

ARCHÆOLOGY IN LEICESTERSHIRE
AND RUTLAND
1975

Edited by ALAN McWHIRR

I NOTES

II REPORTS OF FIELDWORK

I NOTES

Aerial Archaeology

A substantial amount of air cover was provided for Rutland and East Leicester in 1975. Some of this was concerned with the development of techniques and some with routine recording of ephemeral phenomena.

Daily flights from R.A.F. Cottesmore at the latter end of March and the first week in April were used to observe the extent to which differential drying of exposed soils provided indications of earlier land use. Particularly on the clay soils there are marginal conditions in which it seems possible that some relative construction sequence might be deduced from the soil colours of ploughed out banks and baulks. Soil that has been under these earthworks dries out ephemerally (or less) in a lighter colour. The reason for this has not been determined but a buried surface has presumably had less worm action than exposed and cultivated soils on the same horizon.

The existence of many earthworks in the clays that antedate the ridge and furrow systems (both standing and ploughed out) was confirmed. Snow storms during this period were too light and transient to enhance relief and contrast of earthworks in the area.

Another series of daily flights was also made from R.A.F. Cottesmore in the last week in June, second week of July and second week of August. The exceptionally dry summer developed a number of crop mark indications of archaeological sites on all soils in this area but the east Leicestershire clays were least productive of crop marks. In August, a number of reverse parch marks developed, particularly around Oakham. There appears to be, for instance, a prehistoric monument under the Agricultural Showground at Barleythorpe and other ring ditches at Langham and on the S.E. edge of Oakham. Other seemingly prehistoric features were visible around Uppingham as crop marks including superceded field systems between the Eye Brook and the River Chater. Geological contexts that produce crop marks of archaeological features are often, however, suitable for producing crop marks from the immediate sub-soil geology and in this area, the field features are difficult to separate from the geological features in the presumably Lincolnshire Limestone Plateau. Without the associated ring ditches they would probably be misinterpreted as geological.

A number of isolated archaeological features were recorded in the S.W. area of Leicestershire including Iron Age and Prehistoric sites near to Kirkby Mallory and additions to the Prehistoric and Romano British group near to Swepstone. The extent to which such groups of sites in isolation arise from the clearings in a forested landscape or are indicative of a wider pattern of land use that crop mark aerial archaeology can only rarely exploit because of its geological limitations, can, with present knowledge, only be a matter for continuing study.

Although this year's results add a relatively good number of "sites" to those known previously from other types of fieldwork, it is not easy to put their significance in perspective. The construction of a barrow (identified by its crop mark as a ring ditch on air photographs, though fieldwork by Mr. Barry Waite of Nuneaton has identified barrows made from scraped earth that do not produce ring ditch crop marks) required less work than the annual cultivation of a small field. I think it is still possible to suggest that although the excavation of barrows may provide dateable artefacts, they are the result of work that is too unrepresentative of their period by comparison with field systems and that more information on the landscape history of areas should have a higher priority for archaeologists.

J PICKERING

PROVISIONAL LIST OF MOATED SITES IN LEICESTERSHIRE

The following list is provisional inasmuch as field checking of sites has simply been limited to determining whether, in fact, they still exist. It has been the policy in this survey to deliberately ignore the sites of recognized castles whose function was primarily a military one. Also rejected has been the use of the precise term "homestead moats" and instead the more general description MOATED SITES has been adopted, since on examination they proved to include a wide range of types and ownership status, both secular and ecclesiastic. No attempt at classification, therefore, has been made in the list.

The Hon. Secretary of the Archæological Fieldwork Group will be grateful for suggestions regarding suitable additions to this list which will be incorporated in the compilation of the projected Gazetteer of Moated Sites.

Sites have been listed alphabetically by civil parish (other than those in Leicester itself) followed by the name of the site or its approximate location and a six figure National Grid references

Abbreviations Used:

D.M.V. — Deserted medieval village
 D — Moat destroyed
 S — Scheduled monument

AB KETTLEBY, E. of the Church	SK 725229	S
ALEXTON, N. of the Church	SK 817005	
APPLEBY MAGNA, Moat House	SK 316097	
ARNESBY, S.E. of the Church	SP 618921	
ASHBY MAGNA, W. of Conduit Spinney	SP 565904	S
BAGWORTH, Bagworth Moats	SK 454086	
BARDON, Old Hall Farm	SK 461122	
" E. of Kellam's Farm	SK 472131	S
BARKBY THORPE, Hamilton D.M.V.	SK 644073	S
BELTON, S. of Village	SK 451199	
BREEDON-ON-THE-HILL, Breedon Lodge	SK 418222	
BROUGHTON ASTLEY, S.W. of Church	SP 524926	
BRUNTINGTHORPE, E. of the Church (Rectory)	SP 602898	
BUCKMINSTER, S. of Village	SK 882220	D
BURTON AND DALBY, The Grange, Burton Lazars	SK 773155	S
" Hospital of St. Lazarus	SK 765169	S
CARLTON CURLIEU, S.E. of Church	SP 695972	
CLAYBROOKE PARVA, Vicarage Garden	SP 495879	
COALVILLE, Donnington le Heath Manor House	SK 419126	D
" Snibston, Grange Farm	SK 411131	
COLD NEWTON, Hall Close D.M.V.	SK 718064	
DESFORD, E. of Lindridge Hall Farm	SK 472046	
DUNTON BASSETT, N. of Church	SP 548906	S
EMPINGHAM (RUTLAND), Hall Close	SK 948083	S
FREEBY, S.W. of Wyfordby Church	SK 793189	S
" N. of Freeby Church	SK 804202	
FRISBY, Kirby Bellars, Kirby Hall Site	SK 720175	S
" Kirby Bellars Priory	SK 717185	S
GILMORTON, N.W. of Motte and Bailey Site	SP 569879	S
" Cotes De Val, D.M.V.	SP 554885	S
GLEN PARVA, N.E. of Ford (River Sence)	SP 576981	
GLENFIELD, W. of Village	SK 535061	
GLOOSTON, N.W. of Church	SP 748959	
HAMBLETON (RUTLAND), Barnhill Spinney	SK 923072	S
HIGHAM-ON-THE-HILL, Lindley Hall	SP 366960	D
HINCKLEY, Hinckley Priory	SP 427936	D
" Burbage Rectory Garden	SP 441925	
" Barwell, E. of Brockey Lane	SK 454991	
" Barwell, S.W. of Village	SP 436965	D
" Wykin Hall	SP 408952	
" Stoke Golding, "The Moats"	SP 397965	S
HOBY WITH ROTHERBY, Ragdale Hall	SK 653199	
HORN (RUTLAND), Horn D.M.V.	SK 950116	S

HUNGARTON, Baggrave D.M.V.	SK 696086	
” Quenby D.M.V.	SK 701061	
” Ingarsby, W. of Hollow Ford	SK 681049	S
” Old Ingarsby	SK 685054	S
KNAPTOFT, Knaptoft D.M.V.	SP 625895	S
LEICESTER, Evington, W. of the Church	SK 626028	S
” Spinney Hill Farm	SK 607042	D
” Humberstone, “Swan’s Orchard”	SK 630059	
” Humberstone, “Fox’s Hollows”	SK 625061	
” New Parks, “Bird’s Nest” Moat	SK 553059	S
LEIRE, N.E. of Church	SP 527901	
LOCKINGTON-HEMINGTON, S.E. of Sawley Locks	SK 478306	S
LONG WHATTON, N.W. of Church	SK 477237	
LOUGHBOROUGH, Moat Farm	SK 526170	
” Burleigh Hall	SK 519188	
LUBENHAM, Manor House Site	SP 709871	
MARKFIELD, Horsepool Grange	SK 470101	
MARKET BOSWORTH, Bosworth Hall	SK 408033	
” Far Coton, Coton Priory Farm	SK 386022	
MARTINSTHORPE (RUTLAND), Martinthorpe D.M.V.	SK 866046	S
MEDBOURNE, Medbourne Church	SP 799930	
MELTON MOWBRAY, N. of Spinney Farm	SK 762219	S
MOWSLEY, N. of Bosworth Lodge	SP 635871	
NEWBOLD VERDON, S. of Hall	SK 441037	S
NEWTOWN LINFORD, Bradgate House	SK 534102	S
NORTH LUFFENHAM (RUTLAND), S.E. of Cow Pasture	SK 929033	S
OSGATHORPE, Stordon Grange	SK 418192	
OWSTON AND NEWBOLD, N.W. of Furze Hill Farm	SK 788082	S
PECKLETON, “Kirby Moats”	SK 454018	D
” Peckleton Manor House	SK 467006	
” Stapleton, N.W. of Manor Farm	SP 433989	S
POTTERS MARSTON, Potters Marston Hall	SP 498963	D
RATBY, Old Hays Farm	SK 490065	S
REDMILE, N.W. of Village	SK 785361	
SAPCOTE, Park Close Moat	SP 486934	D
SCRAPTOFT, N. of Village	SK 644064	D
SHANGTON, Shangton Grange	SP 722974	
SHACKERSTONE, Manor House Site	SK 374067	D
” E. of Gopsall Park	SK 372065	
” Bilstone Hill Farm	SK 362051	
SHEEPY, Newhouse Grange	SK 318023	
” The Mythe	SP 316994	
” Sheepy Parva Manor House	SK 330015	
” Upton, Manor Farm	SP 363993	
SOUTH CROXTON, N. of the Church	SK 692104	S
SOUTH KILWORTH, Manor House Site	SP 605814	S
SPROXTON, Bescaby D.M.V.	SK 824263	S
STAUNTON HAROLD, Lodge Farm	SK 394212	
STRETTON MAGNA, Stretton Magna D.M.V.	SK 657002	
THURLASTON, Basset House	SK 485996	D
” Newhall Park Farm	SK 507004	S
TILTON, S.W. of Sykes Spinney	SK 745052	S
ULLESTHORPE, W. of Manor House	SP 502874	S
ULVERSCROFT, Ulverscroft Priory	SK 501127	S
WHISSENDINE (RUTLAND), Moor Lane	SK 839151	S
WIGSTON MAGNA, S.E. of All Saints Church	SP 605984	D
WITHERLEY, Ratcliffe Culey, E. of the Church	SP 327994	S

R G MITCHELL

LEICESTERSHIRE DENDROCHRONOLOGY PROJECT

As a preliminary to this project it is necessary to obtain sections of timber that is growing or has recently been felled. Oak is preferred although elm or ash may be useful. Ideally the trees should be at least 100 years old and about 2 feet in diameter and the section required must contain both heart and sapwood, but need not be a complete

disc, a segment or piece cut parallel to the diameter will suffice. Timbers from old or demolished buildings, particularly if dated, are also required. Anybody who may have suitable timber is asked to contact Graham Morgan in the Department of Archaeology at the University of Leicester.

G C MORGAN

M69, LEICESTERSHIRE

Construction work on the M69 began in March 1975. A constant watch was kept on the work especially during the stripping of top-soil and the route was also monitored from the air. All the areas of potential archaeological interest known from preliminary work were checked. The results of the observation were almost wholly negative. The watching brief was made considerably easier by liaison with Mr. Keith Scott of Midland Road Construction Unit.

The top stone of an Iron Age quern was found during preliminary work at SP 463934.

Adjacent to the line of the motorway the possible site of another medieval kiln was recorded at Potters' Marston in the next field to the excavated kiln SP 498973.

The remains of a brick-kiln of early nineteenth-century date were uncovered and recorded at Brickyard Farm near Aston Flamville SP 454923.

FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY SECTION
LEICESTERSHIRE MUSEUMS

II REPORTS OF FIELDWORK

LEICESTER

AUSTIN FRIARS. SK 580044

(i) No trace was found on this site of the Roman north-south street located in 1967 slightly further south at SK 581043. Roman occupation was represented by two ditches which had been re-cut several times and by three inhumations which may be part of the same cemetery as that at Great Holme Street (SK 579042). One of the graves, that of an adult female, must date to the latter part of the Roman period as it was cut into the top filling of one of the ditches which contained coins of the mid-fourth century. The other two burials were both infants buried in shallow scoops in the ground with no traces of coffins. A similar date seems likely for one at least of these which had been decapitated and the skull placed between the femurs, a feature which may indicate Germanic influence.

(ii) Excavation continued on the Austin Friars, West Bridge (*T.L.A.S.* XLIX, p. 61). A controlled section was dug across the large ditch at the north end of the site. The ditch was at least 2 m. deep and 4 m. wide and there was a line of stakes near the base of the northern slope. An interesting feature was the preservation of what appeared to be ripple marks in a layer of sandy silt.

On the west of the site a line of stake-holes was uncovered in the (?) cloister area which may be related to the early building on that side as they ran on a similar orientation. Thick deposits of sand and occupation material were removed in the western area which post-dated the destruction of the early building and pre-dated the main series of buildings. From these occupation layers came two tokens of Edward II, a seal matrix and thirteenth-early fourteenth-century pottery.

At the extreme west of the site, alongside the Old Soar, a series of mortar floors was revealed, sealing the robber trenches of the early building and sealed by slate destruction levels.

FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY SECTION
LEICESTERSHIRE MUSEUMS

GREAT HOLME STREET. SK 579042

The site lies outside the Roman town, west of the River Soar and adjacent to the presumed line of the Fosse Way. An inhumation of Roman date was recorded in 1935 from Great Holme Street and this year's work was in the nature of a trial excavation to find further evidence of a cemetery. Three graves were located and excavated, some distance from the 1935 discovery, and contained the remains of three individuals—two adults, male and female, and one adolescent. Behind the skull of the female was a bone hairpin and the hob-nails of boots or shoes were discovered round the feet of the other two. All three had been buried in wooden coffins of which only the nails remained. Two of the graves were on a north-south axis with the third at right angles.

The three burials appear to form a group defined on the west by a curved gully. To the north was the beginning of another such gully which may indicate the position of a further group of burials. One cinerary urn was also found *in situ*. The area was not always reserved for burials as the graves cut into earlier deposits and fire-bars from a kiln was among the finds from one of these. It is hoped to return to this site and adjacent areas next year as further investigation is required.

FIELD ARCHÆOLOGY SECTION
LEICESTERSHIRE MUSEUMS

NORFOLK STREET. SK 575043

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries mosaic floors were recorded from this site (*V.C.H.*, I, p. 196) which lies about half a mile outside the Roman town, west of the River Soar. Following demolition in 1975 a further area was excavated.

The plan revealed by the discoveries so far is of a central open area or courtyard surrounded by a series of buildings on at least three sides. The west wing, recorded in the nineteenth century, consisted of a range of rooms with mosaic floors behind a tessellated corridor to the east. Most of the north wing still lies below standing buildings but another tessellated corridor, at right angles to the first, was recorded in the nineteenth century and its south wall was located in the 1975 excavations. The building on the south was an aisled barn 12.5 m. wide and at least 17.5 m. in length. The main weight of this structure must have been carried by the double row of posts represented by massive post-pits c. 1.00 m. square. The external walls were of much slighter construction, especially on the south. An earlier channel approximately down the centre of the barn, was cut by the east wall and overlain by one of several hearths within the building which appeared to be associated with metal-working.

A similar channel divided the courtyard area from west to east though not centrally. Over much of the northern, larger part of the courtyard was a firm cobbled surface which sealed earlier post-holes and was later re-surfaced with mortar. Both surfaces were cut by a later wall which reduced or divided the courtyard and joined the east ends of the barn and the north wing. No buildings have yet been located east of the courtyard.

In the northern part of the courtyard was a rectangular feature, 4.5 m. by 3.00 m. and 0.65 m. deep which had been timber-lined and from which a channel led downhill to the east. Both of these features had finally been filled with building rubble mainly composed of fragments of roofing tile and painted wall-plaster. The only feature in the southern part of the courtyard was a large oval-shaped hole which had been dug into the natural Keuper marl and subsequently filled with building rubble.

The earliest stratified levels on the site, below the courtyard surfaces contained material dating to the mid-second century and occupation appears to have continued into the fourth century.

FIELD ARCHÆOLOGY SECTION
LEICESTERSHIRE MUSEUMS

LEICESTERSHIRE

APPLEBY MAGNA. SK 315098

A proposal to lower the level of the churchyard here was reported to the Museum. A trial trench was excavated by Mr. D. Parsons and members of the Museum archæology section to ascertain whether the original levels were still intact. It was found that the stratification had been destroyed by building work in the nineteenth century, and no further investigation was thought necessary, (see pp. 41-45).

FIELD ARCHÆOLOGY SECTION
LEICESTERSHIRE MUSEUMS

BILLESDON. SK 719044

Field walking over the past 15 months in the area of the Life Hill "earthworks" has produced a quantity of Roman pottery. In October 1975 the field immediately east of the "earthworks" was ploughed and 86 sherds of Roman pottery, 1 possible sherd of an Iron Age rim and a flint scraper were found along with oyster shells. The Roman pottery was mainly grey ware, but colour coated wares were also found and a date range of second to fourth century AD would seem appropriate. Pottery and details of find spots are with Leicestershire Museums.

J R BRANSON

BILLESDON. SK 723038

To the south east of Life Hill 18 sherds of Roman pottery were found in the spoil from a drainage ditch. Details with Leicestershire Museums.

J R BRANSON

BILLESDON. SK 720032

Long Lane continues northwards from the village as a hollow way towards Stone Pits field and in the fields on either side are straight-sided enclosures with ditches and banks. During the levelling of part of this area by the Water Board many sherds of medieval pottery were found ranging in date from the 12th century to the 14th. Details with Leicestershire Museums.

J R BRANSON

COLD NEWTON. SK 736055

A bank and ditched enclosure around the head of a small stream was investigated during the drought in 1975. Within the enclosure was a pond, which may be modern, and platforms on which, during the drought could be seen the foundations of buildings. There were no finds. Although this site is just in the parish of Cold Newton it is only $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the centre of Tilton. Details with Leicestershire Museums.

J R BRANSON

GARTHORPE. SK 835202; 824231; 841214

Quantities of Roman pottery have been recovered by field-walking in this area but so far no other traces of settlements have been found, apart from an isolated column base of uncertain date found while straightening the course of the River Eye some years ago.

FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY SECTION
LEICESTERSHIRE MUSEUMS

FROLESWORTH. SP 505905

Over the past few years digging of new drains and wall foundations, clearing a midden and other routine land work have produced much evidence of human presence from pre-history to Roman, medieval and present times. Micro-liths, stone hand axes, an ancient iron axe, early grey, buff and red pottery; a mortarium—probably Mancetter, Stamford and Bellamine Ware. Also a mass of other rough and glazed sherds in great variety, including many examples of Staffs. slipware and more sophisticated and delightful examples of the pottery artist. Clay smoking pipe bowls and stems by the score together with pieces of glassware, moulded, painted and etched and complete bottles from the last century and many fragments of Victoriana. Also large lumps of slag waste and the bronze bell, figurine leg and handled plug or stopper shown here.

The site is in the centre of the village, less than a mile from the Fosse Way, $2\frac{1}{2}$ m. across the upper Soar Valley from Venonae on a sand-gravel-clay ridge; alt. 366 ft.

JOHN WEBSTER

GOADBY

This arrowhead (Fig. 1) was found in a farmhouse garden at Goadby. It is socketed and has barbs, one of them broken, of approximately the same length as the socket. The total length is 73 mm. According to the classification of the London Museum Medieval Catalogue (1940) it is a type 14, which is later than the 13th century and designed exclusively for hunting.

Very few medieval arrowheads are known from Leicestershire. A type 15, from Enderby old church, very similar to type 14 but with longer barbs, is in the Leicestershire Museums' collection. Cottrill (*Antiq. J.*, XXIII, 1943, 54-55) called attention to a description of a type 14 or 15 arrowhead used in the murder in 1297 at Tilton of Simon de Skeftington. This might suggest that both the date and the use of such arrowheads require revision.

R A RUTLAND

HAMILTON. SK 646075

The field in which P. A. Rahtz dug a trial trench in 1955 was ploughed late in 1975 for the first time in living memory and an area of Roman building debris was observed. The material included roofing tiles, Swithland slates, flue tiles, tesserae, painted wall plaster and pottery. The pottery ranges in date from the 1st-4th century AD with

appreciably more first century than fourth. The spot where this material was found does not seem to be the place where Rahtz dug the trench in 1955. A detailed study of this area may help with the problems of continuity between the Roman and later periods.

A D MCWHIRR

ILLSTON. SP 7099

Intensive fieldwork has been carried out in the parish over the past 2-3 years involving the plotting of ridge and furrow and other earthworks. A great deal of medieval pottery has been found and find spots recorded. The fabrics found include pottery from Stamford, Nottingham and Nuneaton. A thin scatter of grey Roman pottery has also been found throughout the parish.

J R BRANSON

LOCKINGTON. SK 484295

A report was received of the discovery of a human skull in a field adjacent to the Romano-British villa and native settlement in this area. (*J.R.S.* LI PP133-4; *Antiquity* XLII pp.46-7, pl.xi; *EMAB* 1962). The site was visited and it was found that the skull had in fact been dredged from the stream in November 1974. There was no indication of its original site or of any further material. The skull is now in the Museum 486'1975.

FIELD ARCHÆOLOGY SECTION
LEICESTERSHIRE MUSEUMS

LONG WHATTON.

Excavation by the Loughborough Archæological Society has continued on the moated site throughout 1975 and has revealed a northward extension of the building previously recorded. Quantities of ridge tile fragments, nails and roof slates have been found, together with small quantities of domestic pottery dating from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries.

A TARVER

LOUGHBOROUGH. SK 537198

The demolition of a timber-framed house in Churchgate, Loughborough, was reported to the Museum. It was too late to stop the demolition but the building was recorded as fully as possible. The house was E-shaped in plan and one of the wings was of base cruck construction. A lathe and mud smoke cowl was revealed, also two Tudor brick fire-places and a wooden mullioned window. Other discoveries included a timber dated 162?, a seventeenth-century shoe and a painted brace with black and white chevron decoration.

FIELD ARCHÆOLOGY SECTION
LEICESTERSHIRE MUSEUMS

LUBBESTHORPE. SK 544011

Stripping of turf and top-soil preparatory to laying a pipe-line through the earthworks at Lubbesthorpe revealed the rubble foundations of a corner of a building with associated medieval pottery. A short distance away was a substantial scatter of Roman pottery although this could not certainly be associated with any features. The site was recorded and the finds are in Leicestershire Museums. 286'1975.

FIELD ARCHÆOLOGY SECTION
LEICESTERSHIRE MUSEUMS

OADBY. SK 625004

Demolition of the Oadby Boys Club premises in London Road revealed the painted outline of a small cottage unit. The steep roof pitch and low walls would be consistent with a timber building of cruck construction.

D H SMITH

RATBY. SK 513060

Investigation of the two domestic units in Church Hill revealed a fairly complete roof truss of collar and tie-beam construction with $\frac{1}{2}$ -lap apex joint, wall-posts standing on

padstones and a section of wall-plate. Some early brick-work also appeared to be associated with this fabric.

D H SMITH

SAPCOTE. SP 497932

Work continued through 1975 on the site of the Roman Villa. The adjacent field to the north of the quarry became available for investigation and a number of trial trenches were dug to ascertain the limits of the Villa. Part of the plan of a bath suite was found along with voussoir shaped box-tiles and curved painted wall plaster from the destruction levels. The wall, reported in 1974 (*T.L.A.S.*, xlix (1973-4), 62), found along the north face of the sunken quarry road proved to turn northwards and to continue for 50 metres possibly ending in a buttress, thus forming two sides of what appears to be an enclosure wall.

S SMITH

SMEETON WESTERBY. SP 671911

The discovery of human skeletal remains and pottery during mole-draining operations was reported to the Museum. The site was identified as a Beaker burial and one complete Beaker and fragments of at least one more were recovered. One skeleton was recorded *in situ* and bones of at least three other individuals were recovered. 485°1975.

FIELD ARCHÆOLOGY SECTION
LEICESTERSHIRE MUSEUMS

THURMASTON. SK 611097

Excavations, on a site threatened by building development adjacent to the standing west wall of the church of St. John the Evangelist, by a local amateur group revealed only the lowest course of pebble foundations for the north and south walls of the building. The foundations were traced over a length of about 13 m. Above this there was a depth of c. one metre of nineteenth-century infilling. No trace of floor levels remained.

FIELD ARCHÆOLOGY SECTION
LEICESTERSHIRE MUSEUMS

TONGE. SK 418233

Pottery of early medieval date including one sherd of Torksey-type ware was found in a garden. No other finds are known from the area.

FIELD ARCHÆOLOGY SECTION
LEICESTERSHIRE MUSEUMS

TUGBY. SK 762008

During levelling operations prior to building a number of features were noted in this central area of Tugby. Several patches of cobbling were found and pottery of 12-13th century date recovered. Detailed plans and photographs with Leicestershire Museums.

J R BRANSON

WEST LANGTON. SP 715921

Trial excavations were carried out at West Langton, Leics. (Grid ref. SP 715921) in December 1974, on behalf of the Leicestershire Archæological Committee. The prime purpose of this was to investigate the state of survival of the uppermost levels of the structure and, if time permitted, to gain some idea of the plan of this possible Roman Villa.

At first, the aerial photographs of the field concerned proved to be misleading and a structural plan derived from them turned out to be non-existent. When trenches were laid out lower down the field by distinct rubble scatters the villa was found.

Two main parts of the villa were examined and the line of a roadway, metalled with stones and surviving at a depth of 45 cm. was found. Resistivity meter readings here indicated a width of 6 metres.

Three main trenches were placed in the east-west running part of the villa. The lines of four walls were found, all surviving as distinct robber trenches. The upper floor levels of the rooms, surviving at depths ranging from 22-50 cm. had suffered badly from early disturbance, weathering and ploughing. Trench G revealed thick patches of an unsurfaced mortar layer, parts of a stone bedding and the gravelly remains

of an *opus signinum* floor. Seven metres away, trench B uncovered parts of two rooms, both possibly with tiled floors originally. Here only two complete tiles remained, though the clay layers beneath were fairly intact. Finally, trench J produced a 2.2 m. wide corridor with an intact patch of tesserae, recognized as the same patch uncovered in 1973 by Mr. Aggas and Mr. Yates of Kibworth Beauchamp. Strangely, this was found at a depth of only 22-4 cm., while nearby ploughing had scattered both tesserae and underlying concrete, and had scored the mortar layer beneath both.

Some distance away a 25 m. long trench revealed most of the cross-section of a west "wing". Here there were two outer corridors and probably two interior rooms, the dividing wall being shown up by resistivity meter readings. Two separate surfaced mortar floors, with indications of a third, were found in the west corridor, while its opposite number had minute traces of an *opus signinum* floor, mortar beneath and then a thick white concrete layer. The latter survived almost intact and was only 32 cm. below field surface level. Alongside it was the only recognizably intact stretch of wall found at West Langton, a wall only 35 cm. wide. Between the two corridors only a small area excavated at depth. Here there was a thick mortarish destruction level, containing the loose remains of a tessellated floor and an *opus signinum* floor. Only a hardened mortar floor beneath both survived in patches.

The building materials recovered included local limestone walling, sandstone, Swithland slate, roof, floor and flue tiles, a variety of *opus signinum*, mortar and pebble-concrete floor layers, tufa, painted and unpainted wall-plaster, glass, iron nails and a quantity of loose tesserae. Pottery was not at all abundant, nearly all the sherds coming from the subsoil and destruction layer above the floor layers. This included samian, mortaria, orange ware, imitation samian and blackish ware. The main categories though were colour-coated ware (35%), grey ware (12%), light bluish-grey sandy ware (11%) and, most interesting of all, gritted pottery (18½%), recalling the pottery from Brixworth. Apart from this a radiate bronze coin and two iron tools, as yet unidentified, were found.

Over 1,200 resistivity meter readings were taken, though many were shrouded by the effects of scattered rubble and an overlying medieval field pattern varying the depth of deposits. Nevertheless, it was possible to construct a hypothetical plan of the villa, in the field worked in. It appears that there were at least two main blocks, the west one being about 20 m. wide and at least 48 m. long. A north block, running east-west, was at least 46 m. long and varied in width from 12 m. to 33 m. There were also indications of out-buildings.

R SHEPPARD

WHITWICK. SK 435162

Church of St. John the Baptist

During reflooring of the east end of the nave and aisles in the summer of 1975 evidence of earlier masonry was discovered. Two features in the south-east corner of the nave were recorded. The first, which was largely covered by pews (position indicated by line a—a on Fig. 2), appeared to be part of an octagonal pier base, the one complete face visible (the south-eastern) measuring 50 cm. (1 ft. 7¾ in.) in length. The reconstruction of this feature in fig. 2 shows that it was of massive construction in comparison with the existing arcade piers to the south of it. It implies the former existence of a nave south arcade some 1.5 m. (5 ft.) north of the present one, supporting a wall probably of considerable thickness. This wall would have aligned fairly well with the existing south wall of the chancel. There was no trace of a respond or pier base at the junction of the west wall of the aisle and the south wall of the chancel. Did this bay of the arcade extend further east? What, in any case, would have been the relationship of its east respond or piers to the crypt, which is of the same external width as the chancel and projects at least 2.4 m. (8 ft.) into the first bay of the nave? The alternatives seem to be either that the nave arcade predates the crypt and was abandoned when the crypt was constructed, or that the east bay of the arcade was supported not on a full respond at the aisle/chancel junction, but on a corbel. Indeed, the existing north arcade, which stands in a similar relationship with the crypt to that of the postulated south arcade, springs at the east end direct from the aisle east wall, without even the benefit of a corbel. On these relationships see A. Hamilton Thompson's paper on the church, which contains a plan by Herbert, in G. F. Farnham, *Charnwood Forest and its Historians and the Charnwood Manors* (Leicester, 1930), pp. 178-81. It is interesting to note that at the end of the eighteenth century, Nichols observed that "the South aisle is larger than the North, and has a fourth arch, dividing it from the chancel." (*History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester* (1795-1815),

III, 1118.) The north aisle was then only three bays long, and the chancel apparently as long as the crypt. The recently found base may therefore have supported not only the arch mentioned by Nichols, but also the chancel arch, which would explain its apparent size. The possibility of a north-south wall in this position, however, makes the detail of the reconstruction offered in fig. 2 open to question.

The second feature was a short stretch (1.22 m./4 ft.) of masonry running roughly east-west in the extreme south-east corner of the nave. Its south face was intact, but on the north side it had been damaged by a nineteenth-century heating duct and grille (at b on fig. 2), so that it is impossible to determine its original shape or purpose. Its projection into the east bay of the assumed south arcade and its apparently slight construction make it unlikely to have been part of the missing respond base discussed above. It may have been the footing for a screen or part of a wide chancel step.

There were no small finds and no stratigraphic relationships or other dating criteria. The features have been buried in the new concrete floor.

Addendum

Since this account was drafted, Mr. John Colledge of Whitwick, whose great-grandfather carried out the 1848 restoration, has kindly supplied the following information: there is no trace of further bases under the pewing west of the octagonal feature recorded here; before the 1848 rebuilding the chancel arch stood some 16 feet further west, with its foundation roughly in line with the first arcade pier. These statements clearly make it necessary to reconsider the detail of the interpretations offered above, and in particular a close study of the 1848 papers is called for. It is hoped to present further conclusions on another occasion.

DAVID PARSONS

WIGSTON MAGNA. SP 609988-609989

(i) Demolition of most of the properties on the west side of Bull Head Street offered the opportunity to investigate their construction. Quaker Cottage, an earlier demolition, was reported briefly in volume XLV of these *Transactions*. Due south of this property stood The Bull's Head public house, a substantial timber-framed building with a series of collar and tie-beam trusses, all erased slightly above the collar level. Some wall-posts were also traced and evidence of a wall-plate and diagonal bracing was also noted. An extensive range of outbuildings were related to both farming and malting with one outbuilding having a special bricked floor for malting.

(ii) No. 43 Bull Head Street concealed timber fabric of similar type to that in The Bull's Head. Roof construction was of collar and tie-beam trusses while two wall-posts were also traced.

(iii) Demolition of a small range of late nineteenth-century terraced cottages in Bushloe End (SP 603997) revealed a palimpsest of building types in the western gable of the adjacent house. Embedded in the gable but bearing no relationship to any of the present buildings was a single cruck blade.

D H SMITH

RUTLAND

EMPINGHAM. SK 936082

A second season of excavation was conducted in 1975 on the site of an A-S cemetery found during the construction of a car park beside the new reservoir at Empingham, Rutland. The work was directed by Nicholas Reynolds, of the University of Cambridge, on behalf of the D.o.E. and the Anglian Water Authority, following work begun in 1974 by Mr. S. Gorin of Newark Technical College.

A total of 132 graves had been laid out along the line of a hollow way, probably in use during the Roman period, and among a complex of silted-up Iron Age ditches. The layout of the graves appeared to be largely random, and all were comparatively shallow. No grave cut into another, indicating that their positions were marked in some way; indeed, it has been possible to suggest, from the evidence of the skeletons, that, although there were no coffins, the graves were covered over rather than immediately back-filled (cf. Reynolds, *Antiquity*, 1976).

A large and varied collection of fine objects had been buried with the dead, among them shield-bosses, knives, spears, buckles, bone combs, chatelaines, glass and amber beads, and various kinds of metal costume fastenings, including annular, penannular, swastika and disc brooches, and a particularly fine series of gilt bronze cruciform

brooches. These indicate a late date for the burials, either at the end of the 6th or early in the 7th centuries AD. The cemetery appears to have been in use for a short period, and there is some evidence to suggest that much of the metalwork was made by one craftsman, or at least in one workshop. A high proportion of the dead were adolescents, though many of the adults lived well into middle age. Some of the skeletons displayed interesting and distinctive genetic features, which suggest the possibility of discerning familial links.

N M REYNOLDS

KETTON. SK 982063

A Roman inhumation burial in a stone coffin was found in 1974 during quarrying operations. The site was disturbed before archæologists could visit the site, but a bronze wire bracelet, fragments of two shale bracelets, and a few sherds of pottery were recovered together with remains of the skeleton.

T H CLOUGH

LEIGHFIELD. SK 830049, 808059 and 807055

Three sites were noted on R.A.F. aerial photographs by J. R. Branson, each with house platforms or enclosures associated with hollow ways or tracks. Little is now to be seen on the ground.

T H CLOUGH

LYDDINGTON. SP 875951

A little Roman colour-coated pottery and grey ware was found on the route of the Wing-Beanfield (Corby) water pipeline during fieldwalking by the Rutland Field Research Group following the removal of topsoil. Finds were deposited in Rutland County Museum.

T H CLOUGH

LYDDINGTON.

Medieval and post-medieval pottery was found along the line of the Wing-Beanfield pipeline during fieldwalking by the Rutland Field Research Group. Medieval pottery was especially prolific in the hitherto undisturbed ridge-and-furrowed fields east of the stream opposite Lyddington church. Finds deposited in Rutland County Museum.

T H CLOUGH

NETHER HAMBLETON. SK 893067

Following excavations in 1973-4 a further season in 1975 was possible as the filling of the reservoir was delayed by the water shortage of 1975. Removal of a stone scatter revealed paved "yards" east and west of the house. A considerable quantity of pottery was found and also bones of horse, ox, sheep, pig, dog and cat. Included in the small finds were many iron nails, door brackets, pegs, knife blades and three flat bronze clips. A silver coin found outside the east doorway has been identified as Scandinavian, Erik the Seventh.

Later in 1975 a section was dug into the "street" to locate the southern wall of the house and this posed certain problems. In the floor material of the southernmost room six silver coins were found. They were Henry III dating from about 1250. Another coin was found in the yard and this was identified as a penny of Edward III from the York ecclesiastical mint, 1351-60.

Present indications are that the site was probably occupied from the 10th-15th centuries and the presence of iron slag suggests an industrial use for part of the period.

A W ADAMS

OAKHAM. SK 849085

A small polished stone axe was found in the garden of 45 Warn Crescent, Oakham. The result of thin sectioning is awaited, but the axe is almost certainly of Group VI (Great Langdale area) rock. Petrology number RUT 5.

T H CLOUGH

SEATON. SP 884986

A scatter of Roman pottery including colour-coated ware and other types was found together with many small pieces of iron slag on the route of the Wing-Beanfield pipeline during fieldwalking by the Rutland Field Research Group. Finds were deposited in Rutland County Museum.

T H CLOUGH