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Edited by JEREMY K. KNIGHT

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ENVOI

Volume I, part I, of the ANTIQUARY appeared nineteen years ago, a slim fascicule of 16 pages whose contents, I see with surprise, were almost throughout the work of Mr. Cefni Barnett and myself. My part, however, was played only at his bidding: the concept was wholly his. At first – it is an open secret – there were doubts as to our ability to publish a journal from our modest income. Two or three more annual numbers stilled them, and brought the volume up to a respectable 140 pages. The next two were considerably larger. Throughout, there was a great diversity: Cefni saw that Monmouthshire archaeology and history were pretty fairly recorded in the sixties and seventies. The high standard of production on which he had set his heart, however, was attained with the vital friendly interest of the late Lt. Col. H. Llewellyn Hughes of the Griffin Press, Pontypool, for many years a member of our Committee.

Cefni came as Deputy Director from his native Carmarthen, indeed from Carmarthen Museum, to Newport Museum in 1949. In 1968, he took over as Director from the cruelly ailing R. G. Absalom, and was faced with the completion of the new building of his Museum, and the manifold cares of running a Department. All this seemed likely to leave him little time besides; but it was the inexorable rise in printing costs, rather than any such consideration, that caused him to end the first series of the ANTIQUARY with Volume III. Indeed, it took us five years to charge the financial batteries sufficiently to cover its final double part. A journal must appear more regularly; and in the new series, let us hope, the new Editors, David Williams, Jeremy Knight and Peter Price will retrieve the ideal of an annual production.

We felicitate and thank Cefni for his achievement, take pride in it.

GEORGE C. BOON
President

FRONTISPIECE

The common seal of Usk Priory. Impression in red wax from Public Record Office E25/111 pt 2.
The inscription reads S : SCE : MARIE : ET : CONVENTUS : DE : VSCA
(The seal of St Mary and the convent of Usk.)

UNPUBLISHED BRONZE AGE FINDS IN NEWPORT MUSEUM

Cefni Barnett and Jeremy Knight

1. A Flat Axe from Monmouth

A flat axe of the Early Bronze Age (Fig 1, 1) was found during construction work on the site of Monmouth Secondary School in the Dixton Gate area (Grid Ref SO/512131) in 1970. Unfortunately the labourer who found it was not able to indicate the precise location and was more concerned to obtain a reward for his services. The axe was presented to Newport Museum by the then Monmouthshire County Council, the owners of the site (accession no. 71. 265). The surface of the axe is encrusted by a heavy pitted patina, with a pronounced circular "dimple" on one face, possibly a casting flaw. It measures 11.4 cms in length, with a width of 6.5 cms at the blade and a thickness at the waist of 1.0 cms. The axe is of "thin butted" type, that is with a butt wedge-shaped in section. It probably belongs to the Welsh equivalent of Coles's Migdale industry[1] and a date of c. 2000-1800 B.C. seems probable. This is the fourth Early Bronze Age flat axe from the county, the other three all being from the lower Usk valley. A hoard of two from Newport is in the Evans Collection in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford[2] and another, similar to the Monmouth axe, was found near Usk[3]. There are cremation burials in urns of the same period from Tredunnock and Usk[4], in both cases apparantly flat graves without barrows, and the alluvial plain and low flanking hills of the lower Usk evidently suited the way of life of these Early Bronze Age folk. The terrain around Monmouth is very similar.

2. A Palstave from Gaer Road, Newport

This Palstave (Fig 1, 2) is published separately by one of us (C.B. see p. 45–55) in relation to other prehistoric finds from the same area. It belongs to Smith's "Early Midribbed" Group II, which, like the Goytre specimen, can be attributed to Burgess's Acton Park phase. The classic study of the type appeared in this journal in 1964 when Dr Burgess published the example from Chepstow, also in the collections of Newport Museum[7]. Unlike the Group I palstaves, the type is not uncommon locally, this being the fourth example recorded from the county.

3. A Palstave from Goytre

A bronze unlooped palstave (Fig 1, 3) was found in 1955 by Mr A. E. Messenger in his market garden "Floral Gardens" at Goytre, Gwent. It is a somewhat debased example of the type with a "shield pattern" in front of the stop-ridge, though in this case the shield is on one side only and even there is not very clearly defined. Parts of the palstave are heavily pitted and there is evidence of some secondary working of the blade, including the marks of a file or similar tool. The butt is broken. The implement (length 15.4 cms, width 6.1 cms, maximum thickness 2.8 cms) was donated to Newport Museum by Mr Messenger (accession no. 55. 189). Shield pattern palstaves are associated with Group I of Smith and Burgess's Anglo-Welsh palstave series, attributed to Burgess's Acton Park phase of the Middle Bronze Age c. 1400-1200 B.C.[5]. The type is commonest in North Wales and rare in this area. Dr Savory's map of the type[6] shows two in Glamorgan and none in Gwent.

4. Looped Palstaves from Cwmbran and Magor

Two looped palstaves with central mid-rib have been acquired by Newport Museum in recent years:- The first (Fig 1, 5) was purchased at a sale of antiquities at Christie's in London in July 1970, the provenance being given as "Cwmbran, Monmouthshire". Efforts to establish a more precise location failed, though it is known to have been sold by a local family. The previous owners had attempted to clean it, and patination only remains in such areas as the recesses of the stop ridges and under the loop and the whole appears to have been coated lightly with lacquer, the appearance therefore being more coppery than is usual. The single rib is rounded and integral to the form of the blade and on one side of the blade is a small pitted hole, possibly a casting flaw. The loop is slightly askew and the narrow blade measures 5.0 cms. in width, the overall length being 17 cms and the maximum thickness 3.2 cms. The accession number is 70.168.

A similar palstave was donated to Newport Museum by Mr D. S. Price of Magor (Fig 1, 4 – accession number 73.06). Mr Price's father had found it whilst digging in a small field at Knollbury Farm, Magor (ST 429883) in 1950. In this case, the rib is more pronounced the stop well rounded and rather deeper than in the Cwmbran axe. The casting seams along both sides are very distinct. The tip of the butt is missing and the loop has either corroded or has been damaged by a blow. The present length is 15.6 cms, the width at edge of blade 4.6 cms, maximum thickness 3.7 cms.

Both palstaves are of Smith's 'transitional' type, and a date of c. 1000-600 B.C. seems probable.

5. A "South Wales" Axe from near Chepstow

In 1956, Newport Museum purchased from a lady living at Llandevaud a socketed axe (Fig 1, 6) said to have been found "near Chepstow". This small neat axe, 8 cms long and 4.8 cms across the cutting edge, has three raised roughly parallel ribs on each face. The neck has a short raised collar or moulding. Though rather small, the axe belongs to the "South Wales" type, characteristic of south-east Wales and parts of southern England in the period 700-450 B.C. Something over a dozen examples are now known from the county[8]. The accession number is 56.68.

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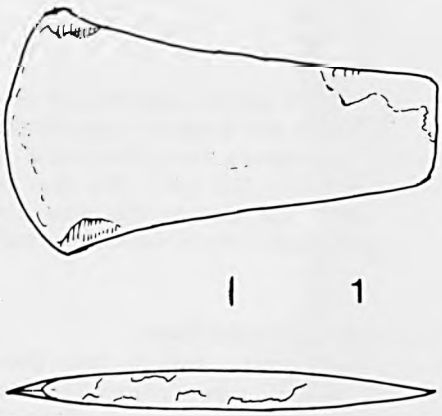
1. Coles, J. M. "Scottish Early Bronze Age Metalwork" **Proceedings Society of Antiquaries of Scotland** 101 (1968-9), 1-110.
2. Ashmolean Museum 1927-2368; 1927-2369. Quoted by Burgess in **Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies** 20 (1962) p. 86 n3.
3. Grimes, W. F. **The Prehistory of Wales** (Cardiff, National Museum of Wales, 2nd ed 1951, No. 402.
4. Tredunnock – Grimes, op. cit. No. 587; Usk – From excavations by Dr W. Manning on the Detention Centre playing fields. Publication forthcoming.
5. Burgess C. in Renfrew, C (ed) **British Prehistory: A New Outline** (London 1974), 198-202. Smith, M. A., "Some Somerset hoards and their place in the Bronze Age of southern Britain" **Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society** 25 (1959), 144-87.
6. Savory, H. N. "The Late Bronze Age in Wales: Some new discoveries and new interpretations" **Archaeologia Cambrensis** 107 (1958). Fig 10 p. 60.
7. Burgess, C "A Palstave from Chepstow" **Monmouthshire Antiquary** Vol I, part IV (1964), 117-24.
8. For a recent list see C. N. Moore "The South Welsh Axe; its origins and distribution" **Archaeological Journal** 135 (1978), 61-2 (and map on p. 58). There is another map in Savory, op. cit. Fig 16, p. 63.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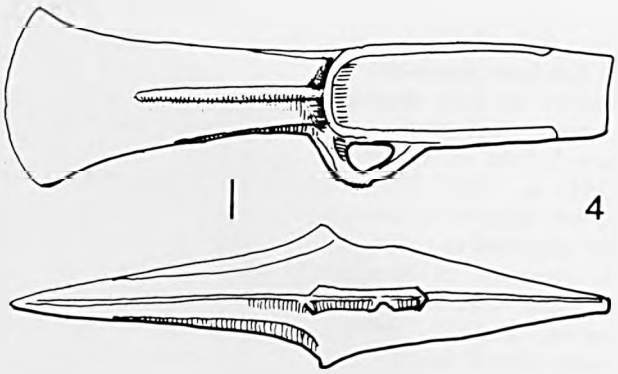
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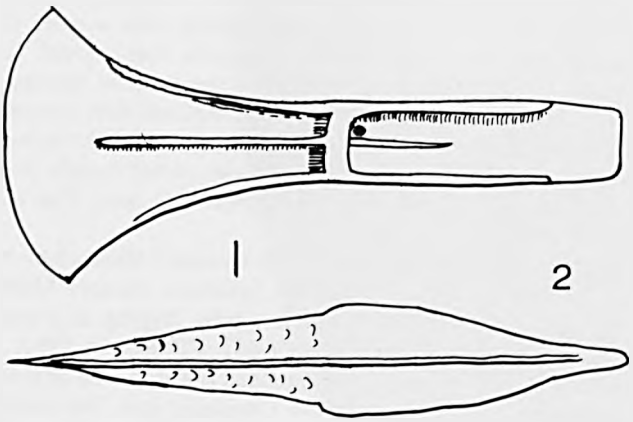
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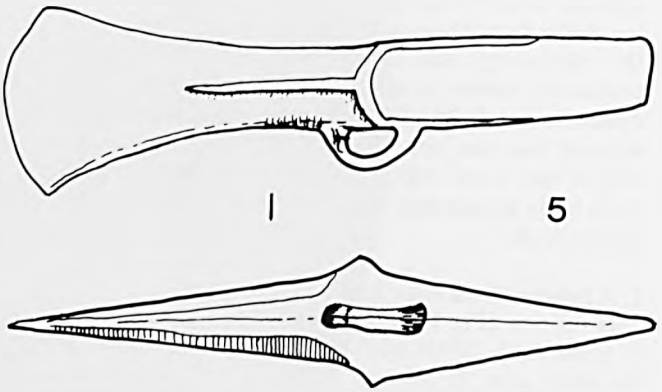
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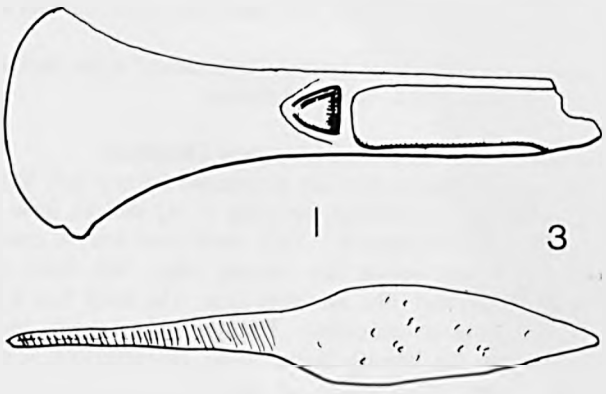
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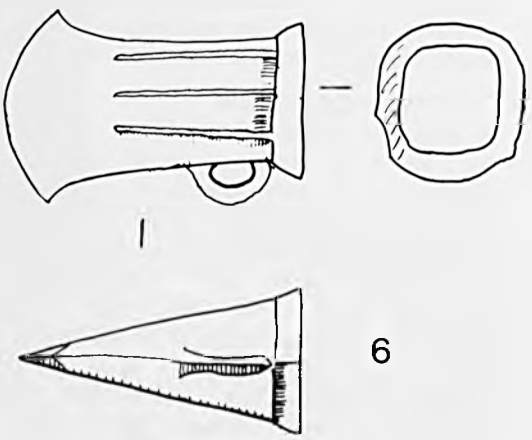
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EXCAVATIONS AT LLANTHONY PRIORY GWENT, 1978

by D. H. Evans

With contributions by A.G. Vince, S.E. Taylor, C.L. Mumford, T.P. O'Connor and C.J. Hayton

Introduction

Llanthony Priory (SO 289279) lies in the Honddu valley, about 13.5 kms north-east of Abergavenny (Fig 1). The standing remains of the Priory church and its claustral buildings belong to a rebuilding which began in c. 1175[1], (Fig 2) although there are references to a ruined chapel here in c. 1100[2], and to a religious community which finally adopted the Augustinian rule in c. 1118[3]. It was the first Augustinian foundation in Wales, and its status as one of the major religious houses in the Principality was maintained by the wealth of the estates with which it was endowed. Architectural and historical accounts have previously been published by Coxe, Roberts, Freeman, Nash, Stephenson, Gardner, Lovegrove, Craster, and others[4]. The church has also been the subject of a number of early engravings – including views by the Bucks (1732), Wyndham (1777), Williams (1793), Hearne (1796), Colt Hoare (1800), Dayes (1801), and Smith (1809)[5]. The only previous excavations which are known to have taken place on the site, were those undertaken by Gardner in the early years of this century; the accounts of these are summarised with his more comprehensive architectural descriptions in two outstanding papers published in 1915 and 1916[6]. Parts of the Priory have been gradually cleared of rubble and consolidated from the late 1830's onwards[7], and in 1951 most of the standing ruins were taken into guardianship by the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works (now the Welsh Office). Since then, clearances have taken place on the site of the chapter house, and the south transept and its adjacent chapels; consolidation is still in progress.

The present paper is concerned with excavations undertaken in 1978 on the chapels to the east of the north transept. The north transept is shown in ruins by the Bucks[8] in 1732, and the area to the east as being already completely covered. By 1978, the only visible trace of the chapels was a vaulting shaft with its ribs, in the south-east corner of the enlarged chapel[9]. This was the one part of the priory church which had remained untouched by previous clearances – largely, because the area had remained in private hands until 1972, when it was taken into guardianship. Excavation revealed the remains of four phases of transept chapels. Work also began on clearing the north transept, but excavation in this area was not completed until 1979, and the report on this, and other areas of the priory subsequently excavated, is to be published in a later paper, together with a new detailed historical account, and the results of a programme of surveys of earthworks and outlying standing buildings.

Relatively few finds have previously been published from the Priory. Three grave-stones were illustrated by Roberts[10]; one of these was subsequently republished with another stone object on the occasion of a visit by the Cambrian Archaeological Association in 1876[11]. The opportunity has therefore been taken to publish some of the material which has been found in previous clearances.

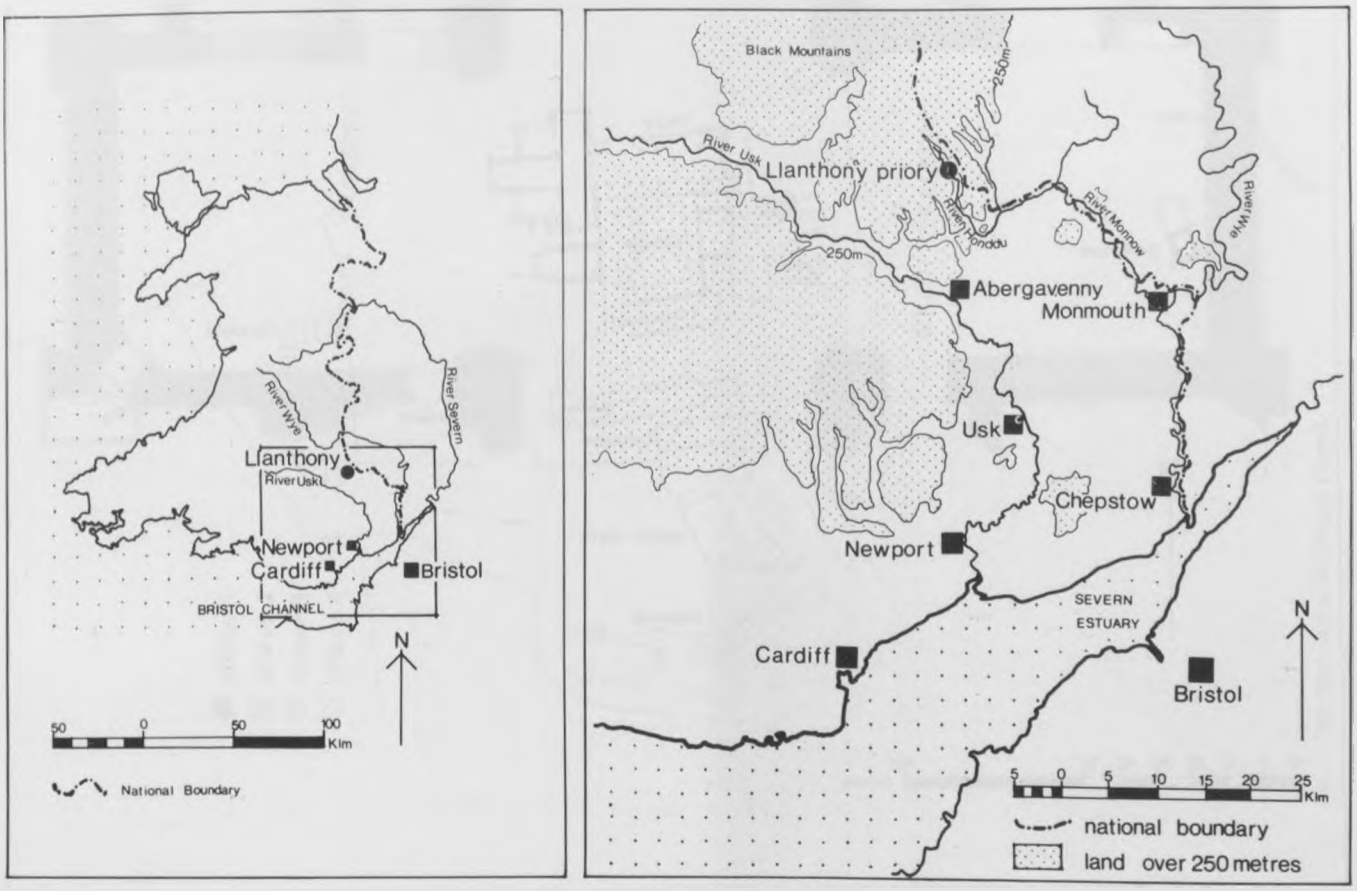


Fig. 1 Location Maps

The excavation was undertaken on behalf of the Ancient Monuments Branch of the Welsh Office and the Department of Archaeology, University College, Cardiff. The author is indebted to J. K. Knight and Dr M. W. Thompson for their support and advice; to Professor M. G. Jarrett who kindly gave permission for students to take part in the excavations, and for university facilities to be used for post-excavation work; to Mr Matthew Knight and Mr Trevor Passmore for readily allowing access onto their land, and supplying much useful local information; to Lawrence, Les and Sue Fancourt of the Abbey Hotel for their many kindnesses, and making life there so very pleasant; to Mr Walter Powell and the Welsh Office masons for all their help. The excavations were undertaken by volunteers, often in adverse conditions; my thanks are due to all of them, but particularly to the following who assisted with planning, recording, supervision and the day-to-day administration: Dafydd Griffiths, Graham Joyce, Debbie Moore, Andy Robertson, Linda Stacey, Anne Thomas, and Harley Thomas. My debt to my two site assistants, John Sherriff and Shân Taylor is even greater.

All of the plans, sections and finds drawings are the work of Chris Ravenhill, with the exception of Fig 30 which is by Howard Mason. The site photographs are by Clive Herring, who is also responsible for their developing and printing. My special thanks are due to Dr. Lawrence Butler and Mr. John Lewis for advice on the identification of objects, and putting up with persistent badgering; to Shân Taylor and Louise Mumford for their painstaking work on the conservation of finds; to Rob Janaway and Carole Mower for their pottery restoration. Lastly, I should like to thank my colleagues, Mr. Ian Soulsby and Dr. Stuart Wrathmell for reading and commenting on the text, and offering much useful advice; any faults which remain, however, are entirely my own. The finds from the excavation are now in Newport Museum, with the exception of the lead ventilator which is to go the National Museum of Wales, and the floor tile which has been placed in a reference collection of tiles, lodged with the National Museum.

The Site

The Priory is sited in the bottom of a glaciated valley at a height of about 240 m above sea-level. It lies on a fairly level terrace which slopes slightly from east to west, and from north to south. The solid geology of the valley is Old Red Sandstone, but the Priory itself is built on a layer of red clay of glacial origin. The Honddu valley is in a rain shadow, and is well sheltered from the prevailing south-westerlies by the Brecon Beacons. It was probably still largely afforested, when the Priory was first built, as medieval accounts refer to its clearance by the monks[12]. The entire valley was granted to the Priory by Walter de Lacy, but although traces of the medieval pattern of land use are still preserved, much of the present landscape reflects the improvements initiated by Walter Savage Landor, on acquiring the estate in the early 19th century[13]. Mixed farming was still practised up to about 270 m within living memory[14], and there are remains of enclosures and abandoned field systems scattered throughout the valley. The modern land use is almost entirely pastoral.

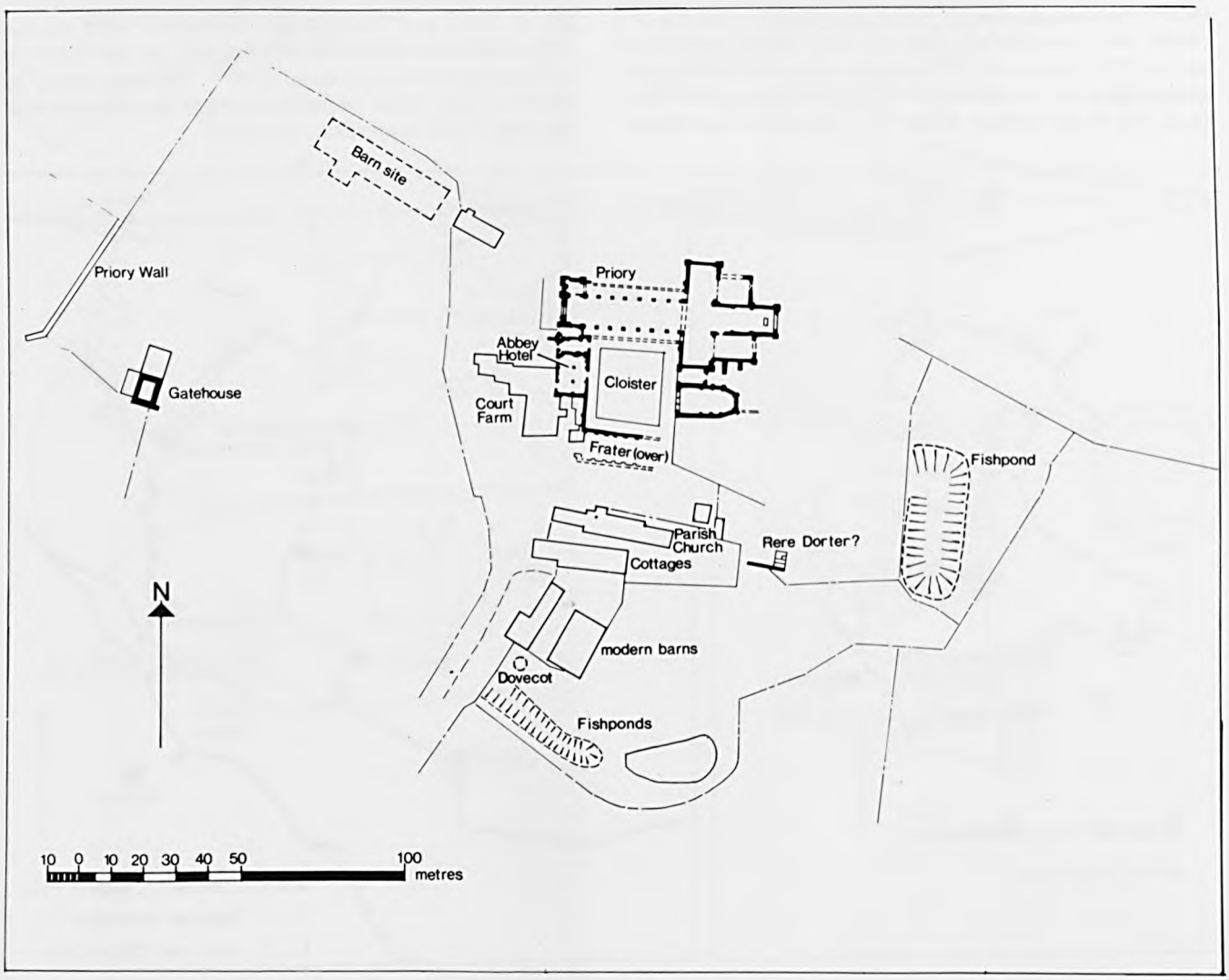


Fig. 2 The Priory complex

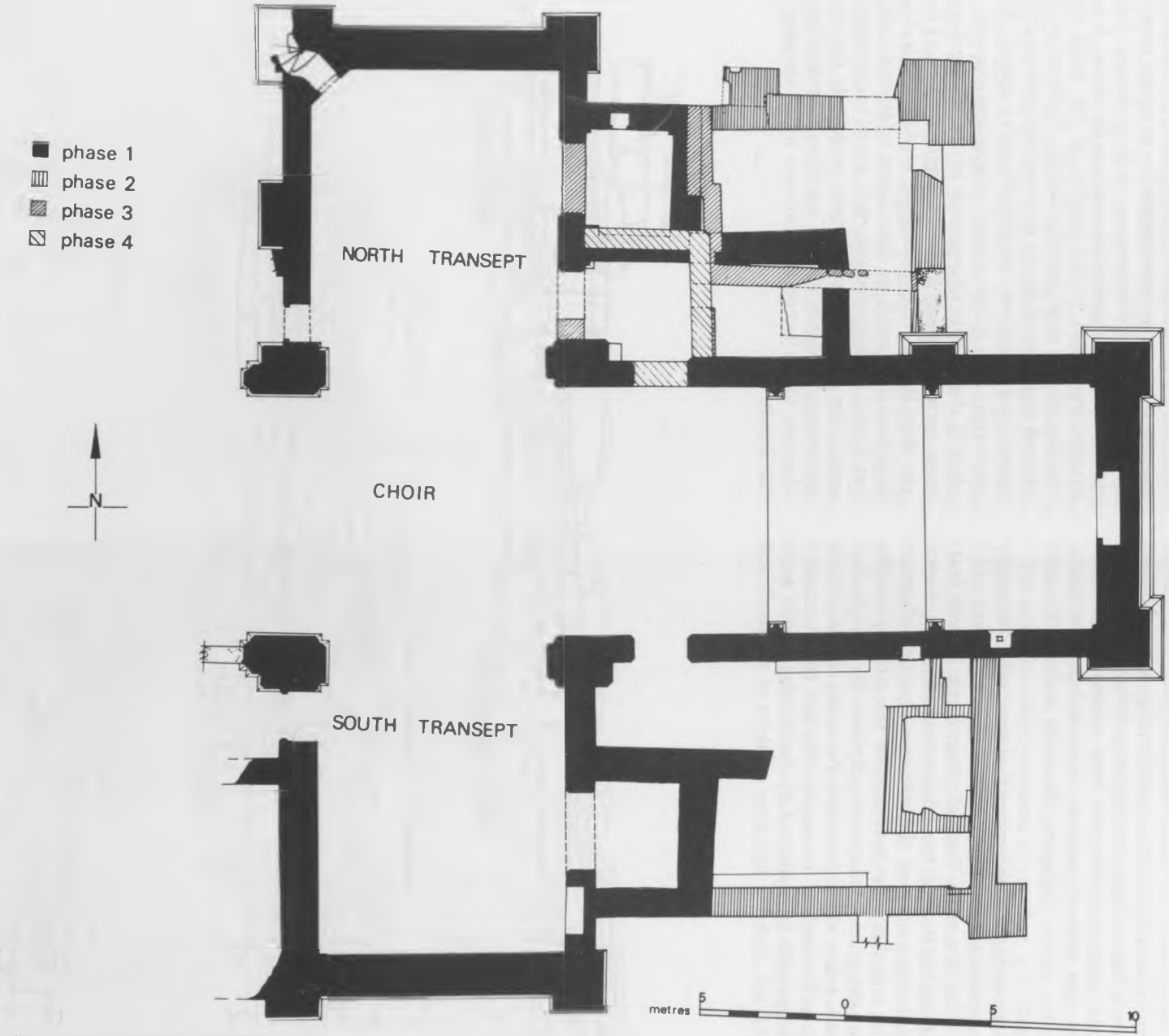


Fig. 3 The East end of the Priory church.

Earlier Clearances of the South Transept and its Chapels

Clearance of the south transept and the area to its east was undertaken in the 1960's. The results of this work have never been published, but are summarised here as they have a direct bearing on the interpretation of the chapels opening off the north transept. Clearance suggested that there were at least two phases of transept chapels. In the first phase, there appear to have been two rectangular-ended chapels arranged *en echelon* – probably of two bays and one bay respectively (Fig 3). Most of the walls survived only as mortared foundations, or (as in the case of the south wall of the choir) as fragments incorporated in the later chapel. The chapels were entered through two archways from the south transept; there was also an entrance into the northern chapel through a round-headed doorway (still extant) from the choir. A vaulting shaft with a plain square-cut chamfered base remains *in situ* in the south-west angle of the south chapel, and traces of similar vaulting survive higher up the north wall of the north chapel.

Subsequently, the chapel area was almost doubled in size by the construction of a single large chapel, measuring c. 12.75 x 7.75 m. internally. This had a large corner buttress at its south-east angle, and two pilaster buttresses along the exterior of its south wall; the most westerly of these appears to be a double offset buttress. The two archways leading from the south transept were replaced by a single large round arch, which interrupts the string-course running around the inside of the transept. The new chapel consisted of three bays (as evidenced by the vaulting on the north wall), and probably had three windows in the south wall (the remains of two survive). It had a large central altar, c. 3 x 4.25 m, at the east end, approached by a single step. Wall seats extended westwards from this step on either side of the chapel. An aumbrey, c. 0.70 x 0.50 m. in the north wall presumably belongs to this phase. The south wall of the choir must have been partially rebuilt during the construction of this chapel, as there is no trace of the pilaster buttress which would have been on the exterior of the presbytery wall (cf. the north wall of the presbytery).

Odd scars of walls leading off the east wall of the phase II chapel, and the east end of the choir wall may indicate subsequent modifications to this chapel, but no clear plan is discernible. However, what is certain is that the south wall of the chapel began to suffer badly from subsidence, and that a series of measures were taken to try and counteract this. Most of the surviving wall is leaning badly outwards, and there are severe cracks in the fabric. A new buttress was added to the exterior of the south wall, blocking off the most westerly window. Furthermore, the external angle formed by the south-western junction of the transept and chapel was strengthened with a squinch. At a later stage, both of the original pilaster buttresses of the phase II chapel were strengthened by the construction of larger buttresses encasing them; the more westerly of these also abuts the buttress blocking the window, and is clearly later than it. There is no clear dating evidence for these, but Craster has suggested that they are all late medieval[15], rather than 19th century measures to maintain the fabric; this seems reasonable, as they are of an entirely different character to the temporary buttresses found elsewhere in the church.

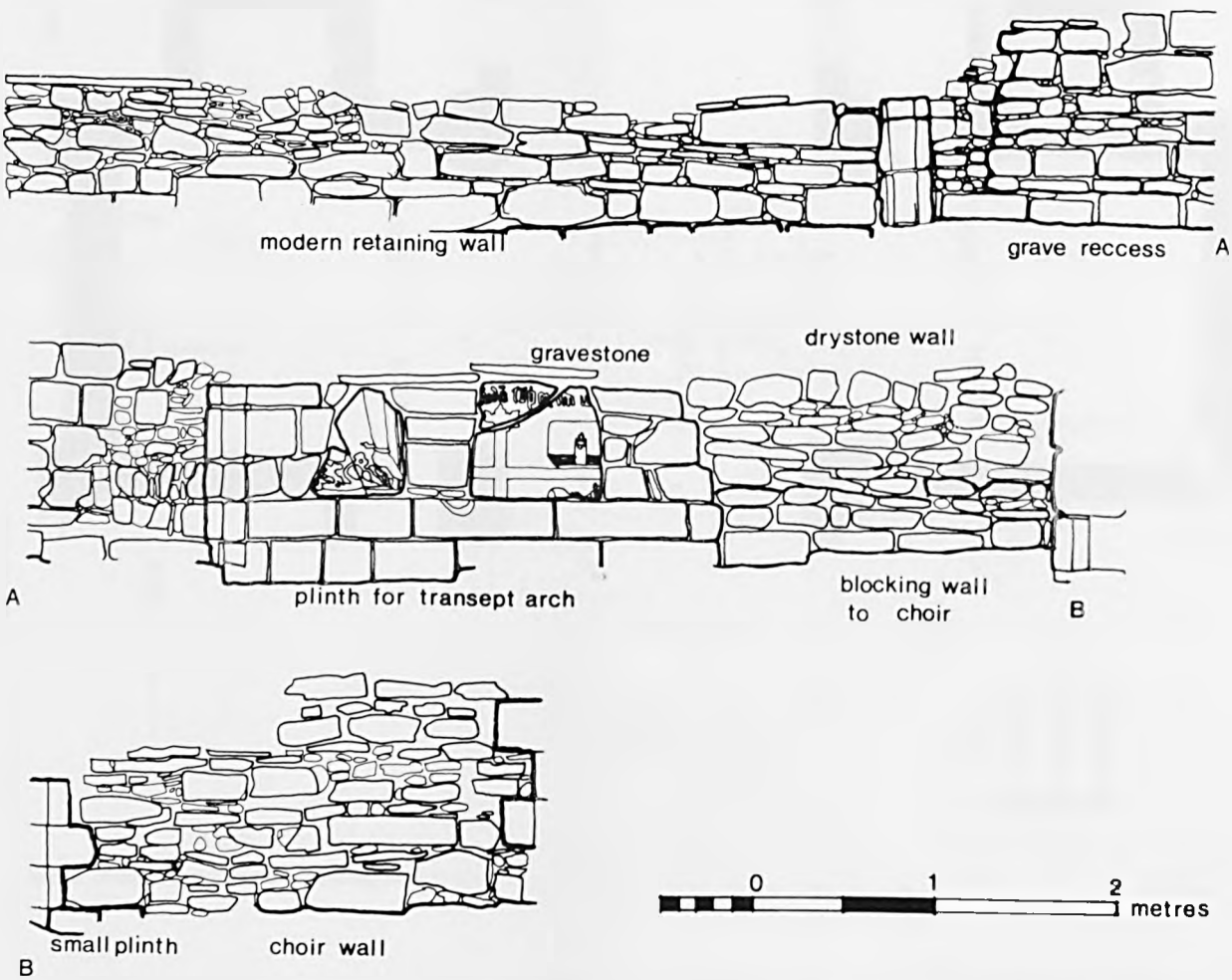


Fig. 4 East-West elevation of the north wall of the choir, showing late medieval blocking and modern retaining wall.

The Excavation

Prior to excavation, the site was covered with some 350 tons of rubble and soil, and was separated from the choir by two pieces of modern walling. The vestiges of a 19th-century farm wall ran on top of the north wall of the presbytery, before turning towards the north-west to meet the north side of the doorway connecting the north transept with the north aisle; thereafter, it mostly followed the line of the north aisle wall. This farm wall is absent on Colt Hoare's engraving of 1800[16], but is clearly shown on a photograph taken in March 1905[17]. As the ground level of the area of the north transept and its chapels was up to 3 m. higher than that in the choir, a drystone wall had been built across the southern entrances to the transept and its chapels (Fig 4); in the chapel entrance this wall lay partially on top of a late medieval blocking wall. The west side of this entrance was formed by the north-eastern pier of the crossing tower. This had original work for only its bottom two courses; all the masonry above this level had been rebuilt in the later 19th or early 20th centuries, as shown by the incorporation of two fragments of decorated grave slabs, which were found in c. 1840 near the chapter house[18] (Figs 4 and 29, no. 1). On the west side of this pier, was a recess for a setting of a third grave slab, similarly first recorded in the 1840's, but its original position is unknown[19]; fragments of white earthenware chamber-pot and transfer-printed wares were found beneath this grave setting. All of this modern work has now been removed, and the complete grave slab has now been relaid on top of grave 25 (see below).

The North Transept Chapels

Excavation in the area east of the north transept revealed four main structural phases of chapels. Although subsequent excavation has modified the interpretation of phase I by revealing an earlier floor level in the more southerly of the two phase I chapels, the plan of the chapel layout remains unchanged. The earlier floor had suffered badly from subsidence, and had to be raised; certain details of the vaulting and ritual arrangements differ in phase Ia from those of the phase Ib chapel, described below. A full discussion of the phase Ia structures is to be published in a later paper.

Phase Ib (Fig 5; plate 1).

In this phase, there were two rectangular-ended chapels arranged *en echelon*, entered through two archways from the north transept; there was also an entrance into the southern chapel through a doorway from the choir (cf the phase I chapels in the south transept).

The northern chapel consisted of one bay, c. 3.70 x 3 m. internally. The north wall survived for a height of c. 1.80 m, and was c. 1 m. wide; it had a cupboard or aumbrey, c. 0.65 x 0.50 m. in size, set into its south side at c. 0.50m. east of the entrance. Its junction with the east wall had been badly disturbed by the construction of the larger phase II chapel. The east and south walls survived only as mortar foundations, c. 1 m. wide. The bases of three vaulting shafts remained in the north-west, north-east and south-west corners; these had plain square-cut chamfers. The chapel had a hard green mortar floor (layer 4d), through which

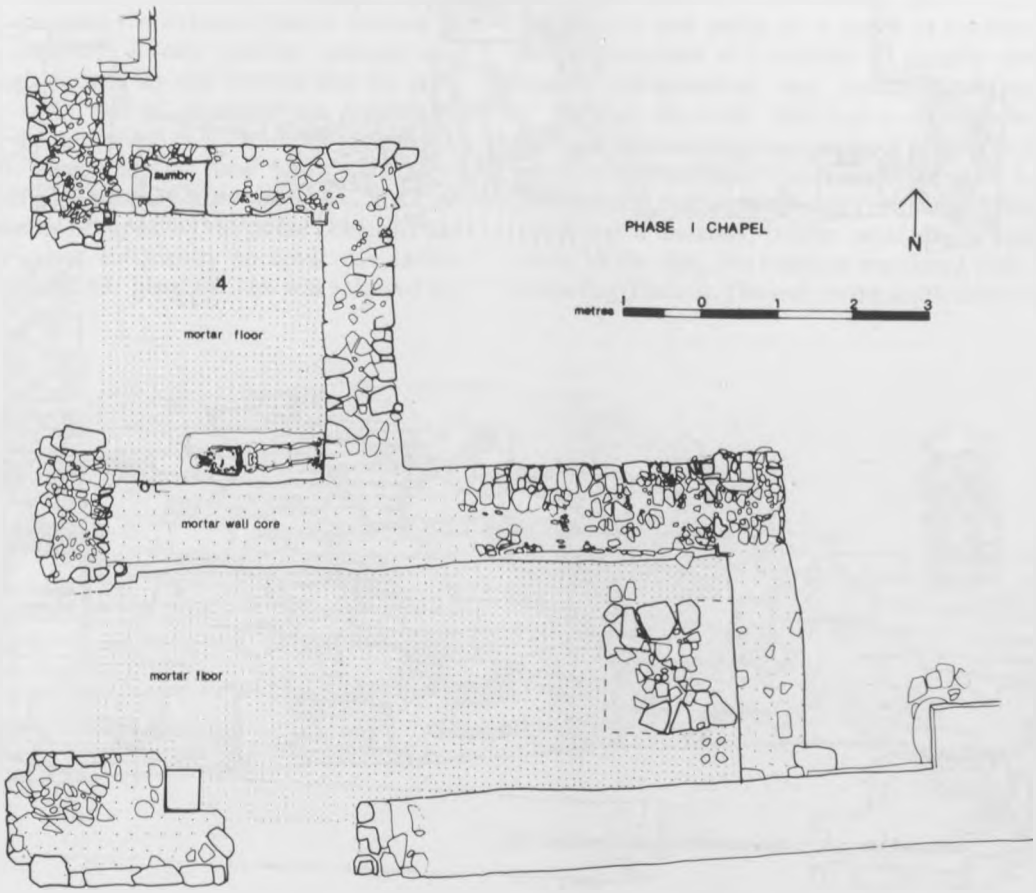


Fig. 5 Phase I chapels opening off the North Transept.

at some stage grave 25 had been cut; this showed as a dark brown feature cut into the south-east corner (Plate 2). The grave is presumed to belong to this phase as it was edged on its east and south sides by the phase I walls – suggesting that the position of these walls was known at the time of interment; furthermore, no trace of a grave-cut was detected higher up, through the make-up of the phase II and III floors. The burial was that of a fully extended adult male, with arms folded at the waist (Plate 3); no trace of a coffin or grave goods was found. The only trace of funerary arrangements was a flat stone placed beneath the head.

The south chapel consisted presumably of two bays, and measured c. 8.10 x 3.25 m. internally. The north and east walls survived only as mortar foundations, c.1 m.wide. The south wall of the chapel was formed by the north wall of the presbytery, and at the east end, the bonding stones for the east wall still survive. The bases for two vaulting shafts remained in the north-west and north-east corners. The latter had a square-cut chamfer, like those in the northern chapel; the former, however, had a circular base with an incised spiral groove, (Plate 4), similar to those on the pilasters on the columns of the nave – suggesting that phase Ib is either contemporary with or later than the construction of the nave. Presumably, the other ribs of the vault were carried on springers higher up the chapel walls. In the eastern half of this chapel, there was a hard green mortar floor (layer 1e). At the west end, however, the floor was much more patchy, and appeared to have suffered badly from subsidence; in places, a thin mortar floor still survived (layer 8d), but in others (notably in the north-west corner), hollows had been levelled up with red clay and a few flat slabs. In the south-west corner was a raised plinth, c. 0.20 x 0.25 m; it stood three or four courses high, composed of roughly squared blocks of sandstone, topped with a flat rectangular slab. Its function is uncertain; it could have been a plinth for a statue or for a candlestick, or it may have been a position for one of the stanchions within liturgical worship (cf. Fountains and Bordesley)[20]. At the east end of the chapel was a large altar base, c. 1.70 x 1.40 m, composed of large flat sandstone flags, one course high.

In the parts of the church constructed during phase I, ashlar was used around piers, buttresses, archways, the outer walls of the tower, and for keying the corners of walls; the rest of the walls were of rubble roughly dressed on the faces. The internal faces of the surviving phase I walls both in the transept and the chapels were rendered with cream plaster, marked out with false white joints to represent square blocks (Fig 7). The north wall of the north chapel, and the south wall of the south chapel had extensive areas of plaster decorated in this manner. The only ashlar present in either chapel was on the south doorway leading in to the south chapel, the north-east pier of the tower, and the central pier of the two arches leading from the transept. A dressed chamfered plinth ran around the base of the exterior of the presbytery (Fig 7), and most of the north transept, but there is no trace of it on the only surviving external face of the chapel walls (the north wall of the northern chapel).

A fragment of human skull was mortared into one of the chapel wall foundations, suggesting that earlier burials had been disturbed by its construction.

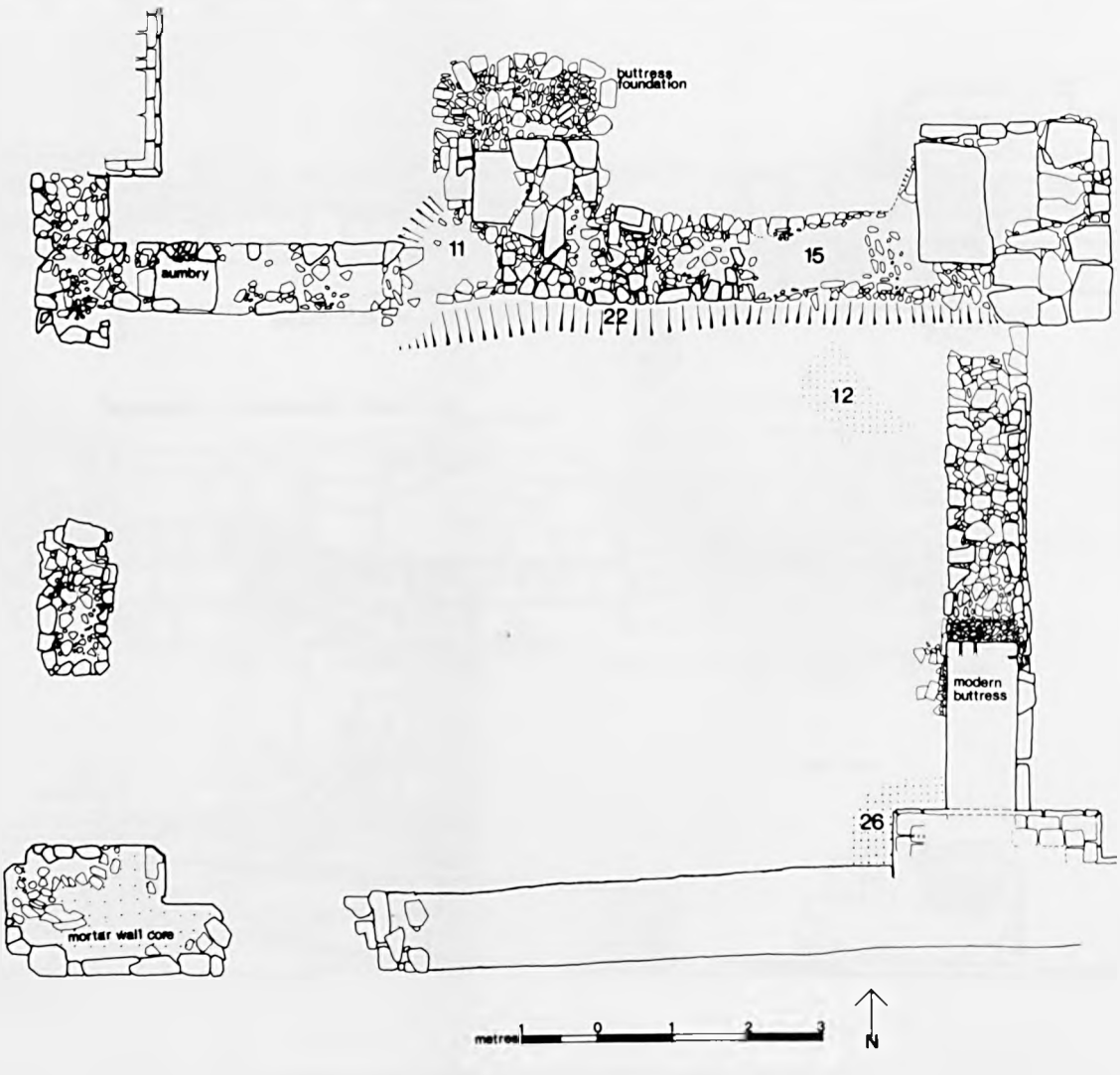


Fig. 6 Phase II chapels opening off the North Transept.

Phase II

As with the south transept, the two phase I chapels were replaced by a larger extended chapel; it was of similar plan, but shorter than those on the south, and incorporated certain elements of the earlier chapels.

The new chapel measured c. 11 x 7.75 m. internally, and was served by the same entrances as the phase I chapels. The existing north wall of the north chapel was incorporated as part of the north wall of the new chapel, and extended to give an overall length of some 13 m. The new stretch of wall was bedded in a foundation trench (22), with a fill of dark brown soil (Fig 13). For much of its length, the wall survived to a height of only c. 0.30 m, and at its east end, its line was indicated by a robber trench (15), which had a fill of loose light brown soil with large pieces of rotten mortar – the impressions of some of the facing-stones being preserved in the clay at its base (Fig 13). Gardner records that he uncovered part of this wall in his excavations[21], but the only trace of his activity was an irregular scoop (11) containing 19th-century transfer-printed wares near the junction of this new wall with the north wall of the phase I chapel. Two large buttresses projecting off the wall carried the thrust of the springing for the vault: a pilaster buttress midway along the wall, was composed of pieces of roughly dressed flagging on top of a cobble foundation (Plate 5), and at the east end, a large corner buttress consisted of large slabs of flagging, set on smaller stones, and revetted on its north and east sides by stones set on edge. The east wall survived slightly better; it was c. 1 m. wide, with a double offset at the base of its exterior face. At its southern end, the junction with the presbytery wall had been removed by the construction of two later buttresses, but it must originally have abutted the phase I pilaster buttress on the exterior of the presbytery wall. (This contrasts with the phase II chapel opening off the south transept; there, the larger chapel enclosed the external pilaster buttress – necessitating its removal). A new vaulting springer was inserted in the angle formed by this buttress and the presbytery wall. The south wall of the chapel was formed by the north wall of the presbytery (Fig 7). Unlike the phase I walls, which were mortared, the new walls were clay-bonded; no trace of any internal plaster survived.

In the areas previously occupied by the phase I chapels, the floor levels were raised sufficiently to cover the earlier foundations (Figs 9 and 13: plate 6). This was achieved by the deposition of a layer of brown, gritty, charcoal-flecked mortary soil (layers 1c, 4c, and 8c), which in places overlay an uneven layer of rough stone slabs (layer 1d); these layers were up to 0.35 m. deep, and incorporated large quantities of midden material, including animal bone, oysters and mussels, roofing slates and tiles, window glass, 13th-century pottery (Fig 15, nos 1 and 2), and a statue foot (Fig 30). The rest of the chapel area was covered with an homogeneous layer of largely sterile red brown loamy clay and sand with a small scatter of stones (layer 5a); this presumably represents an accumulation of hillwash over undisturbed natural (Fig 13). Patches of mortar in the north-east and south-east corners (layers 12 and 26) suggest that these various layers formed a bedding for a more permanent floor (*e.g.* stone slabs), which has subsequently been removed. This suggestion would seem to be supported by the present height of the north wall of the chapel, which appears to have been dismantled to the level of this presumed floor, rather than systematically robbed to its foundations.

Fragments of skull found outside the north wall may indicate that earlier burials were disturbed by its construction.

Phase III

At some stage after the abandonment of the large phase II chapel, a smaller chapel was constructed, with a long narrow room opening off its south-east corner (Fig 8). The more northerly of the two doorways opening off the north transept was blocked, and the southern one may have been narrowed. The entrance from the choir may also have been blocked during this phase.

The new chapel measured c. 3.40 x 7.80 m. internally. Once again, the north wall was formed by the earlier phase I wall. The east wall was bedded partly on the phase I foundations and partly on a course of boulders to the east; it was composed of a mixture of roughly dressed rubble, reused roll-mouldings and roofing-slates, and averaged c. 0.80 m. in width and had a clay-bonded core. The northern half survived to a height of c. 0.50 m; at c. 2.25 m. south of the north-east corner, a recess c. 0.60 x 1.05m, projected to the east – presumably for an altar (Plate 5). To the south was a doorway, 0.60 m. wide, which opened into the room to the east; this entrance was paved with a large sandstone flag (Plate 9). The wall on the south side of the doorway

Fig. 7 East-West elevation of the north face of the south wall of the phase I and II chapels.

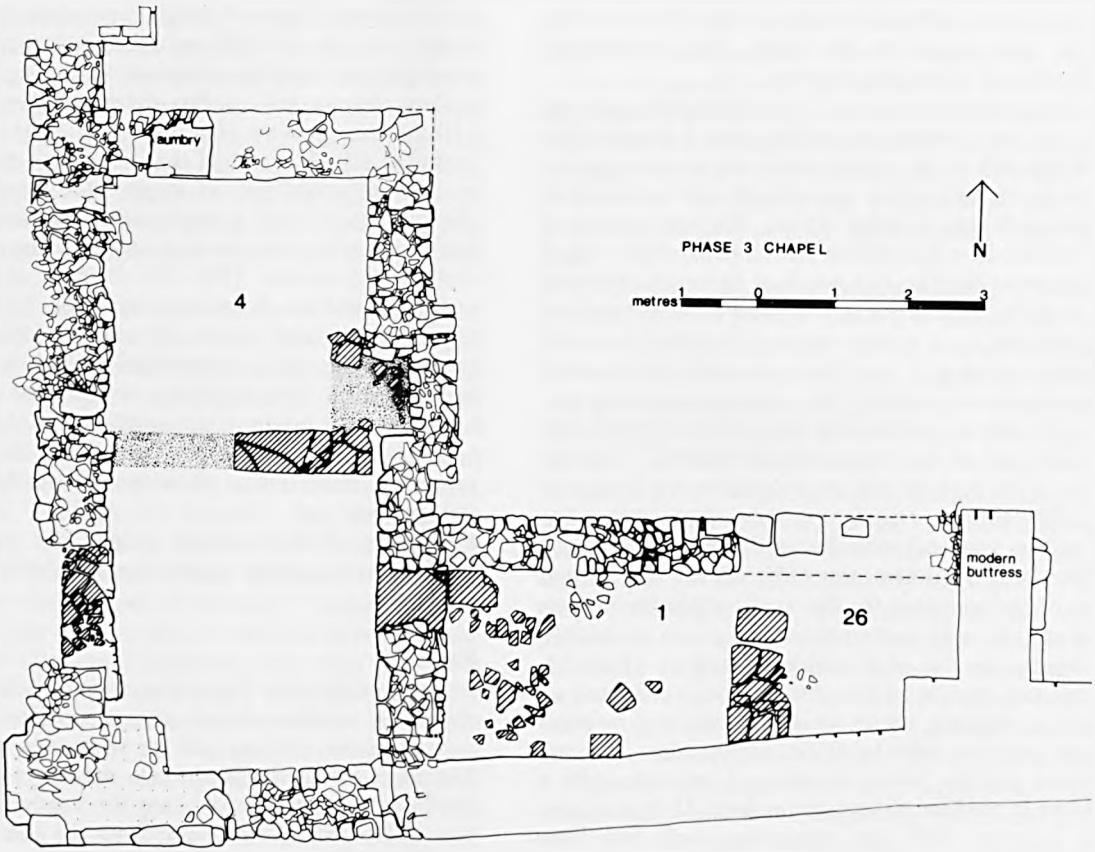


Fig. 8 The phase III chapel opening off the North Transept.

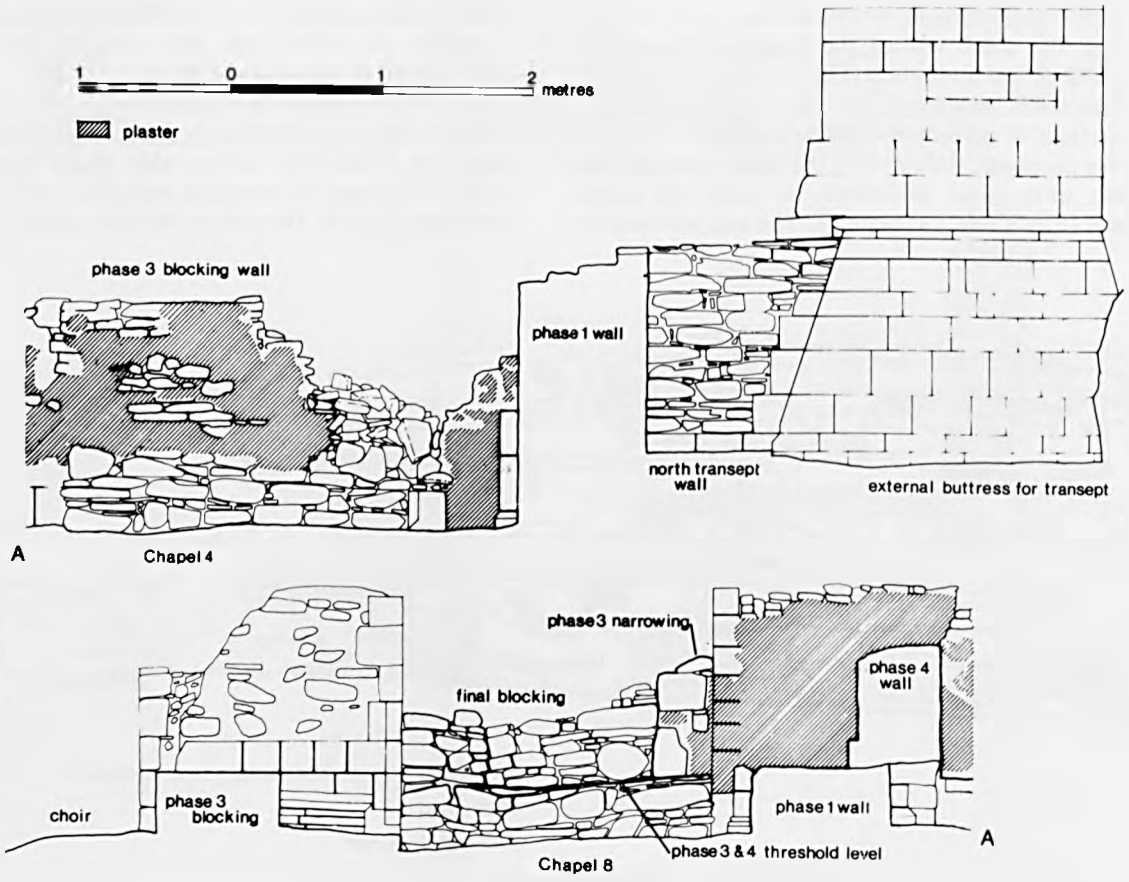


Fig. 9 North-South elevation across the east face of the entrance to the chapels, leading off the north transept.

survived to a height of four or five courses and abutted the north wall of the choir. As with the northern half, this section of the east wall was clay-bonded; sealed beneath it was most of a chicken skeleton. Probably during this phase the entrance from the choir was blocked with a wall c. 1 m wide (Fig 10); when this blocking wall was removed in 1979, a worn penny of Edward II was found on the threshold beneath this blocking[22]. The northern entrance from the transept was blocked with a wall, 0.80 m. wide, which was of rough construction, and incorporated roofing-slates; whilst most of its west face had collapsed, it survived on the east side to a height of c. 1.50 m. (Plates 10 and 11; fig 9). The internal faces of this wall and of the plinth between the two doorways were rendered with plaster, which had been marked out in white with false joints to represent square blocks; this extended above the top of the phase I foundations and clearly belongs to this phase (Fig 9). Similarly plastered, and therefore probably belonging to this phase, were two sections of stub walling which narrowed the south entrance from the north transept from c. 2.20 m. to c. 1.10 m; these were built on top of the slate threshold (Plate 8; fig 9), which might belong to this phase or to the phase II chapel.

The room to the east of this chapel appears to have extended the full length of the earlier phase II chapel, and measured c. 6.75 m. x 2.50 m. internally – narrowing to c. 1.90 m. at the east end. Its north wall was c. 0.80 m. wide and clay-bonded; it presumably joined what was left of the east wall of the phase II chapel, but the junction of the two walls and the east end of the north wall had been completely removed in the construction of two later buttresses. The north wall of the presbytery formed the south wall of this room. In this phase, the scar of the bonding-stones for the east wall of the period I chapel was refaced to form the south side of a threshold – presumably sub-dividing the room (Plate 7; fig 7). This threshold was paved with an area of flagging, 0.80 m. wide, which extended beneath the re-facing of the bonding stones. If this interpretation is accepted, this implies that there was a small room, c. 2 x 2.20 m, at the east end – possibly a vestry?

In the main chapel, the make-up of the period II floors was covered by an 0.05 m. thick layer of compacted burnt red clay (layers 4b and 8b) with sporadic spreads of charcoal and mortar. The whole room showed signs of intense burning, and this was particularly marked at its east end, and in the recess for the altar, where the burning extended down into the clay-bonding of the wall-footings. Furthermore, a compact line of burning and a roughly trapezoidal strip of fire-cracked flagging was sealed by a later wall – the north wall of the period IV chapel (Plate 5). This strip of flagging and other fragments around the recess for the altar may indicate that the entire floor was formerly paved with thin sandstone flags. (The other possibility, that it represents a plain gravestone for grave 25, seems unlikely, as it lies slightly to the north of that grave; moreover, no grave-cut was found through layers 4b and 4c, and, as argued above, the relationship between the grave-cut and the phase I walls suggests that the position of these walls was known at the time of interment). In the room to the east of the chapel, there was little evidence of burning. The period II layers were covered with a largely stone-free layer of soft red mortary soil (layer 1b); sporadic fragments of flagging survived over much of the southern half of the room, and in places were bonded into the north wall.

Phase IV

At some stage, the phase III chapel was abandoned (probably after the fire), and was replaced by a new smaller

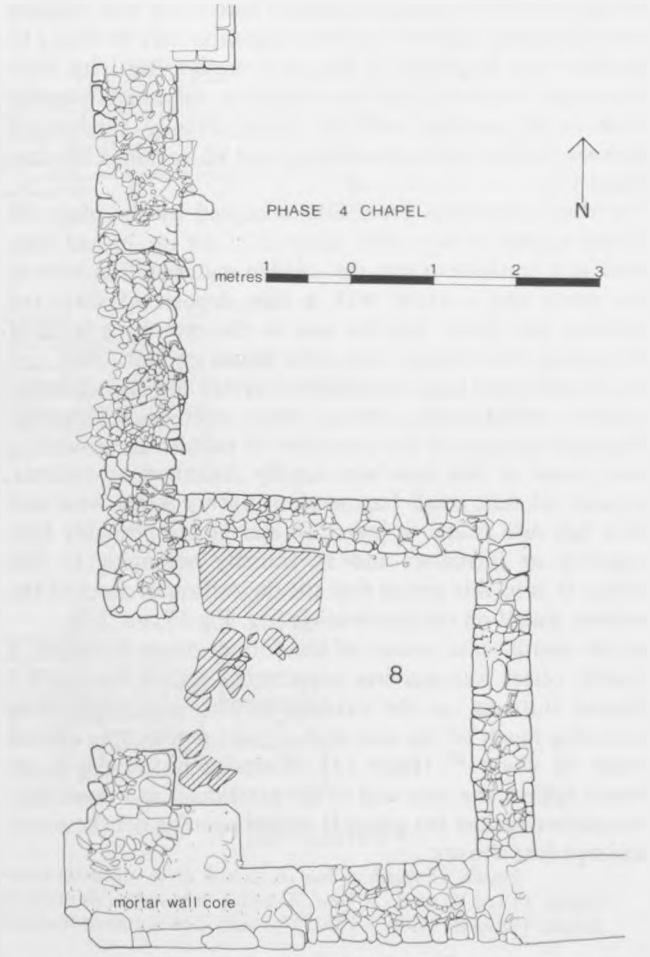


Fig. 10 The phase IV chapel opening off the North Transept.

chapel, which was entered solely through the modified entrance from the north transept (Fig 10).

The new chapel measured c. 3.70 x 3.60 m. internally. Its north wall was c. 0.60 m. wide and survived to a height of c. 0.80 m. (Plate 14; fig 12, no. 1); as noted above, it sealed a line of burning and an area of flagging of the phase III floor. At its west end, this wall abutted the plinth between the two phase I doorways, and sealed the phase III plaster which faced this plinth; at its east end, it was bonded into the new east wall, which used the lower part of the phase III east wall as a foundation. The phase III doorway had been blocked with roughly dressed rubble infill (Plate 12; fig 12, no. 2), which was faced on the back with a large flagstone set on end (Plate 9; fig 12, no 3); the phase III wall was then levelled and used as the foundation for the new narrower wall which was c. 0.70 m. wide. Both the north and east walls of this chapel had clay-bonded cores, which were mortared on the outside; the internal faces of both were rendered with plain white plaster. The south wall of the chapel was formed by the blocking wall in the former entrance from the choir.

Within this chapel, the phase III floor probably continued in use, as it was overlain throughout by a layer of burnt and bubbled plaster bearing impressions of wooden lathes (layer 8a), which clearly represents a final destruction. Amongst this debris was a fragment of floor tile inscribed 1456 (Fig 19). In the north-west corner of the chapel, a large plain sandstone flag, c. 1.50 x 0.80 m, was split in the middle and tilted against the wall (Plate 14); this may be a step or the footings for an altar, which has been overturned. Sealed beneath this slab was a large fragment of a lead window ventilator (Fig 27); the fragile nature of this fragment suggests that it probably fell in this position, rather than

having been subsequently deposited here along with midden material (some support for this suggestion may be found in the fact that fragments of this or a similar ventilator were discovered in subsequent excavations in the north transept close to its junction with the choir). Finally, this chapel appears to have been abandoned, and its entrance blocked (Plate 15).

Elsewhere, the areas previously occupied by the phase III chapel appear to have been allowed to silt up, or had been used as a convenient site for midden material. The area to the north was covered with a thin deposit of silty, red mortary soil (layer 4a); the area to the east, by a layer of red clayey loam (layer 1a), with lenses of soft black soil which contained large quantities of oyster and mussel shells, pitched roofing-slates, animal bones, pottery and mortar. Probably because of the quantities of rubbish accumulating here, most of this area was heavily disturbed by rodents; because of this, small fragments of Surrey white ware and of a fish dish found in layers 1b and 1c are probably best regarded as intrusive, and as actually belonging to this phase. It is to this period that the deposition of most of the pottery found on the site belongs (*e.g.* Fig 17, no. 10).

In the south -east corner of the former phase II chapel, a double offset buttress was constructed against the phase I pilaster buttress on the exterior of the presbytery, thus removing much of the east wall of the room leading off the phase III chapel[23] (Plate 13). A similar buttress is to be found against the east wall of the gatehouse, and there may be another against the phase II chapel opening off the south transept (see above).

Post-dissolution activity

The area of the chapels was buried in building collapse to a depth of c. 1.50 m. (Fig 11). Most of this must represent the collapse of the east wall of the north transept, and the north-eastern corner of the central tower, which had clearly happened by 1732, as evidenced by the Bucks' engraving[24]. The fill had been augmented by relatively modern tipping and levelling, which continued into the present century. One large hollow (pit 2) approximately overlying the north-east corner of the phase II chapel, was filled with rubble as late as the 1930's.

A Victorian buttress was erected against the double offset buttress in what had formerly been the south-east corner of the phase II chapel, (Plate 13) as a temporary measure to consolidate the fabric of the church, and to forestall any further collapse. Gardner records it in the following phrase, "and, lastly, a modern set-off has, *within my recollection*, been built at its (*i.e.* the double offset buttress's) foot"[25] (My emphasis). As he earlier implies that his interest in Llanthony began some twenty-five years before (*i.e.* c. 1890),[26] this may suggest that this buttress belongs to the turn of the century, rather than to the work inaugurated in c. 1840, following the collapse of the south arcade of the nave.

The North Transept

Work began in 1978 on clearing the site of the north transept; deposits of rubble and building collapse, up to 3 m. in depth, were removed, mostly by machine. During the course of this clearance, a newel-stair was discovered in the north-west corner of the transept (Fig 3). Subsequent excavation has proved that this stair-well is of two phases, and that the level of the flagging at the base of the stair has been raised (The full plans and details of the structures in the north transept are to be published in a later paper). The skeleton of a baby (grave 10) was found at c. 0.10 m. above the flagging at the base of the stair-well (Plate 16). The body was orientated north-east to south-west, with its head at the north-east end of the grave. Both the orientation of the body and the circumstances of the burial suggest that it was of post-dissolution date, and certainly must post-date the use of the stair-case.

Discussion

Whilst a full discussion of these structures must await publication of excavations in adjoining areas in the choir and the north transept, it is still possible to make certain comments at this stage concerning the chronology of these chapels.

Lovegrove argued that the presbytery, crossing and transepts of the present priory church were built between c. 1175 and 1191[27]. He based these arguments on architectural grounds and on the fact that the priory had access to a vastly increased income which accrued from new grants of land. The layout of the phase I chapels does not conflict with this suggestion. Similar plans of rectangular-ended chapels arranged *en echelon* occur at the Augustinian priory at Lanercost, Cumbria in c. 1166[28], and at the nearby Benedictine priory at Brecon, Powys in c. 1200-07;[29]. The plan is common to many religious houses in Southern Britain during this period – even extending to Ireland[30]. Whilst it is not clear how long the phase I chapels continued in use, the presence of a transitional vaulting shaft in the more southern chapel of the north transept suggests that the phase Ib chapels continued in use at least until the date of the construction of the nave, which Lovegrove suggested took place in c. 1200-15[31].

The larger phase II chapels represent not only the provision of more room for liturgical worship and possibly for a larger community, but also indicate a greatly enhanced and more prestigious building, and must have been built at a time of expansion. Lovegrove argued that the phase II chapels were built probably in the third quarter of the

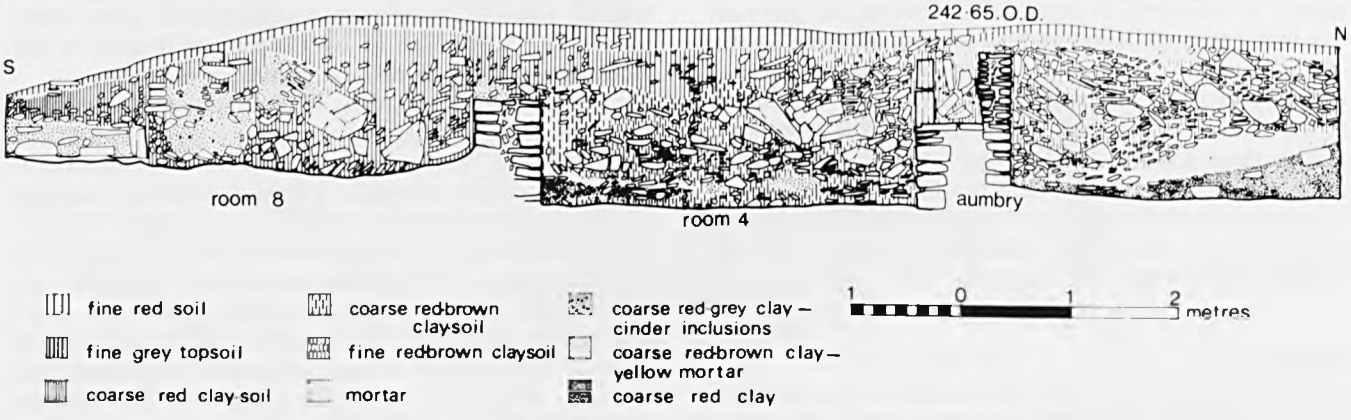


Fig. 11 North-South section across the phase III and phase IV chapels opening off the North Transept.

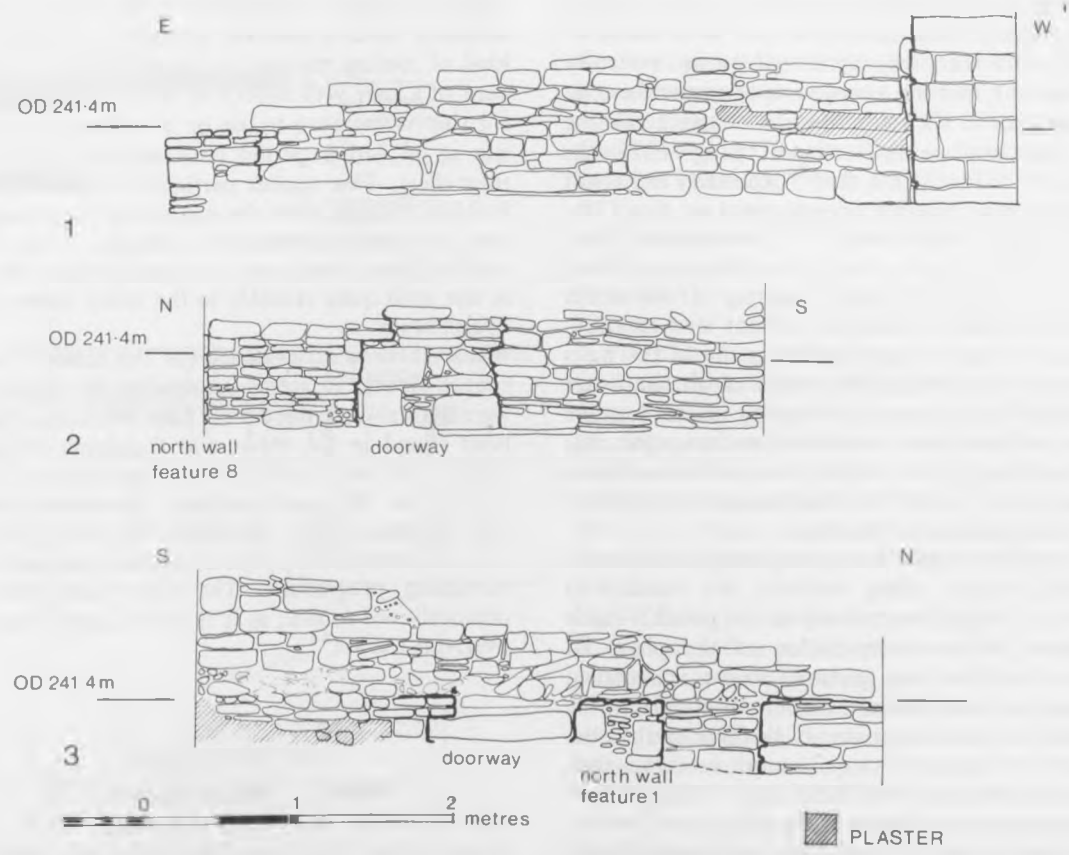


Fig. 12 Phase III and IV Chapel wall elevations:

1. *East-west elevation of N. face of N. wall of Phase IV chapel.*
2. *North-south elevation of W. face of E. wall of phase III and IV chapel.*
3. *North-south elevation of E. face of E. wall of phase III and IV chapel.*

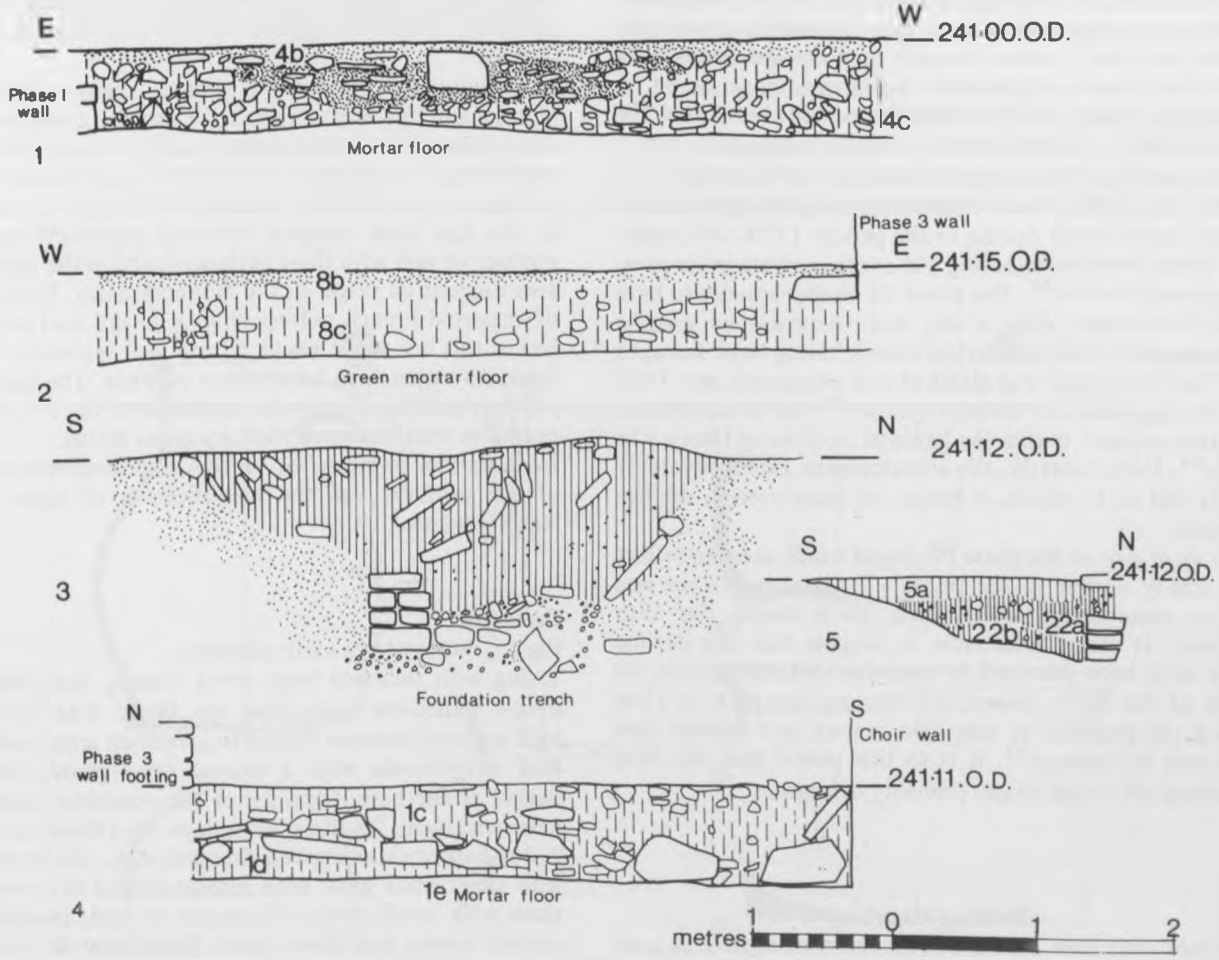


Fig. 13 Feature sections: nos 1, 2 & 4, sections across the phase I chapels; nos 3 & 5, sections across the robber trench (15) & foundation trench of the phase II chapel.

thirteenth century on the basis of the form of the arch in the south transept[32] – though he left open the question of whether the vault was actually completed (he was evidently confused about the vaulting arrangements, as elsewhere he suggested a date of c. 1205 for the one surviving vaulting shaft in the northern phase II chapel[33]). By 1276, the priory had fallen seriously into debt[34], (possibly as a result of an over-ambitious building programme), so, if a 13th-century date for these chapels is acceptable, they presumably must be earlier than this. There is also no evidence that the phase II chapel opening off the north transept was ever finished; no altar or floor level survived, and there was no trace of any plaster on any of the walls (although plaster survived on the walls of all the other periods). Whilst the dangers of arguing from negative evidence are obvious, the possibility remains that this chapel was never completed. Lastly, the pottery sealed in the make-up for the period II floor would not conflict with an early or mid-13th-century date.

Similarly, the smaller phase III chapel opening off the north transept might suggest falling numbers, the inability to maintain a large chapel in good repair, or possibly more restricted funds. If the interpretation of the phase III chapel plan, which has been advanced above, is accepted (notably, that the former entrance from the choir into the chapel was blocked at the beginning of this phase), then the construction of the phase III chapel cannot be earlier than 1310-14 on coin evidence; indeed the very worn condition of the coin suggests that it was considerably later. The confirmation of earlier charters and Irish land grants to the priory in 1324 might well have provided the funds for the construction of the new chapel[35]. It is possible that the room east of this chapel may have gone out of use before the main chapel was abandoned; this may account for the apparent lack of burning in this room, and for the 14th-century analogies which have been quoted for the double offset buttress[36], which appears to post-date its use. The latter has been compared to a buttress constructed at Hingham (county and building unspecified) between 1316 and 1359[37]. On this basis, Lovegrove suggested that a likely date for its construction would be after the new grants in 1324[38], but it seems reasonable to suggest that it might just as easily belong to the period 1370-1400, when the priory was experiencing yet another uplift in its prosperity and income[39]. The phase III chapel appears to have been abandoned after a fire, but there are no specific documentary references to the church having been damaged by fire. The priory was attacked and plundered *ante* 1405 by the supporters of Owain Glyndŵr[40], but is also known to have suffered during the baronial troubles of Henry VI's reign[41]. Unfortunately, the archaeological evidence cannot really tell us to which, if either, of these events, the fire belongs.

The small size of the phase IV chapel would seem to reflect the steady decline in the priory's fortunes and in the size of its community, which took place during the 15th century. It seems reasonable to suggest that this decline may have been mirrored by a gradual deterioration in the state of the fabric; indeed, the Warham visitation of 1504 noted the presence of only five canons, and ordered that the nave be covered[42]. It is to this period that the final blocking off of this chapel probably belongs.

Building Materials

It is not clear how the various chapels were roofed, as large quantities of both perforated roofing-slates and lead sheets with their binding strips were found in most of the layers, – a situation further complicated by the deposition of what is evidently midden material, so that the presence of a certain kind of roofing material in the make-up of a floor or in the core of a later wall cannot be taken as *prima facie* evidence for this having been in use on a building in this area of the site at an earlier period (this applies equally to pottery ridge-tiles). This applies particularly to material from the building collapse after the dissolution, as it is apparent that this has been augmented by tipping – *e.g.* similar long tabular slates, with one or more perforations continued in use until quite recently in the valley under the name of 'Welsh blues'.

Whilst there is no evidence for the material used for the chapel floors, it seems reasonable to suggest that they were probably covered with thin sandstone flags, as have been found in the choir; odd fragments of flagging were noted not only during these excavations, but also by Gardner in the presbytery and the south transept[43]. As with modern paving, this would be one of the first things to be recovered, and, if at all possible, reused in any major rebuilding programme. The only floor tile found was obviously not *in situ*, as it is one of a set of four, originally overlying a grave[44].

THE FINDS

The Pottery

This forms an interesting assemblage. Little, if any was broken in the church, and the bulk must represent midden material brought in to level up the floors of the church. As with all redeposited material, association of pottery in a layer or feature may imply contemporary deposition, but does not necessarily imply contemporary manufacture. It should also be stated that the presence of rodent bones in layers Ib, Ic and Id suggests that the stratification there is suspect.

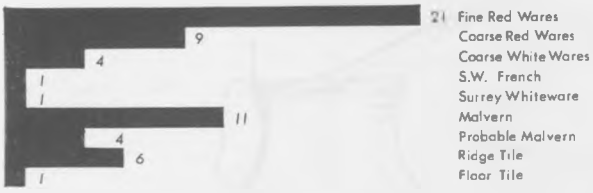
A minimum of 51 vessels is present, many of which are represented by only a few body sherds, comprising not more than 10% of the original vessel. At least 20% of the assemblage is composed of Malvern wares[45]; much of the remainder was probably manufactured fairly locally. Two of the jugs have complex rouletted patterns[46]; the large number of jugs with these patterns found in the Monmouth area suggests an origin in the Monnow valley. The presence of imported French pottery this far inland is of interest[47], but as this is a single vessel, it may well represent a gift or heirloom rather than be evidence of trade. The bulk of the pottery consists of jugs; the capacities of the two restored examples were measured with dry green lentils.

I am grateful to Mr A. G. Vince for his comments on some of the pottery, and the identification of some of the Malvern wares.

Catalogue

Fig 15, Pottery from early contexts:

1. Jug with thumbed base; spout missing, but probably a simple pulled-out one. Fine red fabric with grey core; buff surfaces; exterior dipped in a medium green lead glaze. Rod strap-handle with a central deep groove, and two slashes at the base. Capacity of the complete vessel must have been about 2½ litres. From layer 4c. (Phase II)
2. Jug base with an applied thumbed strip. Brick red fabric with small white grits; both sufaces dipped in a shiny lead glaze with small flecks of copper or iron, resulting in a speckly brown and black finish. From layer 8c. (Phase II)
3. Jug rim. Fine red, sandy fabric; red surfaces; patches of green and brown lead glaze. From later 5a. (Phase II)



	PHASE 2							PHASE 3			PHASE 4				? POST DISSOLUTION	UNSTRATIFIED
Feature Nos	1c	4c	8c	22b	26	22a	15	1b	5a	21	1a	4a	8a	1	5	
Fine Red Wares		1	1		2		4	2	3		2	1	1	1	4	16
Coarse Red Wares				1	1	1					2			2	2	4
Coarse White Wares				1	1										2	2
S.W. French																1
Surrey Whiteware	1															
Malvern	1						1	2			4			3	3	8
? Malvern					1		1	1	2	1					1	3
Ridge Tile		1	1								1			1	1	1
Floor Tile													1			

	PHASE 2							PHASE 3			PHASE 4				LATE/POST MED	UNSTRATIFIED
Feature No's	1c	4c	8c	22b	26	22a	15	1b	5a	21	1a	4a	8a	1	5	
FORMS Jugs	1	1	1	5	2	4	5	1	5	1	1	4			12	32
Cooking pot			1	1	1				2			2				1
Fish dish	1							1			1					
Cup	1															
Albarello																1

Fig. 14 Pottery Histograms: the minimum number of identifiable vessels present in each fabric in the site assemblage (upper); the minimum number of vessels in each fabric present in each feature (middle); the minimum number of forms present in each feature (lower).

4. Jug with rod handle. Hard red fabric with white grits; red surfaces with bib of patchy green glaze on front of jug. Traces of white deposit internally. Mr Vince comments that it is a Malvern product. From layer 1a. (Phase IV)
5. Cooking-pot rim. Hard black fabric with quartz and sandstone grits; buff-brown surfaces. Smoke-blackened exterior. From 22a. (Phase II)
6. Large jar base. Hard red fabric with small white grits; buff interior, dark brown exterior. Smoke blackening on exterior, and lumps of iron corrosion on base. From layers 1a and 1c.

Fig 16

7. Fish dish with two handles and a pouring-spout. Hard red fabric with black core; dark buff-brown surfaces; interior dipped in a dull green lead glaze. Smoke-blackened exterior. Pouring-spout and side handle broken off; although the side handle has been restored as a lug handle (cf. meat dishes from Oxford and Colchester[48]), Mr Vince informs me that there are similar unpublished examples from the Malvern Chase area which have ribbon handles. From layers 1a, 1b and 1c.

Fig 17, Pottery from later contexts:

8. Jug rim with a pulled-out spout. Hard red fabric with a grey core and small white grits; red interior with a fine white slip; dark red exterior dipped in a green and brown lead glaze with small black speckles of iron or copper. Malvern. From layer 1.
9. Albarello or jar neck. Hard red fabric with white grits; brown interior; exterior dipped in a dull green lead glaze. Smoke blackening on exterior above carination. Unstratified.
10. Large jug with strap-handle and pulled-out spout. Red sandy fabric and surfaces; a bib of greenish-brown lead glaze on front, with a few speckles of iron or copper. Four lightly incised girth bands; one applied pellet in an iron-rich slip on the belly of the jug, at the front. Capacity of 3.1 litres. Unstratified.
11. Cooking-pot rim. Hard black fabric with a black core; purplish-brown surfaces; interior dipped in green lead glaze. Exterior smoke-blackened, with glaze runs. From layer 1.
12. Jug rim. Hard red fabric; smooth reddish-buff surfaces; shiny dark green glaze externally. Unstratified.

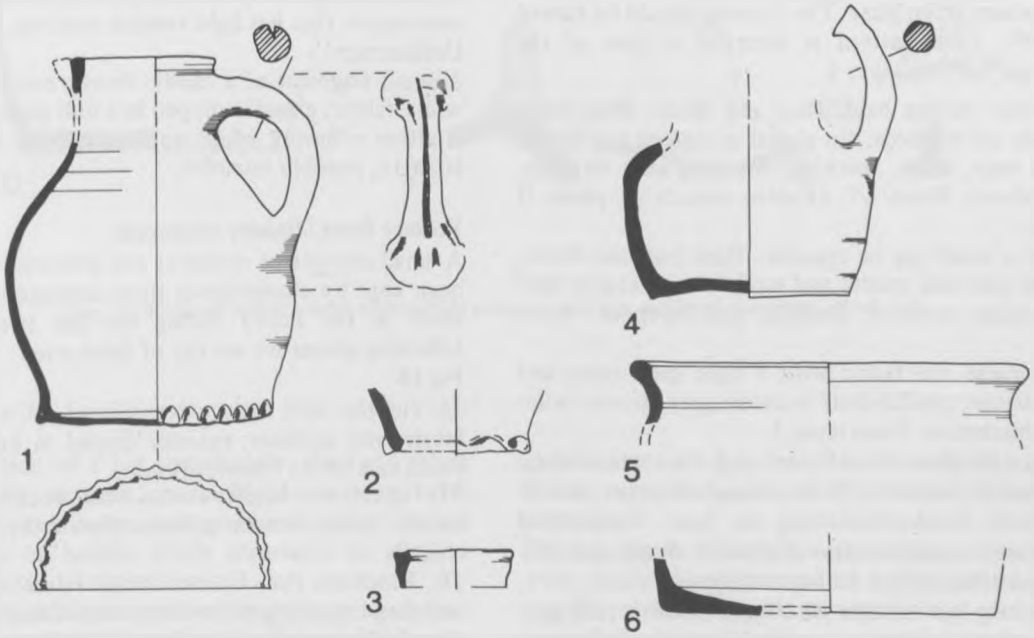


Fig. 15 Stratified Medieval Pottery. Scale 1:4

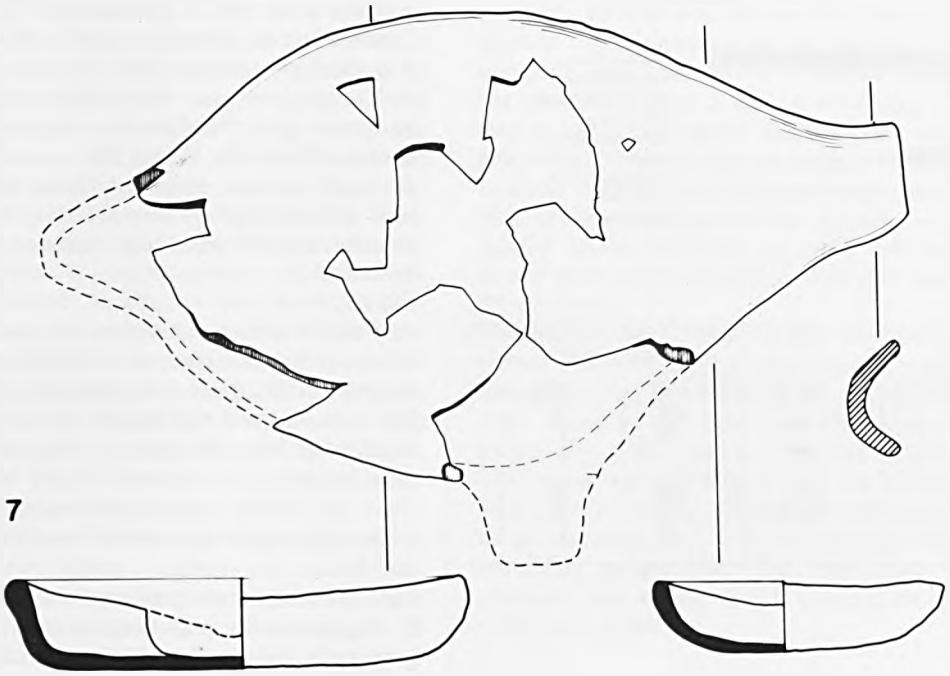


Fig. 16 Stratified Medieval fish-dish. Scale 1:4

13. Globular jug body. Hard red fabric, with white grits showing on the surface; highly oxidised red surfaces; bib of greenish-brown lead glaze on upper part of exterior. Three incised bands around the belly; slight collar at the base of the neck. Malvern. Unstratified.
14. Jug body. Hard red fabric; red surfaces; greenish lead glaze externally. Malvern. From layer 1.
15. Jug strap-handle. Hard red fabric with a grey core and quartz grits; dirty red-brown surfaces, with a decayed green lead glaze externally. Unstratified.
16. Angular rod handle. Red fabric with quartz inclusions; red surfaces with traces of a green-brown lead glaze. Possibly Malvern. Unstratified.

17. Jug sherd with a complex rouletted pattern. Sandy white fabric with a grey core; grey interior; exterior dipped in a dull medium green glaze. The drawing should be turned through 90°; the pattern is identical to one of the Skenfrith jugs[49]. From layer 5.

18. Small cup or jug base. Hard red fabric with white grits; smooth red surfaces; dip glazed in a green and brown lead glaze with black speckles. Stacking-scar on base. Possibly Malvern. From 15. (Robber trench of phase II chapel wall).
19. Base of a small jug or crucible. Hard buff-red fabric, with a black core and quartz and sandstone grits; grey-buff interior; reddish exterior. Possible pouring-spout. From layer 5.
20. Base. Coarse red fabric with a light grey core, and quartz inclusions; pinkish-buff interior; grey brown exterior. Smoke-blackened. From layer 5.
21. Base of a South-western French jug. Fine white fabric with small red inclusions of grog or crushed brick; smooth white surfaces. Smoke-blackening on base. Unstratified above north-east corner buttress of phase II chapel; possibly disturbed or introduced by robber trenches.
22. Pedestal base of a baluster jug. Hard red fabric with grey core; red surfaces. dipped in a shiny medium-dark green lead glaze. Pronounced rilling around foot; wire mark of a straight pull with a single wire, on base. Unstratified.
23. Upper junction of a strap-handle which has pulled away from a jug body. Red fabric with a grey core; orange surfaces, dipped in a shiny green and orange lead glaze with dark speckles. Deep finger-nail slashing at junction. From layer 5.
24 and 25. Ridge-tile crests. Hard reddish-buff fabric with quartz and sandstone grits; dull reddish-brown surfaces, dipped in a decaying yellow-green lead glaze externally. The crests have been pulled as handles, so that they are smooth on one side, with a central thumbed groove pulled vertically up the other; the crest is then slipped onto the tile. No. 24 has a patch of glaze internally which is the result of stacking in the kiln. Unstratified.
There are fragments of about half-a-dozen ridge tiles from the excavation, including fragments from layers 1a, 4c and 8c, but none are anywhere near complete enough to permit restoration. One has light vertical combing.
Unillustrated:
A small fragment of a handle from a cup or small jug. Fine white fabric; exterior dipped in a dull green lead glaze. This is either a Surrey white ware, or a local imitation. From layer 1c, possibly intrusive.

Pottery from Ministry clearances

A small amount of medieval and post-medieval pottery has been kept by charge-hands from clearances and restoration work at the Priory during the last twenty years. The following pieces are worthy of illustration:
Fig 18
26. Jug rim with slight external bead. Micaceous, sandy red fabric; red surfaces; exterior dipped in brown lead glaze. From east of the Chapter-House.
27. Jug rim with slight external bead. Micaceous, sandy, red-brown fabric; brown surfaces. From the South Transept chapel.
28. Pancheon rim. Coarse orange fabric with a grey core and large quartz grits; red-brown surfaces. Applied heavily thumbed strip below the flange of the rim externally. From the Chapter-House, level with the base of the seat. Post-medieval.

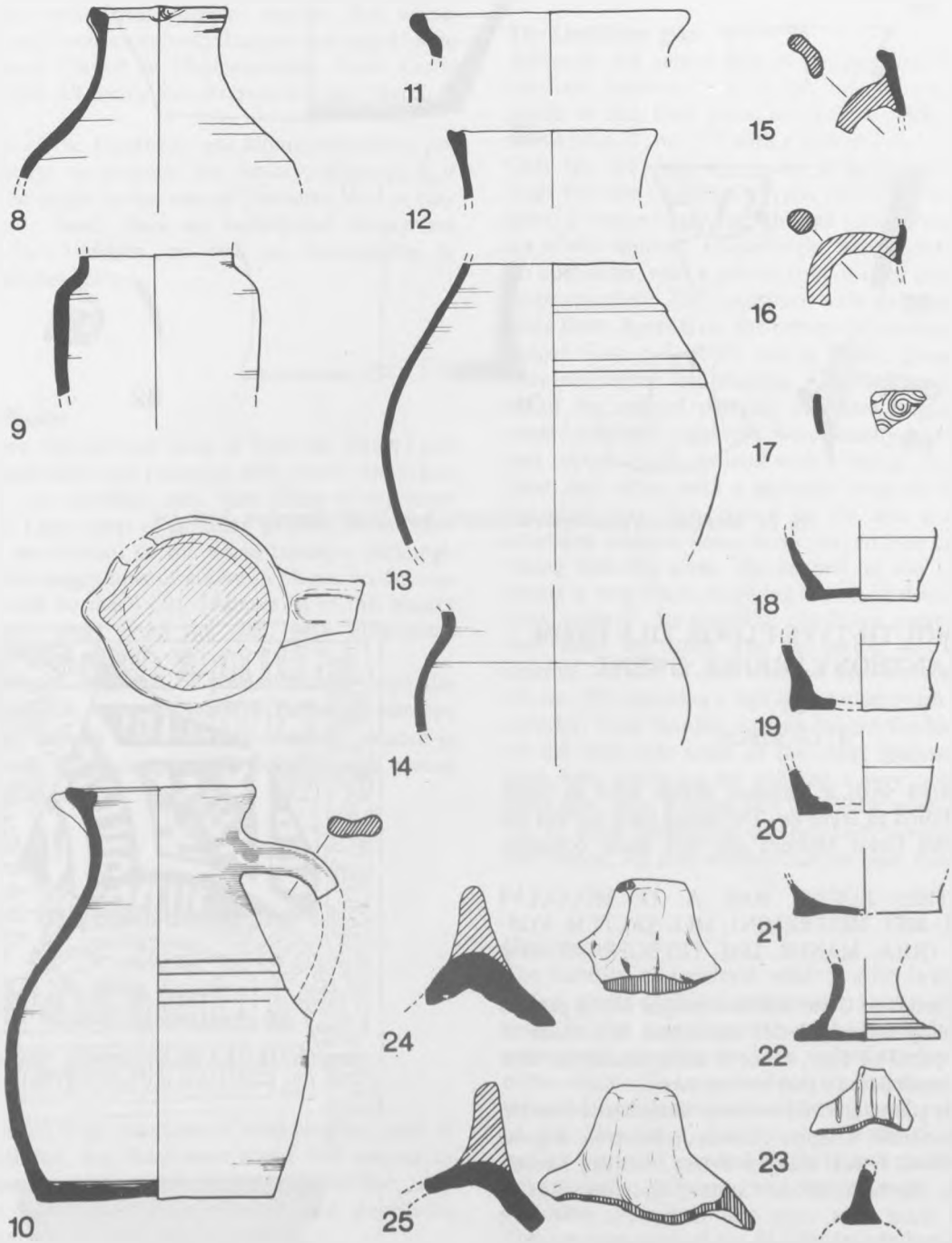


Fig. 17 Medieval pottery from unstratified contexts and late medieval dumpings. Scale 1:4

29. Lower junction of a jug strap-handle. Hard red fabric with white grits; smooth, purplish-red surfaces, with patches of green and brown lead glaze externally. Central thumbed groove on handle. White accretions on interior. Location, as no. 28.

30. Pancheon. Red fabric with white grits; red exterior; interior below rim dipped in a green lead glaze. From east of the Chapter-House. Post medieval.

31. Bellarmine base. Greyish-white stoneware; brown salt-glazed exterior. Interior covered with deposit of pitch. From cottages south of St. David's Church. Possibly imported.

32. Jug sherd decorated with complex rouletted pattern. Fine, sandy orange fabric with a grey core; smooth orange interior; exterior dipped in a green lead glaze. Three horizontal zones of 'Monmouth pattern' roulette (cf White Castle and Monmouth[50]). From a drainage trench in the car-park.

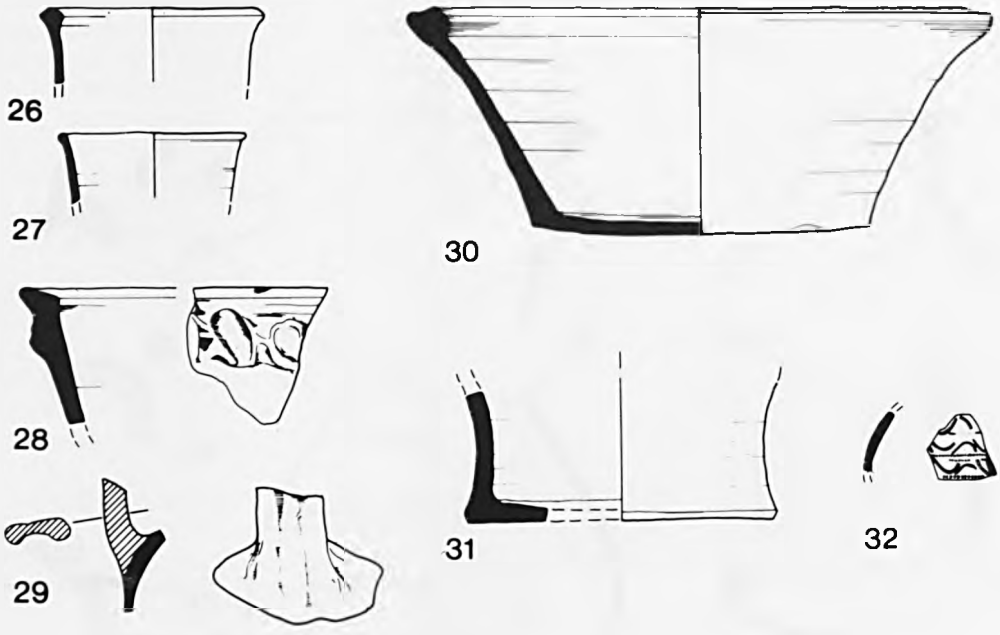


Fig. 18 Medieval and post-medieval pottery from earlier clearances. Scale 1:4

A MONMOUTH-TYPE FLOOR TILE FROM LLANTHONY PRIORY, GWENT

by

A. G. Vince

A tile decorated with a stamped design used at Great Malvern was found in layer 8a. The stamp used for this tile is a well-known Great Malvern one and when complete reads:

MARC: MATHE: LUCAS: JOH. A: D: MCCCCLVI MISEREMINI: MEI: MISEREMINI: MEI: SALTEM: VOS· AMICI. MEI: QUIA: MANUS. DNI. TETEGIT: ME. (Fig 19, upper).

It is one of a series of Great Malvern designs with a pattern composed mainly of black letter inscription. It is made to be used as a panel of four. Since it incorporates the date 1456 A.D., it must date to that year or later.

Tiles with this stamp are known from Monmouth Church, Gwent, Croft Castle Chapel, Hereford, Stretton Sugwas Church, Hereford, Great Malvern Priory, Worcs., Lacock Abbey, Wilts., Bayham Abbey, Sussex, and four sites in Dorset[51]. Of these tiles, only two have been petrologically examined — those from Great Malvern and Bayham Abbey. Both were made in the fabric characteristic of the Great Malvern tilery[52].

The fabric of the Llanthony tile is hard fired and completely oxidized red. Scattered inclusions of rounded silicious sand (mainly quartz, but also chert, quartzite and metaquartzite) with grains up to 0.3 mm. across, one large angular fine-grained micaceous red sandstone fragment and red clay pellets were present in a matrix of baked clay and angular quartz and white mica fragments up to 0.1 mm. long. A sand similar to the silicious inclusions is present on the tile base. (S.V.A.D. ref. M1124).

This fabric is quite distinct from that of the Great Malvern tiles, although both are fine-textured with a high quantity of small quartz fragments in the clay matrix. The fabric is identical to samples of floor tiles from Monmouth. These tiles include one stamped with a definite Great Malvern stamp. It is probable that the tiles now in Monmouth

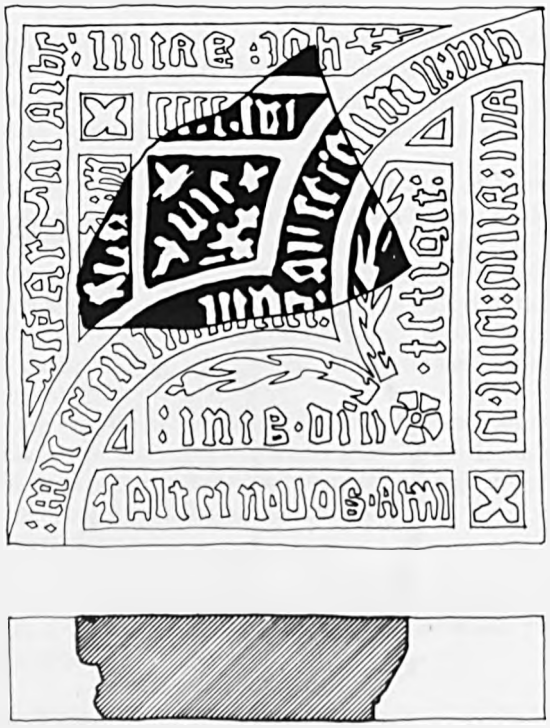
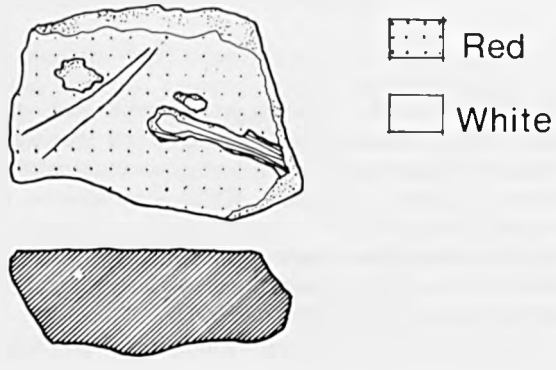


Fig. 19 Fragments of floor tile and painted wall plaster. Scale 1:2



Church tower, set around the walls at the west end and originally from Monmouth Priory, are of the same fabric.
The evidence to date suggests that an offshoot of the Great Malvern tilery was operating somewhere in the Welsh Borderland. There are five other sites in the area which have produced tiles with Great Malvern stamps, but whose fabrics have not been examined: Llangattock-nigh-Usk in Gwent, Newland Church in Gloucestershire, Croft Castle Chapel, Hereford All Saints and Stretton Sugwas Church in Hereford.
The petrology of the Llanthony and Monmouth tiles is not distinctive enough to pinpoint the factory, although it is indicative of an origin in the area of Devonian Marl or clay derived from it. Such clays are widespread throughout Gwent and Herefordshire, as well as outcropping in Gloucestershire and Salop.

Painted Wall Plaster
As noted above, the internal faces of both the phase I and phase III chapel walls were rendered with plaster which had been marked out in white with false joints to represent square blocks. Large areas of similarly painted plaster were preserved on the interior of the north transept. Although there were faint suggestions of colour in places, no discernible design could be made out. (Almost all of this plaster has since come away from the wall, with subsequent weathering and frost action).
The only coloured fragment of plaster known from the priory was found in clearance work in the south transept chapel (Fig 19, lower). This has part of an arc painted in white, on a dull red background. It is scored with several transverse scratch-marks.

THE WINDOW GLASS

by
Shân Taylor
With contributions by
Louise Mumford and D. H. Evans

The site produced large quantites of window glass; most of this was unpainted, but there were about 700 stained or painted fragments. As most of these were stratified, they represent the largest assemblage of excavated glass from stratified layers on any medieval site in Wales.

Techniques of manufacture
The methods of manufacture of medieval stained glass windows were comparatively simple and fairly consistent throughout the whole of medieval Europe. These were described by a German monk, Theophilus, in the 11th or 12th century, and, with the exception of one or two innovations introduced after the first half of the 16th century (and, therefore, not relevant here), changed remarkably little[53]. The purified and fused ingredients[54] were formed into sheets of glass which were then cut, by scoring with a hot iron, to fit the basic design, and held in place with lead cames. Because of their lack of strength, these cames were attached to iron bars fixed horizontally across the windows, and secured in the stone jambs.
Apart form the use of black enamel painting and of a silver yellow stain (the latter was not detected on any of the Llanthony glass), all of the colour came from the body of the glass itself. The denseness of some of the colours – notably red and blue – was overcome by flashing it with clear glass, whilst it was still in the molten state.

The Llanthony glass
Although the greater part of the glass was originally clear, coloured fragments were not uncommon, and included pieces of red, blue, green and yellow glass, and three fragments (Fig 21, no. 28) with a pinkish-beige tint.
Only the red glass was found to be flashed, and from the large number of corrosion pits on the surface of the clear glass, it seems likely that the red surface was on the interior of the window. Interestingly, one fragment was flashed on both sides, with a central core of clear glass.
Approximately 700 fragments were decorated with black trace lines. Apart from the pattern of the lead cames, which ranged from c. 5 to 10 mm. in width, these provided the only decoration and shading. Although no chemical analysis of the enamel painting on these fragments has been made, medieval pigments were usually composed of iron and copper oxide, ground with a highly fusible green lead glass, and mixed with a paintable medium for application; the glass was then placed in the kiln and fired – the attaching medium being burnt out, and the enamel painting fusing with the glass. The enamel on the Llanthony fragments is very black, implying that the colourant was largely iron oxide[55]. Its excellent condition suggests that it was well fused on firing. The decoration was usually on the internal surface of the window, but three fragments (Fig 21, no. 28) depicting a face have broad brush strokes on the exterior, thus forming shading behind the hair and left side of the nose. On some of the other fragments, half-tones have been produced by painting a very positive and dark trace line, with a wider and less dense wash on either side. All of these techniques are relatively common on glass of this period. An iron window bar has been found on the site.

Glass decay
The stability of medieval window glass is primarily determined by its chemical composition, but it can also be affected by the manufacturing methods which were used. In some cases, the glass has been melted at a low temperature, often resulting in imperfections, *e.g.* striations or cords, and inburned surface impurities (these are all present on some of the Llanthony glass); such defects, along with other surface marks of physical origin (*e.g.* scratches), are thermodynamically different, and hence, more susceptible to corrosion.
The vast majority of the Llanthony window glass was in a poor state of decay, with water acting both as an optical filler and an adherent in a large number of the fragments. Almost all of the glass is completely blackened due to the presence of ferrous sulphite. The coloured glass appears to have survived better than the clear glass – with the red glass surviving extremely well; however, as most of the rest of the glass is blackened, this may be a misconception.
The following states of corrosion were noted in the glass from Llanthony (the categories are not mutually exclusive):
a) Glass with a shiny surface with hair-line cracks; it has a black body with a narrow central band of clear glass. This completely disintegrates upon drying – usually, by first splitting along horizontal planes, and then crumbling to a fine powder. Here, water acts both as an optical filler and as an adherent.
b) Glass with its surface covered with pits, which have clearly joined in parts to create larger cavities. Some linear

pits have presumably resulted from pit formation along surface scratches. Generally, pitting is on one surface only (the exterior, when *in situ*), but it is occasionally found on both sides. This suggests that little pit formation has occurred whilst the glass has been in the ground. Glass which had been immediately adjacent to the lead cames, was invariably freer from corrosion pits.

Approximately 100 fragments were covered with small concretions, which, on removal, proved to be covering small pits of proportional size to the concretions.

Glass in a generally good condition, except for a hard, cloudy, opaque crust which obscures all colour and transparency. This type of corrosion was found only on the red flashed glass and on approximately 10 clear fragments.

d) Glass with an opaque, black body which is covered with a layer of flaking scales, usually on both surfaces. Experimental slow drying revealed that not all of the fragments would completely decay – although the majority would; this indicated that their durability could not always be detected before conservation.

These various corrosion states, viewed collectively, suggest that the window glass was badly corroded before it became buried, although, undoubtedly, corrosion would have continued within the ground.

Fig. 20 Painted and stained window glass. Scale 1:2. Nos. 1–9 Phase II, Nos. 10–18 Phase IV, Nos. 19–27 Unstratified.

GLASS CONSERVATION

by

S. E. Taylor and C. L. Mumford

At present, treatments available for excavated glass are far from satisfactory; the alternative is to clean the glass and store it in a damp environment until a suitable consolidant becomes available. It was decided to attempt conservation.

On site, the glass was cleaned and packed damp into sealable polythene bags. In the laboratory, the fragments were rewashed and rinsed in distilled water, and mechanical cleaning of large corrosion products was undertaken – although hard concretions could sometimes not be removed, or even dissolved chemically, without damaging the fragile glass, and these had to be left in place. After cleaning, all of the painted and many unpainted fragments were photographed in colour, and drawn.

In order to test the durability of the glass, several fragments, covering the whole range of conditions, were allowed to dry out slowly; almost all crumbled, and none could safely be handled. It was, therefore, considered that consolidation was essential.

Finding a suitable consolidant for the glass proved difficult – the ideal, (a water soluble resin with suitable properties) not being available at present. Reasonable results would have been gained with a water soluble wax, but treatment would have taken too long.

Several consolidants were tried, and the main problems proved to be penetration and adhesion. The most successful appeared at first to be an epoxy AY 103, HY 951, marketed as Araldite, and although it is considered irreversible, and known to yellow and become brittle with age, it was decided to proceed with it.

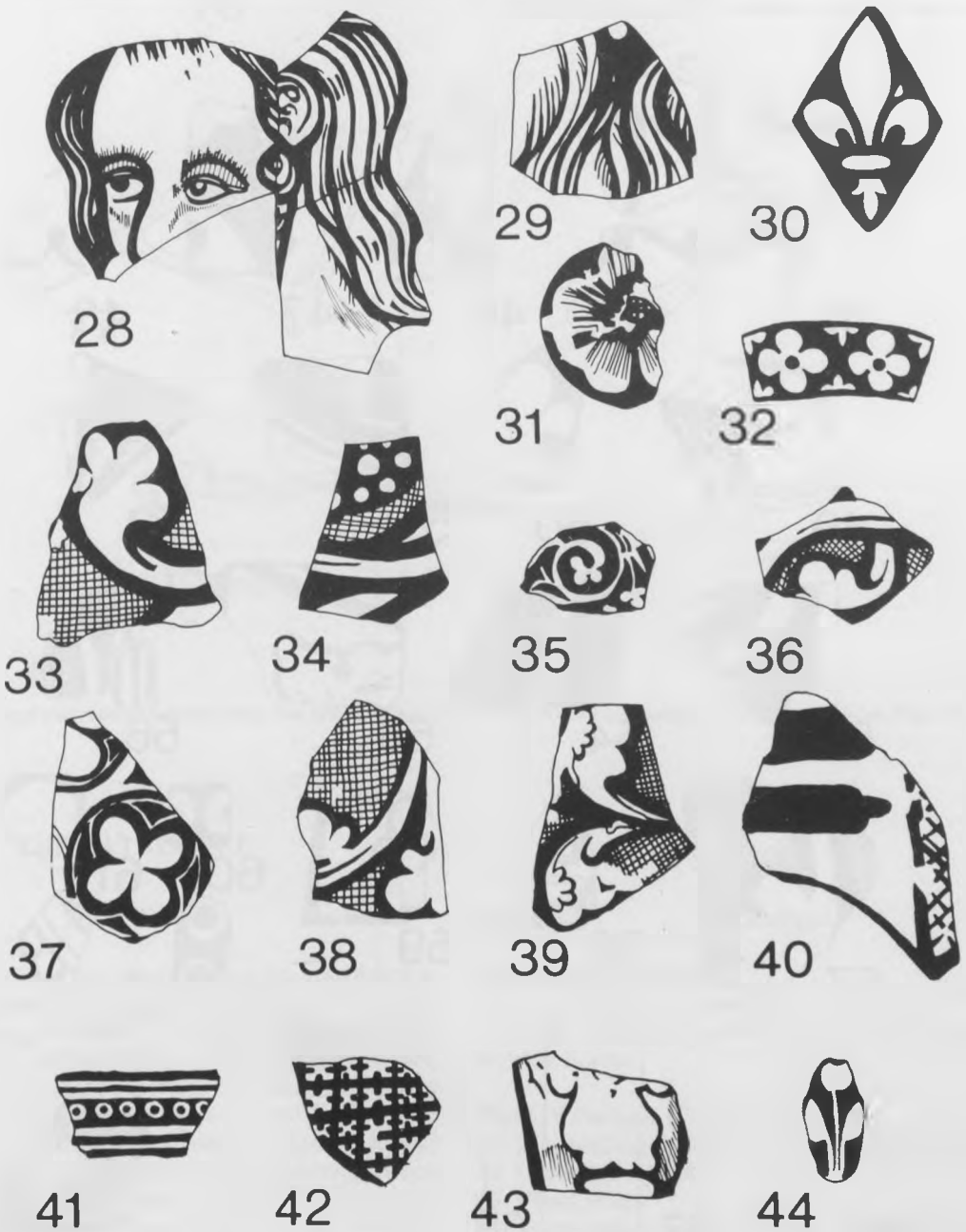


Fig. 21 Painted window glass. Scale 1 : 2. Phase IV features

After cleaning, the glass was placed on taut gauze, stretched across zinc frames, and dewatered twice in acetone – the second treatment being under vacuum. After 18 hours, the glass was placed in the epoxy, and placed under vacuum again. After four hours, the glass was removed from the epoxy, and the excess removed from the surface. The glass was left to harden for 24 hours before lacquering with three coats of Chintex polyurethane varnish, which greatly improved the appearance of the glass – particularly the painted pieces. Chintex is normally stoved to harden it, but this was thought to be inadvisable for such fragile glass; applying the Chintex in 75% solution with its solvent, seemed to give a fairly solid coating – and, of all the lacquers tried, Chintex gave the best adhesion. Where fragments could be joined, this was done with H.M.G. cellulose nitrate adhesive.

Several months later, a number of pieces were found to have crumbled – probably due to insufficient penetration of the rather viscous epoxy. It was decided to try a new consolidant – a low viscosity aliphatic epoxy resin, which is marketed as Rutapox R1210. This has been used with some success on fragile wood and painted leather[56]. Its main advantages over Araldite are its low viscosity (15-25 cp at 25°C), and its long pot life (up to eight hours) – both of which would greatly improve deep penetration. Another property of the resin is its great resilience, which prevents the formation of stresses at the interfaces of the many hydration layers in the glass (unlike Araldite, which is rather brittle). Being a new product, its behaviour on ageing was not known, and there was not time to perform ageing tests, but, considering the urgency of the situation, it was decided to try it. The procedure was carried out as above, except that the glass was left in the epoxy for eight hours, and it was sometimes necessary to harden the resin in a warm oven (50°C). The results have been most satisfactory, so far – even the most fragile pieces having been rendered handlable; the resin, being less viscous, is more pleasant to work with, and surface cleaning of the pieces is easier, and therefore less risky than with the Araldite.

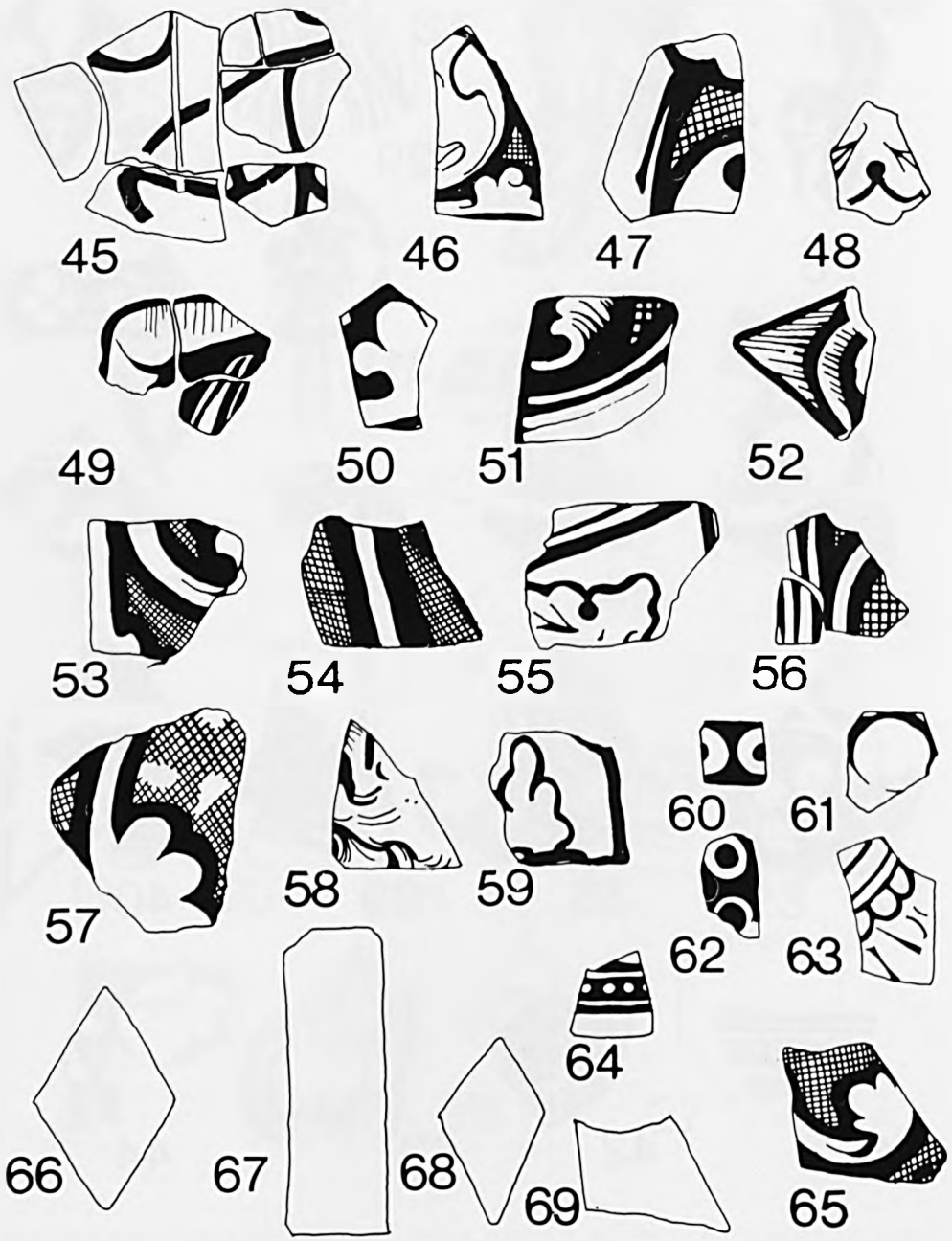


Fig. 22 Painted and stained window glass. Scale 1:2. From Phase IV features.

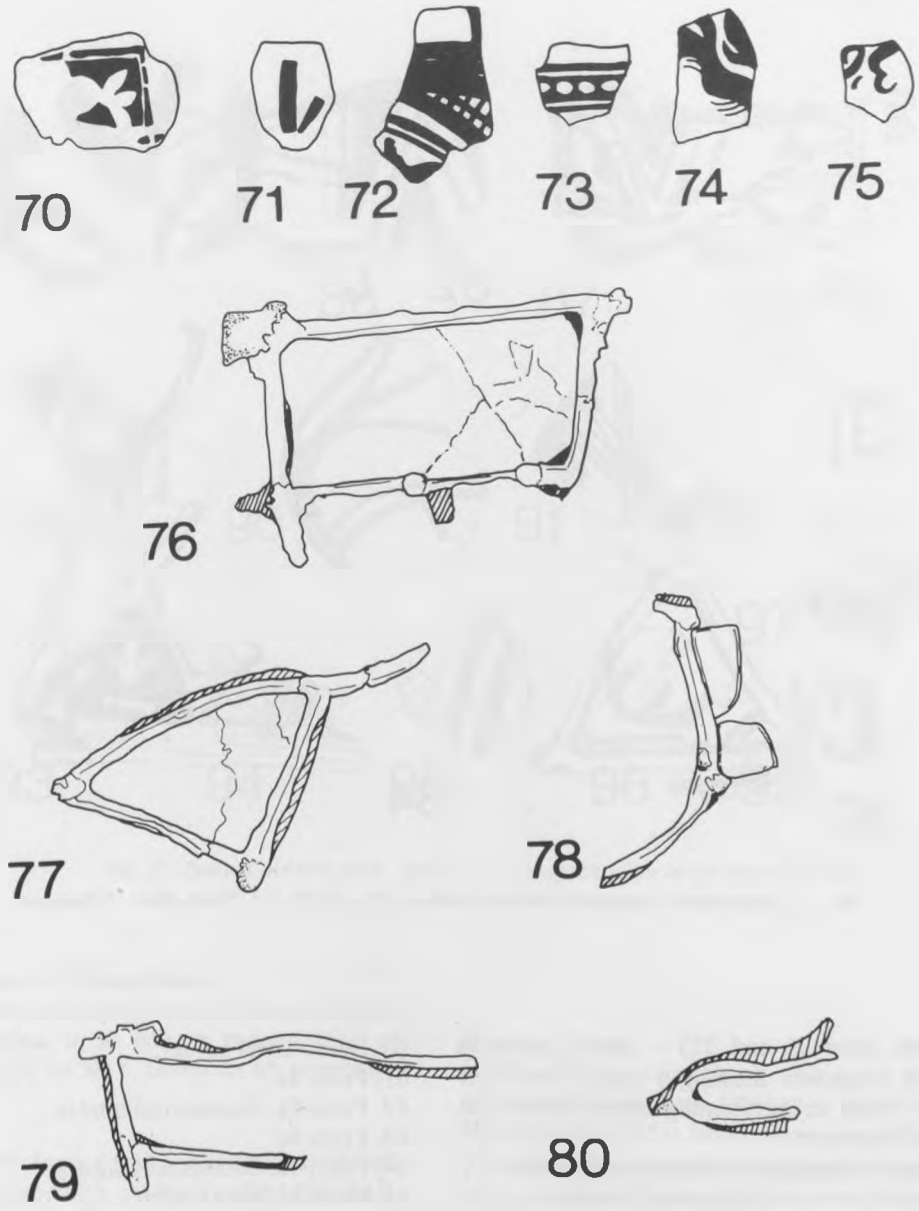


Fig. 23 Painted and stained window glass and cames. Scale 1:2. Nos. 70–75 Unstratified, Nos. 76–80 From Phase II features.

THE CATALOGUE

by

D. H. Evans

By far the majority of the painted examples bear floral or geometrical patterns – or a combination of the two, often with backgrounds of finely hatched lines. Stylistically, these are similar to published examples from Strata Florida, Strata Marcella and Castell-y-Bere[57]. Noticeably absent are heraldic beasts and representations of buildings (as at Blackfriars[58]), chequer board patterns (as at Strata Florida) some of the more elaborate floral and geometrical patterns (as at Montgomery[59], Blackfriars and Strata Florida) and inscribed fragments (as at Strata Marcella). However, so little medieval glass has survived in Welsh churches[60] (particularly in South-East Wales) and so little has been published from excavations in the area, that it would be difficult to comment further on such a relatively small sample.

Catalogue

Phase II Features (Fig 20)

1-4 – layer 4c; 5 – grave 25; 6 – layer 8c; 7-8 – layer 1c; 9 – top of feature 6. 4 and 6 have floral motifs, 7 a geometrical border.

Phase IV Features (Fig 20) – Layer 8a

10. Diamond-shaped quarry with fleur-de-lis motif.
12. Geometrical border.
13. Floral motif.
15. Rectangular pane of green glass with trimmed edges.
16-18. Green glass.

Unstratified (Fig 20)

19–20, 23 and 25 have floral motifs, 27 – clear glass with trimmed edges.

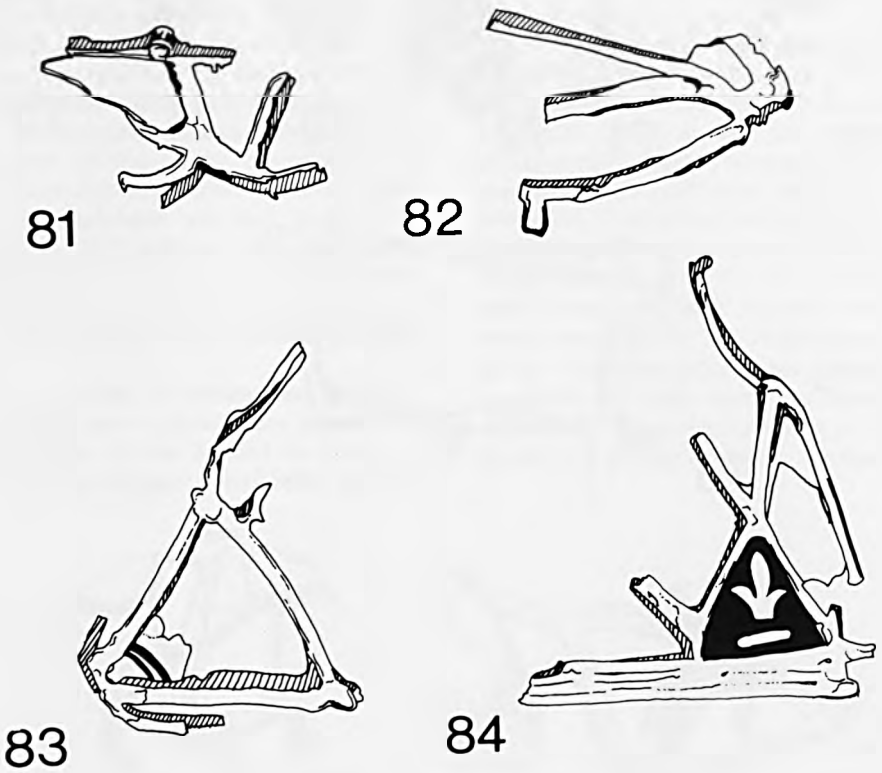


Fig. 24 Lead window cames and painted window glass. Scale 1:2. From phase IV features

Phase IV Features (Figs 21 and 22) – 28-47, Layer 8a
28. Three joining fragments showing a man's head. The reverse has broad brush strokes forming shading behind the hair and left side of the nose.
29. Similar fragment showing part of a face with hair.
30. Diamond-shaped quarry with fleur-de-lis motif.
31. A flower.
32. Border of quatrefoil flowers.
33. Floral motif: for this, and nos. 34, 36, 38-9, 46-7, 53, 56-7 and 65, especially, cf. *Strata Florida*, for this style of flowing floral and geometrical motifs against finely hatched backgrounds.
34-5. Floral and geometrical motifs.
36. Floral motif.
37. Quatrefoil in circle.
38-9. Floral motif and sprays.
40. Border of lattice, or possibly a representation of a window.
41-2. Geometrical border and hatching.
44. Flower.
45. Seven joining fragments.
46-7. Floral motifs.
48. From 1a.
49. From 8a. Three joining fragments. For similar design, cf. *Strata Florida*.
50. From 8a. Floral motif.
51. From 4a. Floral motif.
52. From 4a.
(53-61 – layer 8a)
53. Floral motif.
55. Flower.
56. Three joining fragments of a floral motif.
57. Floral motif.
60. Geometrical border.
61. From 4a.
62. From 8a. Geometrical border.
63. From 8a.
64. From 4a. Geometrical border.
65. From 8a. Floral motif.
66. From 8a. Diamond-shaped quarry of blue glass.
67-9. From 8a. Three fragments of red flashed glass, including a diamond-shaped quarry and a rectangular pane.

Unstratified (Fig 23)
70-5. Six fragments showing floral, geometric and other motifs. In addition, there are a large number of other fragments showing similar designs to those illustrated from stratified contexts.

Window Cames (Figs 23 and 24) – 76-80 from 8c
76-7. Panes of unpainted glass in lead cames.
78. Lead came with fragments of unpainted glass *in situ*.
79. Part of a rectangular lead came.
80. Fragment of came.
81-2. From 8a. Fragments of came with unpainted glass *in situ*.
83. From 4a. Triangular pane of painted glass in lead cames.
84. From 8a. Triangular pane of painted glass in lead cames; floral motif.

From Clearance in South Transept (Fig 25)
The following fragments of grisaille glass were found during ministry clearance of the South Transept, and drawn by Mr J. K. Knight. They display similar floral and geometrical patterns; one of the fragments is blue. 85-98.

Fig. 25 Painted window glass. Scale 1:2. From clearance in the south transept.

Objects of Worked Bone

A small quantity of worked bone was found on the site; most of the pieces appear to be pins, in various stages of completion. I am grateful to Mr S. Greep for his comments on some of these.

Fig 26

1. Trial-piece, probably from a tusk; rectangular-sectioned shank, c. 90 x 8 x 5 mm, with cut-marks along the shaft. Probably a rough-out for a pin similar to no. 5. Layer 4a.

2. Trial-piece, probably from a small long-bone; roughly octagonal-sectioned shank, c. 70 x 8 x 8 mm. Probably a rough-out for a pin, as no. 1. Layer 4a.

3. An unfinished awl or pin, probably from the long-bone of a bird; roughly circular in section, c. 95 x 5 x 5 mm, worked to a point at one end. Sealed beneath east wall of phase III chapel (feature 21).

4. Fragment of a rib, perforated with a rivet-hole (c. 1mm. in diameter; there are traces of iron-staining around the rivet-hole. Unstratified.

5. Lathe-turned bone pin, c. 80 mm. long; oval shank, tapering from c. 3.50 mm. at the top to c. 2 mm. at the bottom; circular head, c. 8 mm. in diameter, with a lathe-registration mark at the top; small iron tip c. 3 mm. long inserted in the end. Possibly a scriber? Layer 4c.

Objects of Iron

Apart from large quantities of iron nails, little iron-work was found during the excavation. The nails appear to have been mainly used in roofing, and several were still corroded onto sheets of lead or roofing-slates; most of the iron objects were found in topsoil, and are probably of relatively recent date. All iron-work, apart from nails, has been X-rayed, and the illustrations drawn from these. Some found in previous clearances are included here.

Fig 26

6. Key with circular shank with open tubular end; open circular or oval bow (broken); four tumblers. London Museum type III[61]. From clearance in the south transept.

7. Part of key (broken); rectangular-sectioned shank, with a circular bow. From topsoil.

8. Roofing-nail with rectangular-sectioned shank and circular head. Found during conservation work on roof of the slype.

9. Roofing-nail or cleat with rectangular-sectioned shank, and narrow elongated head. Found during conservation work on roof of the slype.

12. Iron object with tinned surfaces. It has a central hollow cylinder, c. 36-40 mm. in diameter, which is open at both ends; the cylinder, which is made of thin sheet metal, is perforated with a central rivet-hole, presumably for attachment to a shaft. At one end of the cylinder, four obiate plates had been welded on, but one of these has broken off, and has been replaced with a welded repair patch (not shown on the drawing, as this has only come to light during conservation work); although two of the plates are now folded back onto the cylinder, the angle of the other two suggest that these were for attachment to a curved rather than a flat surface (*e.g.* a bowl or globe). Each plate is perforated with a pair of rivet-holes, c. 5 mm. in diameter, and X-rays show that the edges of the plates are decorated with punched ornament. (A reconstruction drawing will be published in a future paper, after the object has been fully conserved). From layer 8a.

The function of this object is uncertain, but its shape suggests that it comes from the base of an object, such as an orb or incense bowl, that is supported or carried on a staff.

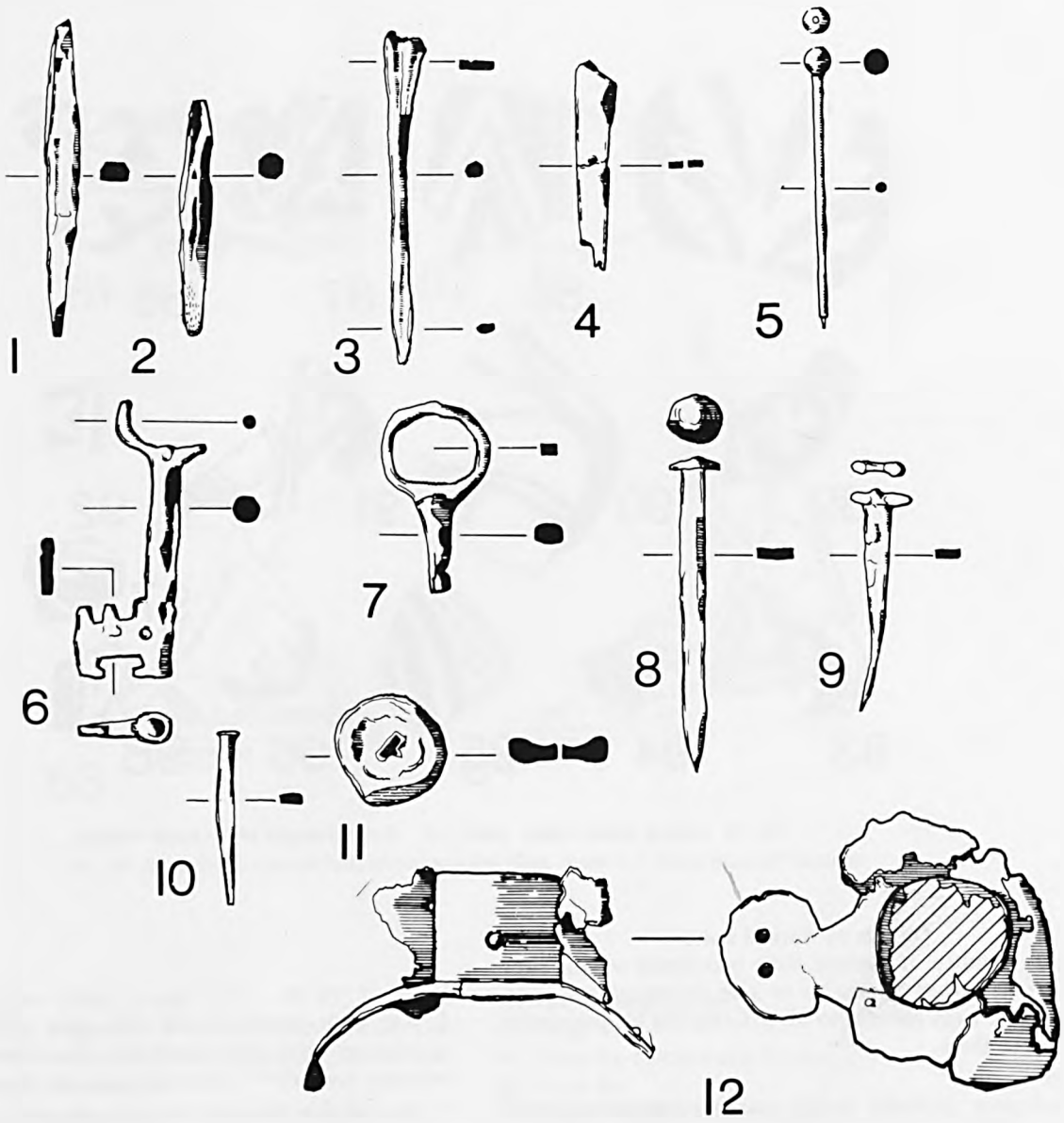


Fig. 26 Objects of worked bone (nos. 1–5), iron (6–9, and 12), and lead (10–11). Scale 1:2

The tinning on the surface suggests that it is part of an ornate or decorated, high-status object, rather than a household or farm implement or object; on the other hand, the absence of gilding, and the use of iron rather than silver or bronze would seem to rule out ritual objects, such as croziers.

Unillustrated

Square-sectioned masonry-spike, c. 98 x 18 x 18 mm. From clearance in the cottages south of St. David's church.

Window bar, c. 340 x 14 x 5 mm, tapering to a chisel edge at one end. From layer 8a.

Two fragments – possibly from the same object. These are either part of a pot-hanger or of steelyards, or balance arms operating on a steelyard principle[62]. One bar is c. 595 mm. long, of rectangular section, 20 x 11 mm. at one end, tapering to 15 x 8 mm. at the other, with eight or nine notches cut into its upper edge. The other is c. 300 mm. long, and 16 x 8 mm. in section, with 17 notches in its upper edge. From layer 8a.

Objects of Lead

About 25 kilos of lead were found on the excavation, and large quantities have been found during the course of previous clearance work. Apart from lead waste or scrap, which is ubiquitous, most of it falls into three main categories.

a) Rectangular sheets of roofing lead up to 500 mm. x 165 mm. in size, with one or more nail-holes c. 8 mm. in diameter (often with the nails still *in situ*) for fixing to the roof.

b) Binding strips of up to 300 mm. in length, varying between 16 and 20 mm. in width.

c) Window cames; a selection of these is shown on Figs 23 and 24. All of these classes of objects were found in layers of all periods. In addition to these, a small number of other objects were found.

Fig 26

10. Rectangular-sectioned bar, 50 x 4 x 5 mm, flattened at one end into a head. Found in clearance work near the Chapter House.

11. Roundel, 32 mm. in diameter, with a rectangular slot cut through the middle. From clearance in the south transept chapel.

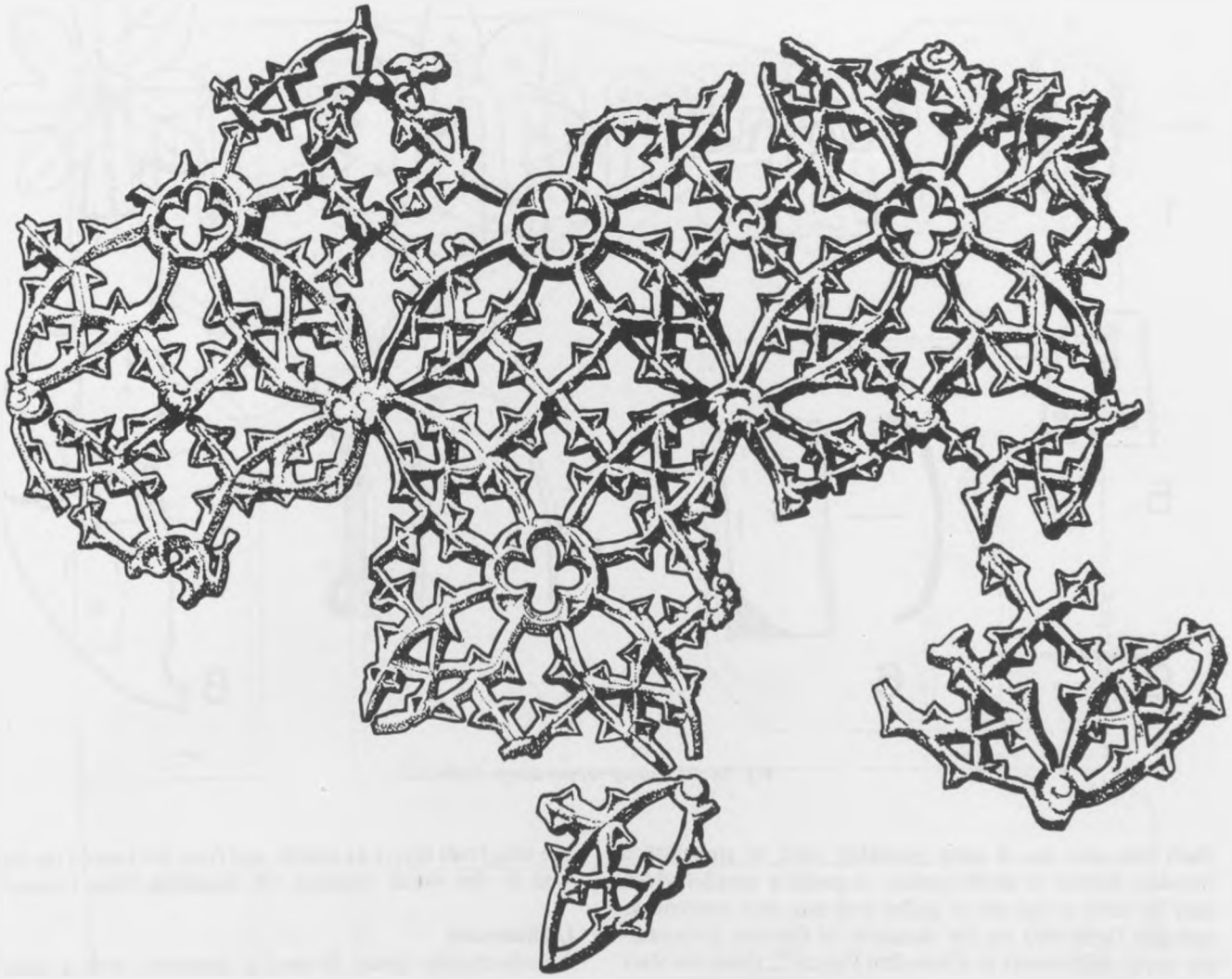


Fig. 27 Lead Ventilator. Scale 1:2

Fig 27

12. Part of a window ventilator decorated with a repetitive motif of intersecting circles with open-work crosses; each band of circles is separated from the next by open quatrefoils set in a circle. It is made up of several repeated squares, 110 x 110 mm.in size, soldered together to make a large ventilator. The decoration is moulded on both sides, and the quality of the moulding is good, with very few flashing marks; but, the quality of the soldering is poor, with several large clumsy welds which have been poorly finished. From layer 8a, sealed under the large stone slab leaning against the north wall of the phase IV chapel.

More fragments decorated in the same way were found in excavations in the north transept in 1979. A full note will be published on all of the fragments in a future paper.

A small ventilator was found in excavations at Haverfordwest Priory and a mould for one was found at Neath Abbey[63]. There are also some unpublished examples from Rievaulx, Roche and Byland Abbeys.

Unillustrated

Lead rod, 32 mm.long and 12 mm.in diameter. From layer 8a.

Jetton

No coins were found during the course of the 1978 excavations, and only one token had been previously uncovered in the course of clearance work. This was found in clearing building debris north of the north-west tower. Mr G. C. Boon kindly provided the following identification:

Nuremberg jetton dated 157(–). Uncertain legends, Reichsapfel. Pierced crowns and lys.

Objects of Bronze

Fig 28

1. Part of a buckle with a single suspension loop; the tongue is missing. Probably post-medieval. Found in clearance work east of the slype.

2. Belt or clasp fitting, which may have operated on the same principal as a slide on a pair of braces. There are no obvious signs of wear on the terminals. From topsoil in the area of the north transept chapels.

3. Star-shaped mount, with eight radiating petals, one of which broadens out – possibly for attachment. It is decorated with a central raised boss, punched out from the inside, and each petal has a similar smaller boss. There are traces of possible textile or organic remains on the back of the plate. From layer 8a.

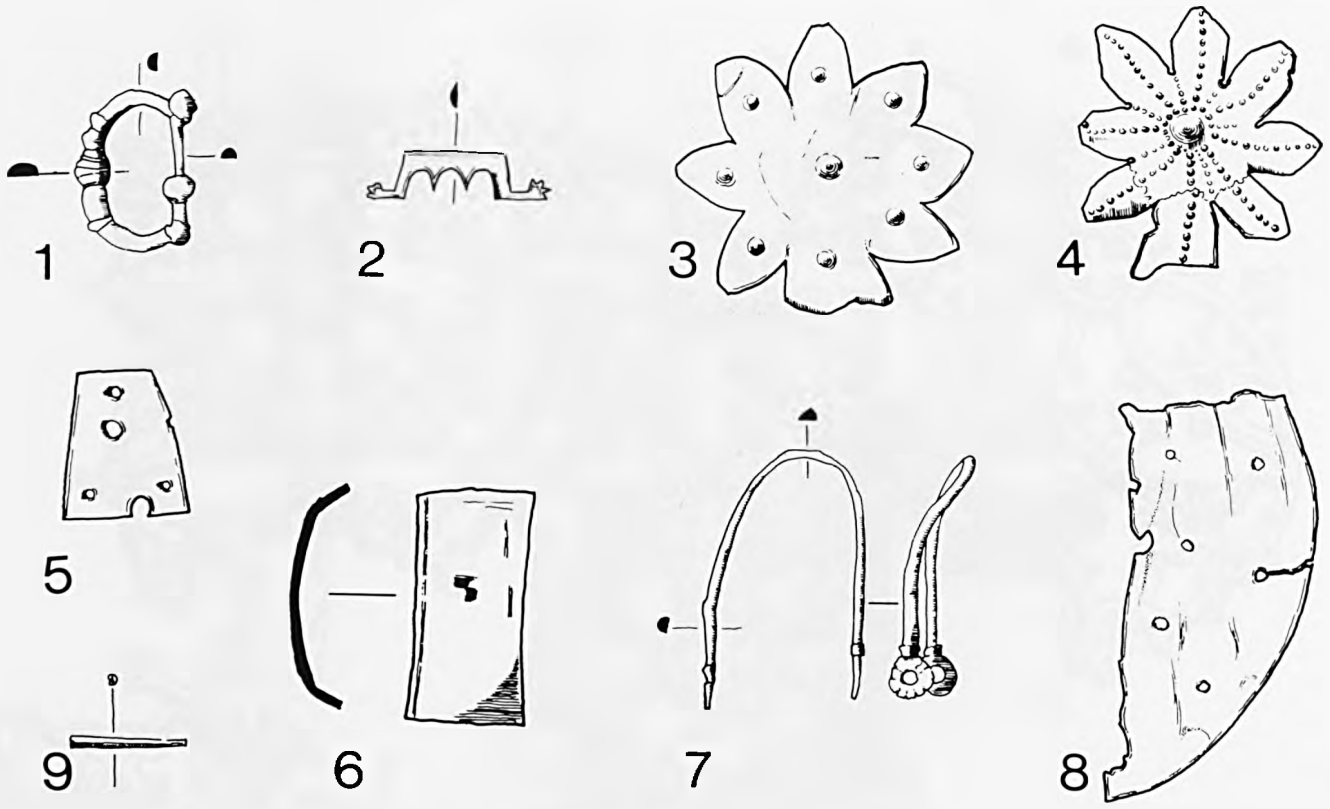


Fig. 28 Objects of copper alloy. Scale 1:2

Both this and no. 4 were probably used to embellish a wooden, leather or cloth surface. A possible parallel which may be cited is the use of gilded lead stars and crescents as spangles (*scintillis*) on the wainscot of the mid 13th-century royal apartments at Clarendon Palace[64]; there the stars were fixed to the wainscot through a flat plate on their rear. At Valle Crucis Abbey, a lead disc decorated with a star and raised pellets had no such obvious means of mounting, and, like the Llanthony examples, was presumably glued to its backing[65].

4. A similar, but more elaborate mount, again in the shape of an eight-pointed star, with one petal broadening out at the base. This has a raised central boss and radiating lines of raised punched decoration; some of the decoration has been punched from either side of the plate. One of the petals has been pierced – possibly for attachment. Sealed in the core of the east wall of the phase IV chapel. An identical plaque was found in excavations in the north transept in 1979.

5. Trapezoidal plate with five perforations; probably part of a belt fitting or strap-end. From topsoil in the area of the north transept chapels.

6. Curved rectangular plate with a border of finely chased lines. Found during the excavation of a drainage trench in the car-park, *i.e.* near the rere-dorter.

7. A curved U-shaped suspension loop made of sub-rectangular rod with a flat circular terminal at either end; these have a central perforation and are decorated with lightly chased ornament. There are no obvious signs of wear on the loop to suggest that it supported anything. From layer 4c.

8. Part of a circular plate made of thin sheet bronze with an overturned rim; it is perforated with at least six holes. Possibly part of a colander? From layer 5.

9. A cord-cover or tag-end formed by rolling a hollow cylinder out of thin sheet. Three of these were found on the site, from layers 4a and 8a, and from the base of the stairwell in the north transept. Cf. examples from Conwy[66].

Unillustrated

A semi-circular plate, 30 mm. in diameter, with a central perforation; it opens into three lobes, the central one pierced. From layer 1a.

A fragment of rod, 80 mm. long and 3 mm. in diameter. From layer 1c.

A spring, 150 mm. long; probably post-medieval. From layer 5.

An S-shaped hook, closed at one end; it is made out of thin wire, 25 mm. long. From layer 8a.

Objects of Worked Stone

Although large quantities of worked stone have been recovered in various clearances, most of this consists of ashlar blocks and roughly dressed rubble infill. Few capitals have been found, and these can usually be matched with complete examples on nearby standing structures (*e.g.* those on the north pier at the west end of the slype). However, a small amount of monumental masonry has survived at the priory, and as much of this is poorly published, the opportunity has been taken to include it here with some of the finds from the excavation. I am grateful to Dr Butler for his comments on some of these pieces, and to Mr Ewan Campbell for his help with petrological identifications.

Most of the building stone used in the priory both for dressed columns and for rubble infill is either a fine-grained silty, or massive, coarse-grained red sandstone. Some of the dressed blocks and capitals have been identified as Ham stone[67]. Oolitic limestone seems to have been preferred for some of the finer sculpture.

The grave slabs (Fig 29)

1. Part of the grave slab of a priest; decorated with a foliate cross, with a chalice on one side, and a book with a

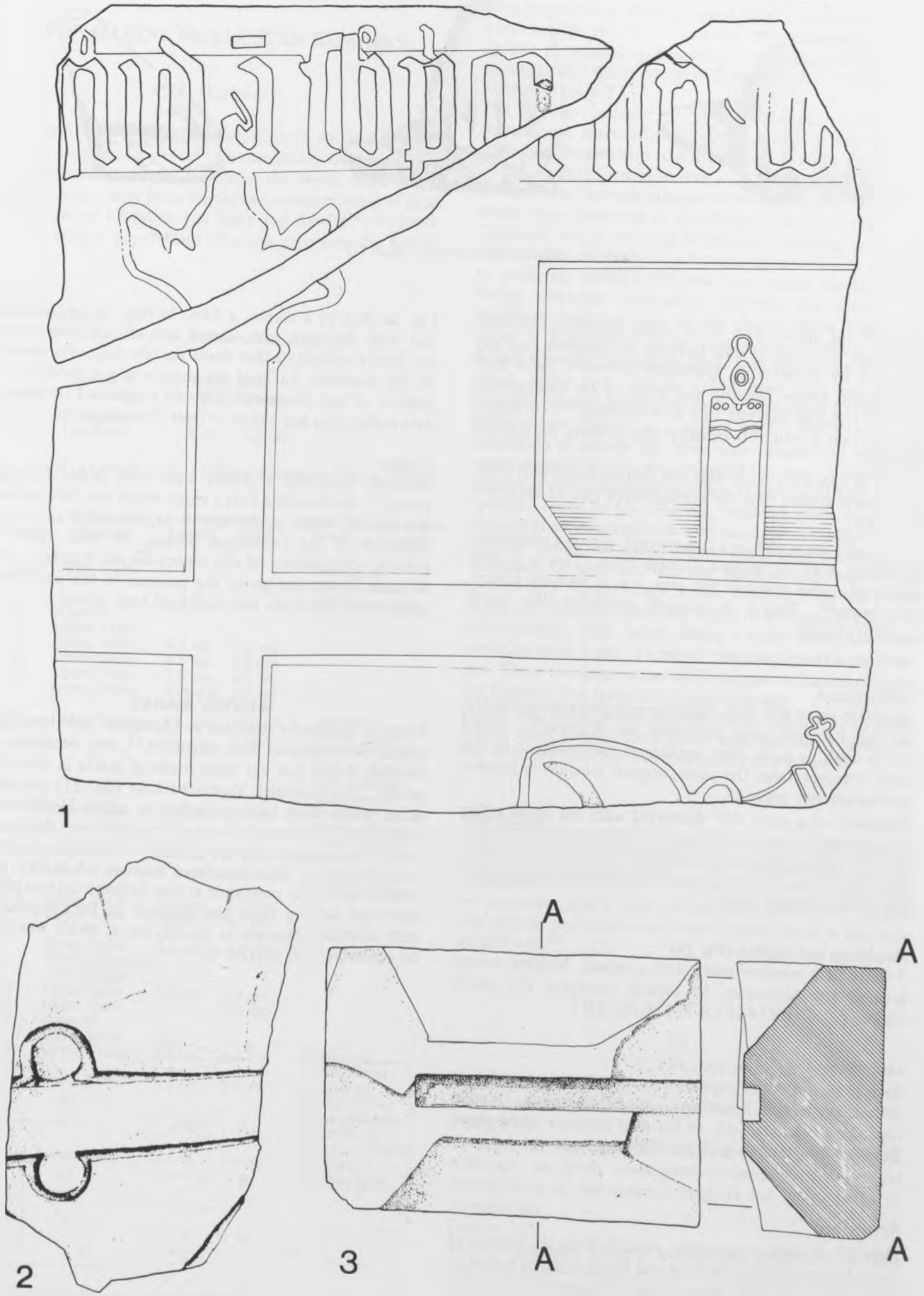


Fig. 29 Carved stone. Scale 1:5

Fig. 30 Carved stone. Scale 1:2

clasp on the other. Part of an inlaid inscription survives down one side; this is now difficult to decipher, but was rendered by Roberts as *'Quondum sub-prior hujus loci'* (This seems rather fanciful, and some of the contractions used on the slab suggests that it is unlikely)[68]. Dr Butler suggests that a mid 15th-century date is likely on stylistic grounds.
Found in clearance work near the chapter house in c.1840, and now mortared into the north-eastern pier of the crossing tower.

2. Part of a grave slab in a fine-grained, silty red sandstone, decorated with an incised floriate cross. This is a very commonly used motif in the area, *e.g.* at Ewenny Priory, Glamorgan[69]. Found in topsoil overlying the north transept chapels.

Unillustrated
Complete grave slab with highly ornate decoration, illustrated by Barnwell, and previously by Roberts[70]. Relaid in the 19th or early 20th century at the entrance to the north transept from the choir; original location unknown. Now relaid over grave 25.
Fragment of a grave slab decorated with the raised effigy of a knight's foot, with spur and floral sprays. Broken off just below the knee. Illustrated by Roberts[71] found with Fig 29, no. 1; now mortared into the north-eastern pier of the crossing tower.

Mouldings and capitals (Fig 29)
3. Part of a window splay with a rebate. Massive coarse-grained red sandstone. In topsoil overlying the north transept.

Unillustrated
Several fragments of capitals carved with elaborate foliate decoration; oolitic limestone – probably Jurassic. Similar capital on the north side of the west entrance to the slype. Found during clearance of the chapter house.

Sculpture

Plate 17. A piece of sculpture, possibly from the bottom of a reredos, portraying the foot and lower body of a saint or abbot with a staff or crozier. Some fragments of red and gold paint still adhering to the folds of the clothes. Dr Butler suggests that it probably dates from the late 15th century. Found in clearance of the south transept, lying close to the large altar base.

Fig. 30 Part of a statue; a foot, broken off at the ankle, and with damaged toes, carved out of oolitic limestone. Dr. Butler comments that there are few diagnostic features on the sculpture, but that the absence of any surviving toe-nails or of any clear veining would suggest a 13th century date rather than any earlier or later. From layer 4c.

Cresset
Barnwell illustrates a cresset with three bowls from the priory[72]; he describes it as a stone which was lying around, the use of which could not be explained by any of the members of the Cambrians present on their visit. The present whereabouts of this object are not known, so it is difficult to surmise about the purpose of the perforation underneath; the stone may well have been reused.

MASONS' MARKS

Some of the marks recorded at Llanthony have been compared with examples from Skenfrith[73], but, otherwise, no detailed record has yet been made of marks in use at the priory. The examples illustrated here (fig. 31) are solely those which have been recorded on ashlar blocks found during the clearance of the north transept, and the excavation of its chapels; they are all fairly common forms. Most were found on the chamfered corners of blocks from window jambs, or piers such as that between the two phase I doorways leading from the transept to the chapels. The only stratified example is fig. 31, no. 1, which was found on a pilaster shaft in layer 4c.

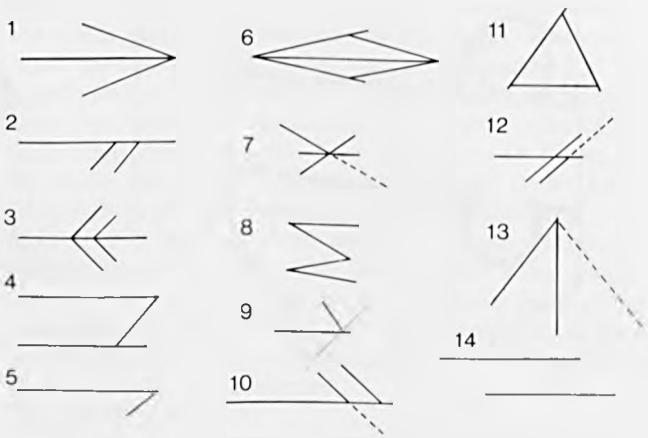


Fig. 31 Masons' marks. Scale 1:3

ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

THE MARINE MOLLUSCAN REMAINS

by

C. J. Hayton

Ostrea edulis, lives mainly offshore from about low water mark to between 15 and 45 fathoms, and in the present has been recorded alive onshore along the Welsh coast of the Severn Estuary only from Porthcawl, with a number of dead shells at other localities, *e.g.* Sully and Kenfig[74], evidence of now extinct populations. Further west into the Bristol Channel there have been offshore oyster beds at varying distances from the coast in moderately deep water, which once supported a thriving oyster fishery, until over-exploitation in the nineteenth century coincided with a severe decline in population numbers. The majority of the large, commercially viable oyster beds lay between Porthcawl and Stackpole Head[75].

Table 1

(List of Specimens)

Mytilus edulis, Linnaeus 1758, Common Mussel.

	Layer	Nature of Remains	Dimensions: Length	Width
1	1c	Fragments	–	–
2	8	Left Valve	5.3 cm	2.5 cm

Ostrea edulis, Linnaeus 1758, Common European, Flat or Native Oyster

	Layer	Nature of Remains	Dimensions: Length	Width	Other Faunal Remains found on the shell
3	1a	Upper Valve	–	–	Borings of *Cliona celata,* a boring sponge.
4	1b	Hinge of Upper Valve	–	–	–
5	1b	Upper Valve	4.3 cm	3.5 cm	–
6	1c	Upper Valve	8.5 cm	6.8 cm	–
7	4c	Upper Valve	7.3 cm	6.5 cm	–
8	5	Lower Valve	Approx. 4 cm	3.1 cm	
9	5	Lower Valve	4.1 cm	Approx 4 cm	Borings of *Cliona celata;* Tubes of *Sabellaria sp.* *, (a tube building polychaete).
10	5	Upper Valve	6.6 cm	5.7 cm	Borings of *Cliona celata;* Tubes of *Sabellaria sp.*
11	5	Upper Valve	6.8 cm	5.7 cm	Borings of *Cliona celata.*
12	5	Upper Valve	6.4 cm	5.3 cm	–
13	5	Upper Valve	Approx. 5 cm	4.7 cm	–
14	5	Upper Valve	5.4 cm	4.2 cm	–
15	5	Two Fragments, one of Hinge.	–	–	–
16	15	Upper Valve	5.9 cm	5.2 cm	–
17	15	Upper Valve	–	5.2 cm	–
18	26	Hinge of Upper Valve	–	–	–
19	26	Upper Valve	5.4 cm	4.3 cm	Borings of *Cliona celata*
20		Upper Valve	8.8 cm	8.6 cm	Borings of *Cliona celata;* Barnacle bases, probably of *Balanus crenatus.*
21		Lower Valve	6.2 cm	5.9 cm	Borings of *Cliona celata.*

*The tubes are composed of sand grains, Foraminiferan shells, Ostracod carapaces, and minute fragments of molluscan shell. Length is measured from the beak (mussel) or hinge (oyster) to the opposite margin, and the width taken as the widest point at ninety degrees to the length.

The Romans introduced oyster cultivation methods into Britain, and made artificially seeded beds at various localities along the southern coasts, particularly around the mouth of the Thames Estuary[76], but the South Wales beds appear to have been natural, self-perpetuating populations. Oyster shells were numerous at the Roman sites of Caerleon and Caerwent, but it can only be assumed that they came from South Wales. Similarly, it is beyond the techniques available to positively identify the area from which the Llanthony Priory specimens originated, although the presence of *Sabellaria* tubes on two of the oyster shells. *(Sabellaria* being a polychaete worm particularly common in the Bristol Channel) perhaps suggests that they came from the South Wales beds, which would have been the nearest available source. Among the earliest references to the South Wales oyster fishery is a record from 1580[77], but it is reasonable to assume that they were present and probably exploited prior to this date, especially in view of the oysters present in the mesolithic midden at Westward Ho! on the opposite shore of the Channel, although there have been changes in coastline and sea level since the mesolithic.

Oysters could be safely transported long distances, as witnessed by the fact that the Romans imported British oysters into Rome[78], and so the distance from the South Wales sea coast to Llanthony Priory is well within this kind of capability. The South Wales oysters were fished by dredging from boats, a method also employed by the Romans. There are large oyster shell dumps, at Stackpole Quay for instance, but these are of uncertain age.

Along the Welsh coast, *Mytilus edulis* occurs today westwards from around the Cardiff area, the rocky shores to the west of Porthcawl being dominated by mussels[79].

Conclusion

The most likely source of the oyster shells from Llanthony Priory is the South Wales coast, somewhere between Porthcawl and Stackpole Head such as Tenby, which was an important oyster port in the early days of the fishery; the mussels probably came from a rocky shore in the same general area[80].

THE HUMAN REMAINS

by

T. P. O'Connor

Two inhumations were submitted for examination.

Feature 10:

The remains were those of an infant of indeterminate sex. Although no tooth buds were recovered, the degree of development of the skeleton suggests the infant to be of perinatal age.

Feature 25:

The remains were those of a man aged about 45+. No estimate of stature was possible due to the state of preservation of the long-bones. Much of the skeleton, notably the femora and the bones of the vault, displayed symptoms characteristic of senile osteoporosis.. Arthropathic lesions were evident on the centra of the few vertebrae which were recovered intact, and around the sacro-iliac joint. Three

discontinuous genetic traits were noted: the mental foramen on the right corpus mandibularis was accompanied by two accessory foramena, a low torus palatinus was present, and numerous small Wormian ossicles were present in the coronal and lambdoidal sutures. Dental health was fair, apart from raging caries in the left palatal dentition. Substantial deposits of dental calculus were evident, particularly on the lower incisors.

Dental formula:

														E	E	E
X	X	6	5	X	3	2	1	1	2	3	c	5	c	c	c
8	7	X	5	4	3	2	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	X

THE ANIMAL BONES

by

T. P. O'Connor

A small quantity of animal bone from Medieval contexts was submitted for identification of the species present. The total number of identifiable fragments was 172. In addition to this were a considerable number of bones of small rodents, most if not all of which were of recent origin. The presence of these in excavated material indicates the high standard of recovery. The condition of preservation was remarkably variable, being excellent in some contexts and very poor in others.

Table 2 lists the species present in terms of the minimum numbers of each in the excavated remains. The relative proportions of the minimum numbers do not directly reflect the relative value of the species. One *Bos* will produce a considerable quantity of meat when dead, and milk and traction when alive, whereas a single *Gallus* yields only a little meat, and perhaps a daily egg.

Table 2

Species	Min. No.	Percentage
Bos (Ox)	2	10.5
Ovis (Sheep)	3	15.8
Sus (Pig)	1	5.3
Dama (Fallow Deer)	2	10.5
Cervus (Red Deer)	1	5.3
Homo (Man)	1	5.3
Gallus (Chicken)	7	36.8
Indet. *Aves*	1	5.3
Indet. *Pisces*	1	5.3

The results reflect a mixed pattern of husbandry, much as might be expected from a "self-sufficient" Priory. *Bos* would have been the major source of meat, with *Ovis* being kept mainly for wool and being eaten as an incidental commodity. The presence of *Dama and Cervus* reflect the utilisation of wild resources – nearly 28% of the animals represented would normally be regarded as wild, although herds of *Dama* and *Cervus* may have been maintained with a degree of human interference. The remains of *Bos*, *Ovis* and *Sus* were distinctly smaller than their modern descendants, and there was no evidence to suggest deliberate attempts at carcase improvement. An interesting feature of the recovered remains was the low frequency of teeth. Only 3.5% of the identified fragments were teeth. This may indicate that carcasses were being dressed away from the main Priory building: other waste components (*e.g.* metapodials and phalanges) were few. The general absence of teeth precluded any detailed examination of age-groupings within each species. Butchery marks took the form of knife-cuts on a fragment of rib of *Bos*, transverse knife cuts on a metatarsal of *Ovis*, and a metatarsal of *Dama* longitudinally cleaved.

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Footnotes

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7. Details in Roberts, **loc cit.**, and Freeman, **loc cit.**
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36. Gardner, 1915, **op. cit.**, 361; Lovegrove, 1946-7, **op. cit.**, 70.
37. Gardner, **ibid**, 362. This might refer to a parish church, presumably on the borders, and therefore familiar to his readers. It cannot be the almshouse at Hingham, Norfolk, as this was not founded until 1483. It might possibly be a misprint for Higham Priory, Kent.
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Plate 1 Phase I chapels viewed from the west.

Plate 2 Grave 25 before excavation.

Plate 3 Grave 25 during excavation.

Plate 4 Base of pilaster shaft in north-west corner of phase I southern chapel.

Plate 5 The phase I, II and III chapels during excavation; viewed from the west.

Plate 6 Section through layers 1c and 1d.

Plate 14 North wall of phase IV chapel; viewed from the south.

Plate 7 Threshold in room to the east of phase III chapel.

Plate 15 Final blocking of entrance to phase IV chapel; viewed from above.

Plate 8 Narrowing of phase III entrance from the transept; viewed from the west.

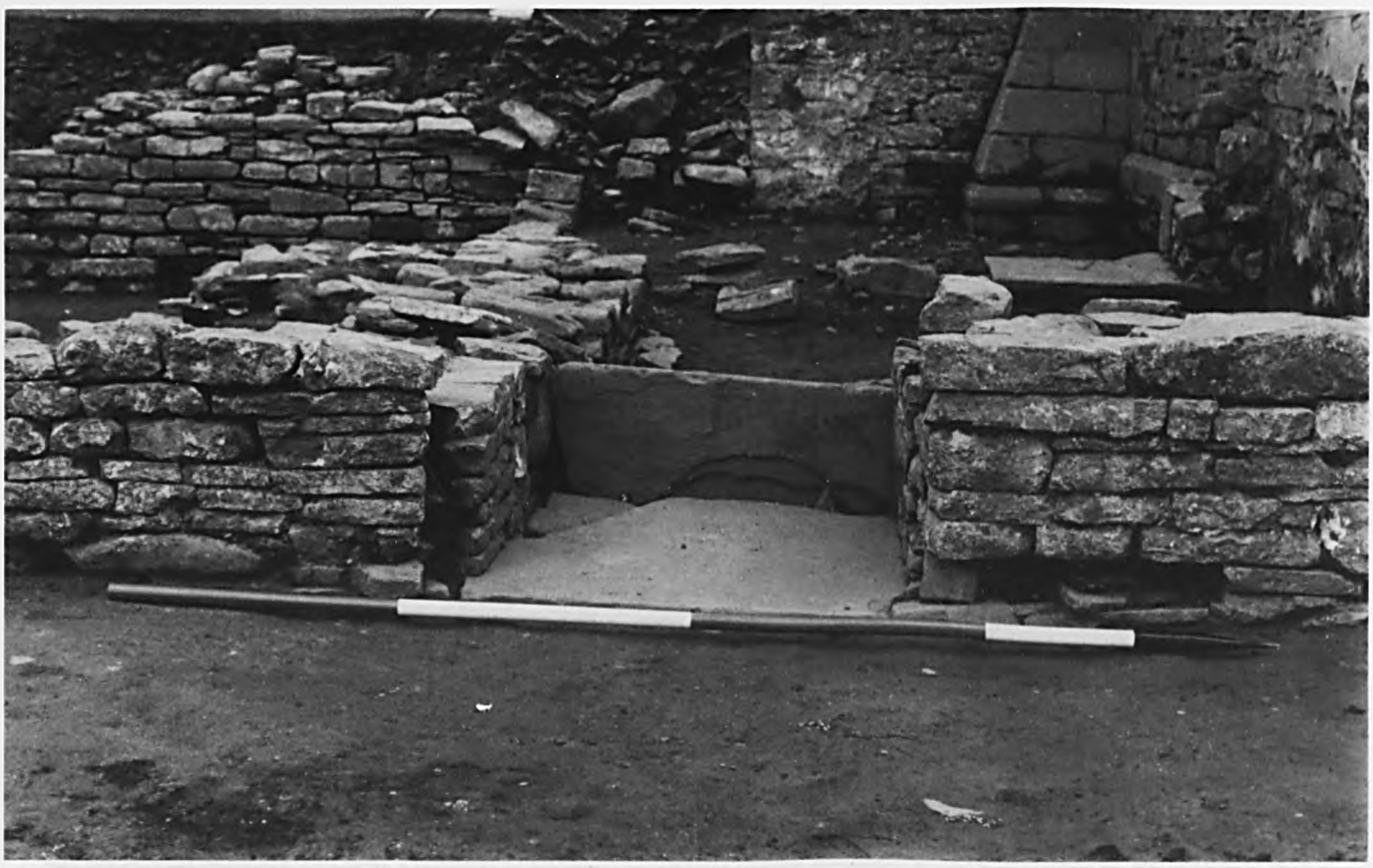

Plate 9 Threshold between phase III chapel and room to the east; viewed from the west, before total removal of blocking.

Plate 10 Phase III blocking wall between the transept and the phase III chapel, after removal of plaster; viewed from the east.

Plate 11 Phase III blocking wall between the transept and the phase III chapel, before removal of plaster; viewed from the east.

Plate 12 East wall of phase III and IV chapels after removal of plaster; viewed from the west.

Plate 13 Buttresses in the south-east corner of the phase II chapel. (viewed from left to right) Phase I external pilaster buttress: late medieval double offset buttress: 19th-century temporary buttress: phase II chapel wall.

Plate 16 Grave 10 at base of newel stair in north-west corner of north transept.

Plate 17 Sculpture found in clearance of the south transept chapels (the sculpture measures 295 mm. across the base). Photo copyright Newport Museum.

USK NUNNERY

by
David H. Williams

(Part 1)

Foundation

The church of St. Mary in Usk dates at least from the early part of the 12th Century[1]. It was here that (before his death in 1135) Richard de Clare, Earl of Hertford and Lord of Usk, settled Benedictine nuns; his son, Gilbert, continued the development of the establishment (he died 1152). Richard Strongbow, 2nd Earl of Pembroke (d. 1176) granted an importanat charter to the priory, and this was confirmed (in 1330) by Elizabeth de Burgh, 'Countess of the Marches'[2]. Other significant patrons and benefactors, in their capacity as Lord of Usk, included Edmund Mortimer (5th Earl of March, d. 1424) and his nephew, Richard Plantagenet (Duke of York, d. 1460). All five were prayed for as 'founders', and alms were given in their memory each 'Shreve Thursday'[3].

Nothing is known of the first century of the nunnery's history; it finds no mention in the usual records until 1246 when there was an inter-regnum and the community received licence to elect a new prioress. In the following year (1247) she obtained (perhaps because of the troubled times) letters of protection[4]. Close proximity to Usk Castle(Leland told how the nunnery stood ' a flight shot from the Castle' (1537)[5].) must generally have given the nuns a sense of security, though sometimes it may have been an hindrance.

Architecture

Three main elements constituted the priory: the church, the conventual buildings, and the gate-house. The early Norman church was cruciform, and to it in the 13th Century a broad north-aisle was added to serve parochial needs. The parish church and the nuns' choir were thus parallel and adjacent to each other, in an arrangement also known at the nunneries of Minster (Kent), Sheppey and St. Helen's, Bishopsgate[6]. After the suppression the transepts and presbytery fell into disuse and were eventually demolished; the present sanctuary (under the tower) was the medieval crossing. The 15th Century wooden screen now extending right across the nave and north aisle may not be in its original position[7]. It bears a commemorative brass lauding Adam of Usk with the words (in Welsh): 'A Solomon he was, of astounding wisdom; and under Usk is now his sleeping bed'[8]. Adam, Oxford educated and a prominent advocate, was born in Usk about 1360-5, numbered some of the nuns amongst his relations, and was a protector of the convent[9]. He was remembered both in the prayers of the community and in the annual 'ringing of his mind'[10].

The church, clearly larger in conventual days than now, was able to accommodate the chapel of St. Mary Magdalene, and three chantries – of the Holy Trinity, St. Nicholas, and "John Edward's chantry". The pilgrimage chapel of St. Radegund was probably not in the church, but it was certainly in the precincts, it was 'within the walls of the monastery'[11]. The church contained an image of 'Blessed Mary of the Priory' before which (in 1514) William Baker, Rector of Tredunnock, willed to be buried[12]. Sir Hugh David ap John gave rents to maintain the lamp burning day and night before the Blessed Sacrament, and Richard Plantagenet and Lady Elizabeth de Clare similarly provided for the wax and oil necessary for the church's illumination[13]. The present window east of the high altar incorporates an accurate representation of the common seal of the nunnery[14].

The conventual buildings have all but disappeared, but the present Priory House was probably formed out of the south range of the cloister. It contains a panelled room where remains part of a Tudor cornice worked in oak, and to be dated probably to about 1530 - 33; the remainder of the freize was removed to Cefn-tilla about 1860. It incorporated the initials, **I.H.S.** (for Christ) and the emblems of His Passion (nails, ladder and scourge). It bears the Royal Arms and supporters (dragon and greyhound) from the earlier part of the reign of Henry VIII (who bought portions of the Lordship of Usk in 1511), and it includes symbols used on his badges – the Union roses, the fleur-de-lys and the portcullis. The pomegranates depicted probably relate to his wife at the time, Catharine of Aragon, (d. 1533). Other arms illustrated include those of theDe Clares (three chevrons). The initial letters of *E.W.* also shown may well refer to the last Prioress, Ellen Williams[15]. The armorial bearings included in the cornice are also exhibited in the 19th Century west window over the porch of Usk Church. The priory gate-house, happily, survives, and incorporates the upper portion of a spiral staircase.

Conventual History

Two records alone remain to tell us much of the community and its approach to the religious life. The first comes in the Visitation record of Archbishop Peckham (1284)[16], and the second in the petition addressed to Rome on behalf of the nuns by Adam of Usk, in the time of the Glyn Dŵr Revolt (1404)[17]. Archbishop Peckam found the nunnery in a 'most desolate state', and the reasons appear to have be been primarily economic. He prescribed a two-fold remedy. First, he ordered that two 'provident and discreet' nuns be elected as Treasuresses; they were to receive all monies and make all disbursements, and thrice in the year – in Lent, at Whitsun and at Michaelmas, they were to render account of their stewardship to the Prioress and five or six of the senior nuns. (Their was nothing exceptional in this arrangement and stipulation, which came to be well before this time adopted in many religous houses). The Archbishop laid down in second place that the nuns were to have a 'senior priest, circumspect in temporal and spiritual affairs, to be master of all their goods'. Clearly, he felt that the nuns could not manage matters for themselves, and needed firm direction. It would appear, too, that some of the community sought solace and company outside the cloister. Peckham instructed the nuns that they should not go out of their precinct without suitable companions, nor were they to stay in the houses of layfolk for more than three or four days.

Adam of Usk's petition (1404) reveals the privations inflicted upon the convent by the Glyn Dŵr Revolt. It also drew attention to potential problems of stability similar to those alluded to by Peckham. Adam of Usk told the Pontiff how 'owing to the burnings, spoilings and other misfortunes caused by the wars raging in those parts, the monastery has come to such want that, unless some remedy be quickly provided, the nuns will be forced to beg for food and clothing by wandering about the country, or to stay in the private houses of their friends; whereby it is feared that scandals are likely to arise'. His petition shows a certain class distinction in the religious life: 'only virgins born of noble ancestry were and are wont to be received' in the nunnery of Usk; hardly Christian! As with several monastic petitions of this period (cf Basingwerk, Llantarnam and Tintern), the alleviation sought came in the granting of an Indulgence to attract pilgrims and other to visit St. Radegund's Chapel in the Priory Church at Easter and other feasts and to give the much needed alms. Such petitions tended to be embellished: Adam may have exaggerated when he said that 'men of that country paid great devotion' to St. Radegund, and were 'wont to visit her chapel'; it seems likely that more were required, in the words of the petition, 'to stretch forth helping hands' to the Priory.

Tudor Times

Nothing more of substance is then known of the nunnery until the admission as a full member of the community of Joan Haryman in 1496. She rose to hold the office of Prioress (1518) and when she retired from this position (by 1529) she was awarded an appropriate corrody (valued at £2-6-8d. p.a.) and annuity (£4-13-4)[18]. In her time as superior she granted the office of Steward to William Herbert of Troy (Jan. 12th, 1518)[19], who already held similar positions at Grace Dieu Abbey (1514) and at Tintern Abbey (1517). William died shortly afterwards, and the nuns gave his widow, Blanche, a sizeable annuity (£4-13-4)[20]; the stewardship remained in the Herbert family.

Prioress Ellen Williams appointed William ap John ab Ifor as 'Recorder or Scribe of the Rolls' of the nuns' manorial court in Usk (August 1st, 1529)[21], and a few months later awarded him a £5 annuity for his 'counsel' (Feb. 12th, 1530)[22]. Ellen was the last Prioress, and with some five other nuns, still inhabited the house at its dissolution; previously, they had appended their common seal to the instrument acknowledging the Royal Supremacy (Sept. 11th, 1534)[23]. The convent was 'surveyed' by the Commissioners for South Wales on June 8th, 1536, and it was suppressed thirteen weeks, three days later, on August 29th[24]. The expenses of the nuns in the interim period came to some £10, and included small 'wages' or 'pocket-money' to the nuns and their servants, the purchase of sheep, barley, wine and beer, and the smith's fee for the shoeing of horses. Other out-goings at this time (as recorded in 1535) included the fees of the now Steward (Charles Herbert, £2), the Auditor (George Taylor, £2), and the Bailiff (Phillip Llywelyn ap Morgan). The latter may have been resident; his entitlement of corrody was worth £3 'for his fee, meat and drink, and livery'[25]. A further £2 stipend was paid to the Chaplain. The nunnery dissolved, the lead on roofs was valued at 52/4d; a not very considerable sum[26]. Prioress Ellen Williams was awarded a pension of £9 p.a. The former Prioress, Joan Haryman, who was still enjoying her corrody in 1535, may have died before the suppression as there is no claim for the continuance of her annuity in the Decrees of the Court of Augmentations[27]. The site was eventually sold to a Llangibby man, Roger Williams; the Court's Auditor (Edward Gostwyke) had remarked (1544) that 'who would purchase the premises the Auditor knoweth not, but only this bringer' – Williams presumably.[28]

Prioresses of Usk

(The names of most are lost to us)

1491 – 7	Joan Lewis[29]
1500 – 1	Agnes[30]
1518 – ? 28	Joan Haryman[31]
1529 – 36	Ellen Williams[32]

The Common Seal of Usk Priory

The matrix is no longer extant. A fragment in a red wax occurs attached to PRO. *E* 326/B. 7987. The most perfect impression known is that attached to PRO. *E* 25/111, pt. 2[33]. It depicts the Blessed Virgin Mary enthroned, and holding the Infant Jesus on her left knee. The Lombardic Capital script employed in the legend shows the seal matrix to have been engraved prior to the mid-14th Century; as this impression was made from it in 1534, the matrix was thus in use for at least 200 years and, probably, for much longer. The pointed oval impression is in red wax, and measures 58 mm x 38 mm. The legend reads:

*S : SCE : MARIE : ET : CONVENTVS : DE : VSKA**
('The Seal of Saint Mary and the Convent of Usk')

(Part 2 to follow in Monmouthshire Antiquary, *1981).*

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4. Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1246/483,1247/511.
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7. F. H. Crossley and M. H. Ridgway, Screens, Lofts and Stalls in Monmouthshire in Arch. Camb. 1959/67-0.
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9. J. Bradney, History of Monmouthshire (III. 1.), 48-9.
10. Valor Eccl. IV, 366.
11. ibid. 365; Bradney, op. cit. 49; Robert Rickards, Church and Priory of St. Mary, Usk (1904), 15-16.
12. PRO. Prob. 11/17, f. 269.
13. Valor Eccl. IV, 366.
14. See the Note appended to this article.
15. Rickards, op. cit. gives a full description.
16. E. Power, Medieval English Nunneries (1922), 223-4; Reg. J. Peckham (Rolls Series), III. 805-6.
17. J. Bradney, op. cit. 48-9, cf. Valor Eccl. IV, 365.
18. PRO. E 326/B. 7987; Valor Eccl. IV, 366.
19. PRO. E 315/94, f. 210.
20. PRO. E 315/95, f. 212.
21. PRO. E 315/102 f 120.
22. PRO. E 315/103, f. 147d.
23. PRO. E 25/111, pt. 2.
24. PRO. LR 6/152/1.
25. PRO. LR 6/152/1; Valor Eccl. IV. 366, cf. PRO. E 215/91, f. 29.
26. PRO. LR 6/152/1.
27. Valor Eccl. IV, 366 (which, in fact, notes its cancellation).
28. R. Rickards, op. cit. 25.
29. PRO. E 315/95, f. 114 and E 326/B. 7987.
30. PRO. C 1/246/50.
31. PRO. E 315/94, f. 210, 95, f. 212.
32. PRO. E 315/102, f. 120; LR 6/152/1.

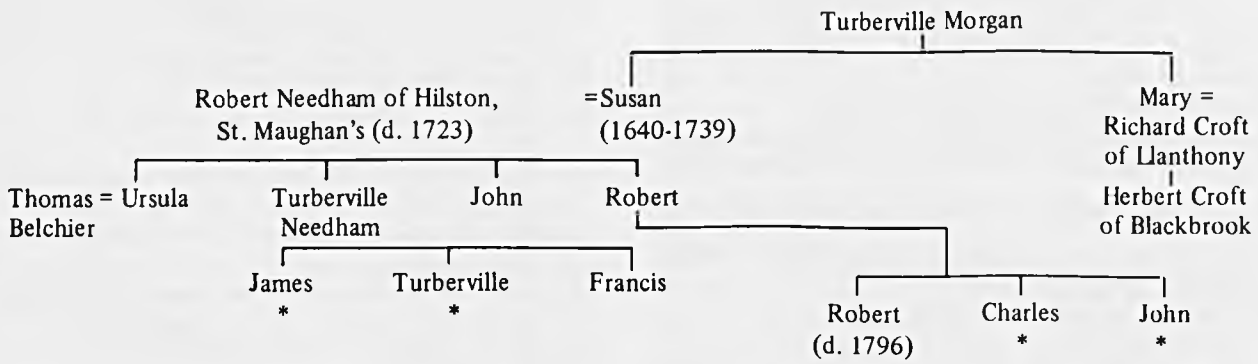
A NEW SOURCE FOR THE HISTORY OF MONMOUTHSHIRE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

by
Philip Jenkins

In the Cambridgeshire county record office, is a substantial collection of correspondence to and from Monmouthshire people, some 170 letters in total, together with several deeds and business papers. As a source, it gains value by giving information on those social classes far removed from magnates like the Morgans of Tredegar and the Dukes of Beaufort, whose papers are such an important source for the county's history before industrialisation. This collection concerns the lawyers and burgesses of Abergavenny and Monmouth, with their friends and kinsmen among the petty gentry, and their dependents, who were little more than peasant farmers. It is an unusual and little used source for pre-industrial Wales, but perhaps the strangest thing about it is its location: why should it be in Cambridge, an area with which South Wales had little connection. The answer is in the collection which preserved these papers, for they were long held at Sawston, the seat of the Catholic Huddlestons, and recusants tended to seek marriage partners from other of their own faith, even if this meant contact with families in very distant areas. In the early eighteenth century, for example, members of the family had married into gentry like the Gages of Sussex[1] and Bodenhams of Herefordshire; and in 1736, the head of the house, Richard Huddleston (1716-60) married Jane Belchier, daughter of the Monmouth lawyer, Thomas Belchier, and his wife, Ursula Needham. The connections established by this match held fast for over thirty years, and as a result, we have a large body of correspondence, mainly relating to Belchier (recipient of exactly 100 letters; c. 1695-1750) and another Monmouth lawyer, Charles Halfpenny (c. 1710-75).[2]

One of the great merits of the Huddleston papers is that they allow us to form a detailed picture of local dignitaries like these, who left little mark in the historical record. Belchier owned a house in Frogmore Street, Abergavenny, but his main property was in Monnow Street, Monmouth, and it was in the latter town that he became a powerful figure. He served as Mayor in 1718, 1728, 1737, and 1748; and was one of that clique of half a dozen local patricians who ruled the town in the first half of the century – men like the Bohuns, Bellamys. Pyes, Fortunes, Middletons and Morses. Indeed, it is remarkable that squire Huddleston felt that this mere lawyer was a suitable father-in-law, even though his choices of marriage partner were severely limited by his religion. On the other hand, Belchier was clearly rich: he lent Richard £100 in 1745, and held mortgages on several local landowners like the Crofts of Llanvair (£1200), Jones's of Llanarth (1735: £200) and Vaughans of Courtfield (1739: £100). Partly through such transactions, and partly through his wife's property, he became a landowner himself in the area of Clytha and Llanvair Cilgedin, and his traumatic attempts to collect rents and tithes during the depression of 1739-42 will be discussed below. However, it is less surprising that this distinctly middle-class man should be claiming the title of "esquire" by the 1740s. His impressive list of silver plate would equal that of many a petty squire at this time, and would exceed that of all but the very richest gentry in the improverished counties of north and west Wales.[3]

It is also remarkable that such a powerful local worthy should still at this date come from so firmly Catholic an environment – although Belchier himself may well have conformed to the Church of England. The Huddlestons were among the leading Catholic gentry of eastern England; two of Richard's sisters were nuns, and many of the letters in the collection came from the Jesuits he sheltered in his own household, John Champion and Edward Galloway. Belchier himself made loans to a largely Catholic circle of squires, including John Vaughan of Courtfield, two of whose brothers went into lifelong exile after participation in the Jacobite rising of 1745. Belchier's own relations were certainly Catholic:



Both the Crofts and the Needhams were strongly Catholic, and in this genealogy, asterisks denote priests. The very name "Turberville" reminds us of family connections with the great family of Glamorgan recusants; and another of Belchier's friends was "Turberville Croft" (endearingly abbreviated to "Tubby"). Monmouthshire and southern Herefordshire had been among the most Catholic parts of Britain in the seventeenth century, and this collection of papers shows how little had changed. We have for instance the (1730s) correspondence of Catherine Bodenham of Rotherwas with Lady Mary Fortescue in London, both ladies being Huddlestons by birth: they exchange gossip about Catholic magnates like the Duchess of Norfolk, but also list their friends among the border recusant gentry, like the Morningtons of Sarnesfield, Berkeleys, Plowdens and Cornewalls[4].

Moreover, it is clear that these Catholic squires still looked for leadership to the Dukes of Beaufort, although this house had been Protestant since 1667. Family loyalties evidently outlasted religious changes. About this time (the late 1720s) the main industrial entrepreneurs in Beaufort's town of Swansea were the Morris's and Morningtons, both client families of his from the Herefordshire borderland; while two decades later, a leading ironmaster of west Glamorgan was Rowland Pytt of Newland and Raglan (died 1761), again a man of the border. He married the daughter of the Catholic William Williams of the Artha (Tregaer) and became sheriff of Monmouthshire in 1758; and he too is mentioned in the papers[5]. The Duke's immense influence also becomes apparent from the other main correspondent in the collection, Charles Halfpenny of Monmouth, writer of 36 letters. He often visited Badminton, was close to the Duke's leading political allies, Sir Charles Kemys Tynte and the Prices of Foxley, and he had business interests in the Duke's town of Swansea. On the death of the "good Duke" in 1756, he wrote that he had lost his "best friend"[6] Halfpenny also came from a Catholic background, which made him the subject of a major controversy in 1730, when he was elected town clerk in succession to Robert Adams. The Whig William Morgan of Tredegar protested that this would give the Catholics too much sway in Monmouth, where already the mass-house was "as publicly resorted to as the established church" and where one might often see strange Papists. Halfpenny was implausibly suspected of being a Catholic convert, but at least his wife and mother were definitely Catholics, and his five-year old son was being brought up in that faith. Morgan proposed the Whig Edward Catchmayd for the disputed office, but Halfpenny's candidature was supported by a petition of about thirty burgesses, and he had clearly been elected according to the charter. So, in this instance, the Beaufort interest prevailed, and Halfpenny served as town clerk from about 1732 until 1775[7]. Like Belchier, he was a man of great local influence, closely linked to other leading men like the attorney Kingsmill Evans of Lydart, whose widow (Catherine Blewitt) he later married. Apart from his own strength, he was powerful as a servant of Beaufort, in which capacity he was largely responsible for securing the county's Turnpike Act in 1755. The great lesson of the Huddleson correspondence is the overwhelming local power of the Dukes, despite the apparent strength of the Monmouth middle-class. This was also shown by the Belchiers, who had been tenants of the Somersets since at least 1669, and who supported the then Marquess of of Worcester so firmly during the Exclusion Crisis as to lead them into considerable danger. About 1681, a Parliamentary committee ordered the attendance of "Thomas Belchier", late Mayor of Monmouth to answer charges that he "did illegally examin several persons upon oath to prove that Henry Probart esq. (of Penalt Argoed, the leading Whig) did sign a petition to his Majesty for the sitting of this present Parliament, and threatened that he would send such as would promote such petitions to gaol, especially Mr. Michael Bohune, for signing and promoting the said petition, saying it was a most seditious, factious and rebellious petition." This Thomas was almost certainly the father of our correspondent, who was in turn "very intimate" with Beaufort's steward in 1741[8].

The news contained in the Huddleston correspondence is of some political interest. In August 1754, Halfpenny wrote to Jane Huddleston from Monmouth, after he had returned from seeing her son Ferdinand at Rotherwas. The young man had apparently been indiscreet in his Catholic worship, and the letter throws light on the ambiguous position of the old religion, even in a stronghold like Monmouth: " . . . . indeed I never restrain him from going to prayers anywhere. I own I once *advised* him not to go to those in town as I had been informed it had been complained of to Mr. Bullock by some ill-disposed people here, and might draw on a prosecution, as had been once attempted upon David Anthony for teaching a little school here, and the then Mayor and I were summoned before the Judges upon it, and Sergeant Skinner also sent for me and assured me he had Lord Chancellor's orders to examine and report the affair to him. The poor man was therefore obliged to desist and go to London to avoid trouble, such was the virulence of those times, and I don't think them a bit (. . . .?) here, but I solemnly protest I only advised without insisting on his not going even there, and as to my refusing his going elsewhere, he declares he never intended to say it, and thinks you have mistook him". (Possibly the "virulent" period here referred to was about 1745, during the threat of Jacobite invasion)[9]. In 1756, another of Halfpenny's letters shows the fragility of Georgian tranquillity: "I am sorry for your scarcity, but the complaint is almost general, we have indeed no dearth (?) but an artificial scarcity of grain which bears a prodigious price from the collusion of the farmers and badgers (corn-speculators). The colliers have rose in great numbers and plundered some barges, and the river not quite open yet, but we have a company of soldiers, and I hope the Parliament will soon redress this grievance".[10] Also in these papers, two short letters provide valuable evidence for these social and political tensions, grievances which were often directed against lawyers and stewards like Belchier and Halfpenny. About 1730, Belchier received an anonymous demand for £19, lest his house should be burned "as Packer's was" by the "Incendiary". Such attempts at blackmail would become very common during the next decades, and are taken as representing a form of social protest as well as simple crime: but the very early date of this incident is striking. Professor E. P. Thompson has studied the "crime of anonymity", and traced the fashion for such letters to Bristol in 1730, when the house of a Mr. George Packer was destroyed; so rural Monmouthshire was following very closely on the heels of its "metropolis" for this new fashion, a demonstration of the dependence of nearby towns on the great port.[11].

Less dramatically, the correspondence permits us to form a fairly detailed picture of middle-class and petty gentry life in a provincial town during the mid-eighteenth century. The leading figures in the local elite included some lawyers like Belchier himself, but like him, they were usually too close to the surrounding gentry for Britain to evolve anything like the French "Third Estate" at this time. For example, there was Kingsmill Evans (1704-62), from a Lydart family, the descendant of a gentleman who had served as county sheriff in 1684; or Charles Floyer, from an old Llantilio Pertholey line with stong west country connections. The Catchmayds were a widespread clan of petty gentry,

notably around Trelleck, and both Edward and George of this line were powerful in Monmouth society. Indeed, the latter purchased the Dingestow estate from the Catholic squire, Richard Jones (died 1769), although this was apparently a speculation rather than an attempt to establish a new gentry dynasty. We can see how complex were the lives of such attornies, who acted at different times as stewards, political agents and money-lenders, while the assizes were naturally the pivotal events of their year[12]. Apart from the lawyers, there were well-off tradesmen like the Reas and Davills, and Dr. Parry; and Monmouthshire clearly differed from the rest of Wales in the strength of its middle-class society. Even so, it is curious to find that one of its richer members – Jonathon Barrow, proprietor of two inns, the "Angel" and the "Royal Oak" – was sufficiently ill-educated as to have to sign his will with a mark (1737). The town also contained old gentry families, permanent residents or frequent visitors, like the Morgans of Bryngwyn, Lorymers of Perthir, and (Catholic) Needhams and Berkeleys of Clytha. Some, like Major Price, were clearly in seriously reduced circumstances, for in 1756 he was unable to pay his rent until he received his remittance from his sons in the East Indies.[13]

Monmouth was clearly a centre of some wealth and sophistication, and this is reflected in the polite gossip which makes up so much of Halfpenny's letters. In 1751, he apologised for only being able to report that "Molly Hughes has played sad pranks. She went off with Tom Clifford to London in February, got down to the Town, about a month ago, where they say she was caught with another young fellow with whom her brother Sam had a battle last Monday, and the gallant went off yesterday morning, it's like to break her mother's heart, and the sooner as the rest are likely to turn out very undutiful".[14] Later that year, he wrote that Miss Berkeley of Clytha had been cured of the disease she had caught by sitting up with Dr. T-ngue, a gouty physician of near fifty years of age, of Bergavenny."[15] In December 1752, "Jack Franks has had, it's said, a by-blow by his maid, which makes that good-natured woman very uneasy, but as it is tacked out at St. Briavel's, I hope it will blow over soon. Our assembly seems on the decline, the two reigning beauties Miss Do. Fortune and Lady Ann had high words last Thursday night, and the latter fainted at some coarse expressions. They say too Miss Tregrose struck Master Rook for laughing at her in the dance, in short there are but school boys and girls go there. In other respects, the town begins to flourish. Admiral Griffin has taken Mr. Burgh's house, who has bought Mr. Vaughan's in Monnow Street, to which he has added a new appartment in taste, with a grand front 56 feet long next to Chippenham. He is in the news or tattle here which you please, and I give it to you for your diversion, if you can have patience to read it . . . . I don't know whether you have heard of our new boarding school, it is set up at the Castle House fitted up on purpose and kept by Mr. Tudor Morgan and his wife, a teacher from London, and Mr. Carty the dancing master. They have already twelve boarders and three half ones, and I hope will have success as they are a good sort of people with a large family."[16]

We can also examine the practical problems of daily life, Mrs. Bodenham at Rotherwas depended on her London relations for necessary items like tea, coffee and sugar, while residents of great country houses exchanged gifts like ducks, pigeons and partridges. These would be conveyed by professional carriers, like Mr. Mountain of Monmouth, a central figure in town life for many years; while Sartain the Bristol carrier had specially printed slips to advertise his services. Another problem was how one could trust a postmaster to convey mail or valuable packages, when the mechanism for tracing and arresting criminals was very rudimentary: why should he not simply default? The solution was found in obtaining bonds, to compensate those who might suffer from his disappearance; in 1727, such a bond (for £400) was made for the Monmouth innkeeper Thomas Pye, who would take up the office of postmaster, with the promised securities of Belchier, Thomas Evans of Llangattock, James Prichard of Monmouth, and William Dunn of Pengethley. On a more trivial point, it was about 1755 that correspondents stopped folding their letters and sealing them for the post, and began using simple envelopes. It is on such everyday questions that the Huddleston papers are valuable. We see how greater and more affectionate interest was being taken in the personalities of small children, a novel theme of the eighteenth century; and in 1739, Jane Huddleston wrote to her father Belchier about two-year old Ferdinand, "my son desires his duty to his grandpapa and grandmamma, and rides a stick every day to see his friends at Monmouth, as he tells us." Again, it is well known that the Georgian period was the great age of the Grand Tour, but less attention has been paid to the practical organisation of such trips, through professional guides or tutors, jokingly known as "bear-leaders". One such was a member of the Needham family of Hilston, for in 1759, Jane Huddleston received a letter signed "W. Needham": "My brother Needham after being out of employ ever since he went abroad has at last (I hope) got a young gentleman under his care. In this last letter but one, he tells me he was waiting orders to set off for France with young Mr. Witham." Apart from foreign travel, visits to resorts and the houses of friends were popular forms of amusement, and members of the Huddleston family regarded trips to Monmouth, Rotherwas or Bath without great concern.[19]

This collection therefore provides information on a wide range of subjects, but it is on agricultural life that it is perhaps most useful. About half the letters (BL 18-100) were written to Belchier between 1736 and 1747, by his bailiff, Thomas Jenkins of Glascoed. He was chiefly concerned with collecting rents and tithes at Llanvair Cilgedin and Glascoed itself, but also ventured to Usk, Pontywain, and across the Herefordshire border to Ledbury, all in his master's interests. The correspondence is of peculiar interests because it coincides with the worst years of an agricultural depression, at its nadir between 1739 and 1742. Jenkins frequently apologised for not sending money by referring to the "badness of the time", which was aggravated by the appalling winter of 1739-40, and the rain and floods of 1743[18]. The tenants repeatedly refused to pay – no dount through sheer inability – and so Jenkins grew increasingly cynical about the value of their promises to pay at some point after the harvest. In 1743, for example, "honest Mrs. Philips" of Llantilio Crossenny has become "that vile bitch of a tenant", one of the "pack of perjured villains"[19]. Distraint of goods was a special problem, and the bailiff hoped that a recent Act of Parliament would prevent the widespread habit of tenants removing all the valuable goods shortly before his descent to seize property. In March 1741, the attorney Charles Floyer pleaded with Belchier to intercede for seventeen tenants Jenkins was prosecuting under this Act, and the Justices Springett and Jones had been asked to arbitrate. However, even where distraint was successfully carried out, this often left the bailiff with large quantities of almost unsaleable oats or cider[20]. Like all stewards, Jenkins was constantly searching for an "honest substantial tenant", but the depression ensured that it was a "seller's market", and even the worst farmer could rarely be evicted for fear that no replacement could be obtained. When a good tenant appeared, Jenkins was delighted: "I am sure to let out the

meadow and pasture which will amount a great way towards the rent of the farm, I have one that will take the Green from where David Morgan lived. He must be obliged to sow (late?) grain and upon the wheat stubble. The farm is left in a desperate condition. There is upwards of 70 acres of oat stubbles and not one sort of grass seed sowed upon any part of it."[21]

Jenkins' letters of this time normally approach despair. For instance, in January 1741, "honest John Floyd did not only defraud me of the tithe but likewise made me spend a great many days waste waiting of him. I sold in Bergavenny some parts of Mrs. Philips' stock. I have sent you by the bearer £10 which be pleased to give a receipt for, as soon as I make more moneys I will send them."[22] In December that year, he found two good tenants for a farm: "I am sure that I have reason sufficient to be fond of letting it out, for I am certain there is no man in England has undergone the slavery I have for this twelve months past riding night and day and losing my business at home, if you'd please to consider there is still a great sum of money in that cheating widow's hands . . . .If you were to know the tenth part of the hardships I undergo I am certain you would pity me, I can't say I have had a day to myself almost now a twelvemonth, but a-horseback every day and to lie alone in that great house, that even a man in gaol lives a happier life than me".[23] If tenants did not pay, then Jenkins could not pay his debts, and this led him into legal troubles because of his mounting debts with the attorney George Catchmayd. He lived in fear of arrest: "it's very hard that I can't go abroad upon any business without any apprehension of trouble which is a great detriment to me, and especially as I never had any profit from the estate in my life."[24]

The work of a steward or bailiff entailed not only the exasperating task of rent collection, but also everyday agricultural problems, and here the correspondence shows that Monmouthshire was ahead of the rest of Wales in many matters, even at the worst of the depression. Leases for periods of years (normally 21) were usual, unlike the terms of lives common elsewhere. Lime fertiliser was much used, and clover was frequently mentioned, often in large quantities. For instance, In April 1742: "I am at a vast expense in putting husbandry upon this farm thinking to make it agreeable to a good tenant. I have sowed here about 40 acres of clover, I have cleared about five acreas of land that was all briars and fern, and sowed oats and barley opon it, I have been at the expense of grafting a vast many crabstocks in the orchards and about the ground, and laid some hundred perches of (. . dy?) so that I hope my endeavours will not only be agreeable but will turn out to an advantage."[25]

There are several references to carrying clover seed to Bristol – once, in a consignment of 200 pounds – and it is clear that this city was a great centre for the marketing of produce. Elsewhere, Brecon fair was clearly important, particularly for buying the ponies for which rural Wales was already famous; and the other places around which country life revolved were the manorial courts, like the Raglan Leet[26]. Below the level of the gentry, life moved in a compass that was small, but not absurdly so, as the normal frontiers of life were the lines joining Bristol, Brecon, and Hereford. We are rarely able to form so clear a picture of the everyday pursuits of Welsh country people at this period, and so the Huddleston papers deserve further study; while the lists of tenants and burgesses they supply will no doubt be of use to local historians and genealogists.

Notes

1. Cambridgeshire record office, Canbridge, Huddleston of Sawston MSS, 488.C1.BL. 1-103; HD 30-6; JH 1-97; MF 15-19: and 488.C2.B28. Henceforward, Huddleston MSS will simply be referred to by series and number, e.g. BL 61. There are also several important uncatalogued papers. For the Catholic Gages, see E. E. Reynolds, **Richard Challoner**, (Catholic Truth Society, 1974), p. 3.
2. T. F. Teversham, **History of Sawston** (Sawston 1947), Part II.
3. K. Kissack, **Monmouth** (London 1975); J. A. Bradney, **History of Monmouthshire** (London 1904-32), I,i,pp. 1-14; BL 5, 13; HD 30, 34, JH 3.
4. Bradney I,i,58; BL 1-6; JH 1; HD 34; MF 15-19; O.G.S. Croft, **House of Croft of Croft Castle** (Hereford 1949).
5. Bradney, II,i, 72-3; JH 77; University library, Swansea, "History of the copper concern" (Morris MSS).
6. HD 42; JH 64-70, 96 etc.
7. Bradney, I,i, 1-7; Public record office, State papers, 36/21/22-5.
8. JH 85-8; BL 23, 103.
9. JH 84.
10. JH 96; presumably the miners were those of the Forest of Dean.
11. D. Hay **et al.**, **Albions Fatal Tree** (London 1977, paperback ed.) pp 263-5.
12. BL 7, 27-8; JH 74; Bradney, I,i,47, and I,ii,205, II,i,56. Uncatalogued papers.
13. Uncatalogued papers; JH 21, 96; HD 49; Bradney, II,i,114-121.
14. JH 61.
15. JH 66.
16. JH 74, 95. For Thomas Griffin, see **Dictionary of National Biography**.
17. Uncatalogued papers; JH 1-3, 36, 44; MF 15-17; BL 2.
18. Bradney, III,ii,69; JH 70, 73. G. E. Mingay, "The agricultural depression", **Economic History Review**, 1955-6, 2nd series, VIII.
19. BL 6, 22, 30, 52, 65-6.
20. BL 7, 9, 34.
21. BL 22, 67.
22. BL 21.
23. BL 41.
24. BL 28; also 27, 33, 42-4.
25. BL 52; 23, 44, 57-9, 67.
26. BL 57; JH 74, 79, 95.

ODD FELLOWS AND AMICABLE WOMEN: FRIENDLY SOCIETIES IN 19th CENTURY INDUSTRIAL MONMOUTHSHIRE

by
Jeremy K. Knight

On the first page of their printed rules, the "Improved Order of United Friends" of Blaenavon explained the purposes of the society:-

"Our society was founded for the purpose of assisting each other at times when, but for the helping hands of our brethren, we might sojourn for a much longer period in out dwellings. For this and other ends we associate together and are bound by a solemn tie, to act towards each other as bretheren and alleviate each other's sufferings. Happily .... we have the power of proving that the pangs of extreme poverty may be relieved, the despondancy of the sick chamber alleviated and the hours of mortal dissolution rendered less awful by the voluntary association of bretheren, united for common support and mutual guard .... against those unfortunate casualties to which all men are more or less liable"[1].

Town or village benefit societies had developed in the course of the 18th century. Independent of each other, and with no central organisation, their mechanism was simple. Members met one evening a month, usually in a public house, to collect what amounted to an insurance premium for the costs of sickness and burial. Some conviviality naturally accompanied such meetings, and some early societies put aside a small sum from the subscriptions for beer – a practice later declared irregular by the authorities. The society also met for an annual feast, often accompanied by a church parade, and to attend the funerals of members. There were normally a pair of stewards, whose duty was to visit the sick and to ensure that only those genuinely ill – and whose illness was not a result of their own dissipation – received benefit. In Caerleon, some eight friendly societies existed by 1825, meeting in the public houses from which they took their names[2]. The Angel Club and the George Club were founded in 1759, the Bull Inn Club and the White Hart Club in 1791 and the Mason's Arms Club in 1795. The Society of Women, founded in 1806, met at the Charity School – the only society that did not meet in a public house. The members of such local societies were artisans and small tradespeople and similar societies existed in villages, like the Helpful Club of Penperllini (1780) or the Mamhilad Club of 1796[3]. By the end of the 18th century it was estimated that almost a million people, nationally, belonged to such societies, whilst in 1814 some 8,400 Monmouthshire people were members – not a particularly large number compared with 147,000 in Lancashire, or 80,600 in the West Riding of Yorkshire[4].

The attitudes of the authorities to such societies varied. Any organisation which brought large numbers of the lower orders together, particularly in public houses, was regarded with suspicion in the age of the French Revolution and the Combination Acts. Many early Trade Unions disguised themselves as Friendly Societies, with such titles as The Friendly Society of Iron Founders or the Friendly Associated Coal Miners Union. In 1825, a government committee reported that "most alliances to raise wages cloaked themselves under the rules of Friendly Societies" and organisations such as the Ebbw Vale Fireman's (i.e. colliery overseers) Friendly Society therefore required careful scrutiny[5]. The paternalistic social philosphy of the age demanded that such societies should be under the control of magistrates and gentry, both for their own benefit and that of society, and in an age when actuarial science did not exist, the collapse of benefit societies through rashness, fraud, overgenerosity or sheer bad luck was by no means unknown. On the other hand self-help and thirft among the working people helped to reduce misery and social tension and (a frequently repeated theme), to keep down the poor rate. These lines of thought can be seen in the *Act for the Encouragement and Relief of Friendly Societies* of 1793 (33 Geo. III, cap. 54) which gave official recognition to those societies which registered their rules with local justices at Quarter Sessions. In view of this legislation, Friendly Societies were specifically except from the Combination Acts of 1799.

The Blaenavon Benefit Society existed by 1813, when the ironmaster Samuel Hopkins left £100 "to the treasurer for the time being of the Sick Club at Blaenavon . . . to be applied for the purposes of that society"[6]. Like most such societies, it possessed a treasurer and a pair of stewards, normally appointed in rotation from among the members to visit the sick and decide on their eligibility for benefit. Their decisions could be, and were, contested in the courts. In June 1838, the stewards of the Blaenavon Friendly Society, William Lloyd and William Williams, lost their case when they were charged by a member with excluding him from benefit on the grounds that his illness was the result of drunkenness and in October 1840, the stewards were ordered at Pontpool Police Court to reinstate Philip Price, whom they had excluded from benefit[7].

During the 19th century, the number of Friendly Societies and Benefit Clubs proliferated. There were various reasons for this. The clubs were centres of much of the social life and ceremonial of working people. They removed the ever present fear of destitution through sickness and of a pauper's grave; with their feasts, outings and ceremonial church parades they fulfilled the functions of such diverse later occasions as the Sunday School treat, the Rotarian dinner and the Trade Union "Gala". It was obviously in the interests of any enterprising publican to encourage such an organisation on his premises. At another level, the clubs were insurance societies, and the insurance needs of individuals varied then as now. Dangerous trades such as coal mining were at times specifically excluded; the insurance of women presented special difficulties (among other things, the mother's club benefits were often among the first family assets to be sacrificed in times of hardship); there was a natural tendency for people following particular trades, or with other affinities to band together, and it was by no means unknown for the more prudent, or the better off, to belong to more than one society, just as today one might have several separate insurance policies. A list of the Friendly Societies registered with Monmouthshire Quarter Sessions between October 1836 and January 1841 has survived[8]. There are 124 entries in all. Not all represent

new societies. Some occur more than once and others were merely registering changed rules, but they give a useful view of a form of social organisation which probably reached and influenced at least as many of the population as other organisations, political and religious, which have attracted far more attention from historians. The list illustrates a number of the themes already mentioned, particularly in the case of 'specialist' societies. Varteg, under the influence of its militantly teetotal ironmaster, G. S. Kenrick, acquired a Teetotal Friendly Society in June 1838, but there is no evidence that the Hibernian Societies founded by Irish immigrants at Newport and Abergavenny in the following year followed this example. The political turmoil of 1838-9 produced a Reform Society at Pontypool in December 1838 and a Conservative Society at the Parrott Inn, Newport in the following April. Later in the same year, the landlord of the Parrott was actively involved as a special constable against the Chartists. The Snatchwood Building Society, founded in the same month as the Newport Society, represents a movement for working class self-help deserving fuller study. Women's societies were also well represented. The Friendly Female Society, meeting at the Full Moon, of Penhow, was a typical village society, named from the inn where it met. Their husbands met under the name of the Friendly Society of Tradesmen, also at the Full Moon. Most of the ironworks towns had their own female societies, like the Friendship and Unity Female Society of Abersychan or the Amicable Women's Friendly Society, founded in June 1837, which met at the Crown Inn, Varteg.

In 1826, the Monmouthshire magistrates, meeting in Quarter Session, were presented with a memorial signed by three of the most substantial and respectable inhabitants of Blaenavon – James Jenkins, the Anglican incumbent; John Griffiths, innkeeper and business man and Frances James, a substantial farmer whose family had owned land at Blaenavon long before the advent of industry there[9]. They informed the magistrates that a group of "Tradesmen and Others" desired to form a society or club called the Blaenavon Second Society and that they were willing to serve as trustees. The society was to meet at the Crown Inn, of which Griffiths was landlord. The rules of the society followed in due course[10]. The subscription was to be 1/6d a month (1/4d for the "box" or fund and 2d for beer), plus a fairly heavy entrance fee, graduating according to the amount of cash in the box. The society was intended for the tradespeople, small contractors and foremen rather than for the labourers and colliers and the title of the society suggest that most members would already belong to the existing sick club. Most of the rules are concerned with entitlement to the 3/- a week sick pay or the £3 plus 1/- per member death benefit (£2 and 6d a head for a wife). No benefit was payable for the results of vice or for injuries sustained in fighting and no death benefit was payable if the member was drowned and his body not recovered, or if he were "disabled by gambling", but under normal circumstances, the social side of life predominated. The members and officers (chairman, stewards and pitchermen) met for the monthly club night, for funerals, and for the annual feast, when a church service was followed by dinner at the Crown Inn. The three sponsors were fairly substantial people. John Griffiths, the son of a blacksmith, was involved in various business and financial transactions and in 1802 was a partner with Thomas Hill, the Blaenavon ironmaster, in an attempt to re-open Nantyglo ironworks. In his later years, he was habitually styled "Gentleman" on legal documents. His son-in-law, the Anglican vicar James Jenkins, was in turn father-in-law of Robert Wheeley, a Blaenavon partner and member of a family who had long been friends and business associates of the Hills. There is nothing in the document to indicate that the sponsors saw their participation in the society as an act of patronage to their social inferiors and for the innkeeper, John Griffiths, the society was a source of profit. The Blaenavon Second Society gives us a glimpse of the middle classes of the ironworks towns – a class often overlooked in what is sometimes seen as a black and white world of ironmasters and their men.

Lower down the social scale, the proliferation of benefit societies was due in part to the large numbers of migrant workers in the new towns who were unable to rely upon the traditional aid of their family or community in time of trouble. Their growth was however halted from about 1830 onwards by the new "affiliated orders" – centrally organised benefit societies like the Oddfellows, who could offer (among other things) help not only within the community, but outside it. An accredited Oddfellow or Forester travelling in search of work could be assured of friendship, help, and in the last resort a decent funeral from his bretheren in those parts.

A number of 18th century local societies called themselves "Oddfellows". References to "Good Fellows" and to "Good Fellowship" (the latter phrase even occuring in the Act of 1793) give a clue to the origin of the name, but early Oddfellows Clubs were normal autonomous "Local" benefit societies. In about 1814, various Oddfellows Clubs in the Manchester area formed a general committee. From this grew the first "Affliated Order" – the Independent Order of Oddfellows, Manchester Unity, to be followed in course of time by Foresters, Druids, Ancient Romans (founded by a schoolmaster with classical tastes), Ivorites, Free Gardeners, Shepherds, Rechabites and Comical Fellows. The Oddfellows, with their Lodges, Grand Masters, Regalia and claims of ancient origin (Adam was the first Oddfellow, just as Noah was the first Druid) owed much to Freemasonry, and subsequent orders owed much to the Oddfellows. The Independant Order of Oddfellows reached Monmouthshire in the late 1820s. Its appeal was to the better paid workers, artisans, craftsmen and small traders and the earliest lodges established themselves in the older towns such as Monmouth, Abergavenny and Grosmont at least as strongly as in the industrial centres such as Tredegar and Blaenavon. By August 1828, the Waterloo lodge of Monmouth was able to organise an impressive summer excursion to Raglan castle, with an array of 25 vehicles, a band and "numerous horsemen, pedestrians etc." By the following year the "Silurian" lodge of Abergavenny and the "Social Britons" of Tredegar were in being and by 1835 there were 9 Lodges in the county[11].

In 1831, the Prince Howel the Good (or Hywel Dda) lodge, No. 541, was established at Blaenavon, the *Monmouthshire Merlin* being careful to point out to its readers that this was a very different thing to a Union Club. The Lodge met at the Ivor's Arms in Ivor Street and were quick to make their mark in the town. In March 1832 they gave an impressive funeral at Blaenavon church to a brother Oddfellow, a stranger to the town, the grandest funeral seen there since that of the ironmaster Samuel Hopkins eighteen years earlier. The celebrations, processions and "feasts" soon established the Oddfellows as one of the major social organisations in the town. A joint celebration with their brothers of Grosmont, or the annual feast provided a rare opportunity for pagentry. On May 21st 1833 the Hywel Dda Lodge met in their Lodge room at the Ivor's Arms and marched through the grounds of Blaenavon House, no doubt with banners and regalia, to the Church, where they heard a sermon from Rev. James Jenkins. They then returned to their Lodge room, where a "sumptuous dinner"

awaited them, with toasts, singing and speeches, until they dispersed at 10 p.m.[12]. It was on one such occasion that James Jenkins preached on the text "Look to the ant thou sluggard", influencing many to join the Oddfellows. At a time when such societies were often regarded with suspicion or hostility, not least by clergymen of the established church, the actions of Samuel Hopkins in leaving £100 to the Benefit Club, or of James Jenkins in giving strong public endorsement to the Oddfellows are significant pointers to social attitudes at Blaenavon. Lewis Browning's account of the Hywel Dda lodge presents us with something of a problem, for he claims that they were not Oddfellows, but Welsh Ivorites and carried on all their business for 48 years (? 1831-79) in the Welsh language[13]. Born in 1828 to a Welsh speaking Blaenavon family, Browning is a first hand witness, but his statement conflicts with the accounts in the *Monmouthshire Merlin*. It may be that the Lodge seceded at some time from the Oddfellows. Such secessions were far from unknown and by the time Browning was writing (1906), they had become the Hywel Dda Lodge of the Order of Philanthropists. By this time, the two Oddfellows Lodges in the town were the Loyal Victoria and Prince Albert Lodge, which met at the King's Arms (also housing a second Lodge of Philanthropists) and the Loyal St. Vincent Lodge, meeting at the Workman's Hall. At the end of 1905, the total funds of the two Lodges stood at £9,553[14]

The Oddfellows themselves were a wholly masculine society, but the Loyal Friendship Lodge of Odd Women met at the Prince of Wales Inn[15]. Despite its name, this was not a branch of the Independant Order of Oddfellows, Manchester Unity, nor, it would seem, of any of the many smaller groups of Oddfellows (like the chapels, the Affiliated Orders were much given to fission in their early days, often on the issue of local autonomy versus central control). The rules of the Blaenavon Odd Women follow familiar ground, with one significant exception. Although a funeral benefit of £2, plus a shilling levy from every member, was paid on death (and a careful register of next of kin kept to settle rival claims to a member's funeral benefit), no sickness payments were made. The sickness insurance of women presented special difficulties, since working women were more likely to be off work due to childbirth or the needs of sick children than by their own illness and an incapacitated housewife suffered no measureable loss of income. A cash sum which could hopefully be set aside against any time of hardship offered better protection to a woman and her family. The Blaenavon Odd Women were therefore a "dividing society", in which the accumulated capital was divided among the members every two years, leaving a sum of 2/- per member in hand to re-start the funeral fund. It would be of interest to know how usual this was among female benefit societies. There is no need to deal here with the changing legislation relating to Friendly Societies[16], save to note that from 1829 Rules had to be checked by a barrister before going before Quarter Sessions. From 1829 to 1870, this Registrar of Friendly Societies (as he was called from 1846) was John Tidd Pratt, a distinguished Victorian public servant, whose influence on many aspects of the movement was considerable. The rules of the Improved Order of United Friends, Monmouthshire Unity, of 1854, whose Blaenavon branch met at the Victoria Inn, show a markedly more professional approach than, say, the Blaenavon Second Society, which was still basically an 18th century "Box Club". To what extent this change was due to Pratt and to what extent to the actuarial experience of the Affiliated Orders (particularly the Oddfellows) is outside the scope of this article. The United Friends, whose statement of their purpose has been quoted at the beginning of this article, seem to have been a small local affiliated order. They imposed a medical examination on new members, with a scale of entry fees graduated according to age. The rules are much concerned with behaviour in the lodge room and with marital affairs. There were fines for betting, sleeping or reading newspapers during lodge meetings. No member was to receive the "funeral gift" of £7.10s for more than one wife in a period of three years, for a wife living with another man or separated from her husband. If it was thought that the wife was likely not to give her husband a decent funeral, the officers were to buy a "good and proper coffin" out of the £10 death benefit and give the residue to the wife. The rules were signed by the Secretary and three officials, one being Thomas Keare, son of one of the pioneer colliery contractor-managers, Richard Keare of New Slope Colliery (alias Dick Keare's Slope)[17]

For a final view of the Blaenavon Benefit Societies, we can turn again to Lewis Browning, who presents them almost like a parade – The Old Benefit Club from the Crown Inn, with its brass band and banners; Dic Shon Fyrnig's Club from the Bridgend Inn, with red ribbons tied in true lover's knots around their hats "which signified they were true to each other"; the Phoenix Club from the New Inn, with yellow ribbons around their hats and banners carried in front of them and the Garnddyris Tumble Club, for the forge-men and colliers of Pwll Ddu. With these were the Ivorities, the Philanthropists and the Oddfellows[18]. One purpose of this article has been to explore the potential value of the considerable body of material relating to Friendly Societies as a source of evidence for 19th century social conditions on the coalfield. Whilst individual Rules can be repetitive, and whilst there is a constant temptation to pick out amusing details (like the not uncommon provision that a member convicted of murder shall not be eligible for funeral benefits), the rules of each Society do give a glimpse of the concerns and preoccupations of a particular group of people within a particular industrial town – be it a social class, a trade, a group of women or simply the patrons of a particular public house. The centrally organised Affiliated Orders give less in the way of local detail, but their role in the development of acturial science or in the organisation of medical attendance for the insured on a *per capita* basis (still the basis of the National Health Service) made possible the large commercial insurance companies which took over many of their functions in the late 19th century and the development of state schemes of sickness insurance and medical care from 1911 onwards. The sums of money controlled by these societies were often not inconsiderable – Lewis Browning quotes the funds of the Blaenavon Oddfellows and Hywel Dda Lodges at the end of 1905 as £5,337; £4,215 and £2,159. In the late 19th century there were those at both extremes of the political spectrum who confidently expected very serious social turmoil as a result of the political enfranchisement of the working classes. That they were disappointed must owe much to the fact that those classes had long experience, through the Friendly Societies and through some religious denominations, particularly the Baptists and Primitive Methodists, of managing their own affairs.

1. **Rules and Regulations of the Improved Order of United Friends, Blaenavon** (H. Hughes, Pontypool, 1854) Gwent C(ounty) R(ecord) O(ffice) Bythway 477. This article grew out of work on social organisations in 19th century Blaenavon, and that area, including such places as Abersychan and Varteg, is therefore treated in greater detail. The subject seemed however to merit more general treatment.
2. Gwent C.R.O. **Calendar of Friendly Societies Rules** sub Caerleon.
3. Gwent C.R.O. J.C.H. 1197 and 1199.
4. P.H.J.H. Gosden **The Friendly Societies in England 1815-1875** (Manchester University Press 1961) p. 22 Gosden is the standard work, from which much of the background material of this article is based. J. F. Wilkinson's **The Friendly Society Movement: Its Origins, Rise and Growth** (London 1886) is also useful. It was written by a clergyman personally involved in the movement. By 1831, an estimated 13% of the population of Monmouthshire belonged to Friendly Societies. Only Lancashire and Staffordshire had a higher proportion. (Select Committee, House of Lords, on the Poor Laws, quoted Gosden p. 23).
5. Gwent C.R.O. **Quarter Sessions, Friendly Societies Rules** 0015-79. The Society was registered in January 1837. Other societies with similar titles include the Blayney Ironworks Union Society founded July 1823 **(Quarter Sessions F.S.R.** 19-41 and 21-15); The Ebbw Vale Union Society of January 1838 (Quarter Sessions, F.S.R. 0015-79) and the United Colliers and Miners Association Friendly Society of 1857, which met at the Three Cranes Inn, Pontypool (Gwent C.R.O. Bythway 663-15). The first major attempt at forming a trade union for South Welsh coalminers was the Friendly Society of Coal Mining of 1831-2. The Report of the Committee on Friendly Societies of 1825 is quoted by Gayer, Rostow and Schwartz in **The Growth and Fluctuation of the British Economy 1790-1850** (Oxford 1953), 82 n. 5.
6. Gwent C.R.O. D. 751. 297 – Will of Samuel Hopkins of Blaenavon.
7. **Monmouthshire Merlin** 23 June 1838; 3 October 1840.
8. Gwent C.R.O. **Quarter Sessions, Friendly Societies Rules** 0015-79. List of Friendly Societies, October 1836-January 1841.
9. Memorial re. Blaenavon Second Society, held at the Crown Inn. Gwent C.R.O. **Quarter Sessions** F.S.R. 19-19.
10. do 22-18. A further Blaenavon Society, the **Free and Willing Friendly Society** was registered in 1829 **(Quarter Sessions,** F.S.R. 19-38.)
11. **Monmouthshire Merlin** 26 Sept. 1829; Gosden p. 31.
12. **Monmouthshire Merlin** 15 October 1831; 5 November 1831; 10 March 1832; 8 and 29 June 1833.
13. Lewis Browning **Blaenavon, Monmouthshire: A Brief Historical Sketch** (Abergavenny 1906), 36.
14. Browning op. cit. 35-6. The term "Oddfellows" may have been used very loosely, for according to the **Monmouthshire Merlin** (22 September 1866) the Victoria and Albert Lodge belonged to the Order of Foresters! There is a good account of the activities of the Philanthropists of Nantyglo in the **Merlin** for 4 August 1866.
15. Gwent C.R.O. Bythway 309. **Rules of the Loyal Friendship Lodge of Odd Women, Blaenavon** (printed by John Rees, Broad Street, Blaenavon 1865).
16. On this see Gosden, op. cit. 173-98.
17. Gwent C.R.O. Bythway 477. Two copies, 1854 and 1861, both printed H. Hughes, Pontypool. See also Bythway 390 (bond for office of treasurer, I.O.U.F. Monmouthshire Unity, 1857).
18. Browning op. cit. 35. Some societies had more remarkable regalia. When the Ancient Britons of Tredegar paraded in October 1866 "The Quaint dresses, long beards etc. afforded considerable amusement to the lookers on" **Monmouthshire Merlin** 13 October 1866.

THE SEAL OF GRACE DIEU ABBEY

by
David H. Williams

Recently located, in the collections of the Society of Antiquaries of London, is the original brass seal matrix of this small Cistercian abbey, near Monmouth, whose history has already been the subject of an article in this journal[1]. More recently still, the seal has been loaned to the National Museum of Wales, where it is now on public display in the Medieval Archaeology gallery.

Matrix

Impression

(actual size)

+ SIGILLVM: ABBATIS: DE GRACIA. DEI....ET CONVENT'
("The Seal of the Abbot and Community of Grace Dieu")
(Reproduced by permission of the Society of Antiquaries and the National Museum of Wales)
(Photograph: Eric Broadbent, National Museum of Wales)

The seal depicts an abbot, full length, holding a book in his left hand, a postoral staff in his right; in the field, to his left, are an estoile and a mullet. The design appears to be different from a later Grace Dieu seal impression preserved in Hereford Cathedral archives[2]. The seal matrix is of some interest; the words *"ET CONVENT"* appear to have been added sometime after the rest of the seal was engraved. In this way, the seal was altered, from being a thirteenth-century, purely abbatial seal, into the common seal for the monastery. This alteration probably followed either the 1307 Statute of Carlisle[3], or the 1335 Constitution of Benedict XII[4], both of which decreed the use of common seals in the abbeys of the Cistercian Order.

After the dissolution of Grace Dieu (1536), the seal matrix came, eventually, into the possesion of the Lorymer family of Perthir, Monmouth, but was presented in 1830 by that family to St. Gregory's College, Downside, where Dom Michael Anselm Lorymer was a septuagenarian member of the community[5]. In 1935, through the good offices of Dom Ethelbert Horne, it passed to the Society of Antiquaries[6]. In 1801, an engraving of the Seal appeared in Archdeacon Coxe's, *An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire*[7], in 1887, it formed part of the subject of a lecture, delivered by Everard Green, F.S.A., to the Guild of SS. Gregory and Luke in London[8]. The only known impression from it was that appended in 1473 to NLW. *Milborne MS* 4876.

1. Monm. Antiquary, I. iv (1964), pp. 85-106.
2. No. 1775; (a plate appears in **Monm. Antiq.** ibid. p. 94).
3. **Archaeologia**, xxviii (1928), p. 4.
4. ibid. pp. 3-4; J. Canivez, **Statuta Capitulorum Ord. Cist.** (Louvain, 1933-41), iii.411, 437 (1335/bulla 2 and statute 2).
5. **Downside Review**, vii. 115-6.
6. Kind information of Mr J. H. Hopkins, M.A.
7. p. 427; (it is also noted on p. 289).
8. Printed in **Downside Review**, vii. 115-6.

NOTES AND NEWS

TWO PREHISTORIC FINDS FROM THE GARN AREA, NEWPORT

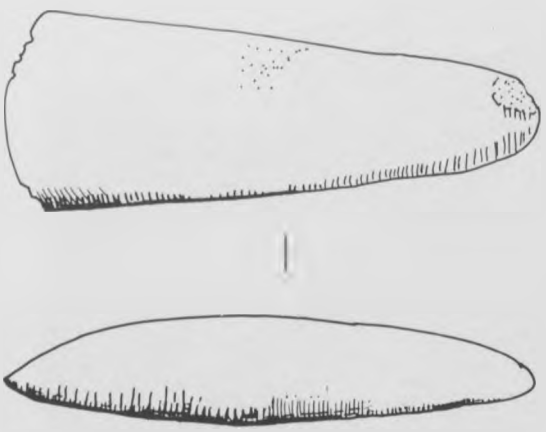
by

Cefni Barnett

In 1954 Dr H. N. Savory reported in the *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* (Vol. XVI, p. 49) on the find of a Neolithic flint axe which had been found on the site of the Garn housing estate in Newport "about 400 yards east of the Tredegar hill-fort". Dr Savory commented on the significance of this and other finds in the area around the mouth of the Usk and subsequently in *Monmouthshire Antiquary* (Vol. 1, pp. 127-8) both Savory and I referred to the strengthening of the developing distribution pattern when reporting on further finds of this nature in the lower Usk valley. The discovery of two more prehistoric finds in the Gaer area of Newport, within a few yards of each other, now adds a degree of piquancy to the situation.

The first find, in chronological order, is an axe-head of fine-grained igneous rock (greenstone), found by a workman "under a hedge" in Gaer Road (ST 295868). The axe (Fig 1) has a flattened oval section, a thick rounded butt and a rather chipped blade, perhaps the result of vigorous usage in ancient times. The length is 14 cms, the width 5.3 cms and the thickness 3.0 cms. The axe was presented to Newport Museum by Mr D. R. Jones, Caerwent (accession no. 71. 272).

The second find is a bronze palstave found by a boy whilst playing in his grandparents garden, also in Gaer Road, at ST/296867. A glance at the grid references will show how close to each other were the two find spots. The palstave belongs to Smith's "Early Midribbed" group, attributed to Burgess's "Acton Park" phase of the Middle Bronze Age of c. 1400-1200 B.C.[1]. In the hollow of one stop-ridge and on one of the flange edges are two small holes, evidently casting flaws. The palstave was purchased from the finder by Newport Museum (accession no. 79.52).



A Neolithic stone axe from Gaer Park Road, Newport. Scale 1:2

1. For references etc. see p.3 above where the palstave is also discussed.

A FLINT ARROWHEAD FROM TWYNBARLWM LLANTARNAM AREA

by

Cefni Barnett

I am indebted to Mr David Williams, of the Holmesdale Archaeological Group, Reigate, not only for bringing to my attention a beautiful flint arrowhead in the possession of his aunt, Mrs G. Waters of Mount Pleasant, Pontnewynydd, but also for providing background information relating to the object and for the drawing of it. Unfortunately the precise find spot of the arrowhead is not recorded. All that is known is that "it was found about ten or so years ago in the Twynbarlwm – Llantarnam area by some boys", who gave it to the late Mr H. F. Waters, then history master of Llantarnam School. In the circumstances, one might hazard a guess that it might have been found on Mynydd Maen where items of worked flint have been found from time to time over a period of many year.

The arrowhead, of pale grey-brownish mottled flint, measures 42 mm in length, with a mximum width across the shoulders of 20 mm. Triangular in form, with slightly convex sides, it is skillfully worked and the point and sides are still sharp. The points of the barbs have been broken off and the square tang may have been truncated, but this is uncertain.

Flint arrowhead from the Twyn Barlwm – Llantarnam Area. Scale 1:1

Editorial Note: The South Wales and Monmouth Record Society

The South Wales and Monmouth Record Society was founded in 1921 to publish historical records relating to Glamorgan and Monmouthshire. Between 1932 and 1963 it produced a series of volumes containing the texts of medieval and other original documents which remain an indispensible source for any serious study of the history of Gwent. In particular, the volumes contained a distinguished series of manorial and other records edited by the late Professor William Rees. Recently, following the death of Professor Rees, the members of the society decided that it should be wound up and the remaining funds transferred to other societies able to carry on its work. The funds were therefore divided between this Association and the Cambrian Archaeological Association, to be used for publication. The Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association would like to express its thanks and gratitude to the officers of the Society, and in particular to Mr W. A. Baker, Gwent County Archivist, for their good offices in this matter. We hope this and future numbers of the *Antiquary* will justify this generous gift by maintaining the high standards set by the Record Society. Dependant as we are upon the subscriptions of members and upon occasional grants to produce our journal, this gift is particularly valued in coming in a crucial time in the history of the *Antiquary*, when it is hoped to restore it as an annual publication.

J.K.K.

For the Record

BERTHOLAU CHAPEL, LLANTRISAINT FAWR (NGR. 392948)

by
David H. Williams

A number of former ecclesiastical sites in Gwent are now in danger of entering the shadows of oblivion. From time to time, therefore, this *Antiquary* will attempt to record such facts as can be determined concerning them[1].

Few motorists on the Coldra-Usk link road, will be aware that they pass extremely close to the former church of Bertholau ('Bertholey'). 'Brethelly' and the 'ferry of Brethelly' find mention in 1295[2], the church was extant in the fourteenth century[3], and a house of some substance – built about 1616, existed at the present 'Bertholey', nearby, until destroyed by fire in 1905[4].

Saxton, on his map of Monmouthshire (1577) named the church as 'Martelly'. Ecton (1754) recorded it as "Pertholey: chapel to Llantrissant, St. Bartholomew"[5]. In the same year, came the last ecclesiastical mention of the chapel, with the institution to "Llantrisant with the chapel of Bertholey" of R. V. Norman[6].

An engraving of the church appears in Bradney's, *History of Monmouthshire* (1923)[7]. The plate depicted in this present article was taken about 1957, when it was said that "for many years past the chapel has been used as a cow house, and its original purpose unnoticed were it not for the remains of tracery in the west window"[8]. Alas, this tracery has long since disappeared, and now only insignificant portions of the chapel walls remain. The edifice measured 13.4 x 5.0 metres, and had a rectangular entrance, 1.3 metres wide, in the south wall[9].

1. A list of most of them occurs in E. T. Davies, Ecclesiastical History of Monmouthshire, i (1953), pp. 94-95.
2. J. A. Bradney, History of Monmouthshire, iii (1921) 153-6; Cal. Inq. Post Mortem, iii. 246.
3. William Rees, Map: South Wales and the Border in the 14th Century, SE sheet (1932).
4. J. A Bradney, op. cit. pp. 153-6.
5. Ecton, J. Thesaurus Rerum Ecclesiasticarum (1754 edn.), p. 516.
6. J. A. Bradney, op. cit. p. 156.
7. ibid. p. 156.
8. ibid. p. 156.
9. Ordanance Survey Field Card, ST 39 SE 9 (Monm, 24 SE 8); (noted by D. Edwards, F. I., 12.3.57).