

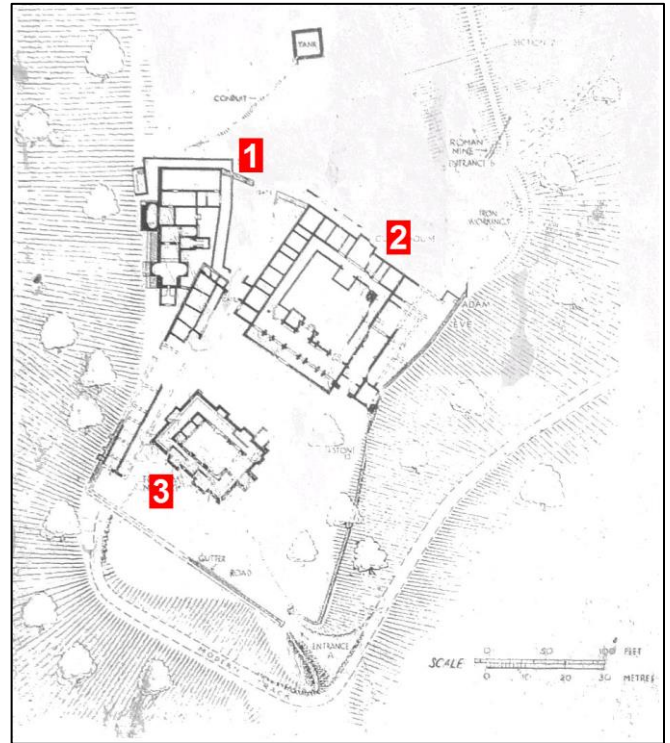


## Lydney Camp

Lydney Park occupies an important historic and strategic location. Defensible positions on steep hill spurs close to the River Severn have been of great value throughout history, both in the control of trade routes along the river, and in access to the riches of the estuary: fish, salt, reeds, and wildfowl. Lydney Park has an added value, once part of the Norman Royal Forest of Dean. The "Old Park" north of Camp Hill has been worked for iron ore from at least the Roman era until the last century. Open-cast iron mines, or scowles, and tunnels still exist throughout the hill.

The earliest occupation of Camp Hill appears to have been as a late Iron Age promontory hillfort of about 100BC, protected by massive earth banks. A small Iron Age bowl ornamented with bulls' heads dates from this period.

The evidence of Roman occupation is very sparse until the end of the first century AD with some evidence of coin and brooch making. By 300AD cob-walled huts appear to have housed people working in an iron mine on the site, and probably in other shafts nearby. However, at the end of the third century, or early in the fourth century AD, a temple complex including a guesthouse, baths and stalls was laid out in a walled precinct.



[1] Bath House [2] Guest House [3] Temple

### The Temple

The temple is unique in two ways, in its layout, and in its dedication to Nodens, an otherwise unknown deity.

The temple layout contrasts sharply with the typical square building, characteristics of temples in Gaul and the Celtic provinces of the empire. The temple of Nodens is more similar to basilical temples associated with mystical cults from the near east. A central basin or earthenware funnel, described and destroyed by the 1805 excavations compares with a temple in Athens, devoted to Bacchus, and was presumably used for carrying libations to the underworld. In addition, the Lydney Temple has

## FEATURES

a triple divided shrine and two side "chapels" possibly derived from early pagan or classical styles, but it is more likely that these multiple shrines are a response to the mystical cults of the third and fourth century AD, preceding the designs of early Christian churches in the following centuries. Indeed, the Lydney temple has been seen as the ultimate achievement of one of the early lost rivals to Christianity.



JRR Tolkien suggested that the previously unknown god Nodens, of the tribal Silures in Gloucestershire, may have derived from an early Celtic Irish or German god; "Nodens the Catcher" with a magic hand, who survived in Irish legend as Nuada and in Welsh legend as Lludd Llaw Ereint, the original King Lear. Lludd's name survives in the place name of Lydney. The central temple mosaic, now destroyed but recorded in 1805, and the location of the site above the salmon runs of the Severn, suggest that his magic hand may have helped him as a divine fisherman. However, there is another, and not necessarily contradictory theory that Nodens was a god of healing. A large number of cult objects and votive offerings have been found; pins, bracelets, tablets referring to healing, and model dogs, including a fine bronze

greyhound. In classical religions, dogs were widely associated with cults of healing. Sacred dogs were known in temples in Greece and Rome, and healed illnesses by licking the affected part of the body.

The end of the sanctuary or cella was not completely open, as usual; it had three rooms separated by stone walls. The walls of the cella were arched colonnades until a fault in the rock below caused the almost total collapse of the temple. It was rebuilt with solid walls. There was a fish-covered mosaic with an inscription that referred to 'Victorinus the Interpreter', probably an interpreter of dreams. The temple was accompanied by a large courtyard guesthouse, a long building used as dormitory accommodation and an elaborate bath suite or *thermae*.

### The Bath House

The Temple of Nodens was of considerable importance, and attracted pilgrims and visitors from afar. The square guesthouse, with its central courtyard remains buried north of the temple. But the baths have been excavated and exposed to allow sight of this remarkable structure, perched on the edge of the hill.

The Long Building flanked the temple precinct, and may have housed a series of booths for healers or the sale of religious artefacts. An oculist's stamp was found nearby, as well as nail-cleaners and a palette for mixing ointments. However sleeping within the temple precinct was also believed to bring healing, and it may be that the Long Building was an "abaton", a place of healing temple sleep.

The Bath House, is of a scale comparable with the great public baths of Roman Britain, and

## FEATURES

although the Romans do not generally appear to have required a religious reason for a good bath, the scale of the buildings at Lydney suggests some connection with the healing arts of Nodens and his priests.



The Bath House, comparable with a modern Turkish Baths, would have been entered from a corridor adjoining the Long Building, into a paved lobby, thence into a waiting room with a stone bench. From here, the frigidarium with its cold-water bath is entered, and then three warmed rooms, the tepidarium, the caldarium, with underfloor heating of the hypocaust and a hot water tank heated by a furnace, including a heated fresh air duct system to the caldarium. A door led into a small projecting room with a separate heating system, the sudatorium, a sweating room or sauna. The rooms would have been rendered and painted, fragments suggest in red and yellow. The small size of the furnaces indicates that they ran on charcoal which, although more expensive, produced a more intense heat, and less smoke.

The latrine appears to have discharged onto the steep slopes below the bathhouse. The water was supplied from a tank to the north, through

a stone-lined conduit, but probably within wooden pipes in the conduit.

The outside of the Bath House was rendered and coloured deep crimson. Originally, the floors of the baths were mosaic, later replaced with stone flags as the wealth or skills appear to have disappeared towards the end of the empire in Britain.

The temple site had a relatively short life. The Roman Empire withdrew from Britain in 416AD. The northern earthwork was raised and, in common, with other hillfort sites, may have been part of the post-Roman reversion to a Celtic defensive site. The capping of the buried archaeology by a layer of tiles and other building material suggests that the temple itself may have been finally destroyed by fire.

### Adam & Eve



## FEATURES

Originally called "Dwarf's Hill", Camp Hill has been known as an archaeological site since at least 1723, when walls remained, overgrown by bushes, up to 3 feet high. With the hill's enclosure by the new deer park, casual digging for relics was supported by a fashionable enthusiasm for antiquarian sites. Thomas Bathurst placed the statues of "Adam and Eve" either side of a viewpoint in about 1740. The origin of these statues now either side of the gateway to the woodland garden, remains uncertain. They are carved of local pennant sandstone; "Eve", with her distinctive head-dress, resembling the head of a Roman statue, a Domitian or Flavian woman unearthed in Bath in 1714; "Adam", variously described as Pan or a Faun, is more typically of the 17th century. The style of the statues is consistent with a date of about 1700, although before 1740, they were reputedly "uncared for in the lower Grounds".

Tessa Wheeler excavated, and her husband Mortimer Wheeler interpreted, the site between 1928-9 and more excavations took place in 1980-1. The finds included a hoard of imitation Roman coins, which were thought to date from the 5th century, but are now believed to be 4th century artefacts.

CAS last visited Lydney Park in 1984.

## Hetty Pegler's Tump

The name of this long barrow comes from Henry Pegler and his wife Hester, who owned the site in the 17th century.

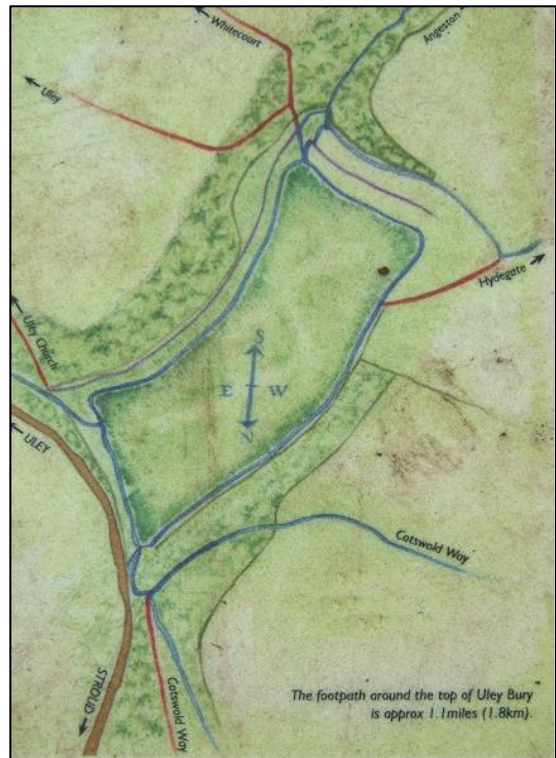
Built in the Cotswold-Severn tradition, the mound is trapezoidal, 36.5 m long by 25.9m wide, and orientated roughly east to west. Two horns flank the narrow east forecourt, in the back of which is the chamber entrance. Once under the massive portal stone it is possible to stand up in the central passage. On the south are two side chambers, but two to the north have been blocked up for safety. Another chamber lies at the end of the passage.



Standing in the dark chamber with only a candle makes it easy to imagine a ceremony or burial ritual here 6,000 years ago. While in the chamber, look at the roof, with the use of dry-stone walling to fill the gaps between the orthostats forming the chamber walls. It must have been difficult to move corpses about in the confined space. When it was excavated in 1821 at least fifteen disarticulated skeletons were found, and a further eight or nine in 1854.

CAS visited Hetty Pegler's Tump on Saturday 17th May 2014

# Uleybury Iron Age Hillfort



This is an impressive Cotswold hillfort. Constructed about 400 BC, the ramparts and defences can easily be traced on the ground. An inner rampart runs around the edge of the hilltop enclosing 13 ha. Outside the natural hill slope has been scarped back in glacis style to create a steep slope, which leads down to an artificial terrace some 20 m wide which runs all around the hill. The outer edge of the terrace has been strengthened by the construction of a second rampart. Outside this second circuit, the natural slope has again been scarped to create a steep fall of about 10 m at the bottom of which is a third, rather less substantial rampart

There are three outer entrances, but rather unusually, two gaps in the outer ramparts do not have corresponding gaps in the inner line. Access into the fort must have involved going around the terrace to the north-east gate.

Uleybury is of a type known as 'developed hillforts' because of their size and the complexity of their defences and boundary systems. On the Cotswolds such hillforts are regularly spaced at intervals of about 20 km, each one set within a putative territory defined by rivers and hills.



CAS visited Uleybury Iron Age Hillfort on Saturday 17th May 2014

## FEATURES

# Dundas Aqueduct, Bath



Designed by John Rennie, this is one of two impressive aqueducts that cross the River Avon. It is slightly shorter than the Avoncliffe Aqueduct, but more dramatic. There is much to see here - a stone warehouse, a wharfside crane and a toll office. Nearby is the start of the Somersetshire Coal Canal, which has been restored as a private mooring. There is a visitor centre here with refreshments and other facilities and a large car park.



CAS visited Dundas Aqueduct on Saturday 18th May 2013

## Highlights from the Magazines

### Current World Archaeology Apr-May 2021

- Altai Rock Art - Visions of the Past in Mongolia
- The Follo Line Project - Exploring Medieval Oslo
- The Torlonia Marbles - An Archaeology of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Antiquities Collection
- What's in a Name? - How to Find your Outpost on the Roman Frontier
- Sailing to Ithaca?
- An Etruscan Renaissance in Florence
- A Virtual Visit to Wahtye's Tomb
- Save Burlington House!
- Lost Dixon Relic

### Minerva - Archaeology & Art May-Jun 2021

- Canterbury Tales - Thomas Becket at the British Museum
- The Lost City Of Al-Qata'I - Cairo
- Persian Splendours - A Major Exhibition on Iran
- Wings of Victory - Brescia's Bronze
- Paper, Paste, and Prepositions - Egyptian Hieroglyphics
- Athanasius Kircher (1601-1680) Antiquarian

### British Archaeology May-Jun 2021

- Waun Mawn - a Welsh Origin for Stonehenge?
- Gunflints in Brandon - No Flash in the Pan
- Poor Archaeology - Excavating the Covent Garden Workhouse & Cemetery

## FEATURES

Secrets in the Roof of Westminster Hall

The Longtown Castles Project - The March of Ewyas

Chapel Salem, Pwllheli

### Current Archaeology June 2021

Darkness Dispelled - Exploring 1,500 years of life and death in the Sculptor's Cave

Encountering Iron Age Bog Bodies

A Story of Two Castles - Tracing the Origins of Two Fortifications in the March of Ewyas

Back at Buster Ancient Farm

Time Team Returns

The Unicorn Preservation Society

## Weobley Castle



It was probably built by the de Lacys soon after the Conquest. It was fortified by Geoffrey Talbot against King Stephen who besieged and captured it in 1138. In 1208-9 the castle was used as the base by William de Braose when he rebelled against King John and from here he went to burn Leominster. It was

then a possession of Walter de Lacy who had property in Ireland and the Welsh Marches. He married Matilda de Braose in c1200. He was a very powerful person in Herefordshire and during the period 1216-1223, he was sheriff and responsible for its defence against the Welsh. The walls and tower were constructed at this period, you have to imagine what it was like as there only humps and bumps now!



In 1358 Weobley passed to the Devereux family who became Earls of Essex in Elizabeth I reign. The last Earl died in 1646 and Weobley passed by marriage to the Dukes of Somerset. Leland, in the early 16th century wrote: 'From Hereford to Webbeley 7 miles by west northe west, It is a market towne in Hereforde-shire, where is a goodly castell, but somewhat in decay, It was as the chefe lordshipe of the Devereux.'

The castle buildings are grouped around a small courtyard, with few indications of serious fortification. The main exception is the south-west tower, which could date to the mid

## FEATURES

thirteenth century. Originally of two or three storeys, it possibly served as a defensible 'tower house'.

All the main apartments were put up in two phases between the late thirteenth and the early fourteenth century. There was no significant break in the work, but it does seem that the initial scheme proved too ambitious. Lack of funds may explain why the south-east tower never rose above foundation level.

The courtyard was entered through a simple gateway. Within, all of the principle rooms were at first-floor level.

On the north lay the hall, the most important building in the castle. The gallery stands at the level of the original wooden floor. From here we may observe the great fireplace, and the window which lit the high table. The basement served as the main kitchen.

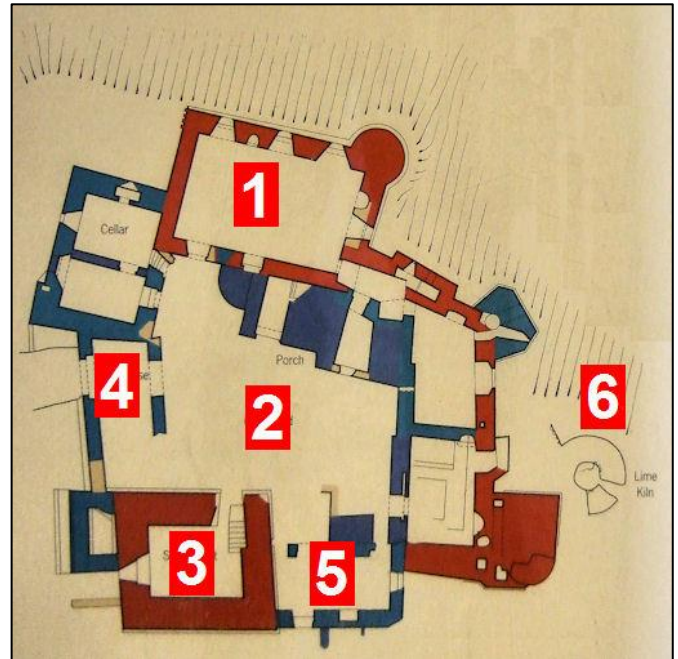
The room in which you now stand is set over a deep cellar. This was the solar, or the lord's private chamber. A small doorway in the corner gave access to a latrine, and also to the room over the gatehouse.

The east range provided accommodation for important guests. There is a polygonal turret at the corner, with latrines at three levels.

A porch block, added to the south of the hall in the late fifteenth century, was later modified as a dwelling for the tenant farmer.

It is all now a little confused as the site was used during the Second World War, when huts and an air raid shelter were built there.

CAS visited Weobley Castle on Saturday  
4th July 2015



[1] Kitchen [2] Courtyard [3] South-West Tower [4] Gatehouse [5] Chapel [6] Lime Kiln

## Quiz

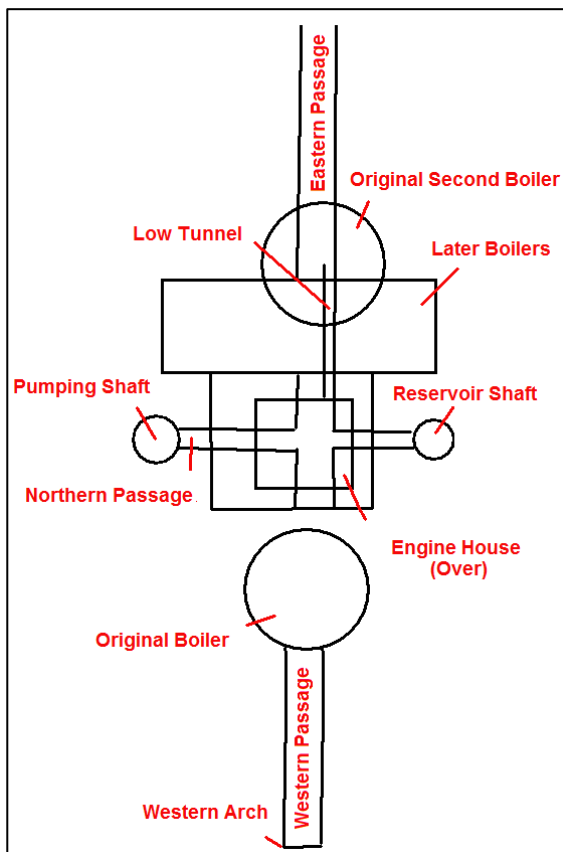
1. P... , One of the hills of Rome.
2. Bull god worshipped in ancient Egypt.
3. Name of Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic Period.
4. John ... , 17th-century English antiquary.
5. Egyptian goddess of writing.
6. Nickname for Homo floresiensis.
7. Site in Meath of the seat of the Irish kings.
8. ... Layard, English archaeologist and first female president of the Prehistoric Society.
9. Roman general who campaigned against the Persians and Vandal Africa.
10. City in which the Hagia Sophia museum is located.



# Recent Events

### Zoom Lectures

April 8, 2021 - **Discoveries and Dilemmas: Excavating the Serridge Engine House (c.1790)** by David Hardwick of the South Gloucestershire Mines Research Group; David's team had uncovered excavations that confirmed the location of a early Newcomen engine house constructed c1790 in Serridge and the presence of significant remains, located on the Coalpit Heath Coal Basin in South Gloucestershire. David's talk discussed the function of the multiple beams, including calculations of the cylinder size and principle beam length. Consideration was also given to a second shaft as a possible reservoir and the purpose of a circular tunnel through the engine house along with the general internal layout of the site. In all, a fantastically interesting tour through a part of our forgotten industrial heritage.



After Hardwick & Grudgings

April 15, 2021 - **Recent Excavations at the Pound, Llandaff** by Dr Tim Young of GeoArch; Following the Llandaff 50 plus group's acquisition of the public toilets next to the entrance of the Bishop's Castle in Llandaff, Tim Young, of Timeteam fame, conducted a community archaeological project at the "Pound" in advance of the building works, involving over 200 local school children. It was soon realised that the corner of a lime-mortared cobble wall of a medieval building just intruded into the edge of the excavation. The building contained an elaborate fireplace with a dressed Bath stone surround. A doorway with a similar surround was also discovered. Small finds included brass dress pins and a fourteenth century French jeton. Tim then went on to discuss the history of the area around the Bishop's Palace and his long-term plans for post-excavation studies in Llandaff.

April 22, 2021 - **Social evening**. Many of our members joined us for a lively and interesting soiree to recount our exploits over the past year.

## Links to Websites

Recorded Previous Lectures:

[The London Society of Antiquaries](#)

[Cambrian Archaeological Association](#)

[Churches Conservation Trust](#)

[Wiltshire Museum](#)

[Must Farm - Nene Valley Archaeological Trust](#)

[The Stained Glass Museum](#)

## Answers to Quiz

1. Palatine 2. Apis 3. Stone Age 4. Aubrey 5. Seshat 6. Hobbit 7. Tara 8. Nina 9. Belisarius 10. Istanbul