



Bristol Archaeological Research Group

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barg

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MEMBERSHIP

Subscriptions for 1978 were due on 1 January. Current rates are:

£2.00 for members aged 18 and over
£3.00 for husband and wife
£1.40 for Senior Citizens and special cases on application
£0.40 for Associate Members (under 18 years)

Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to Bristol Archaeological Research Group and sent to the Hon Membership Secretary, Miss Caroline Gait, to whom any changes of address should be notified. Will members who pay annually by Bankers Order on 1 March, please check that they are paying at the correct rates.

EDITORIAL

A small but significant step is the main event I have to write about in this editorial. This is the decision of the Ordnance Survey to rescind their previous resolution of cancelling their subscription to the BARG Bulletin. May I hastily add, before I am accused of being egocentric, that presumably this applies to all archaeological journals, ephemera etc throughout the country. Without such bulletins the Ordnance Survey could not possibly function as a proper archaeological service.

In the atmosphere of the future aims and functions of BARG, as very aptly described by Leslie Grinsell (p 149-151), it is gratifying to publish the results of some original research and fieldwork by James Russell on the Parish of Clifton (pp138-143).

Members will note in the calendar of the AGM on 24 February 1979. Notices will be sent out at the end of January for nominations for new Committee members. Amongst others, Mrs June Williams, Hon Secretary for Associate Members will not be standing. This is a great blow to the Group as her enthusiasm and dedication have been all too evident. It is important to encourage the younger members of the Group, with talks, coach trips, guided tours etc, and this requires a lot of organisation and effort. May I take this opportunity of thanking June for her hard work, and advertising for her successor. I wouldn't like to think that BARG members consisted of arm-chair archaeologists only. If you think you could take on this task, please contact June at 5 Grange Close North, Westbury-on-Trym, or phone me Bristol 46997 so that a successful handing over arrangement can be made.

THE PARISH OF CLIFTON

by

James Russell

1) Introduction

The former parish of Clifton lies immediately to the west of Bristol city centre. Until 1836, when it was annexed by the City of Bristol, the parish consisted of a roughly rectangular block of land measuring 3 km from N to S and 1.6 km from E to W. It was bounded on the SE by Bristol, on the W and S by the River Avon, and on the N and NE by the tithing of Stoke Bishop, a portion of Westbury-on-Trym parish. Most of Clifton is situated on a ridge of Carboniferous limestone, which rises towards the N to a height of over 90 m above sea-level. The limestone itself is exposed only around the northern and western fringes of the parish, being concealed elsewhere beneath deposits of Triassic marls and breccias. Along the western side of the parish the limestone ridge is cut through dramatically by the Avon Gorge, now generally considered to have been formed during the Pleistocene period.

The Clifton of today is very much the product of the Georgian and Victorian periods. During the 18th and 19th centuries the district underwent rapid development, first as a fashionable health resort and later as a middle-class suburb of Bristol. During the early 19th century the topography of the southern end of the parish was greatly altered by the creation of the Floating Harbour and Cumberland Basin. Except for the broad belt of former common grazing land known as Durdham Down, which runs across its northern end, the area of the old parish is now almost wholly built up. Nevertheless, the layout of the medieval village of Clifton remains clearly recognisable, while on Durdham Down earthworks of Iron Age and Roman date have been preserved. It is with these traces of early settlement in Clifton that the remainder of this article is concerned.

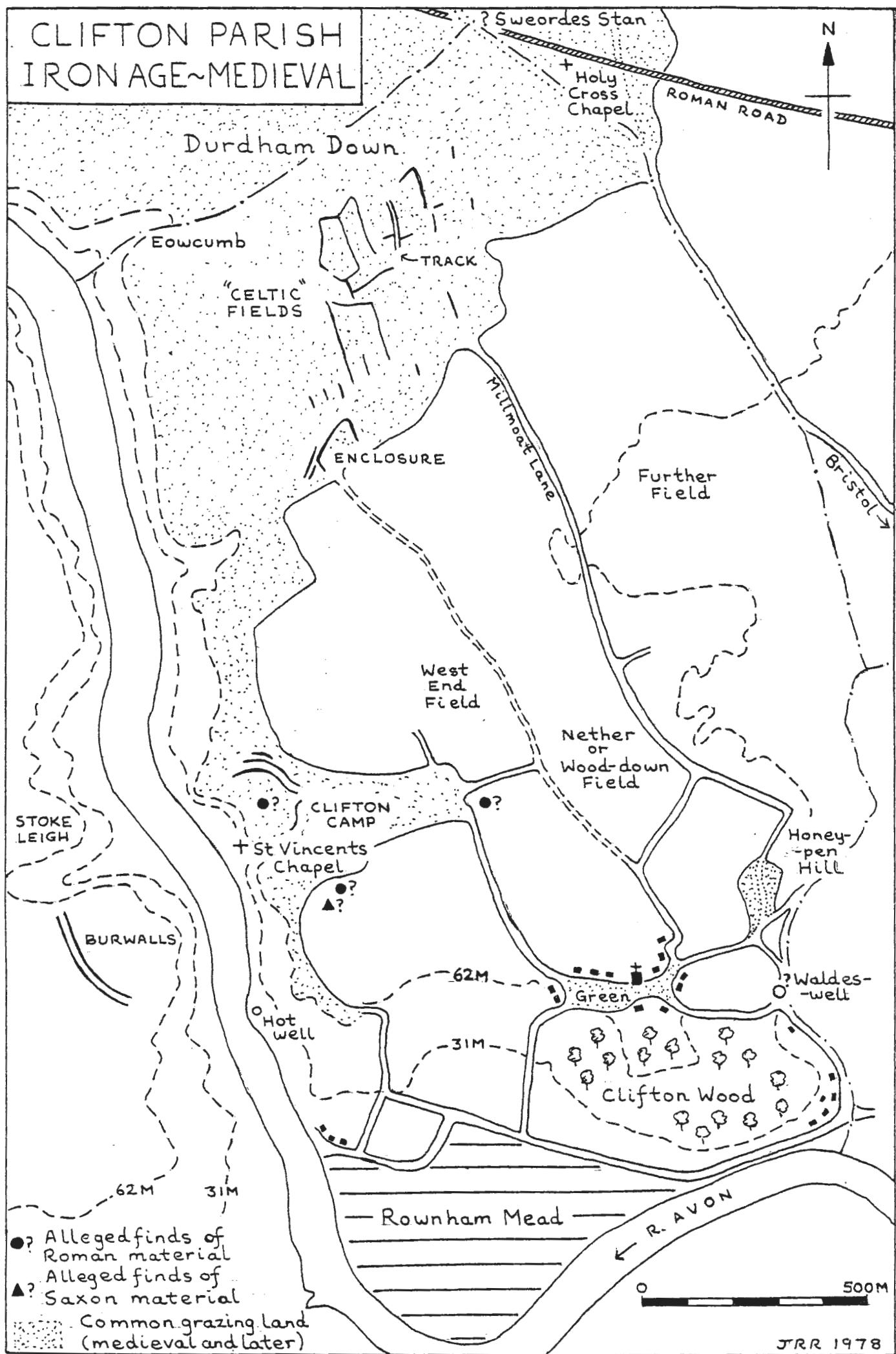
2) Iron Age and Roman Clifton

By far the most conspicuous archaeological site in Clifton parish is Clifton Camp, an Iron Age hillfort occupying a limestone outcrop immediately N of the Suspension Bridge (ST 56657330)(1). Facing the Camp on the western side of the Avon Gorge are two similar fortifications, Burwalls and Stokeleigh Camps. Like Burwalls and Stokeleigh, Clifton Camp is multivallate, with remains of three rings of drystone ramparts along its northern and western sides; the southern defences have mostly been destroyed by quarrying. The original entrance was probably on the E side, where there are mutilated traces of outworks.

At several points along the innermost N and E defences it can be seen that the rubble facing of the rampart has been reduced to quicklime, probably as a result of the burning of internal lacing. Precisely the same phenomenon was noted in the core of the Burwalls ramparts during their partial destruction in the 19th century. No finds of Iron Age material have yet been recorded from within Clifton Camp; the presumably contemporary Stokeleigh Camp has however been shown by excavation to have been occupied from about 200 BC to the Roman Conquest (2). The various slight earthworks to be seen within Clifton Camp, including a square enclosure in the NW corner, are most probably of Roman or Medieval date.

Approximately 1 km N of Clifton Camp, on the SE side of Durdham Down, can be seen considerable remains of a 'Celtic' field system. The system

CLIFTON PARISH IRON AGE~MEDIEVAL



which was first planned and described in 1893 by a local doctor, A B Prowse (3), has recently been resurveyed, at a scale of 1:2500, by the present author in collaboration with Messrs. R Iles and N Clough. The fields are roughly rectangular, between 40 and 60 m wide and up to 150 m long. They are divided by low banks of limestone rubble and are laid out on a consistent NNW - SSE alignment. At ST 56837463 the system is intersected by a contemporary trackway, approximately 3 m wide and running N-S. To the S of the fields, on the sloping edge of the Down facing the Zoological Gardens, is a trapezoidal enclosure cut through and partially destroyed by Clifton Down Road. The enclosure, which is skirted at its western end by a second trackway, has the same orientation as the fields and is presumably contemporary with them.

The Durdham Down field system cannot be precisely dated and could have been in use at almost any time between c 200 BC and AD 400. The elongated shape and comparatively large size of the fields tends however to make a Roman date seem most probable. More specific evidence of Roman settlement in Clifton appears to have come to light, according to contemporary accounts, during the late 18th century, when building work was in progress around the southern end of Durdham Down, close to Clifton Camp. Around 1760 finds of Roman coins, pottery and building materials were made by Sir William Draper while levelling the ground in the vicinity of the Camp, almost certainly in preparation for the erection of his country house, Manilla Hall (ST 57057330; since demolished) (4). More Roman coins, together with several pennies of Ethelred II, were found in 1784, when houses were being built 'near the Camp', probably in Sion Row (ST 56707315) (5), while others are said to have been discovered within the Camp itself.

3) Saxon and Medieval Clifton

The first mention of the medieval village of Clifton, 'the farmstead on the rocks', occurs in Domesday Book, compiled around AD 1086. Here we are told that during the reign of Edward the Confessor the manor of Clifton had been held from the King by Saewine, the 'provost' or chief official of the nearby town of Bristol. Since the Conquest Saewine had been replaced at Clifton by a Norman, Roger fitz Ralph. According to the Domesday entry Clifton was then a very small community, consisting of only fifteen families. We are told that between them the lord and his tenants possessed five plough-teams; reference is also made to seven acres of meadowland.

There is very little solid evidence for the existence of this small medieval settlement before the time of Saewine. The only archaeological finds of Saxon date from the parish are the coins of Ethelred allegedly discovered in Sion Row in 1784. It is nevertheless possible to suggest that Clifton parish was already in existence as a land-unit some two centuries before Domesday. The evidence for this suggestion is contained in a boundary survey in a Charter of AD 883 relating to an estate in the tithing of Stoke Bishop, which, as it will be recalled, embraces Clifton parish on its N and NE sides. The 883 survey seems to indicate that by then the tithing boundaries were already mostly fixed in their medieval and later positions (6).

Three of the survey landmarks - 'Eowcumb', 'Waldeswell' and 'Sweordes Stan' - seem to have been located on the common boundary between Clifton and Stoke. 'Eowcumb' is almost certainly the deep gully on Durdham Down now known as Walcombe Slade (ST 56307450). 'Waldeswell' can be identified, though with rather less confidence, with a spring in the valley between Clifton Wood and Brandon Hill, now known as Jacobs Well but mentioned as 'Wodewell' in a charter of c 1200 (ST 57687285) (7). (It should be noted that this identification assumes that the 883 boundary of Stoke extended

somewhat further SE than the known Tithing boundary). The third landmark, 'Sweordes Stan', which in the survey lies between the other two, cannot be positively identified today. It seems most likely, however, that it lay at the NE corner of Clifton parish, a point marked today by a group of mere-stones W of the water-tower on Stoke Road (ST 57067503).

Between the late 11th and early 18th centuries the village of Clifton seems to have grown and changed very little. As late as 1608 the parish could produce only 18 men fit for military service (8). The manor of Clifton, on the other hand, had a very complex history, with many changes of ownership (9). By the mid 15th century the estate had become divided into a 'greater manor', itself split between three owners, and a 'smaller manor', connected with the parish church, which belonged to the College at Westbury-On-Trym. It was not until the late 17th century that the various segments of the estate were reunited under a single proprietor, the Society of Merchant Venturers. Perhaps as a result of this subdivision few medieval documents relating to the manor seem to have survived. Two valuable post-medieval sources are however easily accessible in print - a 1625 survey of the 'smaller manor' (10), and a map the whole manor prepared in 1746 by Jacob de Wilstar (11). From these two records the topography of the medieval village can be reconstructed with some confidence.

As can be seen from the accompanying sketch plan, the layout of medieval Clifton was relatively simple. At the southern end of the parish, occupying an area of riverside alluvium now bisected by the Cumberland Basin, was Rownham Mead, a common meadow originally divided into unfenced strips. Here, no doubt, were located the seven acres of meadow mentioned in Domesday Book. N of this the ground rises steeply. At the head of the slope lay the village of Clifton itself, consisting of a number of farm-houses, now replaced by elegant 18th century villas, grouped round the rectangular green which still survives. A spur to the SE of the green was occupied by Clifton Wood, still in existence as such in 1625 but replaced by gardens and pasture by 1746.

The small parish church, dedicated to St Andrew, was situated on the N side of the village green at ST 57417293. The church, which seems to have originated in the mid 12th century, was demolished in 1822 following the erection of a new and much larger structure a few metres to the N. In the Second World War the new church was itself destroyed in an air raid, and today the foundations of both buildings are preserved side by side, those of the old church having been marked out with box hedges. The church was flanked on the E by the Parsonage House (on the site of the present Bishops House) and on the SW by the Church House, used for parish business and for sheltering the poor (12).

In the area to the N of Clifton village, roughly in the centre of the parish, lay the open arable fields of the medieval settlement. The survey of 1625 shows that despite much piecemeal enclosure, parts of three such fields - West End Field, Nether or Wood-Down Field and Further Field - were then still in existence; the approximate locations of these are indicated on the accompanying plan. The area was traversed by several lanes and footpaths, mostly running N-S; the most important of these, was the present Pembroke Road, which is mentioned in the 1625 survey as 'Millmoat Lane'.

The area of arable land in medieval Clifton coincided almost precisely with an area of Triassic marls and breccias, producing relatively fertile red clayey soils. To the N and W, where the Triassic deposits give way to outcrops of Carboniferous limestone with a much thinner soil cover, lay Durdham Down, the main area of common grazing land in the parish. The Down, which extended northwards into Stoke Bishop and Westbury tithings, was originally known as 'Thyrdhamdoune' or 'Trydlandowne' in reference to the adjacent settlement of 'Thirdland', the present-day Redland. The Down

escaped large-scale enclosure in the 18th and early 19th centuries and since 1861 has been carefully protected as a public open space. The 15th century Bristolian antiquary, William Worcester, gives a description of a chapel on Durdham Down dedicated to the Holy Cross (13); this was almost certainly identical with a chapel dedicated to St Lambert which lay on the NE boundary of Clifton parish at approximately ST 57237491. Worcester also gives several accounts of the chapel and hermitage of St Vincent, which was apparently situated on the precipitous slopes of the Avon Gorge below Clifton Camp (approximately ST 56517320) (14).

4) Discussion

In the foregoing paragraphs evidence has been presented for three phases of early settlement in the parish of Clifton - Iron Age, Roman and Medieval. Of these the first is represented principally by the Clifton Camp hillfort. It remains to be seen whether Clifton Camp was permanently inhabited or merely used occasionally as a place of refuge; the neighbouring Stokeleigh Camp has however recently been shown to contain unexpectedly dense occupation deposits. The relationship between Clifton, Stokeleigh and Burwalls Camps has long been a matter of speculation. It is possible to see them as representing a co-ordinated defensive scheme controlling movement both along and across the River Avon. It seems far more likely, however, considering the turbulent nature of Iron Age society, that they were the product of mutual hostility between three separate tribal units.

The Roman period is represented in Clifton by the 18th century reports of finds in the Clifton Camp area and by the 'Celtic' fields on Durdham Down. The former, if reliable, seem to indicate some form of settlement around the S end of Durdham Down; the material found by Sir William Draper, which allegedly included bricks and tiles, suggests the presence of at least one substantial building. The Durdham Down fields must represent only a fraction - the fortuitously preserved outer fringe - of the arable land in Iron Age/Roman Clifton; the bulk of this would have lain further S, in the same area as the open fields of the medieval village. The trackways incorporated in the field system could have linked the assumed settlement area around Clifton Camp with the main road from Bath to Seamills.

The origins of the medieval manor and parish of Clifton remain obscure. It seems nevertheless by no means unlikely that its boundaries and pattern of land use were inherited directly from the Roman estate which appears to have preceded it. A parallel instance of the possible survival of a land-unit from Roman into Saxon times can be found at Henbury, some 4 km N of Clifton, where in the late 7th century an estate was granted to the Bishopric of Worcester 'with its ancient boundaries' (15). It may also be noted that the strip-like layout of the parish, cutting across the grain of the landscape to incorporate a variety of terrains and soil-types, closely resembles that of the settlements in the Vale of Wrington, where a similar continuity has been postulated by Dr P J Fowler.

Many gaps inevitably remain in our knowledge of early Clifton. While some of these will probably always remain unfilled, much fresh information could undoubtedly be recovered by a well-planned programme of research. Selective excavation could be carried out within Clifton Camp and the Durdham Down field system, while documentary study could be undertaken to elucidate further the topography of the medieval parish. Given the remarkably high proportion of BARG members resident in Clifton there should (theoretically !) be no shortage of people willing and able to help with such work.

5) Notes

Abbreviations:

PBNS - Proceedings of the Bristol Naturalists Society
PCAC - Proceedings of the Clifton Antiquarian Club
PUBSS - Proceedings of the University of Bristol Spelaeological Society
TBGAS - Transactions of the Bristol & Glos. Archaeological Society

- 1) C Lloyd Morgan, Notes on the Clifton, Burwalls and Stokeleigh Camps.
PCAC Vol 5, 8-24 (1904)
- 2) J W Haldane, The Excavations at Stokeleigh Camp, Avon. PUBSS Vol 1⁴, 29-74 (1975)
- 3) A B Prowse, Some Ancient British Remains on Clifton Down. PBNS Vol, 93-10⁴ (1893)
- 4) W Barrett, The History and Antiquities of Bristol (1789), 10
- 5) W Barrett, op. cit., 15
- 6) S Everett, A Reinterpretation of the Anglo-Saxon Survey of Stoke Bishop. TBGAS Vol 80, 175-78 (1961). My placing of the survey landmarks differs in certain respects from Everett's.
- 7) TBGAS, Vol 3, 217
- 8) J Smyth, Men and Armour in Gloucestershire in 1608 (facsimile 1902), 236
- 9) A S Ellis, On the Manorial History of Clifton, TBGAS, Vol 3, 211-231 (1879)
- 10) L J Upton Way, The 1625 Survey of the Smaller Manor of Clifton, TBGAS, Vol 36, 220-50 (1913)
- 11) J Latimer, Clifton in 1746, TBGAS Vol 23, 312-22 (1900)
- 12) A J Green-Armytage, Concerning Clifton (1922), 20-31
- 13) J Dallaway, Antiquities of Bristow (1834), 78
- 14) J Dallaway, op. cit., 53-55
- 15) H P R Finberg, Gloucestershire Studies (1957), 4.

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SURVEY ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP IN AVON (SAGA)

by

Rob Iles

Over the past few months a small group of BARG members has been carrying out detailed survey work in Avon. Instrumental surveys have already been completed on Durdham Down and several medieval sites on the edge of the Cotswolds. Our main aim is to accurately plan and record visible remains - earthworks, pottery scatters etc - while they still survive. We will concentrate on those items which are still well represented in this area, and types of sites which have been neglected.

Before we are accused of treading on other people's (Parish Surveyors') toes, may we say that this activity is of a more intensive and localised nature than PS recording, is not confined to any particular parish and can only be undertaken by groups rather than individuals. We would be happy to assist Parish Surveyors in planning earthworks they have discovered. Similarly we would like to co-operate with local historians, who are interested in landscape and land use history.

Our next major project is to survey the multi-period remains in Ashton Park, a task in which some of us initially helped Peter Fowler last year.

The remains are very extensive and will probably take several months to complete. We would like to know if there are any people who would help on such projects. The work is done at weekends and requires a fairly long term commitment. This is an opportunity for BARG members to learn basic surveying techniques, which are much simpler than most people imagine.

If you are interested please contact:

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* * * * *

EXCAVATIONS at HAM GREEN, AUGUST 1978

by

M W Ponsford

The Ware

Ham Green ware consists of two main kinds of medieval pottery vessel, green glazed jugs and cooking pots. Other forms were also made, including bowls, meat or dripping dishes and lamps. The jugs are always glazed and consist of two main types, as described by Barton in 1963 (Trans, Bristol Gloucestershire Archaeol Soc LXXXII 95-126).

The first, 'A' jugs in fabric A, is decorated in particular with rouletting, combing and an applied and stabbed neck band. The bases are sagging and undecorated except for a band of rouletting at the basal angle. The rim forms are considered abnormal for Ham Green jugs as a whole with pronounced 'noses' below the rim proper. Bridge spouts are found on Ham Green jugs as a whole. A common feature on 'A' jugs is the 'ledging' effect on the shoulder. They were also finished on a turn-table if not actually wheel-thrown.

'B' jugs are far more common and comprise all other Ham Green jugs. These are characterised by a uniform rim (with less of a 'nose'), a bridge spout which is often decorated with slashing (hence 'bearded bridge-spout') and frilly bases. The decoration is made with a single pointed tool and stabbing, slashing, cross-hatching and horizontal grooving are common all over except on the lower third of the body. Applied strips are often found on the vessels. sometimes composed to depict zoomorphic and, particularly, anthropomorphic designs. It is thought that the applied work belongs to the middle period of production. These vessels are always hand-made in a similar fabric to 'A' jugs with chert inclusions.

The cooking pots are more uniform and are certainly made in the local Triassic clay with quartz inclusions. The decorative techniques are similar to those used on the jugs, consisting mainly of combing and grooving on the upper part of the body and inside the rim. It is thought that combing may be a feature of cooking pots made alongside 'A' jugs.

The pottery was made between c 1225 and 1300. After that period wheel-thrown Bristol wares, made particularly at Redcliffe Hill, pushed out the poorer-quality Ham Green wares. The vessels, mostly jugs, are widely distributed in the BARG area, in South Wales as far west as Carmarthen and in eastern Ireland, particularly at Dublin and Cork, where large quantities have been found in excavations.

Problems

Although the previous paragraphs suggest that a great deal is known about the ware, there are several problems left to resolve. Although we know the period of production fairly exactly, we do not know where the various wares fit chronologically. It is difficult to separate 'A' from 'B', stratigraphically, on sites in Bristol. The evidence has suggested that all kinds were made together. The reason for thinking this is that, because Ham Green ware is very common, residual sherds occur in all post-13th century layers as well. Secondly, only one kiln has been found and that was not accurately pin-pointed. We need to know, for instance, whether it was the only kiln at the site, how long it was in production and whether other kilns were also sited in the same area. We also want to know if the working area was defined, whether there were any workshops nearby and how these operated. These were some of the reasons which prompted the City Museum's excavation at Ham Green this year. The site lies in the field immediately east of Ham Green Hospital (ST 534758) on Triassic marl, within 100 m of the Avon river cliff. A survey by the DoE showed several anomalies in the kiln area, two of which were tested by excavation.

The Excavation

The first trench lay SW of the kiln site and was about 225 sq m in size. This proved to be a frustrating area as very little evidence of pottery manufacture was found. The principal features were two parallel N-S ditches at the east end, the earlier quite shallow, the later one much more substantial. The second was probably medieval in origin but recut at a later date. It was partially filled with 18th century rubbish. Two other clay-filled pits were probably of 18th century date. The 18th century features may have been associated with cottages by the roadside to the south. The hospital outfall drain had been cut diagonally across the site down to natural limestone and clay. Otherwise there was a uniform layer of soil over the area which contained Ham Green sherds and evidence of ploughing and disturbance at a later date.

A further area of 120 sq m was opened up south of the outfall drain and to the east of the original square. This located most of the original kiln, which we were able to put on a plan, and a great heap of wasted pottery. The kiln had little of its flooring left and its relationship to surrounding areas had been cut away by the original excavation. A drainage ditch was found around it, recut at least once.

In these ditches and over them were found thick stratified groups of pottery, including an important one in the ditch, just south of the kiln itself. This group consisted of whole pots which had obviously been dumped at one time.

The results, therefore, were mixed. We still have but one kiln which, at present, was responsible for producing the vast quantities which have been found on excavated sites. This is unbelievable, though possible. The kiln-plan was augmented, though, by the discovery of the drainage ditch around it. A possible boundary ditch to the working area was found in the first area and this also demarcated the concentration of

pottery waste to some extent. The most important result was the recovery of a stratified sequence of wares which may help to provide information on the evolution of the ware.

Sherds of knight jugs and face spouts with beards, found in the excavation, clearly show that all our Bristol-made pottery had its origins in Ham Green ware. Another type of cooking pot, not previously known to have been made at the site, suggests that coarse wares were made at Ham Green at least in the 12th century, if not in the Saxon period.

The most intriguing find was a bronze mount with knight's head finial, decorated with silver and enamel which was of a quality not normally expected from poor potters' working areas. It might also have been the model for some knight jug figures.

It is hoped to carry out more work on the site next year and solve the particular problem of the scarcity of kilns. We would like to thank the Southmead Hospital Group, Ham Green Hospital and the farmers, Alvis Brothers, for allowing us to carry out the excavations.

* * * * *

DEVELOPMENT OBSERVATION GROUP : RECENT DISCOVERIES AT WHITCHURCH

by

Mary Campbell

The Development Observation Group are continuing to carry out their watch over the building sites in Bristol.

A good example of how the Group's work should function has just occurred at Whitchurch. The City Planning Office sent their fortnightly list of granted planning applications to the Museum and among the larger developments was one for Lyons Court. The details concerning this site were sent to Merle Higgs and Vicky Davis who are the watchers in that area. They kept a careful watch upon the site until they spotted what appeared to be a 20 ft long wall and also some pottery. Merle immediately notified the Museum. The next day she returned to the site to sketch a piece of the 'wall' which was due to be demolished and a workman gave her a coin which he had just found beside the 'wall'.

After Michael Ponsford had visited the site it was established that this was not a wall but was a land drain, the pottery was two pieces of Samian and there was a large piece of a mortarium which was possibly imitation Samian and one animal bone was found near the pottery.

David Dawson has given the following report on the coin :

Brass sestertius of the Emperor Trajan

Obv : IMP CAES NERVA(E TRAIAN)O AUG GER DAC P M TR P COS V P P
Laureate bust l

Rev : (SPQR OPTIM)O PRINCIPI - S C Abundantia standing l with cornucopia and ears of corn. On l a modus by her foot
RIC 492 Struck AD 103-111

The Development Observation Group depends upon this type of co-operation between the Planning Office, the Museum, the building contractors and their work forces, and also the many DOG watchers who give their free time to this work. Everyone who knows the importance of this work is most grateful to them.

BARG ASSOCIATES VISIT TO GLOUCESTER
by
Jean Holmans

A group of 34 members travelled by coach to Gloucester on Saturday 9 September. Carolyn Heighway, Director of the Gloucester City Excavation Unit, met us at St Michael's Church Tower, which is situated at the crossing of the four old medieval streets, laid out on the grid plan of the old Roman Colonia.

Carolyn gave us a short talk on the general plan of the town, and important sites to visit, and provided us with some of the excellent mini-guides published by the Gloucester Civic Trust. After this some of us went with Carolyn to see various buildings, whilst others departed to the old dock area.

Some five domestic buildings were seen including houses and inns. Amongst the most impressive of these was the New Inn built by St Peters Abbey c 1450, to accommodate pilgrims visiting the shrine of Edward II. The entrance to the inn is by a narrow lane into one of the most impressive, galleried courtyard inns of this age in England.

Another fine building of the 16th century, (but concealed behind a Georgian facade) was Winfields, 6 Westgate Street. After entering a narrow alley by a side door, one can look up to a fine four-storey elevation, with beautifully carved overhangings and original detailing. Unfortunately, because of the height and the closeness of the neighbouring building, much of its beauty is hidden away, and most people must walk by unaware of its existence. Inside the 16th century Fleece Inn, when the pub is open it is possible to see a fine 12th century barrel-vaulted undercroft - possibly part of an old merchants house.

Later in the morning Carolyn met the group at St Oswald's Priory, where she gave us a short guided tour of the current excavations.

The first church was founded by Aethelfleda, daughter of Alfred the Great. This building (c AD 909) was a large one, with an apse at the western end, and North and South chapels. After 1100 the church seems to have declined, the apse disappeared, and in 1152 it became a Priory for the Augustinian Canons, and the remains of an arcade of Norman arches inserted then can still be seen standing. After the Dissolution the church became a Chapel for the parish, and by the 17th century was mainly in ruins. A new Victorian church was built in 1866 and demolished in 1915. Many of the early features have been discovered by excavation, along with 500 graves, and some important pieces of 9th and 10th century stone sculptures, now in the museum. The excavation still continues, and should provide interesting new discoveries on this multi-period site.

Many of the group visited the Folk Museum, in a fine early 16th timber-framed building known as Bishop Hooper's Lodging. The museum contained a large number of interesting exhibits from prehistoric and Roman times up to the 20th century. In the 18th century the building was used as a pin factory, and the exhibits from this time proved very interesting and showed what a busy job it must have been!

After lunch the whole group was privileged to have a guided tour of the cathedral by Canon Welander. This lasted for 2 hours and proved to be a fascinating and comprehensive survey of the development of the cathedral.

Apart from the main details of the different stages in the construction of the building, a number of other interesting points were shown to us. These included the example of the first Perpendicular architecture in England, constructed in the Lady Chapel built to commemorate Edward II by his son Edward III. We also saw the finely decorated alabaster tomb of Edward II, and in contrast the impressive but simple early wooden carving of the effigy of Robert of Normandy, the Conqueror's son.

The massive East Window contains some of the earliest stained glass in English cathedrals. We also saw an unusually large number of masons' marks on the pillars, and these warrant a special study on their own. We walked round the triforium, and visited the crypt, and finished our tour in the cloisters of the old Abbey, where on the stone benches we saw inscribed marks where the novices played the old game of fox and geese to while away the time.

I myself did not have time to visit the old Dock area, and other interesting buildings of the historic town, so maybe another visit later on would be worthwhile.

Our thanks are due to June Williams who organised the trip, and to Carolyn Heighway, and Canon Welander, our excellent guides, who between them provided such an interesting day.

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THORNBURY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SYMPOSIUM

by

Bill Solley

On Saturday 18 November a most successful meeting was held at the Armstrong Hall, Thornbury. Jointly organised by the Northavon Society for Archaeology and the Avon Archaeological Council, there was an exhibition of material from the area together with maps, photographs and plans of old houses in Thornbury.

The lecturers were introduced by Nicholas Thomas and the City Museum Bristol had brought along some of the items on show.

In the morning John Drinkwater spoke on the Cotswold barrows and he was followed by Linda Hall who described the features of many of the 16th and 17th century farmhouses in Avon.

Ann Ellison opened the afternoon session with an up to date account of the excavations on the Roman temple site at Uley. Roger Leech spoke on the early history of Thornbury and Mike Ponsford described the excavation at Hortham Hospital where Romano-British material was recovered. Julian Bennett gave an account of the 16th century pottery wasters found near Heneage Court and its kiln which has still to be located. Peter Fowler put forward some ideas about the forest clearing and settlements in the Vale of Berkeley in Roman times and had some interesting facts and figures relating to the frequency with which sites had been found on motorways.

After an excellent buffet tea Philip Dixon gave an account of the excavations at Crickley Hill where there was a Neolithic settlement inside the Iron Age hillfort. Dr Dixon extended a welcome to visitors during future work at Crickley Hill and was thanked especially for travelling the great distance to come and speak to us.

The next symposium in this series held under the auspices of the Avon Archaeological Council will be held at Weston-super-Mare in May 1979.

* * *

THE CONTINUING NEED FOR B.A.R.G. : A personal view

by

Leslie Grinsell

Reasons why BARG was formed

The archaeological situation in the Bristol region in the late 1950's and early 1960's was at a low ebb. The Somerset Archaeological & Natural History Society had, since the retirement of H St George Gray in 1950, largely withdrawn from its previous policy of holding meetings in different parts of the county, and its influence in what was then NE Somerset was accordingly declining. The Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, with its focal points in Gloucester and Bristol, was in the writer's opinion concentrating largely on architecture, history and records, and field archaeology did not seem to be getting its fair share. There was accordingly in the Bristol region an archaeological void calling to be filled at a time of rapidly increasing interest in the subject.

It was filled on 7 March 1962 by BARG, which originated from a group of private persons and appropriate staff of the City Museum and the University. From the start it had the fullest support of the City Museum's then director Mr Alan Warhurst who became its first Chairman. Its committee comprised equitable representation from these three sectors: indeed this triple basis of BARG is illustrated by the symbol on the cover of the Bulletin: the triple-spiral decorated glass stud found in the excavations at Westbury College. Its constitution provided for adequate periodical intake of new members with fresh ideas; the Chairmanship would whenever possible rotate between non-professionals, Museum staff and University staff and so far this principle has always been followed. We considered our boundaries to correspond roughly with those of the City Museum's collecting area for regional archaeology: from the Stroud valley to the southern fringe of Mendip, and eastward approximately to the Wiltshire border.

Some achievements

Our first series of lectures, on The Preparation of Archaeological Reports, was issued duplicated in 1962 and reissued in revised form the following year; and in 1966 it was published as a printed book by John Baker. The second printed edition, 1974 is considered the standard work on the subject. Since then regular programmes of winter lectures, seasonal field study tours, and symposia on archaeological themes have been held.

Our Survey and Policy (Part I to 1066, second edition 1966; Part II from 1066, first edition 1965) took stock of our knowledge period by period, and indicated the chief gaps requiring to be filled. It was however rather long and detailed for the average reader (108 pages quarto). A brief Policy Statement, in a pamphlet issued in January 1972, needs modification to take note of the formation of CRAAGS in 1973 to deal specifically with rescue archaeology.

Our four Field Guides, covering the local prehistoric, Roman, Medieval and Industrial sites, and our special Publication on The Mendip Hills in Prehistoric and Roman Times, have played their part in creating a well informed public awareness of our archaeological heritage; and it is good to know that a further Field Guide, on early Medieval sites before 1066, is in preparation.

The Formation of Other Organisations in the Area since 1973

For its first eleven years BARG was the only organisation in the area devoted to its subject (except the University of Bristol Spelaeological Society, essentially for undergraduates). Since 1973 other bodies have emerged. The Committee for Rescue Archaeology in Avon, Gloucestershire & Somerset (CRAAGS) was formed on 10 October 1973 to administer large annual government grants for rescue archaeology in those counties, and to plan and co-ordinate the work in the area. The Action Group for Bristol Archaeology (AGBA) was formed on 14 November the same year, its aims & objects being in the writer's opinion (and as stated in BARG Bulletin, Spring 1974) essentially identical with those of BARG though expressed slightly differently. The Avon Archaeological Council (AAC) started in January 1974 when the new Local Government Act came into force.

So far CRAAGS has, by its terms of reference, concentrated on rescue archaeology, thereby relieving BARG of a commitment which it has never had the means to fulfil. The AGBA has so far been concerned almost entirely with medieval and later archaeology in Bristol and its immediate environs. The AAC is by definition limited to the county of Avon and it does not so far have individual membership. The present enlightened programmes of Monday evening lectures arranged by the Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society are such as to make it desirable for BARG to develop its own lecture programmes in consultation with their Bristol programme secretary, and occasionally to hold joint meetings.

Suggested future functions

The future functions of BARG should in the writer's view include the following items. Their order of priority is not necessarily as here given and is indeed a matter of individual preference:

- i) To issue the Bulletin giving archaeological information relating to the area, bearing in mind that Bulletins are essentially ephemeral and not intended for final records such as reports of excavations. Inclusion of an article in the Bulletin does not preclude its subsequent publication in more permanent form. The Calendar of Forthcoming Events is among the most useful parts of this Bulletin, and the Notices of Recent and Forthcoming Publications help to keep members up to date with the literature.
- ii) To provide facilities for stimulating the preparation and publication of Parish Check Lists.
- iii) To produce and distribute Archaeological Field Guides on the lines already undertaken, relating to the periods or areas within our terms of reference.
- iv) To continue to provide the customary series of winter lectures with emphasis wherever possible on subjects having a bearing on our local problems.
- v) To continue arranging archaeological field study tours.
- vi) To continue to provide, through our Adviser in Field Archaeology, facilities to satisfy the needs of those members requiring experience in skilled excavation under competent supervision.
- vii) To give special encouragement to young (associate) members by arranging special lectures, study tours, and other events designed to meet their needs.
- viii) To perform such other local archaeological tasks as may from time to time be desirable.

It will be noted that the first three functions listed are not being carried out by any other organisations in the area; and the remainder are designed to meet the particular needs of certain major constituents in our membership which are not otherwise being adequately met. All these functions are already being performed by ourselves, but I would stress the imperative need to improve our organisation for selling our Field Guides which contribute so largely to the formation of a more enlightened public attitude to ancient monuments and their conservation: and they also add to our annual income.

To conclude: now that CRAAGS has virtually taken over rescue archaeology in and indeed well beyond our area of influence, our members, while still welcomed as volunteers on rescue excavations, are free to concentrate on study and research followed by publication, and there is accordingly a continuing need for BARG to assist its members in the ways indicated.

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BARRS COURT
OLDLAND

Since September 1978 a number of BARG members, together with members of the Kingswood and District History Society, have been carrying out rescue excavations on the site of Barrs Court, Oldland, the home between the 15th and 18th centuries of the Newton family. The work, which is being undertaken in advance of building development, is being directed by BARG member Jim Constant. The site (grid ref ST 65857203) consists of a magnificent rectangular moat, over 100 m square, adjoined on the NE by a group of 18th century farm buildings, now partly ruined. These incorporate architectural features from the vanished manor house, which was apparently demolished c 1750. Since the interior of the moated area is not directly threatened, work is at present being concentrated on a field to the N, known as 'The Courtyard'. Excavations here have uncovered a disused roadway and a path paved with pennant slabs; finds have included a Neolithic flint scraper, an armorial wine bottle seal and a stoneware sherd with the date 1687. In addition the ruins of the 18th century farmhouse have been partly cleared and surveyed. Work will resume at weekends from 3 February 1979 onwards, and additional helpers, including beginners, will be extremely welcome. The site lies 500 m N of the A431 road from Bristol to Bath, and can be reached by a track beginning in Parkwall Road at grid ref ST 66207215.

James Russell

For further details please contact Molly Ashley, 16 Orchard Rd,
Kingswood

* * *

CAN YOU TYPE ?

A volunteer is needed to type the Parish Survey lists onto cards.
Please contact Mary Campbell at the Museum, Bristol 299771

STOKE GIFFORD ROMAN SITE

by

A J Parker

The Roman settlement at Stoke Gifford was discovered in the spring of 1977, and briefly excavated in the following June. Excavations revealed a substantial spread of limestone fragments and some sandstone flags, with finds suggesting that the site had consisted of at least two buildings, of which one may have been a byre. During the winter of 1977/78, earthmoving machines destroyed much of the site; the 1978 summer excavations were, therefore, intended to define the remaining Roman structures (if any), to establish the chronology of the site, and, if possible, to recover a worthwhile sample of occupation material.

In June, 1978, the annual two-week training excavation of the Department of Classics and Archaeology (as it is now known) again took place at Stoke Gifford. Two areas, to west and south of the previous excavations, were cleared of contractors' spoil, and a large area, formerly unexcavated, was cleared in the southwest corner of the site. The latter proved, like the rest of the site, to have been severely rutted by machinery in 1977; almost all the features planned in the two years' training campaigns turned out to be wheel-ruts. Moreover, what had formerly been tentatively interpreted as a Roman wall turned out to be a modern field-drain, and it was clear that ploughing and earthmoving between them had reduced the Roman structural remains to floor level or below. Fortunately, the two areas below the spoil dumps proved more rewarding.

The northwestern area appeared to represent the edge of the settlement; an irregular scatter of limestone petered out towards the modern field boundary. Likewise, in the southwest part of the site, enough remained undamaged to show that the Roman stone scatter became thinner. Here, as also in the southern part of the excavations, the Roman layers were overlaid by a homogeneous layer of brown clayey silt, apparently waterlaid; although few finds came from this layer, it overlay the destruction layer of the Roman site (which, indeed, appeared to have been damaged by ploughing before the clay layer was laid down), and may, therefore, represent flooding in modern times. Local people recall bathing in a pool which used to form at this spot.

Work on the available areas of the site was not complete at the end of June, so in July and August excavations continued with the help of volunteers, at first on Sundays, and then continuously from 20th - 28th August. I am grateful to several BARG members (especially June Williams and John Hunt) for their help both on site and in recruiting others, to Vic Hallett and Margaret Gray for taking charge when I could not be present, and to Jennifer Gill for her invaluable help with plans and sections. The main area excavated was under the southern spoil tip, and here the Roman remains (although ploughed) were undamaged by modern machinery.

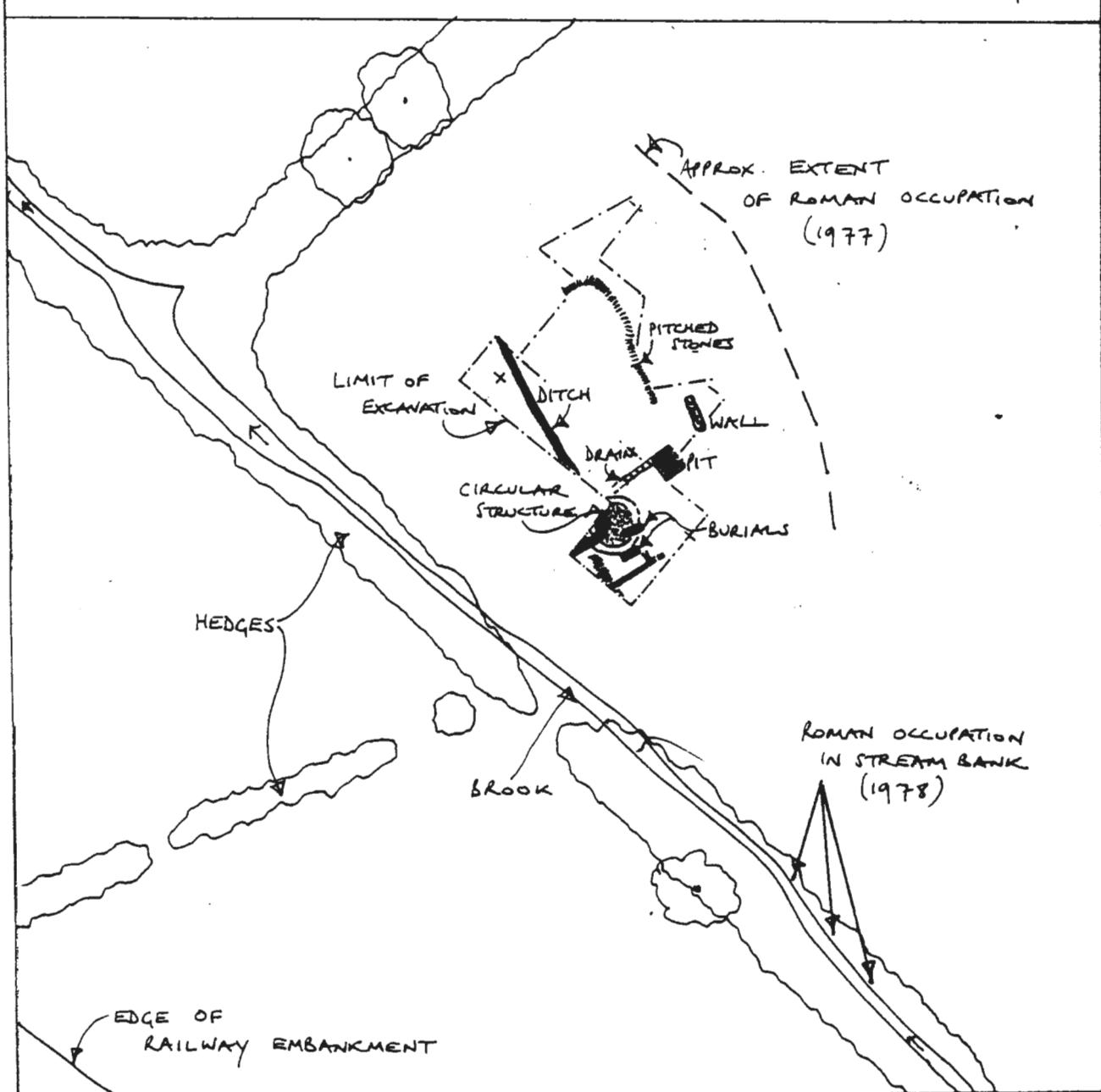
As elsewhere on the site, a flood deposit overlay the debris of the Roman structures. It was not possible to strip the entire area down to natural, but it appears that (in the area of our excavations) the surviving structures were the first on the site, though charcoal flecks and a single ?posthole suggest there may have been somekind of earlier occupation. Coins from the occupation layers indicate that the site was in use c AD 270-350: the latest is an AE3 (small bronze coin) of Constans, Victoria Augg (AD 341-6). Study of the pottery may permit an extension of these date limits.

STOKE GIFFORD ROMAN SITE

PROVISIONAL OUTLINE SKETCH PLAN

0 25 m.

Based on plan by Bovis Homes Technical Services



Within the period of occupation, several structural phases can be provisionally distinguished. First, a well-constructed circular structure was built; no trace of a doorway survives, though part of the structure lies beneath the remaining spoil dump. The floor was carefully made of small, tightly-packed slanting limestone fragments; the structure was 3.9 m in internal diameter, its wall 0.9 m thick at the level preserved (probably a foundation, with offset). No trace survived of any internal arrangements, and the original function of this circular structure remains at present unknown.

To the east of this building, a relatively irregular limestone floor, similar to the stony spread observed throughout the site, may have been laid down at the same time; also possibly contemporary was a substantial line of pitched slabs, running NW-SE, and probably abutting the circular structure. No trace of any superstructure on top of these slabs survived, but they presumably served as the footing for some form of wall. Occupation material, mingled with a considerable quantity of roughly laid limestone fragments, began to build up to N and S of this footing, before a slightly built partition (with traces of a cross-partition) was constructed at right angles, running NE-SW; the circular structure was apparently soon demolished, as occupation spread over the wall, and hearths were made, partly on the floor, partly overlying the wall.

At this stage there were many hearths and ovens in operation over the whole area of the site. Only scanty remains survive of most, but it is hoped to discover their function by analysing samples of ash, burnt clay and stone, crucibles, and slag. Iron slag and iron ore were found commonly on the site, as was coal; no feature to suggest iron smelting, however, was found. The occupation also produced quantities of bronze scrap and droplets from bronze casting, as well as several whetstones. The site's function was not entirely industrial, however, since animal bones, domestic pottery, and other items were widely found. Iron nails (as well as hobnails) were frequent, but at this stage it is impossible to say whether they represent a roof over the working area, or were actually being forged on site.

To the NE of the circular structure, a stone-built drain, laid in natural, led to a square, shallow, pit, 2.0 m square. The pit was filled with a dark rubbish-deposit containing pottery and bone, with no evidence for any function; the SW end of the drain petered out inconclusively, probably owing to ploughing. Further NE, a straight length of wall-foundation, 0.4 m wide and at least 2.2 m long, was planned in 1977, but destroyed before its continuation and its relation to the rest of the site could be found.

Probably at this stage in the history of the site, a substantial ditch, over 0.8 m wide and 0.4 m deep, was cut through the Roman layers. It ran more or less in a straight line NW-SE across the SW corner of the site, cut the circular building, turned a right angle, and ran out of the excavation towards the SW. Hardly any silting took place before it was filled with large stones, laid relatively carefully at the foot, more jumbled higher up, together with bones and other occupation material, including several 4th-century coins. In view of the shallow stratification on the site, it is possible that this ditch is a post-Roman feature, but it appears to underlie the uppermost rubble deposit.

Finally, again apparently before the final collapse of walls, etc., two inhumations were cut into the Roman structures. Both faced east, without gravegoods; one was in a fairly well-built cist grave, with floor slabs laid on natural, and side slabs meeting at a peak above the body.

The other, presumably later, was a shallow grave, hardly dug down into the occupation layers overlying the demolished circular building (which it cut into); the skeleton was barely covered by a layer of stones. Although the date of these burials cannot be exactly fixed, they appear to be late Roman, and to predate the final abandonment of the site.

When was the site abandoned? The coin series hardly supports a date much after the mid fourth century. What was the reason? The waterlaid deposit, at least in the areas so far observed, overlies the uppermost Roman rubble layer, suggesting that the site was already deserted before flooding took place. However, these conclusions are only preliminary; more work on the finds and the excavation records may cause some revision.

The future of the site is uncertain at the time of writing. Earth-moving and services-construction for the next phase of housing are due to begin in January, although the exact details of the developers' plans are still under discussion with Northavon planners, and part of the site may remain unbuilt on. I should like to acknowledge the co-operation of Bovis Homes (South West) Ltd, the landowners and developers, and thank BARG for a grant towards the August 1978 excavation; the main costs have been met by the University of Bristol, and everyone involved in the excavation gave their labour free.

* both male, according to Dr Juliet Rogers,

I am grateful to Mrs C J Hawkes for this obituary of Professor Tratman who died in August.

PROFESSOR E K TRATMAN

Professor Edgar Kingsley Tratman of Burrington known to his friends and students as 'Tratty' or 'Trat', died on 21 August 1978, at the age of 79.

A member of BARG since the group's early days, Professor Tratman was a leading authority on cave archaeology and prehistory in the Mendip and Bristol areas and members will find it a great loss that his tremendous knowledge is no longer available.

Born in Bristol and a member of the family who founded the firm well-known to boat enthusiasts, he was educated at Clifton College and qualified as a dentist at Bristol University in 1923. Much of his professional career was spent in Singapore where he was Professor of Dental Surgery from 1929 to 1950, and he later held dental appointments with the universities of London and Bristol. During the war he was interned by the Japanese where he became prison camp dentist and Medical Officer. A great worker he published over 50 papers in dental journals mainly on dental pathology.

It was as a dental student in 1919 that he became a founder member of the University of Bristol Spelaeological Society and from then on he was a regular contributor to the Proceedings of the Society. In the forty-two UBSS Proceedings, more than 50 of the papers are written by him.

Mendip caves on which he has published archaeological work include, Avelin's Hole, Read's Cavern, Picken's Hole, Backwell Burial Cave, Gough's Cave and several of the smaller Cheddar Caves. At Wookey Hole he has dug at the Hyaena Den and this year completed an excavation at Rhinoceros Hole. In Wookey Hole Cave itself he dug a Romano-British cemetery from 1973-1976 in the Fourth Chamber of the cave, at a point which could only be reached when the water level in the cave was lowered during the Paper Mill holiday.

Cavers who visit Swildon's Hole at Priddy will be acquainted with 'Tratman's Temple', a part of the cave discovered in 1921 and named after Tratman who was the first man to enter it.

Tratman's caving exploits took place not only in the Mendips, but caves in many parts of the world, and he was currently President of the International Spelaeological Congress. In September 1977 when England was the host country, Professor Tratman organised the itinerary, and a highlight of the visit was a banquet he had arranged in the depths of Wookey Hole Cave.

When quarrymen found the remains of Pleistocene mammals at Westbury-sub-Mendip in 1969, Tratman spent many week-ends there for the next few years, and it was through his persistence that the flints found were recognised as being the earliest evidence of man in Britain.

He has dug at the Priddy Circles, Gorseby Bigbury, and hillforts he has worked on include Stokeligh camp, Maes Knoll, Maesbury and Burrington and he has spent many hours trying to trace the routes of Roman roads across Mendip.

The UBSS museum, destroyed during the Bristol blitz, has once again been built up into an interesting collection of geological and archaeological specimens, largely through the efforts of Tratman. At Cheddar Caves Museum too, his knowledge and advice were sought on many occasions.

His services to archaeology were recognised in 1938 when he was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and as a member of the Somerset Archaeological & Natural History Society he became their President in 1976. He was also the local Archaeological Adviser for the Department of the Environment.

A certain rivalry existing between University and Museum led to tumuli on Mendip having a dual set of numbering and Tratman only rarely contributed to BARG publications.

In 1949 he was awarded the OBE and honorary doctorates were given him by the University of Malaya in 1950 and Bristol University in 1976.

Tratman maintained his independence and never married, but his company and conversation were an asset at many a dig, bar and dinner table.

The book, The Caves of North-West Clare, Ireland by members of the UBSS was edited by Tratman and largely written by him.

Scientific caving trips to Ireland with students and members of the UBSS became his regular holidays for Easter and Summer, and it was after a cold wet caving holiday in Ireland at Easter this year, that he started the illness which led to his death.

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BARG ASSOCIATES CALENDAR OF EVENTS

by

June Williams (Hon Sec for Associate Members)

Before I begin my report on events that have taken place since the last edition of the Bulletin, I would just like to say a word about the importance, in my opinion, of our field and coach trips etc. Not only are they occasions of enjoyment, and a get-together of people with the same interests, but highly instructive, especially to beginners by virtue of the fact that one can see and relate to the information being imparted by the very high calibre of archaeologists and others who generously give of their time and knowledge to lead these events. We are very fortunate as a Group in our accessibility to these people.

Events that have taken place since the last Bulletin are as follows:-

Sunday 1 October at 2.30 pm James Russell gave us a well researched and informative guided walk of the Durdham and Clifton Downs (see pp 138-43). Because this event took place before the circulation of the last Bulletin, James has very kindly offered to repeat it at a later date if there is enough interest.

Jo Harrison has also offered to repeat her fascinating talk/tour of the historical aspects of Montpelier which she gave on Sunday 26 November at 2 pm we understand several people arrived after the start of the tour and were unable to find the 'main body'.

Both these events were well worth attending as the areas covered were part of the subjects of dissertations for the respective leaders' successful bids for the University Extra Mural Certificate in Field Archaeology and Landscape History.

Sunday 22 October at 9.15 am Mr Leslie Grinsell led this most enjoyable coach trip in his own inimitable and knowledgeable way to the Cursus, and Barrow Groups around to the New Stonehenge. An additional bonus was our lunch stop at Amesbury. This trip was enhanced by a relevant informal slide/talk by Mr Grinsell the preceding Thursday evening.

Thursday 2 November at 7.30 pm (at the Schools Room, City Museum). Henry Gray, a BARG Associate, who has lived quite a lot of his young life on and around narrow boats and canals, imparted his knowledge of these subjects by way of a very interesting illustrated talk. Henry was kindly supported by his father. This talk was very much enjoyed and appreciated by the Associates and Full members present.

Saturday 11 November: David Dawson led us on this popular train excursion to York city, during which we covered most of the $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles or so of the historical medieval wall which incorporates some of the original Roman wall, and an early Norman outer archway at Bootham Bar, and also Walmgate Bar still retaining its barbican, the only town gate in England to do so.

We visited en route a variety of the interesting aspects of this fascinating townscape, amongst which were :- the mainly 15th century All Saints Church, North Street (the core being late Norman) with its unique windows and medieval woodwork: All Saints Church Pavement with its 19th century octagonal lantern tower - a reproduction of the original: The Guildhall, a restoration of the 15th century Commonhall, which was mostly destroyed during an air raid in 1942 : The superb medieval Merchant Adventurers Hall in Fossegate, dating from the 14th century (which was unfortunately closed to visitors) : Cliffords Tower, which stands on the motte of York Castle. This castle keep built in the 13th century is of quatrefoil shape, one of the few extant: The Shambles, a narrow well-preserved medieval street of shops : The unrestored Holy Trinity Church Goodramgate, one of the most interesting churches of York, built between 1250 and 1500 contains, 18th century box pews, a two decker pulpit, a Jacobean altar rail, an old altar stone, with crosses for the wounds of Christ located in the south wall chapel. The tower has a rare saddle-back (pitched) roof : The Roman Pillar outside the south door of York Minster, which was part of the Roman Principia, on which the Minster now stands : Last but not least, York Minster, built between 1220 and 1470, with its large concentration of medieval stained glass, mainly 13th and 14th century, its Decorated style Chapter House, octagonal in shape, with its conical shaped roof, timbered inside, leaded on the outside, relying on massive external buttresses, as it has no central support.

Some members, alternatively attended a guided tour of the Viking and medieval excavations.

Future Events

Saturday, 27 January 1979, 8.15 am prompt, meeting at the junction of Woodland Rd and Tyndall's Park Rd, there will be a coach trip to London to include visits to the 'Gold of Eldorado' exhibition at the Royal Academy, and the 'Frozen Tombs of Siberia' exhibition at the British Museum. The cost will be minimal, according to numbers attending.

Thursday 1 March 7.30 pm, Schools Room, City Museum. An illustrated talk entitled Heraldry for Beginners by David Dawson. This subject should appeal to younger and older members alike!

Saturday 3 March 8.30 am prompt. Meeting at the junction of Woodland Rd and Tyndall's Park Rd, a coach trip, led by David Dawson to the Medieval Churches of Wiltshire, with some relevance to heraldry and monuments - a must for parish church enthusiasts. Cost, again, minimal, according to numbers attending.

For both coach trips, early applications to me, enclosing a £1 deposit would be most helpful.

Again, I would like to remind members of our informal finds processing, etc. get-together on Thursday evenings in the Stores Room, City Museum. Recently, our potwashers have been fortunate in having Oliver Kent and Mike Ponsford to come along during two of these sessions, to talk informally about the pots being processed. If there is any aspect of local archaeology you would like to be involved in, or informed about do come along and tell us.

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NARROW QUAY, BRISTOL

by

G L Good, Director of Excavations

The excavation lies on the site of the former Co-op building between the north ends of Prince Street and Narrow Quay, only a few metres from the present course of the River Frome. Prior to the excavation of this channel for the Frome, the river ran round the edge of the city walls, roughly on the line of what is now Baldwin Street, to enter the Avon just below Bristol Bridge. At this time the site was covered by a marsh which formed part of the lands of the monastery of St Augustine's.

Throughout its early history the main quays for the port of Bristol and the equally important (and at this time independent) Redcliffe, lay along both banks of the River Avon. With the cutting of a new channel for the Frome across St Augustine's marsh in the mid-13th century and the extension of the City's defences to include Redcliffe as well as part of this marsh, the 'Quay' was built along the east bank of the new cut. The Quay could handle larger ships than had previously been able to trade in the city and became the main area for the loading and unloading of ocean-going vessels. Its rights were shared by the merchants of Bristol and Redcliffe alike. The old quays were then relegated to the status of 'Backs' and handled mainly coastal craft which carried goods to and from South Wales and North Devon and Somerset.

The extension of the Quay southwards along what is now Narrow Quay, shown on Millerd's map of 1673 as the 'Wood Key', and the building of a number of docks by various Bristol merchants took place, for the main

part, in the early 17th century. Part of one such dock was exposed during the excavation for the foundations of the building immediately south of the site in 1956. A number of ships' timbers were also found there and this suggests that similar material might be found during the present excavations.

The basement level of the Co-op building is over 2 m below the present street level and the excavation of this basement at the beginning of the century has removed all traces of structures built over the docks after their disuse (Millerd's map of 1673 shows a group of houses on the site at this time). This means that the concrete floor of the basement directly overlies river silting and backfilling of the docks.

For the main part the site is covered by a thick layer of grey-brown clay, which probably represents a gradual silting up of the docks. Various dark patches contain a large amount of shell and bone, showing where rubbish was tipped into the docks.

In the SW corner of the area is a wide mortar-bonded stone wall which may represent part of the dock structure. Immediately E of this are a number of curved timbers with wooden pegs through them, possibly structural timbers from a ship.

The main problem during excavation is the seepage of water into the site, often causing it to flood completely; but it is the very presence of this water which has kept the timbers and various objects of wood and leather that have been found in such a fine state of preservation.

Excavations will continue until the end of January. In this time it is hoped to build up a better picture of how the docks and quayside were constructed as well as finding possible evidence of the types of ship using the docks.

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BARG LECTURE : Wednesday 14 March 1979

Members are asked to put this date in their diary when H M Taylor will give a lecture on 'Anglo-Saxon Architecture, with special reference to Churches in the Severn Basin'. We are very honoured to have Mr Taylor come to talk to us, so could we have a special effort on the part of members for this occasion.

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RECENT & FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

Recent: periodicals

Antiquity, November 1978, opens with an editorial review of the present problems at Stonehenge: the modern Druid services, the illegal campers nearby during midsummer week, and the current programme for eliminating visitor erosion. A note by Prof Atkinson describes a crouched Beaker Age burial with bracer and 3 barbed-and-tanged flint arrowheads, found last April in the ditch silt of Stonehenge I.

Current Archaeology, no 63, September 1978, draws attention in its editorial to the establishment of The Society for Landscape Studies (annual subscription

£7, Treasurer R T Smith, School of Geography, The University, Leeds LS2 9JT). This society is formed in response to a growing tendency to study field antiquities (and other features of the countryside) in the context of their general environment rather than as objects in their own right.

Glevensis, no. 12, 1978, contains (13-23) an important article by T C Darvill on the study of the neolithic period in Gloucestershire. There are also interim notes on excavations including Roman sites at Kingscote, Frocester Court and the temple on West Hill, Uley.

Recent : other publications

Guido, Margaret. The Glass Beads of the Prehistoric and Roman Periods in Britain and Ireland. Society of Antiquaries Research Report 35, 1978, price £20 to non-members. This long-awaited book contains numerous references to finds in the traditional counties of Gloucestershire and Somerset.

Lowe, Barbara. Medieval Floor Tiles of Keynsham Abbey. 1978. Obtainable from Mrs Lowe, 37 Manor Rd, Keynsham, Bristol BS18 1FB, price £2.75 including postage. (see review on p. 161).

Marcotic, V., editor. Ancient Europe and the Mediterranean : Studies presented in Honour of Hugh Hencken. 1977. Aris & Phillips, Warminster.

Price £17.50. This contains two studies bearing on our region: Humphrey Case, 'An Early Accession to the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford' (18-34) in describing a gold 'sun-disc' from Ireland reviews all other known examples including two found between Bath and Mere; and H N Savory 'The Role of Iberian Communal Tombs in Mediterranean and Atlantic prehistory' (161-80) is a reappraisal of chambered tombs including those of the Severn-Cotswold group.

Forthcoming

Shire Publications have been following their Discovering Regional Archaeology booklets with a series in larger format called Shire Archaeology, of which two volumes (Prehistoric Pottery and Bronze Age Metalwork in England and Wales) recently published are by our former member Mrs Nancy Langmaid (née Proctor). They are now continuing this series with volumes on field monuments, of which those by Aubrey Burl on Stone Circles, David Johnston on Roman Villas, and Leslie Grinsell on Barrows in England and Wales are in active preparation. These volumes are usually priced between £1 and £2.

Leslie Grinsell

REVIEWS

Peter J Fowler Approaches to Archaeology (Adam & Charles Black), 1977)
£6.50

Peter Fowler's new book was written as 'a sequel to, rather than a replacement of', Stuart Piggott's Approach to Archaeology, published by Blacks in 1959, and so it proves to be. Piggott was principally concerned with explaining archaeological method, whereas Peter Fowler's book is rather a discussion and a survey of current archaeological philosophy (or rather, philosophies).

Dr Fowler dips his toes rather cautiously into the murky waters of this deep pool in his first chapter, and in the space of only a dozen pages is never able to deal more than superficially with present and past attitudes to that thorny question 'why archaeology?'. On the other hand, moving to the first of his five principal chapters or themes, on Topographical Archaeology, the author plunges in with the sort of enthusiasm and expertise which BARG members, above all, should expect from the man who has led so many of them into the field. The result is a warm and penetrat-

ing review of the limitations and possibilities of field archaeology as it is today.

The next two chapters are something of a contrast. 'Buried Archaeology' is perhaps the one chapter in the book which does overlap considerably with Piggott's, and in discussing the problems and rationale of excavation adds little that is new. 'Scientific Archaeology', on the other hand, really does complement Piggott and should make the place of anthropology, sampling strategies, and environmental studies in modern British archaeology readily comprehensible to any reader. It is worth stressing that it is the value, and the role, of these techniques that the author rightly discusses, rather than the way in which they work.

So too with chapter 5, Theoretical Archaeology. For the part-time archaeologist (and that of course means at least 9 out of every 10 archaeologists in the country), the recent development of archaeological theory has been confusing and at times nonsensical. In an eminently sensible and balanced review of recent trends, Peter Fowler puts the 'new archaeology' into perspective and for many, into focus, for the first time. Many readers will find this the most useful chapter in the book.

The reviewer's favourite, however, is the last chapter - a convincing explanation of the present state of archaeology, and an eloquent plea for its future. Coupled with an uncompromising attack on both treasure-hunting and the lunatic fringe (to which this reviewer takes the opportunity to add his own voice), the last chapter is both thought-provoking and stimulating, and for those BARG members who buy the book should provide a lasting echo of many an evening spent in one of Peter Fowler's extra-mural classes.

'Archaeology has changed a lot since 1959' says the author in his preface, and there are some interesting insights into how the author has changed with it - a touch of disillusionment here (p.125?), an acceptance of some of the new jargon there, and even (on p.116) a breath-taking piece of English chauvinism - but in the main this book reflects the Peter Fowler the Bristol area has got to know so well during the past 15 years and that is why so many BARG members will want to own a copy for themselves.

Professor Keith Branigan
Dept of Prehistory & Archaeology
University of Sheffield

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Barbara Lowe Medieval Floor Tiles of Keynsham Abbey 1978 151 pp 19 black & white illustrations, 21.3 x 14.5 cms. £2.75 including postage, from Mrs Lowe, 37 Manor Rd, Keynsham, Bristol BS18 1RB

The study of medieval floor tiles is becoming increasingly more popular and this publication, at great expense to the author, is the result of many years work on the medieval floor tiles of Keynsham Abbey. It has, I know, involved Mrs Lowe in making many trips to the British Museum, the Victoria & Albert Museum and many other museums and churches, in order to examine the tiles from Keynsham Abbey in their collections and to study comparative material.

The book is presented in catalogue form which necessitates a great deal of backtracking between the tile drawings and their appropriate descriptions, and the inconsistency in the numbering and scale of some of the drawings only adds to the frustration.

The text opens with a brief summary of the Keynsham Abbey site, followed by the various ways in which medieval floor tiles were made, ranging from the more common Inlaid type to the less common Impressed.

This is followed by a short synopsis of medieval tile kilns. Little attention is given to the plain tiles which contributed so much in the layout of a decorated medieval pavement.

Six sides of print are reserved for the descriptions of the different groups of tiles from the Abbey. This is followed by their fabric types with an analysis by Mr A Vince.

Sixty-two sides of print are taken up with the catalogue of the tiles which number one hundred. This is achieved by using an alphabetical numbering system a--t., a. description of the design to n--r. which informs the reader of the sites from which similar, identical or related material has been found and the museums which possess tiles from Keynsham Abbey.

A substantial part of the book has been assigned to the heraldry of the tiles and the hereditary patrons of Keynsham Abbey, with hefty notes on families whose arms appear on some of the tiles, such as the De Clare and the Beauchamp families. The religious symbolic interpretation of many of the tile patterns is also examined. Of course, the presence of heraldry on tiles does not necessarily connect the family whose arms appear on the tiles with the place where the tiles were found. But Mrs Lowe has put a lot of work into this subject with the result that she has suggested that Richard Beauchamp was responsible for the manufacture and the paving of the Refectory and Chapter House at Keynsham through his hereditary patronage with the Abbey by way of his marriage to Isabel Despencer and by the presence of the Beauchamp arms and others on some of the tiles. This last point remains a highly controversial aspect of floor tile study. If her suggestions are correct then this could lead to more accurate dating of some of the later tiles from local sites such as the Franciscan Friary in Bristol which possesses many identical patterns and which up to now have not been closely dated.

My only criticism regarding the layout of the book is the constant reference to the key at the beginning of the catalogue in order to interpret the meaning of the numbering system.

The present location of a number of the parallels mentioned in the catalogue, whether they be in a museum collection or in situ, is not always stated and this could prove an inconvenience. Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery has a vast quantity of comparative material, including tiles from Keynsham Abbey, which do not appear to have been consulted.

Apart from the few criticisms that I have made, the book is well presented and will, nevertheless, form an important part in the understanding of the medieval floor tile industry in the area.

Bruce Williams
Bristol City Museum

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CALENDAR
OF FORTHCOMING COURSES, MEETINGS & LECTURES
January-April 1979

abbreviations are as listed in previous issues of Bulletin

January

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|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 4 | The Gold of Eldorado. Mr Warwick Bray FSA 7.30 pm Physics Lecture Theatre G44, University of BRISTOL, Tyndall Avenue | BCM |
| 8 | Making Old Bones Speak Mr Jonathan Musgrave. This lecture is organised by the Friends of Bristol Art Gallery, who have invited BARG members - charge of 50p at the door, to include drink. Commences 7-7.30 pm | BRISTOL |
| 10 | The Sophisticated Saxon - A Survey of Town Life in South West England, 800-1066. BRISTOL City Museum, by David Hill | BARG |

- 11 West-Country Rural Life, 1500-1900 Dr J H Bettey MA 10 meetings
 Thursdays, 7.30 - 9 pm, Wellsway School, KEYNSHAM. UNIVERSITY
 11 Archaeology in the Landscape J H Drinkwater 10 meetings weekly
 Fridays 7.30 - 9pm, 2 Princes Rd, CLEVEDON UNIVERSITY
 16 Glastonbury and its excavations W J Wedlake FSA Lecture Theatre
 BATH Technical College 7.15 pm B & C A S
 18 Ancient Woods and their place in the landscape Oliver Rackham
 G44, Physics Lecture Building, Tyndall Avenue, BRISTOL BCM
 19 Looking at Local Parish Churches Dr J H Bettey 7.30 pm
 Ellsbridge House, Bath Road, KEYNSHAM K & S L H S
 20 Pottery from Somerset Panel of Lecturers. Four linked half-day
 courses, fortnightly, Saturdays 2.0 - 6 pm, 94 Staplegrove Rd,
 TAUNTON UNIVERSITY
 20 BARG MEMBERS SYMPOSIUM 2 pm Lectures to be announced BARG
 BRISTOL
 22 Ancient Gluttony Miss G Plowright, Old Crypt Schoolroom, South-
 gate Street, GLOUCESTER 7.30 pm GDARG
 25 Mounting & Display of Coins P H Squire Esq BRISTOL City Museum
 7.30 pm B & B N S
 25 Gas, Gaiters & Galloper Dr R W Dunning Community Centre, Princes
 Rd, CLEVEDON 7.30 pm C & D A S
 27 Coach trip to LONDON 'Gold of Eldorado' and 'Frozen Tombs' exhib-
 itions. Meet 8.15 am Junction of Woodland Rd and Tyndall's Park
 Rd. BARG ASSOCIATES (Full members also welcome)

February

- 6 • Excavations at Uley Roman Temple Dr Ann Ellison 7.15 pm Lecture
 Theatre, BATH Technical College B & C A S
 8 Annual Quiz Competition for the F J Jeffery Trophy conducted by
 R J Jeffery 7.30 pm Smiths Assembly Rooms, Westgate Buildings,
 BATH B & B N S
 9/11 Sources for Local History Dr J H Bettey & Panel of Lecturers
 R w/e course, Friday evening to Sunday at URCHFONT MANOR, Nr
 DEVIZES, Wilts (P) UNIVERSITY
 10 The Avonmouth Story Ethel Thomas 2.30 - 4.30 pm FOLK HOUSE
 12 East Anglian Churches The Very Rev Dean of Gloucester 5.45 pm
 City Museum, BRISTOL. BARG members have a special invitation to
 this lecture. B & G A S
 14 Local Saxon Coin-Mints L V Grinsell 7.30 pm City Museum,
 BRISTOL BARG
 15 The role of the magic lantern in Victorian society Roger Horne
 7.30 pm G44, Physics Lecture Building, Tyndall Avenue, BRISTOL
 BCM
 16 The Order of St Victor (the religious order of the Canons of
 Keynsham Abbey). Mrs Barbara Lowe Ellsbridge House, Bath
 Rd, KEYNSHAM 7.30 pm K & S L H S
 16/18 Historic Families and Houses in Somerset Dr J H Bettey & Dr R W
 Dunning R w/e course Friday evening to Sunday (P), ILLINGTON
 HOUSE, Nr ILMINSTER UNIVERSITY
 19 Members' Night Group Members' Work Old Crypt Schoolroom, South
 Gate St, GLOUCESTER 7.30 pm GDARG
 22 Somerset Place Names M D Costen MA Community Centre, Princes Rd,
 CLEVEDON 7.30 pm
 24 BARG AGM followed by lecture (to be arranged) BRISTOL City Museum
 24/25 Underwater Archaeology: A Practical Introduction for Divers
 Dr A J Parker NR w/e Dept of Extra-Mural Studies and University
 Swimming Pool, BRISTOL UNIVERSITY

March

- 1 Heraldry for Beginners David Dawson Schools Room, City Museum, BRISTOL 7.30 pm BARG ASSOCIATES
- 3 Coach trip led by David Dawson Medieval Churches of Wiltshire meet 8.30 am prompt junction of Woodland Rd and Tyndall's Park Rd All welcome BARG ASSOCIATES
- 6 The Archaeology of Avon P J Greening Lecture Theatre, Bath Technical College (New Building) 7.15 pm B & C A S
- 8 The Royal Mint R J Jeffery Esq Smiths Assembly Rooms, Westgate Buildings, BATH 7.30 pm B & B N S
- 14 ANGLO-SAXON ARCHITECTURE, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHURCHES IN THE SEVERN BASIN H M TAYLOR BRISTOL City Museum, 7.30 pm BARG
- 15 Conservation of the Severn Estuary Peter Ferne G44 Physics Building, Tyndall Avenue, BRISTOL 7.30 pm BCM
- 16 AGM followed by Keynsham Manor House & Grounds W Matthews, Ellsbridge House, Bath Rd, KEYNSHAM 7.30 pm K & S L H S
- 19 AGM followed by St Oswald's Priory Miss C Heighway Old Crypt Schoolroom, Southgate St, GLOUCESTER 7.30 pm GDARG
- 19 Romans in North Africa Brian Warmington 5.45 pm BRISTOL City Museum B & G A S
- 22 A G M Community Centre, Princes Rd, CLEVEDON 7.30 pm C & D A S

April

- 2 Some Aspects of the Monmouth Rebellion Bryan Little 5.45 pm BRISTOL City Museum B & G A S
- 7 The Analysis of Medieval Landscapes Panel of Lecturers One day course 10 am - 6 pm Dept of Extra-Mural Studies, BRISTOL £1.05 UNIVERSITY
- 11 Lecture to be arranged 7.30 pm City Museum, BRISTOL BARG
- 20 Excavations at St Bartholomew's Hospital, Bristol Dr Roger Price Ellsbridge House, Bath Rd, KEYNSHAM 7.30 pm K & S L H S
- 23 Burial in the Roman World R Reece Old Crypt Schoolroom, Southgate St, GLOUCESTER 7.30 pm GDARG
- 26 The Annual Bristol Auction Viewing from 7.15 pm BRISTOL City Museum B & B N S

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