

Worcestershire Recorder



Newsletter of the
WORCESTERSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



Spring 2019, Edition 99

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A Warm Welcome to New Members

Mr Malcolm Fare and the Hanleys' Village Society
Mr David Graham
Ms Lynda Griffiths
Mr Ken MacDonald
Mrs Robina Rand

Charity No 517092. Membership Secretary Tel: 01386 552771

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Cover illustration: St Swithun's, Worcester, 2016. Photo by Andy Marshall. © The Churches Conservation Trust. See p15.

Welcome to our new Chairman

Victoria Bryant needs no introduction to most members. Boasting over 30 years' experience as an archaeologist, she has for several years managed the Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service in the journey from a primarily local government-funded organisation to one with a greatly increased commercial focus. She remains remarkably cheerful in the face of adverse times for the Service.

Chairman's Letter

This is my first letter as Chair of Worcestershire Archaeological Society. This is a great honour for me as the Society is an organisation I have been very familiar with during the 31 years I have worked in the County.



The very first thing to do is to thank the committee and particularly Bob Ruffle, our outgoing Chairman, for the great support and tolerance they have shown me in my year as Deputy Chair and for all the fantastic work that they have done and continue to do. Here are some of the achievements of the last year:-

- the Garth Raymer Research Fund gave its first grant for the excavation of a 19th century pipe kiln in Cripplegate Park (see p13);
- the Heritage Lottery funded *Small Pits, Big Ideas* project took place at White Ladies Aston. This involved Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology colleagues in partnership with the Green Fingers Project and the University of Worcester on behalf of Worcestershire Archaeological Society and we are hoping that this is just the beginning of a wider programme of test pitting across Worcestershire. As those of you who attended her talk will realise, the methodology was based on that developed by Prof Carezza Lewis in East Anglia, and the project was supported by her (see p8);
- the new archaeology gallery at Hartlebury castle opened in July. *On Ancient Tracks* introduces the story of Worcestershire's early inhabitants using archaeological finds, visuals and handling objects. The gallery was supported by Worcestershire Archaeological Society and funded by Severn Waste Services;
- the Society's meetings were relocated to the spacious, warm and welcoming St Peter's Baptist church.

Other things to note are that:-

- work on the agreement between WAS and the University of Worcester concerning the governance and care of the Society's library is ongoing;
- membership numbers are holding up but not increasing and as always we would welcome ideas to bring more people in.

After looking back over the past year I would like to take this opportunity to look forward to what might be the role of Worcestershire Archaeological Society in the years to come. Before the development of 'professional archaeology' outside universities in the late 1960s and 1970s, it was the Archaeological Societies such as WAS which fostered and developed the practice and publication of archaeology. WAS has continued this great tradition and its publications are still the first place that a student of the history of the county should look.

Without change there is no history, but change is not always comfortable. We are living in a period of reduction in public money available to our cultural institutions at national and local

level. This is in contrast to the 20 years before 2010 when funding was increasing. In this changed financial situation I consider that there is an important role for WAS to be actively involved in the archaeology of the county. I do not mean we all get out our trowels – but that the Society, by continuing the process of pump-priming projects, supporting funding bids and acting as an advocate for the importance of archaeology in Worcestershire, can make a significant new contribution to the understanding of the county's history.

Victoria Bryant

The AGM at which Victoria was elected was followed by an entertaining talk by **Garston Phillips**, reminiscing about his 50 years working in the city museum – welcome light relief from Brexit which some might wish was recorded!

Ernie Kay MBE, 1931-2019



Everyone knew Ernie as he was universally known. As soon as he settled in Malvern with his second wife, Margaret, in 1996, he joined WAS, for Archaeology was one of his many interests. He gave years of service to the Society as a committee member and Excursions Organiser. He and I led trips together, taking members away to the isles of Scilly, Wight, Man and Orkney. This was in addition to the day and half-day excursions locally. Ernie did everything behind the scenes, from collecting money, arranging hotels and speakers to writing an informative brochure for the days away. I was just the front man!

Photo courtesy of Jean Upton

Once, in Aberystwyth, he lost his pyjamas and all the party joined in looking for them. 'Lost' notices were plastered round the hotel, some in Welsh, written by a Welsh speaking member. I gave up-to-the-minute news of the search at each meal. It was 24 hours before he found the missing items of night attire at the bottom of his bed, amid much hilarity which he took in good part.

He had worked for the Greater London Council, attaining the post of Principal Business Analyst, using early computers. For some years he retired to the Welsh Border where he helped to open up Offa's Dyke and establish the Offa's Dyke Centre at Knighton. He became President of the Offa's Dyke Association and, with his first wife, Kathy, wrote the still-in-print guides to the Dyke. In addition he oversaw the development of the Presteigne Arts Centre. For his work in Wales he was awarded an MBE in 2001.

In committee, he used his agile brain to wise effect; he was very self-opinionated but, infuriatingly, he was almost always right. He generously helped the Society financially by paying for the tree-ring dating of the Habingdon chest and the binding of the library books.

I am often asked where all his money came from. As he had no children he used the estates from his two wives, Kathy and Margaret, to set up the Kay Trust in their memory, administered by the Charities Aid Foundation. There is, I understand, still monies left after his death, so his philanthropic work will continue. We miss him but we will never forget hm.

Dr John Harcup OBE

Management Team for 2019-20

Contact details are given on the Society's website, worcestershirearchaeologicalsociety.org.uk

Committee members

Chairman	Victoria Bryant	
Deputy Chairman	Bob Ruffle	
Secretary	Janet Dunleavey	
Treasurer	Paula Wittenberg	
Membership Secretary	Bob Ruffle	
Programme Secretary	James Dinn	
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Excursions Administrator	Ginny Wagstaff	
Other Committee members:	Chris Bowers	David Collier
	Margaret Goodrich	Maggie Noke

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Publicity Officer	Kerry Whitehouse
Librarian	Roger Fairman
Technical Officer	Peter Walker
Archaeological Adviser	Chris Guy

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Editorial: Robin Whittaker, Chris Guy

Library & Collections: Debbie Fox, Robin Whittaker, Peter Walker, Roger Fairman

Membership & Communications: Rachael Hall, Bob Ruffle, Caroline Hillaby, Kerry Whitehouse

News from the County

The Charles Archive: A new digital record of Worcestershire's historic built heritage

Thanks to a grant from Historic England, Worcestershire residents and researchers have a new digital resource available to them. In 2018 Historic England funded a partnership project, between Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service (WAAS) and Worcester City Historic Environment Record, to electronically catalogue a collection held by WAAS, called the Charles Archive, and create a digital archive of important material, to be made publically accessible via the Archaeology Data Service.

F.W.B. 'Freddie' Charles (1912-2002) was an architect and a nationally recognised expert on the conservation and repair of timber-framed buildings. He and his wife, the architect Mary Charles (née Logan, 1924-2005), set up a practice based in Worcestershire that eventually specialised in the conservation and restoration of historic timber-framed buildings. Freddie was a founding member of the open air museum at Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings, and during their long careers Freddie and Mary were involved in the restoration of over 250 nationally and historically important timber-framed buildings within Worcestershire alone, including the three big barns at Bredon, Leigh Court and Middle Littleton and the Commandery.

The practice archive of Freddie and Mary Charles was deposited with the Record Office (now WAAS) just prior to Freddie's death in 2002. The 2018 project aimed to electronically catalogue the collection and then digitise a selection of images from what was considered to be the most important and informative material. Selected material included a survey of Friar Street in Droitwich; colour photographs of the wall murals inside the now demolished Dowles Manor; a survey of historic buildings in Redditch New Town area; survey drawings of timber-framed church towers; a detailed account of the restoration of Bredon Barn; and myriad plans, interpretive sketches and photographs of many of Worcestershire's most important buildings.

Some of the material in the archive demonstrates how hard Freddie fought to save vernacular buildings across the county, and it is clear that without Freddie and Mary more of our heritage would have been lost, and iconic buildings like Worcester's Commandery would not look the way that they do today. Some of the renovations might be considered harsh in the present day, often with the removal of 18th- or 19th-century alterations that would now be considered an important part of a building's story, but Freddie's architectural practices are recognised by other conservation architects and buildings archaeologists alike as being ahead of their time. He set the bench mark for both Conservation Architecture and Historic Building Recording, making it common practice to go out to a building, to survey and record it, before drawing up a conservation strategy for the repair and restoration of problem areas.

Freddie Charles found himself teaching architecture at the University of Birmingham after the war. Moving to Bromsgrove in 1952 Freddie and Mary 'were overwhelmed by the timber-framed buildings' (NLSC 2001). Employed by Worcestershire County Council to look at ancient buildings, Freddie soon developed a reputation for specialising in vernacular buildings and timber-framed repairs.

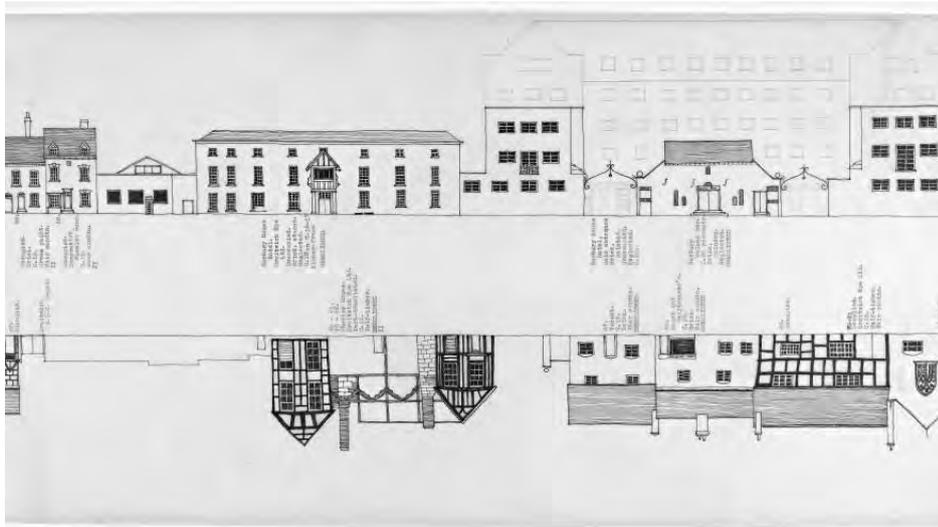


Sketch drawing of FWB's modernist design for the new corner building at 1 High Street, Bromsgrove (705:1246/BA14485/2/1; b705:1246/BA12857/5/14; s705:1246 BA14644/14; f705:1246 BA14644/4) and a photograph of the building as built taken in 2019 © Worcestershire County Council

Post War investment stimulated development across Britain, and Bromsgrove, like many other towns and cities across England, was experiencing considerable change during this period. Dismayed by some aspects of its re-development, which included considerable demolition and re-building of the town centre, much of it to facilitate the car, the Charleses became involved

in attempts to ‘save’ some of the town’s historic buildings threatened with demolition: ‘our viewpoint on old towns such as Bromsgrove is very definitely that they are far too valuable socially, architecturally and historically to be sacrificed to the needs of modern traffic’.

Freddie was an outspoken campaigner for historic buildings that were under threat of demolition or neglect and he put forward schemes and alternative uses for these buildings, such as at Chorley House in Droitwich where he suggested this medieval timber-framed building could have been renovated to become a library, or at Leigh Court Barn where he said in his jointly produced publication that ‘this article is a plea for the barn’s rescue from threatened oblivion’ Charles and Horn, 1973).



Survey of Friar Street by Mary Charles, 1960 (CA_BA14644-19_01b) ©Worcestershire County Council



Photographs of murals at Dowles Manor (CA_BA12857-64-4_a4) © Worcesterhire County Council

Just over 1,000 images from the Charles Archive have been digitised, and these have been added to each of the buildings they represent within the Historic Environment Record for both Worcester City and Worcestershire County Councils. The information has enhanced each of these records to give details such as building layout, build date and conservation and restorative repair work. A few of these buildings are no longer standing today and the information from the Charles Archive on these particular buildings is invaluable. In some cases, it is the only evidence that we have left.

The images linked to the HER records can be viewed by the general public, students, academics, local authority conservation officers and other professionals. The majority of the

digitised archive has been deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) in York and will be made available for anyone to view and access. It is hoped that this access will engender greater understanding of Worcestershire's built historic environment facilitating local authority conservation, archaeological and planning officers to make more informed management and development plans in order to preserve the historic buildings that Freddie and Mary Charles fought so hard to protect. The information will also support local groups, historians and the general public in their local research.

Tegan Cornah, Emily Hathaway and Sheena Payne-Lunn

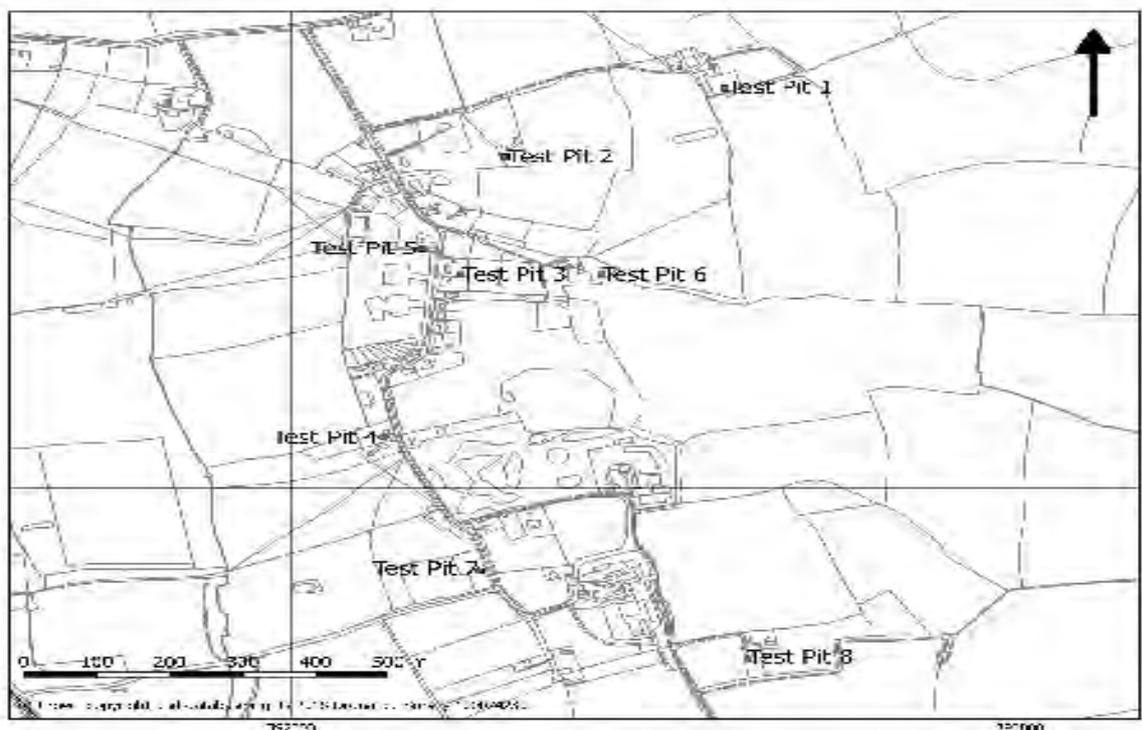
WAAS and Worcester City Historic Environment Record are indebted to the support provided for this project by local historic building specialists including Stephen Price, Nick Joyce and Nick Molyneux.

References:

F.Charles & W. Horn, 'The Cruck-Built Barn of Leigh Court' *J Soc Architect Hist* 32(1) (1973) 5-29
Charles, Freddie (7 of 13) National Life Story Collection: Architects' Lives <https://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Architects-Lives/021M-C0467X0065XX-0001V0>

Small Pits, Big Ideas: The benefits of investigating Worcestershire's rural settlements

A community test pitting project, Small Pits, Big Ideas, was undertaken in the village of White Ladies Aston, just east of Worcester, from 2017-18. This Heritage Lottery Fund project was run by Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service (WAAS) in partnership with the Green Fingers Project and University of Worcester, on behalf of Worcestershire Archaeological Society (WAS). The aims of the project were twofold: to further understand the development of rural medieval settlements in Worcestershire and to enable local Looked After Children to develop new skills and confidence by having a go at archaeology and meaningfully contributing to academic research.



A series of eight 1m² test pits were excavated in gardens and open spaces across White Ladies Aston, following Professor Carenza Lewis' methodology of digging in 10cm spits; a technique

developed for researching Currently Occupied Medieval Rural Settlements (CORS). This fieldwork model has been used extensively in East Anglia with considerable success, as it helps to redress the historic research bias in favour of investigating deserted settlements over continuously occupied ones (for methodology in full, see Lewis 2007). Instead of recording conventional archaeological contexts, excavation focused on the recovery of artefacts and the depths at which they are discovered, as Lewis' methodology uses the presence, quantity and condition of pottery as a proxy indicator for occupation. This method of excavating in spits also makes it easy for those without archaeological training to participate.

White Ladies Aston is a known medieval settlement with a complex yet well documented history of medieval ownership, which involved three separate manors (Page, 1913). Despite this, little was known about the village's layout or how the medieval settlement related to local finds that indicate nearby Roman and Anglo-Saxon occupation. At a county level, few excavations aimed at researching the origins, form and growth of rural medieval settlements have taken place, so it is not yet known how the development of CORS within Worcestershire compares to other regions.

A spread of locations throughout the village was aimed for, with test pits preferentially sited close to the backs of houses where rubbish was historically often thrown. Each test pit was excavated by three or four young people under the supervision of an undergraduate archaeology student, with support from WAAS archaeologists and Green Fingers staff.



An incredible quantity of artefacts was found – 2,447 in total. The finds reflect a long history of domestic occupation in White Ladies Aston, with evidence stretching back almost 1,000 years. Medieval pottery was sparse but present within four test pits clustered near the historic core of the village.

The test pit results tentatively suggest that the earliest medieval occupation occurred around the church and an ancient trackway, at the northern end of the present village. It is possible that this settlement was part of continuous occupation in the area since Anglo-Saxon and even Roman times. Little evidence of late medieval and early post-medieval occupation has been found, raising the possibility that the settlement contracted during this period, or that the occupation focus shifted away from the church to areas not investigated by test pits. During the 17th century many new houses were built on previously unoccupied sites, implying that the village grew in prosperity and potentially size, as these dwellings did not simply replace earlier buildings.

Through the excavation of test pits, valuable knowledge has been added to our understanding of how and where the settlement of White Ladies Aston developed. Significantly, they also provided the first archaeological evidence for early medieval occupation in the village and demonstrate the potential value of test pitting projects in rural settlements within Worcestershire. Further test pits are needed to enhance our understanding of occupation at White Ladies Aston, but as this is only the second community test pitting project in a

Worcestershire village (for other, see Webster et al, 2012), it is an important step towards redressing the research imbalance between deserted and continuously occupied rural medieval settlements.

In addition to archaeological research, the project aimed to bring personal benefits to those who took part. Evaluation showed that 79% of participating young people thought it was 'better' or 'much better than expected', as well as boosting their confidence at trying something new, working in a team, problem solving and meeting new people. Local interest in and support for the project was extremely high, with the village feedback talk having to move to a larger venue to accommodate all the audience.

As with all projects, lessons were learnt and areas for improvement identified, but the encouraging participant feedback and archaeological results demonstrate how valuable test pitting projects can be for individuals, communities and heritage. Many thanks to Worcestershire Archaeological Society and the Heritage Lottery Fund for enabling this project to take place, as well as those who kindly provided support and hosted test pits in their gardens. It is hoped that Small Pits, Big Ideas will be just the beginning of a wider programme of test pitting across Worcestershire and the West Midlands.

Nina O'Hare

Further Reading and References:

- N. O'Hare, 'Small Pits, Big Ideas: Community Test Pitting at White Ladies Aston' Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service: Report No 2570 (2018) available online via Archaeology Data Service
- C. Lewis, 'New Avenues for the Investigation of Currently Occupied Medieval Rural Settlement – Preliminary Observations ...' *Medieval Archaeology* 51 (2007) 131-61
- W. Page, *Victoria History of the County of Worcester* Volume Three (1913)
- J. Webster, D. Williams & D. Hurst, 'Test Pits in 2011 in Hanley Castle Parish, Worcestershire', Worcestershire Archaeology: Report No. 1893 (2012)

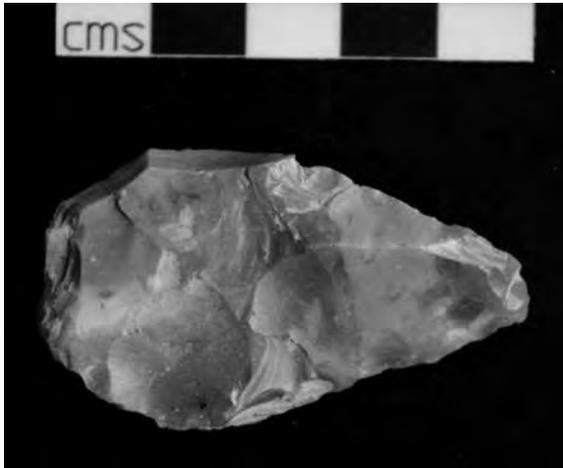
Half a million of years of human activity in one small field: field pickup at Oldbury Farm, Dines Green, Worcester

In March 2016 and 2017 undergraduate archaeology students from the School of Science and Environment at the University of Worcester participated in fieldwalking and test pit excavations in fields associated with Oldbury Farm in Dines Green, now the property of the University of Worcester¹. The systematic collection of all materials from across the fields contributed to the long-running programme of fieldwork directed by Dr Helen Loney and Dr Andrew Hoan for the Worcester Porcelain Project. The project has as its aims the investigation of domestic and industrial refuse and discard across the city and environs of Worcester.

Fieldwork occurred in two half-day sessions each year over two seasons, with around 60 students participating. The relevant fields were subdivided into blocks, and students assigned zones for collection. Students were given the brief of picking up all culturally produced materials, including plastics, and all finds were sorted according to material, type (when relevant) and then counted and weighed.

The finds from Oldbury Farm spanned almost half a million years of human activity, from the Middle Palaeolithic through to the present day. Lithic tools were found from the late Pleistocene corresponding to the Middle Palaeolithic, and from the Holocene, corresponding

to the Mesolithic Neolithic and Bronze Ages. Pottery was recovered from the Bronze and Iron Ages, Roman period, medieval and post-medieval periods, as well as the 'modern' period, including buff slip wares, red wares, cream wares, earthen wares and porcelain. Other finds included glass stoppers from Worcester Sauce bottles, modern coins and a substantial quantity of brick and tile. Industrial waste was present in the form of porcelain wasters, kiln furniture fragments, including saggars, and slag.



The most striking find was a small bifacial tool (*photo by Rob Hedges*) which was identified by Rob Hedges of the Worcester Archives and Archaeological Services as a miniature hand-axe, dating from some time during the late Middle Palaeolithic, at approximately 250-300,000 years BP. Rob Hedges has identified this piece as a Wermer's type E hand axe, in a mottled orange and blue flint, which would have been made and used by the local *Homo heidelbergensis* population of what is now the Severn Valley. Further investigation revealed a scatter of fire-crack rock and other flints from

similar materials, suggesting the presence of an occupation site.

The second striking result is the significant proportion of later post-medieval buff slipwares and red wares, including Midlands Purple and Cistercian fabrics. This material has given us the opportunity to look at the diversity of locally made and imported coarse wares consumed and discarded in the surrounding farms and cottages. Though black glazed red wares are a fairly common occurrence in fields we have surveyed locally, the quantities recovered are unusually high. By contrast, we have found little buff slipware in other local fields, which, along with the presence of medieval green glazed pottery, suggests a range of dates at the site of Oldbury Farm back to the 14th century.

Finally, the results from this site give us an opportunity to understand several very distinct uses of this field. The good condition of the Lower Palaeolithic lithics suggests *in situ* deposition, potentially indicating an activity site for this remote period. Although we have not been able to demonstrate an occupation site, the abundance of fire cracked stones suggests the presence of occupation probably during late prehistory or possibly a burnt mound. The significant quantity of Roman period pottery, mostly comprising variants of Severn Valley wares but also including a single well-tumbled piece of Samian ware, could represent residual materials from midden clearance, from an as yet unknown site nearby. There is abundant evidence for manuring from the medieval period into the modern period; in later periods it may be that some of the waste originated in the developing suburb of St John's and possibly Worcester city. Certainly, the large quantity of saggars and wasters from the various iterations of the porcelain factories show that large amounts of waste were being shipped on carts from the late 18th century out into the countryside surrounding Worcester.

In conclusion, the range and interest of finds from this brief period of work has demonstrated the utility of simple but comprehensive fieldwalking as an effective method of site reconnaissance. In only two full days of activity, we recovered evidence of almost a half a million years of human activity, and contributed significantly to our understanding of every phase of human occupation in Worcester. Further, we have contributed significantly to the

archaeology of the breadth of historical activity in Worcester, including shedding light on one of the least understood parts of Worcester's history: the remote past of the Middle Palaeolithic.

Helen Loney, Andrew Hoaen

Department of Geography and Archaeology, University of Worcester

¹ Loney, H. and Hoaen, A. 2018 Preliminary report on the excavations and field walking at Oldbury Farm, Worcester, unpublished report, University of Worcester.

A Knight family archive rediscovered

The Knight family, principally of Downton Castle in Herefordshire but also with extensive landed interests in Worcestershire in Lea Castle and Wolverley, made their wealth from their stake in the iron industry of the region. However, one member of the family, Richard Payne Knight (1751-1824), grandson of the Richard Knight who had established the family's fortune, found fame in another area, that of the Picturesque movement. His 1805 book, *An Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste*, was very influential in aesthetic theory.

The WAAS holds a small but significant Knight family archive as part of the Kidderminster Library collection (ref. BA10,470/2, 120-123 Class 899:310). These papers include some which relate to the family interest in Exmoor, and it was this that made an article in Vol 161 of the *Proceedings* of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society (SANHS) for 2018 catch my eye. It is an article by Rob Wilson North entitled 'The Rediscovery of the Knight Family Archive and its Importance to Exmoor'. The background is the purchase and improvement of some 16,000 acres of Exmoor by John Knight, a cousin of Richard Payne Knight. The estate he purchased was centred on a mansion at Simonsbath. In 2013 the Exmoor National Park acquired a group of buildings in Simonsbath for possible conversion to a visitor/community centre. Research into the buildings led to the discovery of a substantial archive of Knight papers still in the possession of a lady who had married the great grandson of John Knight. She has passed these papers to the South West Heritage Trust (in 2016) where they have been catalogued. Although the papers mainly concern Exmoor, the article indicates that there are some papers relating to Bromsgrove and the Cookley ironworks.

This volume of the SANHS has now been passed to the Society's Librarian to be added to the runs of exchange journals held at The Hive.

Robin Whittaker

News from the City

There is a riverine flavour to some of the projects reported here. Fieldwork has now started on the creation of a new fish pass at Diglis, a massive engineering project which will involve the removal of over 3000 cubic metres of sediments. An initial borehole survey has indicated a generalised potential for the deeper deposits here (archaeological remains may be buried several metres below the surface) but nothing specific on which to focus any further work. An archaeological watching brief will be maintained during the development. Powick Weir forms another part of the Unlocking the Severn project. Following consultation it was decided to remove only part of the weir, rather than all of it. A watching brief revealed that remains of an

earlier post-medieval weir, built of timber and sandstone, were still present below the modern concrete structure. About 30m upstream from the weir, timbers found in the river bed may be part of another weir, previously unrecorded.

We were able to return to Blackpole in the autumn, following an application to demolish part of the World War I munitions factory. A more detailed record was made of the threatened part of the building.

Currently, a geophysical survey is underway in Fort Royal Park. The aim of the survey, by RSK Geophysics, is to improve our understanding of buried features associated with the Civil War fort. In particular the survey should pick up the buried ditches of the fort, and the ramparts if they survive. Buried ditches and ramparts may also survive from the defensive lines which linked Fort Royal to the city walls, and from a covered way which is thought to have run downhill to the Commandery. The surveys are funded by Historic England, with a contribution from Worcester City Council, and it is hoped they will lead to a redrawing of the scheduled monument boundaries to ensure that the features which merit conservation are suitably protected.

Following the publication of the draft masterplan for Worcester city centre, a number of sites are coming under scrutiny for potential development. One of these is Copenhagen Street car park, on the river frontage and next to the Old Palace. The car park is a scheduled monument, partly on the basis that it contains remains of the medieval riverside wall (a stone wall several metres high, all now buried) and the 1751 porcelain works. Other remains within the scheduled area include part of the Roman (and later) defences and the extent of Worcester's medieval Jewish quarter.

Ray Jones' recent book, *The Origins of Worcester Porcelain*, includes a reassessment of the extent of the porcelain works and an associated property known as 'Mr Holdship's new buildings'. Some ivy clearance along the boundary between the Heart of Worcester College and the Old Palace has revealed that complex remains of some of these buildings survive. These include sandstone walls, perhaps post-medieval (reusing medieval stone), but potentially medieval in date. Built over these are the brick walls of the mid-18th century buildings (dated by Ray Jones to the late 1750s), while there are surviving fragments of a substantial rebuild for Dent's glove factory at the turn of the 20th century. There are detailed plans, elevations and sections of the area in a building application for Dent's, showing clearly what was retained at the time and what was replaced.

James Dinn

The Garth Raymer Research Fund: Russell Pipe Manufactory, Worcester

The first successful application, agreed February 2019

Worcester is well known for the production of high quality china and porcelain, but clay tobacco pipe making in the city has not been well publicised. It was short lived because sources from notable manufacturing centres, including the nearby Broseley works in Shropshire, were better able to satisfy the local demand.

A detailed archival research project of Worcester clay tobacco pipe manufacturing was completed in 2018, ref. SWR 25045, and the cartographical record, ref. HER WCM 98104,

was substantiated. The location of the old pipe kiln has not been built upon, unlike many urban pipe works, and this represents an opportunity to build an understanding of the kiln design and unearth samples of pipes of the period (1818-68). The location currently lies within a children's playground within a Green Flag Award area of the park and this will be duly respected.

Various local archaeology groups have combined with the Worcester City Council archaeology department to develop a Written Scheme of Investigation for the excavation of the old pipe kiln. The investigation will include a geophysical survey in mid Spring 2019 to provide detail as to the extent of the remains, and a later ten-day excavation of the kiln area, scheduled for September 2019.

A specialist kiln archaeologist will be on hand to assess and inform the project as it progresses, and a pipe expert will be engaged to prepare a specialist report on the remnant pipes which are expected to lie within the kiln. The final report will be archived in accordance with local guidelines, conforming to national ones, and is planned for Spring 2020.

The principle aims of the project are:

- to provide knowledge regarding construction of the 19th-century kiln;
- to accumulate dateable samples of pipes to complement the National Pipe Archive and associated Society for Clay Pipe Research;
- to complement existing knowledge of Worcester city china/pottery manufacture;
- to create a 'Living Memories' framework for future generations.



The project has a commitment of in-kind funding from various partners, which include the Worcester City Council Parks, Archaeology, Heritage and Community departments, two major Worcestershire archaeology groups and their affiliated consultants. The project has been awarded funding from two archaeological organisations. These organisations have made the project economically viable by awarding grants. One award is from the Council of British Archaeology's Mick Aston Archaeology Fund, which is supported by Historic England, and the other from the Worcestershire Archaeological Society. Their support is recognised and appreciated by all concerned.

Above: 19th-century tobacco pipe made in Berwick at the time of the Russell Pipe Manufactory. © The Portable Antiquities Scheme: <https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/70471>

R Moore on behalf of the RPM project.

St Swithun's, Worcester

St Swithun's origins have never been fully established. St Swithun was the Bishop of Winchester 852-62, suggesting an Anglo-Saxon origin, but the earliest evidence dates from the 12th century when permission to build a church on the site was granted. This was destroyed by fire, and rebuilt in the 15th century. This church in turn was rebuilt in the 18th century. Possibly the parish wanted a modern church to accommodate the prevailing form of liturgy and a larger congregation. The 18th century saw a move towards the 'auditory' church. Communion was received rarely and the main focus of the interior was not the altar, but the pulpit, which many architects regarded as the key feature of their designs; it was of utmost importance to 'hear the service, and see the preacher'.

St Swithun's continued to serve its community until the 20th century. An enquiry held in 1937 determined it would be demolished unless the Worcester Archaeological Society or the Town Council could purchase it. Around 5,000 people signed a letter of protest against the proposed demolition, one stating that it 'should be jealously maintained as a practically complete and unique realisation of the ideals of the time in which it was built'. After the Second World War a phase of alterations and 'improvements' resulted in the church seen today.

A report of 1969 highlighted extensive stonework decay and 'a large number of cracks in the plaster ceiling and ribs on the north slope'. In the early 1970s concerns about settlement and movement, particularly in the north wall, brought about closure for regular worship. In 1975 it was proposed to undertake underpinning and the installation of five steel frames against the north and south walls, at a cost of £70,000. This resulted in the decision to close the church, a 'matter for profound regret', as it was considered 'one of the most important churches in the country'.

In June 1976 St Swithun's was formally declared redundant and in October 1977 it was vested in the Redundant Churches Fund (now the Churches Conservation Trust). St Swithun's is a classic example of the Georgian 'auditory' church, a remarkable and almost intact survival of the Anglican liturgical practice before 19th-century changes. The surviving Georgian fittings – pews, font, pulpit, gallery, organ – and the memorials are exceptionally rare. The interior is 'marvelous' (Pevsner): its vaulted, plaster ceilings under the tower and in the body of the church are excellent examples of Georgian craftsmanship and the use of the Gothic in the 18th century. St Swithun's is a landmark feature of the city, and a church of exceptional historic significance. Worcester appears to be the only cathedral city that retains an auditory style church, and only Leeds (St John) and Whitby (St Mary) can claim to have examples as intact as St Swithun's.

The Churches Conservation Trust is about to embark on a £2.4 million Heritage Lottery Funded programme of conservation and development work, ensuring its long term sustainability. The Trust will undertake urgent repairs, conservation and adaption to support future use of the church. The vision is to create an inspirational space that will creatively demonstrate the potential of sound and art to engage, enthuse and inspire a greater connection with heritage and history. In the spring of 2020 the church will reopen as 'Sound & Art at St Swithun's' – a unique arts venue and community space. Our aim is to interpret this significant building in new, exciting and accessible ways and to establish St Swithun's as a major player in the city's cultural life.

Hywel Pontin
Art Centre Manager

Back copies of *Transactions* and Newsletters

An incomplete set of unbound copies of *Transactions* and Newsletters from the 1920s to 1990s, owned by another organisation, is now surplus to their requirements. Anyone interested in acquiring these please send a message to hodgeam@btinternet.com. Delivery/collection within the Worcester area by mutual agreement.

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Contact Robin Whittaker: editor@worcestershiresarchaeologicalsociety.org.uk, 01386 554886

Recent Publications

Clifton Quarry, Worcestershire. Pits, pots and cereals: archaeological investigations 2006-2009 Andrew Mann and Robin Jackson (Oxbow Books, 2018)

This is by some way the most substantial publication of a prehistoric site from Worcestershire. The report is matched only by Nicholas Thomas's 2005 report on Conderton Camp, while the scale of the archaeological investigations is larger even than the 1970s work at Beckford (awaiting publication). The two main authors have brought together contributions by over 20 others.

The report describes investigations in 2006-09, on a landscape scale. Some earlier work in the neighbouring area identified Roman settlement, and this has been preserved from quarrying. More work has since been carried out in Area 11 (2012-15), which will be reported separately. The Late Neolithic Grooved Ware pits, and the burnt mound and associated features, are of particular interest as some of the first features of these types to have been excavated in the county. Description of the evidence from these features is quite widely scattered through the report, though the excellent index provides a valuable key to the material from individual features as well as subjects. A minor disappointment is that the individual pit assemblages are not illustrated as a whole, though there is a photograph of the axes from one of the pits on p98. This pit contained an exceptionally large group of between six and eight axes, all but one damaged by burning, burnt stone 'pot-boilers', and quantities of the highly decorated Grooved Ware pottery. The axes included three from Graig Lwyd in north-west Wales, one from west Cornwall, and a flint axe which must have been sourced from south-east or eastern England. One axe is a bit more of a mystery; this is made of amphibolite, which does occur in the Malvern Hills, though the few axes made of this stone which have been found in Britain are widely distributed. A continental European source is also possible.

Iron Age activity was very widespread. It included two possible roundhouses and some groups of pits. The dominant features though were groups of four posts, each forming a square in plan; a minimum of 89 have been identified, across 250m of the site. 'Four-post structures' are familiar from the hillfort excavations at Midsummer Hill and Croft Ambrey, but are much less common on lowland Iron Age sites in the region. Usually they are interpreted as above-ground granaries.

The Iron Age pottery assemblage is surprisingly small, at less than 10kg. Nevertheless it is the largest Early-Middle Iron Age assemblage yet excavated in Worcestershire; other sites are predominantly Middle or Late Iron Age in date.

Despite the size of the area investigated and the concomitant scale of the results, the location maps on pp 2-4 tell a stark story of loss: the area available for investigation from 2006 onwards was only a fraction of that already lost to quarrying in earlier permissions which did not make provision for archaeological work.

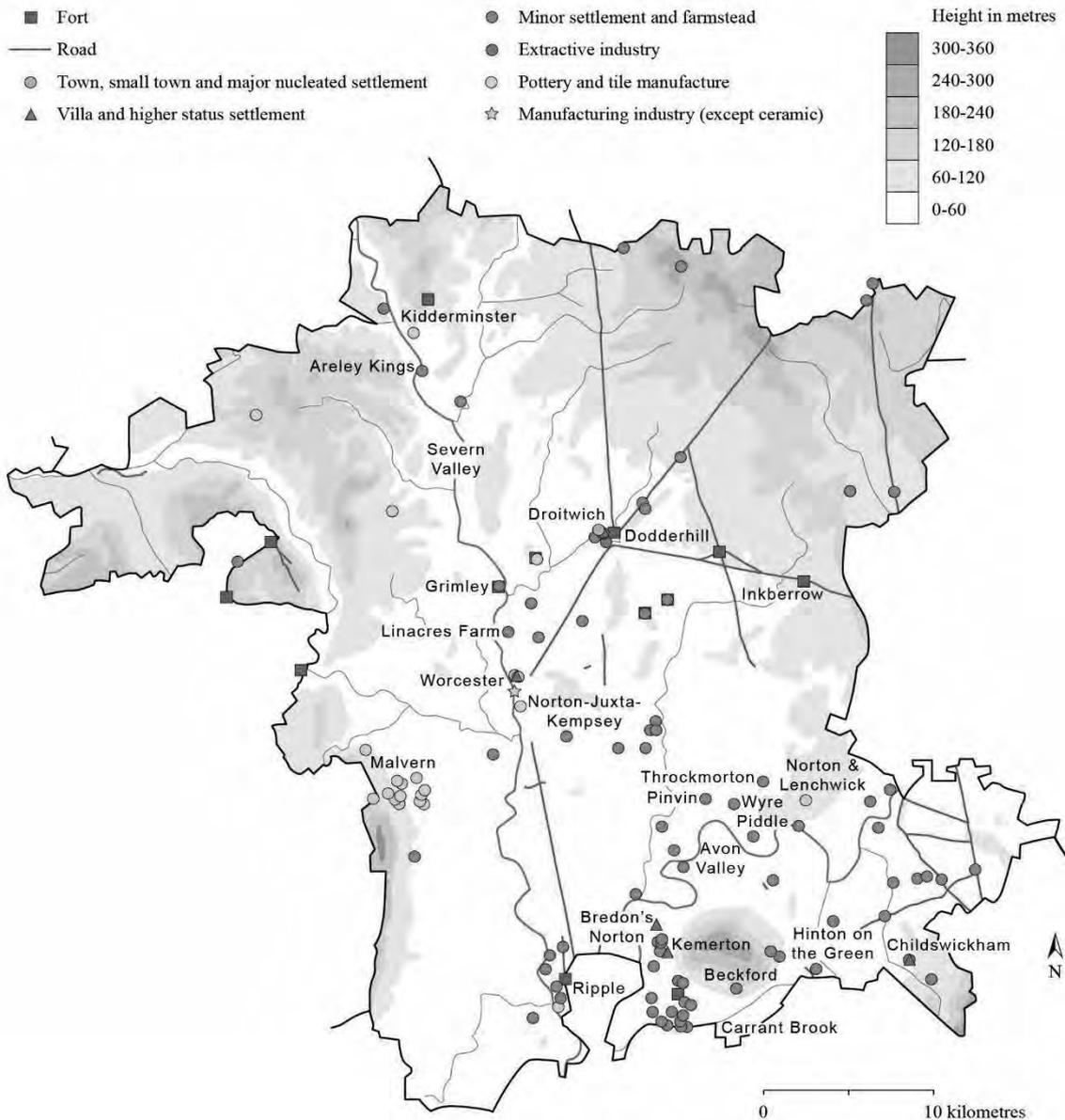
Very much of the evidence on which we have based our understanding of prehistoric Worcestershire has come from sites on gravel or sand (not just from quarries). Nationally, the archaeological approach to these sites is again coming under pressure from the quarrying industry, with calls to reduce the scale of evaluation, putting later stages of work at risk. It is important to remember that the (truthful) claim by minerals operators that gravel (for instance) can only be worked where it occurs (in contrast to other developments, which can be relocated) applies equally to archaeological remains – these can only be investigated where they exist, and are recognised to exist.

This is an excellent and very thorough report on a large and complex fieldwork project. Most significantly it helps to signpost the quality and importance of Worcestershire's lowland archaeological remains, and the need to ensure that there continues to be a sufficient archaeological response to minerals and other developments.

James Dinn

Clash of Cultures? The Romano-British Period in the West Midlands ed Roger White & Mike Hodder (2018) 224p. RRP £30; 20% off for WAS members until 31 July 2019. For special offer price of £24.00 use discount code WAS19: email orders@oxbowbooks.com, website www.oxbowbooks.com, or phone, 01226 734350.

This volume is the third of an ongoing series entitled *The Making of the West Midlands*. The two previous volumes examined the prehistoric period so they set the scene, as it is important to realise that when the Roman army occupied this region in AD 47 or soon after, vast tracts of land had already been cleared of natural forest and been farmed for centuries. The present volume complements the ongoing *Roman Rural Settlement Project* (<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/romangl/>) and the *West Midlands Archaeological Research Framework* (2011). The volume consists of 12 detailed chapters covering the Romano-British period in the counties of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and the West Midlands, plus thematic chapters covering the Roman army, agriculture, coinage, ceramics, industry and religion. It finishes with a discussion of the West Midlands during 'the Dark Ages' or the 5th and 6th centuries AD. The county chapters are all illustrated with a series of standardised maps showing topography, roads, settlements etc so it is easy to compare things like the density of settlement or the extent of the road network across the region (see Map). What really impressed me about this volume was discovering the amount of fieldwork and the activities of the Portable Antiquities Service, all of which has taken place during the last 30 years. At the moment the resources assigned to research and conventional publication cannot keep up with this volume of new data; therefore this volume is extremely welcome as it makes accessible a lot of new data that is otherwise lurking in 'grey literature' reports or the County Historic Environment Records.



Map of Worcestershire in the Roman period by Lou Buglass (Clash of Cultures, Fig 4.1), by kind permission of Birmingham University.

For reasons of space I am going to focus on the Worcestershire material as I think it will be of most interest to the *Recorder's* readers. This chapter was written by the late Hal Dalwood, James Dinn, Jane Evans, Neil Holbrook, Derek Hurst, Richard Morton, Robin Jackson and Elizabeth Pearson so it represents a collaborative effort. Military sites are sparse in Worcestershire compared with the neighbouring counties of Herefordshire and Shropshire, which suggests that the Roman army encountered little resistance here. At Blackstone, an enclosure which was formerly interpreted as a Roman fort is now known to date from the 1st century BC and might have served as a market centre.

Aerial survey in the 1960s revealed a wealth of multi-period cropmarks on the gravel terraces of the Avon and its tributaries that are often of Iron Age and Romano-British date. As a generalisation most of these cropmarks represent an agrarian landscape of ditched fields. These discoveries led to the assumption that rural settlement during these two periods was predominantly based on the gravel terraces, but fieldwork elsewhere within the county has

revealed a surprising density of contemporary settlement. It appears that rural Romano-British settlement within the county consisted of a network of dispersed farmsteads set within ditched enclosures, rather than villages or clusters of farmsteads (see Map). It is likely that each farmstead was run by an extended family. The density of settlement sites across Worcestershire varies considerably, partly due to a lack of exploration, particularly in the north and west of the county. The density of sites is highest on the fertile soils of the Vale of Evesham in the south-eastern part of the county, where in places there is nearly one site per square km. Therefore, a comprehensive road network must have existed, but it is surprising how few Roman roads have been dated and identified to date. Perhaps this is because many of these minor routes are still in use and rarely undergo archaeological investigation. Water transport, particularly along the River Severn, would have been important during the Romano-British period. Sailing barges could have reached Worcester and ports further upstream.

It is well known that during the Romano-British period the Gloucestershire Cotswolds possessed numerous rural villas; some were upmarket Roman-style farmsteads, but others were clearly palatial with large and elaborate mosaics. This pattern of settlement is in complete contrast with the one seen in neighbouring Worcestershire which, despite having better farmland, appears to have possessed relatively few villas of any description, though it is probable that some additional modest villa farmsteads await discovery in the south-eastern portion of the county. Here two newly discovered modest villa sites have been investigated at Bredon's Norton (see review of its publication in the *Recorder* 98, p.14) and Childswickham. The possible reasons for this dramatic contrast in the contemporary pattern of rural settlement need to be considered. For instance, was it connected with different patterns of land tenure? Did the tenant farmers of Romano-British Worcestershire choose not to invest in their rented homes in contrast to the owner occupiers of the various estates in neighbouring Gloucestershire, who appear to have invested large amounts of capital on their homes? If the Worcestershire farmers were tenants, then who were their landlords? The presence of two large Roman coin hoards from south-eastern Worcestershire (a late 4th-century one from Bredon Hill and a Honorian period one from Cleeve Prior) shows that a few of its inhabitants were able to amass considerable wealth. Were the owners of these hoards perhaps the local landlords or their agents? Perhaps the Worcestershire farmers were owner occupiers not tenants but, like the nomadic pastoralists of East Africa, chose to invest their wealth in livestock not upmarket homes with mosaics and hypocausts. I think that the absence of architectural and artefactual evidence for a highly Romanised lifestyle from most of the Worcestershire (except Droitwich and Worcester, see below) has prompted speculation that it was a cultural 'backwater' compared with some neighbouring regions, which possessed imposing cities such as Cirencester and Wroxeter. One problem is that few Worcestershire Romano-British farmsteads to date have been extensively excavated, so their ground plans, chronological development and agrarian economy are still poorly understood. For instance, were the gravel terraces and alkaline Lias clays predominantly occupied by mixed farms with an emphasis on commercial cereal production? Then were the other soil types mainly utilised by livestock farmers, perhaps raising cattle and sheep? The latter would have also provided wool which would have been an important source of textiles. However, the local urban animal bone assemblages all indicate that cattle were the dominant species of livestock within the county.

The impression from surface finds and small-scale fieldwork is that some of the farmsteads in the Vale of Evesham were established during the late Iron Age and continuously occupied for several centuries. The presence of 2nd- and 3rd-century roundhouses at Norton and Lenchwick suggests cultural continuity from the Iron Age, while the presence of rectangular foundations masonry on other sites is indicative of a Roman-style architectural tradition. It is likely that

these foundations supported single storey timber-framed buildings. Most rural buildings were probably thatched, as finds of ceramic roofing tiles and stone slates are relatively scarce.

It appears that the density of rural settlement probably peaked during the late 2nd or 3rd centuries AD, but when these sites were abandoned is uncertain. The end date of site occupation is often assigned to the later 4th century, simply due to the absence of later datable material. The absence of later datable finds is due to the ending of commercial pottery production (presumably due to the collapse of a market-based economy), and the simultaneous cessation of the importation of new coinage in about 410, when the imperial regime abandoned the province of *Britannia* (Brexite in reverse). Late 4th-century local farmers might have responded to the collapse of a market-based economy by reverting to subsistence agriculture and they could have carried on using their existing stocks of Roman-style pottery until these vessels either broke or wore out, so they might have gradually adapted to an aceramic life style, using wooden, horn and metal vessels instead.

Romano-British rural sites across the county all produce low domination Roman coins and quite large amounts of commercially produced coarse pottery, which was obtained from a variety of production centres across southern England (including the ubiquitous Severn Valley wares), plus small amounts of imported fine wares, normally Gaulish Samian. These finds confirm that the occupants of all these sites from the late 1st century AD onward were handling Roman coinage and able to acquire a variety of manufactured goods produced in other regions or provinces. This raises the question, how were these goods acquired by the rural population? Some goods might have been sold by itinerant pedlars, but the obvious explanation is there was a series of local market centres and a network of roads or trackways to provide vehicular access to them. A recent study of 514 Roman coins from the Badsey area of the Vale of Evesham struck between 16 BC and AD 388-402 revealed that many of these examples dated from 260-96. Does this mark a peak in economic activity? Andrews's study (see *TWAS* 26, 2018, pp. 43-62) of the assemblage of Roman coins from Badsey Fields Lane shows that its closest parallels are a roadside settlement in Hertfordshire and two rural villa sites in Gloucestershire and Hampshire, so it might have been a villa farmstead or perhaps a market centre. But until this site is excavated we will never know its status.

While Romano-British Worcestershire was primarily agrarian and rural, its pattern of settlement and its industrial base were quite diverse. The brine springs at Droitwich, which had been exploited since the late Iron Age, were quickly taken over by the Romans. Interestingly, Droitwich was known by the Romans as *Salinae* or 'salt-pans'. The presence of a short-lived fort at Dodder Hill (occupied c.AD 60-68), and an imposing 2nd-century wing-corridor villa (with a least 18 ground floor rooms) at Bays Meadow at Droitwich are both assumed to be connected with the Roman exploitation of this valuable natural resource. Salt would have been wanted for cooking and also as a preservative for food stuffs. It is tempting to interpret this villa as a residence of a 'salt magnate', perhaps either an imperial official or a civilian franchisee. There are some interesting finds from the Bays Meadow villa including a fragment of marble inlay from Greece, evidence of three standardised sizes of sandstone roofing slates and over 600 Roman coins. During the late Iron Age and early Roman periods Droitwich salt was distributed or sold locally in briquetage vessels, which are very distinctive finds and therefore easy to identify, but it appears that by the late Roman period salt was probably being sold in wooden barrels instead, so its containers are impossible to securely identify.

A ceramic tile production centre has been identified at Leigh Sinton, near Malvern. In this locality, due to the occurrence of suitable clays, pottery production had started during the Iron

Age. During the early Roman period the potters of the Malvern area adapted to changing consumer tastes by copying the popular Roman-style vessels to produce a new range of bowls, jars and tankards. An unusual product of the Malvern kilns were pre-formed ceramic ovens and baking plates. What these ovens were used to produce is not known, perhaps a special type of bread. There is evidence of small scale ferrous and non-ferrous metalworking and glass production in Worcester. The amount of iron nails and hand tools found on urban and rural sites confirms that blacksmithing must have been an important craft. Finds of spindle whorls are quite common, showing that spinning (probably of wool) was widely undertaken on a domestic scale, while weaving is evidenced by finds of loom weights.

There were no major Roman towns or cities within Worcestershire, but both Droitwich and Worcester are classified as 'small towns'. The latter may have started as an Iron Age settlement and subsequently became a walled town with an iron smelting industry. As extensive deposits of iron slag have been found in Worcester alongside the Severn, it seems likely that the raw materials like iron ore (possibly from the Forest of Dean) and charcoal required by this industry were being moved by boat. Excavations within Worcester have identified various urban Roman-style timber-framed strip buildings, workshops, farm buildings, plus a circular building following the local Iron Age architectural tradition. A possible urban villa has been identified at Britannia Square. It appears that by the late 4th century the town had been largely abandoned and it probably remained derelict until the foundation of the see in 680. The fact that a former Roman town was chosen as the site of a new Saxon cathedral implies that its significance as a central place within the landscape had not been forgotten.

One aspect of the county's Romano-British archaeology that is badly under-represented are burials. On the southern side of Worcester a number of inhumation and cremation burials have been discovered and a small late-Roman inhumation cemetery was found at Deansway. However, the rural sites have produced few inhumations or cremations. One possibility is that bodies were cremated on a pyre and the ashes not collected and interned in a container so that archaeologically such burials cannot easily be detected. There is little material evidence of Romano-British religious activity in Worcestershire and no temple sites have been identified within the county. There are four face pots known from the county, three of which are from Worcester. It is possible that these unusual ceramic vessels were associated with a Celtic smith god or his Roman counterpart Vulcan, which would tie in with the local iron smelting industry. A 4th-century 'chi-rho device' (the first two Greek letters of the name of Christ) known from Worcester is the only definite evidence of Christianity within the county, but sadly it has no proper provenance. The population of 4th-century Britannia, like us, worshipped many gods. Their religious and cultural diversity is nicely summed up in the wording of a curse recovered from the sacred hot springs at Bath which reads: 'Whether pagan or Christian, whoever it is, whether man or woman boy or girl, slave or free has stolen from me...' (Ireland *Roman Britain: a sourcebook*, 1996, p.194).

The chapter on Worcestershire ends with a series of thought-provoking research themes covering chronology; military sites; transport; urban settlements; villas and rural settlements; religion and burial; production; marketing/consumption and environmental change. To conclude, since 1990 there have been a vast number of archaeological discoveries and interventions across Worcestershire which have substantially rewritten our knowledge of this particular period of the county's past, and this is a dynamic process, so who knows what the next twenty years of fieldwork, metal-detecting and research will produce.

Bruce Watson

Lady Emily Foley. A Remarkable Life Pamela Hurle (2018) 92pp, £11.

There are no great surprises in this book, Lady Emily having been one of Pamela Hurle's *Malvern Women of Note* reviewed in *Recorder* 87 (Spring 2013). However, the author uses her access to the Foley archive in Hereford Record Office to good effect, the majority of the excellent illustrations being amongst its treasures. This 'remarkable life' begins naturally with biographical details of both Lady Emily's own and her husband families.

Widowed after only fourteen years, Lady Emily inherited the Foley estates in Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Staffordshire. A wonderful description of Stoke Edith in Herefordshire by Celia Fiennes at the turn of the 18th century includes the assessment that 'it deserves £10,000 a yeare to live like it'. Another vivid recollection comes from Emily's great-nephew's visit as a ten-year-old in 1888. On the estate Lady Emily carried out annual inspections, awarded prizes for the best managed farms and best kept houses and gardens, and hosted dinners for her tenants. She was instrumental in founding a Female Servants' Reward Society in 1833.

Her philanthropy extended to the church, hospitals and schools, where her sense of discipline is again apparent. Rules concerned fees, fines for absence without leave, punctuality, and appearance 'especially with regard to their hair'; fines went towards slate pencils and ink. Children were not admitted to Tarrington School from Stoke Edith parish unless able to read words of one syllable. In 1875 she gave £2,777 to build a school in Tarrington with master's house attached.

In Malvern Lady Emily continued her husband's work, naming Graham Road after her ancestors, but was not universally popular. For Stephen Ballard she was an 'encroacher' and 'pilferer', while Edwin Lees regretted the environmental impact of her buildings. However Pamela Hurle concludes that Lady Emily 'showed as much ... efficacy and regard for public need' as some modern planning committees. This story is covered more fully in her earlier volumes, *Malvern Hills: a hundred years of conservation* (1984) and *Stephen Ballard* (2010).

The author provides a balanced portrait of a controversial woman who enjoyed fine clothes and lived her long life to the full during four reigns, including virtually all of Victoria's.

Two more welcome books from Amberley Publishing, both reviewed by **Robin Whittaker**:

Worcester in 50 Buildings by James Dinn. £14.99 or £13.49 from www.amberley-books.com
It is now a quarter of a century since Alan Sutton Publishing issued Morriss and Hoverd's *The Buildings of Worcester*, so it is timely that this new volume should now appear, and James Dinn is the ideal author and guide to the City's buildings. His expertise as the City Archaeologist over many years informs all his descriptions, enabling him to add many points of detail that illuminate the significance of his chosen buildings. Limiting himself to 50 buildings (imposed on him by the requirements of the Publisher's series) might be seen as a drawback, but he sensibly stretches what he can cover by using whole areas (such as Britannia Square) as some of his chosen 50. The selection covers the wide span of the City's building stock, from the medieval to this century (including such buildings of recent years as Cathedral Square, The Hive and the King's School boathouse). The colour illustrations are first rate and the text, whilst economical, manages to be extremely informative, and up-to-date with current research. I particularly enjoyed the way the author adds telling points of detail about architects and materials, often using as a source the planning documents from the Worcester City archives.

The book inevitably covers many of the obvious candidates (the Cathedral, the Guildhall, The Greyfriars) but also draws our attention to less obvious choices, such as The Paul Pry in The Butts with its fine internal decoration or the Old Infirmary in Silver Street. The location plan of the sites is broadly helpful, but the inset showing the buildings in the area of Powick Bridge is a little hard to interpret for anyone unfamiliar with the City.

The format of this volume makes it an ideal companion to carry round on a tour of the City. To those wanting to take their enquiries further there is a brief but well-chosen bibliography. This volume can be thoroughly recommended.

Railways Around Worcestershire by Steve Burdett. Price as above.

Steve Burdett's book about the local railway scene might seem of less relevance to our members, but aspects of transport are of great importance to our history. This book covers a period of about 50 years, from 1970 to date (post steam age, although some photographs show steam locomotives pulling heritage trains), and is arranged by the stations of the county. Again, the photographs are of very high quality and attractive both to the railway enthusiast and the general reader. Some of the photographs from the Malvern area are particularly striking. This book underlines the fact that the significance of more recent sources and photographs can be underappreciated.

The stations with most coverage are probably not unexpectedly the two Worcester stations, but less well-known areas such as Blakedown and Hagley or Norton Junction also appear. This latter location by the new Worcestershire Parkway station is likely to loom larger in a similar volume in years to come. I have one small gripe – the table of contents gives pagination but the page numbering ceases after page 6, making it harder to find any particular station of interest.

Worcester Cathedral Dean and Chapter Treasurer's Register 1611-1669 ed David Morrison, Worcestershire Historical Society NS 28 (2018) 365 pp. £28, £21 to WHS members, available online at <https://worcestershirehistoricalsociety.co.uk/online-shop/> or from Robin Whittaker (£3.50 p&p). To be reviewed in the next issue of the *Recorder*.

Last Opportunity! The Sheldon Tapestry Map for Worcestershire, currently on display in the Bodleian Library, is coming down in May. It will be replaced by Oxfordshire, of which only the lower half survives, so it is worth visiting the Ashmolean for comparison with the 17th-century re-weave. The Gloucestershire fragment will feature in the *Talking Maps* exhibition at the Bodleian, 5 July to 8 March 2020. See *Worcestershire Recorder* 93 (Spring 2016).

Worcestershire Archaeological Society: 2019 Excursions Programme

Wednesday 8 May A Trip to the Black Country

A coach trip organised by David Collier. Limited to 30 places.

Sandwell is home to a nationally important medieval timber framed building. Built in 1273, the Great Hall is thought to be the earliest of this type of construction still standing. Wings at each end of the hall were replaced by the current wings in the early 15th century and a Chapel was added at the end of the century. Recently a 16th-century kitchen building has been identified. The site is one of the most complete and original medieval complexes remaining. After a morning guided tour we will have lunch at Sandwell Farm Park. This consists of a restored working late 18th-century model farm, a small museum dedicated to Sandwell Priory

and House and a petting Zoo. In the afternoon, we will visit Oak House. This delightful half-timbered yeoman farmer's house was built in the late 16th/early 17th century and is furnished with interesting furniture, some on loan from the V and A. Tea and biscuits will be served.

Wednesday 5 June Malmesbury and Westonbirt House. Organised by Janet Dunleavey. By coach to Malmesbury for a guided tour of the Abbey and the old town including the Abbey gardens and the local museum. After lunch we travel to Westonbirt House, the home of the Holford family, who rebuilt the existing Georgian family home in the mid 19th century. This lavish house (now a girls boarding school) dates from c1850, is listed Grade I and is surrounded by extensive landscaped gardens. We will have a private guided tour of the main rooms followed by afternoon tea and then time to explore the gardens which should be good in June.

Wednesday 10 July Alcester Roman Museum and Town Walk. Organised by Bob Ruffle. An afternoon visit using members' transport to this small Roman town just over the border in Warwickshire. We will visit the Roman Alcester museum, a partnership between Alcester Heritage Trust and Warwickshire County Council, and have a guided tour of the town centre. Alcester is one of the most investigated Roman small towns in the country, with over 100 archaeological digs in the last 80 years. Recent excavations have revealed much which would have been outside the boundary wall built in the 3rd century AD.

Wednesday 31 July Drakelow Tunnels organised by James Dinn. Limited to 30 places Evening visit. Drakelow Tunnels are a former top secret underground military complex beneath Kingsford Country Park, north of Kidderminster. They were created in 1941-42 as a shadow factory where parts for aircraft engines were machined in the 3½ miles of tunnels throughout WWII. After the war the tunnels began producing parts for tank engines until the Government converted half into a secret facility, Regional Seat of Government 9, for use in the event of nuclear war. Since they were decommissioned and sold in 1993, the Drakelow Tunnels Preservation Trust has been restoring the complex to its original condition to become the largest Cold War Museum in the UK, and the largest underground space open to the general public.

Tuesday 13 August Worcestershire Churches Evening

Tim Bridges will lead an evening visit, using our own cars, to two churches in the Evesham area. Further details will be circulated. Refreshments included.

Wed 4 September Redditch: Forge Mill Needle Museum and Bordesley Abbey

A day visit, using our own cars, organised by Bob Ruffle.

From medieval monastic life to the hardships of working in a Victorian needle mill. Redditch was famous for producing a staggering 90% of the world's needles. The visit will include a tour of Forge Mill with guides to bring to life the story of how the humble needle was made. You will also experience an original scouring mill; much of the original Victorian water powered machinery remains and is working for group visits – the only remaining water powered needle scouring mill left in the world! After lunch there will be a tour of nearby Bordesley Abbey, a 12th-century Cistercian foundation, the subject of a long running archaeological project. Many of the archaeological finds from the site can now be seen in the Visitor Centre which tells the story of the abbey from its foundation to the dissolution.

Items for the next issue should be sent to the Editor, Caroline Hillaby, email recorder@worcestershirearchaeologicalsociety.org.uk by 1 September 2019.



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