lyth manor, and at Condover Hall and mill.[24] Fragments of slate were found at Castle Pulverbatch during building operations. Down the Severn, slates have been found at Hoard's Park Farm near Bridgnorth and at Rowley Farm, Worfield, and during excavations at Tong Castle and Tong college, where quantities of the material have been found.[25] Chronologically the spread outside Shrewsbury ranges from the earliest reference at Harley in the 1360s through the later Middle Ages at Tong, the early 16th century at Prior's House, Much Wenlock, the 1550s at Pitchford Hall, the 1580s at Condover Hall, and finally the Manor Farm at Berrington in 1656.

[1] *V.C.H. Salop*, **viii**, 1968, 68.
[2] *T.S.A.S.*, **lxi**, 1977–8, passim.
[3] A. Clifton-Taylor, *The pattern of English building*, 1972, 148, 150.
[4] *V.C.H. Salop*, **viii**, 68.
[5] *T.S.A.S.*, 2nd ser., **iii**, 1891, 61, 69, 72, 74. The account roll is incorrectly dated 1275–1277.
[6] L.F. Salzman, *Building in England down to 1540*, 1967, 228–9.
[7] Local Studies Library, Shrewsbury (hereafter S.P.L.), MS 2, f.12.
[8] What follows is based on *T.S.A.S.*, 4th ser., **iii**, 1913, 135–262; *ibid.*, **iv**, 1914, 195–247.
[9] *T.S.A.S.*, **lxi**, 33–4, 60, 68. Both the Corndon and micaceous slates were seen by the writer during the excavations at Pride Hill.
[10] I. Peate, *The Welsh house*, 1946, 131.
[11] Shrewsbury School Library, M.S. James vi, transcript of lease.
[12] *T.S.A.S.*, 4th ser., **iv**, 210.
[13] *Ibid.*, 213, 210.
[14] S.R.O. 1831, memorandum of building lease 1577; building contract 1580.
[15] Shrewsbury School archives, Bailiff's a/c book 1578–1663, 120.
[16] S.R.O. 1041/CH/1, churchwardens' a/c book 1544–1623.
[17] Shrewsbury School archives, Bailiff's a/c book 1578–1663, 133.
[18] S.P.L., Deeds 6883–6885.
[19] N.L.W., Pitchford Hall, 1049, 1080.
[20] *Ibid.*, 945.
[21] S.R.O. 1831, petition of Thomas Bould to Richard Purcell n.d.
[22] S.P.L., Deeds 6883–6885.
[23] This paragraph is based on personal observation except where otherwise stated.
[24] S.P.L., Deeds 6883–6885.
[25] Ex inf. A. Wharton who has excavated both sites at Tong.

JOHN SANDFORD OF SHREWSBURY AND PITCHFORD, CARPENTER; BUILDER OF PITCHFORD HALL, 1549

By J.B. LAWSON

Pitchford Hall is the most outstanding surviving example of work by the so-called 'Shrewsbury school' of carpenters in the 16th century. The master carpenter responsible for constructing the frame was John Sandford, whose identity was established during research for *V.C.H.*[1] When the article on Pitchford was written little was known of Sandford or his family and it is the purpose of this note to put him in perspective and suggest certain lines for research by vernacular architectural historians.

The Sandfords are one of the more readily identifiable dynasties of Shrewsbury carpenters and continued for three generations. The earliest mentioned was Humphrey who was sworn a freeman of the Shrewsbury guild of carpenters and tilers in 1540.[2] His services to the town were such that in 1567, following the building of the timber-framed market hall in the Corn Market, now the Square, he was sworn a burgess of the town without fine.[3]

John Sandford, probably his elder brother, was warden of the carpenters' guild in 1545[4] and clearly well established, for he was married with children of an age for one to be sworn a freeman in 1553[5] and for two to be married by 1557.[6] By his wife Eleanor he had at least eight children, six sons and two daughters. Of the sons, Ralph, Thomas and Randyll are known to have been carpenters; Robert was a husbandman and the occupations of John and Adam are not known.[7] When he died in 1566 he was still in possession of the farm leased to him by Adam Ottley in 1549 as part of the consideration for building the 'mansion place' at Pitchford.[8] His will details cash legacies to his children of over £23 besides bequests of goods, chattels, farm stock, and farm implements. There is no mention of his occupation or of carpentry tools either in his will or his inventory which valued his household goods and farming stock at £36 9s. 0d.[9] His animals comprised six oxen, five cows, seven calves, one mare, seven sheep, five pigs and five geese, as well as poultry. His stock and the lease of his farm probably made him far richer than he could have been had he remained in Shrewsbury after 1549 and continued solely as a master craftsman.

Pitchford Hall exhibits most of the features normally found in buildings of the 'Shrewsbury school' which is characterised by the use of cable-moulded pilasters terminated by grotesque heads, sunken quatrefoils, diagonal strutting and carved tie-beams and barge-boards with vine-trails. The earliest dated house of this type in Shrewsbury was the now demolished Lloyd's Mansion, in the Square, built by David Lloyd in 1570; the remains of the building are now at Avoncraft Museum. When *V.C.H.* **viii** was being written it was thought that Sandford's work was represented by the west wing which was clearly earlier than the rest of the house.[10] However, the core of this wing has now been recognised as late medieval and therefore in all probability John Sandford and his family built the whole house.

The hall was probably completed by 1551 when Sandford contracted with Sir Thomas Bromley to extend his house at Eyton-on-Severn.[11] The major part of the work was for a five bay building of two storeys containing eight rooms linked by a gallery at each level. The contract specifies 'streight' and bay windows and close-studded timbering at one foot intervals with a middle rail between the ground cill and the first floor, and the first floor and the wall plate (described in the contract as being double 'enterdewced'). The floor boards were to be well 'rabbetted'. The building was to be framed at the Shoots Wood in Acton Burnell from timber delivered by Sir Thomas as required and the completed frame was to be carried to Eyton at Bromley's expense. During the month allowed for rearing, Sandford and his four men were to have meat, drink and a strike of rye. The price for this and other works including two 'jakes' or latrines was twenty marks (£13 6s. 8d.), exclusive of sawing the timber and boards which were a separate charge. No ornament is prescribed but the style of the timbering agrees with the work at Pitchford where some bay windows survive and the mortice holes for others can be seen. The work at Eyton was to be completed between 28 November 1551 and 3 May 1552 'as moche as to the office and duty of a carpenter belongeth', that is a bare frame inclusive of floor boards.

It seems likely that some of the early buildings of the 'Shrewsbury school' in Shrewsbury may be by John Sandford whose style was clearly mature by the time he worked at Pitchford. The most likely examples are the gable of the Liberal Club in Belmont, 17 High Street at the foot of Grope Lane, and part of the house at Albright Hussey. Later carpenters worked in the same style and included Roger Smyth, a Welshman from Llandisilio[12] who framed the Drapers' Hall 1576–82.[13] A close study of the buildings in the

style, especially of numbering methods on frames, might serve to identify individual craftsmen. The decoration itself is consciously late medieval, the cable-moulding, quatrefoils and vine-trail all being reminiscent of later medieval screenwork in churches, not merely in England but also in the Welsh Marches from where many Shrewsbury carpenters were drawn in the second half of the 16th century.

Eleanor Sandford, widow of John, survived until 1580 when she was buried at Pitchford.[14] Adam Ottley and his descendants had clearly been 'a good master' to her as Sandford had desired in his will. Of their children, Ralph, probably the eldest, was apprenticed as a carpenter in Shrewsbury and became a freeman of the carpenters' guild in 1553 when he probably became a master.[15] It is likely that he was involved at Pitchford Hall, for in 1556 he had a lease of a property at Nobold from Adam Ottley.[16] His brother Thomas, also a carpenter, had a lease of a farm in Pitchford in 1558 which he surrendered in 1564;[17] he appears never to have worked in Shrewsbury. Randyll, another carpenter, received a legacy from his father in 1566, but only once appears in Shrewsbury, on a muster roll of 1580 when he was most likely a journeyman.[18] Ralph Sandford was a prominent Shrewsbury carpenter and is recorded in all lists of Shrewsbury carpenters 1572–96.[19] He was warden of the guild in 1596 and an assistant in 1601.[20] He probably lived on the English Bridge where he acquired a vacant plot from the borough in 1564 which had formerly been occupied by a gaol. As part of the consideration for the fee farm he constructed a four stool public privy.[21] His son Andrew, first mentioned in 1580,[22] worked for his father as a journeyman until 1596, when he was sworn a freeman of the guild and presumably set up as a master.[23]

[1] *V.C.H.* Salop, **viii**, 1968, 119.
[2] Local Studies Library, Shrewsbury (hereafter S.P.L.), Deeds 13491, f.1v.
[3] *T.S.A.S.*, 2nd ser., **x**, 1898, 306.
[4] S.P.L., Deeds 13491, f.2r.
[5] *Ibid.*, f.3r.
[6] N.L.W., Pitchford Hall, 562, 702.
[7] Lichfield & Stafford Joint Record Office, will of John Sandford, 1566.
[8] N.L.W., Pitchford Hall, 695.
[9] L.S.J.R.O., inventory of John Sandford, 1566.
[10] *V.C.H. Salop*, **viii**, 119.
[11] Barnard MSS., Raby Castle, box 2, bdle.1, no.1.
[12] H.E. Forrest, *Shrewsbury Burgess Roll*, 1924, 268.
[13] S.R.O. 1831, uncat. miscellaneous papers of the Shrewsbury Drapers' Company.
[14] S.P.R. Lich.i(1), 47.
[15] S.P.L., Deeds 13491, f.3r.
[16] N.L.W., Pitchford Hall, 562.
[17] *Ibid.*, 690, 702, 711.
[18] *T.S.A.S.*, 2nd ser., **ii**, 1890, 269.
[19] *T.S.A.S.*, **lvi**, 1977–8, 177 (1572); *Ibid.*, 2nd ser., **ii**, 269 (1580); *ibid.*, **iii**, 129 (1587); S.P.L., Deeds 13491 (1596).
[20] S.P.L., Deeds 13486.
[21] Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough archives (Guildhall), box II, 76, f.76.
[22] *T.S.A.S.*, 2nd ser., **ii**, 269.
[23] S.P.L., Deeds 13491.

'TUNNEL MAD' REYNOLDS AND THE WROCKWARDINE WOOD 'NAVIGABLE LEVEL'

By P.A. STAMPER

The infamous Donnington Wood Colliery map is well-known to local industrial historians as a tantalising tracing of a map, the original of which is now lost, but which was clearly a palimpsest of 1788 and later (Shropshire Record Office 691/1). Until now it has been the only source to suggest the existence of a 'navigable level' under Wrockwardine Wood, the map showing it to run between Donnington Wood furnaces and the area north-west of the Nabb, a distance of just over 1 km. At both ends the level is shown to have several short forks.

A recently noticed memo of *c.* 1787 at the Staffordshire Record Office both substantiates the existence of the level, recites the circumstances of its construction, and suggests its intended function (Staffordshire Record Office D.593/L/4/4). The memo states that the Donnington Wood Co. (William Reynolds and Joseph Rathbone) took the Wrockwardine Wood mines in 1781 (from Earl Gower & Co.) for either £600 p.a. or 8d. per ton for the coal and 3s. per dozen for the ironstone, whichever was the greater sum. Subsequently the Donnington Wood Co. contracted with the Ketley Co. (Richard Reynolds) to supply it with 10,000 tons of clod coal from Wrockwardine Wood a year at 2s. 11d. per ton delivered at Donnington Wood furnace, as well as all the ironstone raised there at 3s. a dozen. Additionally they were to supply 8000 dozens of ironstone from Donnington Wood at 10s. 6d. a dozen.

The memo proceeds to state that since the preceding contracts were made (it is unclear when the memo was written but internal evidence suggests *c.* 1787) the Donnington Wood Co. had spent about £5000 in making a subterranean cut or level with an intent to drain the clod coal in Wrockwardine Wood. This would indeed represent a considerable investment; by comparison, in the first years of the 19th century a large blowing engine cost *c.* £1500 and a small winding engine as little as £100–£200.

The level though had not fulfilled its intended purpose as far as the Donnington Wood Co. was concerned, as it drained the ironstone but only an estimated 6000 tons of the coal. However, the Ketley Co., which had paid £500 of the cost, had benefitted considerably, perhaps far more than had been intended, or so the Donnington Wood Co. claimed, as the level had drained the clod and sale coal ironstone in Wombridge where the Ketley Co. held mineral rights. The Ketley Co. had apparently (the wording of the document is slightly ambiguous at this point) had its chartermasters sink a shaft in Wrockwardine Wood, probably near or at the western end of the level, which gave the company access to the coal and ironstone deposits under Wombridge. It is uncertain but likely that this Wrockwardine Wood – Wombridge working was linked to the main level.

The Donnington Wood Co., facing an imminent demand for 10,000 tons of coal from the Ketley Co., was faced with the prospect of paying a further £1500 to erect an engine to drain the clod coal in Wrockwardine Wood. This would be sited 'at the outside of Donnington liberty', and would raise water 90ft. to the surface, allowing it to drain away via the 'Cut or Top Level brought up from the Wildmoors', presumably the Donnington Wood Canal, built between *c.* 1765 and 1767.[1]

The memo ends with a series of calculations showing that the Donnington Wood Co. was at that time raising the coal in question at a loss, and reciting the terms of a lease of 1783 of ironstone in Donnington Wood to William Reynolds. Nowhere is the purpose of the memo stated, but its tone is clear, that the original 1781 agreement between the Ketley and Donnington Wood companies had proved unexpectedly disadvantageous to the latter. Presumably a renegotiation of the contract or a financial settlement was being considered.

The only other fairly certain facts known about the level were recorded in 1935 by the Revd J.E.G. Cartlidge. He stated that near Wrockwardine Wood church was a shaft down to the level. This had a bell-shaped bottom, allowing boats to be lowered on end down to the level and then righted.[2]

It is clear that in the 1780s William Reynolds was actively constructing canals, and that tunnels and shafts were, particularly until the adoption of the inclined plane, an integral part of the local canal network. Indeed, Reynolds has been said to be 'tunnel mad'.[3] Dr I.J. Brown, in his survey of the evidence for the tunnels of the East Shropshire coalfield, divides the tunnels into four groups: a) for transport systems, including navigable levels; b) for drainage purposes as soughs and sewers; c) for getting minerals

etc; d) for miscellaneous purposes, generally as the most convenient way of gaining access over short distances obstructed by physical or other constraints. The evidence for most of the navigable levels and soughs is scanty, and it is rarely clear whether they carried boats as well as acting as drains.[4]

The Wrockwardine Wood level clearly had this dual function. It remains unknown, however, how successful it was in either capacity and how long it remained in use, what cargoes were carried, and the means of extracting them from the level. It is to be hoped that research in the future will answer these and other questions about what was clearly one of a number of major underground tunnels built mainly in the 1780s to link mines with the developing canal network.

This article first appeared in *Shropshire News Sheet*, **17**, 1983, 7–8.

[1] B.S. Trinder, *The Industrial Revolution in Shropshire*, 2nd edn, 1981, 75.
[2] J.E.G. Cartlidge, *The Vale and Gates of Usc-Con*, 1935, 89–90.
[3] I.J. Brown, *The mines of Shropshire*, 1976, 63.
[4] I.J. Brown, 'The tunnels of the Coalbrookdale Coalfield area', *Shropshire Caving and Mining Club Jnl.*, 1979, 37–43.