



SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TRANSACTIONS 1992-1993 VOLUME XXXIV

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

T R A N S A C T I O N S

FOR 1992-93

VOLUME XXIV

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Staffordshire County Studies
Sample

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THE BRONZE CHI-RHO BOWL FROM WALL

D. J. SYMONS

Readers of the society's transactions may be aware of the reported discovery at Wall in the early 1920s of a Roman bronze bowl decorated with a Christogram, but both the circumstances surrounding the discovery and the present whereabouts of the bowl are shrouded in mystery.¹ Preserved in the collections of the Department of Archaeology at Birmingham City Museum, however, is a watercolour of the bowl which has never, to the writer's knowledge, been published, although it was exhibited in the museum in 1979.² The present note is intended to rectify this omission and to discuss what is known about the bowl's discovery. If any readers are able to supply further information on the matter, or know of the bowl's whereabouts, the writer would be pleased to hear from them.

The watercolour (plate I) was painted in 1923 by Dr. Hugh A. Fawcett and presented by him to the museum in November 1974, when he was 83 years old. It has been catalogued in the museum's collections as accession number 1978 A 401. Only one other illustration of the bowl is known, a poor quality photograph of the underside published in 1924 in the transactions of the Birmingham Archaeological Society and reproduced here as plate II.³ The photograph shows that the Christogram was worked in repoussée from below, so that it appeared in relief in the base of the bowl. George Boon has identified the bowl as typical of the 4th century A.D., and has kindly given me permission to rehearse his comments here:⁴

'The lip of the bowl is uneven but with a slight outward turn, suggestive of there originally having been a flat rim; the base seems rather small in the painting, but the small diameter is borne out by the photograph. The bowl has a rather curious linear repoussée fluted decoration, similar to that of the container of the Penard (Gower) hoard of Roman coins ending with Carausius⁵ but straight; and here the flutings contain an elongated S-shaped gadroon, making an otherwise unexampled combination. The Christogram on the base would appear in relief within, the *Rho* of course being reversed (☩). In general for the basic shape one may compare late Roman silverware, as in A. O. Curle, *The Treasure of Traprain Law* (1922) pl. iii (cf. also pls. iv and xix); and H. A. Cahn and A. Kaufmann-Heinimann (eds.), *Der spätrömische Silberschatz von Kaiseraugst* (1964) cat. 52. *Trésors d'orfèvrerie gallo-romaine* (exhibition catalogue, Musée du Luxembourg, 1989), 27–6, shows examples in tin, and [for ones] in bronze note S. Tassinari, *La vaisselle de bronze, romain et provincial, et Musée des Antiquités Nationales* (1975), pl. xiii.'

The one unequivocal reference to the bowl's discovery occurs in the volume, already noted, of the Birmingham Archaeological Society's transactions,⁶ which records the bowl's exhibition at the society's Open Meeting on 23 January, 1924:

'A *Roman Bronze Bowl* exhibited by Mr. Francis Jackson of Wroxeter. This exhibit was of a small bronze bowl about 3½ in. in diameter and of very thin metal. The side showed some enrichments of very simple form but much obliterated by age. The chief interest is in the Christian monogram ☩ very distinctly embossed on the underside of the base. The bowl was found during some excavation work at Letocetum (Wall) near Licfield in 1922, and is particularly valuable as an evidence of Christianity in that district.'

What else do we know of the circumstances surrounding the discovery of the bowl? It was clearly in Francis Jackson's possession in January 1924. In a letter that accompanied the gift of the watercolour in 1974, Dr. Fawcett stated that when he painted the bowl in 1923, it was 'in the possession of the former custodian of the original excavations of Uriconium at Wroxeter'. Extracts from the minutes of the council of the Shropshire Archaeological Society make it clear that the custodian was Jackson:

'May 10th, 1922 – Letter read from Mr. F. Jackson offering his services as Curator of Uriconium. Mr. Jackson to be asked to attend the June Meeting of the Council.'

1 Much of the information about the discovery of the bowl is drawn from letters from Mr. J. A. Pagett and Mr. J. Gould in files in Birmingham Museum. In addition, Mr. Gould has discussed the bowl with me several times, making suggestions which have added considerably to the value of this note. I am also indebted to Mr. G. C. Boon for commenting on the bowl and on the circumstances of its discovery, and also for permission to quote from his letters.

2 *Art in the Roman West Midlands* (handlist compiled by R. Taylor for an exhibition in Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery, April–May 1979), no. 19.

3 *Transactions of the Birmingham Archaeological Society*, 1 (1924), pl. xiii. The photograph is reproduced here by kind permission of the Society.

4 Personal communication of 20 March, 1991.

5 G. C. Boon, *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, xxii (part 3) (1967), 292, fig. 1.

6 *Trans. Birmingham Arch. Soc.*, 1. 50.

7 *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society*, 4th series, ix (1923–4), p. xviii. Jackson retained his post for more than 20 years.

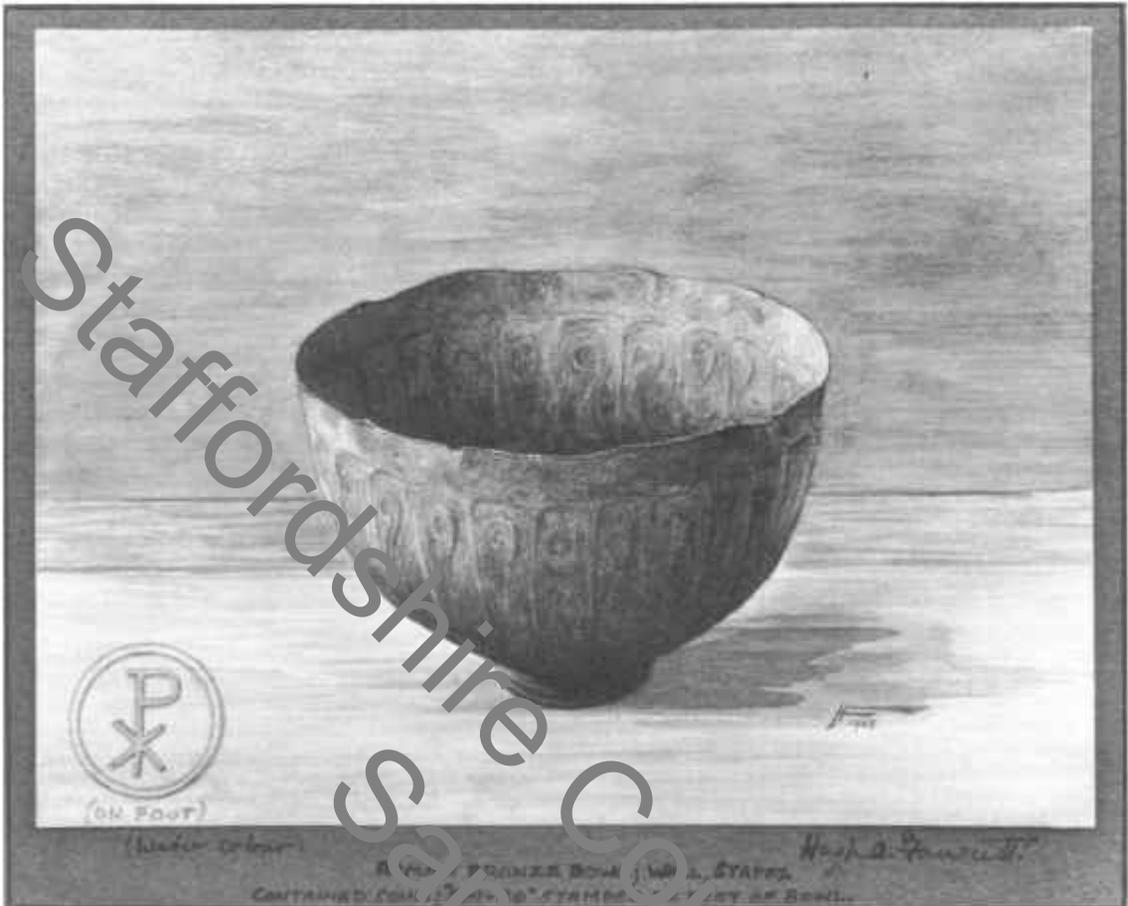


Plate I The Bronze Chi-Rho Bowl from Wall: painting of 1923

'June 7th 1922 – Mr. Jackson attended and was appointed Curator of Uniconsum, he [is] to take the whole of the entrance fees after a payment to the Society of a sum not exceeding £10 a year to cover expenses for rent, rates, insurance and repairs. The agreement to be for one year certain and afterwards subject to 3 months' notice on either side. Mr. Jackson to take half the proceeds arising from the sale of Guides.

Thus, the bowl was already in Jackson's hands by 1923, and this suggests that he was also the finder. In fact, we know that Jackson and Miss E. D. Henderson dug at Wall in 1921, when they discovered 'that the Roman cemetery which authorities had stated "undoubtedly exists, to the east of Wall", was, as a matter of fact, due west of the village', and they were working there again in December 1923.⁸ The transactions of the North Staffordshire Field Club for 1922-23 contain a reference to 'recent' excavations at Wall, which seem likely to have occurred in 1922, although no precise date was given. The same report contains a tantalizing mention of a Roman vase 'of beautiful design and workmanship', but it does not state what the vessel was made of.⁹ A report in the *Lichfield Mercury* for 24 November, 1922, makes it clear that the excavations that year had indeed taken place in the cemetery area at Wall. Unfortunately, neither the Field Club's transactions nor the newspaper report name the director of the 1922 excavations, but the evidence seems overwhelming that it was Jackson (with or without Miss Henderson) and that the bowl was discovered in a grave to the west of Wall village.

One other point seems fairly certain – when discovered, the bowl contained a number of coins. Although the coins are not mentioned in the account published in the transactions of the Birmingham Archaeological Society in 1924, it will be seen on plate I that Dr. Fawcett captioned his watercolour: 'Roman Bronze Bowl; Wall, Staffs. Contained Coins; Chi-Ro [*sic*] Stamped On Foot of Bowl'. The

⁸ *Transactions of the North Staffordshire Field Club*, lix (1924-5), 186.

⁹ *Ibid.* lvii (1922-3), 153: 'During recent excavations some interesting discoveries have been made. Amongst the articles unearthed is a Roman vase, which is described as being in good condition and of beautiful design and workmanship ... There are also several other discoveries all of which will appeal to the members interested in this branch of archaeology.'

EXCAVATIONS AT THE PEEL ARMS SITE, TAMWORTH, STAFFORDSHIRE

COLM MOLONEY

with contributions by Leigh Allen, Alistair Barclay,
Lucy Bown, Angela Boyle and Nicola Scott

INTRODUCTION

The Oxford Archaeological Unit was commissioned to carry out an excavation and watching brief at the site of the Peel Arms Hotel, Tamworth, by Building Design Group of Tamworth. The fieldwork and post-excavation analysis was funded entirely by Hinton Properties Ltd through their agents Building Design Group of Tamworth. The work was carried out over a period of four weeks during May and June 1994 under the direction of Colm Moloney and the supervision of Michael Parsons.

TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY (figs. 1 and 2)

The site, centring on NGR SK 20620402, comprised an area of approximately 1377 m² at the junction of Market Street and Silver Street, fronting onto King Street, near the centre of Tamworth.

The S end of the site was occupied by a mid-18th century inn with an early 19th-century extension on the W side towards Silver Street. To the rear, and fronting onto King Street, was an open yard, formerly a car park. The excavation and watching brief was undertaken within the confines of this open area.

The underlying geology within the development area consists of red marls overlain by sandy bands of the Keuper series. The ground gently rises from the SW to a height of 223 m OD.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND (fig. 3)

Tamworth was the chief residence of Offa in AD 757 and continued as a royal residence until AD 874, when it was ransacked by the Danes. In AD 913 it was re-established as a burh and although subject to Viking destruction in AD 940, the town continued to develop inside the burh defences (Gould 1972, 17). The area excavated lies within this former Anglo-Saxon burh (fig. 3; Meeson 1992, 4, fig. 2). Although Tamworth is not mentioned in *Domesday Book*, by 1086 William the Conqueror had created the royal Forest of Cannock immediately W of Tamworth (Gould 1967, 23), and it was about that time that Tamworth Castle was built within the town's defences, dominating the southern entry (Gould 1972, 18; McNeill 1989).

Tamworth maintained its small-town status from the 12th to 16th centuries, although its population probably did not exceed more than 150 families during this period. No charter has survived granting the town a market prior to the 14th century, although it is likely that it enjoyed this status at a much earlier date (Gould 1972, 21).

At the S end of the site the façade of the Peel Arms Hotel, formerly a coaching station named *The Kings Arms*, was constructed in two sections. The western section forming the corner with Silver Street is the most recent addition c. 1807-1809, and it replaced a possibly late-medieval, half-timbered building, no later than the 17th century. The eastern section with a higher roof is earlier than the 1807-1809 addition. Many of the buildings along the northern side of Market Street are of medieval date.

Excavations on the opposite side of King Street from the Peel Arms site in 1971 identified a 14th-century timber-framed building and found the archaeological stratification to be shallow (Meeson and Sheridan 1974, 5). A ditch of unknown date, crossing the N end of the Peel Arms site, is marked on Wood's map of Tamworth (Wood 1958). An evaluation of the Peel Arms site carried out by the Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) in February 1994 identified two linear features crossing the proposed development area, one aligned E-W (121 = 360) and the other N-S (208 = 326). Both contained pottery dating to the 13th and 14th centuries (OAU 1994). The line of the E-W ditch (121 = 360) is the same as the 'Castle Retrenchment' marked on Wood's map (Wood 1958), and a connection between the two was thought likely.

The evaluation also identified a phase of post-medieval levelling (contexts 106, 107, 203 and 217),

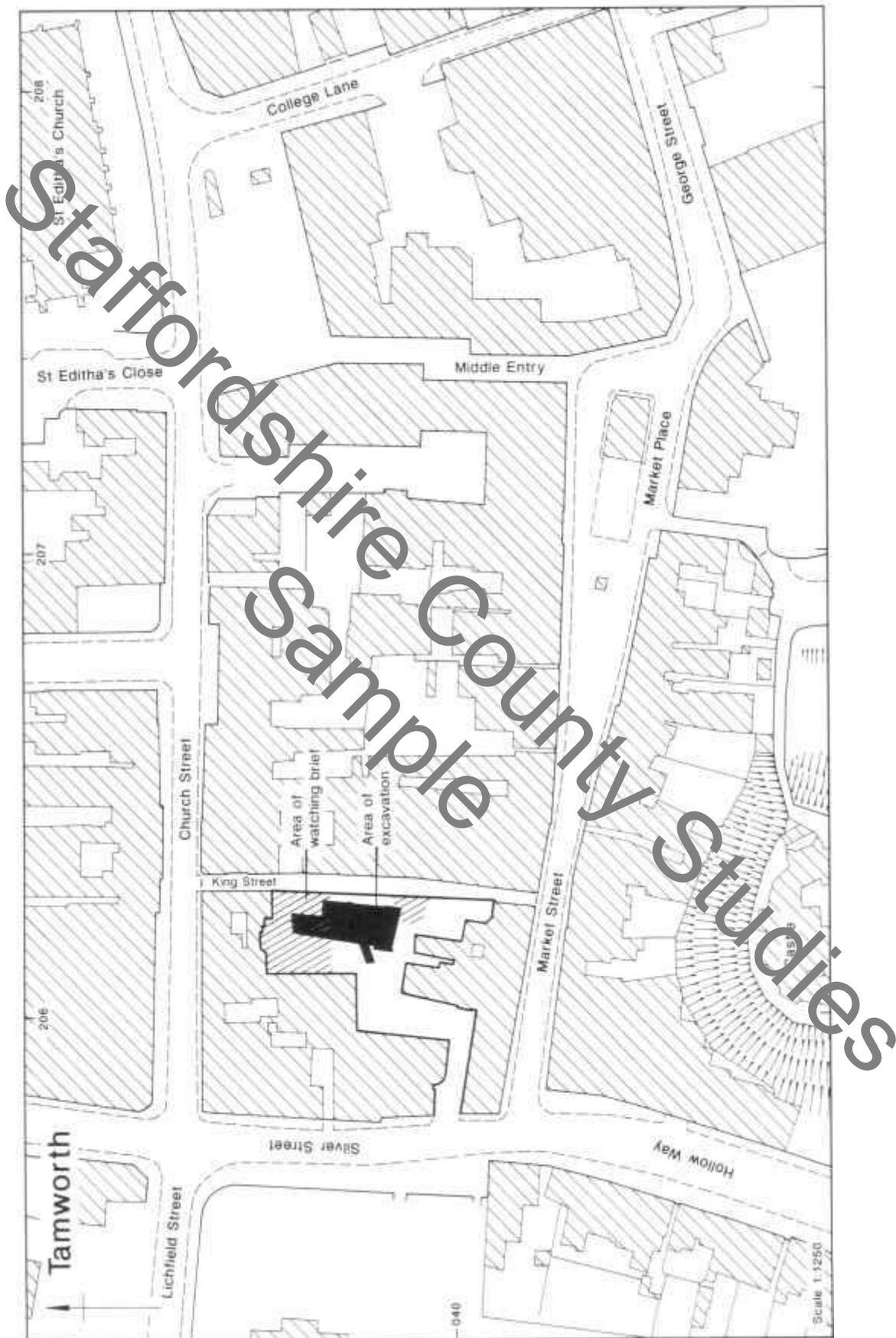


Figure 1: Site location showing areas of excavation and watching brief.

ware of late 12th- to 14th-century date. Its association, in context 345 (assigned to Phase 1), with a predominance of 13th- to 14th-century light bodied wares (see below) supports this identification.

Iron-rich Sandy Wares

The second largest group of sherds recovered in the excavation can be classified as belonging to the generally ubiquitous tradition of Iron-rich Sandy Wares found throughout the West Midlands. Two fabric types and vessel forms in this assemblage correspond with the sub-divisions 'sandy utilitarian ware' and 'sandy table ware/green-glazed pitchers' of that category, as defined at Stafford (Ford 1992). At the Watermill site, Tamworth, these wares are categorized as fabric 3 'Reduced Sandy Ware' and fabric 4 'Reduced Sandy Glazed fabric', and within those categories there is a similar division between utilitarian cooking pots and glazed pitchers/jugs (Nailor 1992). The Tamworth fabrics are likened to those found at Much Park Street, Coventry (fabrics 3 and 4; Wright 1982).

Sandy Utilitarian Ware

One hundred and twelve sherds were recovered from the excavation, all of which display the characteristic uneven surfaces of hand-made and wheel-finished vessels. Generally the sherds are reduced with an oxidised surface, although there are also frequent examples of sherds with both oxidised and reduced firing colour, indicating poorly-regulated firing temperatures. The majority of these sherds are from unglazed cooking pots and jars ranging in rim diameter from 140 to 280 mm, and with sagging bases. Sixteen vessels are represented by simple everted rims with folded over edges, one example of which has thumbled decoration around the outer edge of the rim. Exceptions are a lid seated form and inturned rim form. Parallels for these forms can be found at the Watermill site in Tamworth (Nailor 1992, 116, fig. 75.6 & 75.39) and at Much Park Street, Coventry (Wright 1982, 116, fig. 60.2-60.4, 60.11, 60.16, 60.20, 60.30).

One sherd with a thin white slip and orange/yellow lead glaze on the exterior surface is decorated with an applied vertical strip. Similar sherds in this fabric have been found at Stafford (Ford 1992). Sandy Utilitarian Ware is dated from the 12th- to first half of the 13th- century at Much Park Street, Coventry (Wright 1982), and from the 11th to 14th century at Stafford (Ford 1992), it is found predominantly in Phases 5 and 6 at the Watermill site in Tamworth, dated by the pottery as between the second half of the 11th to later 12th century (Nailor 1992). At the Peel Arms site this sandy utilitarian ware is found scattered throughout the features but occurs in particular concentrations in the pits examined during the watching brief 364, 366, 368, 372, 374, 378 and 380 (Phase 0). A late 11th- to late 12th-century date is indicated for these sherds. One cooking pot base was found in the evaluation context 218.

Sandy Table Wares

Four body sherds and one base with an applied foot are typical examples of sherds from green glazed tripod pitchers. All are reduced sherds and have an olive green lead glaze on the exterior. This particular vessel form is dated as 12th or very early 13th century at Much Park Street, Coventry (Wright 1982), at Stafford (Ford 1992), and at the Watermill site in Tamworth (Nailor 1992). At the Peel Arms site these sherds are likely to be *in situ* in contexts 352 and 356 (Phase 2) and in pits 365 and 370 (Phase 0), but probably redeposited in context 333, Phase 2.

Light-bodied Sandy Ware

The major fabric type within this assemblage can be equated with fabric 1 'Light-bodied Sandy Wares' at Tamworth (Nailor 1992), Much Park Street (fabrics 16 and 17; Wright 1982) and buff/white sandy ware at Stafford (Ford 1992). Light-bodied and buff white sandy wares appear to be a dominant ware in the 13th and 14th centuries throughout South Staffordshire and North Warwickshire, whilst other examples of red painted white wares are known from Coventry (Wright 1982), Warwick (Ratkai 1987/8), and Stafford (Ford 1992). Kiln sites producing White wares are known not only at Chilvers Coton, Nuneaton, but also at Sneyd Green, Stoke-on-Trent, and the products of the latter have been found as far afield as Powys and Shrewsbury. A different range of wares in a buff/white ware are known from kilns at Audlem and Brereton Park in South Cheshire. Whilst the present state of knowledge about the distribution and marketing of these products is little understood, the provenance of the light-bodied sandy wares found at Tamworth are best interpreted as belonging to a network of wide distribution. At the Watermill site in Tamworth this fabric type is defined as distinct from the Chilvers Coton industry at Nuneaton (Mayes and Scott 1984) on the basis of thin section analysis and

such characteristics as the common use of painted red slip decoration (Nailor 1992). The variation in firing within this fabric type not only produces a range of colour from buff/white to pinkish white but also suggests that more than one clay source or kiln for this ware.

Three hundred and sixty sherds were recovered from a variety of vessels, including cooking pots/jars, jugs, dripping pans and bowls. A large proportion of the unglazed sherds are difficult to define as either jugs or cooking vessels. However, assuming that the glazed and decorated sherds are from jugs, both forms are well represented in this assemblage. Twelve cooking pot/jars are represented by rim fragments in a limited range of angular and thickened forms between 140 and 280 mm in diameter. The same range of forms are found at the Watermill site in Tamworth (Nailor 1992, 116, fig. 75.9, 75.10, 75.16, 75.20). The sooted bases which are assumed to be from cooking pots are usually flat. Some cooking pots have a splashed mottled lead and copper glaze on the interior surface.

Eight jugs are represented by plain upright rims with a pinched spout, small everted squared rims and an upright form with internal lip possibly for a locking lid. The plain upright rim can be paralleled at the Watermill site in Tamworth (Nailor 1992, 117, fig. 76.25). The rims range in diameter from 100 to 140 mm. Base sherds from both baluster and ovoid jug forms are present. Other diagnostic sherds from jugs include slashed strap handles (Nailor 1992, 117, fig. 76.25), rod handles with notch decoration on the raised spine of the handle, and decorated body sherds. A variety of decorative elements include painted red slip in vertical bands, a single incised line around the outer edge of the rim, and combed bands of lines forming crude triangular patterns over the external surface of the body. Both green copper and yellow lead glazes are found on these jug sherds and occasionally on the interior of the jug base.

Three examples of larger storage vessels were found, all with the same elaborate squared rim form (Nailor 1992, 117, fig. 76.33) and ranging from 180 to 300 mm in diameter. Two of these examples are decorated on the body with vertical and obliquely applied thumbed strips of clay. One vessel with a flat topped rim and straight sided walls, for which it is impossible to measure a rim diameter, is thought to be from a bowl. The substantial part of a dripping pan survives in this assemblage. The vessel is hand-made with a simple everted rim and copper glazed on the interior.

At the Watermill site in Tamworth these Light-bodied Sandy Wares are introduced in the 13th century and are probably still current during at least part of the 14th century. As a general tradition this ware is commonly dated as late 12th to 14th century, though it does not appear to be in production at Chilvers Coton, Nuneaton, until the 13th century (Mayes and Scott 1984) and does not occur until the later 13th century at Tipping Street, Stafford (Ford 1997). In the Peel Arms excavation this is the predominant fabric type found in all phases and would appear to date from the 13th- to late 14th-centuries. Four jug sherds were found in the evaluation contexts 120 and 218.

Late Medieval Orange Wares

Four sherds in an oxidised orange sandy ware are likely to be 14th- to 15th-century products of a similar tradition to fabrics B and C from the Chilvers Coton kilns at Nuneaton (Mayes and Scott 1984). The same fabric type is present at the Watermill site, Tamworth, where it is paralleled with Much Park Street, Coventry (fabric type 5; Wright 1982) and associated with the production of wide-mouthed jars. Of the four sherds in this assemblage one rim (260 mm) from such a jar and a sagging base can be paralleled at Coventry (Wright 1982, 122, fig. 63.87). The exact provenance of this ware is unknown, although it is a common late medieval type throughout South Staffordshire.

These sherds are associated with the latest fill in the recut of ditch 359 (context 332, Phase 2) and in pits 307, 310 and 316, which were cut into the upper fills of the ditch. A late 14th- or 15th-century date would not be out of place for this material.

Midlands Purple Ware

Ten overfired sherds are categorised as belonging to the Midlands Purple tradition, though some are very similar to the Light-bodied Sandy Wares. The complete profile of a urinal with loop handle, flat base and small everted rim, and the pulled handle from a pipkin could be overfired vessels in the Light-bodied Sandy Ware tradition. Two thickly potted sherds with a purple glaze are more convincing as products of the Midland Purple tradition. Midlands Purple ware is a late 14th- to 15th-century product found throughout the Midlands. It is known to have been produced from kilns at Ticknall, Derbyshire, and at Chilvers Coton, Nuneaton (fabric D), and wasters have been found at Stoke-on-Trent (Ford

TWO MEDIEVAL BUILDINGS IN HORNINGLOW STREET, BURTON-UPON-TRENT

R. A. MEESON AND A. KIRKHAM

186-187, Horninglow Street retain traces of timber-framed buildings which shared a burgage plot established before 1214. Although survival is fragmentary, sufficient remains to provide the best insight to date into the character of town-houses in medieval Burton-upon-Trent. Both buildings were jettied, and both had crown post roofs. A tree-ring felling date of 1345 has been obtained for timbers in No. 187.

INTRODUCTION

186-187 Horninglow Street came to the attention of architectural historians in 1990, when a large redevelopment was proposed which included the demolition of buildings fronting onto the street. Although the buildings were retained within the development, and have been afforded statutory protection, parts of the medieval framing were considered beyond repair and were removed. A watching brief was maintained by the authors of this paper on behalf of the Director of Planning and Economic Development for Staffordshire County Council, with a view to securing a record of the medieval timbers exposed during work upon the buildings. The record made during that exercise provided the bulk of the evidence upon which this paper is based. In addition, the remains of another building encountered on the same site during an archaeological evaluation carried out by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (Dingwall 1991) are briefly reconsidered. One of the medieval buildings described below is at number 186 Horninglow Street; the other is at 186a-187 but for simplicity it is referred to below as 187.

Nikolaus Pevsner used the word 'dreary' five times in the first paragraph of his account of Burton-upon-Trent, but he could not be blamed for failing to notice the hidden remains of a number of medieval buildings (1974, 83). The coming of the canals, and later the railway, had transformed a decayed medieval borough into an internationally renowned brewing town. Early breweries were located behind their owners' houses on the former medieval tenements; some expanded on town-centre sites and were linked to the suburban malthouse by a network of private railways (Palliser 1976, 160-162). Many of the 19th-century brewing and commercial buildings have in their turn, been replaced by modern redevelopment, leaving no visible evidence of the medieval buildings which once lined the streets. Although early carpentry has been surveyed on the site of the Benedictine abbey (awaiting publication), the survival of previously unrecognised medieval buildings elsewhere in the town was extremely unlikely. The only town-house previously noticed in print was at 169 High Street, which was demolished in 1969. That building was interpreted by the Royal Commission of the Historical Monuments of England as a 15th-century three-bay open hall with a storeyed end, but elsewhere it was said to be of 14th-century origin and to include 'a great chamber or solar of seven bays about 57 feet long and 17 feet wide' (Mercer 1975, 200-201; Charles 1971, 54-56).

THE CONTEXT OF THE BUILDINGS

Conventionally, the origins of Burton-upon-Trent lie in the foundation of two churches by St. Modwen in the 7th century and the endowment of the Benedictine Abbey by Wulfric Spot in his will of c. 1004 (Whitelock 1979, 586-589). The place-name, however, may derive from the establishment of a fortified settlement before the late 9th century, though as yet there is no archaeological corroboration of this theory (Gelling 1989, 145-53; 1992, 119). Whereas St. Mary's Abbey held extensive property in 1086, the nature and condition of the town of Burton at that time is hard to determine. If, as has been argued, an entry for Stafford in Domesday Book is an error for Burton, nine households might have been accounted in 1086 (Wrottesley 1884, 3). However, for Burton Abbey manors generally, at least two-thirds of its households might have been omitted from the Domesday survey (Walmsley 1968, 79).

Whatever the condition or status of Burton at the end of the 11th century, a charter of Henry II confirmed to the abbot all the privileges and customs *in burgo et extra burgum* which his predecessors had held (Shaw 1798, 2). According to the abbey chronicles it was Abbot Nicholas (1187-97) who 'made the first borough of Burton, namely, the vill and new wick of Burton', and a market charter was obtained in the time of Abbot William Melburne (1200-14) (Deanesly 1937, xxxiv-xxxv).

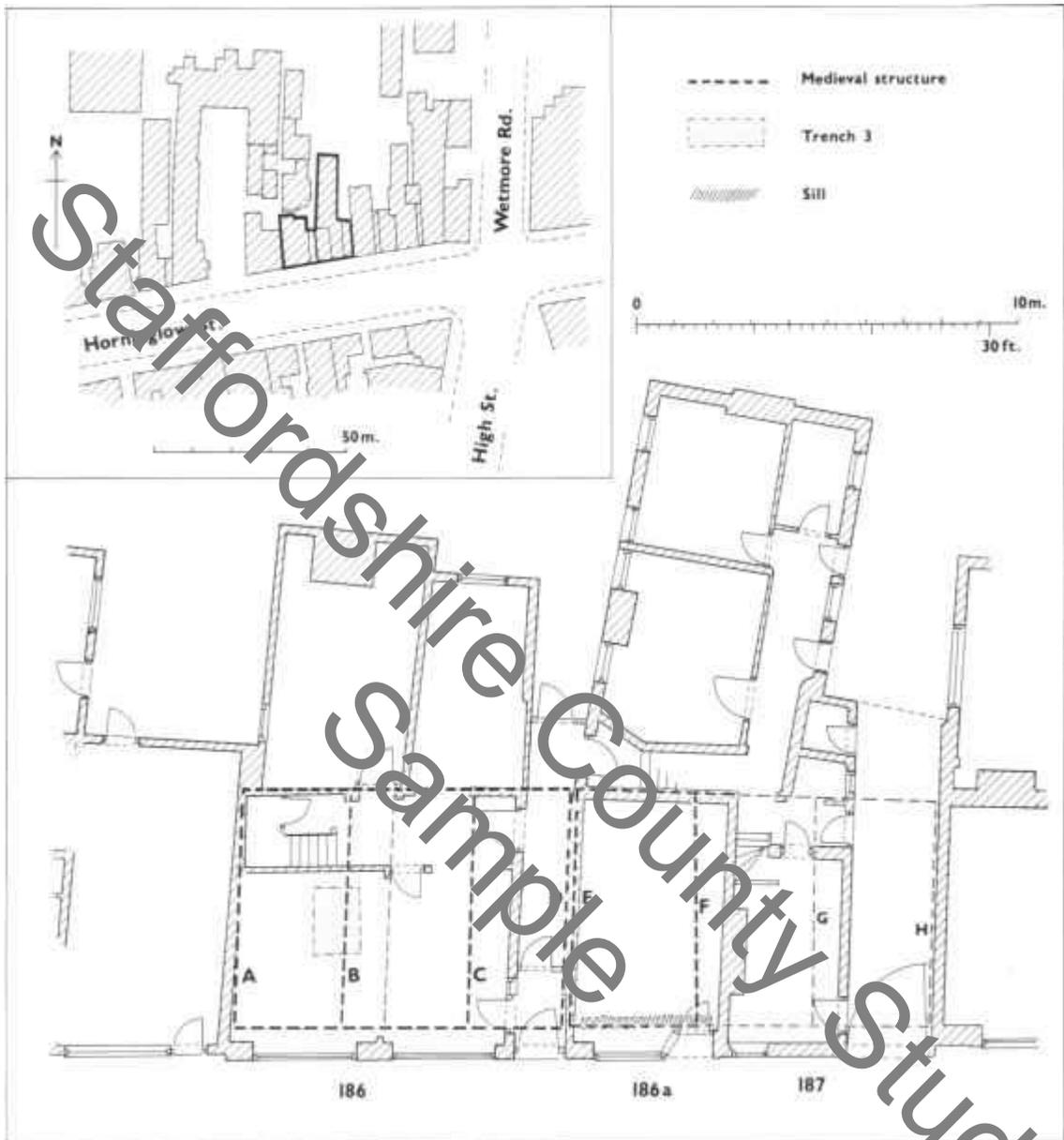


Fig. 1 Simplified plans of 186-187, Horninglow Street, including outline of medieval structures and position of archaeological trench 3.

The tenements along Horninglow Street were the result of an early extension of the borough. Abbot Melburne proposed that burgages should be laid out 'in that street *which lies* [authors' italics] from the great bridge of Burton as far as the new bridge towards Horninglow . . . paying for each burgage 12d. for all service' (Wrottesley 1884, 44). Possibly the thoroughfare predated Melburne's charter, but it was the abbot who established tenements along it, and over former open fields (Stuart 1994, 6). The borough was extended further in 1273 and 1286 (Walmsley 1973, 348).

Most of the fabric of the medieval town has been obliterated, but the archives of Burton Abbey in the Staffordshire County Record Office, together with a map made by Wyatt in 1760 (D(W) 1734/2/3/133), provide plentiful evidence regarding the foundation and early development of the borough. The

Several other crown post buildings have now been discovered in the area. Those in the plank-walled church at Rushton Spencer, with straight upward and downward braces and a fillet on the upper face of the collar purlin, have been tentatively attributed to the late 13th century (Meeson 1983, 29-35). Crown posts were employed in the wing, and probably also on the base cruck truss in the hall, at Pear Tree Farm, Yoxall (Alcock and Meeson 1985, 17). No. 1, Lichfield Road, Kings Bromley, has a plain rectangular crown post with four-way upward braces in what may have been the wing to a former hall; it is tentatively assigned to the late 14th or at the latest the early 15th century. Manor Farm, Wilnecote, has a recently-discovered base cruck truss with a crown post above. Just over the county boundary in Derbyshire, another example has been discovered in Sudbury Home Farm, Doveridge (ex inf. B. Hutton).

The discovery of part of a crown post roof at Abbots Bromley, only 16km (10 miles) west of Burton-upon-Trent, prompts speculation about the way that carpentry techniques were transmitted from one place to another. The village of Bromley had been in the possession of Burton Abbey since the time of Wulfric Spot, and in 1222 Abbot Richard de Lisle created a borough there (Whitelock 1979, 588; Palliser 1972, 68). Churchfields House (SK07962464) retains a single crown post with curved braces down to the tiebeam and an upward brace to the collar purlin. The head of the crown post clasps the purlin and is tenoned on each side into the soffit of the collar — a technique employed in No. 186, Horninglow Street. There were formerly arch braces below the tiebeam. All of the crown posts which have been found in Staffordshire are in high social status buildings or in medieval boroughs. Possibly contact between the two places led to carpenters who had worked in the expanding borough of Burton-upon-Trent being employed to construct Churchfields House and others like it in Abbots Bromley.

No medieval town-houses with crown posts were known in the county until those in Burton-upon-Trent were recognised by Philip Heath and drawn to the authors' attention. The suggested date range for the Staffordshire crown post buildings catalogued above is from the late 13th century to around the end of the 14th century. However, in some south-eastern counties of England construction of crown post roofs continued until much later. Many examples are of octagonal section and have broadly datable moulded bases and capitals. In Kent, during a tree-ring dating programme, crown posts of late 15th- and even early 16th-century date were identified (tree-ring dating lists in VA, xix-xxii).

In York crown posts are of plain rectangular section and dating relies upon carpentry more than decoration. A crown post in Lady Row has been dated to c. 1316, but (as in Kent) others may have been built as late as the early 16th century. The earliest examples in York are of slender scantling and they have unjowled heads. Late 14th- and 15th-century crown posts are 0.25 - 0.26m (9-10") broad, with a jowled head which 'embraces' the collar purlin and is double-tenoned into the collar above. Early crown posts tend to have short, straight braces whereas in the main period braces are broader and more usually curved (RCHME 1981, lxii - lxxii).

At 187, Horninglow Street, both of the surviving crown posts are slender, with unjowled heads, conforming more closely to early 14th-century parallels in York than to later examples. The intersecting braces on each side of the crown posts also point to an early construction date. Such braces are found in conjunction with a slender crown post at 12-15, Newgate, York, of c. 1337 (RCHME 1981, lxx). Conversely, where jettied buildings have joists tenoned into the backs of bressumers they are attributed to the late 15th and early 16th centuries (RCHME 1981, lxix).

At 186, Horninglow Street, the crown posts in trusses A-C are wider than those in the adjoining building; they clasp the sides of the collar purlin, but are not jowled. One such crown post has been recorded in the north wing at Middle Farm, Harwell (Oxon.), and has been tree-ring dated to 1371 or 1372 (Currie 1993, 151). From the roof structure alone, a mid- to late 14th-century date of construction might be postulated for number 186, but the wall framing should also be taken into account. At Mavesyn Ridware Gatehouse a 14th-century date has been suggested for a building with large wall panels and curved braces, but walls with large panels and curved braces are sometimes conservatively dated as late as the 16th century (Mercer 1975, 120).

The Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England and Staffordshire County Council have jointly funded work at number 187 by the tree ring dating laboratory at Nottingham University, where two of the core samples from this building have produced a felling date of 1345. This is a major step towards the establishment of a typological sequence of timber-framed buildings in the county. The confirmation of the date of construction also provides an insight into the early development of the

borough. It has been shown above that the tenement occupied by 186-187 Horninglow Street was laid out between 1200 and 1214, and rent was being paid for two properties there in 1319; one of those buildings contained an open hearth, presumably in a hall adjacent to the street. In 1345 a new building was constructed at 187 and rebuilding took place soon afterwards at 186. This part of the early thirteenth-century borough extension, therefore, was already undergoing a phase of renewal in the middle of the fourteenth century.

In a town which has been through two major waves of redevelopment, these two medieval buildings are remarkable survivals. Although some cellarage has been identified, generally the ground-level has been built up and the survival of significant medieval deposits below the ground has been confirmed by the site evaluation. The retention of the standing buildings, together with evidence of their predecessors in the ground beneath them and the enormous potential of the medieval archives, combine to make this site one of high archaeological and historical interest and potential.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors are grateful to Ednaston Developments Midlands Ltd. for allowing access to the buildings while works were carried out upon them. Douglas Johnson drew our attention to the 1319 rental; he and Denis Stuart provided a pre-publication proof of the transcript. F. W. B. Charles discussed the interpretation of the timber frame, making many valuable suggestions. R. Hook of RCHME was particularly helpful throughout the survey and report preparation, and R. Howard forwarded the tree-ring dates expeditiously to enable them to be included in this article.

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DEAN KIMBERLEY'S VISITATION OF CHURCHES IN LICHFIELD PECULIAR JURISDICTION, 1714

DOUGLAS JOHNSON

In the summer of 1714 Dr. Jonathan Kimberley, the recently appointed dean of Lichfield cathedral, inspected 36 of the churches and chapels in the counties of Staffordshire, Derbyshire, and Warwickshire that lay within the cathedral's peculiar jurisdiction (the area over which the dean, rather than the bishop, had the right of general ecclesiastical supervision, including visitation). 'Mr. Dean's Inspection of the Churches', a summary of his orders for improvements to their fabric and furnishings, survives and is printed below. It is one of the few extant surveys of churches within the cathedral's peculiar jurisdiction and affords some clues to their condition at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Kimberley began his tour of inspection on Wednesday, 28 April 1714, when he visited the Staffordshire churches of Weeford, Hints, and Whittington. The following day he went on to Edingale, Alrewas, and King's Bromley, then, after a long weekend, he inspected Armitage, Pipe Ridware, and Mavesyn Ridware on Monday, 3 May. Norton Canes and Hammerwich were visited the following Wednesday. A week later, on Wednesday, 12 May, the dean was in Derbyshire, where he looked at Wilne; next day it was the turn of the chapels at Long Eaton, Breaston, and Risley. Whitsun fell on 16 May in 1714; Kimberley probably spent it at Lichfield. Three days later he was in Warwickshire, where on Wednesday, 19 May, he visited Gaydon, Bishop's Itchington, Ufton, and Bishop's Tachbrook. On Tuesday, 1 June, he made his way north from Lichfield to Stafford, inspecting on the way Longdon, Rugeley, Colwich, Bednall, Acton Trussell, Baswich, and finally St. Chad's, Stafford. After a day's rest he visited High Offley and Adbaston on Thursday, 2 June. Almost a fortnight later he was again in Derbyshire: on Tuesday, 15 June, he looked at Kniveton and Beeley, and two days later he was at Ashford and Longstone. Finally, back in Staffordshire, he went round the three city churches in Lichfield (St. Mary's, St. Chad's, and St. Michael's) on Wednesday, 7 July, and visited Farewell the following day.

It is difficult to estimate how thorough Kimberley's inspections were. They were obviously more than perfunctory, but even on a long summer day, and with a good horse or carriage it would have been difficult to have made a detailed survey of seven churches on a single day, as the dean apparently did on his journey from Lichfield to Stafford on 1 June 1714. Against that, however, we must assume that due notice of the visitation had been given: the churchwardens would have been in attendance, all would have been ready for his inspection, and he would not have had to stand waiting while keys were found, chests were opened, and Communion plate was brought out of safe keeping.

The visitation seems to have revealed few horrors. Colwich was apparently the only church in serious disrepair: Kimberley ordered a restoration of the east window and three south windows within four months, the only deadline for repairs mentioned in the visitation. His concern for the repair or cleansing of chancels at Weeford, Edingale, King's Bromley, Wilne, Long Eaton ('altogether out of repair'), Breaston ('totally out of repair'), Gaydon, Bishop's Itchington, Ufton, Rugeley, Bednall, Baswich, St. Chad's, Stafford, Kniveton, Ashford, Longstone, St. Mary's and St. Chad's, Lichfield, and Farewell suggests that the cathedral canons, who as rectors were jointly or individually responsible for the maintenance of chancels within the peculiar, were continuing to neglect their churches. Bishop Lloyd had scolded them for that neglect in 1693 and had attempted to remedy the situation in his cathedral statutes of 1694. Eleven years later Archbishop Tenison was told that the chapter had not mended its ways.² Kimberley's visitation suggests that the canons and the lessees to whom many of the churches had been granted were still reluctant to spend money on repairs. Even comparatively minor matters were sometimes skimmed: at Armitage, for example, the chancel was in good order but the stretch of churchyard wall or fence for which Canon Samuel Kimberley, prebendary of Hansacre, was

1 Lichfield Joint Record Office, D. 30/9/3/2/13. The document is printed by kind permission of the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield Cathedral. If it is a complete record of the dean's summer tour, he apparently did not visit all the churches in the peculiar. There are, for example, no entries for the Staffordshire churches of Arley (now in Worcestershire), Brewood (of which Kimberley, as dean, was rector), Cannock, Eccleshall, Harborne, Haselour (the status of which was disputed), or Tipton.

2 *Victoria County History of Staffordshire*, iii. 179–80.

Breaston [Breaston, Derby], eodem die

The chancel totally out of repair. A Common Prayer book to be bought for the clerk.
Robert White
Henry Case [churchwardens]

Risley [Derby], eodem die

The Common Prayer book to be new bound.
William Smedley [churchwarden]

Gaydon [Gaydon, Warwickshire], 19th May 1714

The roof of the church and chancel to be repaired and the east end of the church to be repaired. A chest to be made to keep the cushion and communion plate. A font to be made.

Itchington [Bishop's Itchington, Warwickshire], eodem die

The ceiling and roof of the church and chancel to be mended.

Ufton [Warwickshire], eodem die

The roof of the chancel to be mended. The communion plate in a dirty condition and to be cleaned. A new Common Prayer book to be bought.

Tachbrook [Bishop's Tachbrook, Warwickshire], eodem die

The Bible to be new bound and a new Common Prayer book to be bought.

Longdon [Staffordshire], 1st June

A new carpet³⁰ for the communion table to be bought.
John Marshall
Thomas Hill [churchwardens]

Rudgley [Rugeley, Staffordshire], eodem die

The windows of the east and south end of the chancel to be glazed and pointed.
Francis Emery
Thomas Bladen [churchwardens]

f. 2 Colwich [Staffordshire], eodem die

The east and three south windows: the brick to be taken down to the stone work and glazed and to certify it's done the Friday after Michaelmas day.
Richard Smith
Walter Smallman [churchwardens]

Bednall [Staffordshire], eodem die

The lower ceiling of the chancel to be repaired.
John Farnolls [churchwarden]

Acton Trussell [Staffordshire], eodem die

The rail of the door of the chancel and pavement to be mended. The roof of the chancel to be mended. The mounds of the churchyard to be repaired.
William Dale
George Aspley [churchwardens]

Baswich [Staffordshire], eodem die

The roof of the chancel to be repaired. The window in the chancel to be mended. The church porch to be repaired.
Samuel Whetnall
Jos. Sharpe [churchwardens]

St. Chad's, Stafford, eodem die

The chancel windows to be repaired. The windows in the belfry and church to be repaired.

John Marston
John Collins [churchwardens]

Offley [High Offley, Staffs.], 3rd June³¹

The windows to be glazed. The porch to be mended. A hole to be made in the font to convey the water out and the floor at the north door to be mended.

John Parton
John Oram [churchwardens]

Adbaston [Staffs.], eodem die

The font to be cleaned and a hole made in it to convey the water out and a flagon for the communion table to be bought.

Jos. Gardner
Daniel Levett [churchwardens]

Kniveton [Derb.], 15th June

No person to be permitted to teach school in the church. The pavement of the chancel to be repaired. The chancel windows out of repair. The chancel to be whitened. The floors of the seats in the church and chancel to be bricked or boarded. The floor of the body of the church out of repair.

Thomas Tomlinson
Robert Hurd [churchwardens]

Beeleigh [Beeley, Derb.], eodem die

The hole in the font to be stopped and to be constantly filled with water when there is occasion.

f. 2v. Ashford [Derb.], 17 June

The pavement of the chancel to be mended. The communion plate and surplice to be cleaned.

Longson [Longstone, Derb.], eodem die

The pavement of the chancel to be levelled. A new carpet to the communion table to be bought. The seat of the north side [of] the chancel to be taken down.

St. Mary's, Lichfield, 7th July

The pavement of the south aisle out of repair. The window at the east end of the chancel out of repair. A new Common Prayer book to be bought.

St. Chad's *alias* Stowe [Lichfield], eodem die

The inscription of the prebends that repair the chancel to be fresh done. The pavement of the chancel wholly out of repair. The chancel windows out of repair. The pavement in the body of the church out of repair.

St. Michael's [Lichfield], eodem die

A new Common Prayer book to be bought. The hole in the font to be stopped and to be filled with water when there is occasion.

Farewell [Staffs.], 8th July

The roof of the chancel out of repair. The floor of the seats in the body of [the] church out of repair.

³¹ The entries for High Offley and Adbaston are marked with crosses.

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1992

- 2 Oct. Annual General Meeting
Mid-Staffordshire from the Air – John Darlington
- 16 Oct. Effect of religion on the architecture of Lichfield cathedral – Canon Tony Barnard
- 6 Nov. Buried cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum – Ffiona Gilmore-Eaves
- 2 Nov. Conservation of the landscape in Peak National Park – Ken Smith
- 4 Dec. Christmas Pastime

1993

- 22 Jan. Wolseley glassworks excavations – Chris Welch
- 19 Feb. Interpreting the landscape – Mick Aston
- 5 Mar. The work of the RCHM England in the Midlands – Paul Everson
- 19 Mar. Tithe and enclosure maps and awards – Dudley Fowkes
- 2 Apr. Staffordshire's historic parks and gardens – Alan Taylor

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