

Foreword (2017)

We are extremely pleased that our old friend Dick Broomhead, the author of the Congresbury parish survey, carried out in the late 1980s, has allowed us to publish it on the YCCCART web site.

As Dick says in his introduction, the work for both this survey (and the previous Marshfield survey which I (VR) managed) was funded by the Manpower Services Commission, and managed by Avon County Council. In archaeological circles, it is an open secret that while the MSC was very good at getting bods off the streets (it was, after all, created specifically to reduce unemployment), it was not very good at considering how the results of archaeological research (especially some massive urban excavations) would be processed and published, a problem still being struggled with now, 30 years later. The phrase used at the time was 'The end result is not so important'. I remember it raising my hackles at the time (and it still does).

This publication would not have been possible without the work of Dick and his team in the field in the 1980s, nor without the permission of the various landowners in who's land they worked. My apologies for not knowing the names of Dick's team.

Without the Congresbury Local History Society (in the person on this occasion of Chris Short) the illustrations for the work would not have survived locally. They were cleaned up in Photoshop, but otherwise have not been altered - they are work of the 1980s and should be seen in their original form as far as possible. Please also bear in mind that some surveyed sites will have changed since the 1980s.

It is obvious to me (who struggled with the same pre-computer equipment of stencils and Rotring pens, which had to be shaken vigorously every time you wanted to use them) what incredibly hard work Dick and his team put into this survey, and it is a tragedy that circumstances have conspired to delay it's publication this long. At the time, the first personal computers were beginning to emerge, but the internet was really still a dream in the minds of the people of DARPA in the United States. Reports were written long hand to disappear to a mysterious 'typing pool' to come back with multiple errors that then had to go back again...

And what good came of it, at last? Well, Dick (and I) survived and went on to careers in archaeology (if you regard that as good!)

Inevitably, some small items have been lost and one or two references cannot be found, but this is a detailed study of an interesting and important parish once again coming under intense development pressure.

Vince Russett St Congar's Day, 2017