THE MONMOUTHSHIRE ANTIQUARY

PROCEEDINGS of the MONMOUTHSHIRE ANTIQUARIAN ASSOCIATION

CONTENTS

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MONMOUTHSHIRE ANTIQUARIAN ASSOCIATION

TRELECH

Aerial view from the south. The perimeter of the medieval borough is clearly visible with the remains of the motte in the north-eastern corner. The course of the second main street, running parallel to the present road, is indicated by the line of trees east of St. Nicholas' church.

(Photograph by courtesy of the R.A.F.)

THREE BONES OF S. TATHEUS: OR, DUW YN ANGHYFIAWN NI RANN

by George C. Boon

At three p.m. on Tuesday, April 23, 1912 – S. George's Day, a curious choice, though the rumblings of the Welsh Disestablishment debate were distant – a stately procession wound its way from the altar of S. Stephen's church, Caerwent, towards the recently rebuilt and as yet unconsecrated south aisle.[1] In the midst, preceded by the diminutive figure of the Vicar, William Coleman Williams, M.A. (a Lampeter man), and accompanied by three other clergymen,[2] was a coffin containing bones which many in that numerous congregation believed to be those of S. Tatheus, who had settled at Caerwent, and, with royal favour, had established what was to remain until Norman times an important *clas*. Indeed, the *Urbs Guenti*, etc., of early references is to the monastery and not to the Roman town.[3] In these pages, however, it is of the 1912 translation, just as much history now, that we take note.[4]

The original stone cist had already been reconstructed in the aisle, and was now to enclose the slim coffin which, with its contents, had lain in the church overnight. The ceremony now beginning is recorded by Coleman Williams in a scrap-book still preserved at the Vicarage,[5] and may be detailed here, since no printed sheets seem to have survived, if they ever existed. The order of service had been invented, on the basis of the *Rituale Armeniorum*, by that clerical high-flyer Gilbert Cunningham Joyce, already a canon of St. Asaph's and destined in 1928 to become the second Bishop of Monmouth. In 1892-6, he had been Sub-Warden of S. Michael's Theological College, still in its Aberdare days, and it was doubtless then that Coleman Williams made his acquaintance, for his curacy there, and his succeeding fifteen years' cure of souls at Ebbw Vale, overlapped with Joyce's period of office.[6]

The procession moved off to the strains of Psalm 132; and after the bones had been deposited in their coffin within the grave, the first lesson was read from 1 Kings viii, 3-8, by the Revd. J. W. Ward of Llantarnam. It was followed by Psalm 116, sung, and the second lesson, from 2 Corinthians iv, 6-14 by the Revd. D. Matthias, Curate of Caldicot. Next, Psalm 15, the creed, the 'lesser litany', and – Coleman Williams was High Church – the 'paternoster', after which Joyce had placed the versicles found after the lesson in the burial-service of the 1549 Prayer Book, and the collects for All Saints' Day and the Feasts of S. Bartholomew and (especially relevant, since they, too, had been translated) SS. Simon and Jude. The Vicar's address was prefaced and followed by unrecorded hymns, and the ceremony closed with the benediction, as was proper: there was, and could have been, no Eucharist.

The sequence was well-chosen, and must under the Act of Uniformity Amendment Act 1972, § 4 (additional service on Sundays or Holy Days) have had the permission of the Ordinary, or 'faculty'; but extensive search at the National Library, and the Gwent Record Office, failed to produce evidence. It is hardly surprising that the whole affair was dismissed by the county's historian, Sir Joseph Bradney, kt., in a few withering words.[7] By that time, too, its chief protagonist other than the Vicar, and its paymaster, was dead. He was James G. Wood of Lincoln's Inn, Esq., F.S.A., a fierce dotter and crosser of local antiquarian i's and t's in a numerous series of pamphlets and longer studies: his, too, was the pamphlet produced soon after the occasion, which deals with the discovery and identification of the remains.[8] In 1910 and (he says) at his instance as well as at the enthusiastic invitation of Coleman Williams, the Caerwent Exploration Fund – that extension through the Severn Tunnel of the Clifton Antiquarian Club and of A. E. Hudd, Esq., F.S.A., its remarkable factotum[9] – trenched the vicarage orchard just outside the east gate of the Roman town. Soon a skeleton was exposed in a rough stone cist, which lay east and west actually across the site of a side-wall of a late Roman shop or tavern some 50 yards beyond the gate. In all, thirty interments were found 'in and round' this building; but a special significance seemed to attach to the cist-burial, which was the only one (fig 1). The total of burials is scarcely given except in the archaeological report:[10] other accounts, relying on the Vicar's statements, refer generally to 'at least seven', 'twelve', or 'more than a dozen'. These figures answer respectively to the number of disciples whom Tatheus brought to Gwent

Fig. 1 Long-cist burial, Caerwent Vicarage site, 1910- the skeleton identified as that of St Tatheus

and who survived him, and to the number of 'canons' whom he created.[11] The number *seven* seems to have come into prominence as the result of a letter received by the Vicar from the Revd. Sabine Baring-Gould in February, 1912: '. . . it would be conclusive if you found seven round about the stone cist.'[12] Another grave, which was never identified, was that of the Virgin Maches, who according to the *Vita* was murdered by sheep-stealers and buried in his church by Tatheus' order, a chapel being erected at the scene of the crime.[13]

The whole affair really stemmed from Wood's remorseless barrister's logic, which swept Coleman Williams, still a newcomer in 1910, off his feet. After all, Caerwent had already yielded 'serried ranks' of east-west burials, some in cists, some visibly post-Roman (fig. 2). As many as 130 had been found in the Gaer field west of the church before Lord Tredegar, who was by this time moneying the excavations and was also President of the committee, caused the work to cease for fear of disturbing more.[14] Wood's insistence that the orchard was the right spot arose from the reference in the *Vita* to the whereabouts of the plot presented by King Caradog to Tatheus for his settlement. Though initially truculent, as many Celtic saints were, Tatheus was welcomed as a consequence of some miracles involving a stag, and so received for his support a piece of land just outside the city, extending from the public way to the river – *ager suburbanus a publica via usque ad amnem . . . locum aptissimum divino servitio ac clericali habitatione dignum.*[15] Wood had no doubt whatever but that (a) the *publica via* was the east-west Roman highway on which Caerwent stands; and that (b) the river *(amnis)* could be 'none other than the stream . . . known as the Troggy brook as far as a point opposite to and immediately south of Caerwent [and] having there acquired an additional volume of water . . . [there] as the Nedden.' The *ager*, therefore, 'was outside the eastern wall of the city; and bounded on the north by the main road, and on the south by the Nedden'.

Such was the case expounded by Wood in his pamphlet, and by Coleman Williams from his pulpit; and such is the story succinctly retailed in the neatly-carved wording of the large, grey Forest of Dean slab provided, at Wood's expense, to cover the grave in the south aisle, where it may still be seen, somewhat injured by damp and tread, under a drugget (fig. 3). This extraordinary text reads: *Hic jacent honorifice / recondita et in sua cista / inclusa ossa in pomerio / vicarii istius parochie / inventa infra illum agrum / in quo circa A:S: DLX sanctus / Tatheus Caradoci Regis / donatione templum et / collegium in honorem / Sancte Trinitatis fundavit: / quo in templo constat / ipsum et sanctam Machutam / virginem sepultos fuisse: / cujus quidem sanctissimi / viri veri simile est ista / ossa ex reliquiis esse: / quorum in memoriam hic / lapis positus est A:S: / MCMXII.* In English, the version offered was 'Here lie reverently reburied and enclosed in their original coffin, bones found in the orchard of the Vicar of this parish, within land on which about A.D. 560 St. Tathan, under the benefaction of King Caradoc, founded a church and a college in honour of the Holy Trinity, in which church it is known that he and St. Maches the virgin were buried; and so it is probable that these bones are the remains of that holy man. In memory whereof this stone was placed A.D.1912.'[16]

Nevertheless, it is to be noted that the *Vita* does not give eastern or western boundaries, and the estate could therefore have lain on the west of the Roman town just as easily as on the east: the Troggy runs 700 yards west of the walls before sweeping round to the east, and the same *publica via* would have formed the northern boundary. But in the language of the 12th-century *Vita* the word *amnis* could surely not have been applied to a mere brook; for even the

Fig. 2 Long-cist burials of infants, House XI South, Caerwent

Nedern (as the usual spelling is) was certainly not much more than that in historical times, as Wood was at pains on another occasion to demonstrate.[17] The *Revised Medieval Latin Word-List* does indeed give 'stream' for *amnis*, but the citations are very late. In the classical language *amnis* is a *broad* river, a 'flood'; but in *media et infima latinitas* seems to be so rare that Ducange gives only one instance, in the 9th-century Life of S. Winwaloe, where it is not recognised as a common noun at all, but appears as a proper noun, which is implicitly glossed as *fluvius ingens*, exactly the old meaning. Thus what would have been given to Tatheus was not a narrow plot of some 28 acres corresponding to the former vicarage glebe,[18] but a sizeable stretch of territory running down to the Severn, and conforming more appropriately, therefore, to the needs of a community. In the period concerned, the Gwent Levels were in a state of erosion and inundation, for it was to be several centuries before the Cistercian houses, free of tithe on reclaimed land, set about draining and embanking the potentially rich pasture and even arable land which was, by contrast, at that period accumulating. In their natural state, nevertheless, the marshy Levels were just as valuable to a primitive community for their fish, fowl, withies, reeds, brushwood, and peat.[19]

Other details are equally awkward, though two we may pass over – the virtually Norman dedication to the Trinity, which hardly chimes with the apparent date of the foundation,[20] and the reference to the Bishop of Llandaff, whose very existence before the consecration of Urban in 1107 is shadowy, to say the least, especially (as the *Vita* would have it) in the Norman capacity of Visitor.[21] Neither of these anachronisms affects the core of the matter, which is that a Celtic monastery was established. But it must be added that when the vicarage was being built in 1846, three cists (one containing three skulls – the interments must have been nearly superficial) were discovered.[22] Coleman Williams, instituted in 1909, may well not have known of

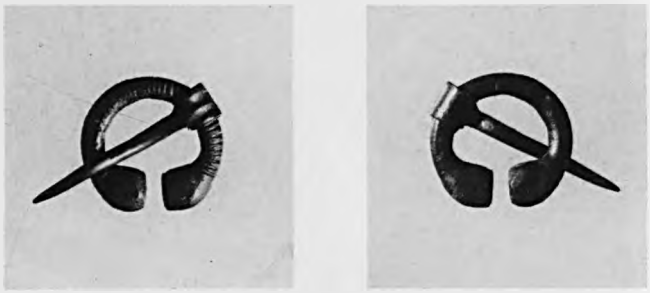

Fig. 4 Gilt-bronze Penannular brooch, Fowler Class G, Caerwent Eastgate Cemetery site, 1973 (photograph National Museum of Wales)

them; but Wood might have been expected to have done his homework and read Octavius Morgan's *Archaeologia* paper, abundantly offprinted, in which they are mentioned. The cist and its occupant translated in 1912 were therefore not unique even in the same cemetery, and any argument based on distinctiveness is destroyed.

In parenthesis, it may be added that further excavations in 1973, when homes for retired clergy were to be built in the orchard, revealed well over a hundred more graves, some in cists. Only one had anything with it, and that merely an iron bangle; but a fine little sub-Roman penannular brooch, once gilt, of Severn Estuary type, was found unstratified (fig. 4), and a satisfactory spread of Dark Age dates was obtained by Carbon 14 from some of the bones.[23] The mode of cist-burial lasted long at Caerwent, for a typical little white-metal funerary chalice, and a priest's iron morse, were exhumed from another found close to the parish church in 1912.[24]

There is, however, a final flaw in the 1912 case for the bones translated being those of Tatheus. Again the matter is one which a prudent scholar might have been expected to have sought out before contemplating the erection of a monument in the church or, as was first intended, on the spot.[25] In the *Annales de Theokesberia*, printed as long previously as 1864, the monks record the gift in 1235 — curiously enough, also on S. George's Day — of a small collection of grisly and other saintly relics amassed by the father of the donor, who was one H. Tancintune, of whom nothing else is known. The list ends . . . *tria ossa de Sancto Atheo qui conditus est apud Kerwent*, 'three bones of S. Tatheus who is buried at Caerwent.'[26] Which of the cists was plundered for these? And how was it identified — was there an 'early Christian monument' over it, or was inconcinnate fact wilfully excluded, as by Wood and the Vicar? And might the obvious site of an early monastic cemetery in its turn have governed what is said in the 12th-century *Vita* concerning the whereabouts of Caradog's original donation? And yet another question: does the forced expression *ossa ex reliquiis*, in the monumental pastiche quoted above, denote a belated acquaintance with the Tewkesbury reference, or does it merely reflect the manifestly incomplete nature of the skeleton translated (fig. 1)? Since not even the hostile Bradney starts that monkish hare, the second alternative is undoubtedly adequate.

1912 did not see the end of mythopoeia at Caerwent, or indeed of the invocation of Tatheus, be it ever so circumspectly done;[27] and after all, he did live there and have his *clas*, of that we may be certain: so let us give him the last word, where bones are concerned:[28]

'God will not portion out unjustly'
'Duw yn anghyfiawn ni rann'

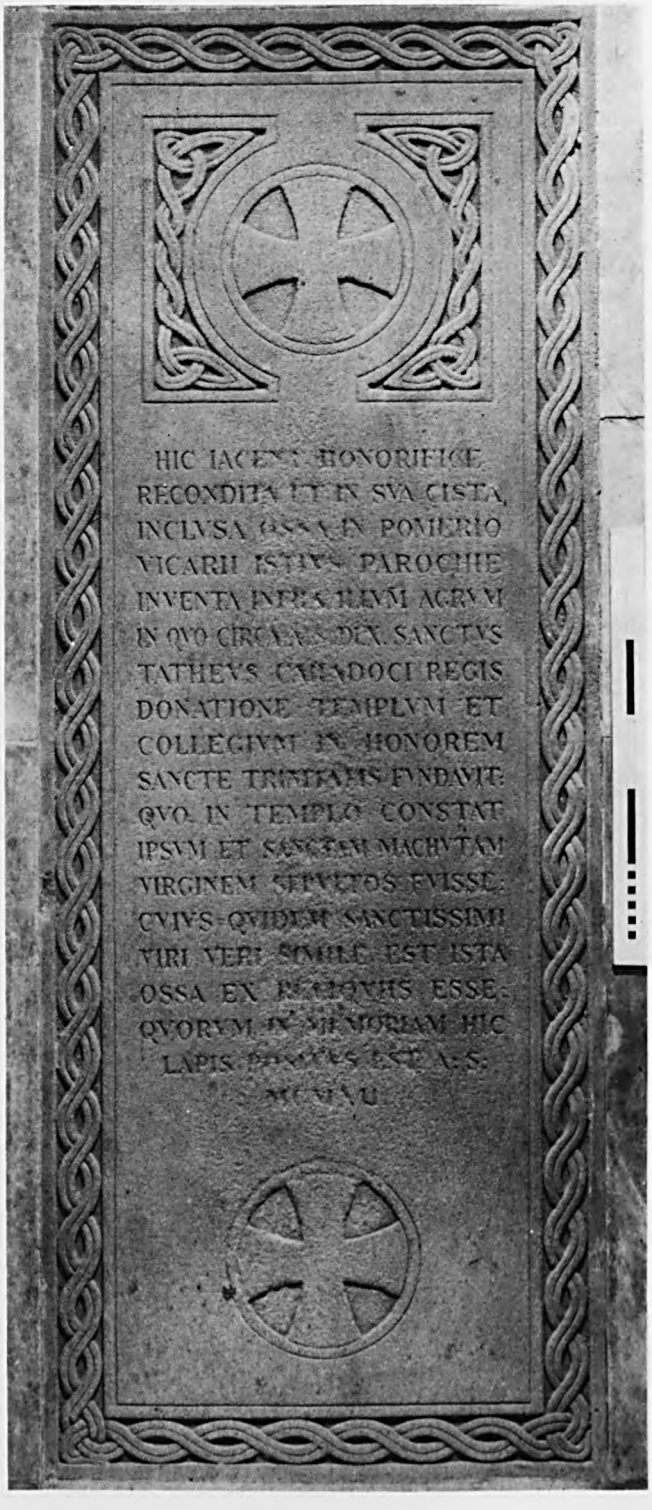

Fig. 3 Inscription in south aisle, Caerwent church, commemorating the re-burial of 'St Tatheus'

1. The chancel was restored in 1893 and the nave in 1910; the south aisle, with new vestry, was consecrated on Corpus Christi, 10 June 1912. Archdeacon Bruce of Monmouth made a 'forceful' sermon on Ps. 84, 7 — the Bishop would have preached, but as proceedings began a telegram arrived from Bristol to say that he had got on to the wrong train.

2. The two named below and possibly Canon Joyce as deviser of the service: the total of four comes from Bradney, *loc.cit.* note 7, but he makes several errors and this may be another.

3. S. Baring-Gould and J. Fisher, *Lives of the British Saints* (1913), iv, 211-4. The Life is in A. W. Wade-Evans (ed.), *Vitae SS. Britanniae et Genealogiae* (1944), 270-87, and a good analysis by Jeremy Knight is in *Mon.Antiq.* iii. 1 (1971), 29-36. 'Tathan', the form often met, is inferior and probably quite wrong, see Wade-Evans in *Arch.Camb.* lxxxv (1930), 324-5. It seems to be a back-formation from Tathana, supposed female saint behind the Glamorgan name St. Athans. *Urbs*, Wendy Davies, *An Early Welsh Microcosm* (1978), 122.

4. Note especially *Western Mail*, 24 April 1912, and *Merthyr Express*, 27 April, and cf. notes 7 and 8 below.

5. I am much obliged to the Revd. Llewellyn Griffith-Jones, lately Vicar, for making available this scrapbook, *sede denuo vacante*, through the good offices of my colleague, Mr. R. J. Brewer.

6. I am grateful to my colleague, Mr. J. M. Lewis, for discussing several of the points raised, and for help over Canon Joyce. I take the *Rituale Armeniorum*, however, on trust.

7. I am grateful to Mr. Daniel Huws and to Mr. W. H. Baker for searching the records in their care. See Sir J. Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire* iv. 1 (1929), 141-3. The *Catholic Times* of 3 May also took an expectedly jaundiced view: '. . . when the preacher touched on miraculous incidents . . . he said "these they would that afternoon pass over". When Anglicans try to appropriate Catholic saints as they appropriated other Catholic property, they find insurmountable obstacles in the way.' It is doubtful whether 'Catholic' is quite the proper description of Tatheus!

8. J. G. Wood, *Saint Tathan, the Patron Saint of Caerwent, written on the Occasion of the Translation of his Supposed Remains* (Newport, 1912), pp. 16. The copy in Newport Reference Library, of which Mr. Rodney Hudson kindly obtained a Xerox copy for me, has the mistaken distances in p. 11 corrected in ink.

9. I hope one day to reveal the 'secret history' of the Caerwent Excavations of 1899-1913. Hudd, alas, is one of those omitted by Irvine Gray in his *Antiquaries of Gloucestershire and Bristol* (1981).

10. *Archaeologia* lxii (1911), 444-5, pl. 63.

11. *Vita*, 3 (where the figure viii must be inclusive), 6, 17. Cf. *Western Mail* 14 January 1911, where the name 'Canon land' is mentioned and taken to refer to Tatheus' canons (so-called). The advowson, however, was in the hands of the Archdeacon and Chapter of Llandaff Cathedral (as Mr. J. M. Lewis reminds me, a Dean at Llandaff is a modern creation). The original grant of 1337 is printed by Browne Willis, *An Survey of Landaff* (1719), 163-7: it seems likely the two acres 'in a place called *Troballyn'* (? perhaps Trefelyn) will be the land given with the advowson, and so will have led to the name 'Canon land', a term therefore not applying to the whole glebe. The name recurs at St. Mellons near Cardiff (? for a like reason).

12. Dated 21 February, 1912, preserved in the scrapbook.

13. *Vita*, 13, Baring Gould & Fisher, *op.cit.*, iii, 392-3. Llanvaches, about 3 miles WNW, was originally *Merthirmaches* (Davies, *op.cit.*, 38, 121, 137). In a letter of 1 February 1911 to the *Chepstow Advertisier*, Wood remarks that 'it needs to find the remains of St. Maches to clinch the evidence'. – Just so.

14. *Western Mail*, 17 August, 1 September, 1910; *Archaeologia* lxii, 434.

15. *Vita* 6; Wood's pamphlet, 9.

16. The scrapbook contains the final Latin text on a left-hand page, copied out, and on the facing right-hand page a turgid first draft with pencil alterations; it has no mention of Maches. This is certainly Coleman Williams' work, and perhaps the bones of the final version too: but that is altogether more succinct. Wood, who was paying for the stone, probably claimed the right to con the text over before sending it to the mason. Interference of this kind might best account for the otherwise M. R. Jamesian comment scrawled in pencil across the corner of the page bearing the first draft: *'quem timebam evenit mihi*, Job iii, 25' – '(the thing) which I greatly feared is come upon me . . . ' (Authorised Version). Bradney objected to the Latin in any case, but wrongly as regards the word *pomerium*, good enough for 'orchard' in medieval Latin. There are one or two letters in a simple, childlike Latin from Bradney to Coleman Williams in the scrapbook, but they have no bearing on the translation of the bones.

17. Wood, *Manor and Mansion of Moyne's Court* (1914), Appendix, 89-90.

18. See note 11.

19. See my 'Caerleon and the Gwent Levels . . . ' in F. H. Thompson (ed.), *Archaeology and Coastal Change* (Soc. Antiq., 1980), 30.

20. There are few before the late 12th century (F. Bond, *Dedications and Patron Saints of English Churches* (1914), 4).

21. Davies, *op.cit.*, 4-5.

22. Octavius Morgan, *Archaeologia* xxxvi (1856), 425, no. 16. Probably the cists mark upper-class burials, cf. Davies, *op.cit.*, 132 note 2.

23. *Britannia* vi (1975), 233; *Archaeology in Wales* 1973 (CBA Group 2, 1974), 51–2. There is now no gilding left on the hoop, unfortunately. I am much obliged to Mr. Knight for details of the C^{14} determinations (uncorrected):

410 + 80 *(sic!)* A.D.	HAR 495
490 + 80 – from slab burial in cist	HAR 497
540 + 70	HAR 494
700 + 80	HAR 496
860 + 70	HAR 493

(We are very grateful to the excavator, Mr. Vincent Gregory, for generously allowing us to cite these dates prior to his publication of the site.)

24. *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Lond.* ser. 2 xxv (1912–13), 174; good account, with mention of 'cist composed of rough flat stones' in *South Wales Daily News*, 16 November 1912, by G. E. Halliday, F.S.A., diocesan surveyor and the architect for the Caerwent restoration.

25. Wood's pamphlet, 11.

26. *Annales Monastici* (ed. H. R. Luard, 1864) i, p. 96.

27. I refer to Nash-Williams and his 'sub-Roman church' described in *Archaeologia* lxxx (1930), 235–6, and repeated in *Bull. Board of Celtic Studies* xv. 2 (1953), 165–7. The buildings which he cites as parallels, in Asia Minor, are totally different and do not have the extremely projecting narthex which he fancied on no proper grounds to have existed at Caerwent. They have projections either side of the main chapel, but these are *pastophoria* divided off from the narthex. The so-called 'flattened apse' at the east end of a building which was almost bound to be oriented east-west because of the Roman street-plan below, and Roman walling corresponding with it, is most unconvincing as anything other than a fireplace-foundation, and was scarcely more than a foot deep internally, if indeed it was recessed at all: the inner face was badly damaged by the roots of a tree, which shows in one of the all-too-few photographs. The solid Roman masonry below has the appearance, all too familiar, of having been robbed off to a level, probably in medieval or later times. See also L. Alcock, *Dinas Powys* (1963), 63, Note 2, and C. Thomas, *Christianity in Roman Britain* (1981), 166–8.

28. Quoted by Baring-Gould and Fisher, iv, 214, from 'Sayings of the Wise' in *Iolo MSS*, p. 257, No. 108.

EXCAVATIONS AT OLD MARKET STREET, USK

by Vivienne Metcalf-Dickinson

This report concerns Medieval and later activity on the site of 10 Old Market Street, Usk. It is hoped that the Romano-British occupation of the site will be published in a forthcoming number of the Cambrian Archaeological Association Monographs and Collections.

Site and Situation Fig. 5.

Usk is a small market town in the county of Gwent (OS 376 007) on the East bank of the Usk at its confluence with the river Olway, and on the flood plain of both rivers. It lies at a height of c. 17m. O.D., on a major bridging point of the Usk river, commanding a natural North - South routeway following the river valley.

Geologically, Usk lies within the Old Red Sandstone region, situated on the estuarine alluvium of the river valley, with gravel terraces occurring beyond Llanbadoc to the South. To the North and West, limestones of the Upper Ludlow beds outcrop; Usk Castle is built on the limestone heights to the North of the town. To the North-east and South-west of the town the Raglan Marl group occurs; to the East and South-east the river valley is flanked by Old Red sandstones, which have been much utilised for building material. The soils within the town are silts, sands and gravels and clays derived from the above.

The first settlement known at Usk was of Romano-British date, though flint implements from the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Ages were recovered during the excavation. Usk town was first mentioned in 1131[1], and was a flourishing community in the Medieval period, with 296 burgages in 1314. A charter was granted to the town by Elizabeth de Burgh, and confirmed by her grandson, Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, on 26th July, 1397. The document was lost in the Glyndwr uprising, and the charter was reconfirmed by Roger's son Edmund on 1st February, 1416. The town was attacked twice by Glyndwr; in 1402, when much of it was destroyed by fire, and again in 1405. A market place was granted to Usk by the Earl of Pembroke on 5th July, 1598, and it was probably at about this time that the distinction between 'Old' and 'New' Market Streets began to be made.

The Castle, originally belonging to the de Clare family, was first recorded in 1173, though it was probably of almost contemporary construction with the Benedictine Priory; the latter was a house of nuns founded by Richard de Clare, Earl of Pembroke, c. 1120-1130, though the church could be as early as the eleventh century. The Priory was dissolved in 1536, and the remaining buildings and approximately six acres of land were sold to one Roger Williams of Usk in 1544/5, for £168 8s 4d. His great-grandson, Sir Trevor Williams of Llangibby Castle three miles to the South, took Usk Castle and town for Parliament in 1646, though he had earlier supported the King. He later returned to the Royalist cause.

The Excavation O.S. SO 3764 0062

In February and March, 1979 the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust undertook a six-week season of trial excavations on a plot of land adjacent to 10 Old Market Street, Usk, and at Maryport Street Car Park, Usk[2]. The areas were scheduled for redevelopment as part of a major infill development programme proposed for the central area of Usk by Monmouth District Council. Usk is an archaeologically sensitive area, both as one of the historic small

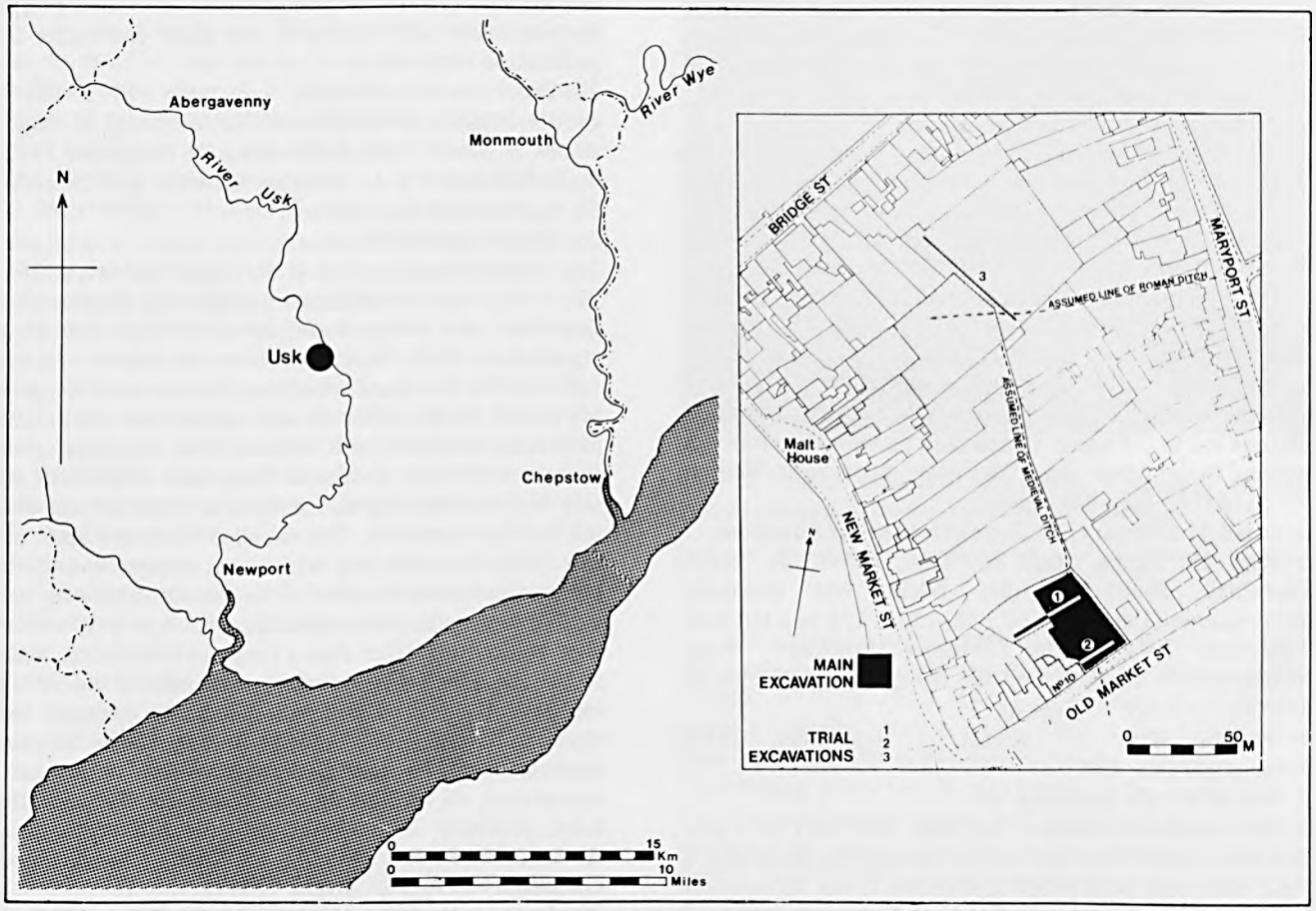

Fig. 5 Location plan, showing true North

towns of Gwent, and as the site of the earliest Roman Legionary Fortress in Wales, with later Romano-British occupation; because of this archaeological and historical important the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust had anticipated a series of rescue excavations during the 1980's, ahead of the proposed development schemes. The site at 10 Old Market Street, Usk became the first of these rescue excavations.

The trial excavations at 10 Old Market Street demonstrated that occupation of the site had occurred during the early and later Post-Medieval periods, and during the Romano-British period. A Medieval ditch was also located. Engineers and surveyors from Monmouth District Council and from Ove Arup and Partners (Consultant Engineers) examined the exposed fluvial soils during the trial excavations, and established that any development on the site would, by nature of the foundations required, destroy the archaeological evidence, which at its deepest point lay only 0.90m. below the present ground surface. A full season of excavation was therefore undertaken during August and September, 1979[3].

An area of approximately 1,000 sq. m. was opened, partly by mechanical excavator, with the help of the staff and boys of H.M. Detention Centre, Usk, who provided all possible assistance during the excavation. Monmouth District Council generously assisted with office facilities, spoil removal, and accommodation for the excavation team.

The Medieval Period

'Site North' was formed by the north-western boundary of the property, and lay some 30° West of true North. Site North has been used throughout in the text.

The Ditch

During excavation work on the Cattle Market site at Usk in 1974, Dr. W. H. Manning of University College, Cardiff, located a section of a previously unrecorded Medieval ditch, apparently running approximately North-South between Bridge Street and the river Usk.[4] It was expected that this ditch would cross the site at 10 Old Market Street, and it was in fact located in two places during trial excavation work in the Spring of 1979.

The main season of excavations in the Summer of 1979 established the line of the Medieval ditch for some 42.00m. along its western side, and for approximately 20.00m. along its eastern side. As it was not practicable during the time available to excavate the whole of the ditch, two sections, each 4.00m. wide, were excavated along its length. It did not prove possible to complete the excavation of the section to the North, but that to the South was totally excavated.

Excavation of the ditch revealed it to be 5.80m. wide and 2.10m. deep, with a wide, V-shaped profile and a flat bottom (Plate 2). Its lower fills were made up of two series of slits, sands and gravels consonant with deposition by flowing water. For any analysis of this sedimentation, see page and Fig. 4. No trace of a recut or of cleaning was observed, but it is possible that any such indications could have been removed by the scouring action of spate conditions. These naturally deposited fills contained some residual Romano-British material, and a quantity of Medieval pottery and roof-tiles, which indicated that the ditch was open between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The top fills of the ditch (approximately 0.50m.) consisted of dumps of building rubble, slag and domestic refuse (including Medieval and Post-Medieval pottery), which had been tipped into the top of the ditch from both sides, possibly as levelling up and consolidation material. This phase would seem to date to the early sixteenth century, by which time the ditch had gone out of use, and its purpose and dimensions seemed to have been forgotten. This conclusion is supported by the fact that a large post-medieval merchant's house on the south side of Old Market Street, known as the Great House and built by Roger Williams c. 1535, extends across the ditch. This house has surprisingly suffered very little apparent subsidence.

Opposite the Great House the line of the Medieval ditch within the excavated area was remembered as an access or right of way. After the initial dumping or levelling within the ditch, approximately 20.00m. of its length was deliberately and carefully metalled with sandstone fragments and gravels between the two Post-Medieval houses which were constructed on the site. Each of these houses had one wall actually built within the width of the ditch, again implying that the dimensions of the ditch had been forgotten by the late sixteenth century.

The ditch section at the North of the site was not bottomed, but was excavated to a depth of 0.90m. Approximately 0.70m. of these fills were of a similar infill dumping nature to those on the southern section, but contained less stone and domestic rubbish. At 0.60m. depth the presence of a single layer of metalling, (maximum thickness 0.12m.) associated with Post-Medieval pottery, suggested that the early Post-Medieval 'right of way' had originally extended northwards as a sunken way across the site, but later went out of use; the rear of the site then became a garden. The northward continuation of the ditch line is represented by a major property boundary, extending for some 100m., which divides the burgages associated with New Market Street and Maryport Street to the West and East (Plate 1).

The upcast from the original construction of the ditch lay on its eastern side, preserved to a depth of 0.40m. The surface was much eroded, and truncated and disturbed by later activity; no trace of walling or of post-holes for a revetment or palisade was discovered. The acid conditions of the soil had also destroyed any trace of a turf-line or old ground surface that might have been expected to be preserved beneath the upcast.

It is often assumed that a major ditch in association with a Medieval town is a defensive feature against attack by enemies. Usk is surrounded on three sides by a system of earthworks (some still extant, others noted on Coxe's map of 1800[5]) which extended from beyond the Usk bridge to the North, incorporated parts of the outer defences of Usk castle, ran beyond the Priory to the East of the town, and can still be seen returning to the Usk river as the Clawdd Du. These earthworks date partly from the third century A.D., and seem to have been revised and extended in the Medieval period. The fourth side of this rough rectangle is formed by the river Usk. It may therefore be considered strategically unnecessary to insert a further defensive ditch running between the town and the river, and this ditch may have had a function unrelated to the protection of the town from attack. Throughout its history, Usk town has suffered from severe flooding by the Usk river and its tributary the Olway, of which the most recent was the severe flood of Christmas 1979. During the latter the excavation site, which was then still open, diverted much water and possibly saved the Great House from inundation. It seems likely that the ditch in question was dug for flood defence rather than any strategic purpose, and this is further suggested by the lack of defensive features associated with the upcast or 'rampart'. In addition, excavation of the ditch fill indicated that all the lower fills were the result of natural deposition and that the ditch had never been maintained to the extent that might have been expected had it been a vital defensive feature.

Other Medieval Features
Other than the ditch, no feature on the site could be definitely assigned to the Medieval period. This is hardly surprising in view of the presence of so dominating a feature as the Medieval ditch, which would preclude close settlement during its period of use, and while it was still recognisable as a major feature.

The Early Post-Medieval Period
In the early part of the seventeenth century, two houses were constructed, one on either side of the ditch; the earlier, House A, lay to the West. The builders apparently had little idea of the nature of the ground on which they were placing these houses, as one external wall of each building was sited within the Medieval ditch.
At least 75% of the foundations of both houses (A and B) had been removed by stone-robbing after the demolition of the houses in the late seventeenth century; for this reason the positions of doorways, etc., proved almost impossible to identify, and the interpretation and phasing as set out below may be open to debate.

House A, Phase 1 (Fig. 6)
House A was originally a two-roomed building, constructed on foundations of river boulders and roughly dressed sandstone blocks, bonded with clay, and apparently laid straight

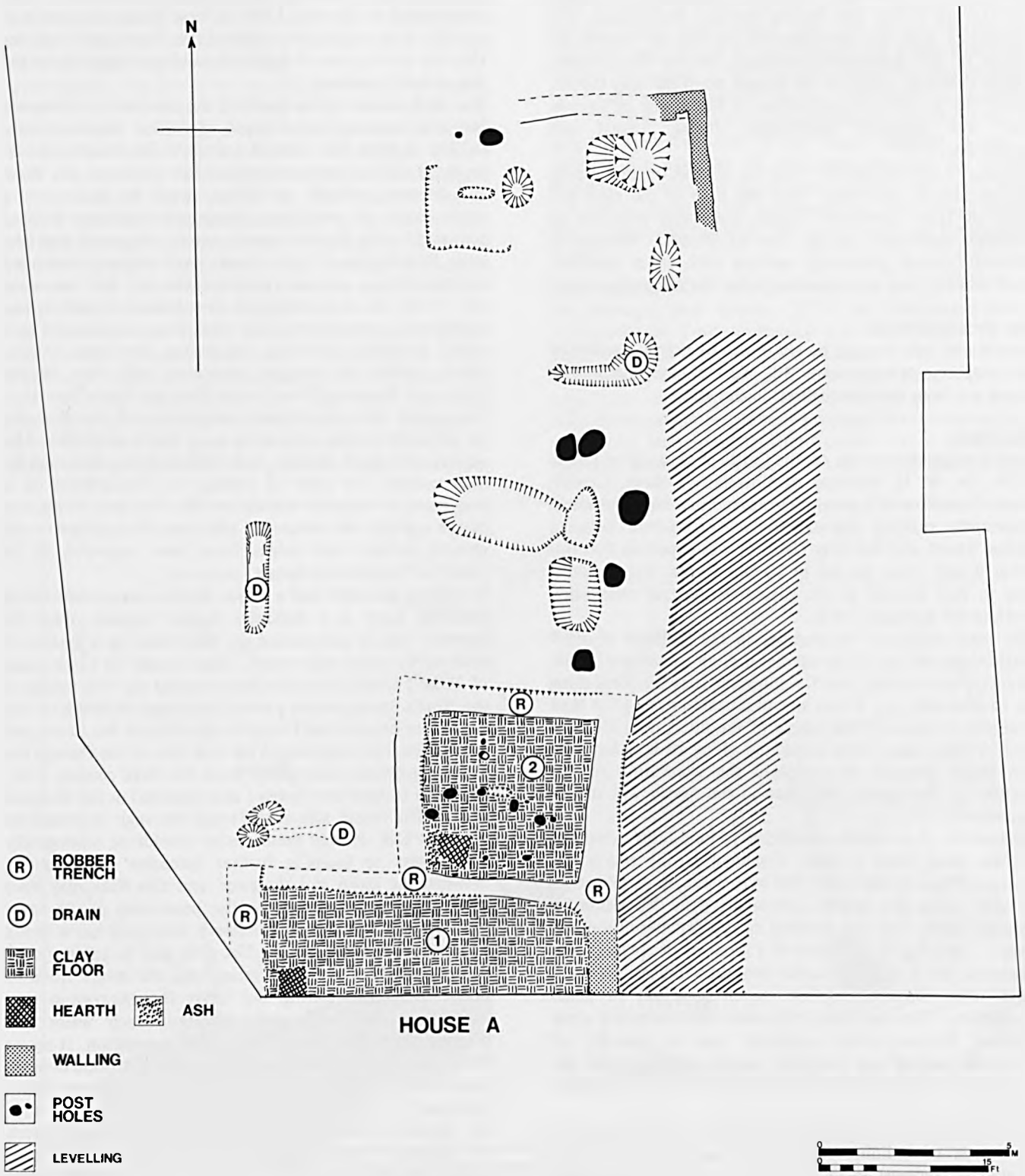

Fig. 6 House A, phase 1, showing site North

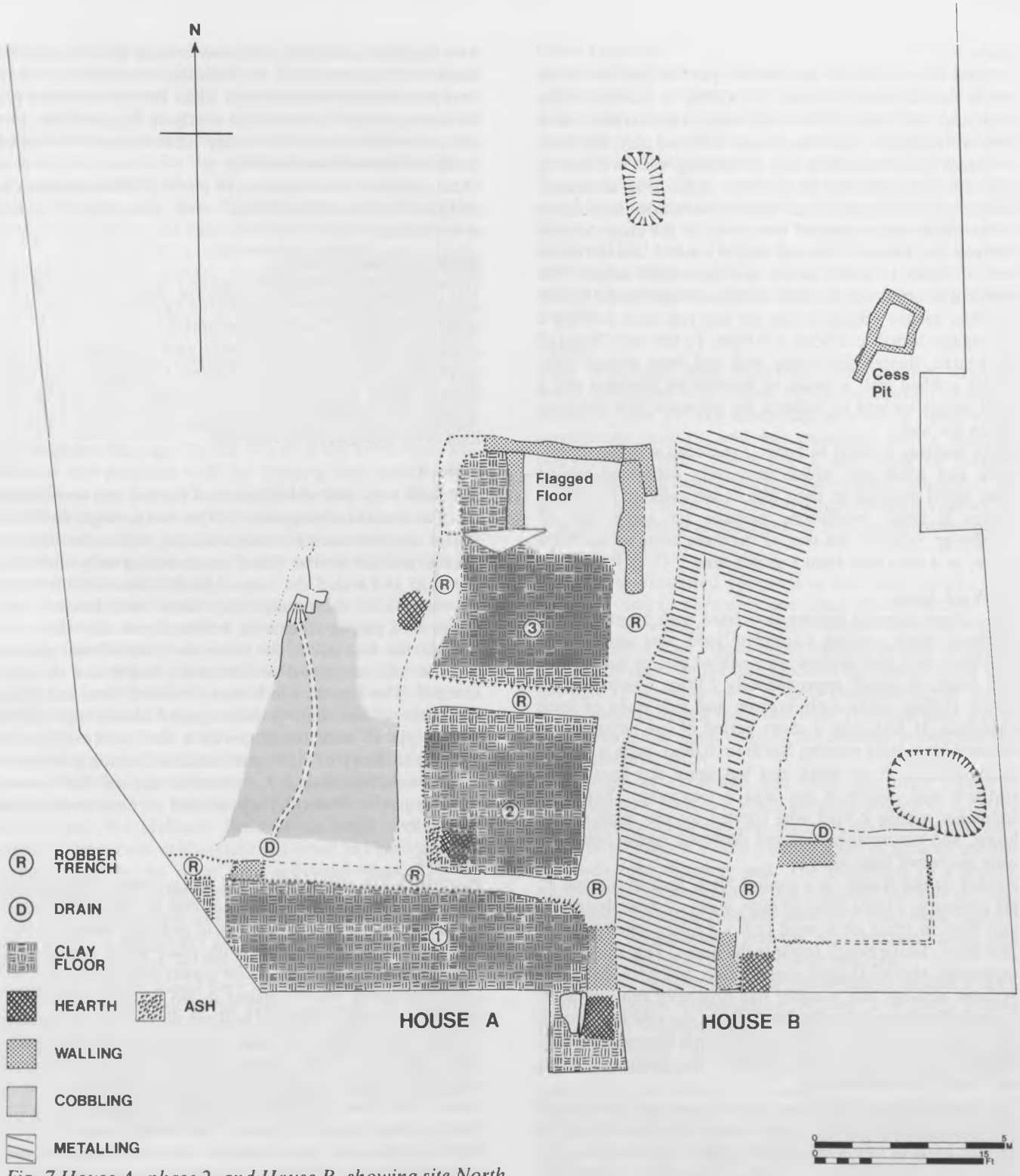

Fig. 7 House A, phase 2, and House B, showing site North

onto the natural ground surface with foundation 'trenches' nowhere in excess of 0.15m. deep. The main east wall lay within the disused Medieval ditch. Small sections of walling were preserved in only two places, with a maximum preserved height of 0.35m. and width of 0.45m. Given the amount of post-demolition stone robbing that had taken place on the site, it proved impossible to say whether the building was of half-timbered or total stone construction.

Room 1

The larger of the original two rooms, which fronted onto Old Market Street to the South, measured 8.20m. x a minimum of 2.80m. internally. The walls were rendered internally with plain white plaster, and the room was floored with red clay. The clay floor was very thin and undulating in places, suggesting much wear, though its clean condition and an almost complete absence of introdden debris would seem to imply the presence of other flooring material protecting it during much of its life.

Very few internal features were recognisable in the room at this phase. The most important was a damaged hearth (0.40m. x 0.50m. preserved) in the south-western corner of the room. This was constructed of squared sandstone blocks (c. 0.15m.) laid in red sand, and edged with slabs c. 0.05m. thick and between 0.20 and 0.25m. long, to form originally a neat rectangular hearth with long narrow edging stones. This technique was used elsewhere in the building during both phases. The hearth had originally extended some 0.60m. further West, as indicated by burnt sand visible in the section, and it is probable that it extended through the original west wall of the building into a chimney.

Room 2
Situated to the rear of the eastern part of the first room was a second, smaller room (c. 4.40m. x 4.30m.). This room also had walls which were rendered internally with plain white plaster, and was floored with red clay; the floor was again much worn and very undulating, with evidence in this case of re-patching in different clays. Thin accumulations of ash and charcoal had been trodden into the hollows. In the south-west corner of the room, in the angle formed between the western external wall of room 2 and the north wall of room 1, was a hearth and associated ashpit. The hearth was again constructed of squared sandstone blocks and long narrow edging stones set into red sand, forming a rectangular hearth c. 0.95m. x 0.90m. To the rear (West) of the hearth, though the house wall had been almost completely robbed out, a series of water-worn boulders and a small ashpit seemed to indicate the presence of a chimney within the wall.
Other features internal to room 2 included a series of post-holes and small pits which frequently contained ash or other burnt material in their fills. It seems likely that room 2 was a small workshop, perhaps for some sort of metallurgy, lying to the rear of the main living room of the house; or it may have been a service area.

The Yard Areas
The earliest external feature associated with house A was a slab-lined drain, cutting a trodden 'yard' area and running East-West into two shallow, stone-filled pits or soakaways. The drain, of which approximately 2.00m. was preserved, was c. 0.40m. wide with bottom and side slabs of local sandstone. It had only a short period of use before being replaced by a drain running North (c. 0.30m. wide x 2.50m. long), shallow at its south end but again slab-lined at its northern end, where it ran into a soakaway. These two drains lay within a yard area formed by the angle of the house, and presumably removed domestic waste; few finds were recovered from either.
Further to the North, in a second 'yard' area to the rear of the property, a third drain (0.60m. wide x 2.86m. long) ran East-West in front of a small (c.8 x 4.50m.) open fronted 'cart-shed', facing South towards the house. This third drain, apparently also of flagged construction, had been disturbed by later activity, but possibly had originally run westward towards the line of the Medieval ditch; the rubble filling of the upper levels of the ditch would have formed a natural soakaway. This presumably provided the drainage for the rear 'yard' and out-building.
The building lying within the rear yard area had been much damaged by later activity. Two courses of stone remained, forming parts of two walls at right angles to each other. The north wall was 0.38m. x 1.54m. long, that to the East 0.38m. x 3.63m. The west and south walls, and a possible internal partition, were represented only by a change in ground level within the building; the south side may never have been fully closed. The building may have been stabling, though no positive evidence was recovered for this interpretation, and it seems more likely to have been some sort of open-fronted store house or cartshed.

Other Features
Only a limited number of other features on the site could be definitely associated with the first phase of occupation of House A. The most definite of these was an associated group of pits and post-holes lying immediately to the North of Room 2, and sealed by later construction work. The pits may have been primarily rubbish pits; but as the fill of one contained clean sand, and all the final fills contained a high percentage of small rubble, in addition to domestic refuse, it is possible that the pits may either have had some function associated with the building of House A, or may have been dug and deliberately filled for use as soakaways before the construction of the overlying flagged floor. The pits contained pottery and a clay tobacco pipe bowl dating to the mid-seventeenth century.
Other rubbish pits belonging to phase 1 were cut into the surface of the northern 'yard' area, and sealed by later re-surfacing.

House A, Phase 2 (Fig. 3)
During the mid-seventeenth century some change in the status of its occupants was reflected by extensive modifications to House A. Two extra rooms were built on, and the original rooms and the yard areas were refurbished. A new room was built to the West of room 1, fronting on to Old Market Street to the South. Very little of this room was available for excavation, and it was not possible to gain any idea of its dimensions or function.

Room 1
The main west wall and fireplace of room 1 was demolished, and the room extended some 1.20m. to the West. The floor in this area was used for mortar-mixing before the wall was rebuilt, and the mortar 'floor' extended partially under the new wall and sealed the original hearth. Some of the worst undulations in the original clay floor were levelled with rubble and plaster fragments before a new clay floor was laid. At the east side of the room, the external wall was cut back to half its original width, and a hearth and chimney inserted. The hearth, which measured c. 0.90m. x 1.30m., was again of the characteristic squared blocks with edging stones type of construction, with a flat slab (c. 0.55m. x 1.10m.) in front of it. It was contained within a fireplace surround which included decorative use of flat stones, forming jambs. The chimney seemed to have been added externally.

Room 2
In room 2, the plaster appeared to have been stripped from the walls, and the debris used to level up the original worn clay floor before a second floor of red clay was put down. The walls were re-plastered with plain white plaster. The original hearth in the southwest corner remained in use, the new floor being laid up against it. No features actually cut this floor, though a series of hollows developed, presumably through wear. Some of these were patched with different clays; in others, thick deposits of ash, charcoal, and small coal and cinder fragments accumulated, finally covering most of the floor. This would suggest a modification rather than a change of use for room 2, the activity concerning the hearth continuing and perhaps increasing, while other processes may have been removed to room 3.

Room 3
On the area immediately to the North of room 2 a large room (4.50m x 6.20m.) was constructed, partially overlying a series of earlier pits, which were filled in and levelled up with domestic refuse and rubble. Approximately two-thirds of the walls and surfaces within the room had been completely robbed out, and it proved impossible to identify to which occupation phase the southern part of the room belonged; but the major construction work on the northern part of the room certainly belonged to phase 2.
Parts of three walls remained in situ; these were parts of the north and east external walls of the building, and an internal partition wall running North-South. The earlier, east wall was originally a property boundary wall continuing North from the first phase of the house. It was butted by the north wall of room 3, (three courses preserved, 0.30m.

x 0.50m. wide) again constructed of local sandstone and river boulders, but with mortar instead of clay bonding. The area bounded by these walls had in the previous phase been occupied by a series of pits, which were variously infilled with domestic refuse and building materials in order to level up the area for the construction of a well-laid floor of sandstone paving. (Plate 3)

The paved floor (2.50m. x 3.00m.) was bounded to the North and East by the external walls previously described, and to the West by a clay-bonded partition wall (four courses preserved, 0.50m. x 0.60m. wide), which was constructed of local sandstone and river boulders, and incorporated some lumps of mortar. This wall was 2.10m. long, and at its south end butted up against a re-used triangular monolithic fireplace bresummer, which extended from the southwest corner of the paved floor to the robbed-out west wall of the room. A small area of paving had been added at the southwest corner of the bresummer to straighten the edge. To the North of the bresummer and West of the partition wall no flooring was present. The paved floor was bounded to the South only by a final row of well-laid paving stones, with no sign of a robbed-out wall or partition on this side. The rest of the room to the South appeared to have been floored only with beaten earth or at the most a thin skim of clay.

Very few internal features were present in this large room other than those described above. Externally, traces of burning immediately outside the west wall seemed to represent a hearth or chimney-base going through the wall, which had been mostly destroyed by later stone robbing.

The interpretation of the function of this room proved very difficult, as few finds were recovered from its surfaces. It was also impossible to tell whether it was separate from the rest of the house, or whether access to it was gained from the work room to the South. The room was probably heated, and the well-laid floor at its north end would appear to have been deliberately put down as a hard-wearing surface, possibly for some light industrial usage. Though there was no drain in this floor, it is possible that the underlying pits (which were filled with building debris) could have acted as soakaways for any surface water resulting from such processes as the tempering of metal, or even laundering, which would have drained from there into the rubble fills on the line of the Medieval ditch. The partition wall could have divided off a small store-room which did not require such a solid floor; or, if the wall did not extend as far as the ceiling, it could instead have formed part of the support for a substantial work surface or even a tank built against the north-east corner of the room.

The Yard Areas

During the second phase of occupation of House A, the yard which lay in the angle of the building was made up with chippings of the local micaceous sandstone, and surfaced with river cobbles laid in a base of red sand. The cobbles were expertly laid, and contoured to form a curving drain 12.50m. long, which ran North to a well-constructed stone-lined drain and soakaway (Plate 4). The area of yard around the soakaway was resurfaced more crudely with angular stones at a later date. It was not possible to determine the exact extent of the cobbled yard, as it had been severely damaged at the edges during the demolition of the building and later.

At some time during the second phase of occupation the small building in the yard area to the North went out of use and was demolished to foundation level. The area was then levelled-up with successive dumps of clay, gravel and sandstone fragments. Several rubbish pits were cut through this crude surface.

Other Features

Towards the North of the excavated area a random group of rubbish pits contemporary with the occupation of House A had been dug. It proved impossible to assign these with any certainty to either of the specific occupation phases. Probably also belonging to this period was a group of six 'bean-trenches' which were unfortunately partially truncated by a mechanical excavator during the initial stripping of the site. These trenches were approximately 1.30m. long, between 0.20 and 0.75m. wide, and 0.10 and 0.25m. deep, and were curved in profile. They were set c. 0.08m. apart and were singularly reminiscent of modern runner-bean trenches.

Dating

Very few finds were recovered from usefully stratified levels associated with either of the occupation phases of House A. The pottery assemblage as a whole dated to the seventeenth century, and was associated with a group of clay tobacco pipes which had a date range of between 1620-1680. The date of the rebuilding and extending of the house should fall in the mid-seventeenth century, given the date of demolition as indicated by features described below.

House B (Fig. 3)

House B as excavated appeared to have been smaller than House A, and to have only one phase of occupation. Two sections of walling (c. 0.70m. thick) remained, again constructed of river boulders and roughly dressed sandstone, but in this case bonded throughout with mortar rather than red clay. Fragments of a re-used Romano-British quernstone were recovered from one wall. The main west wall of the building was again constructed actually within the line of the Medieval ditch.

The house as excavated had only one main room, (a minimum of 7.10m. x 3.50m.) partially divided by a timber partition into front and rear areas. In the front, south area, a hearth (0.90m. x 1.00m.) constructed of squared cobbles was built into the west wall. The possibility of a second, north-south timber partition was indicated towards the East, as though a single-roomed structure had been divided according to function, perhaps into kitchen, living and sleeping areas. All were floored with red clay.

Immediately outside the main north wall of House B lay a drain of flagged construction, (4.00m. x 0.30m.) leading East into a V-shaped gully (1.00m. wide x 1.30m. deep) which continued East beyond the excavated area. The wall and drain had been cut through by a large rubbish pit which marked the destruction of House B.

Thirteen metres North of House B lay a rectangular structure (1.00m. x 0.85m.), built of sandstone walling preserved to a height of three courses (0.50m.). A narrow drain ran through the north-west corner towards the line of the Medieval ditch to the West. The fill of this feature was stained with organic matter, which may indicate that the structure was used as an earth closet situated at a suitable distance from the house.

The Metalled Alleyway

Between the two Post-Medieval houses lay a metalled alleyway or access, 3.00m. wide, and excavated for a length of 20.00m., which followed the central line of the Medieval ditch northwards across the site. The metalling had two phases, and was laid down on dumps of clay, rubble and domestic refuse.

The original metalled surface was laid after the construction of both houses, and was probably contemporary with the extension of House A, though this was not clear owing to the robbing of the east exterior wall of that building. The

surface consisted of carefully laid and compacted gravels and sandstone fragments, and was constructed with a double kerb of water-worn boulders. Each kerb contained a raised metalled 'pavement' strip adjacent to each building; the metalled area between was 0.15m. lower and would have acted as a drain. (Plate 5)

In its second phase the alleyway was levelled up and re-metalled, again with gravels and sandstone fragments, to form a continuous surface between the two houses. This seemed to suggest that an original 'pedestrian-only' access had been later modified to take wheeled traffic.

Houses A and B, Demolition

The two houses appear to have come to an end simultaneously. Both were demolished and much of the building stone was removed, leaving spreads of stone and tile chips, wall plaster and mortar sealing the floor levels, particularly those of House A. North of this building debris the area was 'levelled' with dumps of household rubbish. From both the building debris and the household rubbish a total of seventeen clay tobacco pipe bowls was recovered, dating between 1620-1680.

Following the demolition of House B, a large pit was cut through its east-west wall and external drainage system, and filled with quantities of domestic refuse, including mid-seventeenth century pottery. One coin of Elizabeth I and one of either James I or Charles I were recovered from this pit; it also contained eight clay tobacco pipe bowls with a date range from 1630 to 1660.

The evidence from the coins and clay tobacco pipes, together with the pottery from these contexts, indicates a demolition date for the two houses between 1650-1680.

The Documentary Evidence

It has not proved possible to locate definite documentary evidence concerning the site in the early Post-Medieval period. No relevant information exists in the Parish Records for Usk. A burgage roll of 1630 gives 19½ burgages on Old Market Street, but unfortunately no indication of where each is located, nor sufficient detail of the occupation of the owners or tenants to offer a comparison with the archaeological evidence. Other references occur (e.g. in the Llangibby Castle papers) concerning burgages in Market Street and Old Market Street, dating between 1521 and 1613, but again giving insufficient detail to make a positive identification. Further work, perhaps as part of a Town Survey such as that recently published on Cowbridge[6], might result in more positive identification.

Conclusions

During the early Post-Medieval period the site was occupied by two houses. The earlier, House A, was probably constructed c. 1620, and extensively remodelled in the mid-seventeenth century, before being demolished in the later seventeenth century. No definite conclusions concerning the occupation of the inhabitants could be drawn, though it seems likely, from the character of the rooms as described above, and from the evidence of the finds (see below), that some sort of minor industrial process such as metalworking was being carried on.

House B, slightly later in construction though demolished at the same time as House A, gave no indication that it had any function other than that of a dwelling house.

The assemblage of finds associated with the occupation and demolition of the two houses, in particular the quantity and types of imported pottery, would seem to indicate that the occupants of both houses enjoyed a fairly comfortable standard of living.

The fact that it was impossible to recover the complete ground plans of the houses, together with the amount of later stone-robbing, made any close comparison with the houses of rural Monmouthshire, as described in 'Monmouthshire Houses' (Fox and Raglan, 1954), very difficult. House A in particular cannot be satisfactorily related to any of the regional styles described by Fox and Raglan. House B, however, is possibly comparable with the two-roomed style described in Fox and Raglan Vol II as characteristic of the Monmouthshire region.

Later Post-Medieval

After the demolition and robbing of the two seventeenth century houses, the area was levelled off with rubbish and building debris, and abandoned for a time.

During the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries at least two small V-shaped drainage ditches (c. 1m wide x 1m. deep) crossed the site from North to South. The first of these, which was located at the west end of Trial Area 1, incorporated a circular sump, 0.90m. x 1.00m. deep. Both features contained finds dating to the eighteenth century.

The second small ditch lay towards the East of the Site, and ran from North to South across the length of the excavated area, cutting the remaining footings for the east-west wall of House B. The drainage system incorporated a large sub-rectangular feature, 8.00m. x 2.00m. x 1.25m. deep, which was fed by the northern section of ditch and drained by the southern section. The sub-rectangular feature contained some evidence of silting, as if by standing water, but nothing was recovered to indicate that its function was anything other than either for water storage or flood drainage, possibly in association with some agricultural use of the land. Finds from the fill of this feature dated predominantly between the mid-seventeenth and mid-eighteenth centuries.

Apart from these two drainage systems, other evidence of later Post-Medieval activity on the site was confined to rubbish pits, again of mid-eighteenth century date.

On Coxe's map of Usk (1800), the site at 10 Old Market Street is shown as pasture, with no standing buildings.

Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

At the beginning of the nineteenth century a large Georgian town house was constructed immediately to the West of the excavated area, which then formed its garden. Features belonging to this period included cobbled paths forming part of a formal garden, which were patched in places before being partly removed when the southern half of the area was turfed to form a lawn. Also associated with the occupation of the present building were a number of rubbish pits, and a circular soakaway, 3.00m. in diameter x 2.50m. deep, filled with rubble.

The town house, once known as Plas Mawr but now merely 10 Old Market Street, was in the possession of the Addams Williams family (descendants of Roger Williams and Sir Trevor Williams mentioned earlier) in 1818, and was sold by them in 1864, repurchased later, and finally re-sold in 1930. It passed through several hands before being bought by Pontypool Rural District Council in 1962, for use as a Local Office. Since the Local Government re-organisation of 1974 the property has been owned by Monmouth District Council.

List of Main Features commented on in the Text.

The Medieval Ditch: 150 containing 295, 315, 338, 619, 637, 638, 690, 691, 693, 695
Upcast: 064, 103, 210, 600

House A Phase 1

Remaining walls: 102, 276
Rob trenches: 079, 080, 090, 230, 248, 249, 256, 261, 279
Clay floor room 1: 262
Hearth room 1: 277
Clay Floor room 2: 111, 262
Hearth room 2: 073
South yard 'surface': 105, 268
East-West drain complex: 129, 131, 144, 145
North-South drain: 251, 252
'Cartshed': 677
Pit group North of room 2: 276, 303, 305, 306, 307

House A, Phase 2

Mortar mixing floor: 271
East side hearth: 416
Clay floor room 1: 226
Clay floor room 2: 074, 075, 100, 226
Walls room 3: 247, 259, 260
Paved floor room 3: 246
Hearth, room 3: 290, 299
Cobbled yard surface: 065, 223
Soakaway: 302
Levelling material, North yard: 620, 626, 627, 658, 678, 683

House B,

Reminaing walls: 071, 078, 240
Robbing: 072, 089, 234
Hearth: 269
Clay floor: 077
Partitions: 068, 088, 288
Drain: 070
V-shaped gully: 250, 267
Rectangular outhouse: 602, 675, 688, 707

The Metalled Alleyway

First surface 106, 139, 284
Second surface: 099, 270
Later Levelling dumps: 076, 081, 083, 138, 242

Demolition

Spreads of debris: 056, 057, 061, 062, 101, 224, 235, 243
Large rubbish pit: 087, 207

'Bean Trenches': 628

Later Post-Medieval

East drainage ditch 004, 011
Sump 015
West drainage ditch 063, 086, 212, 217, 603
Subrectangular feature 214, 228

Nineteenth Century

Garden paths: 053, 066, 208
Soakaway: 227, 254

THE MEDIEVAL TOWN DITCH — THE SEDIMENTATION

by S. J. N. Tomson, B.A., Dip.Sci.Arch.

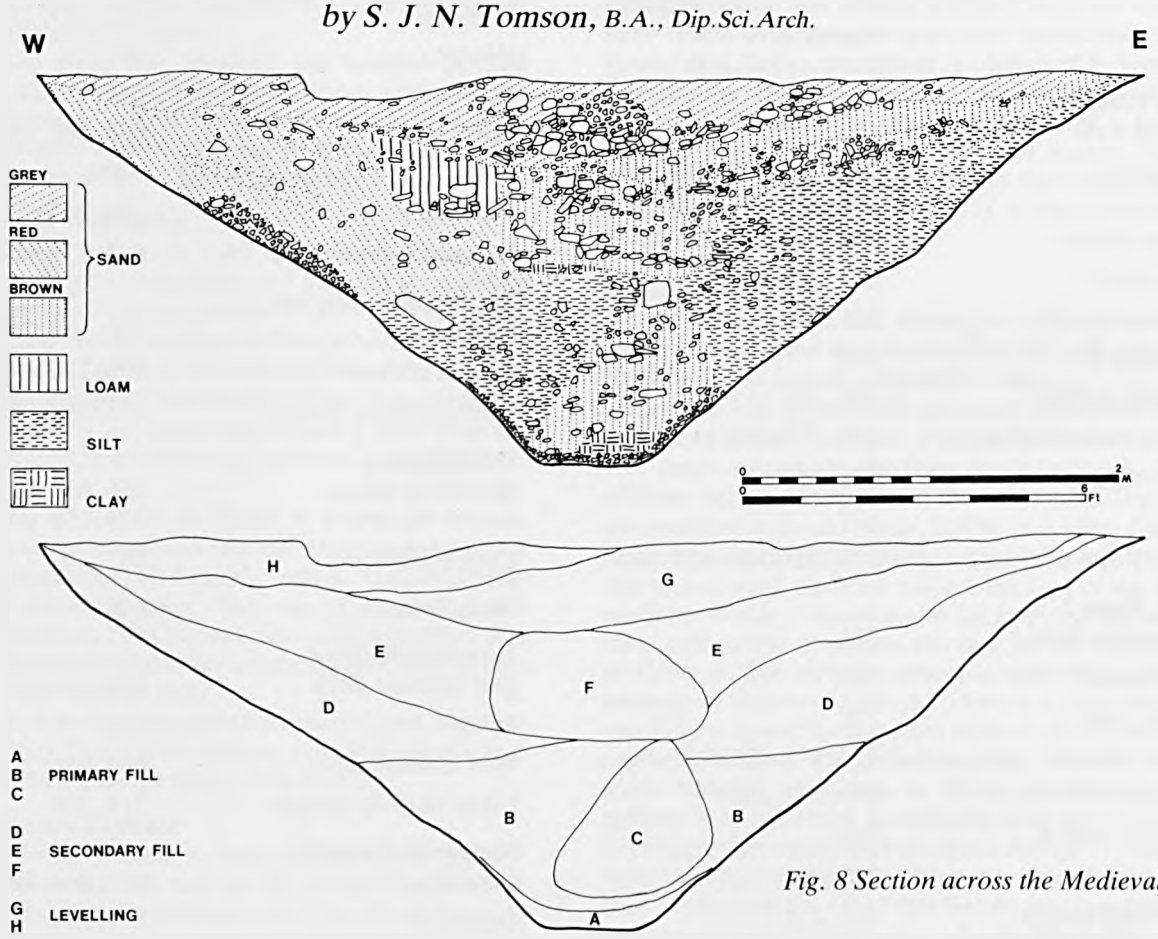

Fig. 8 Section across the Medieval ditch

Primary Sedimentation (A, B, C)

The lowest material within the ditch was gravel (A), derived from the substratum through which the ditch was cut. This contained a certain amount of organic staining, indicating that it represented the earliest man-induced activity within the ditch.

True sedimentation commenced with the deposition of a large volume of silt grade material with low-angle bedding, to a depth above bottom of 0.90m. (B). This reddish brown silt was probably derived from the action of running water washing fine material from the interstices of the gravel and depositing it in the bed. The silt is a water-borne material deposited under steady flow conditions.

Following the deposition of the silt, hydrological conditions changed catastrophically. A large cross-sectional area of densely-packed gravel consistent with a saltation bed load type of deposit was cut into the silt forming a major stream bed deposit (C). A deposit of this type would have been left by a very fast-flowing body of water with a high sediment-carrying competence. A severe short-lived flood would fulfil these conditions. The gravels may be derived from the naturally-occurring beds of gravel through which the ditch is cut. Major flooding would erode material from the natural gravels and redeposit this allochthonous material further downstream.

Secondary Sedimentation (D, E, F)

The secondary cycle comprised a wider, shallower bed formed by the top of the primary sediments. Tranquil laminar flow was represented by a wide, thick (maximum 0.86m.) bed of red sandy silt with a few disassociated pebbles. This silt was in turn cut by a core of compact gravel (F) representing a second flood spate in comparable conditions to the primary flood deposit (C).

The secondary sedimentation sequence was sealed by a series of tips representing the dumping of rubble or levelling up material at a time when the ditch had gone out of use. This material included quarried Llanbadoc limestone (a type not indigenous to the immediate environs of the site), sand, slag, building rubble and domestic refuse (G, H).

Although only two flood deposits were represented in the ditch fill as excavated, it cannot therefore be assumed that only two floods occurred; the erosion of sediment or the clearance of the ditch by man could mean that many more took place during the period of use of the ditch which are not represented in the archaeological record.

The sequences of primary and secondary fills were all deposited by running (not standing) water, suggesting that the ditch cut through the contemporary water table and was therefore always wet. Imbrication in the gravel cores indicates that the water was flowing southwards; this is confirmed by the surveyed levels along the bottom of the original ditch cut. The comparatively short length of the ditch and its gentle gradient (approximately 1 : 500) are not consistent with the natural flow required to result in the type of deposition described above. It must therefore be assumed that at least twice in the history of the ditch it experienced turbulent bank-full conditions resulting in heavy flow type deposits. In view of the known history of flooding in the town of Usk, these conditions are consistent with the interpretation of the ditch as part of a flood relief system similar to an open land drain.

THE POTTERY

Introduction

This report consists of a general discussion of all the main pottery types present in the Usk assemblage, including the more recent material. Similarly the catalogue is designed to present a selection of the finest examples of as many different types as possible. A more detailed analysis of the material from the period of occupation/destruction will appear in a forthcoming volume of 'Medieval and Later

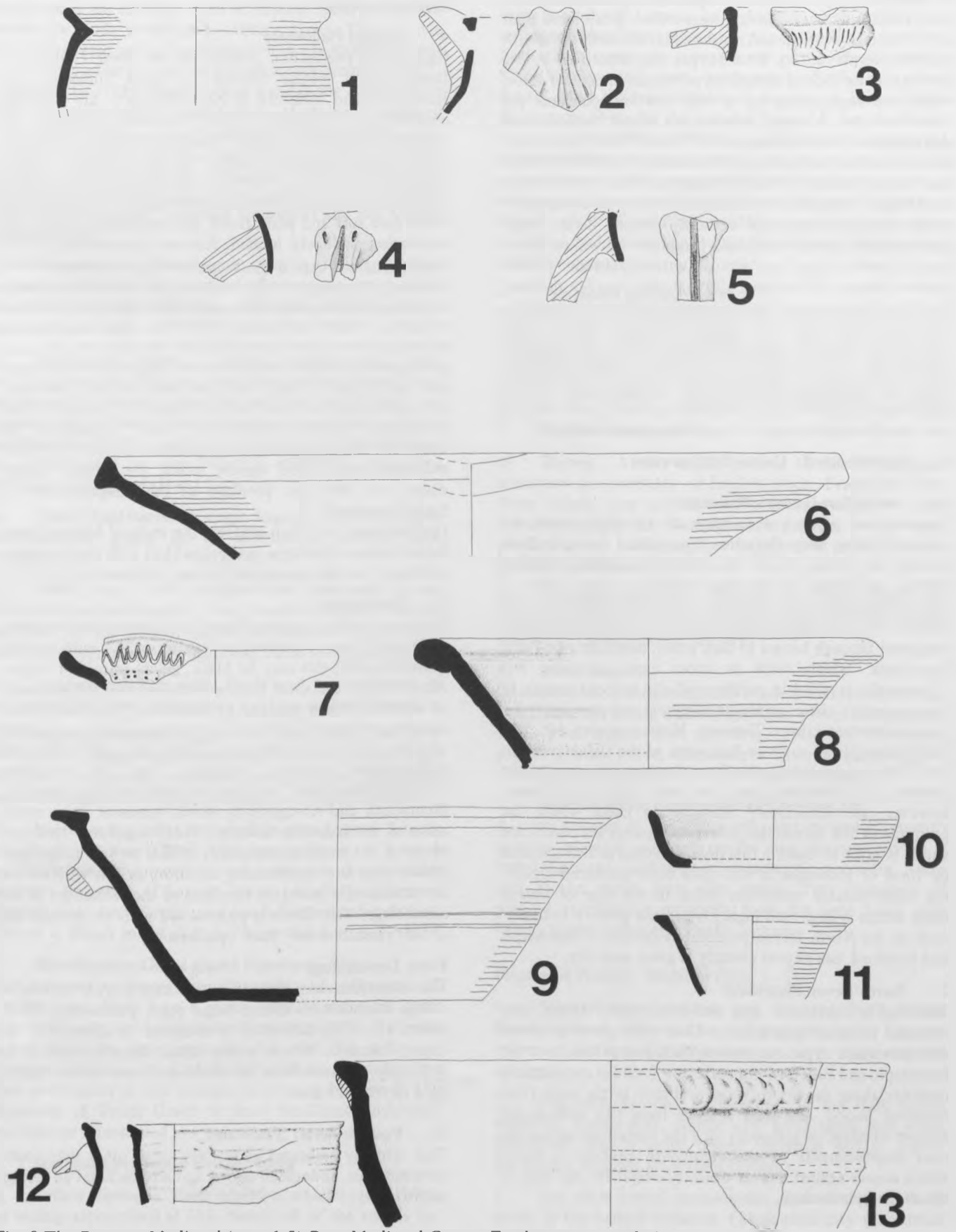

Fig. 9 The Pottery, Medieval (nos. 1-5) Post-Medieval Coarse Earthenwares, scale 1:4

Pottery in Wales', along with a comprehensive list of the clay pipes and makers marks (see below p.

Special thanks are due to Mr. J. M. Lewis of the National Museum of Wales and Mr. D. H. Evans of University College Cardiff for their help in the preparation of this report.

A. Medieval

Only the town ditch yielded medieval material in any quantity, but a small amount of residual pottery occurred in many of the post-medieval deposits. Imported products, both English and continental, were noted. Bristol and Ham Green pottery were present; in the ditch fills both thirteenth and fourteenth century Bristol types were identified. A few sherds may be Bristol imitations of French imported wares, which are represented by a very few monochrome jug fragments and a single polychrome sherd, probably all deriving from the Saintonge area of South-West France. It is likely that the assemblage also contains representatives of the South Somerset pottery industries, which would have been easily brought out through the port of Bridgwater. South Somerset types are certainly present in the early post-medieval period although products known to be of North Devon origin are almost entirely absent. In the relative absence of medieval kiln material from South Wales, local products are not easily identified with any certainty, but it is reasonable to suppose that the bulk of the assemblage, which is characteristically orange or grey with much sand, was brought from no great distance. Certain other of the Usk examples are considered to be of Malvernian origin but this attribution probably only reflects one closely-studied aspect of a wider regional tradition.

B. Post-Medieval: Coarse Earthenwares

1. Local/West Country Plainwares

This category covers a wide range of utilitarian vessels, the majority being deep flatwares. Specialised forms include baking or roasting pans, candlesticks, colanders, chafing dishes, and items of distilling apparatus. The fabric is characteristically buff through to red and contains many small and a few larger quartz inclusions. Glazes vary from yellowish through brown to dark green, depending on firing conditions, which were in most cases oxidising but occasionally resulted in partly or wholly reduced vessels. In some respects these products resemble pottery from the South Somerset kilns – Donyatt, Nether Stowey etc., and it is reasonable to suppose that some of the Usk plainwares may have originated in the West Country, in view of the presence of slipwares from the same area; distinctions, however, are notoriously difficult to make where the products of the vernacular pottery industries are concerned and it is safer to assume that unless a vessel is distinguished by form or technique it will have been produced locally, the most notable exception being in the case of coastal trade where a large and highly organised pottery industry, such as the North Devon production centres of Barnstaple and Bideford, can export cheaply in great quantity.

2. North Devon Plainwares

This highly distinctive and well-documented fabric only occurred in small quantities at Usk; both gravel-tempered and gravel-free types are represented. The products of the Barnstaple and Bideford industries are found in considerable quantity along the South Wales seaboard in the early Post-Medieval period, and their absence from Usk reflects the relative expense of transport into the hinterland before the road improvements of the eighteenth century; a factor which argues against a West Country origin for the bulk of the slipped plainwares.

3. Slip-Decorated Plainwares

Fabrics and forms are similar to the "local" plainwares. Decoration consists of trailed strokes, dots, squiggles etc., repeated at regular intervals. These designs seem to be mostly non-representational. The glaze is frequently clear (brown) or may be darkened; the slip is white. Earthenwares decorated in this style were produced in all areas of the country from the seventeenth century onwards; there is no reason to suppose that the examples from Usk were not locally produced.

4. Slipped Plainwares

Established production centres in the West Country – Donyatt and Nether Stowey in South Somerset, and Barnstaple and Bideford in North Devon – are generally credited with these types, purely on stylistic grounds. The majority are decorated with designs executed in sgraffito; in the Usk examples this mostly consists of simple repeating patterns around the ledge-rims of the flatwares, which comprise the greater part of the assemblage. The fabric is in every case soft and pinkish-red, the colouring dull and the decoration shallowly incised, features characteristic of the South Somerset pottery industries[7]; in contrast North Devon types are generally bright yellow with dark, deeply incised sgraffito decoration, and the fabric harder fired, frequently under reducing conditions. Some of the Usk examples have copper sprinkled into the glaze resulting in a green speckled effect; while this is recognised as a technique used at Donyatt, it may well have been imitated elsewhere. In some examples this has resulted in the overall colour being green rather than yellow; other "greenwares" on which the slip is very thinly applied have a partly or wholly reduced fabric; these vessels, which are mostly chafing dishes, are similar to products of the Rangway kilns in South Somerset[8].

One fragment of a dish imitates the style of Staffordshire/ Bristol yellow slipwares (see below) but with the technique reversed – in this case swirled brown and black on white[9].

5. Blackwares

This is a generic term used here for all coarse earthenwares, plain and very occasionally slip-decorated with a dark coloured glaze; this may be black, green, purple or brown. Almost all of the small hollow-wares fall into this category, as well as a small number of flatwares. These are almost certainly of local origin and may alternatively be classified with the local or slip-decorated plainwares (see above). The hollow-wares probably originate from the numerous "Midland Blackware" production centres such as Hereford, Monmouth and Abergavenny which represent the continuation of the sixteenth century "Cistercian ware" tradition. Many of the small hollow-wares, which include mugs, tygs, posset cups and candlesticks, are more or less vitrified but are structurally probably identical to the remainder of the assemblage. The fabric is pink or red with much sand and closely resembles the "local" plainwares.

Form Terminology

The term *flatwares* is used to describe a wide variety of coarse earthenware forms: large pans, pancheons, bowls, dishes etc. This definition is designed to include all the larger forms to which a specialised function cannot be definitely assigned. Most are multi-purposed vessels known by a variety of names.

C. Post-Medieval: Finewares

This category embraces all pottery types other than coarse earthenwares, as detailed above, but also includes all foreign imports.

1. Continental Pottery

The proportion of exotic imports is normally small compared with coarse earthenwares, and the post-medieval assemblage from Usk is no exception. While they can be much more closely dated than the coarsewares, their very scarcity makes this dating unreliable.

a) **Rhenish stonewares** (cf. Fig. 10 Nos. 85–89). These form the largest group of imports; most are Frechen/Cologne bottles or jugs. Raeren types with frilled bases are absent; basal sherds are all plain, with or without reeding. The two masks are both seventeenth century types. There is one bodysherd with part of an inscription in a central band; this type is considered to be of mid sixteenth century date[40]. There are two other sherds which exhibit the central band with acanthus leaves characteristic of sixteenth century type globular mugs and one fragment, perhaps from a mug, exhibits a small medallion depicting the head of a man wearing a ruff. One of the vessels has warped in firing, and other sherds exhibit surface flaws, perhaps indicating that these were "seconds" intended for export and not for the home market.[51].

b) **Westerwald stonewares.** Only a very few sherds are represented from Usk, both with incised and stamped decoration. All are chamber-pots or tankards decorated in monochrome blue.

c) **Martincamp flasks.** Several fragments of these Northern French products, which date to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, occurred on the site. Vessels are represented both in off-white and red hard-fired unglazed earthenware (Hurst Types 1 and 3), and in grey stoneware, unglazed except for one fragment which has a lustrous brown external glaze (Hurst Type 2).

d) **Other stonewares.** A single fragment from a Chinese porcelaineous ginger jar of seventeenth century date occurred.[12]

e) **Olive jars.** Both unglazed and internally glazed examples are represented. Two vessels account for the majority of the sherds; one is of globular form with a yellowish-green glaze, the other has a thin dark green glaze.

f) **Beauvais sgraffito ware.** There were two fragments of double-slipped dishes with green and blue stained decoration.

g) **Saintonge chafing dishes** (cf. Fig. 10 Nos. 90–91). Probably two vessels are represented; both belong to Hurst Type la, ? with eight knobs. They are glazed alternately green and yellow; the face decorations are highly debased.

h) **Maiolicas and other imported tin-glazed wares.** Among the tin-glazed wares from Usk (see below p.) are a number of exotic imports, mostly dating to the sixteenth century: fragments of Spanish lustre, Isabella polychrome, "cuerda seca" from Seville, and South Netherlands maiolica; part of a Dutch lobed dish has been dated to c. 1700.[13]

2. Miscellaneous Green-glazed Finewares

This category embraces a small number of greenwares of various types. Most have a glossy, slightly iridescent glaze and white body, but an imitation Frechen jug (No. 92) with a buff body has also been included with this group. A sixteenth century date is likely for all these examples, but their provenance is less certain; some may be French but fragments of Tudor Green or from the Dorset industries may also be represented.

3. Staffordshire/Bristol Earthenwares

a) **Yellow slipwares.** These products, which begin c. 1680, are widely represented at Usk. Nearly all of the vessels are press-moulded dishes, with combed, trailed or applied slip decoration. A few examples are reversed with yellow decoration on a blackish (red slip) ground. Many of the sherds have a pinkish tinge to the buff fabric, and a few are deep pink, more or less striated with buff.

b) **Capacity Mugs** (reeded straight-sided tankards with buff bodies and mottled brown glazes). This ubiquitous type, with its characteristic iron-stained lead glaze, occurred in much smaller quantities than the yellow slipwares. A very few sherds appear to belong to jugs rather than tankards; other forms seem to be the exception to the rule. Both these types are common on post-medieval sites in South Wales, and were produced in Staffordshire and Bristol from the late seventeenth century. A Bristol origin seems more likely for the material from Usk, but the fabrics themselves are often difficult to distinguish. Among the thinner-walled vessels, the denser, more homogenous fabrics are considered to be characteristic of Staffordshire products, while the coarser, granular fabrics are thought to point to a Bristol origin[7]. Considerable variation occurs between these extremes, and among the heavier flatwares these distinctions do not seem to apply.

4. Tin-glazed Earthenwares

The number of vessels represented is small and the majority of the sherds small and undiagnostic. Most of them could be either English or Dutch in origin; they belong almost exclusively to the seventeenth century. Only one or two sherds – from Bristol – can be attributed with any certainty.

5. English Stonewares

a) **Brown.** A very small number of sherds of brown stoneware are probably of English origin. Fragments from three vessels have the distinctive white underglaze wash characteristic of the Nottingham industries, which began production c. 1690; another fragment is probably from Fulham (established 1671).

b) **Staffordshire white.** Fragments of three bowls and one plate are represented; these products date to the second quarter of the eighteenth century.

6. Creamwares

Chamber-pots, plates, mugs and bowls are all represented in small numbers in the assemblage. Most pieces are undecorated. Two sherds with mottling typical of Whieldon's products were noted. Creamwares were produced widely during the second half of the eighteenth century.

7. Modern White Earthenwares/Porcelains etc.

A small amount of late eighteenth century and nineteenth century material occurred on the site, the majority of it transfer-printed earthenwares, stonewares, porcelain, lustre and Mocha wares were also noted. Two fragments of painted earthenware, probably from the same bowl, may belong to the earlier eighteenth century.

Illustrated Pottery: Medieval (Nos. 1–5)

1. Storage vessel/cooking pot in hard buff fabric, heavily gritted with quartz and probably other igneous minerals. Surfaces slightly micaceous, with some external sooting.

2. Jug with bearded bridge-spout in the Ham Green tradition. Fabric soft, orange with some small dull white inclusions, also a little quartz. Internal surface highly micaceous, external glaze clear (brown).

3. Jug with broad strap-handle, slashed with a sharp knife, in the Bristol tradition. Fabric pink/grey with much

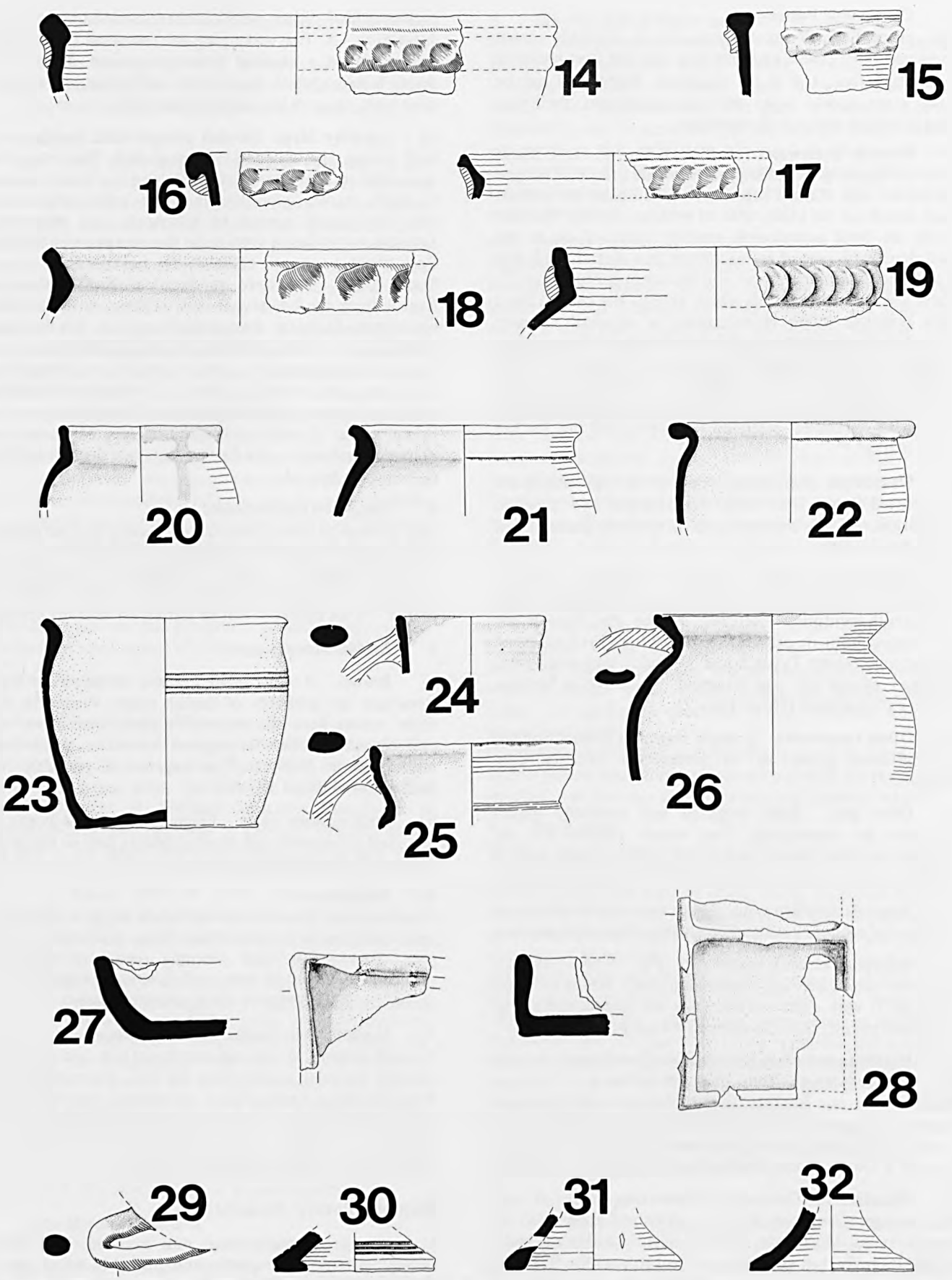

Fig. 10 The Pottery, Medieval Coarse Earthenwares, scale 1:4

quartz and some ? ferruginous inclusions. Glaze clear (brown/pale green).

4-5. Rod-handles stabbed three times; the central stabbing has been extended longitudinally to open both handles almost to their full depth. No. 4 has a coarse homogeneous pink/grey fabric with some small quartz grains visible, No. 5 has orange surfaces with a dark grey core in which quartz grains predominate; the internal surface is micaceous. Glazes are clear (greenish-brown), of good quality (No. 4), patinated (No. 5).

Post-Medieval: Coarse Earthenwares

Local/West Country Plainwares (Nos. 6–37)

No. 7 is decorated with a crude design executed in sgraffito, unique among the Usk plainwares.

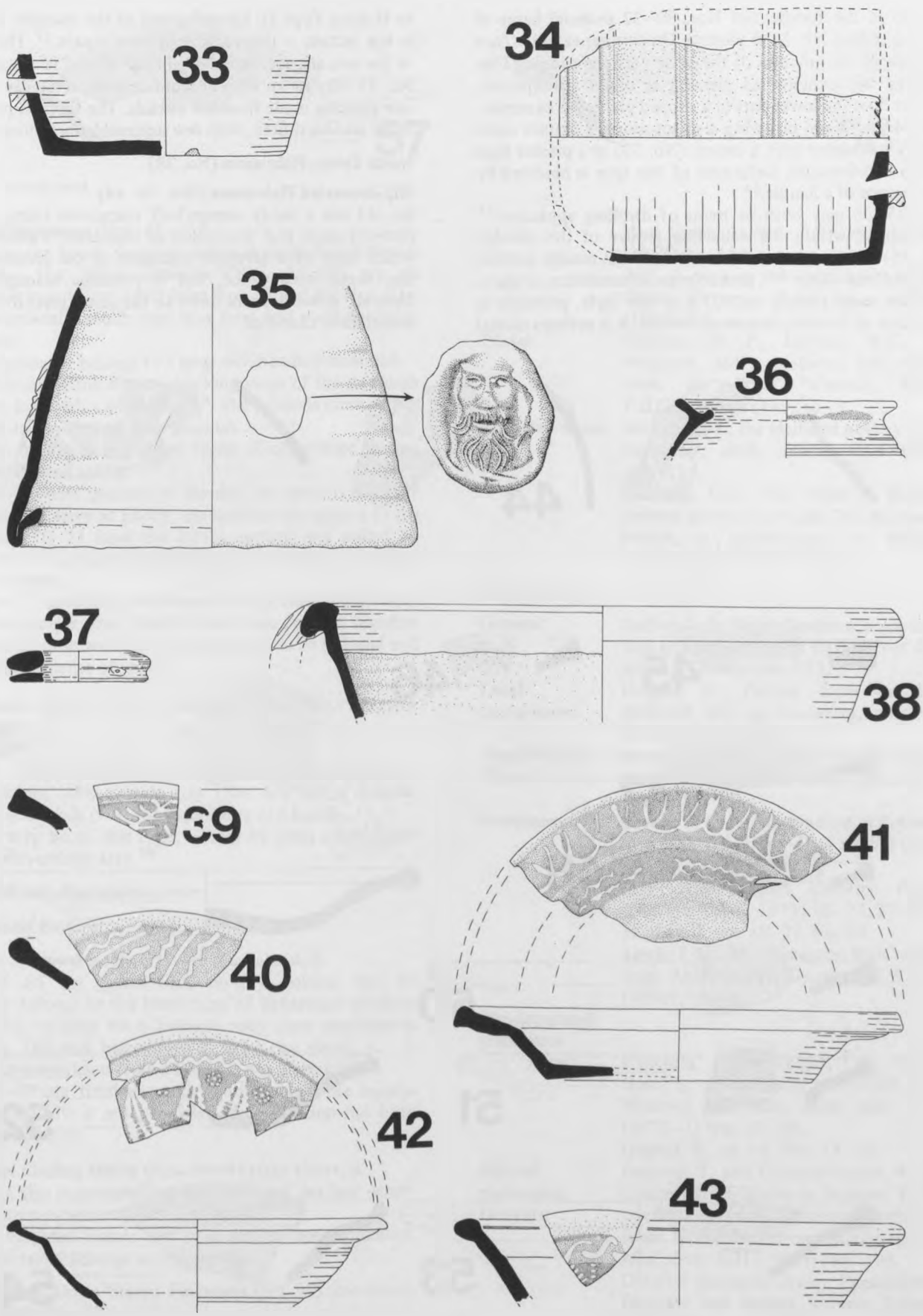

Fig. 11 The Pottery, Post-Medieval Coarse Earthenwares, scale 1:4

No. 9 has a coarse homogeneous buff fabric with calcareous inclusions, a purple internal wash with clear overglaze. The external wash is paler.

No. 11 has a hard grey fabric with a purple wash and patchy green internal glaze.

No. 12 is very hard fired, similar to some of the blackwares; the glaze is similar to No. 11 but much higher (both sides). The wall of the vessel has been pushed in where the crude loop-handle was applied.

Nos. 13–19 illustrate the wide variety of reinforced rims from the assemblage, both on large pans and jars.

No. 28 is similar to 27, but has a ? central partition, perhaps for use as a vegetable dish rather than for meat, or as a trough for animal feed.

No. 29 is the handle and Nos. 30–32 pedestal bases of chafing dishes; No. 31 is pierced. On another example (not illustrated) the junction of the body with the pedestal base survives, but exhibits no piercing as might be expected; neither does the lower part of a slipped plainware example.
No. 34 is unusual in having a spigot-spout, a feature more usually associated with a cistern (No. 33) or a pitcher than with a barrel-costrel. Definition of this type is hindered by the absence of a handle.[14]
Nos. 35–36 may both be items of distilling apparatus;[15] the deposit within the collecting groove of the alembic (No. 35) was analysed and found to contain mainly metallic lead and lead oxide[16] – probably an accumulation of glaze; the face mask (drawn at 1:2) is of fine style, probably in imitation of German stoneware bottles; it is perhaps closest to Holmes Type II. Identification of the cucurbit (No. 36) is less certain – this vessel may be a pipkin.[17] The fabrics of the two are not dissimilar, though No. 35 is coarser.
No. 37 may be an item of kiln furniture. It sits flat and has one piercing made from the outside. The fabric is pink/grey, dense and hard-fired, with few noticeable inclusions.

North Devon Plainwares (No. 38)

Slip-decorated Plainwares (Nos. 39–44)
No. 44 has a sandy orange/buff micaceous fabric, a clear (brown) glaze and decoration of haphazard trailed strokes which have fired greenish. Opinions on the provenance of this vessel have varied, but it probably belongs to the Donyatt industries and dates to the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries.

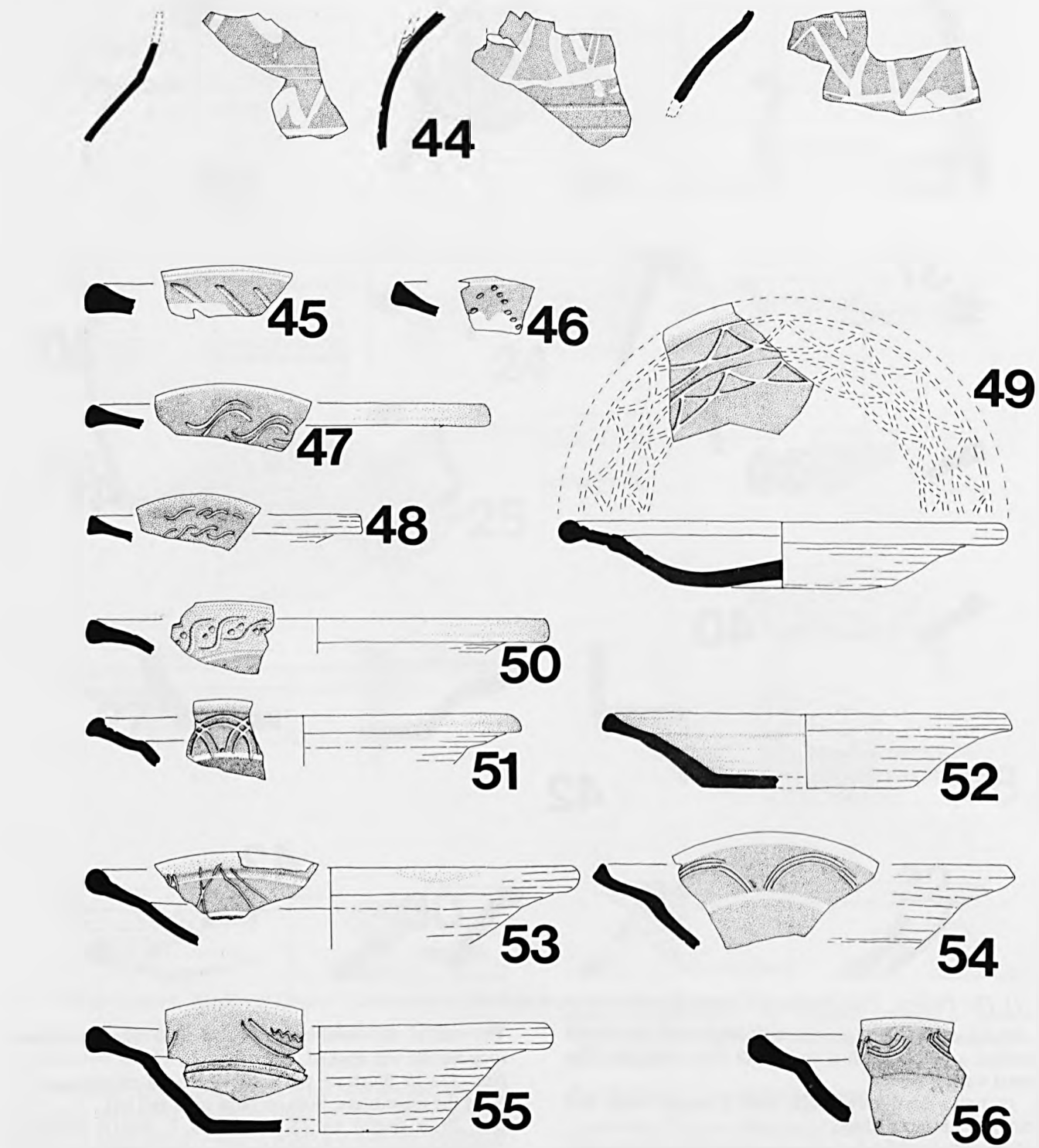

Fig. 12 The Pottery, Post-Medieval Coarse Earthenwares, scale 1:4

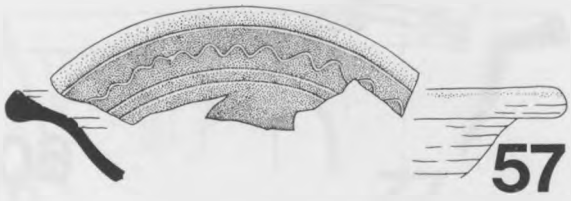

Fig. 12 continued

Slipped Plainwares (Nos. 45–75)
All are in the South Somerset rather than the North Devon tradition. The larger flatwares (Nos. 45–60) are all decorated in sgraffito, apart from Nos. 52 and 59. Nos. 62–63 are unusually small; they may have had some specialist function.
No. 64 probably belongs to a large two-handled meat dish.
No. 67 imitates the Raeren drinking mugs of the sixteenth century, but with a plain base.[18] The fabric is more or less reduced and the (over) glaze greenish.
Nos. 68–75 illustrate the two forms of coarseware chafing dish represented at Usk.
Nos. 68–69 have sections of the rim cut away to leave the remainder to serve as knobs; the handles are applied to the rim. Nos. 70–73 have the knobs applied and pulled up from the rim; decorative thumbing is prominent on two of these examples.
Nos. 74–75 probably also belong to this category. In both types the simple strap handles have been pinched together to a greater or lesser extent. Fabrics tend to be reduced and the surfaces shades of green.

Blackwares (Nos. 76–84) (see also Local/West Country Plainwares)

Nos. 82–84 are candlesticks; two types are represented, a candle-holder with a wide tray (No. 83) and a double-trayed candlestick (No. 84) with traces of a handle.
No. 83 may be of this type, or may be from a handleless holder with a single tray.[19]

Post-Medieval: Finewares

Continental Pottery:

Rhenish Stonewares (Nos. 85–89) (see above, p.
Nos. 85–86 are seventeenth century bottles; No. 85 probably belongs to the latest type of Bellarmine (Holmes Type IX), or may be a Fulham copy (late seventeenth century). The neck has warped in firing (see above, p.). Part of an escutcheon from a bottle is not illustrated.
Nos. 87–89 are from sixteenth century mugs; the inscription on No. 89 is not paralleled.[20] Decoration has been drawn at 1:2.

Saintonge Chafing Dishes (Nos. 90–91) (see above, p.
No. 90 is also represented by one knob and the face decoration from another, both not illustrated.[21]
No. 91 has been burnt; part of a handle, not illustrated, almost certainly belongs to this vessel.

Miscellaneous Green-Glazed Finewares (No. 92) (see above, p. , cf. also No. 67)

Tin-Glazed Earthenwares (No. 93)
No. 93 is an arborello with monochrome blue-on-white geometric design. It may be either English or Dutch.[22]

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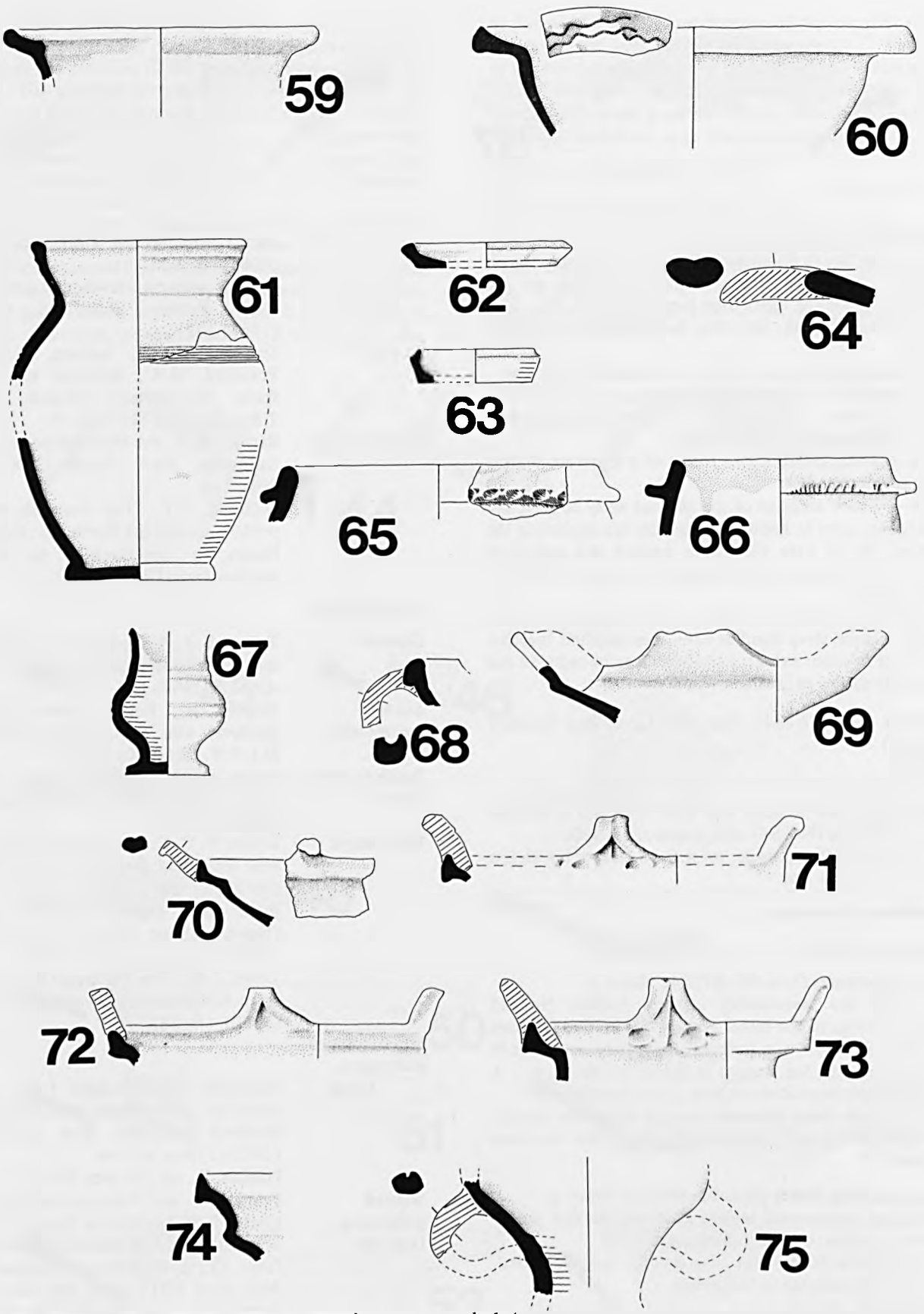

Fig. 13 The Pottery, Post-Medieval Coarse Earthenwares, scale 1:4

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Fig. 14 The Pottery, Post-Medieval Coarse Earthenwares (nos. 76-84). Post-Medieval Fine Wares (nos. 85-93), scale 1:4 except for nos. 85-89, 1:2

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Abbreviations

T.B.G.A.S. Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucester Archaeological Society.

M.L.P.W. Medieval and Later Pottery in Wales (Journal of the Welsh Medieval Pottery Research Group).

CERAMIC TILES

by J. M. Lewis

Fig. 15 The Tile, scale 1:3

Floor Tiles

1 Two joining fragments. 4-tile design, *cf.* white border along two sides only. One corner appears to have been deliberately chamfered. 21mm. thick.

2. (Not illustrated). Corner sherd; edges of underside chamfered. 21mm. maximum thickness. Pattern undecipherable.

Hard, brown/orange fabric with a grey core, containing little sand but some white clay, which appears as streaks in the fracture or as small pellets on the underside, which is unsanded and very smooth, as are the edges; there is no keying. The impressions are very shallow (approximately 0.5mm.) and the edges of the design in No. 1 are sunken through absorption of the slip, giving the impression that the design stands slightly proud of the surface. Very thin green/yellow glaze over a grey surface. Probably late fifteenth – early sixteenth century.

Roof Tiles (not illustrated)

1, 2 Two ridge tile fragments of a hard, laminated micaceous fabric, reddish buff in colour. Both are decorated with circular stamps (approximately 3cm. diameter) in the form of an 8-spoked wheel, the spokes raised, the interspaces sunken. One is white-slipped with a yellow glaze, the other has no slip, so that the glaze appears brown. Up to 15mm. thick.

3 Part of a ridge tile, from which the crest has been trimmed, shaped to form a rough hexagon of diameter 65mm. Coarse grey fabric with grey-green glaze. Medieval.

The objects commented on above are all from contexts of seventeenth century or later date.

THE CLAY TOBACCO PIPES

by D. J. Markell

The assemblage from Usk contains probably the best collection of seventeenth century pipes yet produced from a South Wales site, and should go a long way towards furnishing a detailed type series for the period in the eastern part of the region. A total of 180 bowls and part-bowls, 90 bowl fragments and 19 heels were examined, and 71 maker's marks were noted. A total of 166 items were classifiable, falling into 62 discrete types, but almost half of this number is represented by only one example each, which seems to indicate that some of the apparent differences may be the result of poor finishing. The great majority of the pipes fall within the date range 1630–80; Bristol styles predominate with Broseley types only appearing after c. 1660. This follows a similar pattern to that found on other South Wales sites, and is the apparent result of the Bristol industry's increasing preference for the more profitable American market at that time. Other sources, such as Gloucester and North Herefordshire, may be represented here, but in the absence of positive evidence these examples have been credited to Bristol. Similarly the Broseley style pipes may be from further afield – North Herefordshire is again a possibility, as there is no definite evidence to link them with Broseley itself.

Pipes were produced from a total of 64 separate contexts, of which only eight contained more than five datable items. These contexts included the general clearance and garden

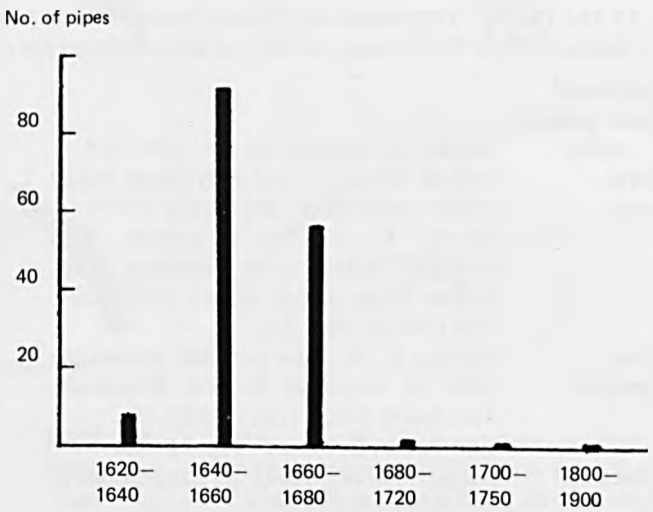

Fig. 16 The Clay Tobacco Pipes — histogram showing date range

soil levels, so dating of individual contexts by their pipe content should be treated with caution. For the whole site, however, the main period of deposition can safely be confined to the period 1630–80. The totals of pipes from each date bracket are as follows:

1620–1640	11
1630–1650*	51
1640–1660	42
1650–1670*	20
1660–1680	38
1680–1720	2
1700–1750	1
1800–1900	1

* These date brackets are as yet only tentatively established. For the purposes of the histogram (Fig. 12, above) the earlier bracket is included with the bracket 1640–60, and the later with 1660–80.

Illustrated Pipes Fig. 17

A selection of the styles best represented has been made for the purposes of this report, but a full corpus of types, together with maker's marks, will appear in a forthcoming volume of Medieval and Later Pottery in Wales.

Identification of the marks illustrated here appears at the end of the catalogue.

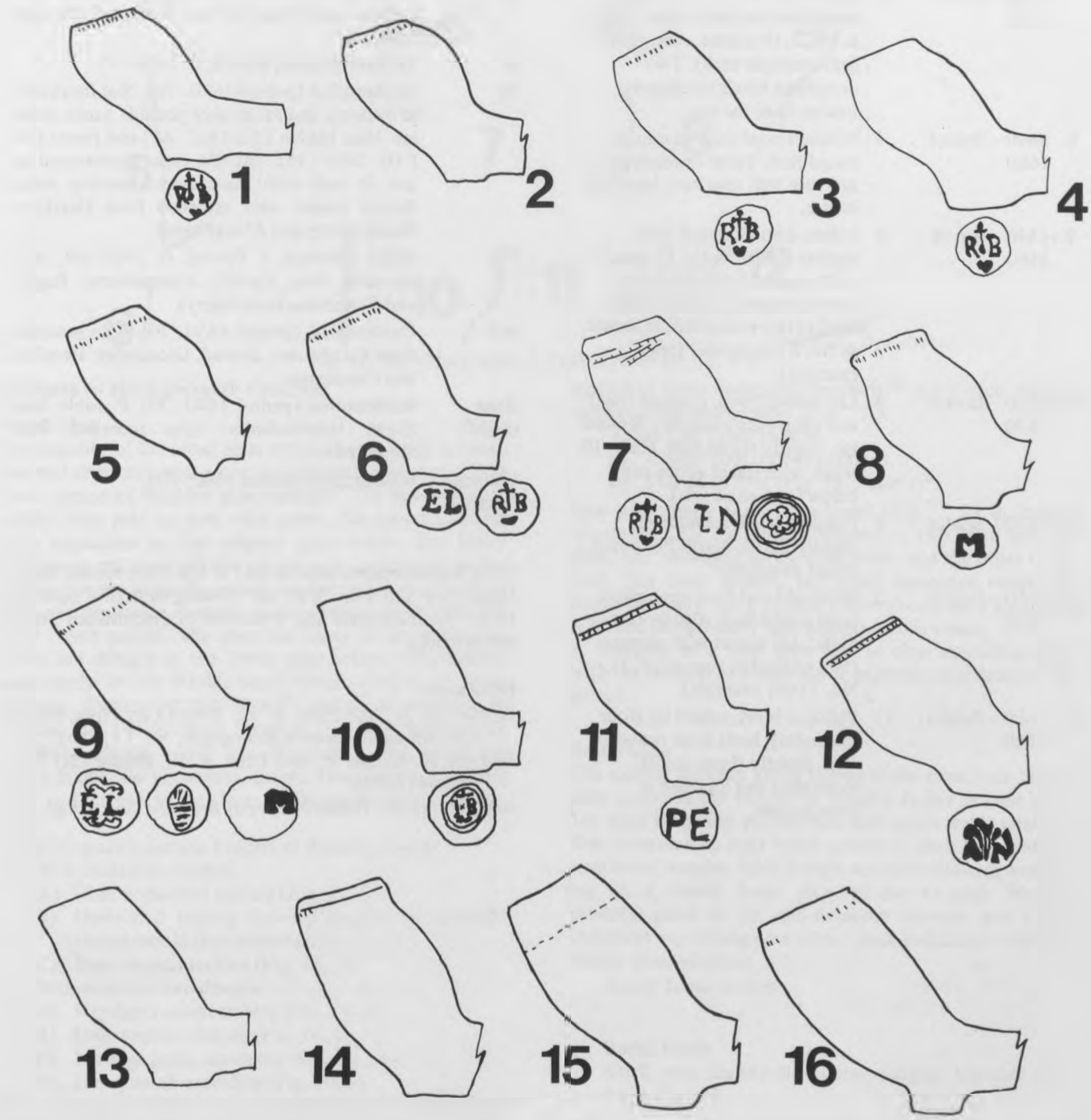

Fig. 17 The Clay Tobacco Pipes, scale 1:1

	Date	Style	No.	Details/Mark(s)
1.	1620–1640	Bristol	6	Polished bowl, round heel. Mark: RB incuse with dagger and heart (one example).
2.	1620–1640	Bristol	2	Polished bowl, small round heel.
3.	1630–1650	Bristol	5	Polished bowl, lop sided; roundish heel. Mark: as No. 1 (four examples).
4.	1630–1650	Bristol	10	Polished bowl, round heel. Mark: as No. 1 (seven examples).
5.	1630–1650	Bristol	4	Polished bowl, short stubby spur.
6.	1630–1650	Bristol	8	Polished bowl (most examples); round heel. Mark: as No. 1 (four examples), EL incuse (one example).
7.	1640–1660	Bristol	14	Polished bowl (one example); round heel, slightly flared. Mark: as No. 1, IN incuse, rose relief (one example each). Two unmarked bowls are slightly smaller than the rest.
8.	1640–1660	Bristol	4	Polished bowl (one example), round heel. Three examples are not very well trimmed. Mark: M incuse.
9.	1640–1660	Bristol	6	Polished bowl; round heel, slightly flared. Mark: EL incuse with scrolls above and below (one example), gauntlet incuse marks (two examples), M incuse, as No. 8 but smaller (one example).
10.	1650–1670	Bristol	4	Lip milled (two), grooved (one) and plain (one example). Roundish, slightly flared heel. Mark: IB relief, with leaves above and below (two examples).
11.	1650–	Bristol	4	Polished bowl, round heel, slightly flared. Mark: PE incuse (three examples).
12.	1650–1670	Bristol	5	Polished bowl (two examples), large round heel, slightly flared. Mark: AN incuse with plumes (two examples, rose relief, as No. 7 (one example).
13.	1660–1680	Bristol	11	Polished bowl, milled lip (four examples); heels from round to oval, slightly flared (most examples) and lopsided in several cases.
14.	1660–1680	Bristol	3	Oval or round heel, slightly flared.
15.	1660–1680	Broseley	2	Polished bowl. oval heel, slightly flared. Atkinson Type 2a.
16.	1660–1680	Broseley	2	As No. 15 but with round heel. Atkinson Type 2a.

Makers' Marks

RB	Richard Berriman, Bristol, fl. 1619–52. His marks cover the whole of his working period and have been recorded from many places in South Wales.
EL	Edward Lewis, Bristol, fl. 1631–50. Also recorded from Abergavenny, Cardiff and Swansea.
IN	Unidentified (period 1640–70). Illustrated in Jackson and Price, but no maker of this date listed.
M	Thomas Monkes, Bristol, fl. 1656–77.
IB	Unidentified (period 1630–70). Not illustrated in Jackson and Price; only possible names listed are John Bladen I (fl. 1657–89) and James Bull I (fl. 1665–75), but the types represented do not fit well with these dates. Possibly not a Bristol maker; also recorded from Hereford, Montgomery and Abergavenny.
PE	Philip Edwards I, Bristol, fl. 1650–69. Also recorded from Cardiff, Abergavenny, Raglan and Cosmeston (near Barry).
AN	Unidentified (period 1650–70). Also recorded from Cirencester, Stroud, Gloucester, Hereford and Cosmeston.
Rose (relief)	Unidentified (period 1640–70). Possible from North Herefordshire. Also recorded from Monmouth.
Gauntlet (incuse)	Unidentified (period 1640–60).

Other known makers represented at Usk were Flower Hunt, James Fox and John Wall, all working in Bristol between 1630–70; there were also a number of unidentified marks and symbols.

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THE GLASS

by Ruth Hurst Vose

The post-medieval glass was nearly all utilitarian, with very few examples of finer glassware. Almost all were in common green 'forest' or bottle glass, the majority of fragments being weathered, some to the point of total disintegration on touch. Most falls within a date range from the mid sixteenth century through the eighteenth century, with a few fragments from the nineteenth – twentieth centuries. By far the greatest weight and number of fragments are bottle glass. No complete vessels were recovered. The glass may be divided according to date, and those fragments which are not associated with the occupation of the site are not commented on here, though a full report is lodged with the excavation records.

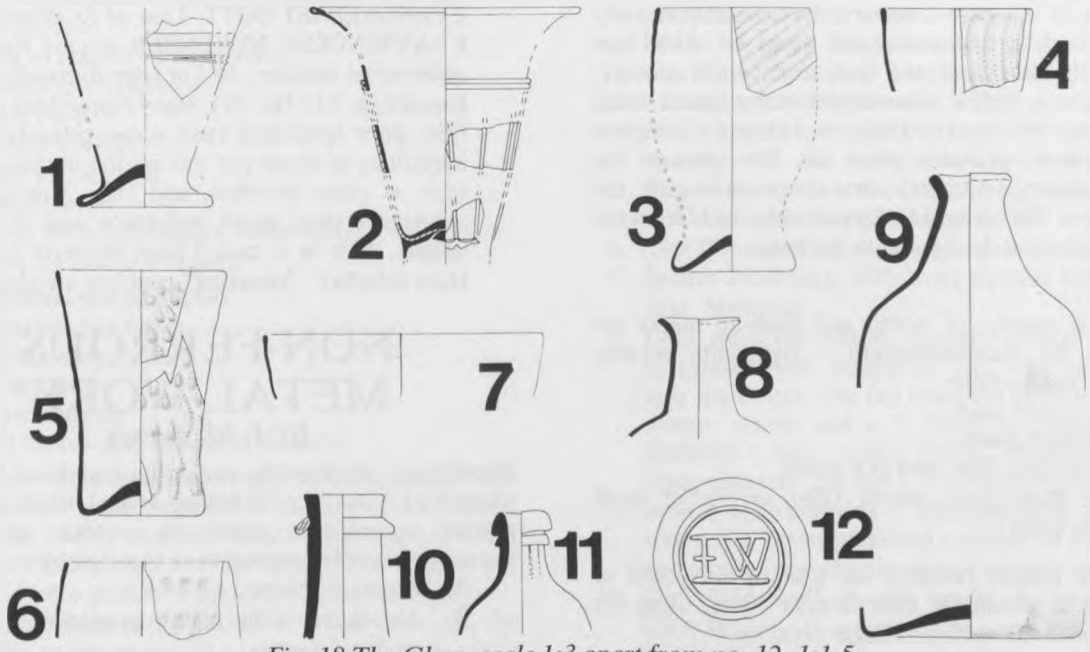

Fig. 18 The Glass, scale 1:3 apart from no. 12, 1:1.5

Sixteenth to Mid-Eighteenth Centuries

Vessel Glass

The majority of the vessel glass was probably made between the mid-sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries – the 'Late' period of Wealden glassmaking.[23] The glass ranges in colour from pale to dark olive green, the colour resulting from impurities in the original glass batch. The heavy weathering on some of the pieces may indicate an earlier dating, but the generally robust condition and good surface of most fragments despite some weathering favours the 1567–1618 period. The glass has many of the distinctive styles and designs of the forest glass makers who worked particularly in the Weald, Staffordshire, and other more outlying districts at this time,[24] and it is tempting to surmise that the products found at Usk were made at the St. Weonards (Hereford and Worcester) glass-house site which is only 26 kilometres distant. Glass of a very similar style and quality was made at St. Weonards from c. 1580–1620.[25]

Vessel fragments include beakers or drinking vessels:

1. With trailed decoration:
   - A) Plain horizontal trailing (Fig. 14, 1)
   - B) Horizontal trailing showing impress of vertically ribbed mould (not illustrated).
   - C) Plain vertical trailing (Fig. 14, 2)
2. With mould-blown designs:
   - A) Wrythen vertical ribbing (Fig. 14, 3)
   - B) Plain vertical ribbing (Fig. 14, 4)
   - C) Lozenge trellis moulding (Fig. 14, 5)
   - D) Honeycomb moulding (Fig. 14, 6)

The majority of the vessel fragments are from comparatively slim drinking glasses or beakers, though a few fragments represent other shapes which follow the general pattern of other forest glass products,[26] e.g. a wide, shallow straight-sided dish or bowl (Fig. 7,).

Vessel base types include:

a) Folded foot (not illustrated).
B) Pushed-in foot (Fig. 14, 1 and 3)*.

One particularly interesting vessel (Fig. , 2) in heavily weathered glass, has a base composed of two fused layers of glass, one belonging to the main body, and the other to the foot. The body section, and other associated vessel wall fragments, have thick vertical trailed decoration (see above). A folded rim probably also belongs to this vessel.

A fragment of a wine glass foot in clear colourless glass, with the remains of a stem knop, probably also dates to this period.

Bottle Glass

The earliest forms of bottle belong to the same Late 'forest' glass period as the vessels, or possibly earlier in some cases. The glass is usually pale to dark olive green and is relatively thin compared to later bottle products. Most fragments are weathered, ranging from a thick opaque yellowish weathering on a friable body glass, similar to early Wealden products prior to the mid-sixteenth century, and a light iridescent weathering on a robust glass, consistent with Late 'forest' glass products.

Bottle forms include:

Bottle Necks

Small with slightly flared rim, roughly trimmed (Fig. 14, 8–9).

*Association of these bases has been made for the purposes of illustration, and is by no means certain.

Bases

A) Circular with small kick (not illustrated).
B) Square with small kick (not illustrated).
C) Hexagonal with small kick (Fig. 14, 8).

Part of the base or walls of a case (?) bottle in very crude green glass with large seeds intruding probably belongs to the seventeenth century.

During the second half of the seventeenth century a considerable English bottle industry grew up, with simple free-blown shapes in thick bottle glass, having a kick below, a tall neck roughly struck from the blowing iron, and a string rim 6–12mm. below the mouth. Fragments from several vessels of this period occur at Usk, notably an early bottle neck with a low string rim (Fig. 14, 10), base fragments with kicks from the later seventeenth century, bottle necks, one with a down-tooled string rim, a small bottle neck with a string rim (Fig. 14, 11), and a complete base with a kick, probably from the first part of the eighteenth century. A bottle seal impressed with the encircled letters 'EW' (Fig. 14, 12) probably dates from the late seventeenth or early eighteenth centuries.

Pontil Marks

An interesting variety of pontil and push-up marks are displayed on the mid-seventeenth – eighteenth century bottle bases. They include:

A) Sand pontil mark.
B) Quatrefoil mark.
C) The blowing iron used as a pontil.
D) Plain glass-tipped pontil (also on earlier small bottle bases).

English bottle makers favoured the glass-tipped pontil or the blowpipe as pontil for their smaller wares, using the larger sand pontil for bottles of larger capacity.[27]

Window Glass (not illustrated)

Window glass fragments from the site, in a variety of green tints, are generally of poor quality with many fragments in a very friable state. All the flat glass is weathered, many pieces with an opaque black weathering, with the better examples having an iridescent sheen. Glass ranges from approximately 1–3mm. in thickness. Evidence of grozed edges occurs on many pieces where the glass has been cut into shapes ranging from slim diamond quarries to small square or rectangular panes. Fragments of two window glass rims give little indication whether the glass was produced by the crown or cylinder process, although a piece with elongated bubbles suggests the cylinder method. The window glass is probably of sixteenth/seventeenth century date or possibly earlier in view of the very bad condition of some fragments. A few comparatively thick fragments are possibly later.

THE COINS

by G. C. Boon

1. Elizabeth I, penny, privy mark *rose* (1565). Chipped but not much worn (North, 2001).
2. Elizabeth I, sixpence, privy mark *crescent*, 1587. Almost as struck.
3. Licensed farthing, James I, privy mark *lion passant guardant*, "Lennox round" type c. 1614 25 (Peck No. 80).
4. Fragment, similar (or Charles I).
5. Bristol farthing, 1652. A very fine example, beautifully patinated and only very slightly worn. Such coins are fairly common in South Wales and illustrate the trading relations with the great metropolis of the West (Williamson's Boyne, No. 12).
6. 'Cronebane Halfpenny', Associated Irish Mine Company. 1789, 'Payable at Cronebane Lodge or in Dublin'. (Dalton & Hamer, Wicklow, No. 27). Worn.
7. Nuremberg counter, pierced: *Obv.* Three crowns and three lys symmetrically about a central cinquefoil; *rev.* Reichsapfel in three-sided tressure. Rather battered, but legends in Lombardic lettering are apparently nonsense on both sides, as sometimes is the case. About mid sixteenth century, cf. Barnard, p. 222 under No. 82
8. *Cast* of another, 11.46g., thick. *Obv.* S. MARCVS EVANGELL IST GOTT, Lion of St. Mark; *rev.* HANS KRAVWINCKEL NVRENBER around Reichsapfel in ornamental tressure. Mid or later sixteenth century (cf. Barnard, p. 221 No. 79). Many Nuremberg counters are thin, poor specimens (and some, possibly, are merely imitations of those put out by the best-known makers such as Hans Schultes, and Hans Krauwinckel) but sometimes they occur well-made and of satisfactory weight. This is a cast; I have however noted one of Hans Schultes' "Venetian" counters weighing 8.7g.

NON-FERROUS METAL-WORK

by J. M. Lewis

Non-ferrous metal-work, consisting mainly of fragmentary objects of brass but including several items of lead and pewter, occurred in about 50 contexts, of which the excavator has called attention to three groups:

A House, A, phase 1.
B. Associated with main occupation of the post-medieval houses.
C Associated with the demolition of the post-medieval houses.

In addition, identifiable objects calling for some comment occurred in:

D Top levels of medieval ditch-filling.
E General post-medieval horizon.
F Post-medieval pits.

In the following summary the numbers are those given to the objects in the catalogue (below, p.).

A **Early post-medieval**
1 Gilt-bronze buckle
2, 3 Bronze buckles
Scrap metal (fragment of perforated brass sheet)

B **Associated with the occupation of the post-medieval houses**
Brass lace-tag
Bronze/brass ring or fragment of buckle
Scrap bronze or brass

The scrap consists of small pieces of bronze, and sheet-brass (some pieces perforated) cut with shears; some of the pieces have been folded. Maximum dimension of largest piece 6.5cm.

C **Associated with the demolition of the post-medieval houses**
4 Finger-ring with inscription
5 Fragment of the lid of a bronze lamp or censer. The larger part of this object came from a post-medieval drainage-ditch.

Finds from these contexts consisted almost entirely of fragments of scrap bronze or brass: seven fragments from sheets or strips of metal (maximum thickness 2.5mm.), including a

strip from the rim of a bowl, twice folded and measuring approximately 30cm., and a piece that had been used for repairing a sheet-brass vessel. Also a fragment of brass wire, some pins and a lace-tag, and a ring (diameter 27mm.) of brass wire (2mm. gauge).

D **Top levels of medieval ditch filling**
- 6 Bronze strap-end
- 7 Bronze knife-tang

E **General post-medieval horizon**
- 8 Lead steelyard weight
- 9 Bronze double-buckle
- 10 Bronze needle
- 11 Pewter disc
- 12 Ring of plaited wire (silvered)
- 13 Bronze spur fragment
- 14 Book clasp
- 15, 16 Bronze buckles
- Brass pin, silvered
- Brass thimble
- Scrap brass (including a folded strip, length 26cm., from the rim of a vessel).

F. **Post-medieval pits or ditches**
- 17 Purse-bar and frame
- 18 Cauldron leg
- 19 Book clasp
- 20 Drawer-handle
- Flat bronze ring (diameter 22mm.)

Of the 37 contexts containing bronze or brass, almost 50% included obvious scrap material – small pieces of sheet-brass with cut edges, small sheets or longer strips of brass that had been folded. Some of the identifiable objects, e.g. Nos. 5 and 15, also probably fall into the same category.

Brass lace-tags occurred in a total of seven contexts, the earliest dating to the upper fill of the medieval ditch; items of dress decoration were also found.

Brass pins were recovered from at least eight contexts dating from the early post-medieval period to the eighteenth century. They all have twisted-wire heads and could belong to any period from the mid-sixteenth to the early nineteenth century (Tylecote 1972, p. 183ff).

Fragments of lead comes from diamond panes occurred in levels associated with the occupation and demolition of the post-medieval houses, and also from the post-medieval horizon and other unassociated features. Unidentifiable lead objects and scrap were also noted from these phases, from contexts of possible medieval date and from contaminated Roman levels. A total of about 20 contexts contained lead objects or scrap; window lead occurred in approximately half of these. Much of the material is not identifiable, so that the proportion of 'scrap' may be considerably less than 50%; but identifiable lead objects rarely occurred in the same context as unidentifiable ones, which suggests the presence of small assemblages of scrap metal.

CATALOGUE

1. Gilt-bronze strap-end buckle, the bow ornamented with knops at the outer corners, with ridges between. 15mm. wide. Early fourteenth century. *Cf.* Fingerlin 1971, e.g. p. 75, No. 103.
2. Bronze double buckle. ? Post-medieval.
3. Bronze strap-end buckle (fragmentary). Approximately 31mm. wide. Thirteenth century. *CF.* Fingerlin 1971, p. 66, No. 52.
4. (Not illustrated). Finger-ring of pewter, probably with a high tin content, silvered. Plano-convex section, inscribed on inside: CONTINV FAITHFVL. Diameter 2cm., width 5mm. Seventeenth century.
5. Cover of a bronze censer or lamp, in two fragments (Plate 6). The lid was conical and is perforated by two rows of 'key-hole' openings. The rim is decorated with a repeating embossed design of circles alternating with a conventional leaf-pattern; the apex and the zone between the openings are decorated with sunken diamonds and triangles. The centres of the circles round the rim are pierced by rivets, and there were pairs of rivets at intervals round the edge of the rim in the spaces between the circles. The illustration shows a conjectural reconstruction.
   Height of larger fragment approximately 9cm.; thickness of metal, 1mm. ? Late medieval.
   Although it resembles the lid of a censer, in which similar openings (derived from the gothic window openings of the early, representational examples) frequently occur, the attachments round the edge would be superfluous in such a vessel.
6. (Not illustrated). Brass strap-end. 9mm. wide.
7. Bronze knife-tang, with three circular holes of varying sizes. Medieval.
8. Lead steelyard weight, crudely shaped to a roughly octagonal form; dished on top, with an iron ring let into the centre. The top bears the impression of a small rosette stamp and a ? heart in outline. Maximum diameter 6.4cm.; height 3.6cm. Weight 1086.9gm. (= approximately 2lb. 6oz.). ? Sixteenth century.
9. Bronze double-buckle. ? Post-medieval. The item illustrated is a better-preserved example of the same form, and comes from the nineteenth century soakaway.
10. (Not illustrated). Bronze needle, flattened and channelled into an H-section at the end to take the eye. Length 7.3cm., width at end 3mm.
11. (Not illustrated). Pewter disc (fragmentary), incised on one side with a pattern of radiating points. Diameter 3.3cm.
12. (Not illustrated). Ring of plaited wire, silvered, formed of three strands of two-filament twisted wire. Diameter 18mm. Presumably dress decoration intended for sewing onto fabric. Sixteenth – seventeenth century.
    Other small items of brass wire from the same deposit may also be related to dress. Similar twisted wire occurred in one of the undated pit deposits.
13. Bronze spur fragment. Fifteenth century or later.
14. Bronze book-clasp. Length approximately 8cm. Seventeenth century. *Cf.* Lewis 1968, p. 116, fig. 6.
15. Bronze strap-end buckle of pronged type. Maximum width 3.3cm. Second half fourteenth century.
    Cf. LMMC, p. 272 and Pl. LXXV. 2; Fingerlin, 1971, p. 114, Nos. 182 and 185–6.
16. Bronze strap-end buckle with plate attached. Maximum width 19mm.
17. Bronze purse-bar and frame, the frame having 11 eyelets (lugs cast as part of the frame and afterwards perforated) round its circumference on the underside. Maximum diameter 14.6cm. First half sixteenth century. Short-bar form, Type BI in *LMMC* typology (p. 167).
18. Bronze cauldron-leg, apparently a replacement cast onto the front of the original leg, which was shorter, and with a projecting foot. ? Sixteenth – seventeenth century.
19. Bronze book-clasp, with fragment of leather hinge attached. *Cf.* 14. Length 6.5cm. Seventeenth century.
20. Bronze drawer-handle. ? Seventeenth century.

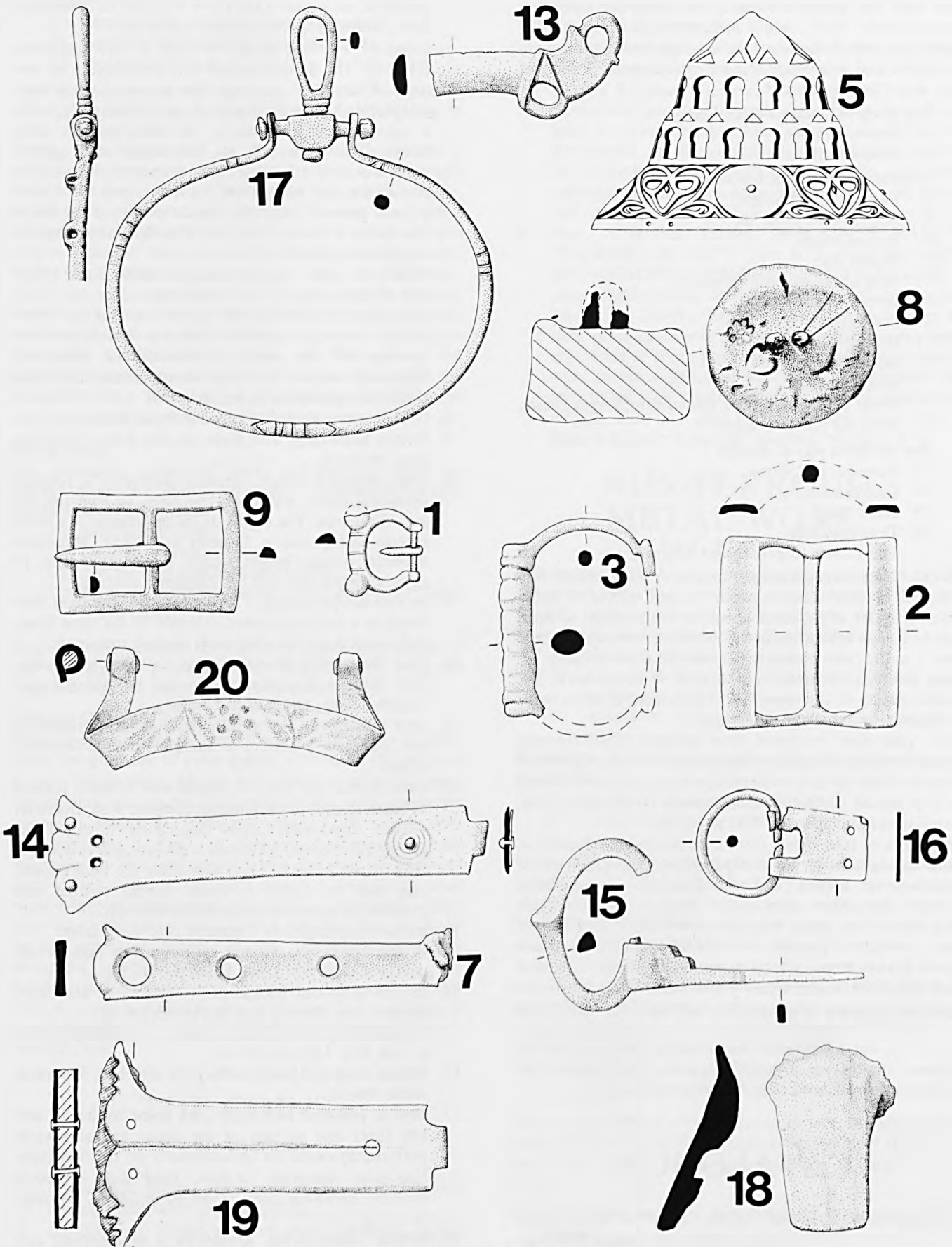

Fig. 19 The Non-Ferrous Metalwork, scale 1:1 apart from nos. 5, 8, 17, 18 - 1:2

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IRONWORK

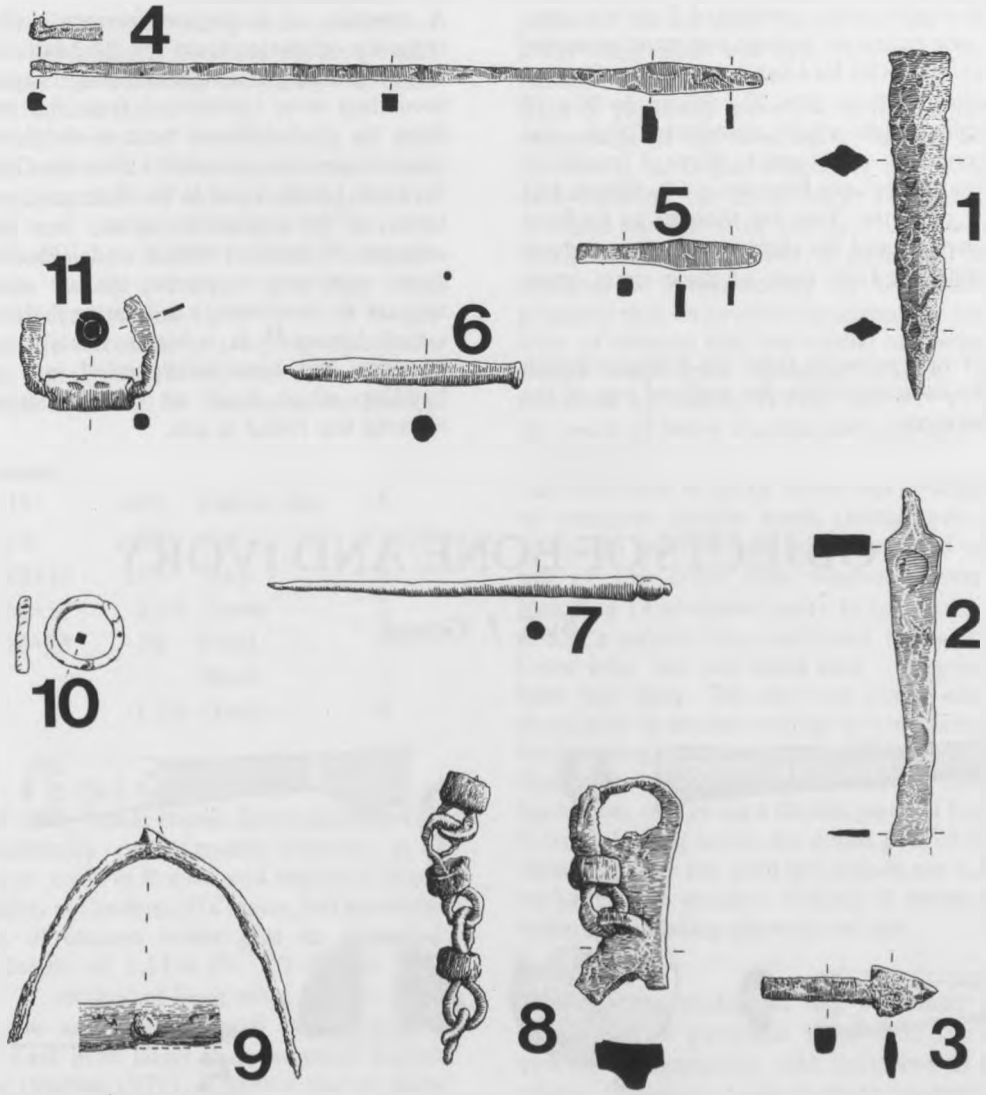

Fig. 20 The Ironwork, scale 1:2

The post-medieval assemblage from Usk was generally in a poor state of preservation, which made identification of individual objects difficult.[28] The items mostly consisted of common objects – nails, horseshoe fragments, knife blades etc., probably domestic debris (see Objects of Worked Bone, p.). Various fragmentary fittings were present but few tools, other than knives, could be identified. A sickle, two wedges and parts of two pairs of ? tongs (Nos. 4, 5) were noted. A ring (No. 10) may be associated with horse furniture, which was also represented by parts of a spur and curb-bit (Nos. 8, 9). Articles of dress included fragments of buckles (No. 11), and what may be a hatpin (No. 7).

A number of items have been selected for illustration, and these are listed below.

1. Part of the blade of a dagger of lozenge section.
2. Probably the handle of a knife from which the bone or wooden plates are missing. Only the base of the blade survives. An x-ray photograph shows the terminal projection to be a decorative knop.[29]
3. Possibly the tip of one of the prongs from a fish-spear. This object is unlikely to be an arrowhead – the blade is flat and the shank, which is square in section, is probably not socketed.

4, 5 Probably parts of tongs, though not from the same pair. No. 4 has a projection at the lower end which shows that it is incomplete; the spatulate end tapers in section and the tip is slightly incurved. No. 5 is of uniform thickness, but its similarity in shape indicates that it belongs to the same type of implement.

6. Unknown function.
7. Bodkin or hairpin with a decorative knop.
8. Probably parts of a curb-bit.
9. Spur, incomplete.
10. Ring of roughly square section, perhaps a strap-junction There are traces of a spiral decoration on the outer edge: this may be a decorative as well as a functional item.
11. Part of a buckle with rotating bar.
12. (Plate 7). Fragments of two wool-carders, which have been placed together so that the teeth lock. The teeth have been formed from short wires bent to form a shape similar to a square staple; the pairs of teeth thus produced were set diagonally through a piece of leather in parallel rows. The leather was then affixed to a wooden back-plate.[30] Both the leather and the back-plates, which would normally be handled and rectangular in shape, have now disappeared. The combs are fragmentary, so it is not possible to estimate their original size; only a very small part of the upper comb survives. The length of the teeth is c. 6mm.

OBJECTS OF STONE

(Not Illustrated)

a) **Utilised Stone**

Several sharpening stones were represented from the post-medieval levels; they varied in texture but most examples probably derive from the Old Red Sandstone series. Sizes of complete specimens vary from 20 x 20 x 97mm. to 70 x 70 x 196mm. A single spindle whorl, diameter 32mm., was probably also from the same series. Three ? mauls or pounders were noted; they vary between c. 50–60mm. and c. 95–105mm. in diameter. Two are thought to be from the Wenlock limestones, and the third is a quartz conglomerate from the Millstone Grit; both of these strata occur locally.[31]

Two fragments of rotary querns from the Romano-British period[32] had been re-used within the walls of one of the Post-Medieval structures.

b) **Masonry Fragments**

A number of decorative fragments of masonry almost certainly originated from the Benedictine priory at Usk or from a building of similar standing. Fragments of sandstone mouldings were represented from the Old Red series and from the Carboniferous beds in the Forest of Dean; limestone fragments came either from the Carboniferous, which occurs at Caldicot and in the Bath area, or from the Jurassic series of the Cotswold region. Two fragments of plain columns of diameter 95mm. and 100mm. in Wenlock limestone were also recovered; the use of contrasting stone appears to have been a decorative feature of some ecclesiastical houses.[33] It is highly likely that these pieces of masonry had been incorporated into the post-medieval buildings which stood on the site, although none of the material was found in situ.

OBJECTS OF BONE AND IVORY

by S. J. Greep

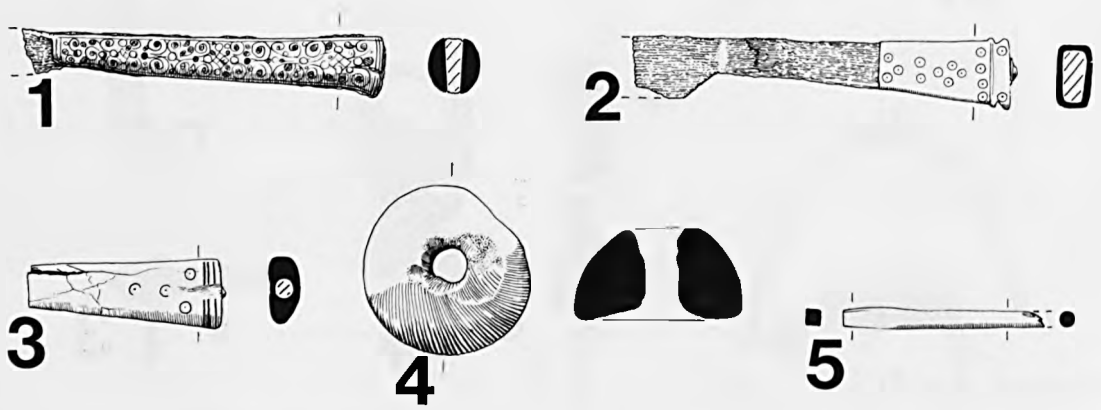

Fig. 21 The Worked Bone and Ivory, scale 1:2

Illustrated Finds

1. Two bone D-sectioned handle plates decorated with a spiral floriate pattern.[34] The tang of the iron blade (missing) is held by an unusually large number of bone and bronze rivets. Length 97mm.

2-3. Two single piece handles of rectangular section decorated with ring and dot decoration on the main faces. The tangs are secured by small caps on top of the handle.[35] These handles are common post-medieval finds; similar examples have been found in Wales at Caerleon and Abergavenny. No. 2, in ivory, is the more elaborate, and retains its blade in situ; the cap on top of the handle is of bronze. Length 103mm. No. 3, in bone, has less decoration; the tang survives inside the handle but the blade and the cap are both missing. Length 53mm.

4. Spindle-whorl manufactured by perforating a *bos* femur head. These finds are fairly common from all periods.[36] Diameter 45mm.

5. Probably the end of a tuning peg,[37] somewhat blackened by burning. Length 53mm. One of two examples from the site; both are broken.

Other objects (not illustrated) included sawn bone and antler waste, and part of a polished ring which may have been used as a strap-junction.

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THE ANIMAL BONE

by Gillian G. Jones

The animal bones from Usk were mainly from contexts of seventeenth century date, chiefly levelling up dumps and rubbish pits, the use of the site being domestic, with some metal and bone working activity.

The bone sample was looked at briefly, owing to constraints of time and finance. The following information was recorded: numbers of fragments of each species, age data of lower jaws where at least one tooth was present, measurements of complete bones and a limited number of measurements of incomplete bones, and signs of disease, bone working, etc. Lack of detailed analysis of the bone sample limits interpretation, for example in studying differences within the site and biasses towards deposition/recovery of different parts of the skeleton (for discussion see Maltby 1981).

Table 1. Species present

Cattle	1139	65%	Fallow deer	5
Sheep (goat)	313	18%	Cat	3+1*
Pig	189+1*	11%	Hare	2
Horse	60+1*	3.5%	Goose	1
Dog	16+2*	1%	Fowl	6
			Duck	1
Other species		1.5%	Oyster	9

* partial skeleton

Cattle

The proportion of cattle bones found shows that the Usk valley was predominantly cattle rearing country, as it appears to have been both in Roman and medieval times, further down the valley at Caerleon (O'Connor, forthcoming). A large collection of cannon bones gave an estimated average shoulder height of 1.11m (3′ 7″) (Range 0.99 1.26m, sample size 73, method of Fock using a factor intermediate between cow and steer, Driesch and Boessneck, 1974). The cattle were little larger than the small Roman cattle from Exeter (Maltby 1979), of similar size to those from Medieval Oxford (Wilson, 1981) and noticeably smaller than those from late Saxon Hamwih (Bourdillon and Coy 1980). At Caerleon there was evidence that the medieval cattle were somewhat smaller than the Roman; data from metapodial bones from both periods fall mostly within the range of measurements at Usk. It appears that during medieval to post-medieval times the range of size increased, some larger cattle being present.

Information about the age at death of the cattle shows the most common age distribution on medieval and earlier sites, where cattle were needed for work, breeding and milk, with little surplus to provide young carcasses for the market. At Usk 72% of jaws recovered were from fully adult cattle (Table 2). Immature jaws included two calves (stage 1), which raises the possibility, especially in a town site, that calves were slaughtered for vellum. As far as could be seen, the jaws were healthy. Absence of the second premolar was not observed (sample size 13). In one case the lower third molar had only two sections; fifteen had the normal three sections.

Table 2. Age Date. Mandibles

		Cattle	Sheep	Pig
1	Birth – M1 in wear	2	0	0
2	– M2 in wear	1	0	8
3	M3 in wear	3	3	11
4	M3 in partial wear	3	5	4
5	M3 in full wear	17	4	3
6	M3 in heavy wear	6	0	4

M1 lower first molar tooth.
Method described fully in Bourdillon and Coy 1980, p. 86 and fig. 17.

Signs of pathology were few. A horn core had two shallow depressions of the inner curve, basally. They are probably nutritional in origin, suggesting occasional difficulties in over-wintering the cattle herd. Johnson, in his travels in Scotland in the 18th century, observed that the cattle barely survived the winter. A metatarsal had a small round swelling, *c.* 14mm across, on the shaft, on the medial proximal side. In another metatarsal the two distal condyles were of unequal size, the medial one being splayed out. A similar case from medieval Walton, Buckinghamshire described by Noddle (1976, 286, Pl. VIII) 'was probably the result of heavy traction such as might be carried out by a plough ox'.

The collection of cattle bones was striking for the number of complete cannon bones (metacarpals and metatarsals) found. In the drainage gully associated with House B, 63 out of 146 cattle bone fragments were cannon bones, including 14 complete bones. In four instances the sawn off end of a cannon bone was found. It would be interesting to know what saw was being used – it appeared not to have been very sharp. The cuts were not so clean and parallel as those seen on similar material at late Saxon Thetford (Jones, forthcoming). In one case, a metacarpal has been sawn through below the proximal end, the flat ventral part has been sawn off, giving a flattish piece of bone about 70 x 27 x 6mm, leaving intact the dorsal part of the shaft plus the distal end. The saw used left a blade gap 1.4mm thick. Even without more detailed analysis, it seems likely that bone working was taking place on the site.

Sheep

The deposits studied at Usk contained only 18% sheep bones, and in particular there were few mandibles, only twelve, in comparison with thirty-two of cattle and thirty of pig. Evidence of age at death suggests that most sheep meat eaten was mutton, no jaws surviving from animals less than about two years old. Measurements are given in Table 3. The sheep were of similar stature to their medieval predecessors.

No certain evidence of the presence of goat was found, although one first phalanx was probably goat, judging from the size (GLpe 42, Bp 13.1mm) and shape (Boessneck *et al* 1964). Horn cores were from sheep, probably one ewe and three males (rams or wethers). One fragmentary skull survived with a very small horn core (about 2cm long). A polled sheep was found in a 12th–13th century deposit at Caerleon (O'Connor, forthcoming).

Pig

Pig bones were well represented and included thirty lower jaws. Eleven of these were from adult or nearly adult pigs, more than three years old. No signs of dental disease or overcrowding of the teeth were observed. The few measurable bones included three lower third molars, all of domestic pig size (Length 28.1, 30.5, 30.5).

The skeleton of a male pig which died at about a year old, was found in a demolition deposit. All bone elements were unfused except the following: the distal humerus (partly fused), proximal radius and the acetabulum of the pelvis. The lower jaw was at Stage 3, the lower second molar showing enamel wear only. Signs of neither butchery nor disease were observed.

Horse

One of the rubbish pits contained part of a horse skeleton. The horse was about 13½ hands (average of 9 measurements, given on Table 3, method of Kiesewalter, in Driesch and Boessneck 1974) and died when only about six years old, judging from the wear on the incisor teeth and the lack of complete fusion of the vertebral epiphyses.

There was considerable pathological alteration on the spine; the third and second last thoracic vertebrae were fused along the spinous processes and there was a slight growth of bone by the lip of the articulations. Similarly fused were the last thoracic and the first lumbar; the anterior end of the body of the last thoracic was also abnormal. There was ossification of part of the inter-vertebral cartilege on the upper half of the articulatory surface. Further down the backbone, the second and third lumbar vertebrae were fused by an exotosis chiefly on the third lumbar, on the ventral/lateral part of the centrum.

It seems likely that the condition described, in a horse which was not old, is the result of injury or excessive stress, perhaps caused by the animal having been broken in for work too soon.

Horse bones were found in sixteen different features, mostly as single bones, and totalled 3.5% of the bone sample. No butchery marks were observed, either on the skeleton or on the other horse bones. Seven complete long bones give estimated heights of 13 hands (3 cases), 13½ (2 cases), 14 and 15 hands (see Table 3).

Dog

Partial skeletons of two dogs were found, both of them showing signs of disease. The first animal was large, with an estimated shoulder height of 66cm (2' 2") (method of Harcourt, 1974). The dog died when quite old; muscle attachments on the long bones were marked and the teeth were well worn. The lower jaw on one side was affected by periodontal disease, which is fairly unusual in carnivores. The area of bone below the fourth premolar and the second molar was swollen on the lingual side and there was an opening 4 x 3 mm in the alveolar border exposing the posterior root of the carnassial, on the buccal side (Plate 10). Radiography of the bone showed no abscess cavity. Measurements: Greatest length of humerus 201, radius *c.* 198mm.

The second dog was more complete than the above. Measurement of five long bones give a shoulder height estimate of 59cm (1' 11"). The teeth were very worn. The right femur was deformed (Plate 11). The proximal end was normal but the lower two-thirds of the shaft was swollen. The distal articulation was twisted out of alignment and was much altered. The right tibia and patella did not survive. The dog must have been lame but evidently lived some time with its lameness. Measurements: Greatest lengths — humerus 178, 179; radius 197, 179; tibia 196.

Other dog bones included one immature metapodial bone, a humerus from a smaller dog (breadth of distal end 23.8) and a humerus which had an extra growth of bone on the Teres eminence. An injury to the Teres muscle, which joins the humerus and scapula, may have been the cause.

Other Species

Bones of other species were uncommon. Three cat bones, from isolated contexts were all immature. The partial skeleton was of late 17th or early 18th century date. It was just adult, fusion lines being visible on the long bones. The only part of the skull to survive was one mandible, with anomalous dentition. The second premolar is duplicated, the two teeth being joined at the adjacent roots and set at an irregular angle in the jaw. (Measurements: humerus GL 87, 87; tibia 99, 99.) Presence of extra teeth occurs fairly commonly in the Carnivora (Baker and Brothwell 1980) although as far as the writer is aware, it has not previously been recorded in early examples of cat.

Bird bones included domestic fowl and goose (*Anser anser* probably domestic). An immature bird bone was probably duck, *Anas platyrhynchos.* (The assistance of Mr. G. Cowles in using the ornithological collections at the British Museum (Natural History), Tring, is gratefully acknowledged.) It was interesting that five bones of fallow deer were found (all metapodial bones, GL metacarpal 178, metatarsal 201, 204), with no bones of red or roe deer. Hare may have been hunted or trapped. Oyster shells were the only sign of use being made of the river or sea.

Table 3. Summary of Measurements

Cattle		N	Range	Mean	S.D.
Horn core	L outer curve		107, 140, 158, 185		
	Basal circumf.	9	108 – 187	157	
Humerus	B Trochlea	8	63 – 72	66.0	
Metacarpal	G Length	42	161 – 201	180.7	8.6
	B proximal	33	44.3 – 59.4	51.3	3.9
	Shaft Diam.	41	23.5 – 35.5	29.7	3.2
	B distal	38	46.9 – 63.6	53.5	4.1
Metatarsal	GL	31	193 – 231	209.4	8.8
	Breadth p	26	37.5 – 51.0	43.5	2.9
	SD	31	21.5 – 29.0	24.7	1.9
	Bd	27	44.5 – 56.3	50.1	3.6

Sheep

Horn core	L outer curve/ bas. cir.		77/76, 75/70(pair) *c.* 135/*c.*125 – /158	
Humerus	BT	7	29 – 32	28.3
Radius	Bp	7	26.5 – 30.5	29.1
Tibia	Bd	13	22 – 26.5	24.7
Metacarpal	GL/Bp/SD/Bd		115/23.5/15.0/27.5	
Metatarsal	GL/Bp/SD/Bd		127/18.0/11.0/22.0	
			134/22.0/12.5/27.0	
			139/20.5/11.5/24.5	

Horse

Humerus	GL to Caput/Bt	295/77
Radius	K/Bp/SD/Bd	319/77 /37.5/ –
		328/– /41.5/77
		346/84 /40.7/80
Tibia	K/Bp/SD/Bd	307/– /49 /66
Metacarpal	K/Bp/SD/Bd	224/46.5/31.5/46.5
		209/45.0/30.8/44.9
Metatarsal	K/Bp/SD/Bd	253/44.0/27.9/44.9
Skeleton, Pit 704.		
Mandible	Cheek tooth row	169
Radius	K/Bp/SD/Bd	331/76 /39.0/72
		332/78 /37.0/72
Femur	K/GLC	401/367
Tibia	K/Bp/SD/Bd	328/– /41 /66
		327/88 /42 /67
Metacrap.	K/Bp/SD/Bd	213/49.5/35.5/43.5
		215/49.8/35.6/46.1
Metatars.	K/Bp/SD.Bd	257/48.0/32.5/46.0
		260/47.4/31.7/47.2

Measuring points defined in von den Driesch 1976, except K — Lengths defined by Kiesewalter.

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Footnotes:

1. Some sources for the history of Usk are listed in the bibliography.
2. G.G.A.T. *Director's Report* 1978–79 p 17ff.
3. Interim report in G.G.A.T. Annual Report 1978–79 p 44ff. All thanks are due to the excavation team, in particular the supervisors – Simon Tomson, Lee Gillibrand, Andrew Marvell and Ben Booth.
4. Arch. Wales 15, 1975.
5. Coxe, 1801 Surveyed by T. Morrice.
6. Cowbridge: The Archaeology and Topography of a Small Market Town in the Vale of Glamorgan, by Dr. D. M. Robinson, Swansea 1980.
7. Ex. inf. J. Allan.
8. Terry Pearson draws a parallel between these types and material from the Rangway kilns, near Donyatt.
9. Pearson and Coleman-Smith, 193.
10. Ex. inf. J. M. Lewis.
11. Holmes, 176.
12. Ex. inf. J. G. Hurst.
13. Ex. inf. D. P. Dawson.
14. Dunning, G. C. Barrel-shaped and Cylindrical Costrels on the Continent and in England, in Cunliffe, B. (ed.), *Winchester Excavations 1949–1960*, I (1964), 127–140.
15. Moorhouse, S., Medieval Distilling Apparatus of Glass and Pottery, *Med. Arch.* XVI (1972), 79–121.
16. Ex. inf. H. R. Warren.
17. Moorhouse (1972), Fig. 32, cf. also Moorhouse (1970), Fig. 10, Nos. 6–13.
18. Moorhouse (1970), Fig. 21, Nos. 252–257; compare No. 92, which is in imitation of a Frechen jug.
19. Ibid. 46, Note.
20. Ex. inf. J. M. Lewis.
21. In the illustrated examples three wooden pegs have been used in each instance to attach the face-decoration to the knobs of the vessels. These are particularly evident where the face has become detached from the knob; it would appear that the knobs have been thrown initially and this part of the vessel later strengthened on both sides when the face was applied. As the extent of this strengthening is not clear, and obscures the edges of the face itself, these details have not been indicated on the profiles of those pieces on which the decoration is intact.
22. Dawson, G. J., Fig. 55, No. 82; also Fig. 57, which illustrated the geometric designs from Norfolk House.
23. G. H. Kenyon, *The Glass Industry of the Weald* (Leicester, 1967), 13, 17, etc.
24. R. Hurst Vose, *Glass* in the Collins Archaeology series, (London, 1980), 185.
25. N. P. Bridgewater, Glass-house Farm, St. Weonards: A Small Glassworking Site, *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club* XXXVII (1963), 300–315.
26. D. W. Crossley and F. A. Aberg, Sixteenth Century Glass-Making in Yorkshire: Excavations at Furnaces at Hutton and Rosedale, North Riding, 1968–1971, *Post-Medieval Archaeology* VI (1972), compare Figs. 60–67.
27. Olive Jones, Glass Bottle Push-ups and Pontil Marks, *Historical Archaeology* V (1971), 72.
28. Thanks are due to Mr. J. M. Lewis of the National Museum of Wales for his help in the identification of the ironwork.
29. cf. Mo rhouse, S., Finds from Basing House, Hampshire, Part Two, *Post Medieval Archaeology* V (1971), Fig. 17, No. 7.
30. The writer is grateful to Dr. I. E. Anthony of the Welsh Folk Museum, St. Fagans, for this information.
31. The writer is grateful to Messrs. R. M. Owens and T. Sharpe of the Department of Geology, National Museum of Wales, for their help in the identifications.
32. See the report (forthcoming) on the finds from the Romal levels at Old Market Street.
33. At Hailes Abbey in Gloucestershire (Cistercian) lias limestone (blue-grey) has been used in conjunction with the local Jurassic limestone (yellow).
34. cf Goodhall and Christie 1980, Fig. 56, No. 1.
35. A similar arrangement is seen on a handle from Hull (Armstrong 1977, fig. 29, 147) of identical form, which secures a blade similar to the Usk piece, but this example lacks the ring and dot decoration.
36. cf. Greep, forthcoming. The heads of bovine femora are quite often detached during butchery. Examples are known from Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and Medieval contexts.
37. cf. Fry 1976, 137–139; Lawson 1978, 139–141, Henig 1977, fig. 39.

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Plate 1, Aerial view of the site showing line of medieval ditch continuing north as a property boundary

Plate 2, Section across the medieval ditch

Plate 3, Paved floor in House A, phase 2, room 3

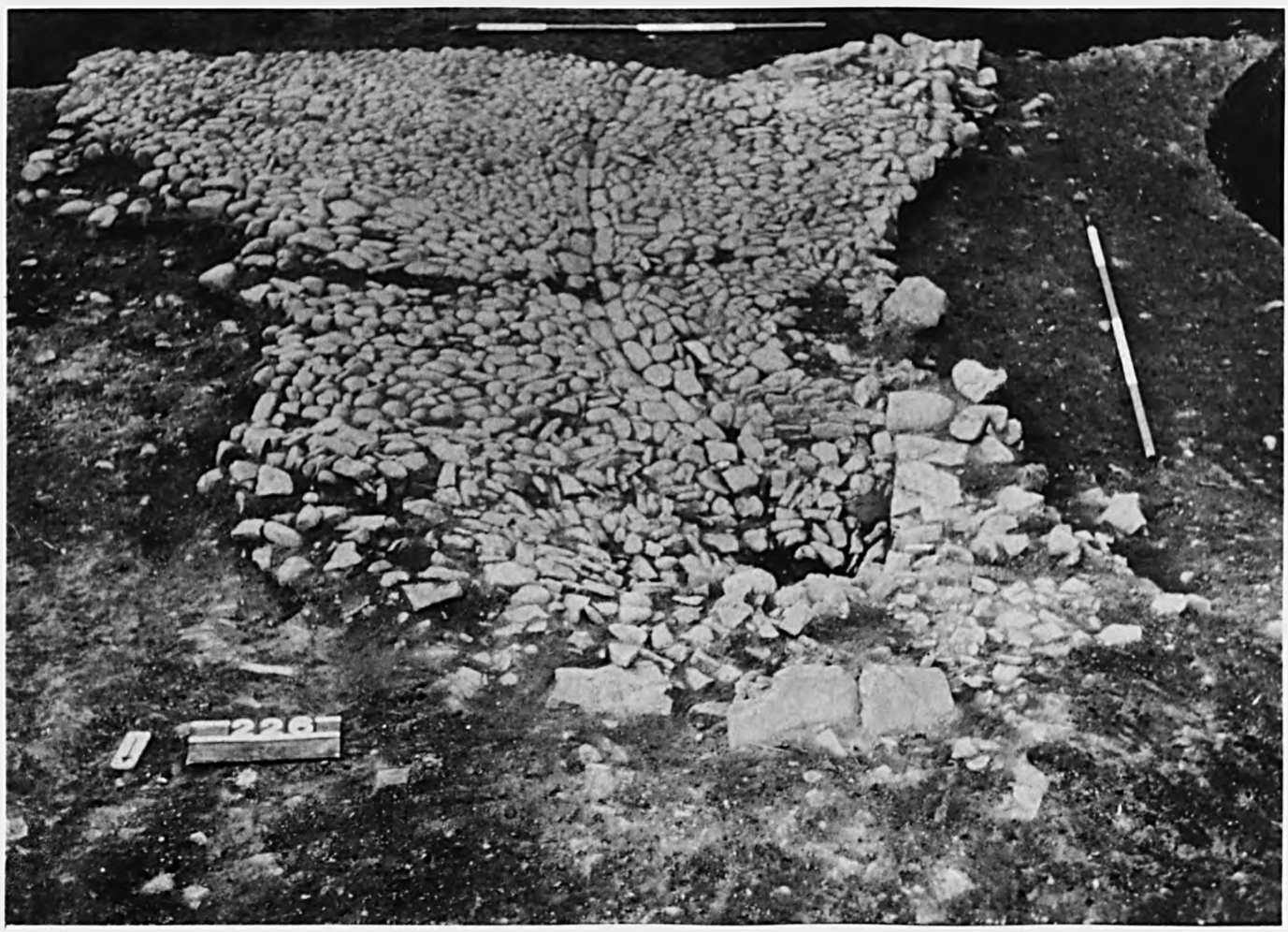

Plate 4, Cobbled yard with drain, House A, phase 2

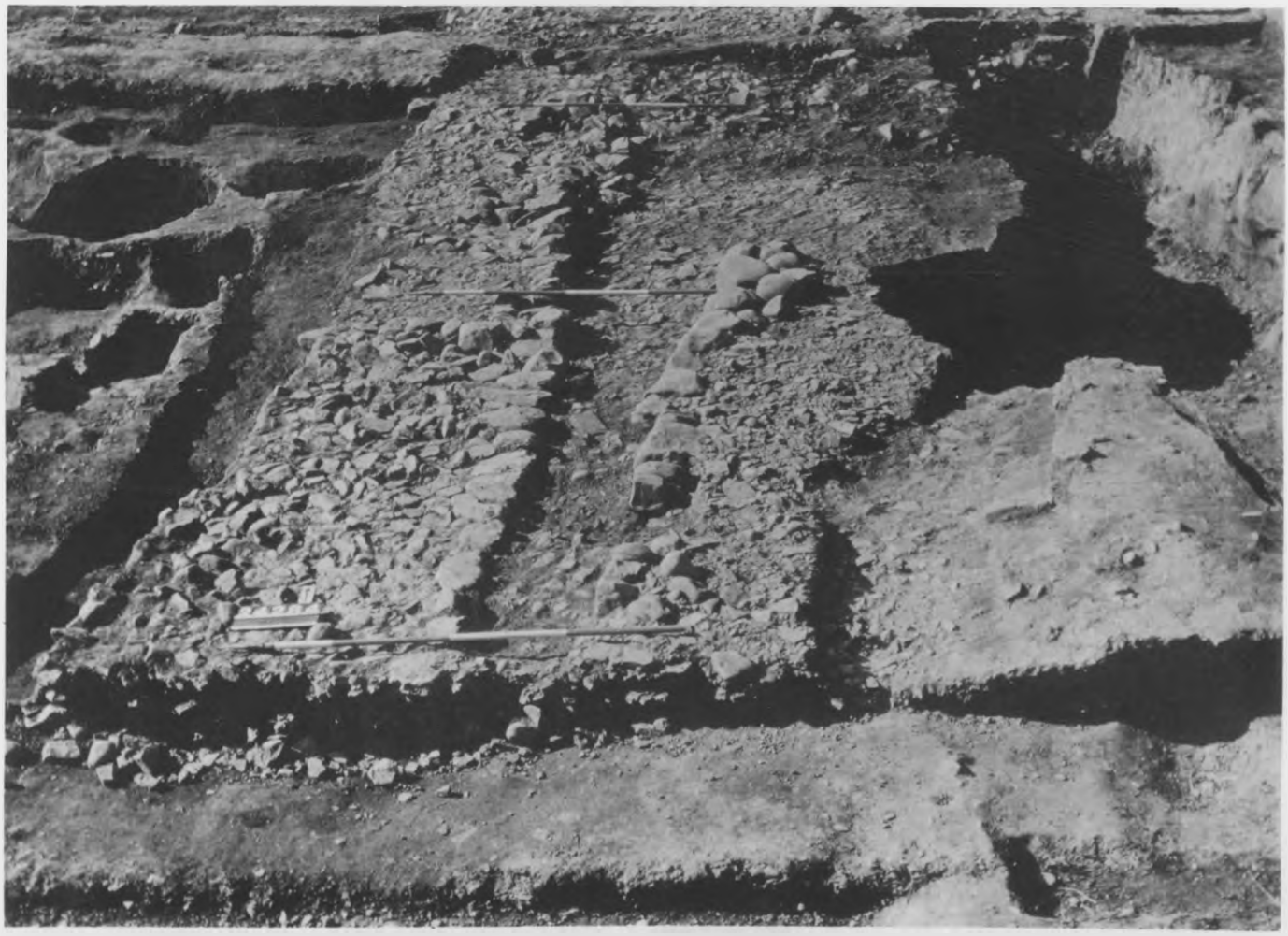

Plate 5, The metalled alleyway in its first phase

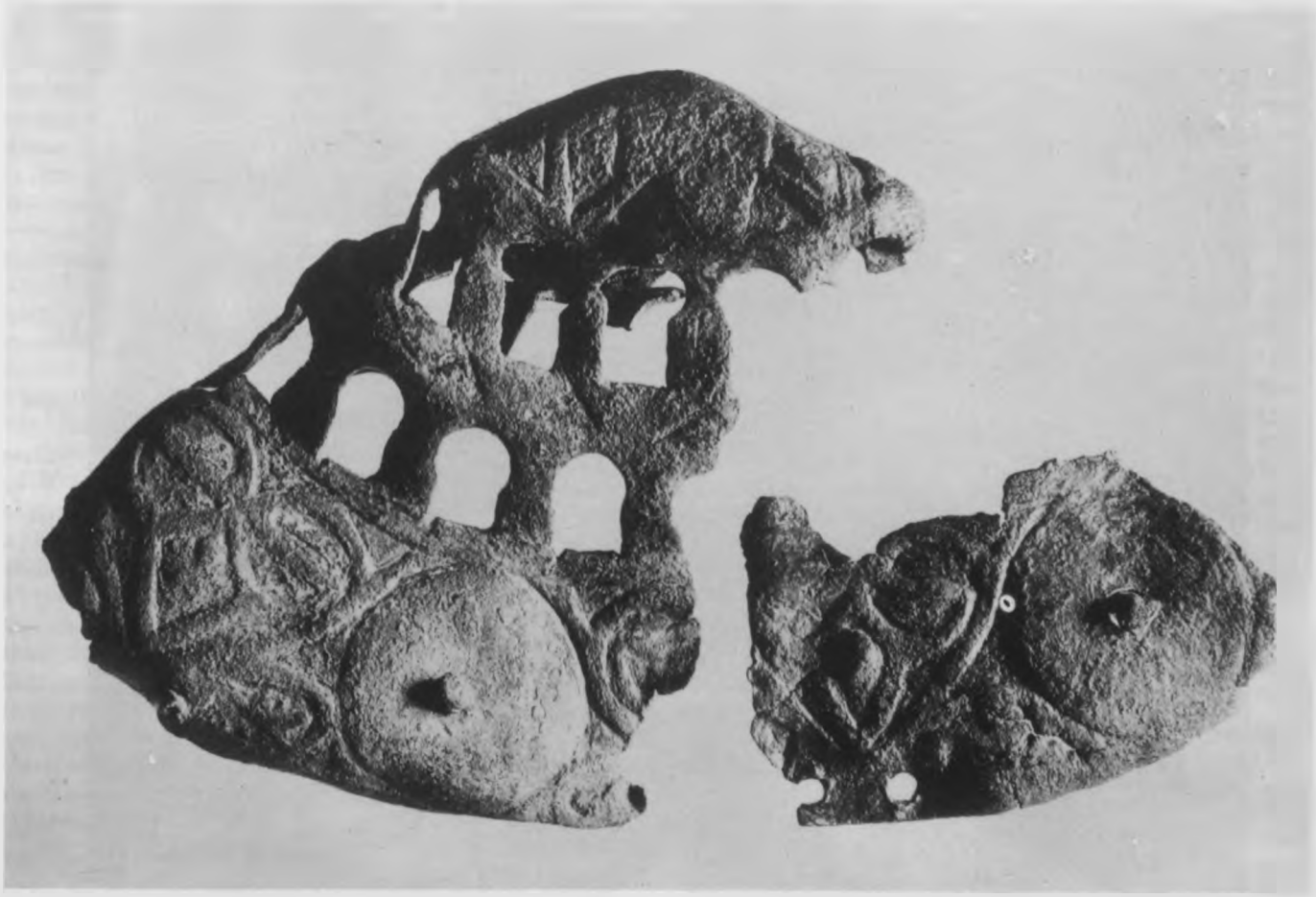

Plate 6, Bronze censer cover

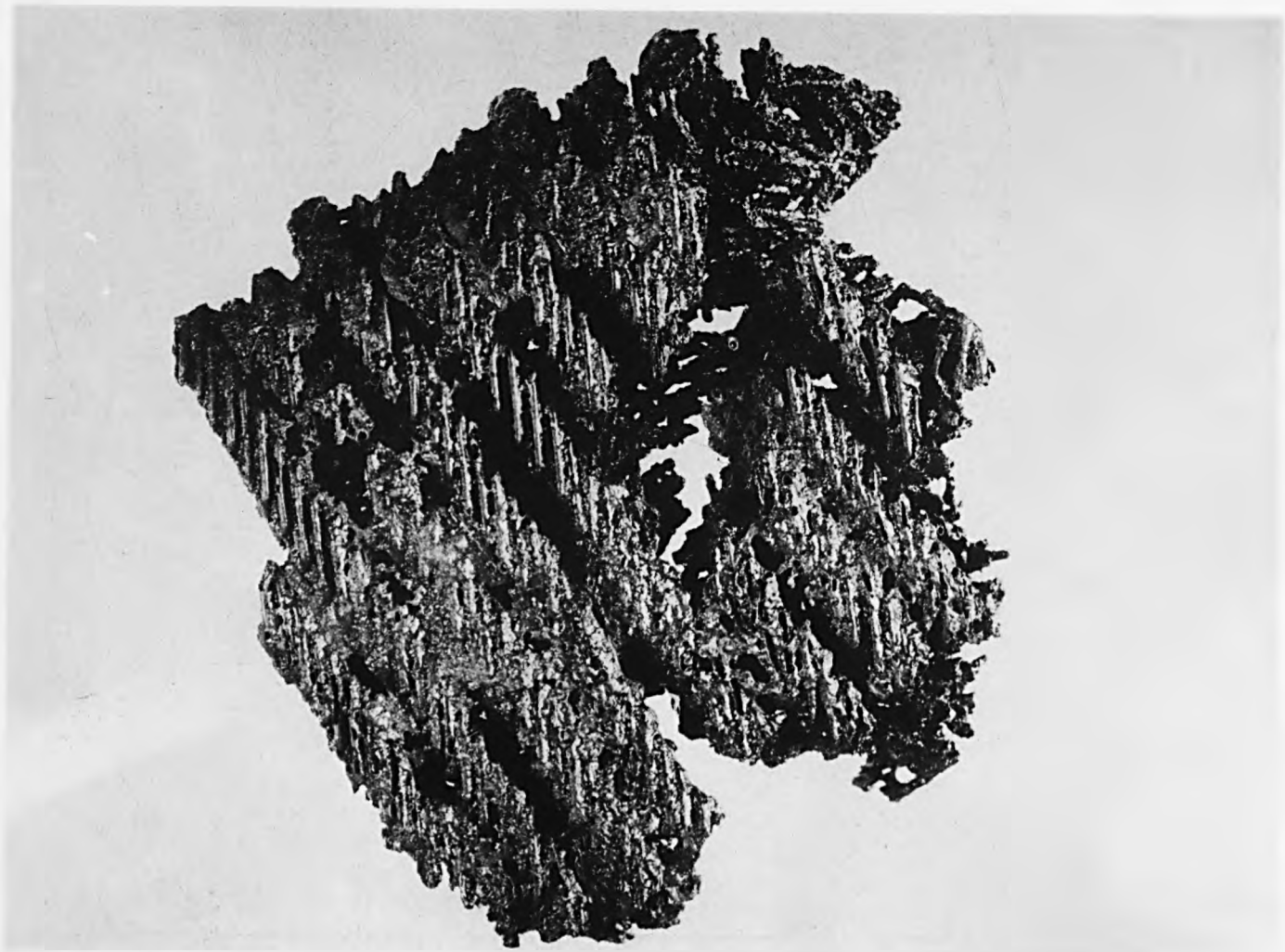

Plate 7, Iron cloth carder

Caerwent Summary plate 3

TRELECH: A Decayed Borough of Medieval Gwent

by Ian N. Soulsby, M.A.

Today, Trelech is little more than a village lying on the B 4293 mid-way between Chepstow and Monmouth. At the height of its prosperity in the late thirteenth century, however, it was probably the largest of the Gwent boroughs and, few other Welsh towns could equal its total of almost 400 burgages. It enjoyed the privileges of borough status, including the right to hold a weekly market and annual fair, it was the *caput* of a hundred, while its position was further enhanced by the presence of a motte-and-bailey castle and an impressive church.

Trelech – "the town of the stones" – derives its name from the group of three standing stones which lie in plot 8912 to the south of the present village. Both the place-name and the stones have been the subject of considerable discussion and speculation.[1] Known locally as "Harold's Stones", they are traditionally said to commemorate the site of a battle between the Welsh and Harold Godwinson in the mid-eleventh century and the legend gained credibility in 1689 when it was inscribed by Lady Maud Probert on a sundial erected in the churchyard. There is no evidence to support this theory and it would be more realistic to ascribe the stones to the Neolithic or Early Bronze Age.[2] Nothing at all is known of Trelech before the medieval period, although some writers have mistakingly identified the borough church, dedicated to St. Nicholas, with the "church of Trylec" recorded in the *Book of Llandaf* in an entry of the late seventh or early eighth century. As Bradney pointed out in 1906, however, the reference was not to any predecessor of the borough church, but to the church of Trelech Grange, 2½ miles south, since the entry sited the building "between the two Aghiti rivers", a position occupied by Trelech Grange.[3]

The proximity of Trelech to the English border together with comparative evidence from other towns in south-east Gwent point to the Norman period for the foundation of the medieval settlement although the borough has no recorded history before the mid-thirteenth century. The motte first appears in 1231[4] but the existence of a *burgus* is first noted in 1288. By that date, Trelech was already a flourishing community of perhaps 378 burgages,[5] an impressive figure when we consider that its nearest Gwent challenger was Chepstow where 308 plots were recorded in 1306.[6] This urban dominance, however, appears to have been short-lived since the borough fell victim to the supporters of Madog ap Llywelyn in 1295; an inquisition carried out in the following year on the death of Gilbert de Clare, the "Red Earl", noted that 102 burgages lay vacant "by fire in the war".[7] Many of these plots were not reinhabited as an extent of 1306 recorded a reduced total of 271 burgages, and these in the hands of only 113 burgesses.[8] A similar inquisition conducted in 1314 showed a further reduction in the burgage figure to 265 and it is evident that the decline of the borough had already begun.[9] Despite the subsequent contraction of Trelech it is clear that the early town must have extended over a greater area than that of the modern village. Fortunately for the historian and archaeologist the district was by-passed by the Industrial Revolution and has not subsequently experienced any significant redevelopment. The present settlement, therefore, still preserves the basic outline, as well as some of the topographical features, of this once extensive medieval community.

The borough was sited on a small plateau bounded by the rivers Monnow and Usk, with the burgages laid out within a rectangular area shaped by the River Olwy to the south, the Penarth brook to the west, and two minor streams on the north and east. Occupying a central position within this area stand the remains of the motte which is known locally as "Twmp Terret". Bradney considered this to have been of Welsh origin but his conclusion cannot be substantiated. The first reference to the castle dates from 1231[11] and it seems likely that it was the work of the de Clare family who controlled the borough, with the rest of the lordship of Usk, throughout the greater part of the thirteenth century.[12] In 1245 the sheriff of Hereford was appointed constable of the castle but it does not appear to have been maintained beyond the end of the century.[12] It was in the hands of Gilbert de Clare in 1290[13] but may have been destroyed during the Welsh attack of 1295 since an inquisition carried out in 1306 on the death of Gilbert's widow, Joan, referred only to "the *site* of an old castle."[14] A similar inquisition noted the existence of the motte in 1314[15] but it is significant that when Edward II, three years later, ordered the Exchequer to make payment to the constables of the other de Clare castles of Usk and Caerleon, no sum was mentioned for the upkeep of Trelech.[16] Indeed, the castle is only referred to in one of all the subsequent fourteenth-century references to the borough and manor.[17] Present remains consist of the motte which has a diameter of 107 metres. It stands within the grounds of Court Farm and all indications of the bailey have been eroded by centuries of agricultural activity. In view of the probable short history of the structure and its relative unimportance it seems unlikely that the "twmp" was ever topped with masonry defences. Sections of stone flooring, were recorded in 1908 but these were the remains of a nineteenth-century summer house built by the Rumsey family.[18]

Some 100 metres to the north of the castle stands the impressive church of St. Nicholas. The building occupies the highest vantage point and its size is a continual reminder of Trelech's former populousness and importance The present church dates essentially from the fourteenth century and although no reference earlier than 1359 has come to light,[19] its occupation of such a prime central site suggests that it replaced an earlier structure, perhaps erected at the time of the borough's inception. It was a general feature of such planned medieval boroughs that the north-western corner, if suitable, was reserved from the outset for the construction of the town church.[20] The road running past the church and through the present village represents the main thoroughfare of the medieval borough. It is unfortunate that all traces of the flanking burgage pattern which can still be detected in other decayed boroughs such as Laugharne and Cilgerran have long since disappeared. Yet with almost 400 plots to accommodate in the late thirteenth century, the original topography must have included additional streets, particularly since the large areas covered by the church and motte would have severely restricted civil settlement on the western side of this road. Indeed, traces of a second street running parallel to it can be seen at the rear of the church. This was noted by Bradney who observed sections of paving and building foundations in plots 051, 9642 and 9934 where field boundaries preserve its former course.[21] The presence of additional lesser streets leading east-west and forming the chequered effect which is a familiar characteristic of planned boroughs is also suggested by plot boundaries between the motte and the church. They lead at right-angles from the present street, running parallel to each other, with the distance between them sufficient to accommodate two rows of burgages.

Beyond this probable street-pattern it is possible to detect traces of the defences which enclosed the early town. As Professor Beresford has suggested, these appear to have been in the form of a ditch and slight bank, perhaps topped with a timber palisade, which followed the rectangular course determined by the four streams.[22] Remains of the southern line of the bank running east-west and parallel to the River Olwy can be seen to the south of Court Farm in Plot 0024. The course of the eastern and western defences is suggested by the regularity of field boundaries while a probable line for the northern ditch is indicated by the former courses of a small stream marked on nineteenth-century plans as flowing east-west immediately above the present village school. It must also remain a possibility, however, that the medieval community was not entirely restricted to the defended area. The development of early suburbs, sometimes appearing before the initial defences had even been completed, is not an uncommon feature of early town whose planners often appear to have underestimated the demand for burgages. The examples of Cowbridge, Denbigh and Kidwelly, all of which experienced such extra-mural growth, allow speculation that at least some of Trelech's burgages were laid out along the main roads leading into the borough. If this was the case, the most favourable site would have been in the area of the crossroads at the southern end of the main street.

Of the economy, occupations and corporate life of the early burgesses only a hazy impression is provided by documentary evidence. Although Trelech was consistently referred to as a borough, no reliable record of a charter has survived. The town certainly exercised the rights and enjoyed the advantages of burghal status, however, including the right to hold a regular weekly market and annual fair,[23] and was also the centre of the surrounding hundred with its monthly court.[24] By the late seventeenth century many of these privileges had apparently lapsed; in 1677 the burgesses complained that:

> "they have not their charter renewed, which is humbly referred to the lord of this said manor or lordship and his officers, that the same with the privileges hereunto belonging may be restored to them as formerly the same have been."[25]

In keeping with Trelech's foundation as an English community established within a predominantly Welsh countryside, the early burgesses all bore predominantly Anglo-Norman names. Among the tenants of Richard de Clare listed in 1255, for example, appear Simon Croker, Henry fitz John, Robert Grennard and William the Squire,[26] while the keeper of the manorial park in 1326 was one Robert de Knytteley, pardoned by Edward II for the death of John atte Wall. Likewise, the handful of the borough's more famous sons also bore non-Welsh names; in 1315 Adam *de Trillek* was appointed by Maud, Countess of Gloucester, as her attorney in Ireland,[28] while between 1344–60 John *de Trillek* was bishop of Hereford.[29] The subsequent decline of the community during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, however, appears to have been accompanied by an easing of the restrictions on Welshmen taking up burgages and the racial character of the borough experienced a marked change. The trend would be in keeping with other English plantations which, by the late medieval period, had frequently assumed a predominantly Welsh character. At Knighton the native element in the population had reached 60% as early as 1292 while the Welsh also made early inroads at Aberystwyth.[30] In the case of Trelech, this change appears to have been a feature of the late fourteenth century; in 1382 we find an obvious Welshmen in David ap Thomas, appointed as receiver of the lordship while a certain Ieuan ap Grono *de Trillek* appears in the Chepstow Assize Roll in 1415.[31] Particularly valuable in this context are the names of the vicars of St. Nicholas who would have increasingly required a knowledge of the Welsh language. In 1359 the living was in the hands of Benedict *de Lanveir*[32] but subsequent appointments were restricted to Welshmen, as the following, albeit incomplete, list suggests:

1377	John ap Gruffudd of Chepstow Priory[33]
1390	Gregory ap David of Llandingat (Dingestow), in exchange with John ap Gruffudd.[34]
1398	John ap William, in exchange with Gregory ap David.[35]
1412	Hywel ap Iorwerth[36]
1554	Adam Johns[37]
1555	Thomas Jones[38]
1561	John Williams[39]
1571	Robert Gruffudd[40]

It would seem, then, that an initially alien community within an overwhelmingly Welsh lordship became thoroughly assimilated into, and an important part of, the surrounding native culture.

Turning our attention to the economy of medieval Trelech, the evidence points to an essentially agrarian community although the picture is coloured with modest indications of early industry. Both arable and pastoral farming were practised by the burgesses who, in 1306, held 583 acres which rendered £4–17–2^{d} per annum.[41] By this date much of the land was being given over to sheep breeding, a profitable enterprise which became increasingly important throughout the lardship of Usk as the century progressed.[42] Between the early 1290's and 1324 the number of sheep at Trelech increased from a mere 29 to almost 600, while in 1330 Elizabeth de Burgh, sister of the deceased Earl Gilbert, alone kept 514.[43] Cattle and swine also featured among the livestock; in 1255 Henry "the herder" appears among the de Clare tenants together with Robert "le Fuller" whose presence points to the existence of a fulling mill and the preparation of cloth in the vicinity of the borough.[44] A corn mill and smithy were also available to the medieval community,[45] while the burgesses enjoyed fishing rights at the weir of *Newere*.[46] Of far greater importance to both the local economy and seigneurial revenue, were the lord's Park and Forest. There are frequent references to the 'park and chace' of Trelech which appear to have been maintained and stocked with deer long after the borough itself had declined. In 1466, for example, we learn of the appointment of William Herbert as "master of the King's chace of Trellek".[47] Indeed, it was the highly coveted forest which proved to be the mainstay of the early borough economy and a vital source of manorial revenue. The tenants paid pannage of 20/– for the privilege of letting their swine feed in the woods,[48] while of far greater significance was the income from the sale of timber and charcoal, averaging in excess of £100 p.a. throughout the first quarter of the fourteenth century and reaching a peak of £233 in 1329/30 when charcoal production alone contributed over £30.[49] To complete the diversification, ironworking was also a feature of the fourteenth-century borough economy.[50]

Despite this picture of a relatively prosperous economy Trelech's prominent position in the urban hierarchy of medieval Wales was short-lived and the borough economy was already showing signs of contraction by the end of the thirteenth century. The burgage total of 378 recorded in 1288 had fallen to 265 by 1314 and this decline continued throughout the fourteenth century. An early blow was

inflicted by the Welsh rebels in 1295 as witness the 120 burgages which stood empty in the following year and by 1296/7 the office of receiver had lapsed and been amalgamated with that of Usk.[51] Nevertheless, the community proved capable of recovering from this set-back and although the number of burgesses had fallen to 113 by 1306, all of the 271 plots recorded in that year rendered the cutomary annual rental of 1/–. Figures from the next survey of 1314 indicate that this decline had almost been arrested as only a further 6 burgages had been lost.[52] Two valuations were conducted in that year, however, producing quite different assessments; the first was necesitated by the death of Gilbert de Clare at Bannockburn and in June the borough was valued at almost £24. In December, when the estates passed to his widow, the "town of Trillek" was assessed at £90–17–8, a figure which may point to a reorganization of the lordship or perhaps to the incorporation of other sources of seigneurial income, perhaps from timber, not included in previous valuations of the borough.[53]

The later stages in the decline and contraction of Trelech are more difficult to determine because of the paucity of documentary evidence from the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[54] Whether the Welsh attack of 1295 was repeated by the followers of Llywelyn Bren in 1315–6 is not clear, although a royal force under the command of William Montague was camped at Trelech in March 1316.[55] In the short term, regardless, the economy was not adversely affected. Indeed, through the first half of the fourteenth century borough rents remained stable, varying only between £19–19–1 in 1308–9 and £17–18–8 in 1330–1.[56]

1330–1.[56] It was the succeeding half century which saw the demise of Trelech, with rents slumping from £15–1–9 in 1374–5 to a mere £2–8–0 by 1408–9,[57] and for an explanation the historian must turn to the social and economic dislocation resulting from the Great Pestilence or "Black Death", and the rebellion of Owain Glyndwr. Indeed, it was through these lordships of the south-eastern March that the plague first entered Wales in March 1349, resulting in a serious decline in manorial rents.[58] Before the inhabitants were able to revive their communities a second and more devastating pestilence hit Gwent in 1369. Trelech lost one-third of its burgesses, decayed rents "because of the Pestilence" amounted to £5–5–0, while as late as 1409 the same explanation was given for the presence of 48 vacant burgages.[59] Undoubtedly, the community received a series of blows from which it was unable to recover, only to be hit again by the Glyndwr revolt. While the borough itself may have escaped direct attacks, Glyndwr's supporters were active within the immediate area in 1403 and the already vulnerable borough economy can hardly have escaped the ravages of the surrounding countryside.[60] By 1532 Trelech's value had slumped to £8–1–5, and the implications of this figure are only apparent when compared with Caerleon, assessed at £21–5–9, and Usk at £31–11–5.[61] This depressing trend continued throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and, as we have already seen, the complaints of the burgesses registered in 1677 reveal the loss of borough status and privileges.[62] This gloomy picture was endorsed in 1696 when the antiquary Edward Lhwyd described Trelech as . . .

> "a market town and had a Maior for its chief officer, but now is reduced to a poore inconsiderable village".[63]

Virtually ignored by the Industrial Revolution, this demise was not corrected and according to the first official census of 1801 the population stood at a mere 102 while sixty years later only 29 houses remained. By 1901 this figure had fallen again when only 19 homes were noted, and two of these stood uninhabited.[64]

1. For a full discussion of the place-name see Henry Owen, (ed.), George Owen's *Description of Pembrokeshire*, Cymmrodorion Record Series, pt. III, (London, 1906), 236, and J. A. Bradney, *History of Monmouthshire*, II, pt. ii, (London, 1906), 150.
2. T. Wakeman, "Prehistoric Remains in Monmouthsire" *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 3rd. ser., i, (1855), 120–1.
3. *Infra duo flumina Aghiti mawr et Aghiti bichan* (J. G. Evans & J. Rhys, (eds), *Book of Llan Dav*, (Oxford, 1893), 200. Wendy Davies.
4. *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, 1225–32, 427.
5. Public Record Office (PRO), (S)pecial (C)ollections, 6/1247/21.
6. PRO, (C)hancery 133/127.
7. *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem*, III, 245–6. The rebels also destroyed 66 burgages in Newport (C 133/77/1).
8. *CIPM.*, iv, 326.
9. C 134/43; *CIPM.*, v, 336.
10. *Hist.Mon.*, 137.
11. Above, note 4.
12. *Cal.Pat.Rolls.*, 1232–47, 468. In 1263 the *fortalice* of Trelech passed to Maud, Countess of Gloucester, (*ibid*, 1258–66,242).
13. *Calendar of Charter Rolls*, ii, 350–1; *Cal.Pat.Rolls*, 1281–92, 351, 359.
14. *CIPM.*, iv, 326.
15. *Ibid*, v, 336.
16. *Calendar of Close Rolls*, 1313–18, 408.
17. In 1398 when it was in the possession of Thomas le Despenser, Earl of Gloucester, (*ibid*, 1396–99, 278), but no mention is made in 1322 when the manor was granted to Hugh le Despenser (*Cal.Ch.Rolls*, iii, 449), or in the inquisition of 1371 which refers only to "the town and manor" (*CIPM.*, xv, 224–5).
18. *Arch.Camb.*, 6th ser., ix (1909), 70; Bradney, *Hist. Mon.*, 130.
19. *Cat.Pat.Rolls*. 1358–61, 212; Bradney, *Hist.Mon.*, 150–1.
20. Other examples include Caernarfon, Haverfordwest, Beaumaris, Rhuddlan, New Radnor and Crickhowell.
21. *Hist.Mon.*, 130–1.
22. *New Towns of the Middle Ages*, (London, 1967), 561.
23. *CIPM.*, iii. 245–6, iv, 326.
24. *Ibid*, xii, 322; *Cal.Pat.Rolls*, 1557–8, 432–3.
25. Survey of the manor of Trelech, 19th Oct. 1677, quoted in full by Bradney, *Hist.Mon.*, 134.
26. *Cal.Cl.Rolls*, 1254–56, 201.
27. *Cal.Pat.Rolls*, 1324–27, 330.
28. *Ibid*, 1313–17, 368.
29. *Ibid*, 1343–45, 216; *Cal.Cl.Rolls*, 1343–6, 350, 460.
30. R. A. Griffiths (ed.), *Boroughs of Mediaeval Wales*, (Cardiff, 1978), 38–9; PRO (E)xchequer, 179/242/48, 57; M. A. Faraday, "The Assessment for the 1/15th of 1293 on Radnor", *Trans.Radnorshire Soc.*, xliii, (1973), 79–85, xliv, (1974), 62–8.
31. *Cal. Fine Rolls*, 1377–83, 294; T. B. Pugh (ed.), *The Marcher Lordships of South Wales*, 1415–1536, Board of Celtic Studies, History and Law Series, xx (Cardiff, 1963), 56.
32. *Cal.Pat.Rolls*, 1358–61, 212.
33. *Ibid*, 1377–81, 17.
34. *Ibid*, 1388–92, 293.
35. *Ibid*, 1396–99, 412.
36. *Ibid*, 1408–13, 448.
37. *Ibid*, 1553–4, 358.
38. *Ibid*, 1554–5, 251.

39. *Ibid*, 1560–3, 85.
40. *Ibid*, 1569–72, 189.
41. *CIPM*., iv, 326.
42. W. Rees, *South Wales and the March*, (Oxford, 1924), 196.
43. SC 6/925/20; 926/3, 5; W. Rees. *op.cit*., 196 note; R. R. Davies, *Lordship and Society in the March of Wales, 1282–1400*, (Oxford, 1978), 117.
44. *Cal.Cl.Rolls*, 1254–56, 201.
45. *CIPM*., iii, 245–6.
46. *Ibid*, xv, 224–5.
47. *Cal.Pat.Rolls*, 1461–67, 527; *CIPM*., xii, 322; xv, 224–5.
48. W. Rees, *op.cit*., 124 note.
49. For an annual breakdown of returns, 1296–1339, see G. A. Holmes, *The Estates of the Higher Nobility in Fourteenth-Century England*, (Cambridge, 1957), 107, and M. Altschul, *A Baronial Family in Medieval England: the Clares, 1217–1314*, (Baltimore, 1965), 255.
50. W. Rees, *Industry Before the Industrial Revolution*, i, (Cardiff, 1968), 39, 58.
51. Altschul. *op.cit*., 259.
52. See above, notes 5–9.
53. *Cal.Cl.Rolls*, 1313–18, 131–2; Altschul, *op.cit*., 164, 246.
54. In 1366 the *Manor* of Trelech was valued at £58–15–9 (*Cal.Pat.Rolls*, 1364–67, 274–5).
55. *Cal.Chancery Warrants*, 1244–1326, 437.
56. SC 6/925/24; 926/10; Holmes, *op.cit*., 143.
57. SC 6/928/19; Holmes, *loc.cit*.
58. W. Rees, "The Black Death in Wales", *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc*., 4th ser., iii, (1920), 115–35.
59. SC 6/928/19; Rees, *op.cit*., 118, 124; *idem, South Wales and the March*, 247.
60. *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1401–5, 438.
61. E. Owen, (ed.), *Mss. Relating to Wales*, Cymm. Rec. Ser., iii (London, 1908), 605–6.
62. Above, Note 25.
63. *Edward Lhwyd's Parochialia*, Cambrian Arch. Assoc. Supplement, pt. iii, (London, 1911), 19.
64. Census statistics for the period 1801–1901 are available in Bradney, *Hist. Mon*., 129.

MEDIEVAL IRON-WORKING AT TRELECH: A Small Salvage Excavation, With A List Of Early Bloomery Sites In The Monmouth-Trelech Area

by S. C. Clark, Henry Owen-John and J. K. Knight

Introduction

The construction of a driveway removed c. 0.20m. of topsoil from a 3.00m. wide strip of land parallel to and a few metres from the West wall of the churchyard of St. Nicholas' Church, Trelech (at SO 49950545). This work exp sed a series of archaeological features associated with apparently medieval iron working; activity in this area subsequent to the iron working phase was also attested. Superficial examination was undertaken of those deposits which had been exposed near the North end of the strip, in order to clarify the nature and relationship of the exposed features prior to backfilling with gravel for the drive. As no further damage was to be caused by the construction of the drive, archaeological activity was restricted accordingly.

The circumstances that led to the watching brief and excavation were unfortunate. OS Field number 0051 was scheduled as an ancient monument in 1976. Monmouth District Council and the owners of the site failed to notify the Welsh Office of a planning application to insert a driveway which appeared on the Monmouth District Council list of planning applications for the week ending 7th December, 1979. The Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Limited were consulted by Monmouth District Council's Conservation Officer, but being unaware that the field was protected by law, contacted the owners with a view to minimising archaeological damage. This was agreed and the owners duly notified the Trust of their commencement date. A watching brief on the whole driveway was undertaken by Mr. S. C. Clarke and fellow members of the Monmouth Archaeological Group. In addition Mr. J. K. Knight of the Welsh Office, Ancient Monuments Branch and members of the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust's excavation team at Caerleon took part in the limited scale salvage excavation.

Situation & Geology

The former medieval borough of Trellech is today little more than a village and is situated at height of approximately 215m. above O.D. 7 kilometres to the South of Monmouth (Fig. 1). It is situated towards the northern end of a plateau of Brownstones, the majority of which are sandstone. To the East is higher ground where Quartz Conglomerate overlies the Brownstones and attains a height of 306m. at Trelleck Beacon, while further to the East again the plateau is defined by the river valley of the Wye. To the West the area is also well defined by the escarpment above Llanishen; to the North the land falls away less regularly, to the river Trothy. The character of the underlying subsoil was not evident within the limited area and depth of excavation but the occurrence of pinkish brown sandy clay textured contexts both in the fills of features and the composition of other layers was indicative of the partially decomposed sandstone substratum that might be expected in such an area.

The Watching Brief

No features of archaeological interest were recorded in the southern part of the driveway. However at a point c. 25m. from the gate leading onto the B4293 a rise in ground level formed by a scarp c. 0.50m. high corresponded with the appearance of considerably more stone in the topsoil and the occurrence of a few sherds of thirteenth/fourteenth century pottery. It seems likely that the scarp represented the edge of a building platform on the northern part of which the salvage excavation was undertaken.

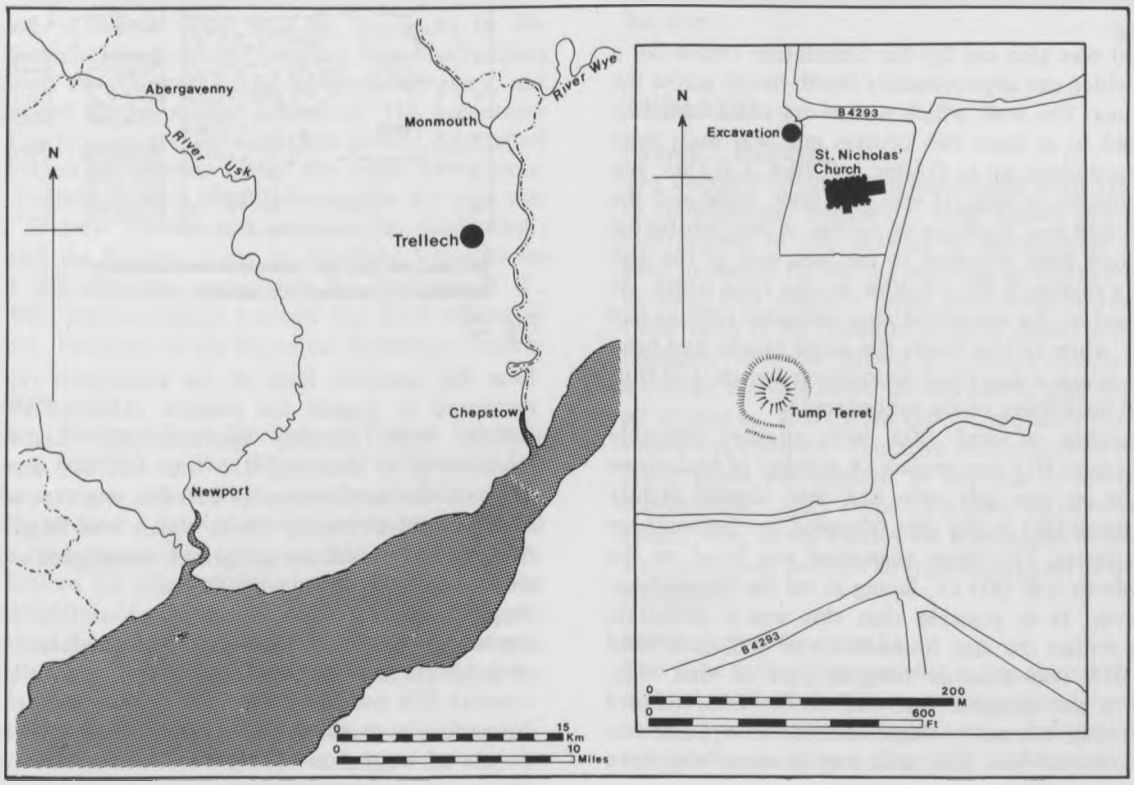

Fig. 22

The Salvage Excavation (Figure 2)

Machine removal of the brown sandy loam topsoil exposed features of varying date. The earliest deposits in the area (008, 009) were of pinkish brown sandy clay which in the case of 008 was notably clean and compact. It was not possible to ascertain how extensive these deposits may once have been, because of disturbance caused by the cutting of later features. 008 attained a depth of at least 0.20m.

These deposits had been cut by a series of interleaving pits, some associated with iron working. Pits 001, 002 and 012 all extended East beyond the excavated area. 001 had vertical sides and was up to 0.20m. deep. At least half of the fill was iron slag, with an extremely high iron content for a waste product. The remainder of the fill was a dark brown loam. This pit had been cut by another (002) to the South with gently sloping sides which attained a depth of 0.15m. within the excavated area at a point where a marked steepening of the sides of the feature was evident. Compact orange rust coloured iron scaling filled the pit. In addition to cutting feature 001 to its North 002 also cut another pit (012) to its South. The extent and depth of this feature which extended to the East beyond the excavated area could not be ascertained, but it gave the appearance of being slag lined. In other respects the fill was of similar character to that of 001 (above); the two features may have been comtemporary. 0.10m. to the South of 012 was another apparently smaller slag filled feature (013). Both 012 and 013 cut a compacted surface of pink sandy clay (024) which incorporated tap slag in the surface. A 'bun' from an iron furnace was discovered resting on this surface.

The pits described above could be readily identified on account of their distinctive fills. It is likely that context numbers 010, 014 and 018 also represented the fills of large pits which were less easily defined, as these contexts were marked by a well mixed pink/brown sandy loam which except for those areas of 010 and 014 adjacent to 008 had no clear edges but were different in character from the cleaner more compact 009 adjacent to 010. Context number 010 was cut by pit 001 and another slag filled feature (004) was also cut into it. Consequently it is possible that 010, and perhaps therefore by association of the similar fills 014 and 018 predated the pits associated with iron working.

Context 010 was also cut by the foundation trench for a wall (003) which ran approximately North-South across the excavated area. The wall, which was of dry stone construction, survived to at least two courses and was built from blocks of local stone up to 0.40m. x 0.20m. x 0.15m. and occasional blocks of slag. It was c. 0.60m. wide and the core of the wall was made up of rubble. A less substantial outer face had been attached to the west side of the wall and added a further 0.35 – 0.40m. to the total width. At the North end of the excavated area extensive robbing had taken place, while to the South the stone blocks had been removed to reveal a slag filled foundation trench, (022) or possible slag backfilling of the robber trench.

The relationship of wall 003 with another probably structural feature 015 was unclear. A number of local stone blocks faced on one side only had been aligned slightly differently from 003 in the area occupied by the southern part of the latter. The stone alignment was faced on the opposite side to wall 003 i.e. facing in on the foundation/robber trench. It is possible that this was a deliberate attempt to render the slag foundations of 003 more solid and that 015 was thus an integral part of that wall. However it is also possible that 015 overlay 003/002 and was not directly related to those features. It appeared to have been inserted into 014, and may in some way have retained that context.

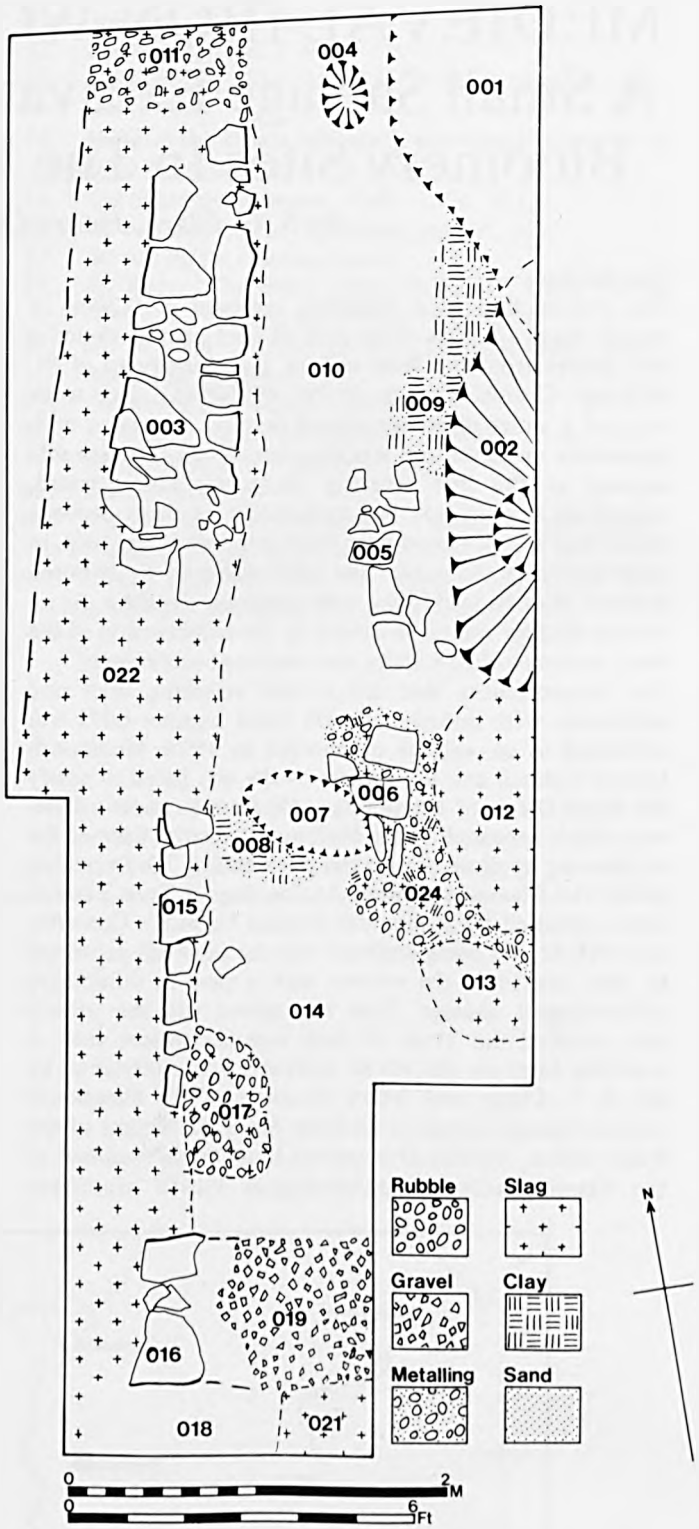

Fig. 23

Near the southern limit of the excavation evidence was recovered to suggest the possible existence of a wall c. 0.80m. wide running approximately East-West. The relationship of this wall 016 with 022/003 was not clear; however the short section of 016 that was exposed together with a robber trench (019) which was filled by partly decomposed sandstone and gravel, was aligned at about 80° to the better preserved wall 003.

Approximately 1.00m. to the East of 022 was a short stretch of stone blocks (006), two of which had been set on end. All the blocks were closely packed and well founded in context 024 and may once have had a structural function. Immediately to the North of 006 a few loosely arranged blocks of local stone (005) were identified overlying 010. the function of these blocks was not clear.

The latest features on the site were apparently two small pits (007 and 017) which cut 006 and 014 respectively. 007, which measured c. 0.60m. x 0.40m. x 0.20m. deep, produced a base sherd from a post medieval pottery vessel (seventeenth century). Both features had a brown loamy fill, although that of 017 was somewhat darker and contained occasional lumps of slag. In addition to these late features a dense spread of iron slag with a small amount of dark loam soil overlay wall 003 and the limited area that was excavated to the West of that context.

Conclusion

The salvage work revealed a sequence of activity, which because of the circumstances of the excavation may not be entirely reliable, especially in respect of the suggested early contexts, and is difficult to date with any precision. The earliest activity was represented by the possibly natural contexts 008 and 009, which had been cut by extensive areas of disturbance represented by 010 and 014. The similarity of the fill of 018 with features suggested that it may have belonged to the same phase. The relationship of the metalled area 024 with 014 was not clear but 024 was clearly cut by the slag filled pits 012 and 013. 012 was in turn cut by 002 as was 001. All these pits seem to have been associated with iron working, but were presumably peripheral to the main area of that activity. The character of the slag has been identified as belonging to a pre blast furnace technology (see below). The extensive use of slag in wall 003/022 demonstrated that the structure dated to a period after the introduction of iron working, and thus probably after the pits referred to above. The recovery of a sherd of seventeenth century pottery from pit 007 which cut a structural feature (005) indicated that the structures on the site were probably disused after the seventeenth century. The uppermost deposit of mixed slag and loam presu ably represents levelling of the structural features and iron working debris.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to the owners of the site Mr. and Mrs. Futcher of the Croft, Trellech, for allowing access for archaeological investigation, and also their neighbours Mr. and Mrs. Poulter for assistance in the work undertaken. The swift action of Steve Clark and his colleagues in the Monmouth Archaeology Society ensured that observations were made on the construction of the whole driveway, and greatly assisted in the salvage operation. The volunteers from the Caerleon excavation team had already completed a day's work on the 'Roman Gates' site before being transported to Trellech to work until darkness. The site plan was drawn by Andrew Marvell and prepared for publication, together with the location maps, by Jim Daly. Visual examination of the slag was undertaken by Professor R. F. Tylecote who was contacted through the good offices of Charles Blick, President of the Historical Metallurgy Society.

DISCUSSION

Ev dence for Medieval Iron Working at Trelech has long been known. *Inquisitions Post Mortem* of 1295 and 1314 refer to the revenues of iron forges (see Soulsby above) and areas of slag under the fields at several points in and around the village have been noted by Coxe, Bradney and others. However limited the scope of the present work, this is the first time that one of these areas of slag has been archaeologically examined and a brief summary of the techniques of medieval iron working may be helpful in interpreting the finds.

The production of iron involves two separate processes – reduction of the metal from the ore at the furnace and the working of the resulting mass or bloom of impure iron into usable form at the forge. (The medieval term for a bloom of iron was a gadde). This does not include the third stage, in which the iron is worked into the finished object by the smith. The surviving accounts of an iron forge belonging to the Bishop of Durham at Byrknott in Weardale in 1408 show that the three basic trades of the iron industry already existed at the end of the medieval period – the "Colier" (at this date meaning a charcoal burner), the Bloomsmith or furnaceman and the smith. There were also labourers under a foreman, whilst the wives of the smith and the foreman broke ore and worked the bellows – another tradition that was to carry over into the age of the blast furnace. The works included a "Bloomhearth" or furnace where the ore was reduced and a "Stryngheath" where the gaddes were worked into bars of iron.

Until the introduction of the blast furnace in the time of Henry VIII, simple bowl or shaft furnaces were used, basically similar to those of the Romans. The slag was run off and hardened into characteristic heavy glossy-surfaced slabs of "tap slag", the upper surface carrying characteristic trickles of solidifying slag (these flat slabs of slightly glassy material with their clean fractures somewhat recall slabs of home made brittle toffee in texture). The furnace hearth, when cooled, would contain the bloom of iron together with a mass of brown cindery slag, that at the bottom retaining the hemispherical form of the hearth bottom. Tap slag, large lumps of cinder and "furnace bottoms" are usually evidence for the presence of iron furnaces. Forge slag is very similar to furnace cinder, but the large lumps (and of course the tap slag and furnace bottoms) do not occur. This is the significance of the occurrence of tap slag and masses of cinder (including furnace bottoms) on the Trelech site. The reference to "iron forges" there might mislead the unwary into thinking that only the second stage of production took place, but in medieval usage (as at Byrknott) the whole process from ore to finished iron took place at the forge. It was only with the introduction of the water powered furnace and forge that it became physically necessary to separate the two (in order to obtain sufficient water power) and the term forge was confined to the place where the product of the furnace was formed into bar iron.

TRELECH

Pottery – Medieval

The majority of the small assemblage from Trelech consists of undiagnostic fragments, both glazed and plain; all are unstratified. In the absence of recognisable forms, it has been necessary to sort the material by fabric alone; however, at least four distinct types have been isolated. None of these seem to be common to both glazed and plain wares. Probably between fifteen to twenty vessels are present, although a count based on rim sherds was not possible. In all categories, apart from type 1, probably only one or two vessels are involved. Tentative attribution of the individual fabric types was possible in the case of the Bristol wares; the largest category (type 1) is likely to be of local origin – similar fine, sandy fabrics are widespread in the Monmouth area and could perhaps be regarded as part of the Malvernian tradition.

Fabric Type 1 (number 3)

This type is the most variable and may include several subdivisions. All of the pieces are from glazed vessels, although in some examples the glaze has decayed. Most sherds exhibit few inclusions of any size – these are mostly quartz

Fig. 24

sands with the occasional fragment of grog and other fillers. Tempering is more apparent in the surfaces which are otherwise smooth; they are orange or buff in contrast to the cores, which are normally shades of grey.

Fabric Type 1a (number 2)
This may be a variation of type 1, but is characterised by its high mica content, both in the surfaces, which are smooth, and the body.

Fabric Type 1b
This fabric, which may be another variation of type 1, is represented by a single sherd. It appears laminated in fracture; quartz and sandstone are present, but any laminar inclusions seem to have leached out.

Fabric Type 2
This type of fabric is widespread in the Vale of Glamorgan although only one sherd from Trellech can be certainly identified as of this category. Quartz grits, mostly of medium size, are abundant, less so on the surfaces which are smooth and light brown in colour – the core is light grey. This "Vale" fabric is probably in the same tradition as the coarsewares from Ham Green.

Fabric Type 3 (number 4)
This fabric is much coarser in appearance and is mostly self-coloured grey, though some pieces have buff surfaces. Random quartz and quartzite grits occur throughout the body and surfaces; all appear to be rounded gravels, some of them very large. Mica is present, more noticeably in the surfaces.

Fabric Type 4 (number 1)
This fabric is very similar to known Bristol types which are characterised by quartz and shale inclusions; the surfaces are buff and the core pale grey. Only glazed fragments are represented here, although both jugs and plainwares occur in the same fabric, which is very distinctive.

Illustrated Pottery

1. Screw-twist rod handle in fabric type 4. The fixing of a rod-handle with a single thumb-press is unusual and may indicate a specialised vessel, possibly an aquamanile.[1] The glaze is mottled olive-green and reddish brown, unusual for a Bristol product.
2. Slashed strap handle in fabric type 1a. Surfaces orange, core light grey, traces of yellow-brown glaze much decayed. This handle may be from a twin-handled jar as another very similar handle is also present.
3. Body sherds from a jug in fabric type 1 with "complex rouletting" design. Core grey with buff interior and grey-orange exterior surfaces under patchy variable green glaze. Similar decorative patterns have been noted from Pitman's Court, Monmouth and from Newton Mill, Dixton, where the design is reversed.[2]
4. Flared club rim in fabric type 3, probably from a large storage vessel.

1. I should like to thank Mr. M. W. Ponsford of Bristol City Museum for this information.
2. I am grateful to Mr. S. M. Clarke for details of comparative material from the Monmouth area.

TRELLECH

Post-Medieval Pottery
Sherds from probably five coarseware vessels are represented; these include one ledge rim dish, one ledge/club rim dish and the base of a jar or jug. Fabrics are characteristically soft orange or red, untempered apart from the basal sherd which contains quartz and sandstone. Glazes vary from ochre to dark green; the former may have resulted from the application of a thin slip. Probably all are of local origin and belong to the 17th/18th century, although one sherd is of more recent date.
Two fragments of yellow slipwares are also present; one is from the body of a Staffordshire posset pot or porringer with feathered slip decoration, the other part of a press-moulded dish with combed decoration, probably from Bristol.
All the post-Medieval material is unstratified, apart from the jug base, which occurred in the lower fill of a pit.

S. H. Sell

Appendix – **Early Bloomery Sites in the Monmouth-Trellech Area**

Roman

1. **Monmouth. Granville Street 1** SO. 51081283 Excavation by Monmouth Archaeological Society, 1965. Furnace bases, channel with slag run in situ, stone working floor and slag pit.
2. **Monmouth, Granville Street 2** SO. 51131291. Excavation by Monmouth Archaeological Society 1964. Sealed Roman level, ? 2nd century, with much slag. Probable Roman levels with slag at SO 51141291. Further work in this area by Mr. R. Shoesmith revealed furnaces of Roman date (*Monmouthshire Beacon* 10th August 1973).
3. **Monmouth School Gymnasium** SO. 51041272. *The Monmothian* 1882 records coins of Allectus and pottery. Two Roman coins found 1912.
4. **Monmouth, Henry Spencer's Yard** SO 50871273. Roman pottery associated with much iron slag. *Monmouthshire Beacon* 27th January 1967.
5. **Monmouth, Fitzroy Close** SO 50181238 Furnace remains associated with 3rd century coins and pottery found during building of housing estate.
6. **Monmouth, Elstob Way.** SO 50201231 Excavations by S. C. Clarke, 1971, prior to housing development, revealed a shallow ditch containing Roman pottery and slag.
7. **Dixton Newton Hadnock** SO 535151. Furnace base from trial excavations on site of Roman villa at Hadnock. Also furnace remains and heavy slag area around Black Barn in "Cinder Field" (name given in Estate map). SO 534152. *Monmouth Archaeology* (Newsletter of the Monmouth Archaeological Society) No 1, July 1974 and No 3, March 1979.

Probable Roman Iron Working Sites

8. **Monmouth, Priory Farm** SO 510141. Roman pottery

associated with iron slag found in small excavation by Mr. G. Hall of Monmouth School.

9. **Monmouth, Bailey Pit Farm** SO 48701333. Roman pottery associated with slag, furnace lining and vitrified slag. Unexcavated.
10. **Dixton Newton, Hadnock** (a) SO. 53621454. Field north-east of Conegre Barn, near wood. Slag and rim of decorated samian vessel (b) Lower Warfield SO 529136. Slag with possible Roman sherds.
11. **Trelech, Hygga Farm** SO 48020417. Iron furnace with scatter of Roman pottery. Found August 1980, unexcavated.

Medieval

12. **Monmouth, Granville Street** 1 SO 51081283. Medieval furnace bases and associated remains, 1965. See No 1 above.
13. **Dixton Newton** West of church SO 51841354. Heavy slag deposits associated with medieval pottery N.B. "Chattrescroft" centred on roundabout *Monmouthshire Beacon* 1 December 1966.
14. **Dixton Newton Hadnock,** Conegre Barn SO 53481461. Area of slag east of barn with 13th century cooking pot.
15. **Skenfrith Castle** Massive iron smelting deposits underlie stone castle of 1219–1232. Excavations by O. E. Craster 1954 and later (*Archaeologia Cambrensis* 1967 133–58) and by J. K. Knight, 1972 (publication forthcoming). Latter revealed iron furnace and channels with heavy runnels of slag partly cut into lower silting of early Norman ditch.
16. **Monmouth, White Hill** SO 477122. Slag concentrations associated with late medieval pottery.
17. **Trelech Village** West of church SO 499054. Iron furnace debris associated with 13th–14th century pottery, 1980. See above.

Probable Medieval Ironworking Sites

18. **Trelech Grange** SO 489011. Small wood "Cinder Patch Wood" by side of Nant y Defaid, a tributary of the Angidy Fawr.
19. **Trelech village** SO 49970524. Owner reports bed of cinders and slag beneath northern half of area. *Ordanance Survey Record Cards* SO 40 N.E.
20. **Trelech Village** SO 140 521. Black earth with charcoal and slag in mole hills.
21. **Trelech, Cross Hands Farm**. Bradney (*History of Monmouthshire* II, 130) reported a bed of cinders 2–3ft thick under the surface of a field on this farm.
22. **Tintern** ST 520993, formerly Blackacre Grove. Area of bloomery slag and blackened soil. Found by Mr. Paul Courtney, to whom I am indebted for the information.
23. **Tintern** ST 522988. East of Penterry church and deserted medieval village. Scatter of bloomery slag in field. 600m. south of site 22. Found by Mr. Paul Courtney, to whom I am once more indebted for information.
24. **Monmouth, Pitman's Corner** SO 50981298 and SO 51001298. Heavy layers of slag, probably medieval, found in excavations by Monmouth Archaeological Society 1968–69.

Sites of Uncertain Date

25. **Monmouth, Monnow West Bank** SO 50941211. Area with heavy slag exposure c 12 metres square on river bank. This is a 19th century cutting, not the original river bank.
26. **Monmouth, Troy** SO 512103. Heavy iron slag area reported by farmer 1980 in field adjoining wood.
27. **Monmouth, Troy** SO 508106. Much slag noted in stream 1981.
28. **Monmouth, Trewen, Watery Lane** SO 49491255. Heavy area of slag noted by Mr. W. Frost.
29. **Monmouth, Bailey Pit** Slag concentrations noted at SO 486131 and 487130 (Lower Bailey Pit) and SO 483129 (Upper Bailey Pit Drive).
30. **Monmouth, 30 Hereford Road** SO 51041370. Heavy layer of slag noted in garden by Mr. F. Scard (? is this near 18th century charcoal forge – JKK).
31. **Monmouth, Priory Farm** SO 51451360. Heavy slag concentration, probably a furnace, noted 1980.
32. **Monmouth, Oakfield** SO 50761468 Slag layer 18 ins. deep reported by farmer, Mr. Jones 1980.
33. **Dixton Newton** Rabbit Wood, Hadnock. SO 53191452. Heavy slag concentration and furnace debris in bank at point of wood. Discovered 1981.
34. **Rockfield** SO 463149. Site of probable furnace, found 1980. Unexcavated, no dating evidence.
35. **Rockfield** SO 48101348. East of Caxton Tower. Probable furnace, found 1981. Unexcacated no dating evidence.

THE WINDMILLS OF GWENT

by Paul Courtney

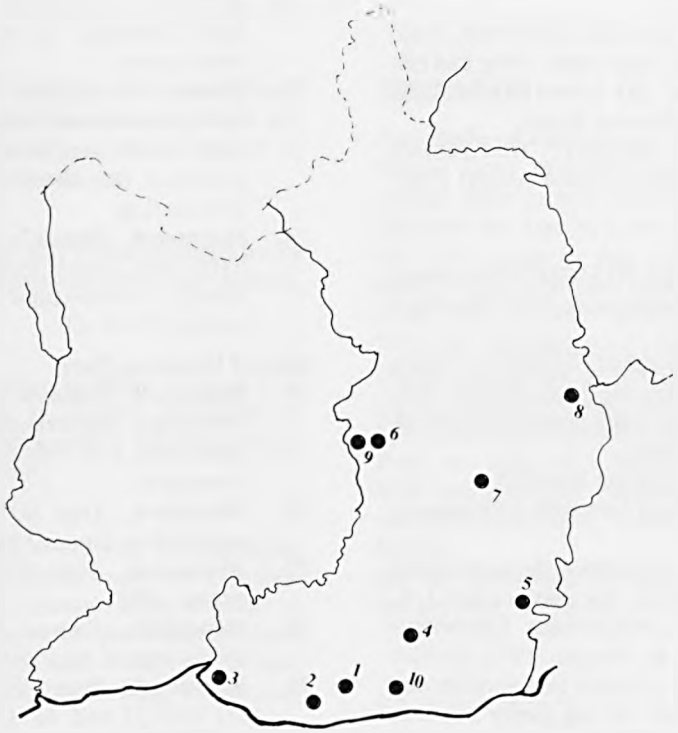

Fig. 25 WINDMILLS IN GWENT 1. Magor, 2. Redwick, 3. Nash, 4. Llanvair Discoed/Llanvaches, 5. St Arvans, 6. Upper Berthlwyd, 7. Windmill Break near Llanishen, 8. Monmouth, 9. Llancayo, 10. Roggiett.

The hilly landscape of Gwent meant that water rather than wind was the dominant power source for mills. Coates and Tucker have recently compiled evidence for the existence of large numbers of watermills in the catchments of the Monnow and Trothy rivers.[1] This article aims at bringing together some of the scattered documentary evidence for the existence of windmills in Gwent.

Windmills are first recorded in Britain in the late twelfth century. Medieval windmills were mostly of the postmill variety; the body of the mill rotated around a central post which was supported by horizontal crosstrees generally set into a mound or tump. By utilizing a long tail-beam the mill could be moved to face into the wind. The first British tower mill is documented at Dover Castle in 1295 but tower mills were probably rare until the post-medieval period. The sails of tower mills were carried on a cap which moved independently of the stone or brick tower.[2]

Only one certain medieval reference to a Gwent windmill is known; this is mentioned under *Magor* in an inquisition post mortem of 1334.[3] Pugh refers to a new windmill at *Dowlais*, a manor of Newport lordship, in the 1446–7 Ministers Accounts. However, the relevant entry seems to record a single watermill for corn *molendim domini aquati et blandiferi* not two mills as Pugh suggests.[4] No windmill is mentioned in the 1465–6 accounts which are the next surviving.[5] Rees' map of the fourteenth century Marches places two windmills at *Goldcliff.*[6] I have been unable to trace any documentation specifying the power sources of these mills. Rees may have supposed they were wind powered due to their low lying position on the Caldicot Levels. However, a fourteenth century petition shows that a watermill with an underground leet existed at Goldcliff.[7]

In the post-medieval period documentation becomes more extensive. At *Nash* on the Caldicot Levels a windmill tump is mentioned in 1704 and 1721.[8] The said piece of land was valued at 17d in 1707 and was given an area of 17 perches (203.5 m²) in a deed of 1800.[9] This is also presumably the windmill tump recorded in a survey of Lebenyth manor in 1665.[10] The first edition of the Ordinance Survey six inch map (surveyed in 1880/1) locates a building named Windmill Tump at ST 348839; this is now part of a small concentration of housing north-east of the village. Windmill Reen (a fen drainage cut) is also located nearby.[11] Another windmill tump is located at *Llanfihangel Rogiett* in 1650/1 and 1710.[12] In 1803 William Ridgeway was presented in the court baron for encroaching this windmill tump.[13] The name survives to locate this mill on a limestone rise overlooking the levels (ST 455883). At *Redwick* on the levels Windmill Reen is first mentioned in 1655 and Windmill Tump recorded in 1655/6.[14] The site is still marked by the remains of the windmill mound in a field north-west of the village (ST 402845). It is quite possible that it is the same mill as that referred to in 1334 under Magor.[15] A decayed messuage and land formerly called the Windmill at *Monmouth* is mentioned in indentures of 1698, 1700 and 1740 and may mark the site of a lost windmill.[16] Another uncertain windmill may be reme bered by the Windmill House and Field of *St. Arvans* parish mentioned in a deed of 1802.[17] In 1584, however, the jury of survey for Chepstow manor which included St. Arvans re orded that they knew of no windmill ever having existed in the manor or lordship.[18] These above sites with the exception of Nash, Redwick and Rogiett remain unlocated. The tendency of Gwent tithe maps not to list fieldnames is a particular handicap.[19]

Two more possible windmills may be recorded by placenames. In *Llanvair Discoed* a windmill close is mentioned in a deed of 1711 and is probably adjacent or nearby to the coppiced Windmills Woods of a 1772 indenture.[20] These woods lie on the bounds of Llanvair and Llanvaches parishes (ST 440922). The first edition of the six-inch Ordnance Survey map (surveyed in 1880/1) locates a wood

called Windmill Breast on the western edge of the Trellech Plateau in *Devauden* parish south of Llanishen village (SO 474018).[21] Finally Bradney writing at the beginning of the century records the tradition that the hilltop Upper-Berthlwyd farm in *Gwehelog Fawr* parish (SO 376058) was once a windmill.[22]

Mention should also be made of two surviving towermill shells built in stone. At Llancayo farm in the floor of the Usk Valley in *Gwehelog* parish are the remains of a tower mill probably of early nineteenth century date (SO 365030). A second towermill is located at Windmill Tump in *Llanvihangel Rogiett* (ST 455883), and was out of use when Bradney wrote in the early 1930s.[23] It is of uncertain date but is probably a refoundation on the site of a postmill recorded by the reference to a windmill tump from 1650/1 onwards.

The locations of the above mills show a variety of sitings. It is of no surprise to find Nash and Redwick on the Levels where water power was presumably less effective than in the more hilly areas of Gwent. Llancayo in the Usk Valley is also in a lowlying position; although the River Usk only 60 metres away offered an alternative power source. In contrast Rogiett and especially the less certain sites of Upper Berthlwyd and Windmill Breast near Llanishen represent raised sites.

The post-medieval references to windmill tumps suggest abandoned postmill sites. A similar situation is found in West Gloucestershire.[24] It seems likely if unprovable that these represent medieval manorial mills. The latter mills were adjuncts to individual farms but as many of these sites are doubtful no precise chronology can be given. However, sites like Llancayo probably represent investment associated with the general agricultural improvements of the late eighteenth and earlier nineteenth centuries.[25] The mills were presumably killed by the agricultural changes of the late nineteenth century. Factors involved probably included the agricultural depression, increasing specialization made possible by the railways and the increasing use of steam power and roller-milling.

NOTES

1. S. D. Coates & D. G. Tucker, *Water-mills of the Monnow and Trothy and their tributaries*, (Monmouth, 1978).
2. The standard work is R. Wailes, *The English Windmill*, (London, 1954). See also the same authors *A Source Book of Windmills and Watermills* (London, 1979).
3. Public Record Office C 135/39/6.
4. T. B. Pugh, *The Marcher Lordships of South Wales 1415–1536 Select Documents*, (Cardiff 1963), pp. 168 and 200. I am grateful to D. H. Evans for confirming my reading of this document.
5. Gwent County Record Office (Gwent CRO) MAN/B/90/004.
6. W. Rees, *South Wales and the Border in the Fourteenth Century*, Ordnance Survey 1932.
7. *Calendar of Ancient Petitions Relating to Wales*, pp. 103 and 108. See also D. H. Williams 'Goldcliff Priory' in *Monmouthshire Antiquity*, 3i (1970–1), pp. 37–54.
8. Gwent CRO MAN/E/133/0053; Gwent CRO Newport 3347.
9. Bradney, *Monmouthshire*, 3ii (1928); Gwent CRO D. 668.18.
10. Gwent CRO Newport 4586.
11. O.S. 1st edition, six inches to a mile, sheet XXXIV.
12. Gwent CRO D.668.10; Gwent CRO D.668.18.
13. Gwent CRO Newport 4810.
14. National Library of Wales. Badminton Collection Manorial No. 1397, a Court leet; Gwent CRO Evans and Evill 0183.
15. In 1391 Redwick was said to be part of Magor: *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem*, Vol. xv, Rich II, No. 986.
16. Gwent CRO Misc MSS 737; Gwent CRO Misc MSS 738; Gwent CRO Misc 740/741.
17. Gwent CRO D.412.44/45.
18. National Library of Wales. Badminton Collection Manorial No. 1790. Copy of 1584 survey: original is in Badminton House.
19. I would be grateful for any further information on locations and can be contacted at 18 Tynant St., Grangetown, Cardiff CF1 7PJ.
20. Gwent CRO Newport 5601.
21. O.S. 1st edition, six inches to a mile, Sheet XX.
22. Bradney, *Monmouthshire*, IIi (1911), p. 112. He mentions a millstone and spindle outside the building. However, the stone presently in the yard is a spindleless press stone probably for cider.
23. Bradney, *Monmouthshire*, IVii (1929), p. 226.
24. Personal communication from R. Newman.
25. A number of Glamorgan mills can be dated to this period. See M. Williams, *The South Wales Landscape*, (London 1975), pp. 154–7.

EXCAVATIONS AT CAERWENT (VENTA SILURUM) IN 1981

Summary of Results

Fig. 26

The first season of excavations, carried out on behalf of the National Museum of Wales, commenced in the south-east corner of Insula 1 (north-west corner of the town). This is the first excavation within the Roman town since the opening of the adjacent Pound Lane site in 1947 and 1948 by G. C. Dunning.[1] The aim of the work is basically "historical" – to trace the development and decline of *Venta Silurum*, which despite extensive excavations, especially in the early part of this century, remains almost wholly unknown.

An area approximately 520 sq.m. in extent was opened and the remains of a substantial courtyard house were uncovered. Measuring 22m from north to south, it is only slightly smaller than the often quoted House III South in the south-west corner of the town.[2] The rooms were arranged round a central courtyard with a verandah on three sides, but unfortunately only a small portion of the east range was revealed for most of it lies beneath a pigeon-loft and private garden. In Room 1, a portion of a tessellated pavement of coarse sandstone *tesserae* survived, but in all the other rooms of the south range the floors had been destroyed. However, the large number of *tesserae* found in the top-soil above the rooms of this wing would seem to suggest that they also had tessellated floors. Room 6 in the west wing had been heated by a hypocaust, but very little of the system remained. The brick furnace-arch was situated in the west wall, and both the sides and floor bore the signs of intense heat. Immediately in front of the arch were the remains of three brick *pilae* bedded directly onto a clay surface, but the others had been robbed and left no traces. In the north wing, the only floor-level to survive was a portion of coarse *opus signinum* floor in Room 10. All the walls were of mortared limestone blocks, and the roof had been covered with hexagonal stone slabs. A colonnaded verandah on the southern side of the building, fronting the east-west road, was probably an addition to the original plan. Examination of the coins and pottery would seem to indicate that the house was constructed in the late third or early part of the fourth century. Occupation, however, had ceased by the middle of the fourth century for there is a complete absence of any late coinage and there are no significant quantities of pottery which can be dated beyond that time. This is at complete variance with the situation encountered on the Pound Lane site where occupation appeared to continue well into the fifth century.

Under the north wing of the courtyard house there are substantial signs of an earlier building. Its northern limits, however, lie beyond the courtyard house and the present excavation, so that no coherent plan can be identified as yet. *Opus signinum* floors belonging to this phase were found intact within Rooms 8 and 9, and a small portion of a mosaic bearing a geometric design was also uncovered in

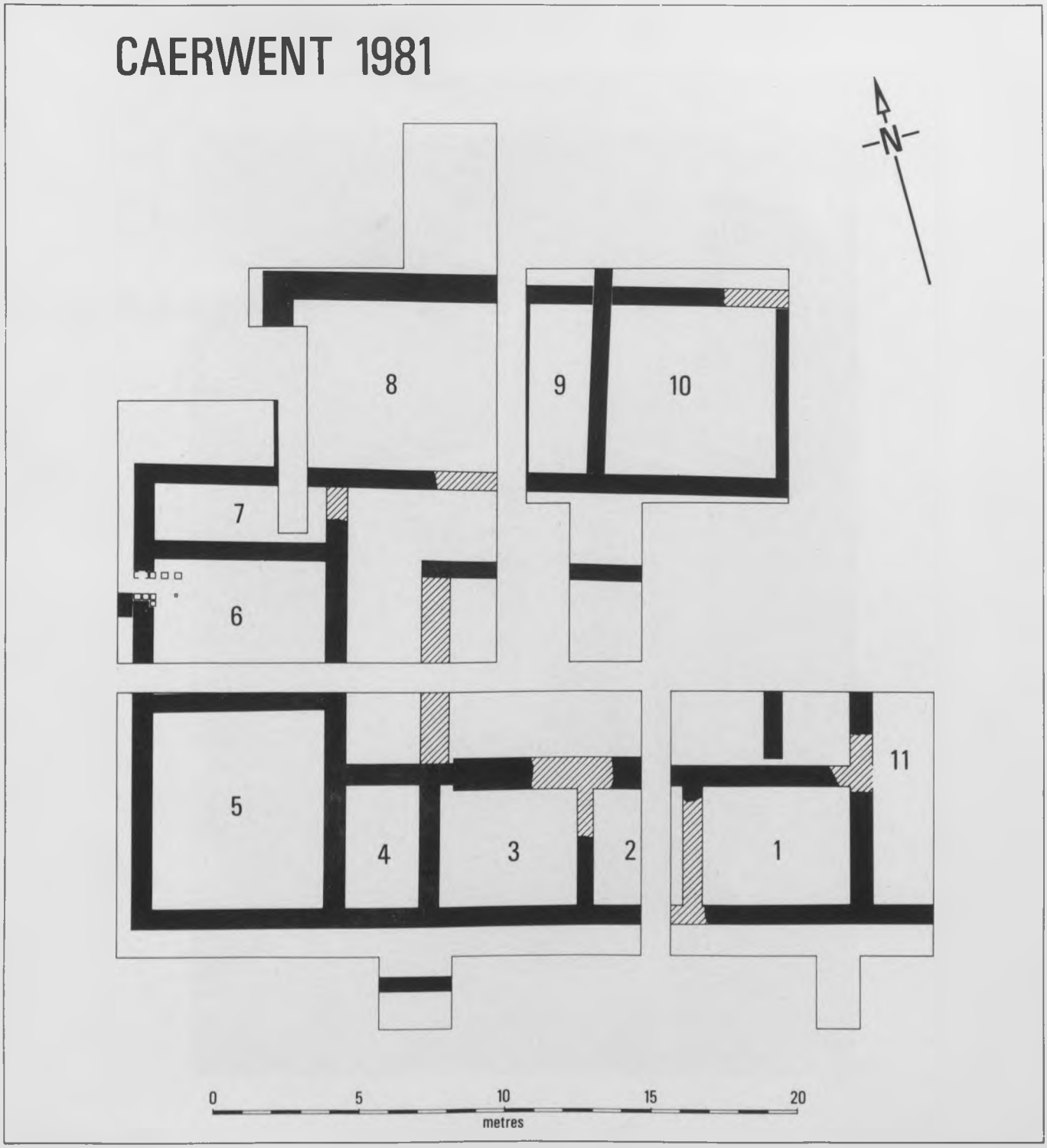

Fig. 27

Room 10. One of its walls, later re-used in the courtyard house as the west wall of Room 10, was carried over an infilled well by a relieving arch. A quantity of painted wall-plaster, including a brightly painted small figure of a peacock, also belongs to this phase.

The only substantial evidence for activity post-dating the courtyard house was confined to the north wing. A dry-stone wall built directly on the *opus signinum* floor of Room 10 may have formed the east wall of a small rectangular structure which had re-used in part the north and south walls of this wing of the courtyard house. A rough section of walling and foundations in Room 8 probably formed the west wall, which would give a measurement of 9 by 6.5m. for this building. A small section of walling which abbutted the outside of the east wall at its southern end, and which was similar in character to it, was built on a deposit of burnt clay, perhaps a portion of collapsed wattle and daub from the courtyard building, which contained a coin of Constans from the mint of Trier (LRBC i, 163)[3] dated to A.D. 341–6. This coin would appear to provide a *terminus post-quem* for the construction of this building.

Richard J. Brewer

FOOTNOTES

1. *BBCS* xiii (1948), 56–9 for a summary of the 1947 excavation, and *Mon. Ant.* III, i (1970–1), 61 for a report on the uncovering of a mosaic in House XXVII North.
2. *Archaeologia* LVII (1901), 301–10.
3. Carson, R. A., Hill, P. V. and Kent, J. P. C., *Late Roman Bronze Coinage* (1960).

THE 'BROCKWEIR' HEAD

by George C. Boon

Brockweir is on the Gloucestershire side of the Wye, territory which the *Antiquary* traverses but seldom. But the curious carved stone above the porch of the smith's shop there, shown in this charming portrait of Mrs. Vaughan the smith's good lady, is now a Monmouthshire relic, having been translated to the garden of No. 3, Badminton Villas, Bridge-st., Chepstow in April, 1975. The story is given in a note published in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 1977, 139–40, in which this photograph is mentioned. It was taken by A. E. Hudd, the *factotum* of the Caerwent excavations, in the first days of November, 1908, and came to light this year in an album of Caerwent illustrations deposited at the National Museum by Dr. Ian Longworth, Keeper of the Dept., of Prehistory and Roman Britain at the British Museum, to which Hudd's daughter had presented it many years ago.

Little can be said of the stone, which was found in Caswell Wood, Tidenham, overlooking the Wye and Brockweir from the south-east, by Mr. Vaughan about 1885–6. There is a spring there, whence perhaps it may have come – compare, perhaps, the curious faces incised around the spring at 'Tarren Deusant', north of Llantrisant, Glamorgan (Royal Commission Inventory, *Glamorgan* i, pt. 3 (1976), p. 68, No. 992, pl. 30). I do not see any reason to claim that the 'Brockweir' carving is Romano-British – indeed, there is no stylistic feature which permits of a sound opinion of period or date, contrary to Hudd's suggestion in *Archaeologia* lxii (1910), p. 6, footnote. Only the face is worked: the serpent-like form of the bust is a freak of natural weathering.