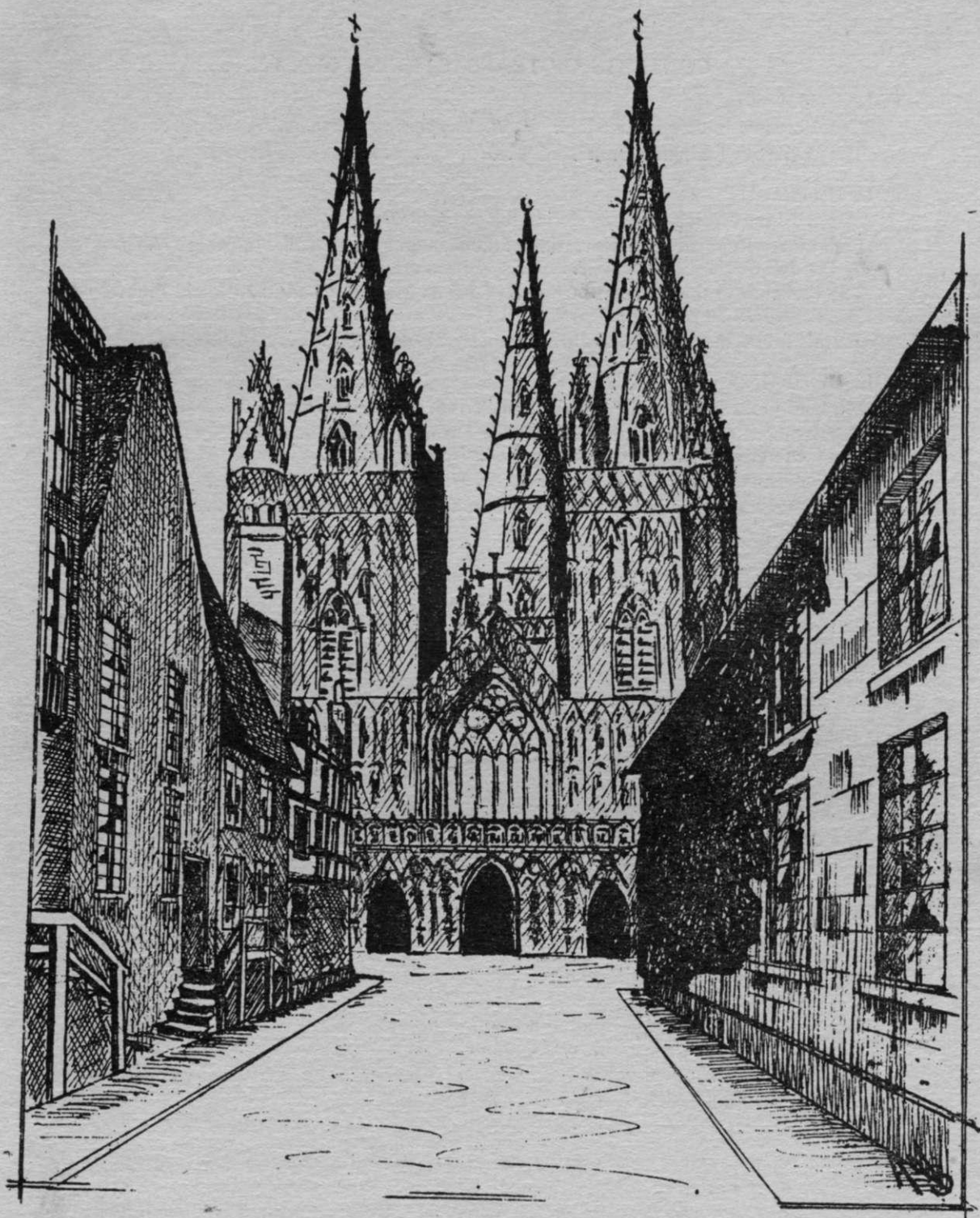




**SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

TRANSACTIONS 1968-9 VOLUME X

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL
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TRANSACTIONS

FOR 1968-9

VOLUME X

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1969

At the Annual General Meeting of the Lichfield and South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society on 1st November 1968, it was decided to change the name of the Society to:

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL
AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

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REFERENCES

The following abbreviations have been used in the text and figures for references, etc.

<i>Arch. J.</i>	<i>Archaeological Journal</i>
C.B.A.	Council for British Archaeology
C.S.	<i>Cartularum Saxonicum</i> , ed. W. de G. Birch (1885-93)
Drag.	Dragendorff, 'Terra Sigillata', <i>Bonner Jahrbucher</i> , xcvi (1895), xcvii (1896)
<i>E.H.D.</i>	<i>English Historical Documents</i> , i, ed. D. Whitelock (1955)
<i>E.H.R.</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
Ex. N.	Excavation North
Gillam	J. P. Gillam, <i>Types of Coarse Pottery Vessels in Northern Britain</i> (1968)
<i>Hazelwood 1962</i>	S. O. Kay, 'The Romano-British Pottery Kilns at Hazelwood and Holbrook, Derbyshire', <i>Derbyshire Archaeological Journal</i> , lxxxii for 1962 (1963), pp. 21-42.
<i>Jewry Wall</i>	K. M. Kenyon, <i>Excavations at the Jewry Wall Site, Leicester</i> , Report No. 15 of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London (1948)
<i>Med. Arch.</i>	<i>Medieval Archaeology</i>
N.G.R.	National Grid Reference
O.D.	Ordnance Datum
O.S.	Ordnance Survey
<i>P.P.S.</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society</i>
<i>S.H.C.</i>	<i>Staffordshire Historical Collections</i> , published by William Salt Archaeological Society, now Staffordshire Record Society
<i>T.B.A.S.</i>	<i>Transactions of Birmingham Archaeological Society</i>
<i>Trans.</i>	<i>Transactions of Lichfield and South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society</i>
Tr.N.	True North
<i>V.C.H.</i>	<i>Victoria County History</i>
<i>Wall 1961/3</i>	J. Gould, 'Excavations at Wall, Staffs. 1961-3', <i>Trans.</i> , v for 1963/4 (1964)
<i>Wall 1964/6</i>	J. Gould, 'Excavations at Wall, Staffs., 1964-6', <i>Trans.</i> , viii for 1966-7 (1968)
W.S.L.	William Salt Library, Stafford

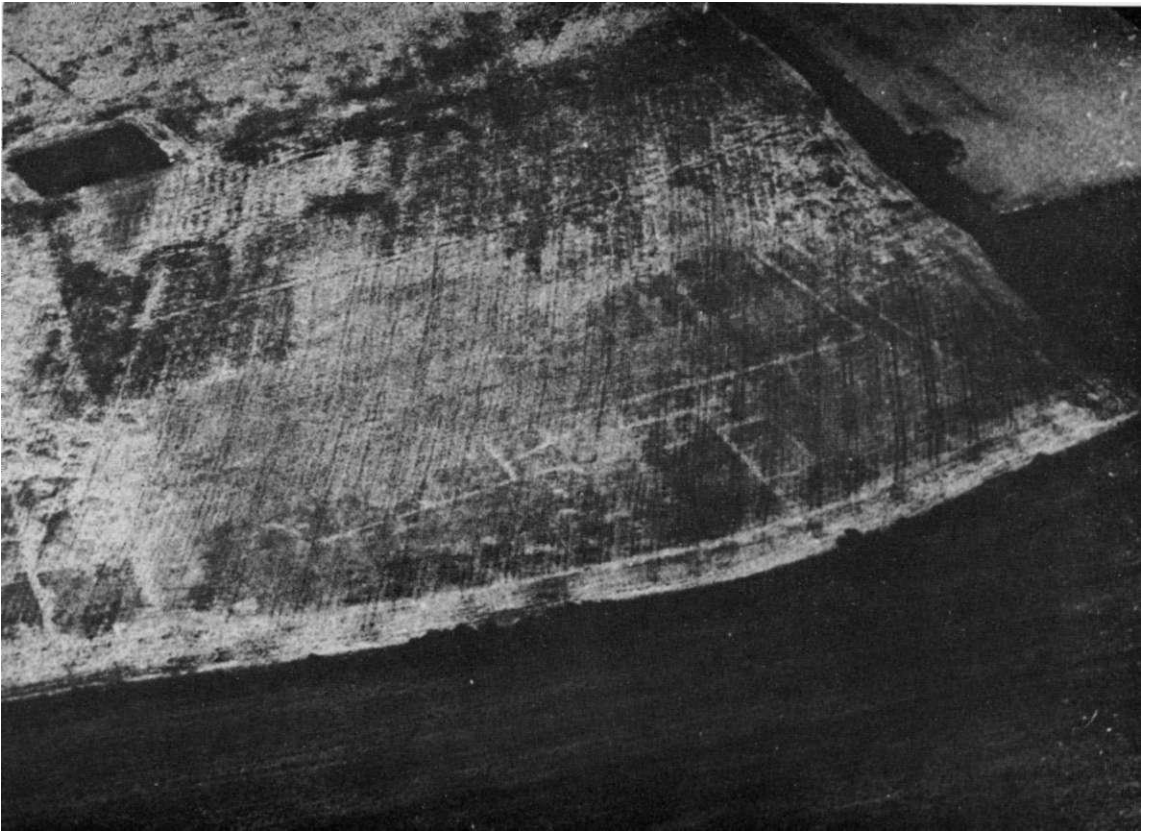


Plate I—Air-photograph of crop-marks at Fisherwick, Staffs., looking south-westwards showing the drove-way on the right and the farm-stead in the centre

EXCAVATIONS AT FISHERWICK, STAFFS., 1968— A ROMANO-BRITISH FARM-STEAD AND A NEOLITHIC OCCUPATION SITE

HENRIETTA MILES

SUMMARY Excavation of crop-marks revealed a Romano-British farm-stead specializing in stock-rearing. This consisted of pens and palisaded enclosures adjacent to a drove-way, and four sub-circular huts. Activity began in the early second century A.D. and continued into the third century A.D.

Slight traces of Secondary Neolithic occupation were found, including some sherds of pottery.

INTRODUCTION

THE SITE is in the parish of Fisherwick, on the west bank of the River Tame about five miles below Tamworth. (N.G.R. SK 184103.) Elford village lies a quarter of a mile to the east across the river (figs. 1 and 2).

Apart from Wall (*Wall 1961-3, Wall 1964-6*) and Shenstone¹ little was known about Roman settlement in the area until recently. Mr. James Pickering discovered and photographed (Plate I) the site at Fisherwick during an aerial survey of the Tame and Trent gravels. This survey also revealed a complex of probable Roman sites in the parish of Alrewas. Other sites on the Trent gravels are known in the parishes of King's Bromley, Wychnor and Barton-under-Needwood². Fisherwick is the first of these gravel sites to be excavated and proved to be of Roman date.

The farm-stead is situated on the end slope of a slight ridge of the New Gravel Terrace of the Tame, about 300 yards south-west of the present course of the river. The ridge rises five feet above its surroundings to 175 ft. O.D. The site stretched down the slope towards the river as far as the edge of a band of recent alluvium. Near by is a ford across the river. This ford is not shown on modern maps but appears on a map of 1809³. The top of the slope is about ten feet above the present level of water in the Tame in November. All of the site is above the present flood-level.

The gravels on which the site lies are composed of narrow bands of sand and gravel. These run at varying angles, and fine sand fills many irregular hollows in the coarser gravel. Recent dark-brown silt covers the gravel in places.

¹ H. R. Hodgkinson and P. B. Chatwin, 'The Roman site at Shenstone, Staffs.', *T.B.A.S.*, lxiix for 1939/40 (1944), pp. 1-32.

² *A Matter of Time* (1960), Royal Commission on Historic Monuments.

³ Fisherwick Park sale catalogue, 1809. W.S.L. 115/6/41.

As the site was threatened by gravel-digging the Ministry of Public Building and Works undertook an excavation. This was directed by the author for four weeks in October and November of 1968*. The finds have been given to the Staffordshire County Museum by the Midland Gravel Co. The plans and field-notes have also been lodged there.

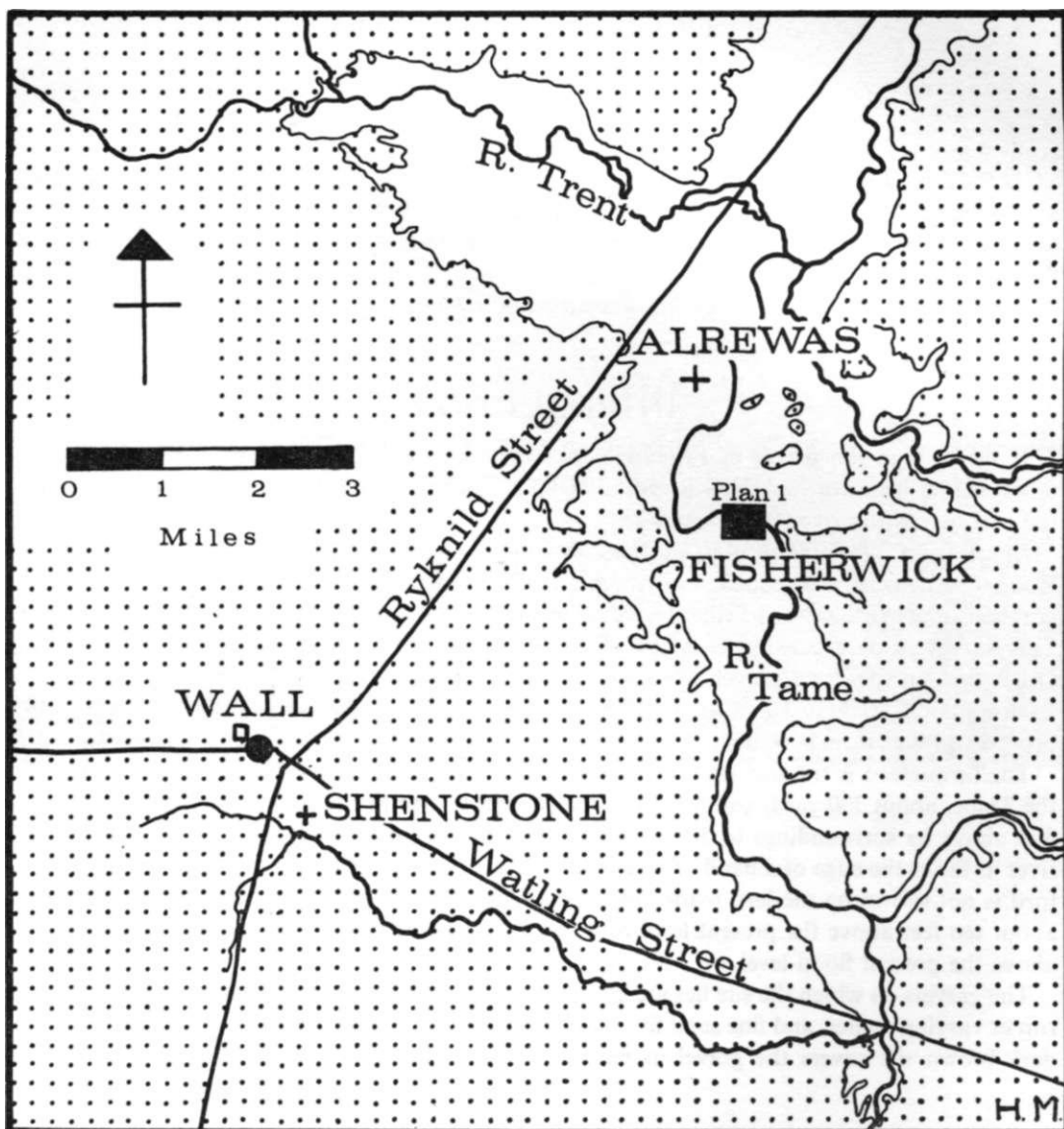


Fig. 1 Roman sites in the Fisherwick area

* A JCB 3c mechanical excavator, driven by Mr. D. Hill, was used for the first week; six labourers were employed throughout the excavation; Mr. J. Bennett and Mr. I. Young acted as assistant supervisors.

THE EXCAVATION

The main features shown on the air-photograph were located by digging long trenches with a mechanical excavator. Certain large areas were then chosen for stripping and smaller areas were cleared over ditch junctions. Ploughing had cut into the gravel on the top of the ridge. There was a slight build-up of soil lower down the slope. The machine was used to remove the plough-soil without disturbing the underlying features.

The Romano-British features include a drove-way, huts and a series of enclosures and field boundaries which were apparently laid out at the same time, prefixed B, (fig. 3). Some Roman features, prefixed A, are earlier than this main phase, and others, prefixed C, represent later modifications. It is not claimed that all features assigned to each phase are contemporary; there was insufficient evidence to be certain about the relationships of all of them. Where there is no evidence for phasing, features have been assigned to phase B. The Neolithic features have been prefixed N and are dealt with separately. (Pages 19-22.)

CATALOGUE OF ROMANO-BRITISH FEATURES

This catalogue is an adjunct to the plans and sections, figs. 3-8. All features were filled with brown gravelly soil unless otherwise stated. This was lighter in colour, it had less humic content and more pebbles than the plough-soil, but was darker and less pebbly than the undisturbed gravel. Depths given are actual surviving depths of features, but they were originally deeper. The upper parts of all features have been lost through ploughing and erosion. Features produced no finds unless otherwise stated. References to pottery are prefixed by P; these and other finds are described in pp. 14-19. All compass points relate to Excavation North, which was 50° west of True North.

- A 1, fig. 4. Round-bottomed gully, up to 8 in. wide and 4 in. deep, but shallow and indefinite in places. Filled with soft, dark-brown soil. This formed an approximate arc of a circle 26 ft. diameter, perhaps the drip-gully of a circular hut. Cut by A 3.
- A 2, fig. 4. Post-hole, 6 in. deep. Approximate centre of the circle of which A 1 forms an arc. Filled with grey, gravelly soil. Perhaps the central support for the same hut as A 1. The gravel around it was stained and dirty as far as A 1.
- A 3, fig. 4. Irregular flat-bottomed ditch, 1 ft. deep. Filled with dark-brown, gravelly soil. Cut A 1. Cut by B 19. One grey wall-sherd. P 51.
- A 4, fig. 3. Section fig. 8. Steep-sided ditch, 1 ft. deep, forming a D-shaped enclosure. Probably a palisade trench. Cut by B 1.
- A 5, fig. 3. Plan fig. 8. Ditch about 4 ft. wide, 6 in. deep. Cut by B 9.
- A 6, fig. 5. Round-bottomed ditch, 1 ft. wide, 1 ft. deep. Filled with dark-brown, sandy soil. Cut by B 9.
- A 7, fig. 4. Depression about 4 ft. wide, 6-9 in. deep. Cut by B 19.
- A 8 & A 9, fig. 6. Flat-bottomed slots, apparently contemporary, both 1 ft. 3 in. wide, about 8 in. deep. Filled with dark-brown, gravelly soil. Could have held light wooden fences. Cut by B 19 and B 20.
- A 10, fig. 6. Segment of curved ditch, 1 ft. 6 in. deep. Cut by B 20.
- A 11, fig. 6. Steep-sided, flat-bottomed pit, 1 ft. deep. Cut by B 19.
- A 12, fig. 6. Rectangular depression, 9 in. deep. Cut by B 21.

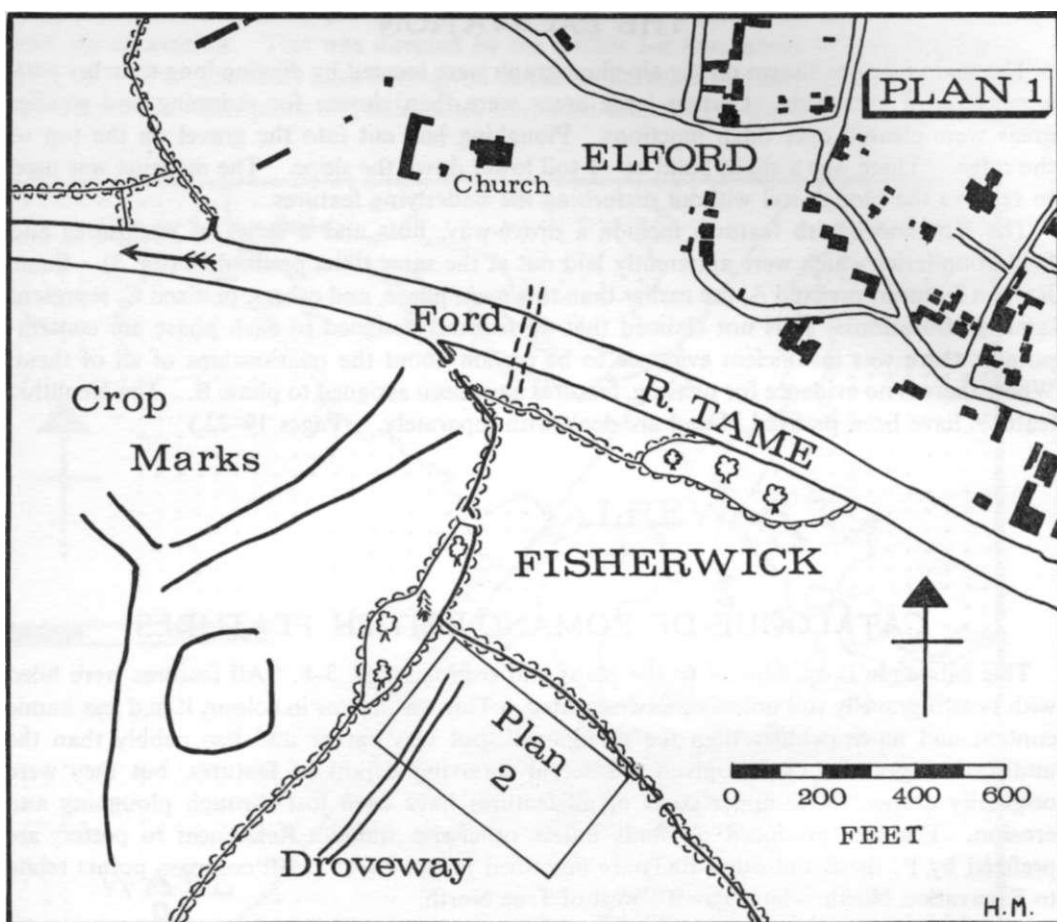


Fig. 2 PLAN 1. Location of excavation and crop-marks

B 1 & B 2, figs. 3 & 5. Sections fig. 8. North and south ditches of drove-way. This drove-way was traced for 500 ft. The distance between the ditches averaged 25 ft. centre to centre, but widened in one place to 35 ft. and narrowed at the entrance to the farm-stead to 15 ft. No metallurgy was found, but in places in the western part the surface had been worn slightly hollow. At the western end the ditches were round-bottomed, 3 ft. wide and 1 ft. 3 in. deep. They were filled with bands of grey sand and gravel which suggested natural silting. In places, profiles were irregular, indicating repeated cleaning. About 90 ft. west of B 3 the ditches became steep-sided and flat-bottomed and slightly larger. Here they were filled with brown gravelly soil. East of the junction with B 9, B 2 became very shallow, about 6 in. deep, but started to deepen again east of B 4. At the eastern end the ditches were 2 ft. wide, 1 ft. deep and filled with brown gravelly soil. From about 90 ft. west of B 3 the ditches probably held posts. B 9 and the western part of B 2 were continuous. A mortarium from the top two inches of B 1 just east of A 4 dates to A.D. 145-185. P. 25 and P. 26.

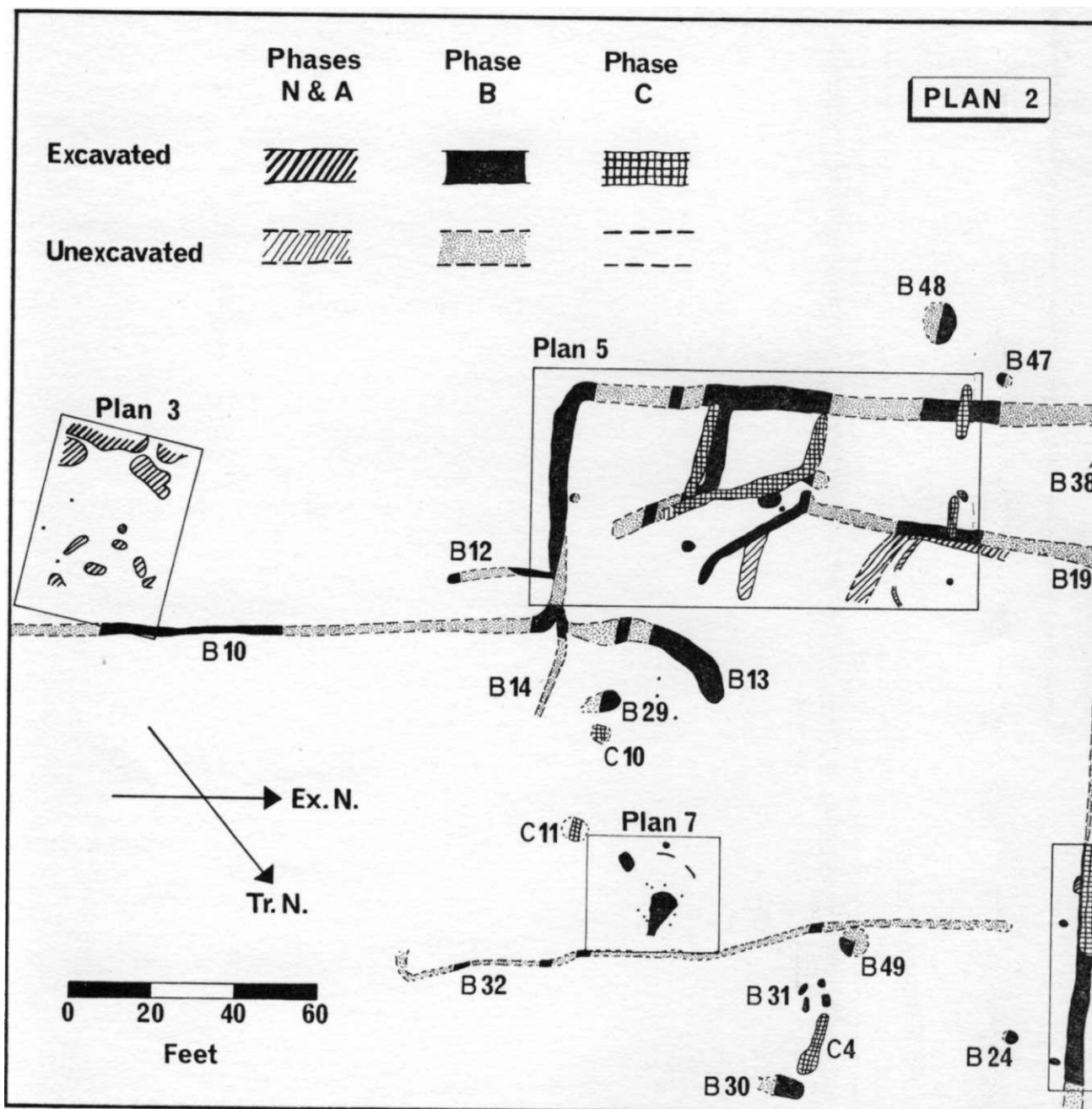
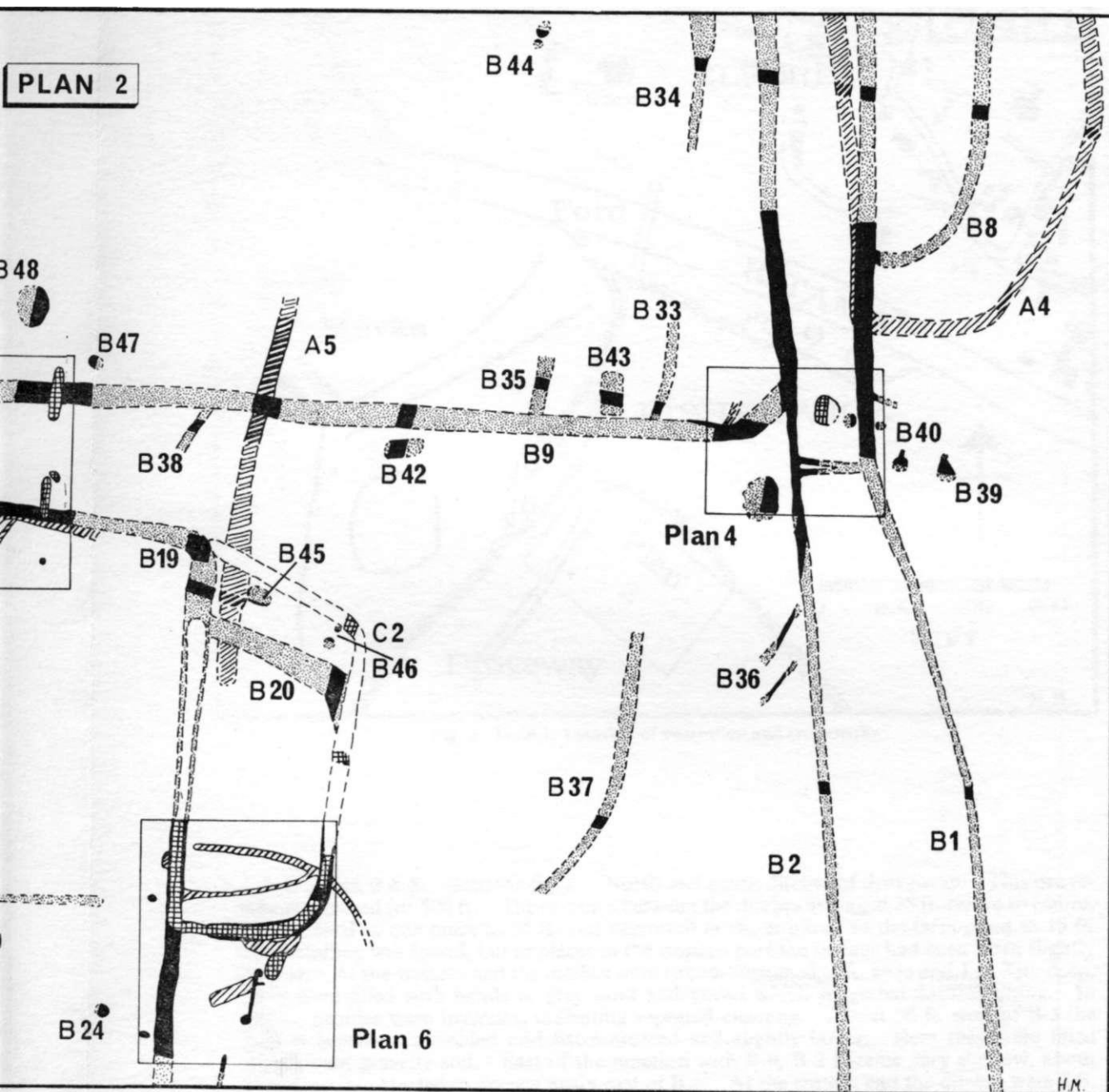


Fig. 3 PLAN 2. General s



2. 3 PLAN 2. General site plan

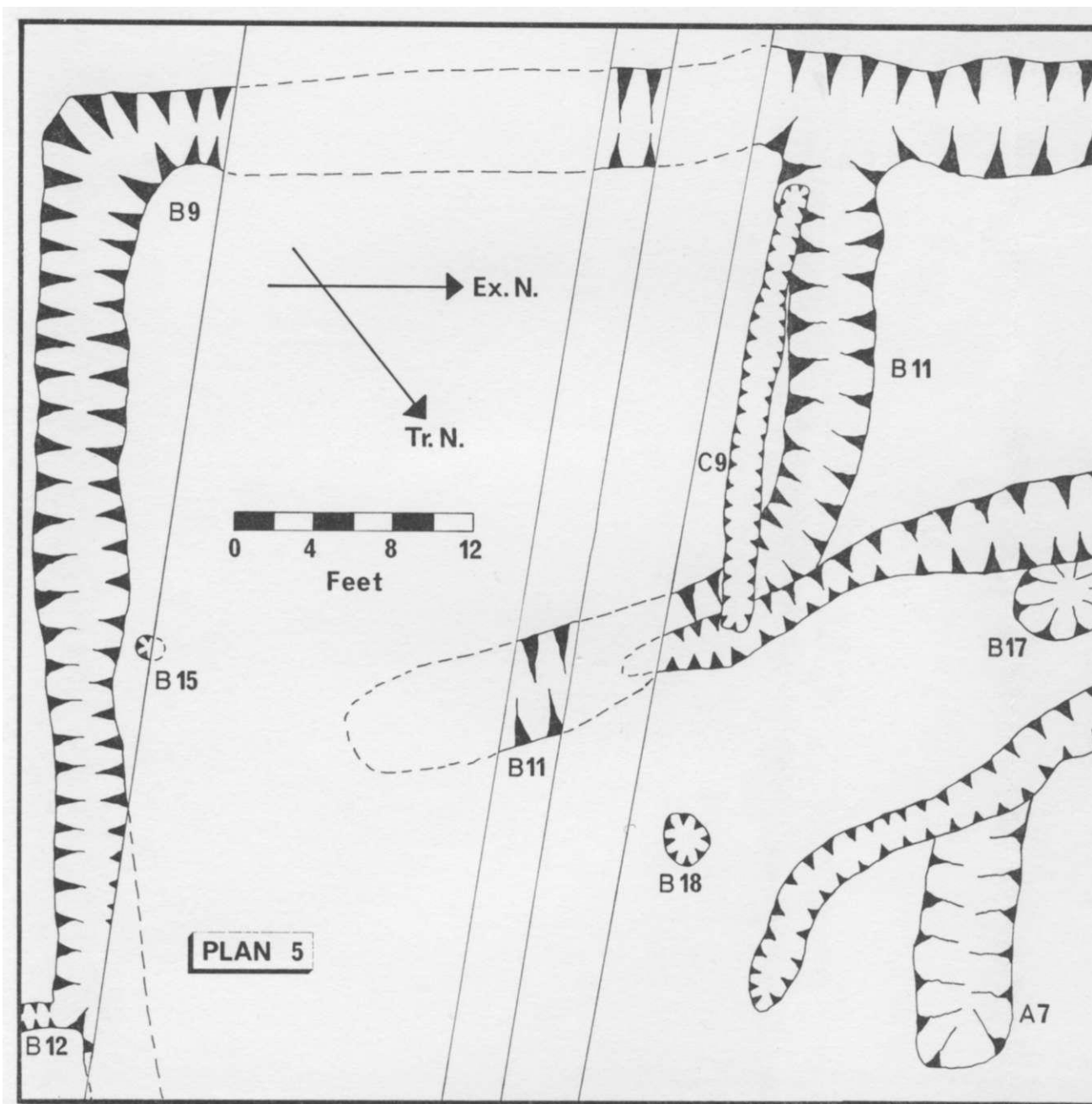
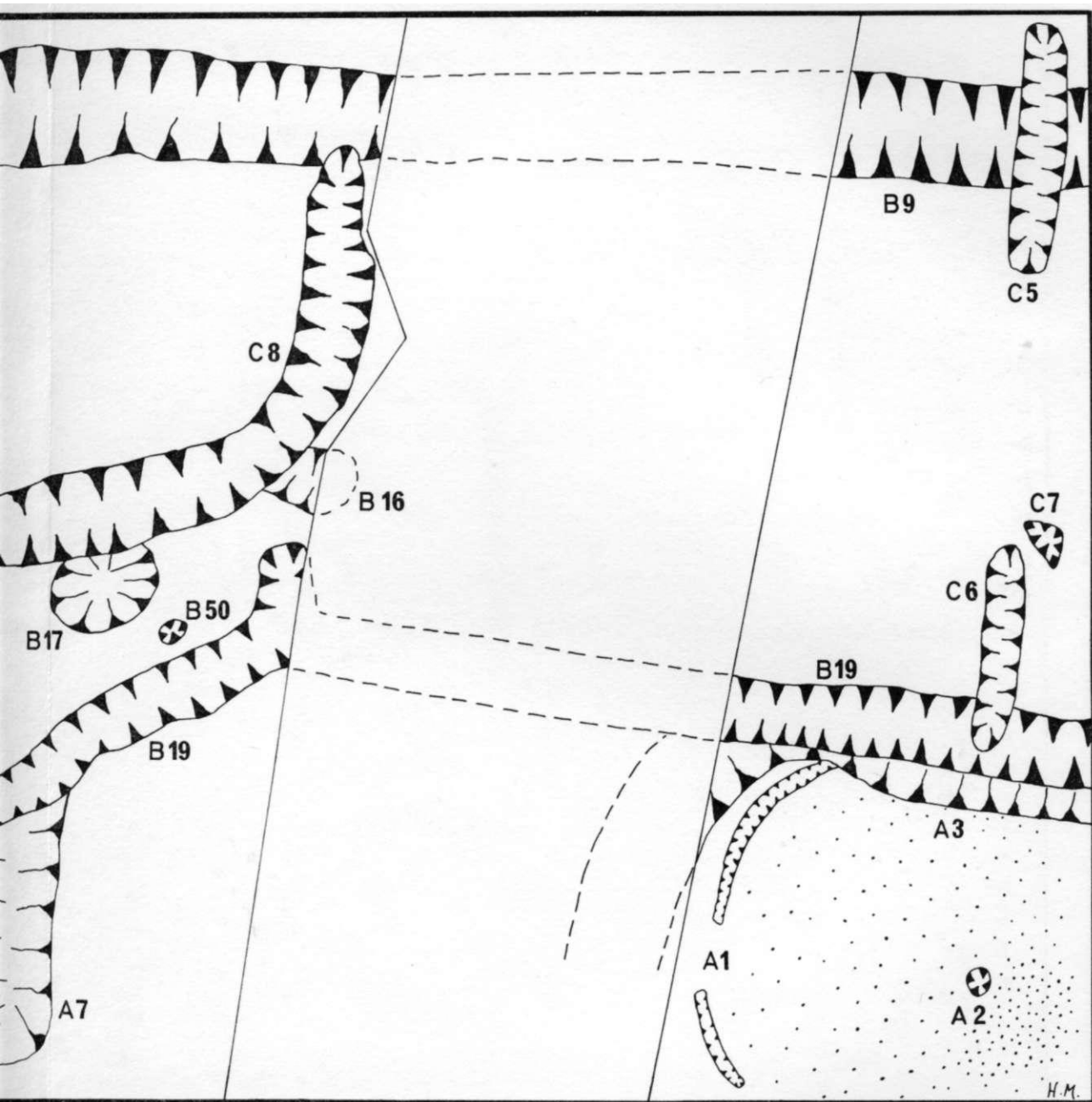


Fig. 4 PLAN 5. Detail plan of Roma



Plan of Romano-British stock-pens

- B 3 and B 4, fig. 5. Narrow slots, V-shaped profiles, 6 in. deep. Adjacent to junction with B 2, B 3 deepened to 1 ft. to form a post-hole filled with brown, stone-free soil. These slots must have held consecutive gates or barriers across the drove-way. The fill of these slots was continuous with that of B 2.
- B 5 & B 6, fig. 5. Post-holes, 1 ft. deep.
- B 7, fig. 5. Round-bottomed ditch, 9 in. deep. The fill was continuous with that of B 1.
- B 8, fig. 3. Flat-bottomed ditch, which probably held post, 3 ft. wide and 2 ft. deep. Fill was continuous with that of B 1, with which it would have formed a D-shaped enclosure.
- B 9, figs. 3, 4 and 5. Section and plan, fig. 8. The main palisade trench of the Romano-British farm-stead. Straight-sided, fiat-bottomed, 3-4 ft. wide, generally 2 ft. deep but up to 2 ft. 9 in. in places. Where it had been cut through sand, especially near A 5, post-holes were found along its bottom. These were irregularly spaced, averaging 3 in. in width and depth. The fill of this feature was a homogeneous brown gravelly soil, which was probably the result of repeated recutting and back-filling around new posts. Cut A 5 and A 6. Its fill was continuous with B 2, B 10, B 11, and B 12. Cut by C 5 and C 8. Mortaria and coarse wares; P. 29, P. 34, P. 35 from the very top of its fill, P. 27, P. 28, P. 30, P. 32 and P. 36 were deep in its fill. Date range of mortaria mid-second to early third century A.D.
- B 10, figs. 3 & 11. Section fig. 8. Palisade trench forming a southern extension of B 9. Straight-sided, flat-bottomed, 2 ft. wide, 1 ft. 3 in. deep. It had contained posts similar in size to those in B 9, but the post-holes were closer together and overlapped in places. Its profile showed clear evidence of recutting in places. Fill as B 9. The air-photograph appears to show B 10 ending in a semi-circular curve about 30 ft. south of the edge of Plan 2 (fig. 3). A trench through the position of this mark revealed no trace of it. Mortaria and coarse pottery from its fill, P. 1-P. 24, fig. 9, are mid-second century.
- B 11, fig. 4. Section fig. 8. Palisade trench, straight-sided, flat-bottomed, 1 ft. 6 in. deep. Fill similar to and continuous with B 9. It formed a nearly rectangular enclosure in the angle of B 9. Cut by C 8 and C 9.
- B 12, figs. 3 and 4. Palisade trench, straight-sided, flat-bottomed. 1 ft. 6 in. wide near B 9. 2 ft. wide at southern end. 1 ft. 6 in. deep. Fill continuous with B 9.
- B 13 and B 14, fig. 3. Palisade trenches, straight-sided and flat-bottomed. B 13, 1 ft. 6 in. wide and 1 ft. deep near B 14, 6 ft. wide and 3 ft. 6 in. deep at its far end. There was clear evidence for one recut at this end, the original fill being light-brown gravel, and that of the recut being brown gravelly soil. This brown soil occurred at its southern end and was continuous with the fill of B 14. B 14 was 1 ft. 6 in. wide and 1 ft. deep. Its fill was continuous with that of B 9. P. 52-P. 54. Horse-tooth.
- B 15, fig. 4. Post-hole, 8 in. deep.
- B 16 & B 17, fig. 4. Pits 1 ft. deep. Both cut by C 8.
- B 18, fig. 4. Post-hole, straight-sided, 1 ft. deep. Filled with grey gravel.
- B 19, figs. 3, 4 & 6. Section fig. 8. This may comprise more than one feature. Its southern end was a palisade trench, straight-sided, flat-bottomed, 2 ft. wide, 1 ft. 6 in. deep. Its eastern end was round-bottomed, 3 to 4 ft. wide, 1 ft. 6 in. deep, and cannot be said to have held posts. B 19 has been shown as a continuous feature on the evidence of the air-photograph. The extension towards B 16, fig. 4, may be a separate pit but appeared to be part of B 19. A trench 20 ft. beyond the east edge of Plan 6, fig. 6, revealed no trace of this feature in waterlogged clay. B 19 cut A 3, A 7, A 9, A 11. Cut by C 2 & C 6. P. 37-P. 43.
- B 20, figs. 3 and 6. Palisade trench, fairly straight-sided and flat-bottomed. 3 ft. wide, 1 ft. 6 in. deep. It formed a D-shaped enclosure against B 19. At the east end was an entrance to this enclosure about 6 ft. wide. Cut A 8 and A 10. Cut by C 2.
- B 21, fig. 6. V-shaped slot 6 in. deep, joining two post-holes each 1 ft. deep. A short slot, 4 in. deep, ran north from it. Possibly one side of a small building, but no other trace of it could be found. Cut A 12.
- B 22, fig. 6. Round-bottomed slot, 6 in. deep, on approximately the same line as B 21.

- B 23, B 24 and B 25, figs. 3 and 6. Small pits or post-holes, 1 ft. 6 in., 1 ft. and 1 ft. 3 in. deep respectively.
- B 26, figs. 3 and 7. A group of features representing a sub-circular hut. An area of natural gravel, about 18 ft. x 20 ft. was very stained and dirty. On the north and west sides of this were lengths of a round-bottomed gully about 4 in. deep. In the stained gravel area was a very rough circle of small post-holes, none more than 3 in. deep. These enclosed a hollow, worn 6 in. into the gravel. In the bottom of this hollow was an oval pit 4 in. deeper. This pit and the hollow were both filled with a sticky, black, almost stone-free soil. The hollow and its fill extended south-east beyond the sub-circular area of stained gravel. P. 55 and P. 56. Iron object No. 1.
- B 27, fig. 7. Post-hole, 4 in. deep. Filled with dark-brown, gravelly soil.
- B 28, fig. 7. Pit, 1 ft. deep. Filled with grey gravel.
- B 29, fig. 3. Oval hollow about 4 in. deep, filled with sticky, black, almost stone-free soil. The gravel around it was rather stained and dirty. Three post-holes, 6 in. wide and deep were found to the north. These features together are probably the remains of a hut, but not all of its area was excavated.
- B 30, fig. 3. Oval hollow; similar in form and fill to the hollow in B 29. In the centre of the hollow and in the middle of the fill was an area of burnt clay, possibly a hearth. P. 57.

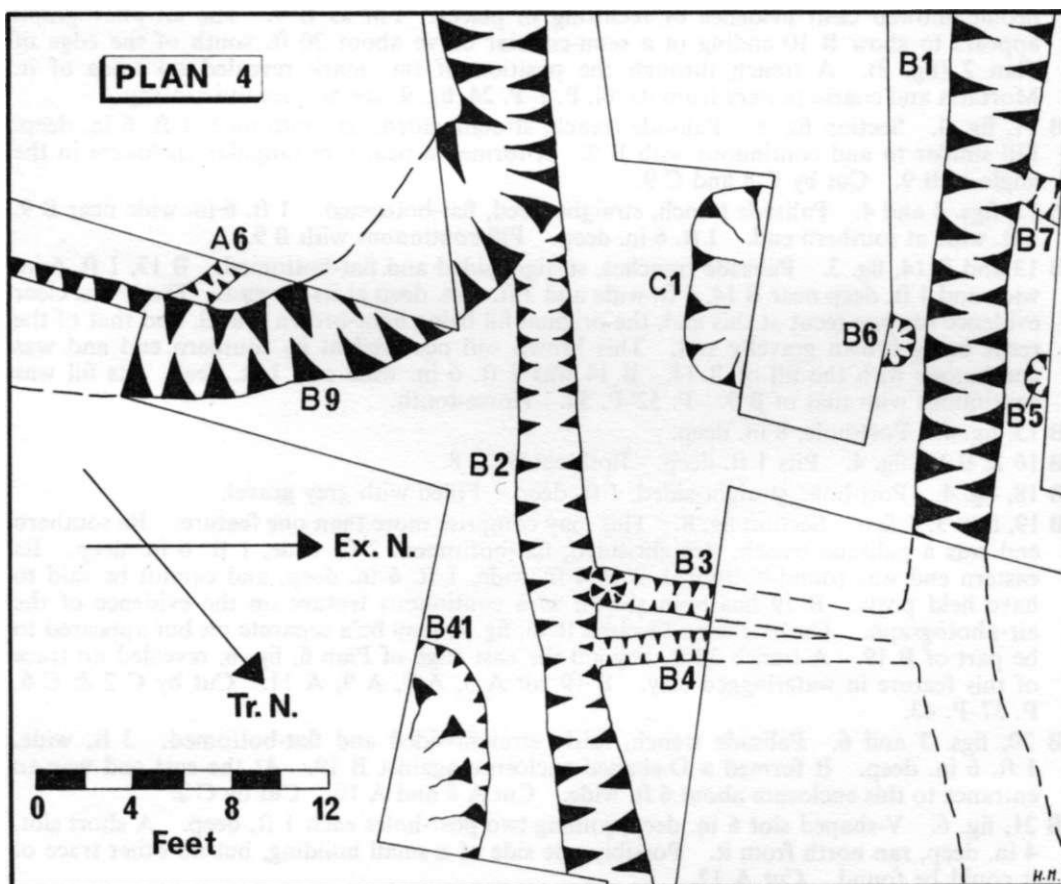


Fig. 5 PLAN 4. Detail plan of entrance to farm-stead

- B 31, fig. 3. Four irregular pits, possibly post-holes, about 6 in. deep. Filled with brown gravel and some small pieces of burnt clay.
- B 32, figs. 3 and 7. Section fig. 8. Round-bottomed slot, 1 ft. wide and 9 in. deep. Could have held a light fence.
- B 33 and B 34, fig. 3. Round-bottomed ditches, 2 to 3 ft. wide, 1 ft. deep. Perhaps the same ditch.
- B 35, fig. 3. Round-bottomed ditch, 4 ft. wide, 1 ft. deep. Clear evidence of recut.
- B 36, fig. 3. Two parallel V-bottomed slots, 9 in. wide, 6 in. deep.
- B 37, fig. 3. V-bottomed palisade trench, 2 ft. 6 in. wide, 1 ft. 3 in. deep.
- B 38, fig. 3. Flat-bottomed palisade trench, 2 ft. 6 in. wide, 2 ft. deep.
- B 39 and B 40, fig. 3. Pits, 1 ft. deep. A slot, 1 ft. wide, 6 in. deep, ran west from B 40.
- B 41, fig. 5. Irregular pit, 1 ft. 6 in. deep. Possibly a tree-hole.
- B 42 and B 43, fig. 3. Pits or lengths of ditches, 2 ft. deep.
- B 44, fig. 3. Two small pits or post-holes, 6 in. deep.
- B 45, B 46, B 47, B 48 and B 49, fig. 3. Five pits, 6 in., 6 in., 6 in., 3 ft. and 1 ft. 6 in. deep respectively.
- B 50, fig. 4. Post-hole, 1 ft. deep.
- B 51. (*Not shown on plans.*) Joins B 1 160 ft. west of edge of Plan 2, fig. 3. Round-bottomed ditch, traced for about 60 ft. north of B 1, 3 ft. wide, 2 ft. deep. It had silted up gradually. Grey primary silt was overlain by brownish-grey sand, and above this orange-brown sand. Probably contemporary with B 1. Finds from orange-brown sand, P. 47-P. 50, of which the mortarium dates A.D. 120-150.

A trench was dug through the circle with a dark centre showing towards the top left of Plate I, which proved this to be natural, caused by a mixed subsoil of clay and gravel.

- C 1, fig. 5. Pit, 1 ft. 6 in. deep.
- C 2, figs. 3 and 6. Section fig. 8. Steep-sided palisade trench, recutting B 19 and B 20 and extending the enclosure they had formed slightly to the west. Fill a little less gravelly than B 19 & B 20. Traces of post-holes on its bottom in places. P. 45 and P. 46.
- C 3, fig. 6. Sub-rectangular pit, 1 ft. deep. Cut A 10.
- C 4, fig. 3. Irregular hollow, 9 in. deep.
- C 5 and C 6, fig. 4. Section fig. 8. Two flat-bottomed slots, 2 ft. wide, 8 in. deep. Filled with soft, brown, slightly gravelly soil. Cut B 9 and B 19.
- C 7, fig. 4. D-shaped post-hole, 1 ft. 9 in. deep. Filled with light-brown gravel.
- C 8, fig. 4. Section fig. 8. Palisade trench, 1 ft. 9 in. deep. Filled with patches of clean gravel and dark-brown soil. Cut B 9, B 11, B 16 and B 17. Cut by C 9. P. 58, P. 60 and P. 63.
- C 9, fig. 4. Flat-bottomed palisade trench, 8 in. deep. Filled with dark-brown soil. Cut B 11 and C 8. P. 44.
- C 10, fig. 3. Pit, 4 ft. wide, 3 ft. deep. Filled with layers of clean gravel, sticky black soil, ash and burnt clay. Cut through area of dirty gravel around B. 29. P. 61. Iron object No. 2.
- C 11, fig. 3. Pit, 5 ft. wide, 3 ft. deep. Fill similar to C 10.

INTERPRETATION OF ROMANO-BRITISH FEATURES

The complex of crop-marks at Fisherwick covered about 17 acres, of which about 4 acres were investigated. The remainder is scheduled as an Ancient Monument, (Staffordshire 174b). The total length of 3 ft. wide trench dug was 2,211 ft., and the total area stripped, in addition to these trenches, was 13,533 sq. ft. The unexcavated area of crop-marks did not show in such fine detail. It consisted of a drove-way and a sub-rectangular enclosure of about one acre. These crop-marks were plotted on to fig. 2 from an oblique air-photograph.

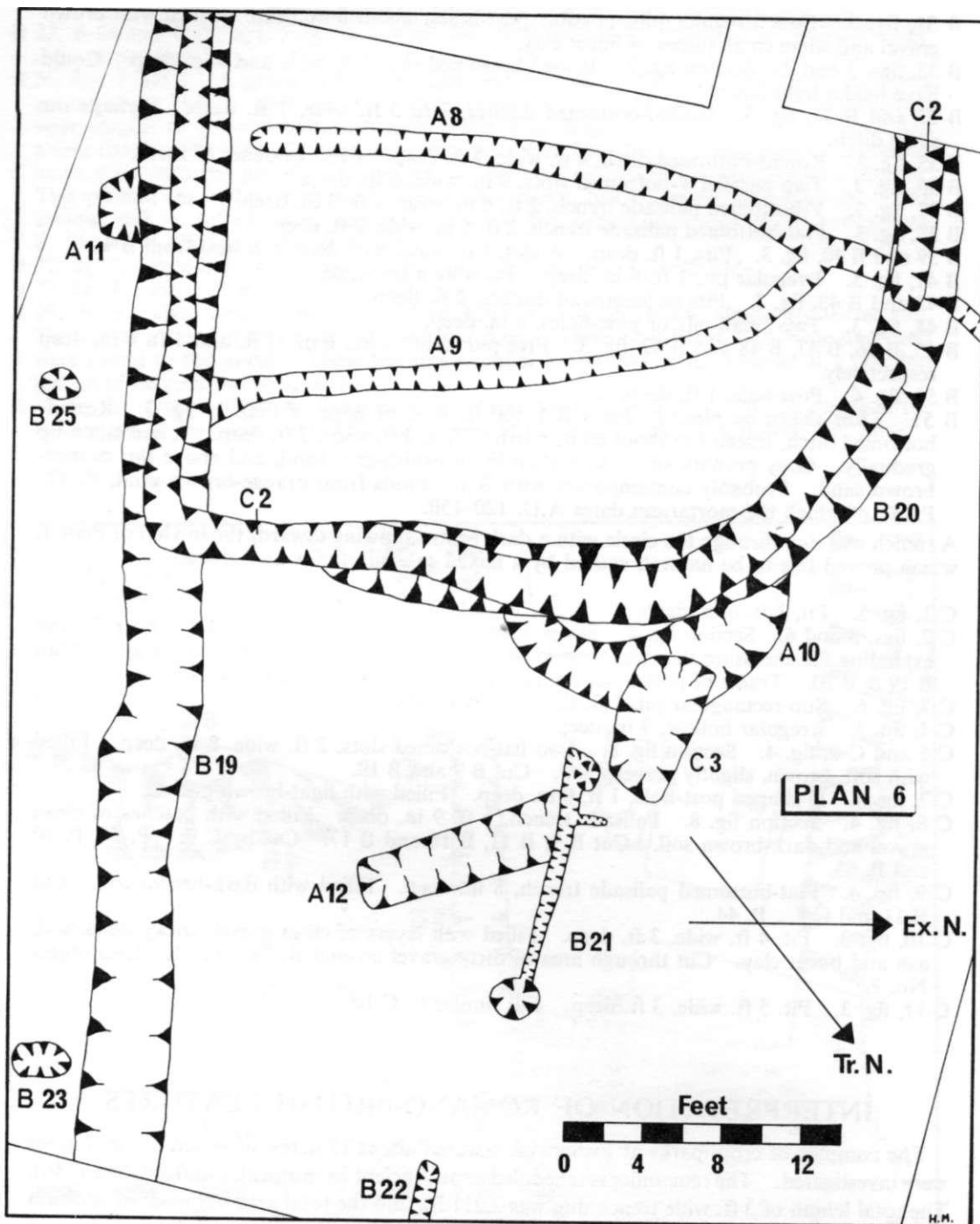


Fig. 6 PLAN 6. Detail plan of Romano-British features

Both the excavated drove-way and that in the next field lead towards the ford. This ford is the first upstream on the Tame from its confluence with the Trent. In the open forest conditions likely in the Roman period this gravel ridge, just above the flood-level of the river valley, would have formed an attractive place for settlement. The farm-stead occupied an area of gravel between recent alluvium bordering the river and mixed clay and gravel to its west. The choice of its site must have been made by people with local knowledge.

The site was not completely excavated and not all the features found could be interpreted. The air-photograph shows some features which were not excavated.

The earliest Roman occupation was on a small scale; a D-shaped enclosure, a hut, a few pits and ditches which may have formed parts of other enclosures. The grey wall-sherd, P. 51 from A 3, is the only direct evidence that any of these features were Roman. However the similarity in shape of the D-shaped enclosure A 4 with that formed by B 19 and B 20, and the similarity between the fills of features in phases A and B, suggest that phase A is also Roman. The fills of Neolithic features were different, being very leached.

The construction of the drove-way and the main laying-out of the site appear to have been contemporary. Field-boundaries were laid out stretching north from the drove-way. A continuous palisade trench was constructed along the west side of the farm-stead. The western part of the drove-way was probably bounded by hedges. These could have been set in banks made from the upcast from the ditches. Before these hedges had grown, the ditches and possibly fences along these banks (although no evidence was found for such) would have prevented animals from straying. When the hedges had grown the ditches appear to have been allowed to silt up. The drove-way thus could have continued indefinitely after the deposition of the last datable material in the silting of its ditches. The ditches in the eastern part of the drove-way held posts. These were continuous on its north side, but were interrupted on its south at the entrance to the farm-stead. Here the posts turned south to form a continuous fence with the main palisade of the farm-stead, (B 19). The post-hole in B 3 could have held a post on which a gate was hung or, more probably, to which hurdling was lashed. Barriers at this point would have blocked the drove-way or the farm-stead entrance.

The uprights in the fences were placed close together, (although it is not certain that all post-holes found were of one phase). The gaps between the uprights would have been filled with wattle, or less probably, with runners lashed to them. Although the soil preserved iron, only two nails were found in the whole excavation, so it is unlikely that nails were used.

In its main phase the farm-stead consisted of D-shaped enclosures against the north side of the drove-way; another D-shaped enclosure, (B 19 and B 20), within the main enclosure, and a pen formed by a palisade trench (B 11) in the angle of the main palisade trench (B 9). Other pens could have been provided when needed by lashing hurdles across from B 19 to B 9, B 11 and B 13. Post-holes such as B 50 could have held supports for such hurdling. The pen in the angle of B 9 was later enlarged by the digging of C 8, and later still contracted or divided by C 9. At some stage a permanent division (C 5 and C 6) was made of the space between B 9 and B 19. The D-shaped enclosure, B 19 and B 20, was later slightly enlarged and the position of its entrance moved (C 2). Lighter fences would have been held in slots such as B 32 which may have formed the eastern side of the farm-stead.

Traces of three huts probably belonging to the main period of occupation were found. All three had worn hollows filled with black soil in their centres; probably because the top-soil had been removed from their interiors, and the surface of the gravel had been their floors.

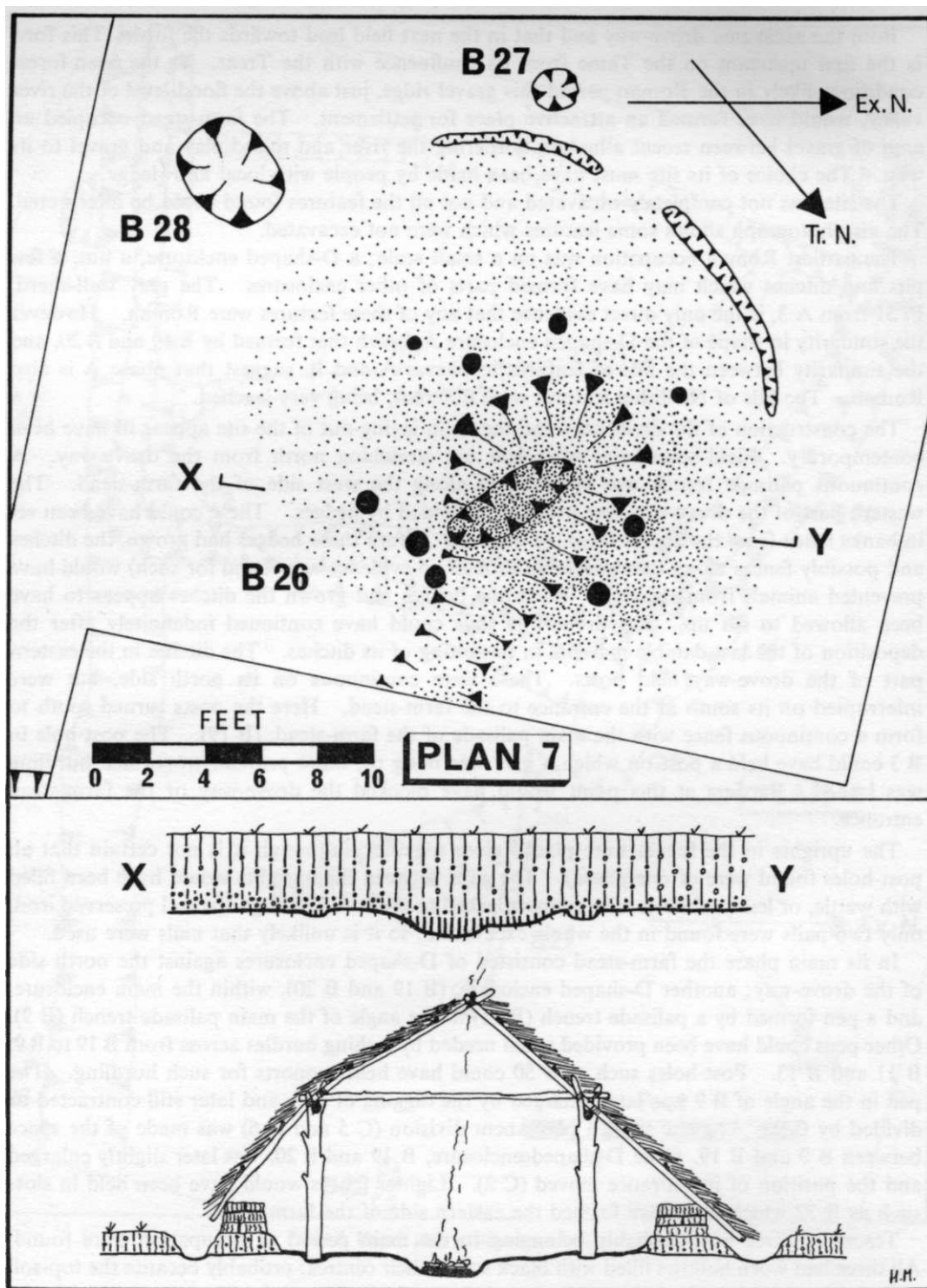


Fig. 7 PLAN 7. Details of hut B 26

This feature did not occur in the hut of the earlier phase, (A 1 and A 2). This hut may not have been occupied long enough for a hollow to have been worn, or perhaps in this case the top-soil had not been removed. There is no dating evidence for this earliest hut, but the difference could reflect a differing constructional technique which could suggest a different date. It is just possible that it is Neolithic. The reconstruction of the best preserved hut (fig. 7) shows a light timber-framework lashed together. As the post-holes were so slight it is probable that the framework was very light and supported itself. The roof must have been light in weight and made of thatch. No trace of any iron fittings was found. The turf walls on which the roof is shown resting are supposition but, if the inside of the hut had been stripped of turf before building, there would have been turf available. There was an entrance to the east. The hut would have been irregular in plan and elevation. It suggests a makeshift construction using any odd lengths of wood which were obtainable. The hearth in the centre is based partly on general probability and partly on the lumps of burnt clay found in the hollow of B 30.

The site has been described as a farm-stead. The small enclosures and pens indicate that this was mainly concerned with stock-rearing. The deep settings for many of the palisades suggest that these were strong and capable of restraining large animals, i.e. cattle or horses, as lighter hurdling would have sufficed for sheep. Animal bones have not survived apart from one tooth from a small horse. There is thus no evidence for deciding the kind of animals which were bred at Fisherwick. Both cattle and horses could have been turned out to graze in open forest conditions and brought to the farm-stead as occasion required. The Roman army needed numbers of both horses and cattle, the former for their cavalry units and the latter for meat and leather. The rearing of either could have been a profitable concern for an enterprising Briton.

There was no definite evidence for arable farming. The group of four post-holes (B 31) forming a 5 ft. square is reminiscent of the granaries of pre-Roman Iron Age sites; for example, the 8 ft. square structure at Staple Howe, Yorks¹. Even if these post-holes held a granary it need not have been used for locally grown grain but may just have been a store for a purchased supply.

It is unlikely that the occupants of the huts were the owners of the farm-stead. The huts, even if only occupied seasonally, as is possible from the general paucity of finds, were constructed in a way that suggests that their builders had far inferior skill and resources to those responsible for the palisade trenches. Virtually nothing is known of the social conditions prevalent in Roman Britain. The evidence from Fisherwick at least suggests a group of poor people, either slaves or nominal freemen, working on the land of a richer master.

The drove-way and its related enclosures were probably constructed in the early years of the second century A.D. The mortarium stamp, P. 25, from the very top of the fill of the north drove-way ditch, suggests that this had completely silted up before about A.D. 185. The group of pottery from B 10 (P. 1 to P. 24), dating to about the middle of the second century, came from a recut which would suggest that the feature was originally dug some time before this date. There is no sure way of telling how long a timber fence would have lasted before needing renewal because this would depend on many factors such as the type of wood used, its seasoning, the soil conditions and whether the post bases had been charred. A life of about thirty years might seem reasonable, and this would agree with a date in the A.D. 120s

• T. C. M. Brewster, *The Excavation of Staple Howe, Yorks.* (1963), fig. 8.

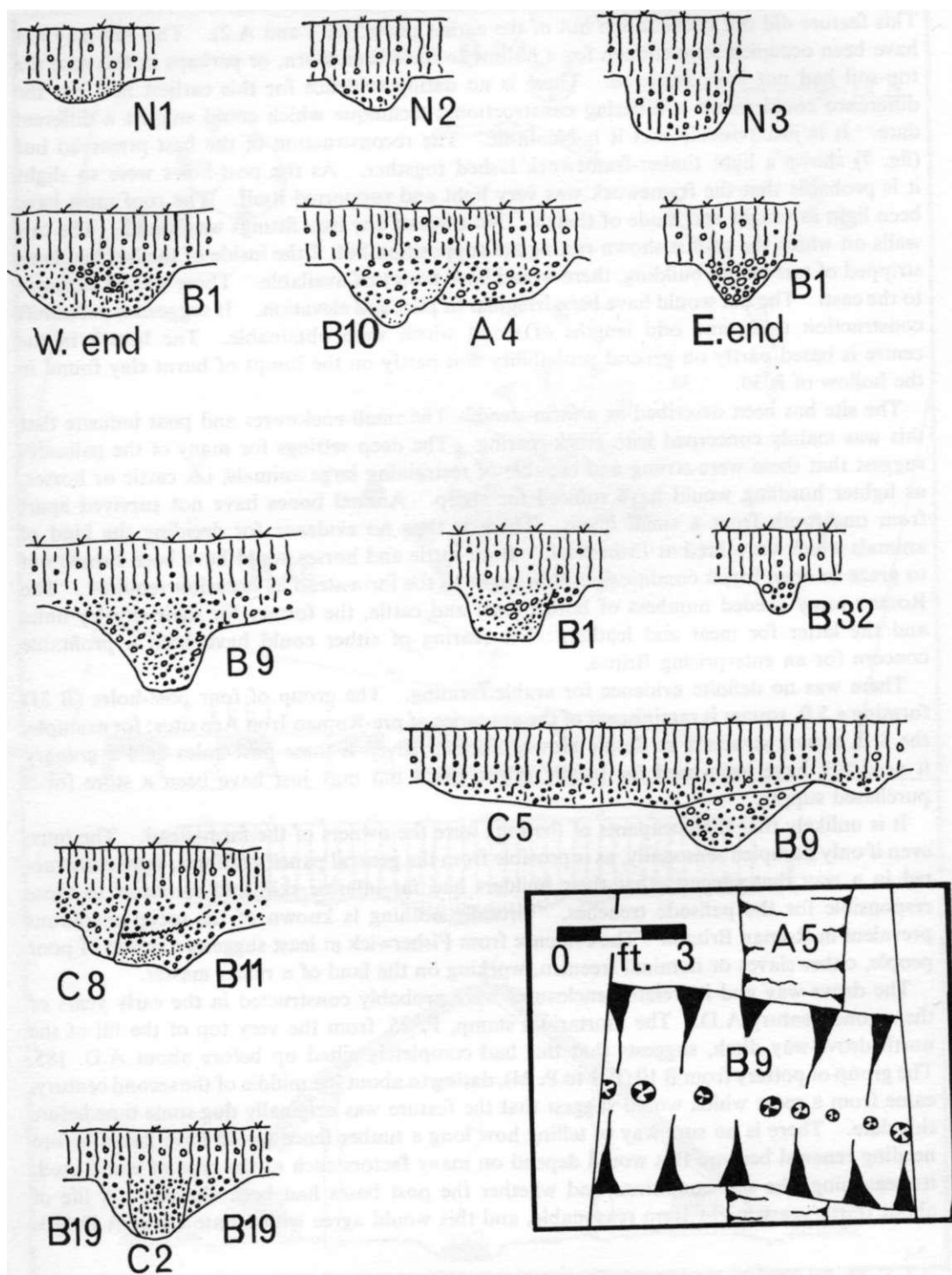


Fig. 8 Sections and detail plan of post-holes in B9
Scale of sections: 1 in. to 4 ft.

for the main laying out. Various alterations necessitating the redigging of palisade trenches occurred during the second century and possibly in the early third century. Only P. 41 from B 19 need be third century of all the pottery from the fill of these trenches. Some of the mortaria from the surface of features or from the top-soil suggest that the site was occupied in the third century, even though no alterations took place after around A.D. 200. The reason for the abandonment of the site is uncertain. No evidence of flooding was found. The recent dark-brown silt had been cut through by Roman features.

It is probable that the river valleys of the Tame and the Trent were being farmed extensively, at least in the early Roman period. The complex of crop-marks in Alrewas parish includes drove-ways and sub-rectangular enclosures of a type that has been dated to the later first century A.D. in the Welland valley⁶. Recent trial excavations (see separate note in this volume) of a site at King's Bromley, some six miles north-west of Fisherwick, suggest that several oval enclosures, probably connected with stock-rearing, date to the late first century A.D. Away from the river gravels, the site at Shenstone was probably connected with agricultural activities, although its surrounding double ditches remain unexplained. The Fisherwick area in Roman times was probably part of the *civitas* of the Cornovii whose capital was at Wroxeter⁷. Very few villas are shown in this *civitas* on the O.S. map of Roman Britain. The army probably remained at Wall until the middle of the second century A.D. at least, (*Wall* 1964-6, p. 11). No buildings using stone or tile are known in the area, apart from those at Wall and the probable building at Shenstone, and it is possible that the region was never very Romanized. This would explain the dwellings in the native tradition at Fisherwick in the second or even third centuries A.D.

No close parallel to the farm-stead at Fisherwick can be found, although a somewhat similar site was excavated by Mr. E. Greenfield at Little Paxton in Huntingdonshire. (Publication forthcoming.) Aerial surveys of the river gravels of lowland England have revealed hundreds of sites incorporating enclosures of various forms, often associated with drove-ways. A fine series of these in the Warwickshire Avon valley has been plotted from air-photographs and published⁸, including some that are rather similar to Fisherwick. As more of these sites are excavated, we shall learn more of the rural settlement pattern in Roman Britain, and be able to understand their relationship to the villas, which have received far more attention. One suspects that villas will appear to have been not the most typical form of Roman agricultural unit, but only the most Romanized.

* W. G. Simpson, 'Romano-British Settlement on the Welland Gravels', *C.B.A. Research Report No. 7, Rural Settlement in Roman Britain* (1966), p. 19.

⁶ A. L. F. Rivet, *Town and Country in Roman Britain* (1964), p. 150.

⁷ G. Webster and B. Hobley, 'Aerial Reconnaissance over the Warwickshire Avon', *Arch. J.*, cxxi for 1964 (1965), pp. 1-22.

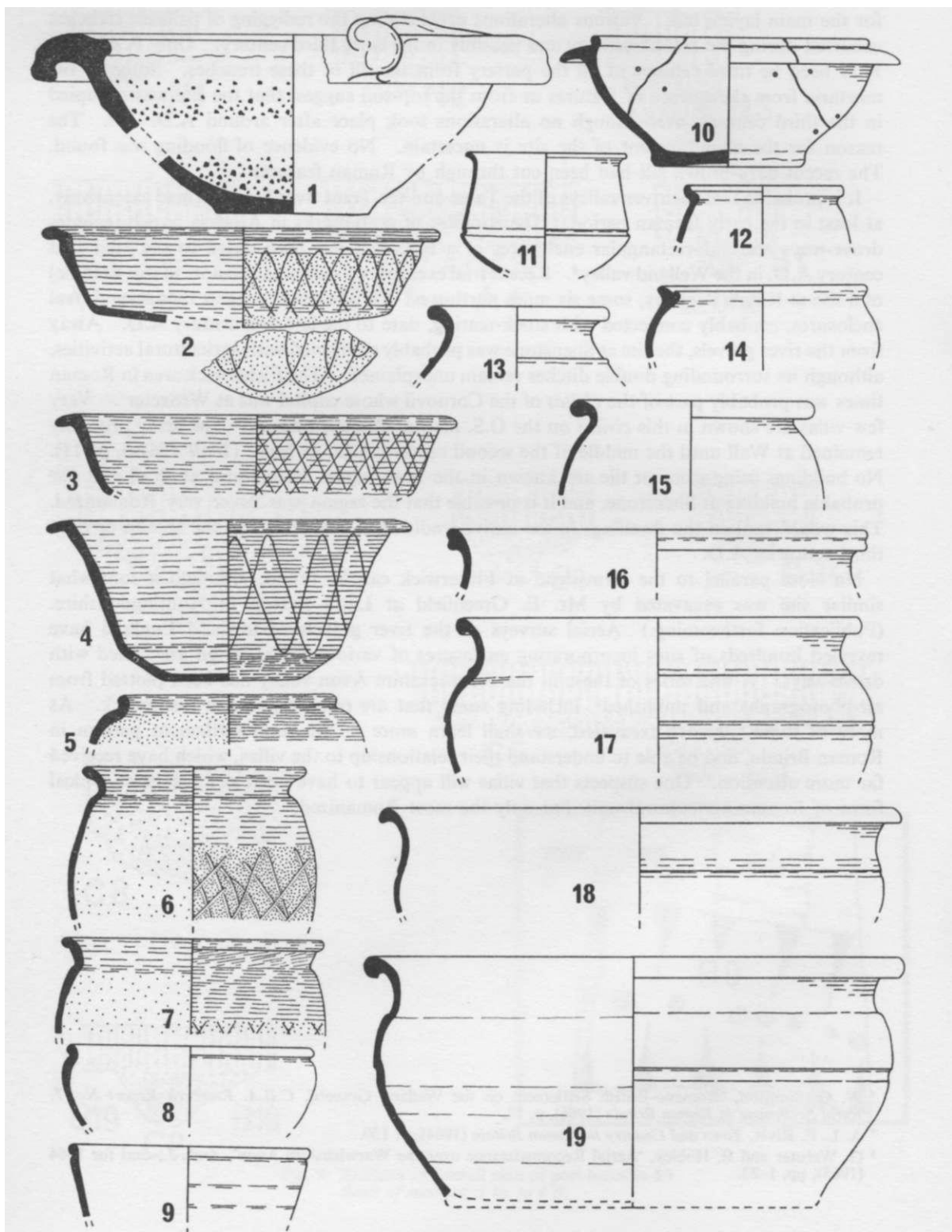


Fig. 9 P. 1 to P. 19, mid second-century Romano-British pottery from BIO (1/4)

THE ROMANO-BRITISH COARSE POTTERY

All identification of inclusions is based on visual identification only. Most of the pottery could be of the period A.D. 125-200, although some sherds may be a little later in date.

FIGURE 9

P. 1 to P. 24 from B 10, a continuation of the main palisade trench. These sherds appear to have been deposited at one time. They were found together in a short length of the feature.

P. 1. See mortaria report.

P. 2. Bowl, black-burnished. Soft, sandy, with some larger, white, quartzite grits, slightly 'micaceous', (the glittering specks may not actually be mica); grey core. Compare Gillam 308, dated A.D. 130-180.

P. 3. Bowl, black-burnished. Fabric as P. 2.

P. 4. Bowl, black-burnished. Fabric as P. 2. Compare *Wall 1961-3*, fig. 16, No. 188, and Gillam 221, dated A.D. 140-180.

P. 5. Bead-rim jar, black-burnished. Fabric as P. 2. Compare *Wall 1961-3*, fig. 16, No. 186, and Gillam 118, dated A.D. 125-160.

P. 6. Jar, black-burnished. Fabric as P. 2. Mid-second century type.

P. 7. Jar, black-burnished. Fabric as P. 2. Also, sherds from three other black-burnished jars very similar to P. 7.

P. 8 & P. 9. Small bowls. Grey, sandy, 'micaceous'. Dark-grey coated surfaces.

P. 10. Flanged bowl. Soft, fine, grey. Surface black-coated, lightly burnished. Apparently an imitation of black-burnished ware. Repaired with lead rivets, fragments of which remain in the drilled holes, and some black substance, probably pitch. Compare *Jewry Wall*, fig. 46, No. 18.

P. 11. Small beaker. As P. 8. Compare *Jewry Wall*, fig. 46, No. 15.

P. 12. Small jar. As P. 8.

P. 13. Narrow-necked jar. As P. 8. Compare *Wall 1961-3*, fig. 16, No. 183.

P. 14. Small bowl or jar. Well formed lid-seating. Fine, hard, slightly sandy. Cream with pink core, similar to the mortaria fabric.

P. 15. Small jar. Similar fabric to P. 8 but with more sand.

P. 16. Rim of large jar. As P. 15.

P. 17 to P. 19. Bowls or wide-mouthed jars. As P. 8.

P. 20 to P. 24 are not illustrated

P. 20. Small rim-sherd, similar in form to P. 19. Hard, slightly sandy, blue-grey, lightly burnished.

P. 21. Wall-sherd with rouletted ornament. Soft. Orange with grey surfaces. Rouletted jars are thought to have appeared at Wall about A.D. 160. (*Wall 1961-3*, p. 31.)

P. 22. Base of large jar; wall flares out slightly towards junction with base. Soft, slightly sandy, lightly filled with a little grog and some grits up to 11/32 in. Pink.

P. 23. Wall-sherd from large jar, crudely formed. Soapy, with much angular grit. Light-brown, grey core. Could be hand-made.

P. 24. Half of the base of a large black-burnished jar, 4 1/2 in. in diameter, 5/8 in. thick. Fabric as P. 2. Base has been trimmed to a disc and a hole 5/8 in. wide has been drilled through its centre.

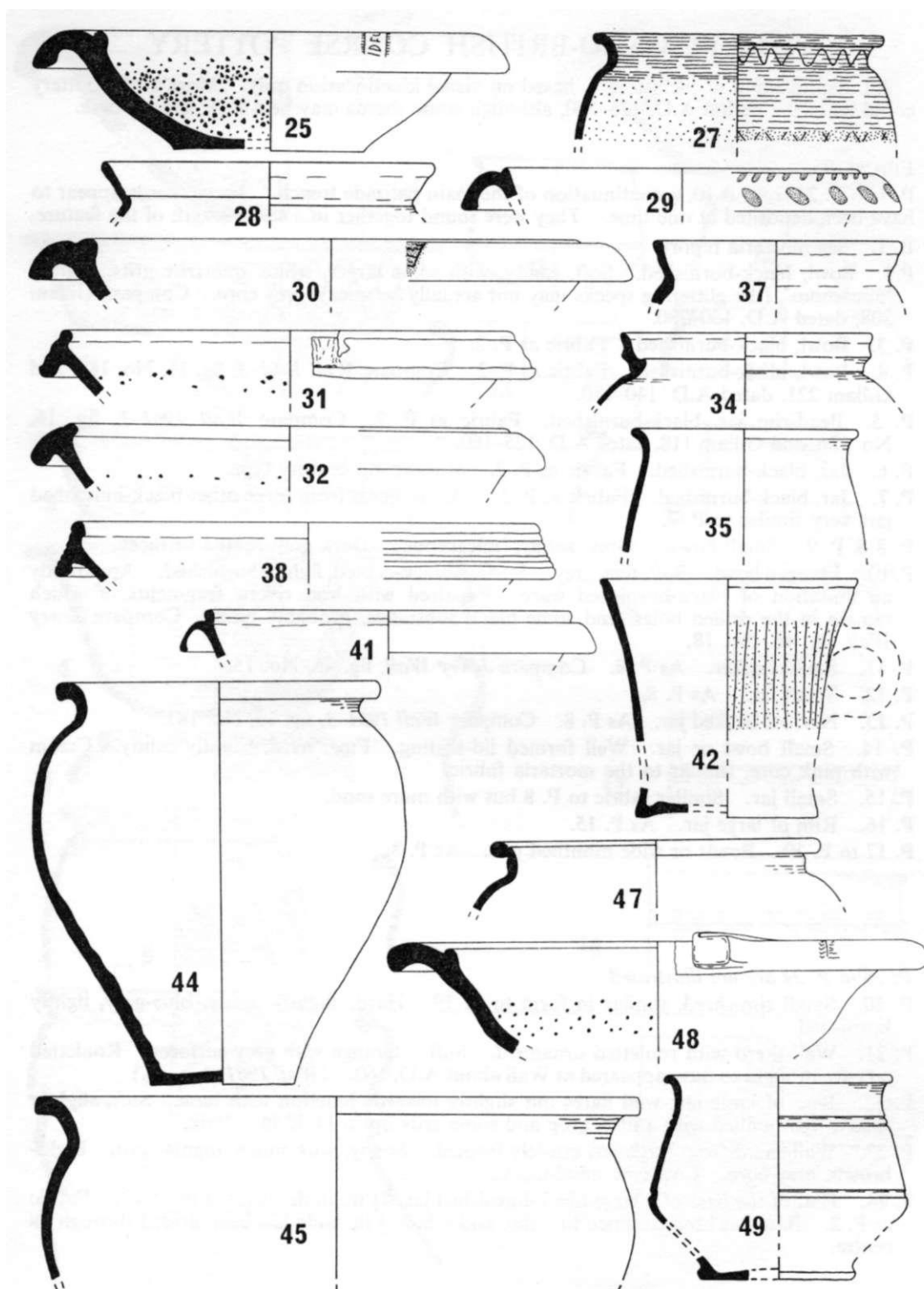


Fig. 10 Romano-British pottery from other parts of the site (1/4)

FIGURE 10

- P. 25. B 1. See mortaria report.
- P. 26. B 1. *Not illustrated.* Wall-sherd, hand-made. Soapy with large grits up to 9/32 in. Dark-grey. Hand-made pottery sometimes occurs on second-century Roman sites in the Midlands".
- P. 27. B 9. Jar, black-burnished. Fabric as P. 2. A common second-century type.
- P. 28. B 9. Rim-sherd of Derbyshire ware jar. Very hard, much coarse grit, surface wiped. The grits protrude to produce a characteristic, pimply surface. Grey fabric with grey to orange surfaces. Derbyshire ware is known to have been made from the late second century A.D. onwards. Forms similar to P. 28 were made at kilns at Hazelwood and Holbrook, (*Hazelwood 1962*).
- P. 29. From surface of B 9. Small flanged bowl with motives in red-brown paint at intervals on the flange. This example can be attributed to the Hartshill-Mancetter potteries, where such bowls were made in the same kilns as the mortaria, and in the same fabric. (*Jewry Wall*, fig. 22, No. 22, is of this same general type but later in date.) This example is probably to be dated c. A.D. 160-220.
- P. 30. B 9. See mortaria report.
- P. 31. Top-soil over B 9. See mortaria report.
- P. 32. B 9. See mortaria report.
- P. 33. *Not illustrated.* From top-soil over B 9. See mortaria report.
- P. 34. From surface of B 9. Rim of jar, Derbyshire ware. As P. 28. Compare *Hazelwood 1962*, fig. 7, No. A 81.
- P. 35. From top of B 9. Small jar. As P. 8.
- P. 36. B 9. *Not illustrated.* Form as P. 19. Fabric as P. 2.
- P. 37. B 19. Rim of jar, Derbyshire ware. As P. 28. Common at both the excavated kiln-sites. (*Hazelwood 1962*.)
- P. 38. From top-soil over B 19. See mortaria report.
- P. 39. B 19. *Not illustrated.* See mortaria report.
- P. 40. *Not illustrated.* From top of B 19. See mortaria report.
- P. 41. B 19. Rim-sherd from flanged bowl. Very pale brown with reddish-brown core. Soft, fine. No close parallel has been found. Fabric and form suggest that it may be from the Oxford region. Probably third century.
- P. 42. B 19. Tankard. As P. 20. This and *Wall 1961-3*, fig. 16, No. 185 lack the two horizontal grooves bounding the decoration which appear to have been characteristic of the tankards from the Perry Barr kilns¹⁰.
- P. 43. B 19. *Not illustrated.* Rim of bowl, similar in fabric and form to P. 19.
- P. 44. C 9. Jar of Derbyshire ware. As P. 28. Compare *Hazelwood 1962*, fig. 5, type B from the kiln-site.
- P. 45. C 2. Rim of large bowl or jar. Fine, slightly sandy, soft, pinkish-brown fabric. Grey, lightly-burnished surface. Very worn.
- P. 46. C 2. Rim-sherd of bowl. Fabric as P. 20.
- P. 47 to P. 50 are from the top layer of silting in B 51
- P. 47. Rim of jar. Soft, fine with some coarse sand. Grey with orange surface.
- P. 48. See mortaria report.
- P. 49. Beaker. As P. 8 but with orange-brown core. Compare *Jewry Wall*, fig. 46, No. 13.

⁹ D. P. S. Peacock, 'Romano-British Pottery Production in the Malvern District of Worcestershire', *Trans. Worcestershire Archaeological Soc.*, Third Series, i for 1965-7 (1968), pp. 15-28.

¹⁰ H. V. Hughes, 'A Romano-British Kiln Site at Perry Barr, Birmingham', *T.B.A.S.* lxxvii for 1959 (1961), pp. 33-9.

Not illustrated

- P. 50. Rim-sherd of jar. Fabric as P. 8, form as P. 13.
- P. 51. A 3. Plain wall-sherd from large jar. As P. 8.
- P. 52. B 13. Sherds of jar. As P. 15 in form and fabric but slightly larger.
- P. 53. B 13. Sherds of bowl or jar. As P. 17 in form and fabric.
- P. 54. On gravel surface near B 19. See mortaria report.
- P. 55. B 26. Five small wall-sherds. As P. 8, but slightly more sandy.
- P. 56. B 26. Wall-sherd from large jar. As P. 8.
- P. 57. B 30. Three sherds from large jar, black-burnished, upright lattice. As P.
- P. 58. C 8. Rim of bowl, black-burnished. As P. 2.
- P. 59. C 8. Sherds of bowl. As P. 18 in form and fabric.
- P. 60. C 8. Rim-sherd of jar. As P. 15 in form and fabric.
- P. 61. CIO. Base of jar, Derbyshire ware. As P. 28.

THE SAMIAN WARE

Not illustrated

- P. 62. On gravel surface near B 19. Rim of bowl, Drag. 37. Probably Central Gaulish, mid-second century.
- P. 63. C 8. Rim of bowl, Drag. 31. Probably Central Gaulish, mid-second century.

THE MORTARIA

KATHERINE F. HARTLEY

Fragments from eleven mortaria have been examined, four with potters' stamps, (P. 25, P. 30, P. 48 and P. 54). Most are weathered either by soil conditions or exposure, but all are in white or cream fabrics, while the surviving trituration grit is usually red-brown, sometimes dark grey, P. 1, P. 48, and P. 54 also having a very few white grits. In fabric and form they are all typical products of the Hartshill-Mancetter potteries in Warwickshire which are not more than 17 miles away.

FIGURE 9

- P. 1. B 10. Several fragments, probably from one vessel and giving a quarter or more of it. This is likely to have been stamped but the surface is too pitted for any stamp to be recognized. This distinctive form was made by Erucanus, Coertutinus, Similis and Icotasgus during the Hadrianic-Antonine period, and a date of c. A.D. 120-180 covers the possible range.

FIGURE 10

- P. 25. B 1. Several fragments making just under a quarter of the vessel, with a retrograde stamp from one of the seven dies of Bruscius. Bruscius used a kiln in conjunction with the late Antonine potter, Junius, at Hartshill and several of his stamps have been noted from forts of the Antonine foundation in Scotland. His activity can be dated with reasonable certainty to the period A.D. 145-185.
- P. 30. B 9. A broken, retrograde stamp from one of the five dies used by Minomelus; the stamp has been covered with dark brown slip, a practice occasionally affected by the

Hartshill-Mancetter potters, presumably to draw attention to the stamp. A kiln of Minomelus, probably used in conjunction with Vitalis IV and Gratinus, has been excavated at Hartshill. His products also are recorded from forts of the Antonine foundation in Scotland, but the association with Vitalis IV, a predominantly Hadrianic potter, suggests that his production had begun by A.D. 140. *c.* A.D. 140-170.

- P. 31. Top-soil near B 9. This basic form was first made in the late second century and continued in production into the fourth century. This is probably third century.
- P. 32. B 9. A form made by Carita- in the late second century, but continuing in production as an unstamped form in the early third century¹, *c.* A.D. 160-230.
- P. 33. *Not illustrated.* From top-soil near B 9. The closest parallels in form and fabric are in the work of Maurus. *c.* A.D. 145-185.
- P. 38. From top-soil over B 19. A variant of Gillam form 282, probably A.D. 260-340.
- P. 39. B 19. *Not illustrated.* Made within the period A.D. 165-220.
- P. 40. *Not illustrated.* From top of B 19. As P. 38.
- P. 48. From top layer of silting in B 51. This fragmentary stamp is probably one of Martialis I who may perhaps have worked in the Hartshill-Mancetter potteries, though his kilns have not been found. His work is uncommon and it will only be possible to attribute this example when more of his stamps have been found. The form points to a date *c.* A.D. 120-150, which would fit his work very well.
- P. 54. *Not illustrated.* On gravel surface near B 19. The badly worn, incomplete stamp cannot be identified with certainty but the strokes surviving leave little doubt that it is a stamp of Junius (retrograde), Maurus, or a potter who stamped Maurem—. All of these potters worked in the Hartshill-Mancetter potteries during the Antonine period and a date *c.* A.D. 145-190 should cover all the possibilities.

THE IRON OBJECTS (*Not illustrated*)

1. B 26. Curved fragment, heavily corroded. From a horse-shoe or an ox-shoe.
2. Two small nails, heavily corroded. One from C 10, the other from the surface of the gravel near B 20.

THE BONE

A cheek tooth of a horse, probably slightly smaller than the present day New Forest pony.

- B 13. Identified by M. Sheldrick, of the British Museum (Natural History).

CATALOGUE OF NEOLITHIC FEATURES (fig. 11)

- N 1. Section fig. 8. Pit, 2 ft. wide, 6 in. deep. Filled with orange-brown sand and patches of comminuted charcoal. Perhaps a cooking pit. Neolithic sherds, fig. 12.
- N 2. Section fig. 8. Pit or post-hole, 2 ft. X 3 ft. 6 in. X 9 in. deep. Filled with orange-brown sand. Flint flake, No. 9.
- N 3. Section fig. 8. Pit or post-hole, 5 ft. X 2 ft. 6 in. X 1 ft. 6 in. deep. Filled with brown gravel.
- N 4, N 5 & N 6. Small post-holes, 4 in., 10 in. and 3 in. deep. Filled with dark-brown gravel.
- N 7 to N 14. Irregular hollows up to 1 ft. 3 in. deep. Filled with clean, orange-brown gravel. These may have been Neolithic features from which the humic content had been leached, but are more likely to have been natural.
- The air-photograph shows a faint circle in this area. A 3 ft. trench dug west for 50 ft. from the area of Plan 3, fig. 11, revealed only a pocket of soft, brown, natural silt in this area.

¹ 'Bainbridge Fort [1960]', *Proceedings of Leeds Philosophical and Literary Soc*, ix (pt. iii), p. 122, fig. 7.

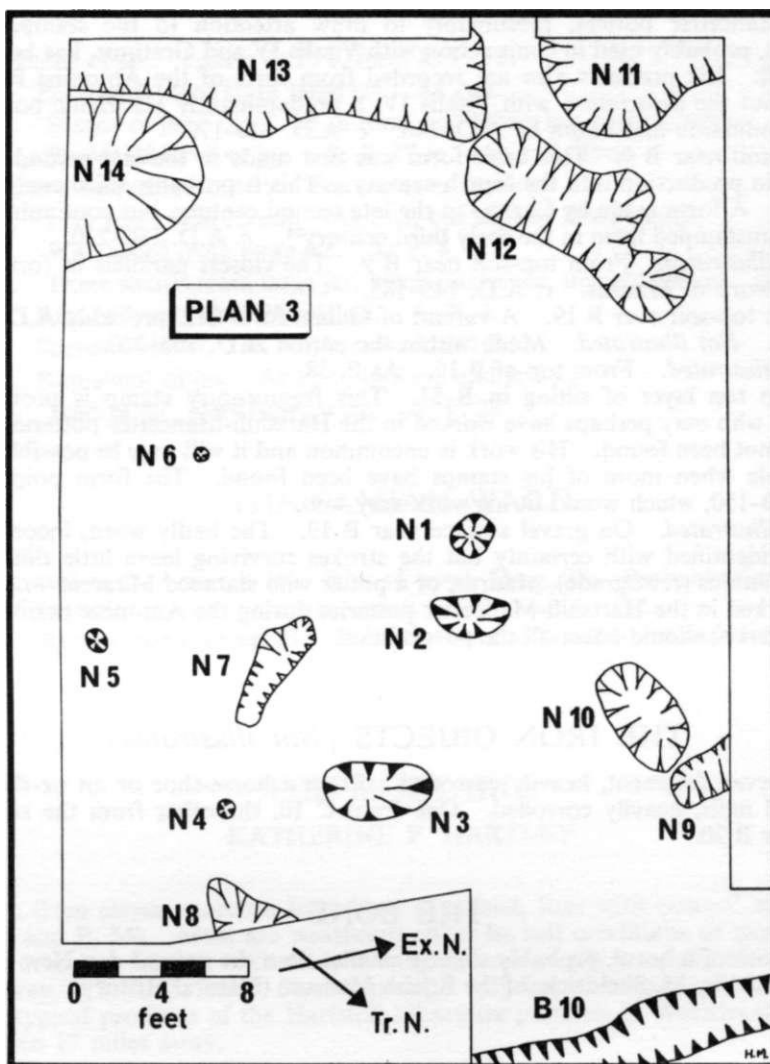


Fig. 11 PLAN 3. Neolithic features

INTERPRETATION OF NEOLITHIC FEATURES

The only definite Neolithic features found were in the area of plan 3, fig. 11, but a scatter of flints was found over the remainder of the site. The pit N 1 has been interpreted as a cooking pit. N 2, N 3 and N 5, N 6 form a rectangle 14 ft. X 10 ft. It may be that, in spite of the difference in size between N 2-3 and N 5-6, these features are the remains of supports for a hut. In this case N 4 could have held an additional support for the roof, as could possibly N 7 in the centre of the rectangle. Very few Neolithic hut plans are known, and in general only pits and odd post-holes are found on occupation sites¹². Possibly so few are known because in the past traces as slight as these at Fisherwick have not been accepted as hut plans.

¹² N. H. Field, G. L. Matthews and I. F. Smith, 'New Neolithic Sites in Dorset and Bedfordshire', *P.P.S.*, New Series, xxx (1964), pp. 352-81.

The gravel ridge at Fisherwick, close to a ford, would have been an attractive site for settlement or temporary encampment. The Tame would probably have been navigable by small boats like dug-out canoes and, joining with the Trent, would have offered a means of communication over a long distance.

The Fisherwick sherds are the first Neolithic pottery to be found in Staffordshire. They should probably be assigned to the Mortlake category of Secondary Neolithic wares, and they would thus belong to the late Neolithic period, after about 1900 B.C.¹³. The best parallel, the vessel found with cremated bones in a round barrow near Arbor Low in Derbyshire¹⁴, accords well with this date. It is unlikely that this part of the Midlands was much frequented in the Neolithic period. There is a group of chambered tombs, some producing Secondary Neolithic pottery, on the Pennines in Derbyshire¹⁵. To the south, recent excavations on the gravels of the Warwickshire Avon at Barford¹⁶ have revealed ritual sites associated with Secondary Neolithic pottery; and at Warwick, pits and a possible house have been found dating to an earlier period of the Neolithic. (Excavated by Mr. S. Taylor, report forthcoming.)

The scatter of Neolithic implements in southern Staffordshire, including imported stone-axes such as the Group VI example of Great Langdale, Cumberland stone¹⁷, shows that this area was occupied, even if sparsely, in the Neolithic period. No doubt more sites will be found when further work is done on the river gravels.

NEOLITHIC POTTERY (fig. 12)

- (a) N 1. Two sherds from the same pot. Fine, soapy, with sparse, white quartzite grits up to J in. Dark-grey core with brownish-pink surfaces. Decorated with whipped cord maggots, on top of the rim and on the outside of the neck, and more faintly with the same stamp on the inside of the neck. The pot should probably be placed, on rim-form and decoration, within the Mortlake category of Secondary Neolithic wares.¹⁸ The reconstructed profile is rather unusual in the angle of its shoulder; the closest parallel seems to be the pot from a round barrow, near Arbor Low, Derbyshire, about 33 miles to the north¹⁹.
- (b) N 1. *Not illustrated.* A small abraded sherd, rather thicker but possibly from the same pot.

FLINTS (fig. 12)

All from the top-soil, except Nos. 6, 9 and 10.

- 1. Near N 1. Flake scraper with retouch on end and both sides.
- 2. Near C 8. Double-edged knife with secondary working on both edges. Made on a flake.
- 3. Near N 1. Small end-scraper.
- 4. Near C 5. Small end-scraper.
- 5. Near B 12. Small end-scraper.
- 6. From south end of B 19. Part of a double-edged knife made on a long flake.
- 7. Near B 1. Small discoidal knife made on a flake.

¹³ I. F. Smith, 'Windmill Hill and its Implications', *Palaeohistoria*, xii, Groningen (1967), pp. 469-81.

¹⁴ T. Bateman, *Vestiges of the Antiquities of Derbyshire* (1848), p. 65.

¹⁵ S. Piggott, *The Neolithic Cultures of the British Isles* (1954), p. 267.

¹⁶ A. Oswald, 'Barford', *West Midlands Annual Archaeological News Sheet*, No. 8, 1965, pp. 4, 5.

¹⁷ A. J. H. Gunstone, 'An Archaeological Gazetteer of Staffordshire, Part F, North Staffs. *Journal of Field Studies*, iv (1964), pp. 11-15.

¹⁸ I. F. Smith, *Windmill Hill and Avebury* (1965), pp. 74-8.

¹⁹ S. Piggott, 'The Neolithic Pottery of the British Isles', *Arch. J.*, lxxxviii for 1931 (1932), fig. 18, No. 3.

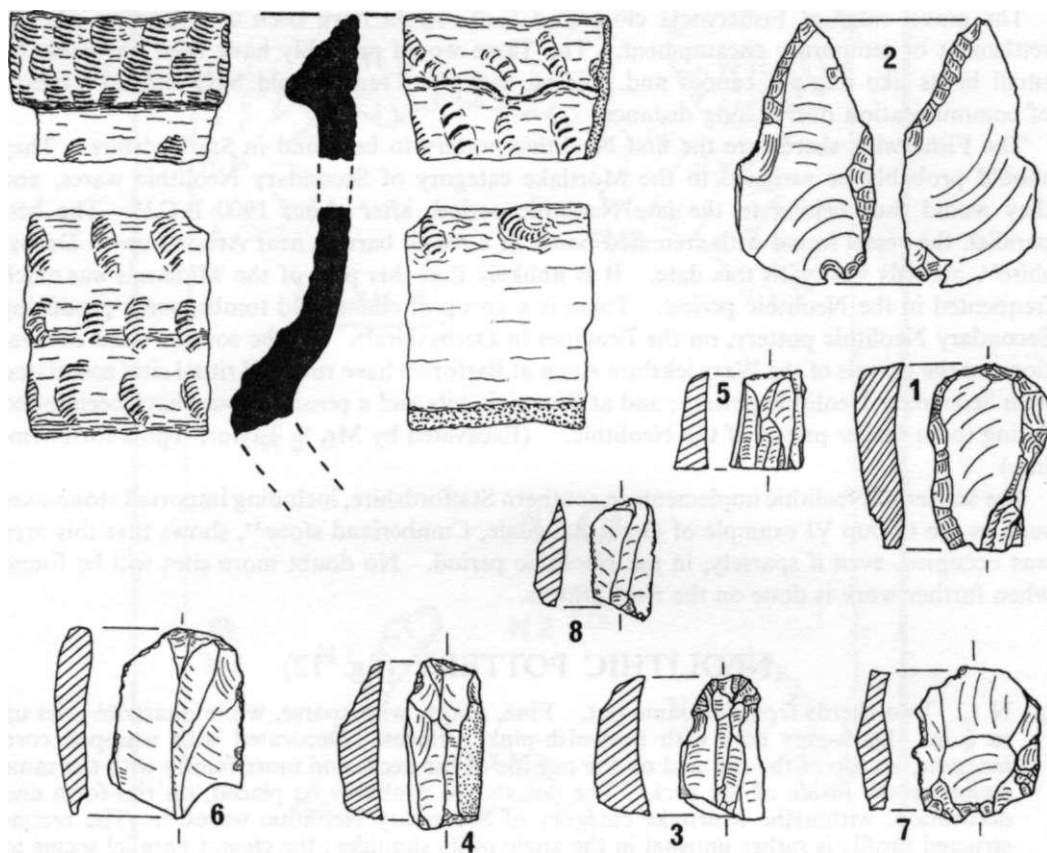


Fig. 12 Secondary Neolithic sherds (1/1) and flints (2/3)

8. Near B 1. Small flake with serrated edge.

9. *Not illustrated.* From N 2. Cortical flake 1J in. X J in. x \ in. Traces of use on one edge.

10. *Not illustrated.* Near N 1. Core rejuvenation flake.

About twenty unutilized struck flakes were found in the top-soil on various parts of the site. The form of all these flints is consistent with a date in the late Neolithic. The quality of flint used is reasonably good although it all appears to be pebble-flint.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the Midland Gravel Co. for permission to excavate, in particular Mr. Breen and his staff; Mr. J. Pickering for showing me his air-photographs of the area; Mr. J. Bennett and Mr. I. Young, my assistant supervisors; Mr. J. Gould for much help and encouragement; Councillor A. Ward for showing me a copy of the Fisherwick Park sale catalogue; Mrs. K. F. Hartley for her report on the mortaria and comments on sherds P. 29 and P. 41; Dr. G. Webster for confirming the date of the pottery from B 10; Mr. E. Greenfield for showing me the plans of his excavation at Little Paxton; Mr. S. Taylor for information about his Neolithic material from Warwick; lastly, my husband, Trevor, for drawing the pottery and other assistance in the preparation of the report.

The Society acknowledges the grant kindly given by the Ministry of Public Building and Works towards the cost of publishing this report.

SECOND REPORT OF THE EXCAVATIONS AT TAMWORTH, STAFFS., 1968—SPITAL CHAPEL

J. GOULD, F.S.A.

SUMMARY Examination of the chapel pointed to a Norman origin with thirteenth century alterations. Excavation failed to find any traces of earlier structures on the site but did find an illicit medieval burial. Documents show that the chapel could only have functioned as a hospital for a very short time, if at all, and that for most of the medieval period it was a chantry.

INTRODUCTION

SPITAL CHAPEL (N.G.R. SK 209050) lies almost midway between the parish churches of St. Editha's, Tamworth and St. Leonard's, Wigginton. It is half a mile outside the borough defences of Tamworth and is in Wigginton parish. It stands on rising ground with a subsoil of sand and gravel and is at present surrounded by modern housing. Last century it stood in isolation in a rural setting.

During one week of July, 1968, the chapel was examined in detail and excavation undertaken by the senior girls of Perrycroft School, Tamworth. Various peculiarities had suggested that this might be a pre-Conquest church, later rebuilt, and it was with this in mind that the work was undertaken.

Thanks are due to the girls who worked cheerfully, especially Jennifer Arnold, Susan Arnold, Christine Haynes, Gaye Johnson, Susan Lowe, Denise Mace, Barbara Morton, Ruth Pointon, Susan Ratcliffe, Hazel Reddy, Elaine Sketchley, Linda Taylor, Susan Wanty and Kay Wright. Thanks are also due to the Headmistress, Miss M. E. Keatley, **B.SC.** who encouraged the project, the South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society who loaned the tools, Mrs. D. Gould who helped with the excavations and especially Dr J. G. L. Cole who supervised the removal of the skeletons and prepared the specialist report on them. The chapel was visited by Mr. P. Rahtz, Dr. Raleigh Radford and Prof. E. M. Jope; I am grateful for their comments. The work was carried out with the consent of the Archdeacon of Stafford, the Ven. B. Stratton, **M.A.** and the vicar and churchwardens of St. Leonard's, Wigginton, whose help and cooperation are very much appreciated.

THE BUILDING AND THE EXCAVATION

Spital Chapel is a simple two-cell church with a nave measuring externally 25 ft. 6 in. by 20 ft. 3 in., and a chancel 15 ft. long on the south side, 14 ft. 3 in. on the north and 15 ft. 10 in. wide. The west wall of the nave has been completely rebuilt this century. The east wall of the chancel also shows signs of rebuilding and at the corners there may have been clasping buttresses long since removed. The north and south walls are 2 ft. 8 in. thick and rest on a good quality sandstone plinth, 8 in. high with a 2 in. chamfer. At present the plinth is

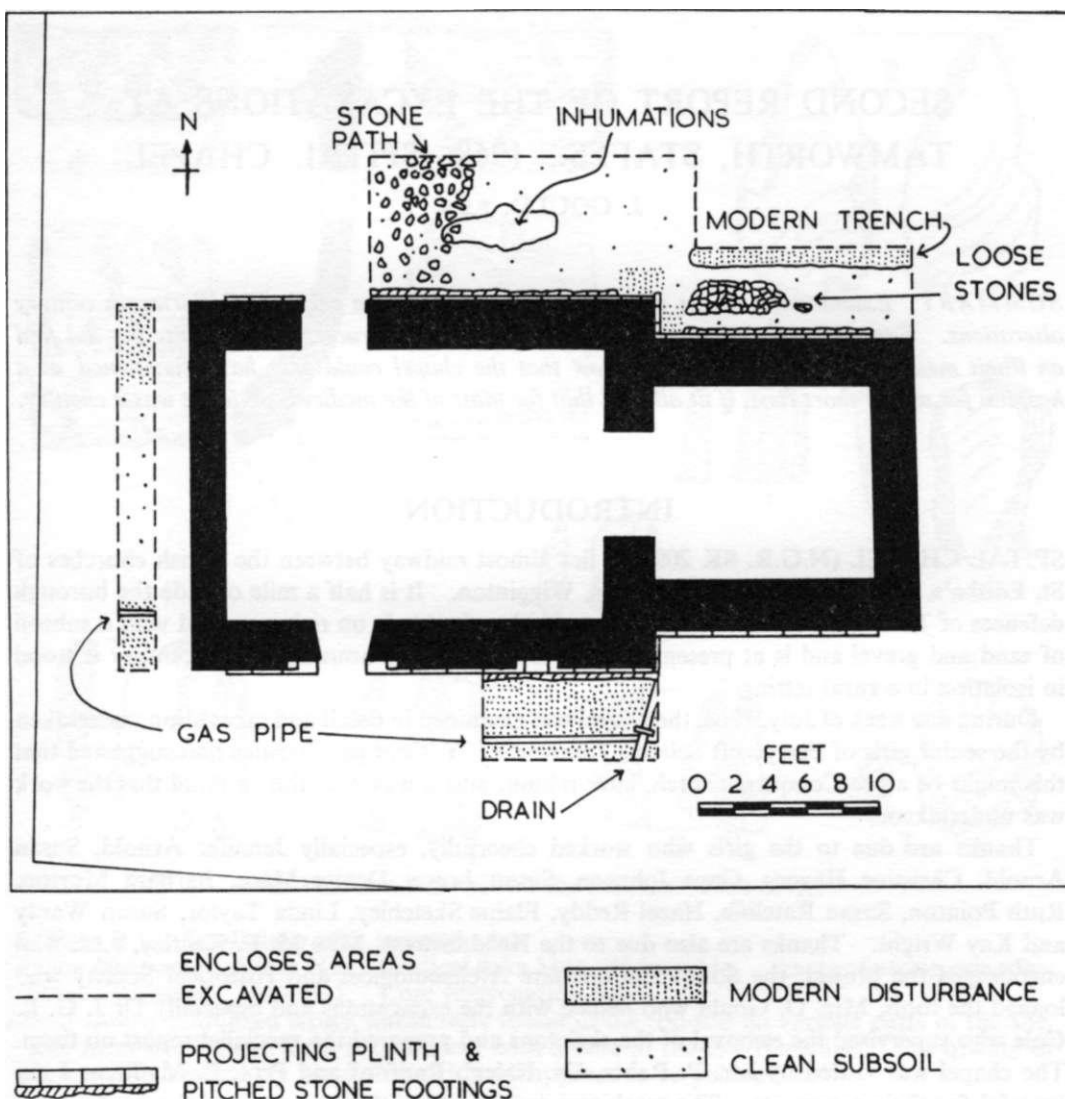


Fig. 1 Plan of area excavated

exposed and consequently weathered on the south side; on the north side it is below ground level and so is better preserved. The plinth rests on a pitched stone foundation, a mere 6 in. deep where tested. The original chancel walls were faced with well-cut ashlar (sandstone) approximately 10 in. high, presenting an approximately square outer face. The only place where these blocks stand undisturbed in their original positions is at the west end of the north wall of the chancel, there they stand 4 ft. high above the plinth. Elsewhere the chancel is still faced with these blocks but they appear to have been disturbed. The work should be compared with the nave of the small Norman church that still stands at near-by Dosthill. The stonework of the nave at Spital Chapel is much inferior externally to that of the chancel and is mainly of uncoursed rubble though some ashlar has been incorporated in rebuilt sections.

No original window remains, but on the inner side of the north wall of the chancel are straight joins 2 ft. 7 in. apart showing there was once a window there.

The north door has a rounded arch of single order and is rebated. The arch has been rebuilt and the jambs of the door show poor workmanship and may have been patched or rebuilt. The door is 3 ft. 6 in. wide externally, 3 ft. 11 in. without the rebate, and the top is 7 ft. 5 in. above the plinth. Inside it is 8 ft. 3 in. above the plinth and is well constructed.

The present south door is an insertion. Originally it may have been a door of good quality belonging architecturally to the first half of the thirteenth century, with brackets at the side such as are usually used for shafts of Purbeck marble, the shafts having long since disappeared. The arch is no longer symmetrical and much of the masonry has been spoilt by cutting in an attempt to make the pieces fit. Either the door was brought from elsewhere and inserted into the building or, if originally made for this building, it has at some time been very badly re-erected. The door is 3 ft. 6 in. wide internally and is splayed.

Six feet from the east end of the south wall of the nave is a blocked door, presumably the original south door before the insertion of the present one. Externally it was but 2 ft. 4 in. wide and the masonry within shows that it stood 8 ft. 3 in. above the plinth. Inside are vertical joins showing the door was there 2 ft. 8 in. wide and suggesting that there had been a 2 in. rebate. A window now occupies the upper part of the doorway and the lower two stones of the window each have a 2 in. rebate. Although the inserted window has been given a slight splay, the original doorway was not splayed.

Excavation was undertaken on the west, north and south sides of the chapel (fig. 1). In all cases there was modern disturbance down to the level of the undisturbed subsoil on which the pitched stone foundations rest. At no point was there any indication that any wall at any time branched out from the stone plinth so that no porticus was ever present on the north or south sides and there never was any porch or tower to the west. The plinth showed that the original building was of the same shape and size as the present building and no trace was found of any earlier wooden construction. On the top of the undisturbed subsoil were many pieces of sandstone, many fragments of medieval roofing-tiles (a few bearing traces of green glaze) and some sherds of coarse, unglazed pottery, not closely datable but which suggest the twelfth century.

On the north side of the chapel, a stone path ran diagonally from the north-east to the north door. This rested directly on the subsoil and contained a few scraps of (twelfth century?) cooking-pots. Partly covered by the very rough path was a shallow adult burial. The feet of the skeleton were to the east and the arms were folded. There was no trace of any coffin (or coffin nails) or shroud. The bottom of the grave was a mere 18 in. below modern ground surface. With the skeleton was a piece of well-glazed roofing-tile and two scraps of coarse medieval pottery. Despite the shallow depth of the grave, the skeleton appeared undisturbed. Across the pelvis of the skeleton, lay the skulls of two children, one skull to the north and one to the south. These rested directly on the adult skeleton, but being closer to the surface were badly disturbed. The remaining bones of the child skeletons were fragmentary, dispersed and badly decayed.

DISCUSSION OF THE BUILDING

The thickness of the walls of the nave, 2 ft. 8 in., the flimsy nature of the foundations and the proportions of the blocked south door, suggest Saxon construction, and the use of ashlar

would be consistent with this. There were none of the well-known late-Saxon features such as long-and-short work.

On the other hand, both the north and the original south doorways were rebated and this does not accord with Saxon dating. Dr. Radford suggests that the tooling of the masonry inside the chancel points to a twelfth-century date and he believes that the blocked north window of the chancel belongs to that period also. The rebuilt chancel arch does not have impost moulding on the eastern side and Dr. Radford considers this to be a twelfth-century feature possibly ghosted by the rebuilders who may have found evidence no longer existing for rebuilding in this manner.

Apart from the impost moulding, these twelfth-century features all seem to be part of the original construction so that the chapel must be assigned to that date, though there are peculiarities, as might be expected at that date in rural Staffordshire.

The present south door shows alterations in the thirteenth century and though the roofing tiles cannot be closely dated, the fact that some fragments are glazed, suggests an expensive roof at some time in the medieval period.

DOCUMENTATION

Spital Chapel stood in an area that was administered in the post-Conquest period through the royal manor of Wigginton. Whether it was actually part of Wigginton, or whether it belonged to that half of the borough of Tamworth (the Staffordshire side) that was administered on the King's behalf through his court at Wigginton was disputed in the thirteenth century.

In 1242, the King granted the manor of Wigginton to Henry de Hastings and his wife Ada together with other manors in exchange for land in Cheshire¹.

At the time of Simon de Montfort's rebellion, Hastings forfeited his lands to the Crown. In 1266, Henry III gave Wigginton together with both Warwickshire and Staffordshire Tamworth to Philip Marmion who had been loyal during the troubles². Philip Marmion already held Tamworth Castle. Inquisitions were held in 1249 and 1266 concerning Wigginton and Tamworth but in neither is there any mention of Spital Chapel³.

Early in the reign of Edward I, inquisitions were held in all the Hundreds, concerning property held or alienated by the Crown. The results of these inquisitions have been published and are known as the *Rotuli Hundredorum*. The Hundred Roll for Offlow (the Staffordshire Hundred in which Wigginton stands) was compiled about 1274 and is missing, but extracts were made from the Roll about two years later and these have survived. The extracts show Philip Marmion as then having built anew a chapel on land he had obtained from his tenure of Wigginton and Tamworth⁴.

A few years later, in 1283, Philip Marmion granted the Hospital of St. James (i.e. Spital Chapel) to a William de Croubyrihal', chaplain, until such time as Philip could establish a religious house there of the Premonstratensian Order, with five chaplains whom he hoped

¹ Liberate Roll, 26 Henry III.

² Patent Roll, 50 Henry III.

³ *S.H.C.* for 1911, pp. 136 ff.

⁴ *Rotuli Hundredorum*, ii (1818), p. 116. The phrase *constructa est de novo* is ambiguous but in this context is taken as meaning built anew or rebuilt.

would be able to wear the sign of a shield⁵. This appears to be a personal badge of Philip Marmion who sealed various documents with this emblem⁶. The back of the original document is wrongly endorsed in seventeenth-century handwriting attributing the document to 1289 and naming the chaplain as William of Comberry Hall'. In granting the chapel, Philip Marmion stipulated that the chaplain was to hand over the chapel when needed and until then was to celebrate mass daily on behalf of Philip and his ancestors so that in effect the chapel was a chantry. In 1285 an inquisition was held to see if it would be to the detriment of the King if Philip were allowed to endow the Hospital of St. James outside Tamworth with extensive properties in Lincolnshire⁷. The jury found that the King would suffer a loss of £8 19s. 11d. whenever the land passed by escheat into his hands⁸ and consequently it seems that permission was refused, for no entry permitting the endowment appears subsequently in the Patent Rolls. The chaplains appear to have been installed for when an Assize was held in Tamworth in 1294¹⁰ it was stated that Philip had built the chapel [*sic*] and installed a master and brothers but that these had given the chapel back to Philip because of poverty.

The Calendar of Patent Rolls for 1275, that is just after Philip was rebuilding the chapel, show that a Richard de Wyveslegh, precentor of a church in Ireland, came to England in connexion with the election of a bishop but was taken ill while passing through Tamworth and forced to stay there several months. On one occasion, Richard's horses were stolen on the orders of Philip Marmion and taken to Tamworth Castle. When Richard raised a hue and cry, Philip's men assaulted him and 'drew blood on him'. Apparently Philip was determined that Richard should not leave Tamworth at that time. At the Assize of 1294 referred to above, it was stated that Philip Marmion received the chapel from this Richard de Wyveslegh and his brother Robert, the brothers having received the property from Henry de Hastings. This looks very much as if Philip had been manufacturing a title to the property (it was common practice to do so at that period) so that, were his ownership challenged, he could call Richard and Robert Wyveslegh to warranty and presumably by then the brothers would be safely back in Ireland where a court would find it difficult to reach them.

The Assize also stated that Philip, following his failure to endow the chapel, installed various people at Spital Chapel in turn including a Robert de Pycheford who held it in 1294. Robert de Pycheford also held the churches of Pitchford and Hoghton as well as being a canon of St. Editha's, Tamworth¹¹.

The chapel seems to have continued as a chantry until the Reformation. In 1524, Sir H. Willoughby and his wife confessed to a friar there and spent a shilling on bread and beer whilst giving alms of one penny¹². In 1534 a Robert Parrott was chaplain, the chapel and its appurtenances being then worth £3 6s. 8d. a year¹³. At that time it was called a free chapel

⁵ University of Nottingham Library Doc. MID 3870/3.

⁶ Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord Middleton preserved at Wollaton Hall, Nottinghamshire* (1911), p. 77.

⁷ Dr. Tanner in his *Notitia Monastica* (1744), p. 502 quotes the erroneous facts as given on the endorsement, taking the details from a manuscript of D. Thornton. This error has caused some confusion in the past.

⁸ *List of Inquisitions ad Quod Damnum preserved in the Public Record Office*, pt. 1 (1904), p. 16, file ix, No. 28.

⁹ T. C. Banks, *History of the Ancient and Noble Family of Marmyun* (1817), p. 327.

¹⁰ *S.H.C.*, vi, pt. 1 (1885), p. 294.

¹¹ Patent Roll, 22 Edward I.

¹² Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission, *op. cit.*, p. 366.

¹³ *Valor Ecclesiasticus temp. Henrici VIII auctoritate regia institutis*, iii (1817), p. 148.

and it also appears on the Chantry Returns of 1548 as a free chapel. By 1550 the chantry was closed and the property sold¹⁴.

The chapel then seems to have become a farm-building and was referred to as a barn in the eighteenth century. In 1855 it was called 'a barn or more properly a cottage with two chimneys'. The Guild of St. Albans then obtained the property and planned to set up a College of St. James there. In 1906 the chapel was up for auction and bought by Dr. Joy. Much local interest was then roused in the chapel and a restoration appeal made. H. C. Mitchell claimed to have restored the chapel in 1909¹⁵ but it was not until 1914 that the west wall was encased in stone and a fire-place removed.

DISCUSSION

The documentary evidence shows that the chapel needed rebuilding in the thirteenth century. This is surprising if the chapel is a twelfth-century building as is suggested on architectural grounds. No indication has been found of the original builder but in the twelfth century the property was part of the royal demesne. It is not clear either for whom the hospital was intended to cater. Some hospitals were mainly for the poor but in 1179 the decree issued by Pope Alexander¹⁶ stated that lepers should be allowed to have their own chapels and burial grounds. Hospitals dedicated to St. James, were often set up after a pilgrimage to St. James, Compostella. The only person connected with Tamworth known to have undertaken such a pilgrimage was Robert Marmion Junior¹⁷ but that was in 1222 when he was no longer closely associated with Tamworth. That date is also too late for the architectural features of the original building. A royal foundation cannot be counted out since the twelfth-century kings were sometimes in this area especially for the hunting and the chapel is on royal demesne. It would also help to explain the hospital being called a *free* chapel.

The inserted thirteenth-century door presumably belongs to the rebuilding in 1274 by Philip Marmion and as the original south door must have been blocked at that time there may have been some change of function.

It is not clear whether the chapel ever functioned as a hospital. It may have done so between its erection in the twelfth century and its falling into disrepair so that it needed rebuilding in the thirteenth century. If it did so, there remains the problem of how it was financed. When Philip Marmion installed William de Croubyrihal' he gave him the hospital and its appurtenances together with grazing for four cows and two horses. The appurtenances were not listed and are far from apparent. The *Rotuli Hundredorum* showed the hospital as taking 2s. *Id.* from the manor of Alrewas and at the Reformation the value of the Chapel was only £3 6s. *%d.* It is hard to believe it functioned as a hospital before 1274 when Philip rebuilt it. When he sought to endow it Philip called it a hospital, though the documents only state that he intended to found a religious house of five chaplains. It could have functioned during the short period when the chaplains were installed and when, following the failure to

" *S.H.C.* for 1915 (1916), p. 272.

" H. C. Mitchell, *Tamworth Parish Church* (1935), p. 78.

" *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi, Benedicti Abbatis*, ed. W. Stubbs (1867), p. 229.

" Patent Rolls, 6 Henry III.

endow it, they handed the building back to Philip because of their poverty. After that it seems to have been merely a chantry.

The grave that was found strongly suggests poverty (see Report on the Bones) and may belong to the short period when the five chaplains were there. The alternative is that it was an illicit medieval burial (which would account for the grave being so shallow) on dedicated land. That the adult was inhumed with feet to the east and arms crossed suggests respect for the corpse despite the grave being so shallow. It is unfortunate that the children were so near the surface and were so disturbed that no suggestion can be made as to the implication of their burial though they do seem to have been buried at the same time as the adult though the age of the adult suggests she was not their mother.

REPORT ON THE BONES FOUND AT SPITAL CHAPEL TAMWORTH, JULY 1968

J. G. L. COLE, **M.B., CH.B.**

The adult skeleton found in a shallow grave was that of a woman who at the time of her death was well on into middle age, possibly as old as 50 years, and unlikely to be under 40 years. This opinion is based on the commencing disappearance of the sutures of the vault of the skull, the very considerable wearing of the teeth and the degenerative changes in the cervical and lumbar spines. Her left sacro-iliac joint was firmly ankylosed with bone, the right was intact; the commonest explanation would be tuberculous sacro-iliitis. This was completely healed and probably did not contribute to her death.

Of the two children, very few fragments remain. The elder vault is consistent with an age of 6-9 years with no indication as to sex or of generalized bone disease. The smaller skull showed that the deciduous dentition was commencing to go (two incisors were missing and the permanent dentition was just below the alveolar margin). The first and second molars had perforated the alveolar margin - this may have been so thin as to have been broken during the cleaning of the bones, but is unlikely. This gives an age of 3 to 6 years. If these ages are approximately correct they are unlikely to be the children of the woman.

The children's skulls contained a quantity of white granules which were interpreted as the result of a lime burial. The concentration of the granules in them and not so much in the adult is another small point against the children belonging to the woman; but this argument cannot be forcibly made.

THE BONES OF THE ADULT

Skull This was cracked in many places and very little of the base was recovered except for a battered sphenoid bone. The left side of the face including the orbit and maxilla were not recovered. Sutures of the temporal bone were open but the inner table of the coronal, sagittal and lambdoid had fused. The maxilla showed the right canine, two premolars and second incisor. The sockets for the molars had filled with bone during life. The socket for the third molar (wisdom) was directed forwards suggesting that it was 'impacting' the second

molar and this may have contributed to its loss unless the pain had led to its being pulled out; but would anyone have stood for two extractions at a sitting? This is again suggesting that there may have been infection causing all three to be lost. On the left side only one molar was recovered on its own. The mandible was reconstructed and all teeth were present. The incisors showed alveolar margin resorption with tartar line well marked. All the teeth showed very considerable wear, only the third left molar and the second right molar showed any enamel, the remainder were well into secondary dentine. The sparing of the second right molar in respect of wear suggests that the maxillary molars had been lost some years before. Dental caries was marked in the right second premolar, first and third molars, but not on the left at all. Could disuse have contributed to the caries on the right mandible?

Spine Degenerative changes were found in the right apophyseal joints C. 2-C. 7. The dorsal spine was not well preserved, neither were the ribs, but all joint spaces were intact. The lumbar spine showed marked lipping between L. 2 and L. 3 on the left side, to a lesser degree between L. 1 and L. 2, but grossly round the upper margins of L. 4.

Pelvis (Measurements: Inlet A.P. 10-80 cm. transverse 13-34 cm. oblique 11-43 cm.) The sacrum and coccyx showed much decay. The left sacro-iliac joint was ankylosed. (This may have caused a scoliosis in life which would account for the changes on the left side of the lumbar spine and the right side of the cervical spine. The dorsal spine was too damaged to assess in this respect.

Long bones Most of these were broken in mid-shaft during excavation, but the measurements, except where stated, are reasonably accurate.

MEASUREMENTS (in centimetres)

	Left	Right
<i>Humerus</i>	32-75	33-75 (head crushed and capitellum missing)
<i>Radius</i>	24-5	— (head missing)
<i>Ulna</i>	25-2	25-5
<i>Femur</i>	46-2	47-0
<i>Tibia</i>	38-0	38-0
<i>Fibula</i>	35-5 (part of head missing)	right upper shaft missing
<i>Feet</i>	All the tarsal bones and the halluces were recovered but apart from osteoarthritic changes in the ankle, especially the right, no lesions were seen.	
<i>Hands</i>	Left, 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th metacarpals; 1st proximal, 3rd middle and 2nd terminal phalanges; trapezium, hamate, capitate. Right, 2nd, 3rd and 5th metacarpals; 1st and 2nd proximal, 5th middle phalanges.	
<i>Feet</i>	Left, 3rd and 5th metatarsals; 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th proximal phalanges. Right, 3rd and 5th metatarsals, 4th and 5th proximal phalanges.	

GENERAL

Using the appropriate formulae and the above measurements the average of nine different calculations suggests the height of the adult as 170-2 cm. (5 ft. 7 in.).

The woman then was between 40 and 50 years old, and had suffered from a tuberculous sacro-iliac joint. This may have accounted for the marked osteoarthritic changes in her ankles, as trying to ease the pain in her back she may have stumbled along over cautiously. Alternatively, she may have had to walk extensively over rough ground. Her teeth show that her diet was full of grit, and the extensive caries suggests a diet mainly of carbohydrate foods.

The loss of the three upper right molars can be explained by the impacted wisdom causing severe pain and possibly infection with the spontaneous loss of them after much suffering, or their extraction artificially. If the estimate of her age is correct she is unlikely to have been the mother of the children buried in the same area. The grave a mere 18 in. deep, the absence of any ring, the grave being on the north side of the chapel (a site not normally used for burials) and the absence of any coffin or shroud, all suggest poverty. The fragment of glazed roofing tile found with the skeleton suggests that the rubbish from the building operations may account for the high lime content found in the surrounding soil.

THE BONES OF THE CHILDREN

These were recovered in small numbers only. The larger vault comprised the frontal and parietal only, the measurements being:

Nasion-bregma	11-0 cm.
Bregma-lambda	12-0 cm.
Temporal suture to sagittal suture, maximum	13-2 cm.

The smaller child's basiocciput was found inside the vault described above; both temporal bones were found intact and showed no significant development of the mastoid process. The most interesting parts of the smaller skull were the complete mandible and the left maxilla, basiocciput and basisphenoid (unfused), most of the frontal bone in pieces and the body of the ethmoid.

Mandible. Right side, A, B, C, D, E, F present with molar of permanent dentition just penetrating the alveolar margin.

Left side A, B, C not recovered, D, E in situ with two molars of permanent dentition erupting.

Maxilla. Left E, F recovered, sockets for D, C suggest they were lost post-mortem. Two molars of the second dentition had erupted through the alveolus.

Miscellaneous. One damaged vertebra and humerus without epiphyses measuring 14-25 cm.

The Society acknowledges the grant kindly given by the Tamworth Arts Council for the publication of this paper.

THIRD REPORT OF THE EXCAVATIONS AT TAMWORTH, STAFFS., 1968—THE WESTERN ENTRANCE TO THE SAXON BOROUGH

J. GOULD, F.S.A.

SUMMARY Excavation revealed the post-holes of the southern side of the western entrance to the Saxon burh. The rampart had a club-shaped end and very large post-holes suggested the footings of the abutment of a bridge to carry the rampart-walk over the entrance. Subsequent medieval defences seem slight but suited to a borough that documents show did not enjoy economic expansion.

INTRODUCTION

IN 1967 THE WESTERN DEFENCES of the Saxon borough were found and sectioned in an emergency excavation before the building of a tower of flats on the so-called Brewery Lane site¹. This established the line the defences followed (fig. 1) which was seen to be running as if to cross Lichfield Street near a kink in the modern road. Dr. C. A. Raleigh Radford advised another excavation near that point in the hope that some details of the western gate might be discovered. The contractors, Messrs. Kendrick of Walsall, cooperated and made a strip of land, 12 ft. wide, available for excavation immediately against the modern road very close to the tower of flats then under construction. The excavation was made by the South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society on behalf of the Ministry of Public Building and Works from 27 July to 20 August 1968.

Thanks are due to Messrs. Kendrick who not only made the site available but also assisted in the mechanical movement of the spoil from the surface of the site and the loan of helmets and planks. Their site foreman, Mr. Jukes, and Mr. A. J. Homer of Messrs. Mason and Richards, the architects concerned, were very helpful throughout. Donations were made jointly to the cost of both this excavation and that also in Tamworth in 1968 on the Bolebridge Street car-park (separate report forthcoming) by the Tamworth Borough Council and the Staffordshire County Council. Useful discussion and opinions were offered when visiting the site by Dr. Raleigh Radford, Prof. E. M. Jope, Dr. G. Webster, Mr. P. Rahtz and Mr. J. G. Hurst. In addition, Prof. Shotton examined and commented on various stones from the filling of the early ditch. Thanks are also due to Miss B. Morton, Miss L. Taylor, Mrs. D. Gould, Mrs. J. Meeson, Messrs. D. Horton, R. A. Meeson (who again was a valuable deputy) and K. Murray who made up a willing and cheerful team.

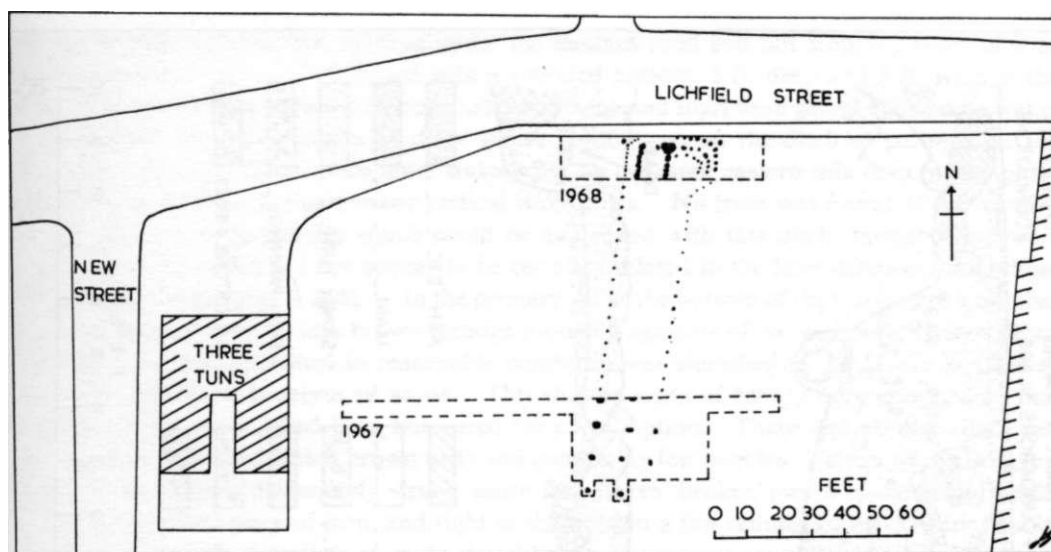
THE SITE (N.G.R. SK 20540405)

The site was 80 ft. north of the 1967 excavation (fig. 1). The subsoil consists of Keuper marl and sandstone, overlaid in places by gravel and in other places by sand. The area

¹ *Trans.*, ix for 1967/8 (1968), pp. 17 ff.



Plate I—Tamworth: the Lichfield Street site under excavation, 1968



ENCLOSES AREAS EXCAVATED _____

POSTHOLES OF LATE SAXON DEFENCES

PROBABLE LINE OF RAMPART

Fig. 1 The sites excavated in 1967 and 1968

excavated was 12 ft. by 60 ft. immediately against the pavement of Lichfield Street. Nineteenth-century houses and shops had stood on the site before their recent demolition when red ash was spread on the surface to form part of a temporary car-park. Difficulty was expected from wall foundations, sewers and other services, and from cellars. In fact only one cellar was encountered, the services were bunched into two narrow openings between buildings, and the buildings were without any foundations at all except in three places, where old seventeenth-century foundations had been reused and these were shallow. Consequently, when the site was stripped mechanically, the turfy sand of what proved to be the base of the Saxon rampart was found immediately under the brick and tile floors of the buildings so that only 9 in. of red ash and rubble were removed before trowelling. The post-holes of the A.D. 913 defences (yEthelflaed's) were found at a higher level than that of the modern road. Below these defences was an earlier ditch - apparently the same as that found below the Saxon rampart in 1967.

THE PRE-A.D. 913 DITCH (figs. 2 & 3)

The 1967 excavations had found a ditch immediately below the front of the Saxon rampart². It was cut partly through soft sand, had post-or stake-holes in the bottom and contained ox bones in the primary silt. In 1968 the ditch was again found in the same position relative to

² Ibid.

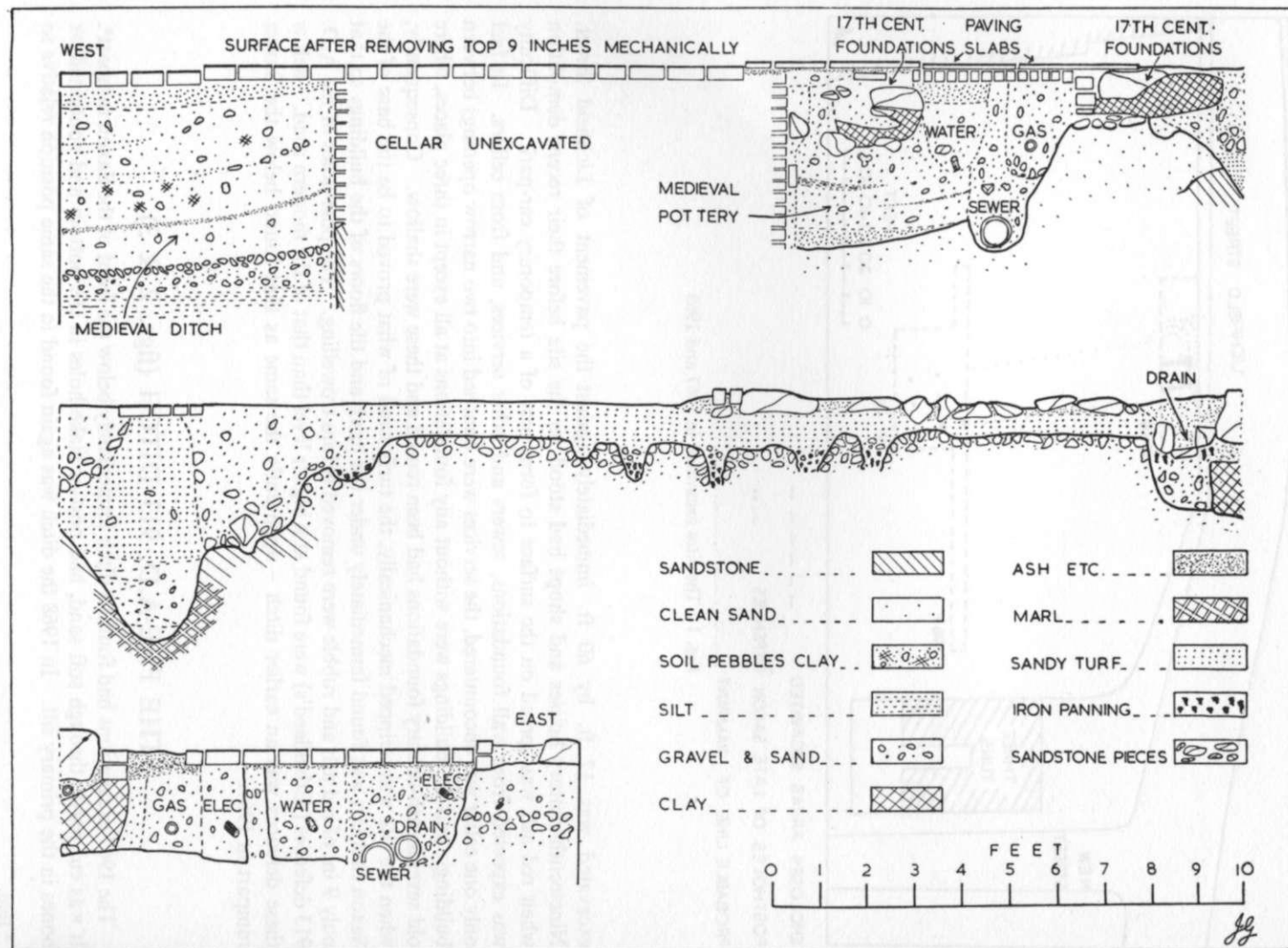


Fig. 2 Section of the northern side of the area excavated

the later Saxon rampart but running under the modern road and not stopping short of it as did the rampart. It was 'V'-shaped with a rounded bottom, 5 ft. deep and 8 ft. wide at the top. The sides which were cut through soft sandstone and marl were pitted with many stake-holes inclined at various angles as if for stakes pointing across the ditch or perhaps for the securing of thorns. There were more stake-holes on the inner eastern side than on the outer side, and on the inner lip were many vertical stake-holes. No trace was found of the remains of any rampart or post-holes which could be associated with this ditch, though there were some post-holes which did not appear to be certainly related to the later defences, and whose purpose is not clear (figs. 3 & 4). In the primary silt at the bottom of the ditch were a number of bones, mostly decayed to a brown smudge though fragments of ox teeth were recognizable. The one bone that remained in reasonable condition was identified by Dr. J. G. L. Cole as the lower end of the humerus of an ox. This showed signs of having been chopped so that presumably the animal had been butchered for consumption. There was no secondary silt, but the ditch was filled with a brown turfy soil containing few pebbles. There were also a few pieces of sandstone, deliberately struck waste flint flakes, broken pieces of cannellod shale, a heavily corroded piece of iron, and right at the bottom a few crumbs of black, very friable, pottery. These are described in more detail below.

THE SAXON GATEWAY

In line with the palisaded front of the Saxon rampart found in 1967 (fig. 1) was a row of post-holes running from south to north but curving to the east as they approached the northern limit of the present excavation (fig. 4). These holes had held upright timbers and like all other post-holes on the site, contained iron-panning where rain-water, containing carbonic acid, had drained down the sides of the posts before encountering ground-water containing iron salts in solution. The posts were approximately 9 in. in diameter and there were gaps of up to 5 in. between the posts. Immediately over these post-holes and following the same line were the foundations of a seventeenth-century wall resting on a thick bedding of clay. The palisade in front of the rampart found in 1967 had been faced with clay, but the clay found in 1968 was related to the wall above rather than the posts below and contained one small manganese-glazed sherd (No. 5). It is just possible that the builders of the wall found the clay facing of the rampart and utilized it for their foundations, but if this was so, then the clay was much disturbed at that time.

Immediately inside this palisade was a row of seven large post-holes up to 2 ft. in diameter, touching each other, but ending before reaching the northern limits of the excavation where the palisade post-holes curved eastwards round the end of the row of larger holes. Further to the east was another row of five large post-holes parallel to the former ones, 10 ft. away from them, centre to centre, also ending and enclosed by the easterly sweep of the palisade. The enclosing sweep of the palisade shows that the rampart ended at this point also and hence the two lines of large timbers are regarded as the very substantial abutment to carry the rampart walk on a bridge over the entrance to the borough. All the post-holes of the encircling palisade were not found, since their line passes just under the modern pavement before re-appearing in the excavated area, and sweeping southwards to enclose the rear of the rampart. Except over the earlier ditch, the posts had been set in a subsoil of gravel. The formation of iron-panning in this gravel meant that the post-holes and not the post-pits

were recovered. Some post-holes, especially the smaller ones to the rear of the rampart, were completely full of iron-panning so that it was difficult to empty them completely. In some cases it was possible to remove the top eight or nine inches of panning in one piece, preserving the shape of the post that had once stood there. In the earlier ditch with its soft turfy soil it was the post-pits not the post-holes that were found (fig. 4) and these can be seen in the section (fig. 2). The palisade was reinforced by two further rows of posts on the inner side, all apparently part of the original construction. At the western and eastern corners of the palisade were two large post-holes (fig. 4) suggesting bollards to protect the corners, or alternatively they may have been used in some way to secure gates closing the entrance to the borough.

At the entrance the rampart had been 28 ft. wide whereas at the site of the 1967 excavations it was only 16 ft. wide. This and the curving line of post-holes suggests a club-shaped end (fig. 1). Although the pattern of the post-holes faintly suggests a guard-chamber at ground level inside the inner corner of the rampart, this is discounted, for it would have been very small, the entrance would have had to be on the south side, and there would have been no view or control over the entrance. A further possibility is that the reinforcement of the inner corner of the rampart was to support some structure above - perhaps a guard-chamber entered from the rampart walk.

The sequence of building was first the abutment for the rampart-walk bridge, since this could not have been added to the palisade, then the palisade, and finally the turf of the rampart. Only the bottom 9 in. of the turfy base of the rampart was found. Apart from a few decayed pieces of bone, there were no small finds in or under the rampart. The Saxon ditch found in the 1967 excavation was not found this year, but was expected to have been where the later medieval ditch was encountered.

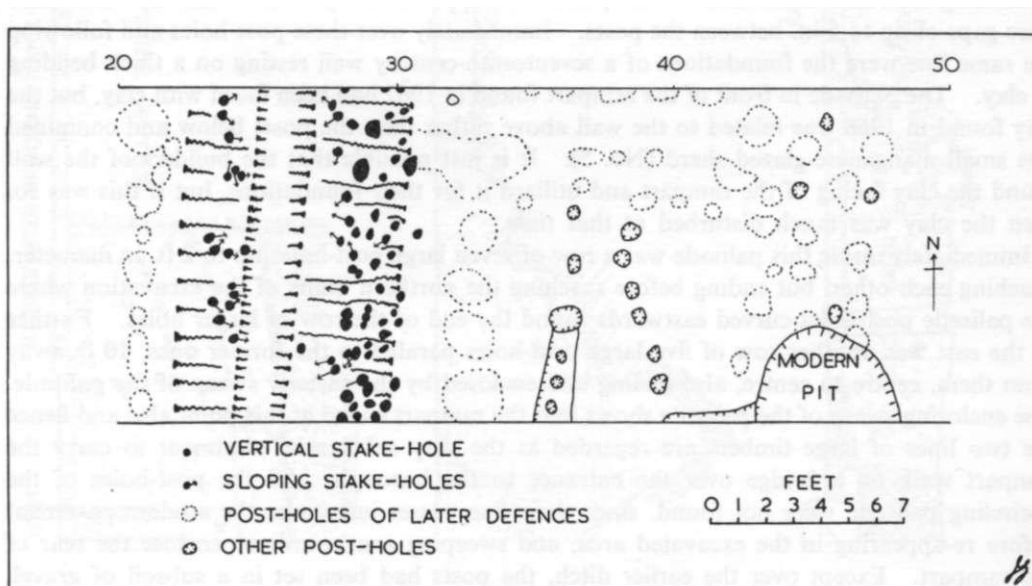


Fig. 3 Plan showing the pre-rampart ditch

It was a piece of great good fortune that the modern sewer to the west of the rampart just missed the front of the palisade, whilst modern services to the rear, again just missed the rampart which was left tightly sandwiched in between. The latter did mean that it was impossible to discover whether or not there was a road at the rear of the rampart, as was suggested by Dr. Wainwright's excavation in 1960¹.

POST-CONQUEST DEFENCES

The large medieval ditch lay at the western end of the excavations (fig. 2) and was cut by a modern cellar. It was emptied to a depth of 5 ft. but no further because of water for which the modern cellar acted as a collecting reservoir. This was not pumped out to allow further emptying of the ditch, as it was unlikely to add to what was already known of the medieval ditch from the 1967 excavation, and from that in 1968 on the Bolebridge Street car-park. To have excavated further at this point would also have been to risk the soft wet bottom causing falls undermining the modern pavement.

DISCUSSION

The early ditch does not appear to have been built as defence against an armed band, since there was no trace of any associated rampart or substantial palisade. The sloping stake-holes in the side of the ditch and the vertical ones on the inner lip, suggest defence against animals (this was a forest area) or the occasional robber, rather than an army who could have fired the ditch obstacles with ease. This raises the question of what it was at Tamworth that this ditch protected and delimited before the erection of the borough by jEthelflaed. Sir Frank Stenton has argued for a royal tun at the end of the seventh or the beginning of the eighth century, and has suggested that this was the 'Tomtun' (tun by the Tame) of the Medeshamstede Memoranda which show Ethelred, King of Mercia, assenting to a gift of land whilst *in cubiculo proprii vici qui nominatur Tomtun*². If Stenton's identification is correct, then there had been a change of name by 781 when Offa issued a charter from his palace at Tamworth³. Tamworth means some sort of enclosure by the Tame, the building of which may have given rise to the change of name in the same way that the addition of defences to St. Peter's at Medeshamstede caused that name to change to Peterborough. Since there is no mention of a town at Tamworth until 799⁴, the enclosure most likely was concerned with the building of the palace complex. The ditch found in the present excavations could relate to such an enclosure for this was a forest area and continued to be so long after the ending of the Saxon period⁵. The parallels with Offa's palace at Tamworth must lie with the wooden palace of the Northumbrian Kings at Yeavering⁶ or that of the Kings of Wessex at Cheddar⁷. The presence of the palace

¹ *West Midlands Annual Archaeological News Sheet*, No. 3, 1960, p. 8.

² F. M. Stenton, 'Medeshamstede and its Colonies', *Historical Essays in honour of James Tail*, E. Edwards and others (1933), pp. 315 ff.

³ C.S. 240.

⁴ C.S. 293; *E.H.D.*, p. 470, No. 80.

⁵ V.C.H., *Staffs.*, ii (1967), p. 335; *Trans.*, vii for 1965/6 (1967), p. 21 f.; *Birmingham and its Regional Setting*, British Association (1950), p. 121, fig. 25.

⁶ H. M. Colvin, *History of the Kings' Works*, i (1963), pp. 1 & 2.

⁷ P. Rahtz, 'The Saxon and Medieval Palaces at Cheddar, Somerset', *Med. Arch.*, vi-vii for 1962/3 (1964), p. 53 ff.

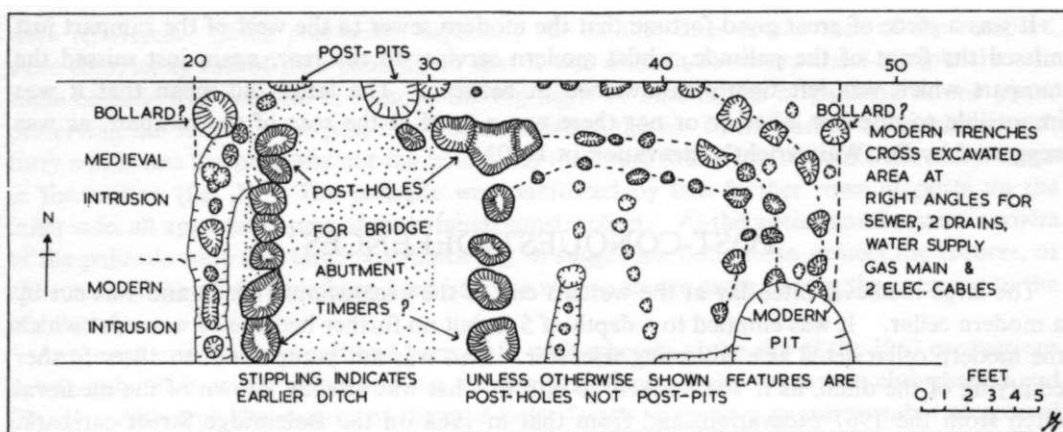


Fig. 4 Plan showing the post-holes of the A.D. 913 entrance

with the comings and goings of the King and his household, as well as the occasional meetings of the Witan, would give rise to a permanent community - the town of Tamworth to which later charters refer - just as Roman forts often gave rise to permanent civil settlements¹⁰.

The palace at Tamworth came into great use in the ninth century judging from the number of charters issued from there. This thinly populated Mercian centre in forest country seems understandably to have escaped the thieving attention of the Danes until they had exhausted the possibilities of plunder in the richer areas elsewhere, hence the increased use of the palace. When the Danes at last moved up the Trent to Repton, they were getting dangerously close. Soon afterwards the Mercian King, Burgred, fled to Rome. Although Ceolwulf II succeeded him, he only did so with Danish collaboration. He was the last king of Mercia, but whether the palace was destroyed at this time or not, is not known.

In 913, when helping her brother King Edward to launch an offensive against the Danes, Æthelflæd built the borough at Tamworth. It is the western entrance of this borough that has been found. No trace was found of any earlier entrance at this point and although there must have been an entrance in the post-Conquest period, no trace of that either was found. Only the cutting of the medieval ditch shows there to have been any change or embellishment of the defences at Tamworth. On the other hand, the loss of medieval details may be due to the levelling of the rampart, since later defences may have been built on top of it. Nevertheless the absence of evidence suggests such reconstruction was not on a grand scale and tends to confirm the view that the town that grew up, first with the building of the palace and then within the shelter of the borough defences, did not thrive. The basis of any town is commerce, and Domesday shows that the population of the surrounding countryside was sparse, as is to be expected in a forest area. Athelstan, who seems to have courted Mercian popularity, appears to have made an effort on Tamworth's behalf. At Tamworth he married one of his sisters, who had confusingly similar alliterative names, to the Norse Viking, Sihtric, though this may merely mean that Tamworth was a convenient half-way house to save Sihtric from

¹⁰ G. Webster, 'Fort and Town in Early Roman Britain', *The Civitas Capitals of Roman Britain*, ed. J. Wachter (1966), pp. 31 ff.

having to come too far into enemy territory. The Tamworth mint also seems to have been established during Athelstan's reign, but the few coins that have survived suggest that it was not very busy. Other evidence that Tamworth did not prosper economically lies in its failure to become the head of a shire when the Midland counties were formed in the tenth century as did the more prosperous boroughs at Stafford and Warwick. In Domesday, although a space was apparently left for the Tamworth entry at the commencement of the Staffordshire portion after the entry for Stafford, the entry was not inserted¹¹. Nevertheless the burgesses from Tamworth do appear under three other entries. The Wigginton entry shows four Tamworth burgesses sharing six ploughteams with a serf and eight villeins and does not suggest wealth. The Coleshill entry shows ten Tamworth burgesses as belonging to that manor, but the implications of the entry are not clear. Under Drayton Bassett, eight Tamworth burgesses are said to belong to that manor and to work there like the other villeins, and that suggests poverty. This poverty is confirmed by the earlier surviving Pipe Rolls. From the earliest (31 Henry I) it is learned that the King excused the Staffordshire burgesses of Tamworth from an old debt of 25 shillings because of their poverty¹². The same Roll shows that the new auxilium of 25 shillings was paid by the Staffordshire side of the borough, but that 30 shillings was still outstanding from the Warwickshire side. The burgesses at Stafford had £3 6s. 8d. to pay for the new auxilium. In 1156 the assessment of Tamworth (Staffordshire) and Stafford remained constant but the Roll makes no mention of any sum due from the Warwickshire side of Tamworth. The Roll of 6 Henry II shows Tamworth (Staffs.) as being assessed at £4 13s. 4d. whilst Stafford was assessed at £12. The Roll of 33 Henry II shows various Staffordshire towns being tallaged as follows: Newcastle-under-Lyme £15 4s. 6d., Stafford £13, Cannock £2 6s. 8d., Penkridge £5 3s. 4d., Rugeley £3 1 1s. 0d., Walsall £2 2s. 0d., Alrewas £4 1s. 4d., Tamworth £2 3s. 4d. Even Wigginton was tallaged £5. These amounts must to some extent reflect the prosperity of the places concerned. Even if the amount against Tamworth is doubled to allow for the Warwickshire side of the borough, Tamworth still does not appear to be as flourishing as one might expect a well-known borough to be. This is again emphasized by the findings of an inquisition made in 1249 into the manor of Wigginton through which the Staffordshire side of the borough was administered. The annual value of Wigginton itself was given as £42 9s. 3d. and that of the hamlets of Hopwas and Coton as £2 15s. 1d. and £1 15s. 5d. respectively. Tamworth, with no allowance for agricultural land (for this was deemed part of Wigginton or one of the hamlets despite the burgesses cultivating it) was given as £6 0s. 1d. (burgages £2 6s. 10d., Market and court pleas etc. £2 6s. 4d., view of frankpledge 6s. 4d., tallage of burgesses £1). A further inquisition held in 1266 gives the value of both sides of the borough: Rent of Assize from burgages, Warwicks. £2 8s. 4d., Staffs. £2 10s. 0d., pannage, (Staffs, only) 6s. 6d.; market dues, pleas, fines, court perquisites, etc., Staffs. £2 10s. 0d. Warwicks. £2 15s. 0d.; tallage, Staffs. £1, Warwicks. £2. Both inquisitions show that at that time an acre of pasture was considered to be worth 6d. a year and an acre of meadow worth 1s. 6d. a year¹³.

In 1327 Edward III was granted, a subsidy of one twentieth on all moveable possessions of those whose goods were worth not less than ten shillings. In 1333 he was granted another

¹¹ Several other boroughs whose entries would have been complicated are represented in the hurriedly compiled survey by blank spaces; see R. Weldon Finn, *An Introduction to Domesday Book* (1963), pp. 56 ff.; and the *Domesday Facsimile, Staffordshire*, Ordnance Survey (1864).

¹² J. Hunter, *Magnum Rotuli Scaccari* (1833), p. 75.

¹³ *S.H.C.*, 1911, pp. 136 ff.

subsidy of one tenth of the moveable goods of all those whose property was worth six shillings or more and who lived in boroughs or on ancient demesnes of the Crown. Those who lived elsewhere paid less. The subsidy rolls for Staffordshire have survived and the following figures are taken from them:

1327

Stafford	76 burgesses paid £11 Or. <i>Od.</i>
Lichfield	108 burgesses paid £8 2s. 6d.
Newcastle-under-Lyme	50 burgesses paid £5 12s. 10 [^] d.
Tamworth (Staffs.)	24 burgesses paid £2 13J. Offr. ¹⁴

1333

Stafford	56 burgesses paid £13 8s. <i>Od.</i>
Lichfield	57 burgesses paid £12 0s. <i>Od.</i>
Newcastle-under-Lyme	55 burgesses paid £10 3s. 4d.
Tamworth (Staffs.)	19 burgesses paid £3 6s. 10rf. ¹⁵

The inquisition of 1266 referred to above shows that the borough of Tamworth was divided approximately equally between Staffordshire and Warwickshire. Consequently the Tamworth figures above should be doubled before comparison is made with the other boroughs. Tamworth is easily the least wealthy though no Staffordshire town was very rich. This low economic status of Tamworth can be expected to be reflected to some degree in its defences. The wide medieval ditch does show that there was some reorganization of defences on the post-Conquest period, but the absence of any elaborate defences (other than the ditch) of that time in either the 1967 or the 1968 excavations is not surprising in view of the economic status suggested by the above figures. This is especially so when it is remembered that the Norman castle lay within the borough defences, was held by rich tenants-in-chief with lands in many other counties and was built in stone about this time. It was capable of accommodating all the burgesses, had that been desired, and in any case would act as a deterrent to any aggressor. For all other purposes, such as control of entry and exit of the town, the wide

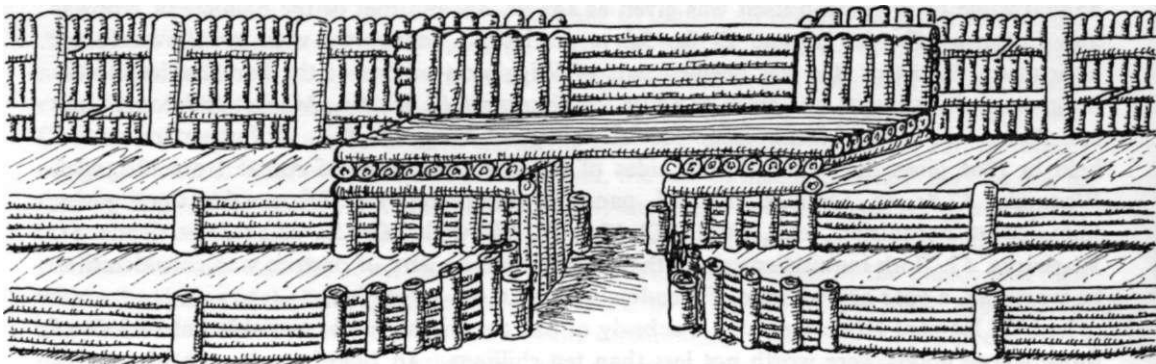


Fig. 5 Imaginative reconstruction of the gateway, as seen from the inside of the borough (Width of the gateway and height of the timbers are not known. In view of the speed with which the borough was built, it is assumed that the timbers above ground level were not squared. They were certainly not squared below ground level.)

¹⁴ *S.H.C.*, vii, Old Series (1886), pp. 195 ff.

¹⁵ *S.H.C.*, x, Old Series (1889), pp. 79 ff.

ditch, probably wet in the bottom, and rampart may have been sufficient. In any case the section cut in 1967 suggests that even the ditch was allowed to gradually silt up from the twelfth century onwards. This is confirmed by the Tamworth court rolls which show that in 1310, eleven burgesses were fined for encroaching on the ditch with hedges, in 1324 one was fined for cutting down trees growing in the ditch, in 1332 no less than thirty-one people were fined for encroaching on the ditch, in 1356 eight were ordered to remove their hedges and enclosures from the ditch, whilst in 1404 all occupying part of the ditch without paying rent were ordered to produce authority for this¹⁶. At this time both Nottingham¹⁷ and Coventry¹⁸ were being enclosed with stone.

Only twice in its early history was Tamworth of outstanding importance in comparison with other towns; first when the Mercian palace was built there in the forest during the eighth century and was widely used during the ninth; and second when jEthelflaed built the borough as part of the offensive against the Danes. In the first case a sparse population may have been an advantage, and in the second it was military considerations, not economic ones that were paramount. The first may be reflected in the present excavations by the early ditch with its mass of stake-holes, and the second by the heavily timbered entrance.

THE POTTERY

From the primary silt of the early ditch:

1. Three small scraps of very friable black pottery with much water-rounded quartz but very little bonding material.

From a post-pit of the palisade cut into the filling of the early ditch:

2. One fragment of pottery 1 in. by 1 in., black with polishing on the outer surface and not hard fired.

From the upper filling of the medieval ditch:

3. One body sherd of Saxon Chester-ware; no decoration.
4. Many body sherds from medieval pots the fabric of which suggests the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; no rims or pieces of significance.

From the clay forming the foundation of a wall which ran over the most westerly row of post-holes connected with the palisade:

5. A small piece of a plain rim with a high-quality manganese-glaze probably from a seventeenth-century tyg.

¹⁶ H. Wood, *Borough by Prescription* (1958), p. 53.

¹⁷ *Med. Arch.*, ix for 1965 (1966), p. 164.

¹⁸ *T.B.A.S.*, lxxxi for 1963/4 (1966), p. 88.

METAL, BONE AND STONE

From the filling of the early ditch:

1. A piece of gritstone 2 in. X *1 1/2* in. X 1 1/2 in. three faces of which seem to have been deliberately smoothed and the two edges between the three faces, rounded, possibly part of a whetstone. Prof. Shotton comments:

The outer surfaces are smoothed so that the sand grains are rubbed down, and this could be the result of human action. I think the fragment is too small to reconstruct and to be certain that it is part of a quern or something of that sort, and the smoothing cannot be entirely ruled out as natural.

2. Many shattered pieces of canneloid shale from coal measures which do not outcrop in Tamworth itself.
3. Six waste flint flakes, deliberately struck but without secondary trimming.
4. A heavily-rusted piece of iron, probably part of a blade. Mr. M. M. Hallett comments:

The blade, though heavily rusted was quite strongly magnetic and sufficiently coherent to be polished for microscopic examination. Unfortunately it was revealed that it had been almost completely converted to a compact oxide and there was so little metal left that no useful observations of its metallurgical characteristics could be made.

The Ministry of Public Building and Works has kindly given a grant towards the cost of publication of this paper.

THE ORIGINS OF LICHFIELD, STAFFS.

C. C. TAYLOR, F.S.A.

SUMMARY Topographical and documentary evidence is examined which suggests that Lichfield is not an ancient urban foundation but a medieval 'new' town of about 1150. Following from this, a reassessment of the area's earlier history indicates that the eleventh-century manor of the Bishops of Lichfield was probably at least part of the territorium of the near-by Roman settlement of Letocetum.

URBAN HISTORIANS have long been familiar with the problems of the so-called medieval 'new' or planned towns. Well over one hundred of these are now known to have been established by royal, lay and ecclesiastical lords alike in England between the late eleventh and late fourteenth centuries¹. In our own county of Staffordshire, two of these 'new' towns are well known. Newcastle-under-Lyme is one, established soon after 1154 by Henry II. The other is Newborough, now a village in Needwood Forest, which was established as a borough in 1100-39 by Henry de Ferrers, but whose existence appears to have been short-lived.

Lichfield has of course never been looked on as one of these planned towns and is normally accepted as an 'organic' town which slowly grew up under the shadow of its ancient cathedral. However this view is, in the writer's opinion, due to a lack of critical examination of the history of the town. He feels that the time is now ripe for a reassessment of the possible origin of Lichfield. The ideas put forward here may not be acceptable to all, but at least they attempt to solve some of the historical and topographical problems associated with the town, which up to now seem never to have been recognized.

Some seventy years ago, in her pioneer work on the Laws of Breteuil², Miss M. Bateson suggested, on purely documentary evidence, that Lichfield was deliberately established in the early twelfth century, i.e. a planned town. Subsequent students of Lichfield history have ignored this work, and even Dr. H. Thorpe in his article on the growth of Lichfield³ did not mention it. Dr. Thorpe made the point that the street-plan of Lichfield provides 'a good example of medieval town planning', but did not make any definite suggestion that the town was a deliberate creation. More recent workers on medieval new towns have also failed to note certain features of the history and topography of Lichfield⁴, with the result that Lichfield is still regarded as a normal 'organic' town. The present writer would like to enlarge on the points made by Miss Bateson and Dr. Thorpe and to add to them various other pieces of evidence in the hope that the place of Lichfield as a planned town of the twelfth century may be accepted.

¹ M. W. Beresford, *New Towns of the Middle Ages* (1967).

² *E.H.R.*, xv (1900), pp. 73-8, 302-18, etc; xvi (1901), pp. 92-110, etc.

³ *S.H.C.*, for 1950/1 (1954), pp. 139-211.

⁴ Beresford, *op. cit.*

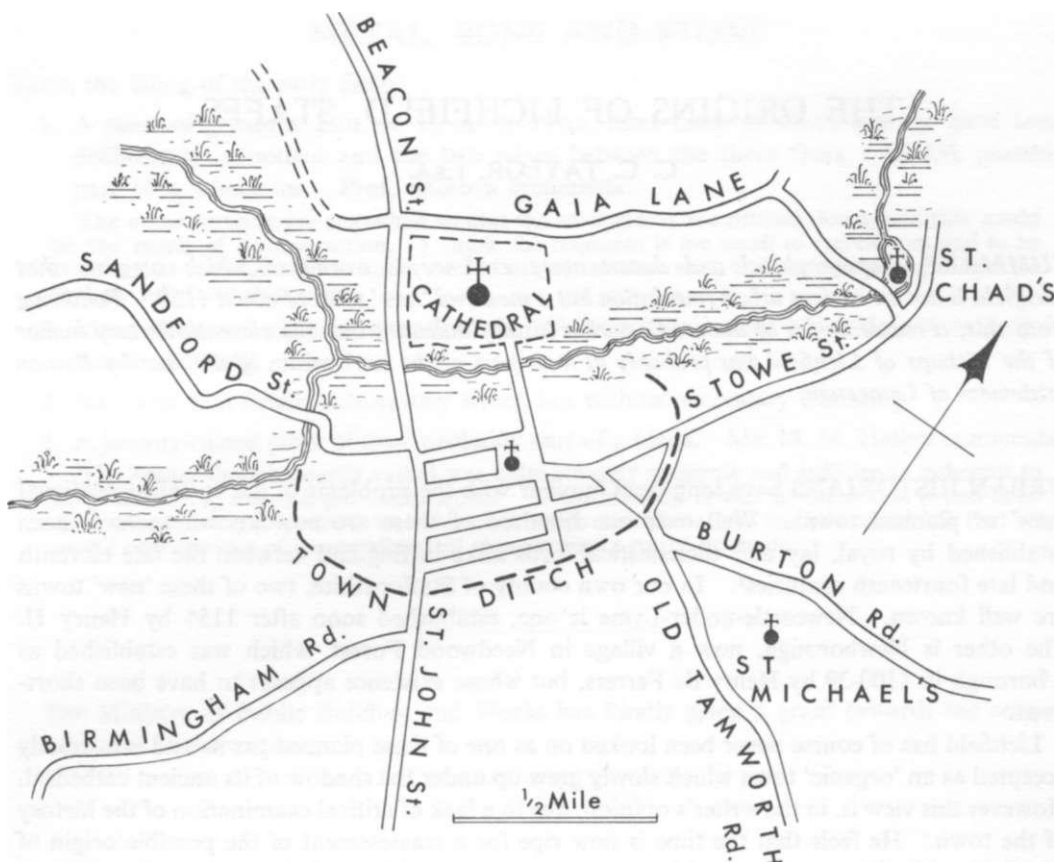


Fig. 1 Lichfield: General plan

Miss Bateson pointed out that in 1225 Lichfield successfully pleaded that, by the Laws of Breteuil, the Assize of *Mortis Antecessors* could not be held in the city. This, she thought, indicated that the privileges of the town had been based on those of Breteuil in Normandy, and she suggested that Lichfield, together with sixteen other towns in England, Wales and Ireland, whose privileges were also apparently based on those of Breteuil, were all deliberate post-Conquest urban creations. Miss Bateson's work came in for a certain amount of criticism⁵ and, although it is now clear that she was wrong in assuming that evidence of privileges of Breteuil *alone* was indicative of a new town, recent work has shown that the liberties of many planned, as well as organic towns, were directly or indirectly based on those of Breteuil⁶. Nevertheless Miss Bateson's suggestion that Lichfield is a planned town cannot be accepted without further proof on its own. As Professor Beresford has said of this type of town, 'A single symptom is no more than ground for suspicion. It is by a conjunction of symptoms that we move towards evidence'⁷. It is hoped that the points put forward below will provide these symptoms.

⁵ For example, *E.H.R.*, xxx (1915), pp. 646-58; C. Stephenson, *Borough and Town* (1933), pp. 120 ff.

⁶ Beresford, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

⁷ Beresford, *op. cit.*, p. 380.

Any student of urban topography must be puzzled, as the writer has been for many years, by certain features of the position and layout of the city (fig. 1). In terms of position it is difficult to understand why the town is where it is. It lies, or lay before relatively recent alterations, on the south side of a wide, marshy and partly water-filled valley, on relatively low lying ground, surrounded by higher, drier places. If a town were to develop naturally, surely it would have grown up on the north side of the valley on the sandstone area around the cathedral. As it stands, it is a very unusual feature for a medieval cathedral to be separated so completely from its associated town. Most English cathedral cities are in close physical contact with their cathedral churches, for example, Worcester, Exeter, Norwich, etc. More important, it is difficult to see how a town could develop naturally on a site which posed such serious difficulties for communications. Today we take for granted that the town is a focal point for routes that have always existed. But until c. 1296, when Bishop Langton built the causeway across the valley linking Bird Street and Beacon Street, there was no way for travellers to cross the valley except to go via Stowe Street, St. Chad's Church and Gaia Lane. In addition one must remove from the map all the other more recent alterations and changes to the existing road pattern. This involves not only the Friary Road and the by-passes of this century, but also the major alterations of the nineteenth century such as the present roads to Burton (Trent Valley Road) and Tamworth (Tamworth Road), both constructed in 1835, and the whole of the road to Walsall (Queen Street and Walsall Road) made in 1833. In terms of long distance travel, the two Roman roads in the area, the Watling Street and the Ryknield Street, neither of which pass close to the city, are far better routes, and the Roman town of Wall (Letocetum) is much more suitably sited at least from the point of view of communications.

Particularly important here is the way the old roads leading into the town meet its main streets. Thus, though roads from the north-east converge and enter the town via Greenhill in a normal way, the continuations of these roads south-westwards leave the town in a curious manner. The road to Walsall (Sandford Street) leaves the town at a very odd place in Bird Street and has no sensible relationship with the main town plan at all, while the Birmingham Road meets St. John Street at a place quite unrelated to the town. Both these junctions have produced serious traffic problems in this century which have been partly solved by massive new-road construction. In effect then, the main inner street-plan of the town fits somewhat unconformably with some of the roads leading into it and suggests to the writer that the street-plan itself is not an early feature of the area.

This street-plan is worthy of special attention (fig. 2). It is remarkably rectangular and consists of four almost parallel streets, Market Street, Bore Street, Wade Street and Frog Lane, with streets at right angles to these, Bird Street and Lower St. John Street at the south-west end and Dam Street, Conduit Street and Baker's Lane at the north-east. This produces a pattern consisting of four large rectangular 'chequers' between 700 feet and 840 feet long and from 145 feet to 230 feet wide, and three more irregular chequers to the north-east. At the north-east end of the northernmost of the large chequers is the market-place, in which stands St. Mary's, the parish church of the town. The market-place was clearly once much larger than it is now, apparently almost square with sides about 230 feet long but encroachments on the south side have much reduced its area. There seems to be little doubt that some element of deliberate planning is involved in the production of such a pattern.

The width of building plots within this rectangular layout is perhaps also relevant in this context. Naturally too much must not be made of this kind of evidence because alteration

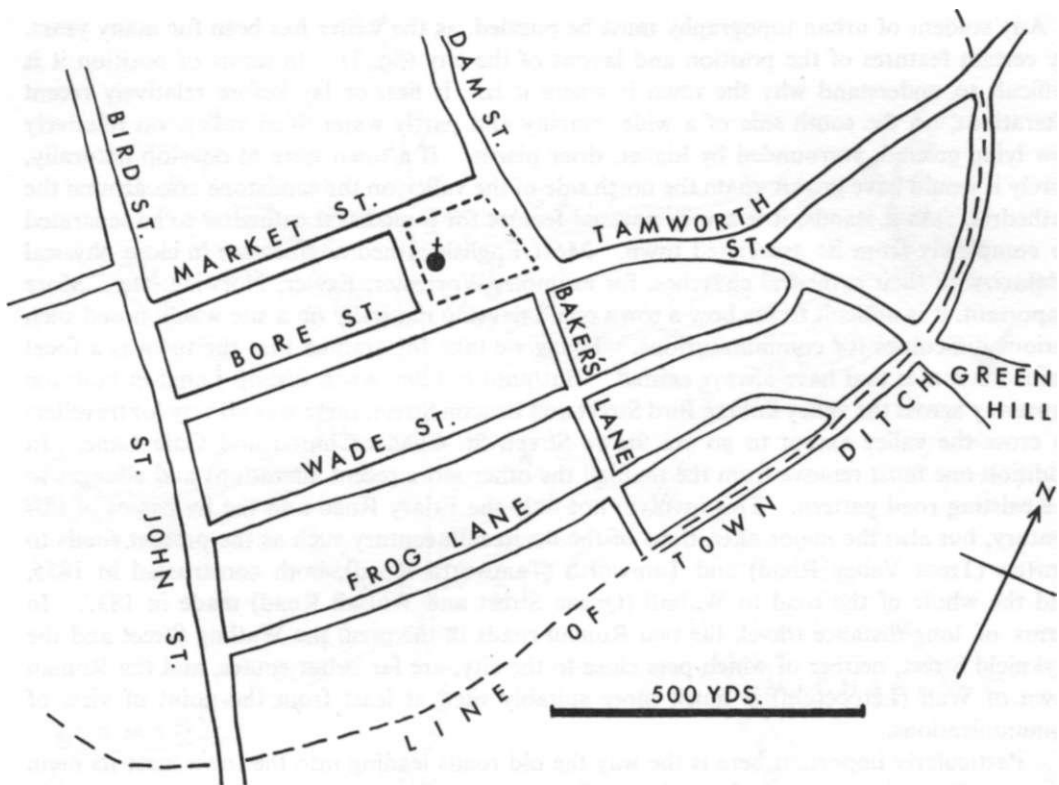


Fig. 2 Lichfield: Street-plan of town centre

and amalgamation has gone on and is still going on in the town. Nevertheless, on the O.S. 1:500 scale plan of the town of 1884, which is the earliest accurate large-scale plan of Lichfield that the writer has found, there is a distinct tendency for the building plots in the centre of the town to be 40 feet wide plus or minus one or two feet, except at street corners and where obvious alterations have taken place. This again seems to indicate an element of planning in the town's lay-out.

One further piece of topographical information is afforded by the pattern of the parish boundaries in and around the town (fig. 3). The town centre, that is the rectangular part of the town and including Tamworth Street, Sandford Street and the Friary, is in St. Mary's parish. To the north, north-east and north-west lies the parish of St. Chad, while to the south and east lies the parish of St. Michael. The pattern produced by these boundaries looks extremely odd and rouses the suspicion that St. Mary's parish has been cut out of St. Michael's. Unfortunately this cannot be proved since the early history of all these churches is obscure, but again it is a point to be noted, for it is a feature that is common to many planned towns*. Indeed this feature might well explain why there is only one medieval church within the old town in contrast to many organic towns which often have more than one. St. Mary's church may well have been the church set up within the new town for the use of its

* Beresford, *op. cit.*, pp. 133¹, 401, 531, fig. 41.

new inhabitants. It certainly never had a churchyard and the dead of the parish were always buried at St. Michael's church outside the town.

The large area of land south-west of the town centre and within St. Mary's parish, which was largely empty of building until the present century is also noteworthy. It was apparently waste ground until 1229 when a House of Grey Friars was established there and yet it was part of the town. It is conceivable that this area was included within the new town in the hope that it would be eventually built up and thus was an over-optimistic view of the potential size of the medieval town. A similar feature occurs in the better known planned town of Salisbury in Wiltshire.

Moving on now from purely topographical considerations to historical sources, there are a number of pieces of evidence which must be noted. Though the first cathedral was built on the present site in c. A.D. 700, there is no evidence that this resulted in the growth of a town. Indeed there is no evidence anywhere in the country for large scale urban development before the ninth century⁹, but in the case of Lichfield there is no evidence for a town until

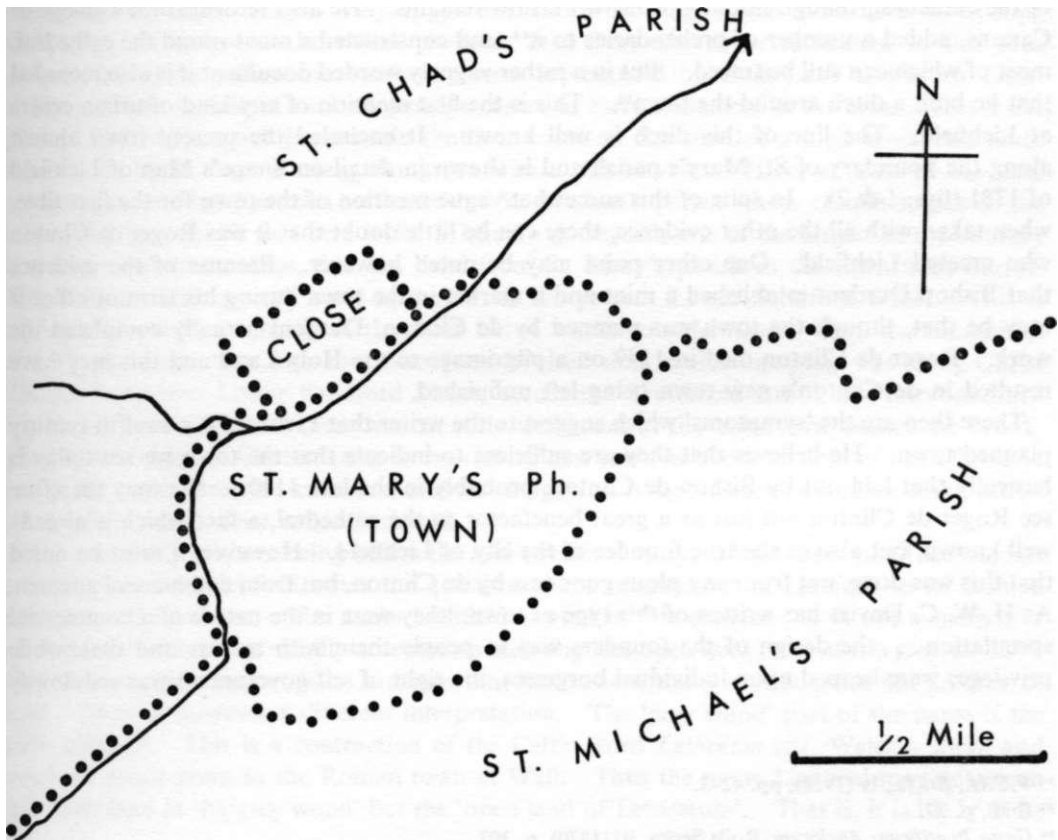


Fig. 3 Lichfield: Parish boundaries

⁹ *O.S. Map of Dark Age Britain*, 2nd ed. (1966), text p. 15.

very much later. The first detailed picture of Lichfield is given in Domesday Book, and while it shows that as part of the Bishop of Chester's manor it was a thriving agricultural community, there is no indication of any town there¹⁰. The removal of the seat of the Bishop, first to Chester in 1076 and later to Coventry in 1102, was undoubtedly the result of Archbishop Lanfranc's decree of 1075 that episcopal sees should be in major urban centres. This also suggests that Lichfield was an insignificant place at this time¹¹. Even later, William of Malmesbury, writing of the early twelfth century, described Lichfield as 'a small place, far from the busy life of towns in the midst of a wooded district'¹², which again suggests that there was no urban centre there.

By 1151 however we can be sure that a town was in existence. In that year Bishop Durdent was granted permission to coin money in *his* town and in 1153 King Stephen granted a market there¹³. From here on there is no doubt about the town's existence and its subsequent history is well known. Therefore we can assume that Lichfield as a town was created in the first half of the twelfth century and from the evidence of Bishop Durdent probably sometime around 1150. The only person who could have created Lichfield at this time was Durdent's predecessor Roger de Clinton, Bishop from 1129 to 1149. Roger de Clinton carried out a great deal of work at Lichfield. He certainly rebuilt or more likely completed the rebuilding of the cathedral, though nothing of his work now remains. He also reformed the College of Canons, added a number of prebendaries to it¹⁴, and constructed a moat round the cathedral, most of which can still be traced. But in a rather vaguely worded document it is also recorded that he built a ditch around the town¹⁵. This is the first mention of any kind of urban centre at Lichfield. The line of this ditch is well known. It encircled the present town almost along the boundary of St. Mary's parish and is shown in detail on Snape's Map of Lichfield of 1781 (figs. 1 & 2). In spite of this somewhat vague mention of the town for the first time, when taken with all the other evidence, there can be little doubt that it was Roger de Clinton who created Lichfield. One other point may be noted however. Because of the evidence that Bishop Durdent established a mint and a market in the town during his term of office it may be that, though the town was planned by de Clinton, Durdent actually completed the work. Roger de Clinton died in 1149 on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and this may have resulted in de Clinton's new town being left unfinished.

These then are the 'symptoms' which suggest to the writer that Lichfield is a twelfth-century planned town. He believes that they are sufficient to indicate that the town we see today is basically that laid out by Bishop de Clinton, probably in the late 1140s. We may therefore see Roger de Clinton not just as a great benefactor to the cathedral, a fact which is already well known, but also as the true founder of the city of Lichfield. However, it must be noted that this was done, not from any pious goodness by de Clinton, but from commercial acumen. As H. W. C. Davies has written of this type of town, 'they were in the nature of a commercial speculation. . . the design of the founders was to people them with traders and that, while privileges were heaped upon individual burgesses, the right of self-government was sedulously

¹⁰ *V.C.H., Staffs.*, iv (1958), pp. 42-3.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹² *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum*, Rolls Series, lii (1870), p. 307.

¹³ *S.H.C.*, for 1924 (1926), Nos. 167 and 461.

¹⁴ *Arch. J.*, cxx (1963), pp. 293-1.

¹⁵ H. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*, i (1691), p. 434.

withheld from the community¹¹⁶. This is especially important with regard to Lichfield. The new town was set up by the Bishop for his and his successors' profit, and it long remained so. It was to be many years before the burgesses of Lichfield threw off the shackles of episcopal government which de Clinton put on his new town. Indeed one of the most interesting aspects of the late medieval political history of Lichfield is the long struggle between the Bishops and the burgesses of Lichfield over the control of the town, in which the burgesses were ultimately successful.

If the above argument that Lichfield is basically a planned town of the mid-twelfth century is accepted there are still problems with regard to the siting of the earlier 'village' of Lichfield. Here the writer can offer no reasonable proof such as, he hopes, he has given above. Nevertheless, perhaps some speculation is permissible for it may help to solve the problem of the relationship between Lichfield and its Roman predecessor Letocetum (Wall).

The first problem is to decide if we are looking for one Lichfield or more than one. There are in fact indications of at least three settlements in the area, which may have been known collectively as Lichfield before any town was established. As noted earlier, the obvious place for a settlement on purely geographical grounds is on the dry sandstone land on the north side of the valley around the cathedral. Indeed, it is unlikely that when the cathedral was founded it was built on truly virgin soil; more probably it was sited near an existing settlement. It seems to the writer probable that there was some settlement in this area perhaps along the valley side route-way, now represented by Gaia Lane and Shaw Lane. However, there is at least another possible centre of early settlement in the area. This is the present Greenhill, which lay outside the later town on the crest of a high sandstone bluff. It takes its name from a triangular green which still survives. Here, at least in the later medieval period, lay the main settlement of St. Michael's parish whose church stands to the east of the 'green'. It was here in St. Michael's graveyard, one of the largest in the country covering some seven acres, that the dead from St. Mary's parish in the town were buried. The third possible area of early settlement is the present Lower Sandford Street. This is perhaps the least convincing of the three but is worth consideration. Until the nineteenth century, the main way into the town from Walsall and Wolverhampton was along Christ Church Lane into Lower Sandford Street, across the Trunkfield Brook and into Sandford Street. It is possible that there was an early settlement at the 'sand ford' across the brook. Thus when Roger de Clinton came to lay out his new town he chose an area of open flat land across the valley from his cathedral and its village and lying between two other small settlements all of which were called Lichfield.

The possibility of there being before the mid-twelfth century, at least three small settlements collectively called Lichfield raises the question of the relationship of Lichfield to its Roman predecessor Letocetum. The name Lichfield is vital in this context. It is not a habitative place-name at all, but is usually accepted as meaning 'the open land in or of the grey wood'¹¹⁷. This as it stands is important. It means that the name is not a specific place but an area of land. There is however a different interpretation. The 'grey wood' part of the name is the *Lich-* element. This is a contraction of the Celtic word *Letoceton* (c.f. Welsh - *llwyd* and *coed*) the name given to the Roman town at Wall. Thus the name Lichfield may not mean 'the open land in the grey wood' but the 'open land of Letocetum'. That is, it is likely to be

" *Quarterly Review*, ccviii (1908), p. 54.

" E. Ekwall, *Dictionary of English Place-names*.

the name given to the land belonging to or administered by Letocetum, in fact the *territorium* of the town. Therefore the three hamlets or villages which the writer has suggested as having been in existence before the twelfth century and collectively called Lichfield could have lain within this territory. It is also of some interest that the ending -field often occurs in forested areas and is applied to more than one settlement¹⁸.

It would therefore be of great value to try to define the land or *territorium* of Letocetum in order to see the relationship to it of Lichfield. The only unit of land which might show this relationship in any way at all, though admittedly widely separated in time, is that of the Bishop of Chester's manor of Lichfield recorded in Domesday Book¹⁹. In 1086 the Bishop of Chester held a large manor and area of land called Lichfield. This land must have included a large number of settlements but, because of the way Domesday Book was compiled, only twenty-three of them are actually recorded. Of these, three are lost and cannot now be

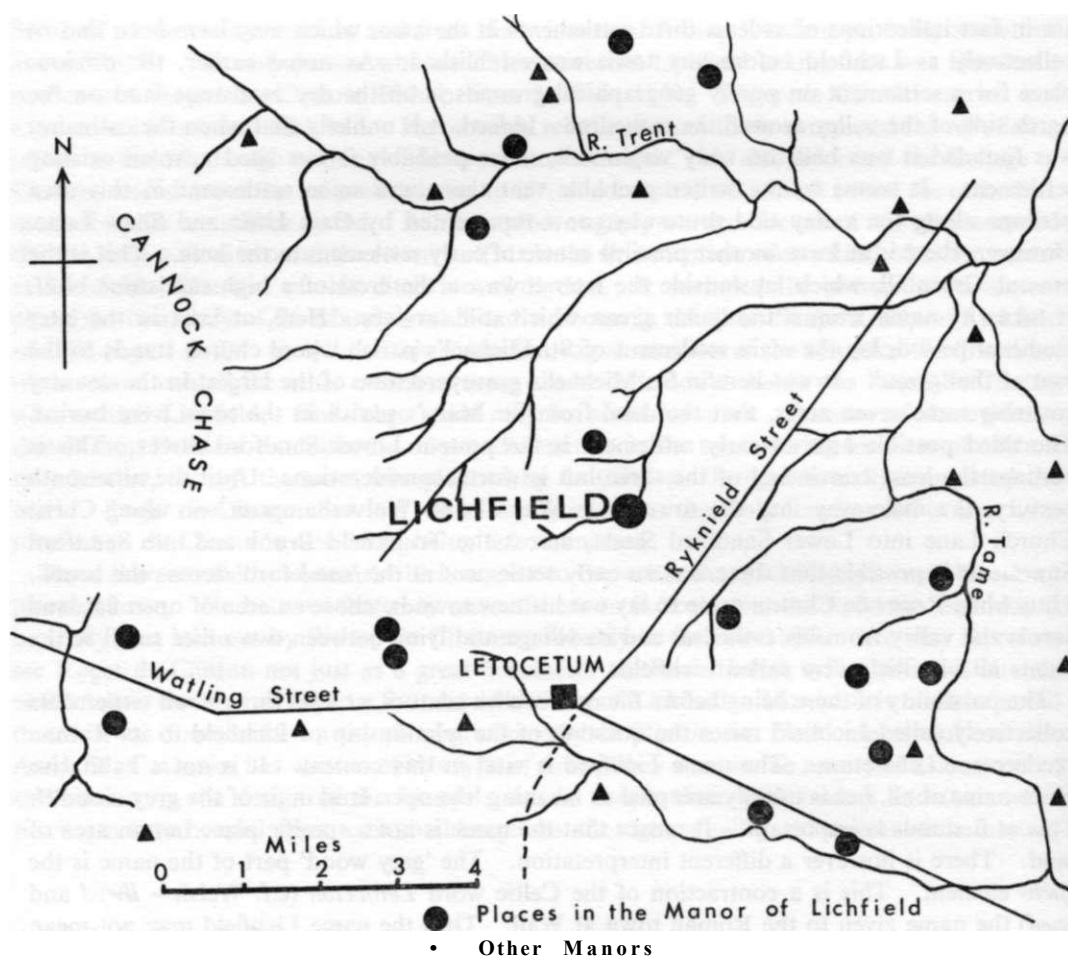


Fig. 4 Domesday manors of the Bishop of Chester

¹⁸ For example, *Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine*, lxii (1967), pp. 74-102.

¹⁹ *V.C.H., Staffs.*, iv (1958), pp. 42-3.

identified and another three Harborne, Sraethwick and Tipton have perhaps no relevance here. However, the remainder have an interesting distribution (fig. 4). They are spread somewhat unevenly across a broad area, bounded on the west by the high land of Cannock Chase, on the east by the River Tame and extending just to the north of the River Trent and a little beyond the Watling Street to the south. Letocetum thus lies not in the centre of this area but near its southern edge.

It is not of course suggested that the seventeen named places were the only ones in existence in 1086. It has already been noted that near Lichfield itself there were perhaps three settlements and there must have been many more in this area whose existence is submerged under a tenurial organization not fully described in Domesday Book. Nor is it suggested that all this land belonged to the Bishop of Chester in 1086. It clearly did not. Three manors in the area Hopwas, Alrewas and Kings Bromley belonged to the King and others such as the Ridwares were held by other lords. It is suggested however that this general area, which in the main belonged to the Bishop of Chester and had probably belonged to the See of Lichfield for many centuries, may have had some relationship to the *civitas* of Letocetum. After all there is no doubt that this area was known as Lichfield in 1086. Perhaps originally it was exactly what its name appears to mean, the land of Letocetum. The case for the existence in the later Roman Empire of a *Civitas Letocetensium*, separated from the *Civitas Cornoviorum* (or *Civitas Coritanorum*), has been stated by A. L. F. Rivet²⁰.

How the relationship was maintained between the last known occupation of Letocetum in the late fourth century and the Bishop's estate of 1086 is unknown. It is possible that some sub-Roman or Celtic organization or administrative unit remained intact long after the formal end of the Roman period, a situation not unknown elsewhere²¹. During the troubled times that followed, the administrative centre may well have moved from the exposed position of Letocetum on the Watling Street to the remoter marshy valley two miles to the north-east. There are some slight indications that the land of Letocetum could have become the Bishop of Lichfield's estate from various pieces of evidence. One such is that relating to St. Chad. Chad was trained as a priest at Lindisfarne by Scottish teachers in the Celtic tradition of the early church²² and there is evidence to suggest that he spent some time as a missionary in the west and north-west Midlands before A.D. 664 or 665. It was the custom of the Celtic church to name their churches after their founders and of the thirty-odd ancient dedications to St. Chad still extant almost all are in the west and north-west Midlands. This suggests that Chad was preaching to the Saxons of this area and while doing this he was based on a pre-existing Celtic Christian community around Lichfield in the old land of Letocetum. Indeed it was to this area that Chad returned in A.D. 669 as Bishop of Mercia and fixed his See at Lichfield.

The existence of a Celtic Christian community at Lichfield is shown in the seventh-century Welsh poem 'Elegy for Cynddylan' which records a massacre of such a community by Welsh raiders at that time²³. There can be no doubt that the place referred to in the poem is Lichfield

²⁰ J. S. Wachter (Ed.), *The Civitas Capitals of Roman Britain* (1966), pp. 108-10; see also, I. Ll. Foster and L. Alcock (Eds.), *Culture and Environment (Essays in Honour of Sir Cyril Fox)*, (1963), ix 'The Cornovii', p. 254.

²¹ *Antiquity*, xvii (1944), pp. 133 ff; *Med. Arch.*, iii for 1959 (1960), pp. 79-85.

²² Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, iii (1896 ed.), p. 28.

²³ *Trans.*, v for 1963/4 (1964), pp. 51-4.

and not Letocetum. This is the real period and setting for the old tradition of a Christian massacre at Lichfield recorded by the older antiquaries²⁴. It was probably the combination of the existence of such a Celtic community once centred at Letocetum, the religious association of the locality as a place of Christian martyrdom as well as the work of St. Chad that led to the establishment and continued existence of the cathedral at Lichfield. Here then at an obscure village or hamlet near the centre of the land of a Roman settlement which had apparently been abandoned 300 years before, a cathedral arose which was to lead to the establishment of a new town some 450 years later.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer would like to thank Messrs. J. Gould and A. L. F. Rivet for valuable criticism and advice on a number of points in this paper.

The Lichfield City Council has kindly given a grant towards the cost of printing this paper.

For example, T. Harwood, *History and Antiquities of Lichfield* (1806), p. 515; T. G. Lomas, *Lichfield, City and Close* (1818), p. 2.

MEDIEVAL POTTERY FROM LICHFIELD, STAFFS.

K. J. BARTON, F.S.A.

THE TWO VESSELS which are described below were found during excavations in the centre of Lichfield, and were brought to my notice by your former Chairman, the late Mr. Frank Lyon, to whom we are indebted for their preservation. They are now deposited in the Lichfield Museum.

Fig. 1, No. 1. Jug, tall cylindrical, base missing, pulled lip-spout. Pulled, rectangular-sectioned handle fastened on the lower end with two deeply incised thumb-prints.

Bib-glazed on the upper front only with a reduced olive-green glaze. This vessel has been stood in front of a fire to warm the contents as shown by blackening.

Found in April, 1965 in Pool Walk car-park (N.G.R. SK 116096).

Fig. 1, No. 2. Jug, squat, partially angular profile. Rim missing. Pulled, rectangular-section handle fastened to its lower end with one deeply incised thumb-print. Base thrown up. Decorated with three roughly applied stripes of treacly-brown glaze, one central and the others on each side.

The fabric of both these vessels is identical, being very hard, dove-grey to light-grey in colour, filled with fine sand and occasional larger fragments of quartz.

Found in 1962 at rear of the Youth Centre (N.G.R. SK 11690961).

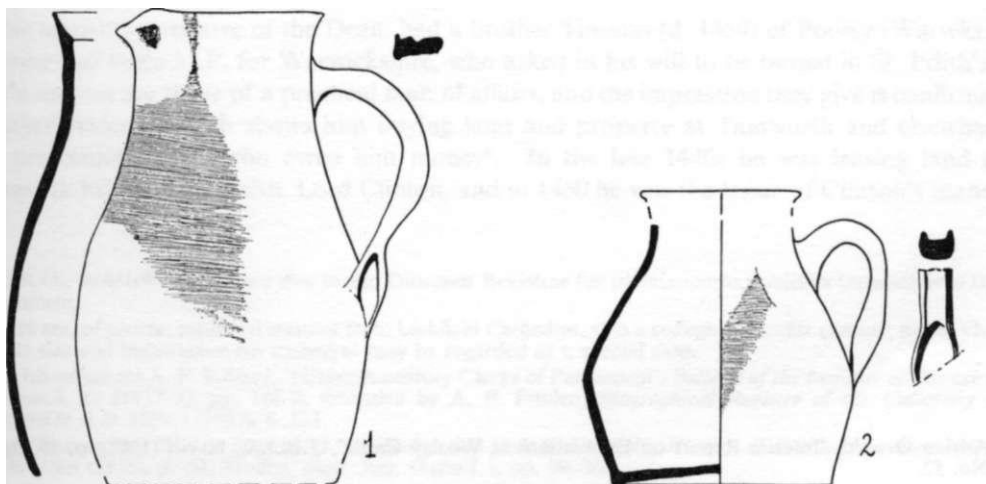


Fig. 1 Medieval Pottery found at Lichfield (1/4)

DISCUSSION

It is regrettable that a city as important as Lichfield has so far not had any of its medieval pottery retained and recorded. This paucity of information has forced me to look elsewhere for parallels and we are fortunate that in the reports on the excavations at Weoley Castle¹ and the Jewry Wall, Leicester² similar material has been found and recorded. At both these sites wares similar to these in a hard, grey, fabric with bib glaze in dark-brown or purple have been found. Of those at Weoley listed as period 7 (fig. 12) the forms with the exception of No. 52 are not similar, but at Jewry Wall, fig. 78, No. 2 and fig. 79 are exact parallels, with the exception of the groove-decoration, and the pinched foot-ring. In both these cases an early fifteenth-century date is given, at Weoley Castle 1385-1440, at Jewry Wall 1422-3. These vessels from Lichfield should therefore be dated to *c.* 1420-40. Exactly similar wares to these have been found during excavations at Wall³.

¹ Adrian Oswald, 'Interim Report on Excavations at Weoley Castle', *T.B.A.S.*, lxxviii (1962), p. 80, fig. 12, No. 52.

² *Jewry Wall*, 'Report on the Medieval Pottery' by G. C. Dunning, pp. 246-7, figs. 78 & 79.

³ Mr. J. Gould has kindly allowed me to examine this material.

DEAN BATE'S STATUTES FOR ST. EDITH'S, TAMWORTH, STAFFORDSHIRE, 1442

D. A. JOHNSON

IN SEPTEMBER 1442 John Bate, Dean of the collegiate church of St. Edith, Tamworth, promulgated a supplementary set of statutes for his church, a transcript of which has survived on folios 189-90v. of the register of Bishop Hey worth of Coventry and Lichfield, now in the Lichfield Joint Record Office¹. The whereabouts of any original of these statutes, if it has survived, is unknown, and there appears to be no trace of the earlier Tamworth statutes of which Dean Bate speaks. No medieval statutes survive from Penkridge, Stafford, Tettenhall, and Wolverhampton, the other collegiate churches in Staffordshire².

Bate himself is the only fifteenth- or early-sixteenth-century Dean of Tamworth to emerge from the records as more than a name³. He was a relative of Cardinal Kemp, Chancellor of England from 1426 to 1432 and again from 1450 to 1454, and when he became Dean in 1436 was already making a career for himself in Chancery. In 1437 he became Clerk of Parliament; but he held the post for only a year. His dismissal has been attributed either to his incompetence (in the first Parliament to meet after he had been replaced the judges complained that they had received neither salary nor robes for two years) or to the dislike which Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, the King's uncle, felt for his kinsman Kemp. Since Bate appears to have been a sound enough businessman the latter explanation is probably nearer the truth. In any case he remained a Receiver of Petitions in Parliament until 1454 and was still described as a clerk of Chancery in 1468. Although he held the subdeanery of York in addition to the deanery of Tamworth and was also by 1461 Prebendary of Wilnecote in St. Edith's his ecclesiastical preferment was comparatively undistinguished. His interest in Tamworth (unusual for most medieval deans) may have been due partly to family connexions in the Midlands: Walter Bate, Prebendary of Bonehill, a contemporary at the church and almost certainly a relative of the Dean, had a brother Thomas (d. 1459) of Pooley (Warwks.), a lawyer and twice M.P. for Warwickshire, who asked in his will to be buried in St. Edith's⁴. Bate's statutes are those of a practical man of affairs, and the impression they give is confirmed by other evidence which shows him buying land and property at Tamworth and elsewhere and prosecuting those who owed him money⁵. In the late 1440s he was leasing land at Tamworth belonging to John, Lord Clinton, and in 1460 he was the lessee of Clinton's manor

¹ L.J.R.O., B/A/1/9. Thanks are due to the Diocesan Registrar for permission to publish a translation of this document.

² There are, of course, medieval statutes from Lichfield Cathedral, also a college of secular canons; but in view of its size and importance the cathedral may be regarded as a special case.

³ For his career see A. F. Pollard, 'Fifteenth-century Clerks of Parliament', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, xv (1937-8), pp. 146-8, amended by A. B. Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500*, i (1957), p. 131.

⁴ For Thomas and Walter Bate see J. C. Wedgwood and A. D. Holt, *History of Parliament: Biographies 1439-1509* (1936), p. 50; Emden, *Biog. Reg. Oxford*, i, pp. 29-30.

⁵ For his purchases see e.g. *Calendar of Close Rolls*, 1435-41, p. 459; 1441-7, p. 449; 1447-54, pp. 492, 493; for debts see e.g. *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, 1461-7, p. 254 (£10).

of Bolehall in the Warwickshire portion of Tamworth parish⁶. When, in 1442, the burgesses of Tamworth were granted pavage and portage for the repair of Bolebridge it was Bate who was appointed controller of the work⁷. The Dean does not always seem to have been so usefully employed, however. Twice, in 1459 and in 1463, he was indicted for rape and, though he was discharged on each occasion, it cannot be said with any certainty that he left the court without a stain on his character⁸. In 1478 Bate, by then an old man and probably in ill-health, resigned his subdeanery at York⁹. He died the following year¹⁰.

In his statutes Bate attempted to solve the main problem which faced St. Edith's in his day, that of the status and remuneration of the church's working clergy¹¹. For over a century, and even before the final acquisition of St. Edith's by the Crown in the mid fourteenth century, the Dean and five canons who together constituted the Tamworth chapter had in general been non-resident pluralists. The deanery and canonries here, as in other royal free chapels, had been used by the Crown as preferments with which to reward civil servants, diplomats, rising churchmen with good connexions, and other clerks with some claim to the royal favour. Few deans or canons can ever have visited Tamworth, a comparatively poor church with few endowments. The failure of Bate's five colleagues to appear for the promulgation of his statutes is not surprising. All were busy men. Shiryngton, for example, was Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster¹², Malefurnity (or Maufurney) private secretary to the Duke of Gloucester¹³. Administration and pastoral work had for many years been left to the six vicars choral, one appointed by the Dean and the others by the five canons, and to the deacons and other assistant clergy; to them fell the task of maintaining the routine of services at St. Edith's and serving the various chapelries in the parish. The standard rate of pay for a vicar in 1366 appears to have been £5 a year. It had evidently not been raised by 1442, and was probably irregularly paid. Moreover the vicars had no security of tenure, and the fact that they could be dismissed at will obviously hindered the recruitment of suitable men. Bate's insistence that the vicars should not only have life-appointments but also first claim on the chapter's common-fund revenue (and, if necessary, on the prebendal income of individual canons) must have been welcome to the vicars. It certainly seems to have been successful in restoring stability to St. Edith's. Bate had, moreover, as he states in his statutes, used his influence to beg a little more money for the vicars from the Crown, and if a further attempt a few years later to obtain yet more from the same source ultimately failed he cannot be

⁶ *Cal. Close*, 1447-54, p. 18; British Museum, Cotton Charter xxvii, 180.

⁷ *Cal. Pat.* 1441-6, p. 104.

⁸ In 1459 he countered the charge by producing a general pardon which he had obtained from the King, and in 1463 he escaped by spotting a technical flaw in the indictment, which had not specified in which county Tamworth lay: *S.H.C.*, New Series iv (1901), pp. III, 128. The charges may have been trumped up by some ill-wisher; English anti-clericalism at this period has been described as 'unusually vicious', and accusations of rape levelled at clergy were common: R. L. Storey, *The End of the House of Lancaster* (1966), p. 9.

⁹ Le Neve, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300-1541* (Athlone Press ed.), vi (The Northern Province, Editor-B. Jones, 1963), p. 17.

¹⁰ *Cal. Pat.* 1476-85, pp. 155, 159.

¹¹ For the remainder of this introduction see, unless otherwise stated, my forthcoming article on St. Edith's in volume iii of *V.C.H. Staffs.*

¹² *Visitations of Religious Houses in the Diocese of Lincoln, 1420-36* (Canterbury and York Society 1915), pp. 195-6; Sir Robert Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster*, i (1953), pp. 389-90, 607; J. Otway-Ruthven, *The King's Secretary and the Signet Office in the 15th Century* (1939), pp. 157, 182-3.

¹³ *Cal. Pat.* 1422-9, p. 131; 1452-6, p. 209; *Calendar of Papal Registers*, x, pp. 354-5; K. H. Vickers, *Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester* (1907), p. 377.

blamed for that. It may even have been Bate who persuaded Henry Jekes of Tamworth that the vicars deserved proper accommodation. In return he required from the vicars discipline and decorum, perhaps modelling his demands on those made by the Lichfield Chapter on their vicars choral.

The statutes are in Latin; this translation has been modified in a few places, without it is hoped destroying its accuracy, so as to present a readable English version. Of the sources of revenue mentioned in the statutes three only appear to need explanation. The profits of Tamworth fair had been granted to the college by 1266; the advowson of the church or chapel at Middleton (Warwks.) had been purchased from Philip Marmion in 1257; and the mills at Amington (Warwks.) lay in the Dean's prebend of Amington, part of the ancient parish of Tamworth.

TRANSLATION

- f. 189 To all children of Holy Mother Church to whom the present writings shall come, William, by divine permission Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, greetings, grace, and blessing in this world and afterwards eternal blessing in the world to come. We have inspected letters patent of our beloved sons in Christ the Dean and Chapter of the collegiate church of Tamworth, in our diocese, attested by their common seal and with the mark and subscription of the learned man Master Richard Wetton, Notary Public, the text of which is as follows.

To all children of Holy Mother Church whom this concerns or shall concern or whom the following arrangement affects or can subsequently affect, John Bate, Dean of the Collegiate Church of Tamworth in the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield, greetings in Him who is the true well-being of all. Be it known to you all that when, because of the duty placed on my shoulders, I came in person to the said collegiate church over which, by God's permission, I preside as Dean, although unworthy, I inspected and investigated the statutes and ordinances of the said church and carefully examined its furnishings and the priests responsible for divine service and their behaviour. I learned that what was needed for the general benefit of the said church, and especially for the better maintenance of divine worship (which was diminished and neglected in the past on account of the abuse and non-observance of the statutes issued on that subject and still is notoriously seen to stand in need of swift remedy) was the promulgation of new statutes for the said church. My conscience compels me therefore to attempt to reform and amend these faults, as God shall direct me. Accordingly, both by strength and virtue of a commission in this matter specially granted to me by the reverend father and lord in Christ William, by the grace of God Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, and by the capitular power devolved upon me, with the consent and counsel, and at the wish of my beloved brothers the canons and prebendaries of the said church, specially cited and convoked on a certain day and at a certain place to discuss, consult, ordain, decree and establish the following, I have decreed the renewal and reformation of certain of those ancient statutes of the said church (which, as I have already said, have been so ignored and neglected that they have virtually become dead letters), and the issuing of certain new statutes which are in future to be obeyed in the said church and added to its existing statutes, to the glory of God, the increase of divine worship, and the convenience, good standing, and reputation of the said church.

FIRSTLY, so that God may be more carefully and laudably served at divine worship and the devotion of Christian folk may be more fully contented, it is established and ordained that henceforth all the canonical hours and the High Mass shall be celebrated with music at the due hours and at proper times each day in the said church, not forgetting the services for the dead and the requiem masses on the days when the choir does not sing, according to the Use of Salisbury, unless there shall occur some lawful impediment. And that the vicars choral and deacons of the said church shall be present in person at all canonical hours and at all divine service in the said church, and shall behave with due reverence, putting aside idle conversations and anything else which might disturb divine service and being carefully and devotedly attentive until service is finished. IF any of the said vicars choral shall be absent from matins, High Mass, or vespers without reasonable excuse he shall forfeit a halfpenny of his salary for each absence, the money to be given to all the vicars in common and used to buy or repair utensils necessary for their house. EACH vicar shall have six days' holiday every three months without forfeiting anything so long as this can be done without halting divine service or causing difficulties with the singing; any vicar or deacon who without reasonable cause or excuse shall prove very negligent and remiss, absenting himself from the canonical hours and divine worship, shall be expelled from this church and deprived of his vicar's stall and vicarship after a third and formal warning given to him by the Dean or the man who is acting for the time being as the Dean's substitute. Every day the bell(s) shall ring three times before matins - twice before the sixth hour of the day and once immediately after the sixth hour. After this the vicars and deacons shall gather in the choir and begin matins. Even on solemn days and when necessity shall seem to demand it nothing shall start sooner.

ITEM, for the adornment and augmentation of divine worship it is established, ordained, and enjoined for ever that vicars choral and deacons of this church shall in future, during services in the church, wear surplices, hoods, and black copes from Michaelmas to the Vigil of Easter and surplices and hoods from then until Michaelmas, paying for them out of their own pockets; no vicar or deacon not so dressed shall appear in church while service is being celebrated in the choir unless he is a newcomer to the church; otherwise let him immediately depart.

MOREOVER, I wish, establish, and lay down as a strict rule that the body of vicars shall remain at full strength. When a vicar's stall in the church falls vacant the canon prebendary of that stall or his proxy shall within two months present a worthy priest to the Dean or, in his absence, to him who is acting as his substitute; and if the priest is found after thorough examination to be able and suitable both as regards his character and his knowledge he shall be admitted and shall take the oath which in future every new vicar in this church shall take: that is to say he shall swear on the Gospels that he will be faithful and obedient to the Dean and canons of this church, obeying all lawful and canonical commands, that as soon as he knows those statutes, ordinances, and praiseworthy customs of this church which concern and affect him he will observe them, and that he will maintain divine service in the church in so far as lies in his power. IF a canon or his proxy fails to present within two months then, lest a long vacancy and an insufficient number of vicars should restrict the proper performance of divine worship, the Dean or his substitute shall provide a worthy and suitable man to the stall so vacant.

AND MOREOVER, since that most gracious prince and our lord, Henry the Sixth, the noble King of England, has turned the gracious eyes of his superabundant benevolence upon this collegiate church, which exists because of his protection and patronage and owes its foundation to his noble forbears, and, moved to generosity
f. 189 v. by his singular piety, has recently, at my particular request and of his special grace, bestowed and conferred by his letters patent several notable and varied benefactions upon the church in free, pure, and perpetual alms (as is more fully explained in the letters patent) to the relief, help, and sustenance of the vicars choral,

deacons, and other ministers serving God in it, I establish and lay down as a lasting rule that every day the prayer 'We beseech Thee, Almighty God, that Thy servant our King' etc. shall be said at the High Altar at the day's High Mass for the peace, quiet, and fortunate and healthy estate of the same most beneficent prince and of his realm. And when in God's good time he has run his earthly race and is taken from us, then every year on his anniversary day funeral obsequies with sung requiem masses shall be celebrated for his soul in the choir of this church by the vicars and deacons according to solemn ecclesiastical practice; as shall be done henceforth every year for the soul of Henry the Fifth of glorious memory, late King of England and father of our lord the King, on his anniversary day. The vicars choral shall hereafter, according to my ordinance made on the subject, pay *Sd.* yearly to each of the deacons present at the said obsequies and masses for the late King and for tolling the bells, and 8rf. to each of the deacons present at the obsequies and masses for our present King when they shall come to be celebrated and for tolling the bells, from the income which they will receive from four messuages in this town of Tamworth granted and given by our lord the King to the vicars and deacons and their successors for this purpose, the rest of the money being divided equally among the vicars choral present at these obsequies and masses.

AND MOREOVER, since the said vicars choral and deacons have hitherto lived in the company of laymen and secular folk, eating and drinking with them as members of the same households and in common with them, and, since they have no place of their own where they may lay their heads, have slept in these people's houses - a practice which not only sullies their reputation and good name but also draws off and holds back their zeal for religion and that of many others: I THEREFORE, paying heed to the words of the Psalmist, 'Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!' establish and ordain that the present vicars choral and deacons of this church and their successors shall live together as one body in a house in a lane by St. Edith's graveyard which, by royal permission and licence, Henry Jekes of Tamworth has given to the said vicars and deacons and their successors as a fit and respectable dwelling. There they shall eat together as table-companions, the vicars as commoners and the deacons as semi-commoners. The vicars shall remain at night within the site and precinct of the house once its chamber (*camera*) has been properly repaired, and the deacons shall in future sleep and take their repose in the church itself for the care and safe-custody of its books and ornaments; the penalty for failure to do this has been laid down. And since we should do good to our benefactors, it is established and ordained that the said vicars and deacons shall pray for the good estate of the said Henry Jekes while he lives, and that after he has released his spirit from this light into death they shall celebrate exsequies and a sung requiem mass for his soul in the choir of this church annually on his anniversary day for ever.

MOREOVER, it is only rarely that respectable, able, and suitable persons, recommended by character, life, and learning, can be found who are willing and able to render to Almighty God his due service in this church and to watch over the Lord's flock committed to their charge. This is partly because of the meagreness of the old accustomed stipend, which, as should not be the case, is insufficient to maintain them in a fit and proper manner, and partly because vicars choral in this church, who may have spent their entire lives here bearing all the toil and burden of divine service, customarily find themselves, when they are incapacitated through ill-health or broken down by work and the passing years, dismissed from their posts in old age, when their powers have failed, and thrown out, forced by necessity to spend their declining years in misfortune, a scandal to the Church, and to die in obscure poverty. Therefore, since according to the apostle 'they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar'¹, I, with the express consent and advice of all and singular my

¹ Psalm cxxxiii. 1.

² I Corinthians ix. 13.

brethren, the canons of this church, specially gathered for this purpose and notified of it, and at their wish, purpose, establish, decree, and ordain that each vicar choral shall have a stipend of nine marks a year, enough to give him a respectable and fitting standard of life. The nine marks are to be made up as follows. Eight marks, six shillings, and eightpence are to come from the tithes of wool, lambs, calves, flax, and hemp, from the personal tithes on trading, work done by craftsmen, stipends, and day wages, from the revenue, oblations, mortuaries, tapers, candles, and torches (*cereis, candelis, et torcheis*) from funeral services, from the receipts from the toll and profit from St. Edith's Fair, held annually in the town of Tamworth, and from all the other returns, incomings, and benefits (save the proceeds, returns, and income from Middleton chapel and the tithes of the mills at Tamworth and Amington), which, according to the ancient custom of this church, are normally distributed and divided between the Dean and canons. This money is to be distributed on the dates set out below by two of the vicars specially chosen for the purpose. The remaining six shillings and eightpence are to come from the proceeds, returns, and income of Middleton chapel in the manner and form set out more fully below. The vicars choral are to have the cure of souls in this church and the various chapels annexed to it, and are to serve their parishioners as they have done in days gone by, ministering to them the sacraments and sacramentals. No vicar who has been duly admitted into a vacant vicarship and received into a stall in this church, and has served well and faithfully in the same, shall in future be dismissed from his stall and vicarship without just and reasonable cause and expelled without the approval of the Dean or his substitute; but so long as he behaves properly and in a praiseworthy fashion he shall remain vicar for life, on condition that when he is ill or aged he shall make provision, at his own charges and expenses, for the due and proper service of his cure and his parishioners.

f. 190

ITEM, lest anyone should raise this matter in future, this is to certify that some of the small tithes, viz. the tithe geese from the parishes of the Dean and prebendaries in Tamworth and outside it, and the tithes of flax, hemp, apples, onions, and other garden produce from the parishes outside Tamworth, have never been included in the customary distribution [of common-fund revenue between the dean and canons].

IT IS ALSO ESTABLISHED and ordained that, as often as shall prove necessary, two of the vicars shall be chosen and deputed by the Dean or by his substitute. These two shall swear that in each year during which they have this responsibility they will well and faithfully collect and receive all and singular the said tithes, oblations, obventions, profits, returns, and earnings which, according to the aforesaid ancient custom of this church, have been, as has been said, distributed and shared among the Dean and canons, sell that which it is possible to sell, and, under the supervision of the Dean or his substitute, put the money in a common strong-box chosen for the purpose. This box shall be locked with two locks, the Dean or his substitute having the key to one and the two vicars the key to the other. Then, four times a year, at Christmas, Easter, the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, and Michaelmas, or within the eight days following each of these festivals, the two vicars, under the supervision of the Dean or his substitute, shall well and truly pay each and every vicar twenty-eight shillings and fourpence and every deacon five shillings. The money which is left at the end of each year, that is to say at Michaelmas, after these stipends have been paid shall be shared out equally among the Dean and canons. And if there should turn out to be insufficient money in the box to pay the vicars' and deacons' stipends, then the Dean and each canon, in person or through his farmer or proxy, shall contribute equally towards making up the deficit from the revenues and profits of his prebend, being forced to do so if necessary by the sequestration of this income.

MOREOVER, it was established and ordained of old in this collegiate church that all profits, revenue, and income from Middleton chapel and from the said mills [at Tamworth and Amington] were to be split up, part being divided between

those among the canons who had been in residence for two consecutive months during the preceding year, part being distributed among the vicars, and the rest spent on ornaments for the church; the custom being, that if neither the Dean nor any of the canons was in residence then the two senior vicars swore before their fellows that they would faithfully demand, collect, and receive the said income, revenue, produce, and tithes, using the money to pay off any debts weighing on the church and to provide any necessary ornaments lacking in it, and rendering a true account of the remainder to the Dean or to the President and the Chapter, as is explained more fully in the ordinance concerning this matter. There have, however, been occasions in the past when, the Dean and canons not being in residence, various people have wilfully disobeyed this ordinance, culpably making themselves liable to the sentence of excommunication laid down for those who break it. I, therefore, wishing to eradicate such an abuse with a swift remedy, establish, decree, and ordain that the said ordinance must be inviolably observed. And, because the ordinance does not state how much each vicar is to have as his share of this revenue, I lay down and establish that in future each vicar is to be guaranteed six shillings and eightpence from the said income, revenue, produce, and tithes, to make up his annual stipend to nine marks; this additional money being given to the vicars by the Dean and the canons in residence. And if neither the Dean nor any of the canons is in residence they shall receive it from the vicars chosen for this purpose. And, when the vicars and others having a claim on the church have been paid, then the said two vicars shall spend and lay out what remains of the said income, revenue, produce, and tithes, reasonable expenses being also allowed for, upon the ornaments of the church and the repair of the vestry, the chancel, and the sacristy (*domus Thesaurarie*), and shall render a true account of their finances when and in what fashion they shall be required to do so by the Dean and Chapter.

MOREOVER, wishing as I do that the said vicars and deacons should abstain from such things as scandalize honest folk and bring the clergy into ill repute, I establish and ordain that if any vicar or deacon is found to be very careless and faulty in his job, snared and involved in any infamous crime, or defamed among honest and sober folk as being responsible for such a crime, he shall be dismissed from this church by the Dean or his substitute and deprived for ever of his vicar's stall and vicarship if, after two reprimands, he refuses to mend his ways.

I ALSO ORDAIN and establish that whenever the deanery or a canonry and prebend in this collegiate church shall fall vacant, whether through death, resignation, surrender, or any other cause, the new Dean or canon shall, within a year of his induction into corporal possession of his deanery or canonry, give a book, chalice, cope, set of vestments, or any other noteworthy ornament worth a hundred shillings to the collegiate church, or a hundred shillings in cash to be spent, under the supervision of the Dean and Chapter or their substitute, on purchasing such things.

MOREOVER, I ESTABLISH and ordain that in future the Dean shall, for the execution and oversight of all and singular the above statutes, choose as his substitute
 f. 190 v. a canon, if any of them shall be in personal residence at the church. If, however, there is no canon in residence, then the Dean shall choose as his substitute the vicar choral whom he thinks to be most suitable and best fitted for the task. I establish, ordain, and decree that these aforesaid statutes, ordinances, and decrees shall be kept and observed inviolate in this collegiate church for ever, and decree and command that they shall be incorporated into, added to, and inserted among the ancient statutes of the church. And we, the said Dean (appearing in person) and Chapter of this collegiate church, bind ourselves and our successors in perpetuity to observe all and singular these statutes, ordinances, and decrees, as far as they concern us, for ever and inviolate, and bind ourselves not to contravene them directly or indirectly, secretly or openly.

Present at this promulgation of the statutes: John Bate, Dean and commissary aforesaid, in person, and the duly and legally appointed proxies of Master Thomas

Schepey, Prebendary of Syerscote, John Prentys, Prebendary of Bonehill, Thomas Lane, Prebendary of Wilnecote, Walter Shiryngton, Prebendary of Wigginton, and Dreux Malefurnity, Prebendary of Coton, prebendaries and canons of this collegiate church. In pledge, authority, and witness whereof the church's common seal is affixed to these my statutes, ordinances, and decrees, promulgated and made by me with the consent and advice, and at the desire of all and singular my colleagues, together with the mark and subscription of the under-mentioned notary, as a perpetual record thereof. Given and transacted, as has been written and rehearsed above, in the chapter-house of this collegiate church on the sixth of September, in the year of Our Lord, according to the style and reckoning of the English Church, 1442, in the fifth Indiction and in the twelfth year of the pontificate of our most holy father and lord in Christ Eugenius IV, by divine providence Pope.

There follow

- (a) A certificate from Richard Wetton, Notary Public, who acted as clerk to the Dean and Chapter in this matter. The absent canons had been duly notified of the meeting at which the statutes were promulgated; he examined the letters of proxy which their representatives presented at the meeting and the commission which the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield had granted to Dean Bate and found that all was in order. He was present at the meeting and, at the request of the Dean and Chapter, made this true record of the proceedings, which he has signed and marked with his notarial mark. The Dean and Chapter have appended their seal.
- (b) The Bishop's ratification of the statutes, dated at his manor of Haywood, 27 Sept. 1442.



Plate 1—Shelfield Lodge Farm, Aldridge, Staffs. General view from the south-west, 1954

SHELFIELD LODGE FARM, ALDRIDGE, STAFFS.—AN ALTERED HALL-HOUSE OF MEDIEVAL DATE

S. R. JONES, F.S.A.

SUMMARY—Shelfield Lodge Farm, demolished in 1961, was a T-shaped building probably rebuilt in the early 18th century but retaining part of its predecessor — a medieval hall-house. Comparison is made with the plans and construction of other timber-framed Mid/and halls. A timber-framed barn adjoined the house and sketch details are given.

INTRODUCTION

SHELFIELD LODGE FARM (N.G.R. SK 031023) was demolished in 1961 as part of a new housing development. Prior to this its dilapidated appearance (Plate I), depressingly typical of so many farm-houses in urban areas, was such that its subsequent removal would have aroused little but local approval. However, as early as 1954 the general proportions of the house together with one exposed timber-framed wall were noted by the writer as indicating a structure of some considerable age and permission was obtained to inspect the interior. Two comparatively brief visits were made and unfortunately on each occasion permission to examine the major and more recent portion of the house was refused by the tenant. Nevertheless what was made available constituted a sizeable remnant of what had undoubtedly been an open hall of late medieval date and the following description, based on admittedly inadequate field-notes, is offered as a record of the building¹.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The house, with the exception of the rear wing, was of brick construction, the characteristic features of which suggested a date for its erection as being sometime in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. The plan was T-shaped (fig. 1) with the head of the T comprising a parlour and dining-room entered from a common baffle entrance set between the front door and the central chimney-stack; the stem of the T was formed by a rear wing that represented the main axis of the medieval house. This wing, aligned east to west, contained at its western end the remains of an open hall that fortunately retained its principal feature, a deep arch-braced collar-beam roof truss (fig. 1) that sprang from heavy posts in the side walls².

There were indications that the hall had been truncated in length at its west end beyond the gable chimney-stack and that another bay (?) of the medieval house, in continuation of the rectangular plan (see below), appeared to have been incorporated into the rebuilt, or added, brick-block to the east. The side walls were close-studded and divided at mid-height by

¹ Regrettably, the demolition of the house was not observed by the writer. No documentary evidence concerning the history and previous ownership of the house has been sought, a task perhaps to occupy a local historian with a more intimate knowledge of the district.

² For an earlier incorporation of a medieval hall into a modest sized timber-framed house of early seventeenth century date see 'The Cottage' Park Lane, Baswich; short description in *V.C.H. Staffs.*, v. (1959) pp. 33-4.

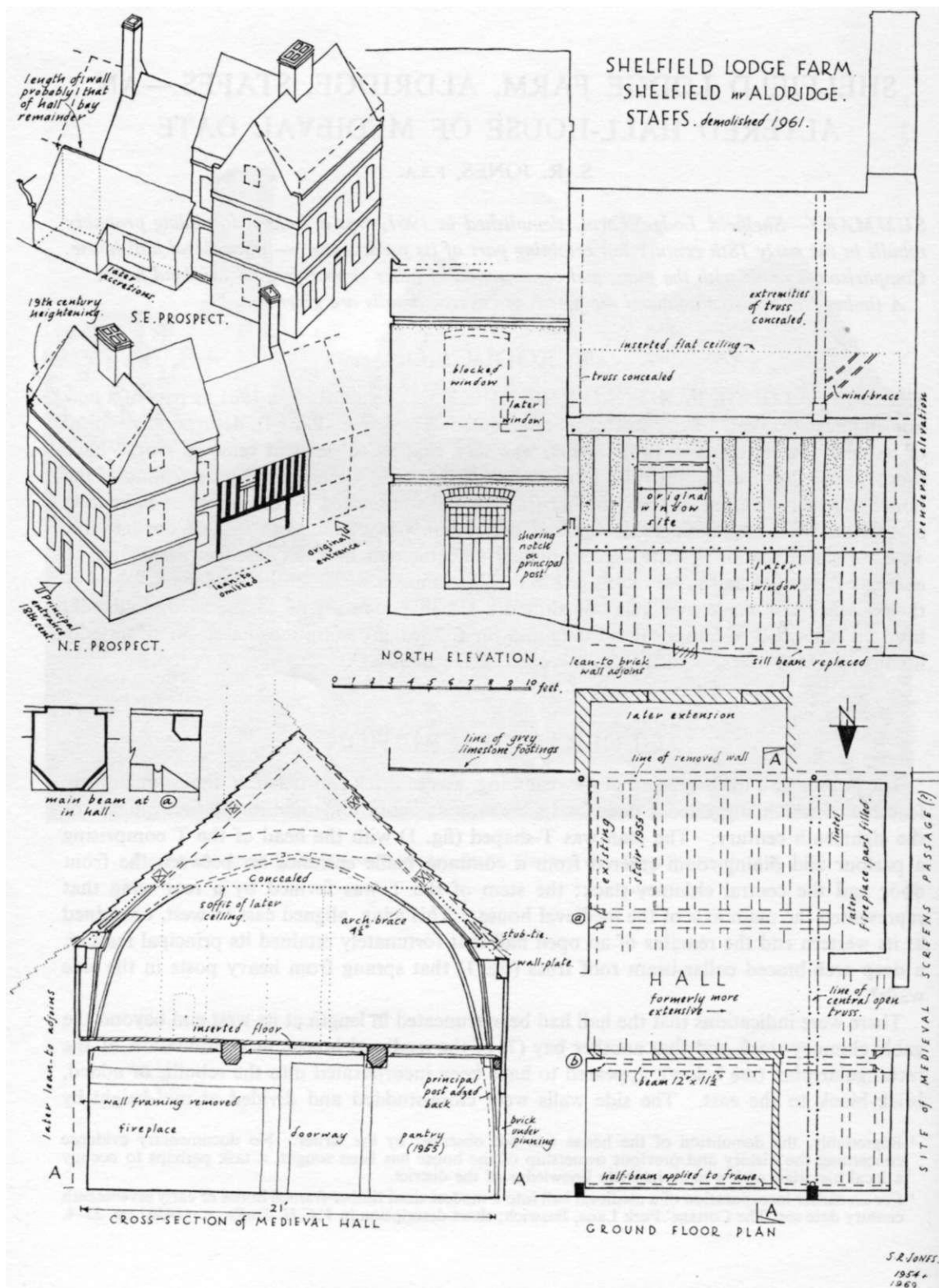


Fig. 1 Shelfield Lodge Farm. Plan, cross-section and elevations

a single horizontal rail. What had apparently been a large rectangular opening with chamfered jambs for a window from which the head and mullions had been removed was partly exposed in the north wall. Internally the floor inserted in the hall was probably of late sixteenth-century origin and comprised two axial ceiling-beams and transverse joists that were carefully stop-chamfered. Coeval with this major improvement may have been the building of the chimney-stack within the body of the hall and conceivably sited against the line of the cross-passage: the width of this latter thoroughfare possibly corresponded to that of the gap between the gable and the detached brew-house further west. The common lay-out of the ground-floor medieval hall invariably included at one end two opposed doors in the side walls representing the principal access to the house. Between these doors the cross-passage so created was either more or less open to the body of the hall or partitioned off from it in one of two ways. The earlier in origin of these was one employing a spere-truss, a vestigial remnant of the aisled hall whereby the arcade-posts were retained and the space between them and the side-walling filled to form fixed screens or speres: the wide central opening between the spere-posts was probably closed in part by a movable screen³. The other arrangement was where the cross-passage was placed immediately within the adjoining storied bay with the common partition-wall framed in such a way as to accommodate a single wide doorway for access to the hall.

Certain ground-floor plans of medieval hall-houses in Staffordshire and adjoining counties have been selected for comparison with the Shelfield house (fig. 2) in an attempt to emphasize particular likenesses they share. Ignoring basic differences of construction in the group, two being cruck-trussed and the rest of post-and-truss type, the common feature (excepting f and h) is the spere-truss. In each case this partition defined the line of the cross-passage and in two of the Staffordshire houses, Hood Lane Farm, Armitage⁴ and Wales End Farm, Barton-under-Needwood, the later chimney-stacks were built backing onto it: likewise in the Coleshill example where the inserted hall floor derives some support from the spere framework⁵.

Kinvaston Hall Farm and Wales End Farm illustrate two alternative and fairly common positionings of the spere-truss whereby in the former house it bisects one of the two bays of the hall and in the latter it stands at the end of a two-bay hall beyond which a further half-bay forms the cross-passage. Where, as in the Penkridge house, the spere-truss intruded into the hall the resulting interior must have been curiously asymmetrical with the central open-truss seemingly displaced and the room, moreover, effectively shortened⁶.

The relevance of these arrangements to the Shelfield hall can be underlined by drawing attention to the disposition of certain of its features, assuming that one is dealing with the remnant of a hall of two equal bays. The length of the complete bay was 11 ft. 6 in. and that

³ The local doyen of spere-trusses is that at West Bromwich Manor-House, Staffs., illustrated in M. W. Barley *The English Farmhouse and Cottage* (1961), fig. 6a. During restoration work there a line of stone-footings was exposed in the floor between the spere-posts implying a fairly substantial fixed screen.

⁴ See P. R. Sheppard, 'Cruck-trussed houses in the Lichfield district' *Trans.*, iii for 1961-62, pp. 42-44. The spere-truss is not described as such but the author indicates that a transverse passage is denoted by the internal posts.

⁵ The blocking of the passage in the Aldridge cruck-house was the result of a need to provide back-to-back hearths coupled with a baffle or lobby type entrance in conformity with new house plans of mid-seventeenth century date.

⁶ It may well be that the 'uninterrupted' bay was subdivided by an intermediate roof-truss as at Solihull Hall, Warwickshire and The Old Ship Inn, Anstey, Leics. (fig. 2d), both now demolished; this feature was near to, or immediately above, the site of the open hearth.

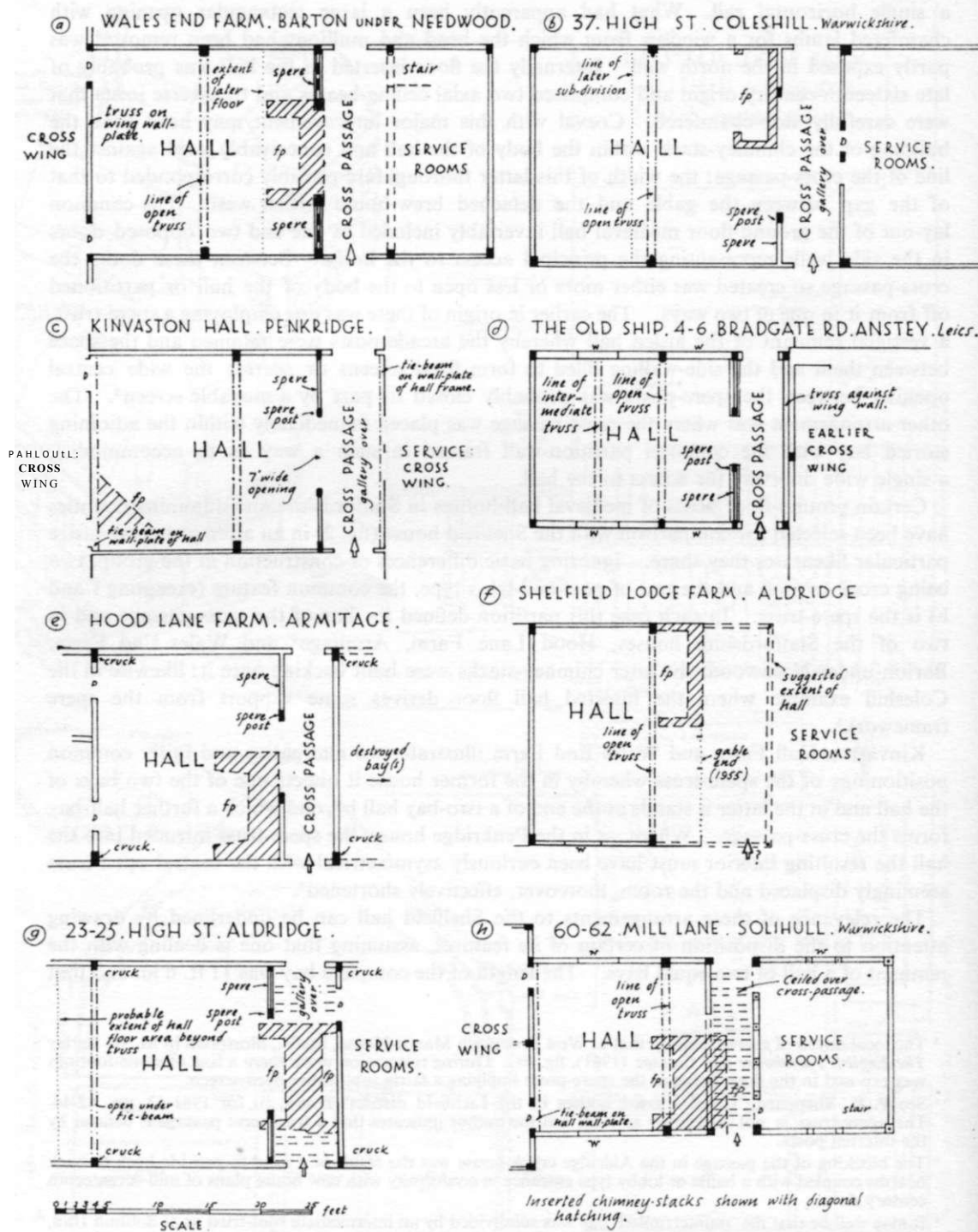


Fig. 2 Comparative ground-floor plans of medieval halls in the Midlands

of the truncated bay 5 ft. so if one postulates the removal of a further 6 ft., the hall would have had originally a total length of 23-4 ft. A further general correspondence between the plans e, f, g, h, is discernible in the matter of the distance, that roughly of 17 ft. between the hall end trusses and the line of the cross-passages but in only one of these, h, is there an open truss that effectively compares with Shelffield. This truss, asymmetrically placed in the hall, allowed two unequal bays; the larger, adjoining the cross-wing, measuring the same length, in the roof-space, as that of the entire bay at Shelffield'.

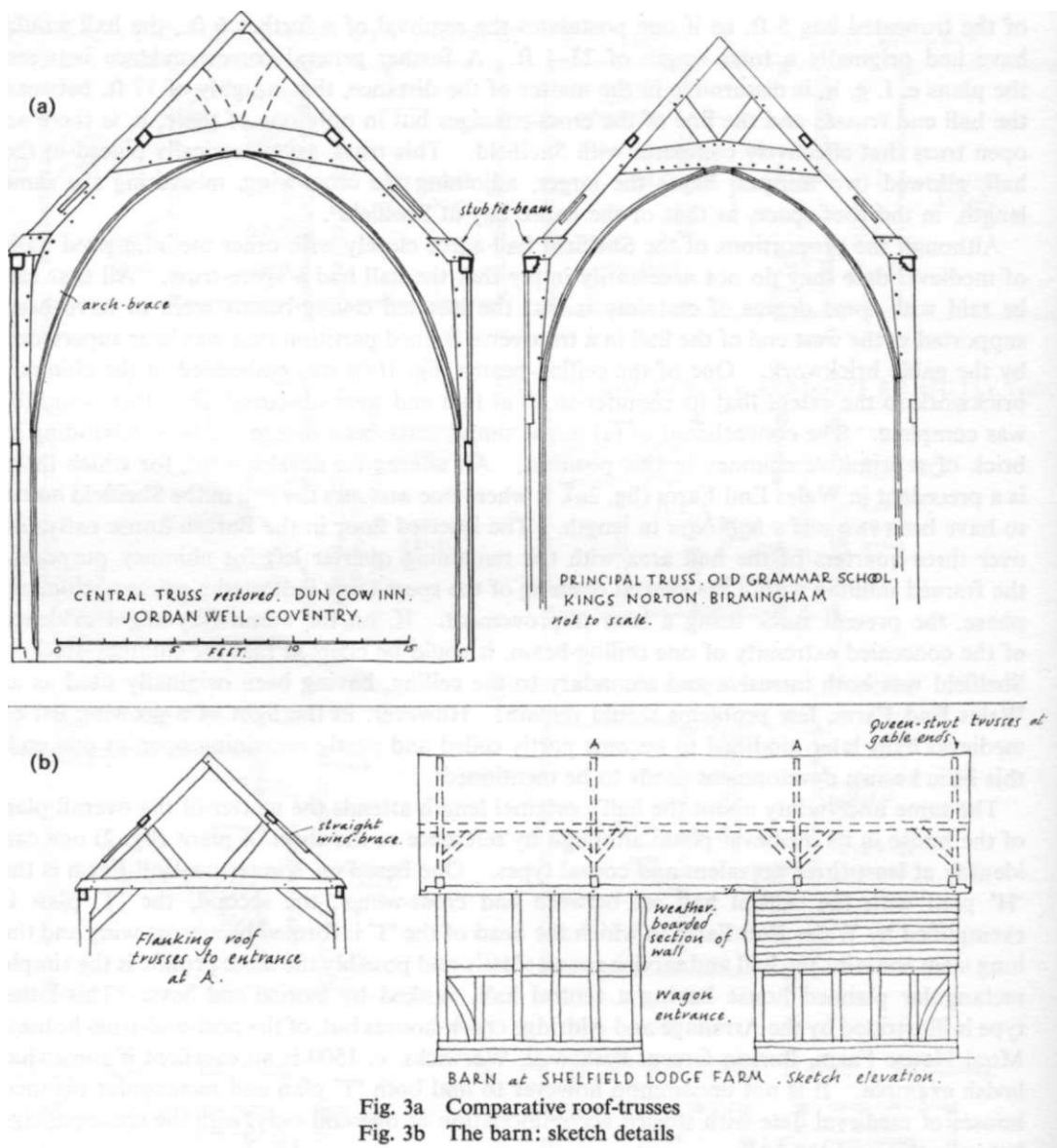
Although the proportions of the Shelffield hall agree closely with other medium-sized halls of medieval date they do not necessarily imply that the hall had a spere-truss. All that can be said with some degree of certainty is that the inserted ceiling-beams seem to have been supported at the west end of the hall in a transverse framed partition that was later superseded by the gable brickwork. One of the ceiling-beams (fig. 1(a)) was embedded in the chimney brickwork to the extent that its chamfer-stops at that end were obscured: the other beam (b) was complete. The concealment of (a) might simply have been due to the later rebuilding in brick of a primitive chimney in this position. An alternative development, for which there is a precedent in Wales End Farm (fig. 2a), is where one assumes the hall in the Shelffield house to have been *two and a half bays* in length. The inserted floor in the Barton house extended over three-quarters of the hall area with the remaining quarter left for chimney purposes: the framed infilling within the central opening of the spere-truss indicated a primary chimney phase, the present stack being a later improvement. If, on the admittedly slight evidence of the concealed extremity of one ceiling-beam, it could be claimed that the chimney-stack at Shelffield was both intrusive and secondary to the ceiling, having been originally sited as at Wales End Farm, few problems would remain! However, in the light of a growing list of medieval halls later modified to become partly ceiled and partly remaining open at one end, this little known development needs to be mentioned*.

The same uncertainty about the hall's original length attends the matter of the overall plan of the house in its medieval phase although by reference to the sheet of plans (fig. 2) one can identify at least three prevalent and coeval types. One based on Kinvaston Hall Farm is the 'H' plan with the central hall set between end cross-wings; the second, the 'T' plan is exemplified by Wales End Farm in which the head of the 'T' is formed by a cross-wing and the long stem contains the hall and service rooms; lastly and possibly the most prolific is the simple rectangular planned house having a central hall, flanked by storied end bays. This latter type is illustrated by the Armitage and Aldridge cruck-houses but, of the post-and-truss houses, Moat House Farm, Burton Green, Berkswell, Warwicks. c. 1500 is an excellent if somewhat lavish example. It is not uncommon however to find both 'T' plan and rectangular planned houses of medieval date with storied accommodation at one end only, with the cross-passage between this and the hall.

The fact that the brick-wing forming the rear of the eighteenth-century house at Shelffield was of the same width as the adjoining medieval framed structure could be advanced justifiably

* Attention has been drawn to halls of two unequal bays by F. W. B. Charles, 'Medieval Cruck-building and its derivatives', *Med. Arch.* (Monograph Series No. 2), especially drawings 1 and 4, Lower Norchard Cottages, Peopleton and Silligrove Farm, Wyre Forest, Bewdley respectively. The larger bay in these structures is assumed to have contained the dais-seat, or its equivalent, and the smaller bay a hearth and cross-passage.

* Other 'reduced' halls include Old Smithy Cottages, Brewood (*V.C.H. Staffs.*, v(1959), pp. 21-2), divided on line of central truss; likewise Littywood, Bradley (*V.C.H. Staffs.*, iv (1958), pp. 74-5), and Rectory Farm, Grafton Flyford, Worcs. (personal observation) where a large flue was formed between the central truss and the line of the spers.



as evidence that this continuation perpetuated the line of the earlier house eastwards. It may strike one as odd that a later builder conceded this much to the older fabric but doubtless the combination of the usefulness of that end of the house, in connexion with the work of the farm, and tightness of the client's purse-strings contributed to its retention. Its new reduced status, socially speaking, was demonstrated outwardly by the difference in the adjacent roof levels and emphasized internally by a marked difference in first first-floor levels between the room over the old hall and that of the new wing. A close examination of the principal post at the east end of the north wall to determine the existence of rail mortices as proof of a continuation of the timber-framing beyond that point was not conclusive. A deep notch, cut on the face

of the post, was made either for the purpose of assembling the frame or for shoring the truss during some later structural modification.

THE ROOF

The principal roof truss (fig. 1) was of a type that was widely distributed in the Midlands as a list of known examples clearly shows.

- (i) Dun Cow Inn, Jordan Well, Coventry (demolished: recorded by writer during *V.C.H.* survey 1958).
- (ii) Old Grammar School, King's Norton, Birmingham.
- (iii) The New Bowling Green Inn, St. Nicholas Church Street, Warwick.
- (iv) The Guildhall (first floor), Leicester's Hospital, Warwick.
- (v) The Old Vicarage, Alveston, near Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire.

With one exception, that of (iii), all of these buildings have, or had close-studded walls and as a group they probably belong to the second half of the fifteenth century or a little later⁹. The central trusses of two of these are illustrated (fig. 3) and among the characteristic features common to them and the group are the stub tie-beams and deep arch-braces to comparatively high placed collar-beams. The bipartite character of the arch-braces to the Shelfield truss is uncommon and unfortunately their upper extremities being concealed at the time of the survey, the precise nature of the truss-apex is uncertain. A single wind-brace was partly exposed on the north slope (fig. 1) springing from the principal truss on its west face: its general profile was unusual and it may have formed, in conjunction with its counterpart in the same bay, an ogival-shape. It is pertinent to the earlier discussion of the original plan of Shelfield Lodge Farm to note that of the above list, three houses are of a simple rectangular plan and in no example is there a spere-truss or any comparable partition surviving.

THE BARN

Near the farm stood a timber-framed barn fronting the road. It was a three-bay building of seventeenth-century date and designed to carry weather-boarding for the upper half of its side and end walls. It appears to be better remembered, on enquiry, by the local inhabitants of Shelfield than the house itself: the sketches (fig. 3) are included to provide, however slight, a fuller record of the site.

The demolition of the Shelfield house has now been followed by that of another local house, Coppy Hall Farm, Aldridge. The general appearance of this building, as recorded in three indifferent exterior photographs taken by the writer some years ago, suggested an internal structure of high architectural and historical interest. Its complete disappearance, apparently without any better record than these slight views, should alert local archaeologists firstly to the rude haste with which seemingly substantial buildings may be dispatched and secondly, and more important, to the need for a systematic survey of the farm-houses and cottages in their neighbourhood¹⁰.

⁹ See J. T. Smith, 'Timber-framed Building in England', *Arch. J.*, cxxii (1966), pp. 133-58, especially the discussion on close-studding, pp. 143-5 and figs. 5 and 6.

¹⁰ An extremely useful publication 'The Investigation of Smaller Domestic Buildings', Research Report No. 3, produced by the Council for British Archeology indicates what can be done by an interested amateur in this particular field.

NOTES ON EXCAVATION BY F. H. LYON ON THE SITE OF THE NEW POST OFFICE, LICHFIELD, 1965-6

F. MARSTON

WE HAVE RECEIVED from the family of our late colleague and ex-Chairman, Mr. Frank H. Lyon, the manuscript of the notes which record his findings on the site of the new Lichfield Post Office and adjacent shops in Baker's Lane, while constructional works were in progress during the winter of 1965-6 (N.G.R. SK 11900945).

Mr. Lyon had for many years accepted responsibility for watching, on behalf of the Society, any excavations that were taking place in the city of Lichfield.

The site investigated here lies mainly north-west of the northern length of Frog Lane (now Redcourt Road). Part of it would at one time have been in the curtilage of Redcourt House. While site levelling and deep excavations were in progress for the construction of retaining walls for the new Redcourt Road and for the mound on which the old Frog Lane School stands, Mr. Lyon thought it possible that foundations of the reputed Lichfield Castle would be uncovered.

The evidence for the existence of this Castle was collated by the Rev. T. Barns in the *Transactions of the North Staffordshire Field Club*, xlviii for 1913/14 (1914), pp. 123-8. This is cited by Mr. Lyon, together with other documentary evidence, mainly culled from Harwood's *History and Antiquities of Lichfield* (1806).

Mr. Lyon appears to have been working heroically with little help in trenches made by a mechanical excavator, although one of these machines was at least put at his disposal at one point.

The sheer face of cuttings in the sandstone bedrock was revealed and an expert, Mr Thompson from the Ministry of Public Building and Works, was called in. His opinion was that this was a quarry face, though Mr. Lyon could not accept this without reservations. Small sherds found some five feet down were dated by Mr. K. J. Barton to the fourteenth or fifteenth century. To the south and adjoining the school site, a low wall of worked stone-blocks was uncovered.

The evidence for the existence of a medieval castle at one time in this vicinity is, as Mr. Lyon says, very slender. In reproducing in his notes an illuminated headpiece, dated 1538, from the Guild Book of St. Mary¹, showing a castellated building, Mr. Lyon rather ignores the statement of Leland at around that time that no castle then existed². The earliest surviving records, of the early fifteenth century, refer to Castle Field, Castle Ditch or Dike and to *vinella voc. le Castledich*³, viz. an alley known as Castle Ditch. Had a castle then existed these terms would hardly have been used, so it is hard to believe that the 'Great Tower', in which Richard II is said to have been held in 1399, could have been here⁴. It is also hard to

¹ City Muniments, Guildhall, Lichfield.

² John Leland, *Itinerary* (Ed. Toulmin Smith), ii (1964), p. 99.

³ Thomas Harwood, *History and Antiquities of Lichfield* (1806), p. 500, n. 19.

⁴ John Stow, *Annates* (1631 ed.), p. 322; cit. Harwood, p. 302.

believe that the keep of a castle would occupy so vulnerable a position below the higher ground of Greenhill, but the alley on the site of Gresley Row bears the name of Castle Ditch on Snape's map of 1781 and the name applied also to the lane further south, until it was filled in to make room for the new bus station.

It is more likely that the puzzling mound, *vicus altus*⁶, on which the old School stands was part of a prehistoric fort, for which Rev. Barns and Mr. Lyon find some evidence. These questions may shortly be answered when the old School, built in the seventies of last century, is demolished and when excavations take place for the traffic island at the junction of Rotten Row and Birmingham Road by-pass, where massive foundations have recently been revealed. Mr. Lyon's notes are illustrated by plans, sections, sketches and photographs, but these are not all sufficiently finished for publication. They have now been deposited in the Public Library, Lichfield, where they may be consulted in the Reference Section.

⁶ Harwood, *op. cit.*, p. 500, n. 17.



PRELIMINARY NOTE

AN EARLY ROMANO-BRITISH SITE AT KING'S BROMLEY, STAFFS.

HENRIETTA MILES

THREE SMALL OVAL ENCLOSURES showing on an air-photograph at N.G.R. SK 116165 were threatened by gravel-digging. A trial excavation on behalf of the Society with the aid of a grant from the Ministry of Public Building and Works, was directed by the author in March 1969. Traces of two of the enclosures measuring about 60 ft. and 80 ft. across were found, and also a pit containing part of a mortarium dating to around A.D. 100. It is hoped that further work will be done on the site. I am grateful to the owners, Messrs. Dunning and Sons Ltd., for permission to excavate, and to Mr. A. A. Round for his organization.

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NOTICE

Mr. J. W. WHISTON, honorary editor of the Society's *Transactions*, has been elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

PROGRAMME 1968-69

1968

- May 25 Excursion to Northamptonshire; Brixworth, Earls Barton and Whiston Churches, and Althorp Hall (Lord Spencer). Leader; M. M. Hallett
- June 22 Excursion to Wroxall Abbey; Beaudesert Castle and Church; Henley-in-Arden Guildhall and Church; Wootton Wawen Church; cast-iron aqueducts on Stratford-upon-Avon canal. Leader: M. M. Hallett
- Oct. 4 **(L)** Early Monastic Buildings and Culture - Rosemary J. Cramp, **F.S.A.**
- Oct. 25 **(T)** Prehistoric Staffordshire - A. J. H. Gunstone
- Nov. 1 **(L)** Annual General Meeting
- Short talks on items exhibited by members : Interesting finds from Wall - A. A. Round; An eighteenth-century watch by Stripling of Lichfield - P. Edden; William Wollaston - P. Edden; Two interesting books with local associations - S. W. Dewes; Female skeleton found at Spital Chapel, Tamworth - Dr. J. G. L. Cole
- Nov. 22 **(T)** Stonehenge - Prof. R. J. C. Atkinson, **F.S.A.**
- Dec. 6 **(L)** Offa's Dyke - F. Noble
- Dec. 20 **(T)** Saxon Towns - Dr. C. A. Raleigh Radford, **F.B.A., F.S.A.**

1969

- Jan. 3 Civic Evening at St. Chad's Hall, Lichfield
- The Origins of Lichfield - C. C. Taylor, **F.S.A.**
- Jan. 10 **(T)** Sutton Hoo - H. R. Loyn, **F.S.A.**
- Feb. 7 **(L)** Mummies - P. H. K. Gray, R.N.(Rtd.), **M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.M.R.D.**
- Feb. 28 Travel Evening in Guildroom, Lichfield
- Macedonia and Montenegro - R. F. Dodd
- Mar. 7 **(L)** Seventh-century Mercia - J. Gould, **F.S.A.**
- Mar. 21 **(T)** Tamworth Mint - E. W. Danson
- Mar. 28 Travel Evening in Guildroom, Lichfield
- Japan, Hong Kong and Bangkok - M. M. Hallett

(L) Lichfield Public Library **(T)** Tamworth Castle

EXCAVATIONS

1968

- Mar. 10-15 Early Romano-British site at King's Bromley
- Director: Mrs. Henrietta Miles
- May 31-June 29 Site of car-park, Bolebridge St., Tamworth (Saxon)
- Director: C. Young
- July 13-20 Spital Chapel, Tamworth (in conjunction with Perrycroft School, Tamworth) (Medieval)
- Director: J. Gould, **F.S.A.**
- July 27-Aug. 20 Lichfield Street, Tamworth (Saxon)
- Director: J. Gould, **F.S.A.**

1969

- Easter Church Street, Tamworth (Medieval)
- Director: R. A. Meeson
- Excavations continued on the Roman site at Wall, under the direction of Mr. A. A. Round.

VOL. VIII (1966-7)

Excavations at Wall, Staffs., 1964-6 on the site of the Roman Forts. / <i>Gould, F.S.A.</i> ..	10/-
Observation on the construction of the by-pass at Wall, Staffs. <i>Adrian Oswald, F.S.A.</i>	2/-
Withy Lane of Bentley, Staffs: A Genealogical Revision. <i>Gerald Mander, F.S.A.</i>	
Appendix: Gerald Mander and the <i>Wolverhampton Antiquary</i> . <i>J. W. Whiston.</i>	2/-
Croxall, Staffs. An Air-Photograph of a deserted medieval village. / <i>W. Whiston</i>	2/6
Amington, Warwicks. A Deserted Medieval Village Site. / <i>Pickering.</i>	1/-
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Deserted Medieval Villages of Staffordshire & adjacent Areas.	1/6
Church House, Abbots Bromley, Staffs. <i>F. W. B. Charles.</i>	2/6

VOL. IX (1967-8)

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First Report of the Excavations at Tamworth (Staffs.) 1967 - The Saxon Defences. / <i>Gould, F.S.A.</i>	5/-
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VOL. X (1968-9)

Excavations at Fisherwick, Staffs., 1968 - A Romano-British Farm-stead, and a Neolithic Occupation Site. <i>Henrietta Miles</i>	
The Mortaria. <i>Katherine H. Hartley.</i>	5/-
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Second Report on Excavations at Tamworth, Staffs., 1968 - Spital Chapel. / <i>Gould, F.S.A.</i>	
Report on the Bones. <i>J. G. L. Cole, M.B., CH.B.</i>	2/6
Third Report on Excavations at Tamworth, Staffs., 1968 - The Western Entrance to the Saxon Borough. <i>J. Gould, F.S.A.</i>	3/6
The Origins of Lichfield, Staffs. <i>C. C. Taylor, F.S.A.</i>	3/-
Medieval Pottery from Lichfield, Staffs. <i>K. J. Barton, F.S.A.</i>	1/3
Dean Bate's Statutes for St. Edith's, Tamworth, Staffs., 1442. <i>D. A. Johnson.</i>	3/-
Shelfield Lodge Farm, Aldridge, Staffs. An Altered Hall-house of Medieval Date. <i>S. R. Jones, F.S.A.</i>	3/6
Notes on Excavation by F. H. Lyon on the Site of the New Post Office, Lichfield, Staffs. <i>F. Marston</i>	

Copies of many of the papers are available as offprints at the prices shown. Copies of all volumes, except No. 1, are also available. Orders should be sent to the Hon. Editor:

J. W. Whiston, 58 Wednesbury Road, Walsall, Staffs.