



Birmingham City Council

Museum and Art Gallery

Mr. A.A. Row
85 West St
Corfe Cast
Dorset.

With compliments

Telephone: 021-235
Fax No: 021-236 6227

Michael Diamond MA FMA
Director
Chamberlain Square
Birmingham B3 3DH

Dand

Hay House and much of the surrounding land has now been taken by the Castle Bromwich Golf Club, and when it was found necessary some months ago to widen the lane to Hay House, which is now used as the Club House, the Hoar Stone had to be removed. As it was too large to transport to another site, and as no one connected with the Club was aware of its antiquarian interest, a large hole was dug in front of it into which it was dropped and where it now lies buried.

Benjamin Walker.

*Note on Excavations in the Roman Cemetery at Wall,
October 1927*

Letocetum (modern Wall near Lichfield) was a Roman station of some importance at the crossing of the Watling and Ryknield Streets. The XXth Legion 'Valeria Victrix' and XIVth 'Gemina' advanced into Shropshire A. D. 45-55; it is probable, therefore, that Letocetum was occupied about this time.

The Roman Settlement was on the high ground of which the enclosure now known as 'Castle Croft' is the centre, but the limits of the occupied area have not been determined. The Watling Street approaches Wall from London in a north-westerly direction, from Wall it runs due west to Wroxeter. On leaving the village, the road crosses a small stream, probably the western limit of the settlement, traverses ground which was a marsh until recently brought into cultivation, and then passes on to higher ground. It is on this higher ground that a number of interments had been previously discovered on both sides of the road. Unfortunately, no record was kept of previous excavations; it is impossible, therefore, to determine the position of the graves discovered.

In October 1927, by kind permission of Mr. W. W. Ryman, the owner, the writer was allowed to conduct excavations in Field No. 201, O.S. Survey, 1923 edition, on the north side of the Watling Street.

A small portion of the field was selected and, as the time available did not permit of complete stripping, trenches were dug commencing near the road and extending obliquely into the field.

Nine graves were discovered, all of interments after cremation.

The contents of these were as follows:

Trench I, No. 1. Depth 12 in., portions of three fractured vessels.

(a) A mortarium of coarse buff clay with heavy roll rim.

(b) The lower portion of a pot of coarse grey clay with sides sloping outwards.

- (c) The greater part of the base with ringed foot of another of coarse red clay coated with white slip.

Trench II, No. 1. Depth 11 in., a group of three pots.

- (a) A globular vessel, rim missing, with girth-groove immediately above largest diameter; below, hatched ornamentation succeeded down to the base by triangular impressions; smoothed surface varying in colour from dark to light grey.
- (b) The same as (a).
Both vessels contained fragments of calcined bones.
- (c) A globular vase (recovered entire) of soft red clay with small flat bottom and small mouth with rounded rim.
Contained a few small fragments of bone.

Trench III, No. 1. Depth 1 ft. 10 in. A group of seven vessels.

- (a) A carinated pot (also recovered entire) of rough grey clay. Flat bottom with foot ring, the rim slightly everted with girth-groove below.
Two other girth-grooves between the latter and the keel.
Contained a few fragments of bone.
This vessel has marked late Celtic characteristics.
- (b) Fragments of a pot and bead necklace consisting of eight whole glass beads of different sizes and the disintegrated remains of others apparently of paste.
A bronze finger-ring broken in two pieces.
A bone counter and a thin plate of bronze, probably part of a mirror.
- (c) An urn in fragments.
- (d) A small glass vase (recovered entire) of greenish colour. Found in a vertical position to the east of (a), (b), (c). Contained a few very small fragments of bone.
- (e) Parts of a child's feeding-bottle of hard grey clay. The fragments include the neck, base, and nipple. With it were two hobnails and one nail with a hollow conical head.
- (f) Foot and parts of the rim of a small jar of soft red clay with traces of greenish grey colour coating inside and out.
- (g) Parts of the bottom and side of a vase of soft red clay with greenish grey colour coating inside and out.
There is little doubt that this is the grave of a child.

Trench III, No. 2. Depth 1 ft. 2 in.—part of a large olla or cooking-pot with rustic decoration, the surface somewhat roughened, varying in colour from dark to light grey.

Trench III, No. 3. A fine bowl of hard brown clay, originally bitumen coated inside and out. Rounded rim, a boldly raised cordon, between the rim and the bulge, dividing the upper portion of the side into two equal zones. The upper zone burnished, the lower rough and ornamented with zigzag burnished lines. Late Celtic in character.

Trench III, No. 4. Fragments of a pot incapable of reconstruction.

Trench III, No. 5. Cooking-pot with inbent rim and beaded lip, crudely ornamented round the bulge with burnished lines forming a diamond lattice. Coarse brown clay with particles of white grit. Pre-Roman technique. (May, *Silchester Pottery*, p. 191. Type 8.)

Trench IV, No. 1. Depth 13 in. The lower portion of a pot of light grey clay with flat bottom and sides sloping outwards. Contained fragments of bone.

Trench IV, No. 2. Depth, 2 ft. 2 in.

(a) Fragments of a large pot of coarse thin grey clay.

(b) Fragments of rim of pot of hard grey clay.

Plain vertical rim with broad down-turned flange.

(c) One-handled flagon of white clay in fragments.

Top of flagon 19 in. from surface.

A quantity of nails.

A large quantity of calcined bones, including parts of a human skull and upper jaw.

Trench VI, No. 1. Depth 18 in.

The lower portion and part of the rim of a large urn of hard grey clay with rustic decoration.

Some fragments of bone.

An iron nail.

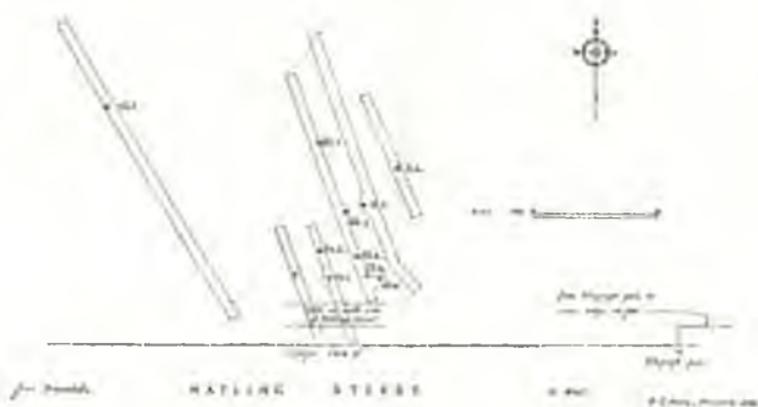
Trenches IV and V revealed sections of the North Ditch of the Watling Street. Dimensions: Width 7 ft. 6 in.; Depth 4 ft. 3 in. + 1 ft. top soil.

A piece of modern sand-faced floor quarry was found in the bottom of the ditch, from which it is inferred that the ditch was filled up in recent times, probably when the frontage was straightened and the existing hedge planted.

If it is safe to draw a conclusion from the small area examined, the graves do not appear to be arranged according to any plan. Three lie within 10 ft. of the north side of the road ditch, two be-

tween 10 ft. and 18 ft., three between 30 ft. and 45 ft., one at a distance of 64 ft. The only certainty is that the graves are more numerous near to the road than at a greater distance. In all cases the urns were in black earth containing wood charcoal and, in some cases, calcined bones. This appeared to have been deposited over or round the urns

LETOCETVM BVRIAL GROVND.



after they had been placed in position. In Grave Trench III, No. 3, the urn was placed in a bowl-shaped hollow.

Two of the urns have rustic ornamentation. This ware has been dated between A. D. 80 and 120-30.

The Pre-Roman technique of at least one of the vessels and the oblique rims and contours of others indicate an early date, first or early second century.

H. R. Hodgkinson.