

ARCHÆOLOGY IN LEICESTERSHIRE  
AND RUTLAND  
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I NOTES

II REPORTS OF ARCHÆOLOGICAL FIELDWORK

I NOTES

ARCHÆOLOGICAL FIELDWORK GROUP.

M69

Members assisted in the preliminary field survey of the central sector of the Leicestershire sector of the M69.

MOATS GROUP

Members of this sub-group are engaged in compiling a Gazetteer of Moated Sites in Leicestershire and Rutland. The initial phase, indexing of documentary sources, is well underway: work is in progress on printed sources and also on unpublished material in the City and County Records Offices.

ANN DORNIER (*Hon. Sec.*)

A ROMAN PHALERA FROM LEICESTER.

A Roman phalera (Plate 41a) of dark-blue glass, somewhat chipped, but otherwise in a fine state of preservation with no visible trace of weathering, was found in 1971 at a depth of 10 ft in a trench for a gas-main at New Parks, Leicester. The phalera, D. 3.7 cm, bears a cuirassed male bust in high relief, with three infants' heads on the shoulders and in front of the chest. The main bust is certainly a portrait of a member of the Julio-Claudian Imperial house, and the infants' heads, though not portraits, are intended to represent specific younger members of the same house.

The piece belongs to a numerous group of portrait-medallions, mostly of dark-blue glass, mounted in metal mounts (some of which survive), which were issued as parade decorations (*dona militaria*) to soldiers on special occasions. Several different types exist. The present one, of which seven examples are now known, including the fine Colchester piece in the British Museum, is thought by Prof. Toynbee<sup>1</sup> to represent Germanicus with three of his children, and to have been issued, most probably, in A.D.23, although other views about its date and iconographic intent exist.<sup>2</sup>

1. J. M. C. Toynbee, "Some notes on Roman art at Colchester, no. viii, The glass 'medallion'", *Trans Essex Archæol Soc.* XV (1955), 17-23. This is a study of the whole group, based on the Colchester example (BM.70.2-24.2), which still retains its metal mount.

2. For fuller discussion of the Leicester piece and its parallels see D. B. Harden, "A Julio-Claudian glass phalera", *Antiq. Journ.* LII (1972), 350-3 and 366.

D B HARDEN

A THIRTEENTH-CENTURY STEELYARD WEIGHT FROM BROUGHTON ASTLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE.

In 1972 a steelyard weight (plate 41b and plate 42) was taken to Leicester Museum for identification. The precise location of the find is not known but it is thought to have been discovered during work near Broughton Astley.

The weight is fashioned by the *cire perdue* or lost wax method of production (see H Hodges, *Artifacts* (London, 1964), 72). The outer casing is made of latten

with a lead filling. The filling hole is located in the base. It bears four shields embossed in relief:

1. Lion rampart
2. Lion rampart
3. Three lions or leopards passant guardant
4. Three lions passant guardant

The shields are set at equal distances round the upper half of the weight and each device occurs within a border of double lined triangles, well executed, set within two deep cut horizontal lines around the shoulder. The patina is minimal with the exception of areas amongst embossed devices, but, where it does occur it appears as dull green with patches of dark blue.

#### *Dating.*

Dating evidence for this weight is based on comparative material in other parts of the country (see *Proc Dorset Natur Hist Archæol Soc*, volumes 47, 48, 52, 58, 64 and 75) and on stylistic grounds of the shield devices of this particular weight. Shield 1 carries a lion rampart with the body in an upright position with the right fore and hind paws placed diagonally upwards terminating with three toes. In the second half of the 13th century the right hind paw moved down and formed a right angle with the left as in shield 2 (see Fox Davies, *Guide to Heraldry*, 176).

The fact that both styles are represented on the devices suggests that the weight was made during the Transition period. The evidence therefore, points to a date of c.1250 for this weight.

T PEARCE

#### ALONG THE ASHBY CANAL TRAMWAYS. LIMEKILNS.

There are still four sets of intermittent limekilns along the Ashby Canal and its tramways. The largest and best preserved set are in the quarries at Ticknall (SK 362239). There are fourteen, some in very good condition. The other three sets are deteriorating rapidly. Near Lount (SK 392194), on a loop of the tramway bypassed by the Midland Railway Company when the line was changed to standard gauge, are four built into the embankment which carried the Tramway. In Dimmingsdale (SK 376218), where Earl Ferrers had his limeworks, there are still traces of about five kilns. According to an Inventory made on the death of Earl Ferrers in 1859 (L.R.O. DE41/1/152), there were ten kilns.

On the Canal, near the Blast Furnace at Moira (SK 314151) there are the remains of seven kilns, built into the bank of the canal. These were also used to roast iron ore for the furnace.

These sets of kilns are interesting from two points of view. They are the last remains of the widespread lime burning carried on in the NW of the county for building and agriculture, which reached its peak in the early 19th century. They also indicate the care taken to site the kilns so that the handling of stone was cut to a minimum. At all four sites stone could be tipped directly into the top of the kiln.

#### BELL PITS.

North of Spring Wood (SK 387189) are the remains of what appear to be two bell pits. They are at the end of an embankment which carried a spur of the tramway.

#### STEAM ENGINE BOILERS.

South of the bell-pits is the boiler of a vertical steam engine.

Constructed of two cast-iron sections bolted together, it is just over 11 ft high. It is still in very good condition but there is no indication of its origin.

The *Leicestershire Industrial History Society* recently excavated a haystack boiler from the site of the Califaft Colliery (SK413172). Built of cast-iron plates bolted together, it is about 6½ ft high and about 25½ ft at its maximum girth. It is now in the Museum of Technology for the East Midlands.

JOHN RAWLINGS



Plate 43 Austin Friars, Leicester. Range of rooms west of cloister with main drain on right

*Photo: Leicester Museum*



latter part of the eighteenth century and during the early nineteenth century. These involved building a third cross-bay and a whole range of outbuildings, presumably replacing an earlier series of stables, etc.

Investigation of the cellars revealed a series of medieval cobble-stone walls, that pre-dated the earliest standing fabric of the building, and did not relate on plan to the existing building. This probably supports the suggestion that the recently demolished building was part of the rebuilding that occurred at the Southgates following destruction caused during the siege of Leicester (1645).

D H SMITH

## KNIGHTON GRANGE ROAD.

A fourth-century Roman coin was found when digging the garden of a house in Knighton Grange Road. The reverse is *GLORIA EXERCITUS* with one standard and two soldiers. Acc No 570'1973

## ST. MARGARET'S PASTURE. SK 581054

A barbed and tanged flint arrowhead found about ten years ago, has now been added to the Museum's collections. It is made on a flake, with one surface patinated. The edges have been retouched, and one of the tangs broken. Acc No 235'1973

## OLD WHYTTE SWANNE, Market Place. SK 58700440

Two bays of a box-framed timber house were revealed in the course of demolition work in the new Market Place development. Construction was of a relatively late form, having a collar and tie-beam truss, with lower queen struts and a through-purlin roof. A less-common feature was the presence of double braces to the tie-beam of the one complete truss that had survived.

D H SMITH

## ST. NICHOLAS CIRCLE. SK 58380445

A further small excavation took place in 1973 across the south wing of the *forum* (Plate 44). The area was very much disturbed to a depth of about 10 ft, and several large concrete foundations penetrated even further. The lines of the three most southerly walls were located, as well as two north-south walls of slighter construction. The masonry was largely robbed, at least down to foundation level, and the stylobate blocks of the exterior portico wall had been removed in the Roman period. The extensive metallated area south of the *forum* was also located again, and silt from here had washed over the stylobate wall, and built up inside the portico. There was little trace of floor levels. JEAN MELLOR

## LEICESTERSHIRE

## ANSTEY.

A *dupondius* of Tiberius was found in the garden of 199 Link Road, Anstey. Acc No 565'1973

## BUDDON WOOD. SK 562149

Further trial trenching was carried out on this Iron-Age site, in advance of destruction by quarrying.

Earthworks on the hill-top proved when excavated to be modern. The subsoil contained Romano-British and Iron-Age A pottery, worked flints and pebble pounders. Below the subsoil and cut into the natural were two stratified pits containing Iron-Age A pottery, worked flints and a spindle whorl. These pits were the only indication of any structure associated with the wealth of finds from the site. The Iron-Age pottery may be closely paralleled with that from Fengate, near Peterborough.

The excavation was carried out by A E S Musty on behalf of the *Leicestershire Archæological Committee* who received a grant from the Department of the Environment. A E S MUSTY

## CASTLE DONINGTON, 31 Bondgate. SK 44622750

Fieldwork investigation revealed a two-bay cruck framed house standing partly on an outcrop, and partly on a plinth wall of sandstone. It is hoped to publish an extensive note on this building in a future issue of *Transactions*. D H SMITH

## CROFT.

A Roman coin of Maximian was found on a building site in Croft.

Acc No 473'1973

## CROFT. SP 510967

A Roman coin was found by Mr D A Ramsey one inch below the surface and five yards west of the triangulation point on Croft Hill. The coin was identified by Leicester Museums as one of Faustina, the daughter of Antoninus Pius, and to be similar to Catalogue Number 1402 in *Roman Imperial Coinage*, vol III.

## DUNTON BASSETT.

Eight sherds of Medieval pottery were found by J A Daniell on the north side of the church, between the church and the earthworks.

Acc No 566'1973

## EAST NORTON.

Eleven sherds of Roman pottery, including colour coated ware and samian were found on the ridge at Walnut Farm, East Norton.

Acc No 323'1973

## FLECKNEY. SP 648933

Two medieval sherds of pottery were found in the garden of 16 School Lane.

Acc No 220'1973

## GLEN PARVA. SP 573982

Two sherds of medieval pottery were dredged from the River Sence.

Acc No 320'1973

S SMITH

## HARBY.

A lead token was found at Diamond Cottage, Harby, probably of late medieval date.

## LONG WHATTON.

Further work took place on the site of the medieval manor house, and an interesting complex of foundation walls based on a layer of large pebbles was found. Covering part of the site just below the plough soil was a thick layer of sandstone slates with a single hole in each for the nail, many of which were found

REV S B COLEY

## LUTTERWORTH.

Two pieces of decorated samian pottery and a blint flake were found in the garden of Candlemas Cottage, Chapel Street, Lutterworth.

Acc No 319'1973

## NARBOROUGH, Bell View Cottages, Leicester Road.

Demolition of three cottages revealed a complete closed saddle cruck truss, with a short king-post (.61 m) rising from the saddle. Several other timbers, probably from a cruck-framed house appeared to have been re-used in the brick cottages. Cruck measurements: width at base: 5.03 m, height—ground to king-post top: 5.74 m, blade widths at elbow: 0.29 × 0.19 and 0.29 × 0.20 m.

D H SMITH

## NETHER BROUGHTON, Chapel Lane. SK 69452572

Demolition for redevelopment of a complex building unit including three bays of timber, box-framed construction having a plain collar and tie-beam roof truss carrying a tile-hung roof. The building stood on a plinth wall of dressed ironstone, 1.20 m high. The original unit appeared to have been of cross-passage plan with a wattle-and-daub chimney rising against the passage wall. An unusual feature of this house was the discovery that several of the panel infills were of small cobble stones, set in gypsum plaster. At either end of the timber-framed unit, additional buildings in brick had been raised, these dating from eighteenth and nineteenth century. Ultimately the unit had been divided into three separate properties.

D H SMITH

## ODSTONE.

Medieval pottery was found during field walking by J A Daniell, on the site of the Deserted Village of Odstone. Acc No 564'1973

## RATBY, Bondman Hays. SK 49200710

Though in an advanced stage of decay the earliest building on this site—a two-bay timber box-framed house having a collar and tie-beam trussed roof with through-purlins, supporting a roof of ranged Swithland slate, merits considerable attention for it is one of the few timber-framed houses in Leicestershire that stands in the fields beyond the village. Constructional details suggest a relatively late date for this building, probably seventeenth century. Bay dimensions: 3.65×4.31 and 4.27×4.31 m. Opposite this house stands a brick farmhouse of a later date, having been built during the second half of the eighteenth century, and enlarged during the nineteenth. D H SMITH

## SCALFORD (Wycomb). SK 77372485

An inhumation cemetery comprising at least four skeletons was found immediately north of Wycomb Manor House. The burials were at a depth of between two to three feet, and were orientated with the heads between south and west. Mr R A Rutland visited the site, and reports that there were no datable finds associated with the burials. R A RUTLAND

## THURMASTON.

Medieval pottery found during excavations by Roundhills School has recently been accessed. The site was by St. Michael's Church. Acc No 419'1973

## RUTLAND

## NETHER HAMBLETON. SK 893066

The *Rutland Field Research Group for Archaeology and History* conducted excavations on the site of the deserted village of Nether Hambleton under the guidance of Miss C Mahany. The work on site was organised by Squadron Leader A W Adams. A 15 metre square has revealed three walls of a Saxon (?) long-house type of building. The southern end had the appearance of a stock room, and the northern area revealed a well-defined hearth of red stone and large pebbles. Several hundred fragments of pottery have been found, dating from the sixth to the seventeenth centuries. The earlier finds include early and developed Stamford ware, large fragments of Lyveden ware, Saxon cooking pot and other specimens of Bourne ware, Leeds ware, Midland purple, and Nottingham ware. One type of pottery not fully recognised has been provisionally labelled "Rutland" ware.

Small finds of interest include a lead ball, fragments of bronze, bronze buckle, a selection of iron nails and pegs, several sharpening stones, and two silver coins from near the hearth. One coin was a *soldino* of c.1400, and the other a cross-cut half penny of c.1200.

There is a suggestion of iron working on the site.

A W ADAMS

## NORTH LUFFENHAM.

A cremation pot, similar to one from North Luffenham (*Antiquity* XI (1937), 391) was sold at Christie's, 14 July 1971, lot 142.

*Medieval Archaeology* XVI (1972), 170