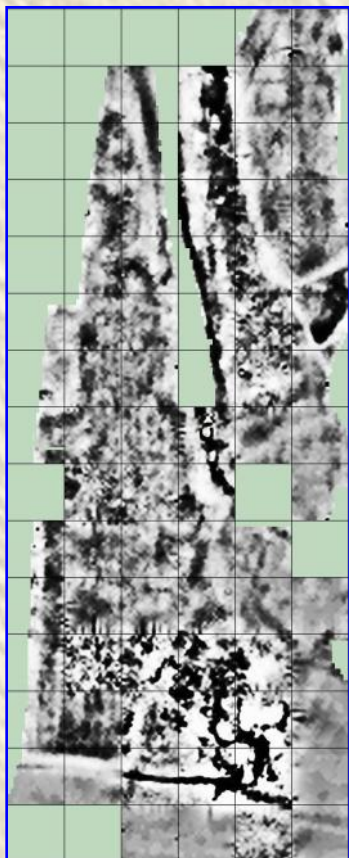


# YCCART

## Newsletter

December 2013

Yatton, Congresbury, Claverham & Cleeve Archaeological Research Team



### An Incredible Landscape at Iwood

In 2010 as part of the ongoing Congresbury Romano - British kiln project YCCART undertook geophysical surveys in a field at Iwood. The results reported in [YCCART 2010/Y16](#) were amazing. Further resistivity surveys in 2012 and 2013 have revealed even more remarkable features.

The latest resistivity results are shown in the attached figure.

Black high readings can result from walls, rubble, made up surfaces, roads or track-ways and stone coffins or cysts. White or

low readings may result from ditches or pits, slots

and gullies, drains, graves or metal pipes.

At the bottom of the results (2 squares up) a black line indicates a ditch or possible leet, presumably stoned lined. Above it appears to be a sequence of buildings. Could this be an early mill site?

The top right 4 squares show parallel lines, top left, running west which suggest possible drains or a track-way lined with stones. (Or is this part of a rectangular building?). Below this a near circular feature is cut across the north by a vertical black line which is linked in turn to a horizontal half crescent. What is this all about?

Many other anomalies are being considered by Vince Russett, North Somerset County Archaeologist, who is editing the report and trying to unravel this complex set of results. Watch the website for the report.



## YCCART Research Team (YRT)

The aim of the Research Team is to undertake research, field walking and geophysical surveys in order to establish a cohesive picture of the activities and extent of the Roman occupation in the YCCART area.

The Team has been involved in researching the archaeological and historical background to the Wemberham Roman Villa site and Roman activity in the surrounding area. We have examined newspapers and SANHS reports and located finds from the 1884/1885 digs at Wemberham which are held at the Somerset Heritage Centre and Weston super Mare Museum. Some of these finds have been listed and photographed. This work is ongoing, as hopefully more objects may surface.

We also looked at the wider area of Kenn Moor. With the co-operation of some of the local farmers and land owners, and with maps and aerial photographs supplied by a YRT member, we confirmed the area under study is very large and will be a challenge. Some work has been carried out in this area by Messrs. Usher and Lilley and

this will be used in our research. Our aim is to see if our work, together with the use of new equipment and techniques can provide a clearer picture of this undoubtedly busy and important area.

As part of our research we visited the Somerset Heritage Museum to examine the finds held there from the work of Steve Rippon, who led a team in 1994/95 on the 'North Somerset Levels Project' in the Kenn Moor area.

We hope to find connections to these previously located archaeological sites, with roads and waterways being of prime importance. Research is being carried out on this aspect of our task however there are few maps to which we have access at present; others may exist which would assist our research. Can you help us?



# FRED on Cadbury Hill Fort

A full report on the use of FRED (a 'NIVCOMP' digital hydrostatic levelling device) on Cadbury Hill Fort is in preparation. This article presents some preliminary results.

FRED was used to survey an area at the west end of the Hill Fort, covered previously with low scrub/brambles, and cleared by the diligence of YCCART members, in the spring of 2012. This enabled an area, related to the RM 15 baseline, of approximately 40m (east – west) x 30m (north – south) to be surveyed. Measurements were made at 2m intervals along both the X (east – west) and Y (North – south) axes. The resulting, contour plot using Surfer (kindly

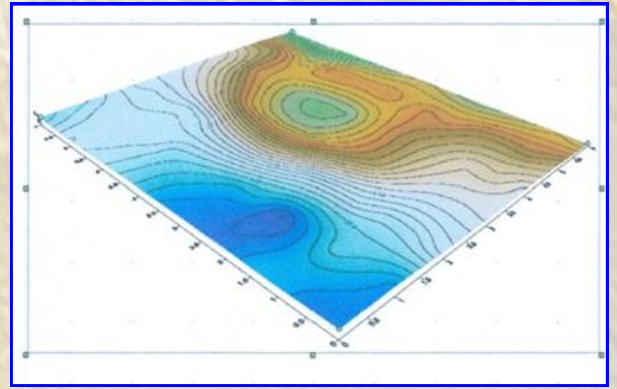


Figure 2 A 3D Contour Plot of the targeted feature suggesting a possible base of a round house

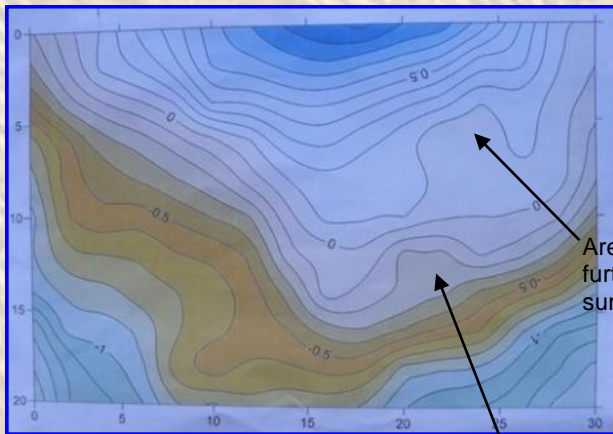


Figure 1 General Survey, (Grid 1) (Arrows indicate features of interest)

Area surveyed in more detail (see Fig 2)

donated by Golden software, USA), (Figure 1), clearly demonstrated the terrain, and indicated 2 features (arrowed), showing interruption of the contours. One of these was targeted for a more detailed investigation. This feature was shown to be approximately circular, and of a low profile. These findings may be consistent with the base of a round house (Figure 2). Thus, for the first time, a feature, not easily recognised on the ground, was identified in a general survey, and clearly defined by a more detailed, targeted investigation.

It is hoped to carry out more surveys in the near future in an attempt to determine other 'hidden' features.



## Archeological Finds Photographed

Sadly North Somerset no longer has its own museum and archaeological items once in storage at Weston super Mare are now kept at the excellent Somerset Heritage Centre near Taunton, where they are accessible for education and research purposes. Some items fortunately are on display at Weston super Mare Museum, which is owned and operated by the Town Council. A visit to this museum based in Burlington Street is well worthwhile.

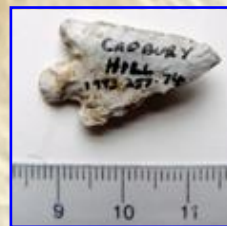
All objects held at both sites still remain the property of North Somerset. Prior and after removal of items to Taunton YCCART members, with the excellent help of staff from Taunton and Weston super Mare, spent time photographing items, mainly found at

Cadbury Congresbury Hill Fort, Henley Temple site and Wemberham Roman Villa (latter two are both in Yatton). Just a few of our photos are shown here.



### Cadbury Congresbury Hill Fort

Excavations in the from 1968-72 revealed imported pottery from Syria, North Africa and Francia, round



house foundations of post-Roman date (very unexpected at the time) and remains of one end of a great timber hall. The banks of the fort had been completely restructured in the post-Roman period. The

photos of an excavated flint arrow head shows early life on the hill and the Penannular brooch, probably dating to the post-Roman occupation of the site.



### Roman Temple Site at Henley

This exquisite flat brooch in the form of an eagle with folded wings seems to be tearing at some prey held between its feet. The brooch is of leaded gunmetal/brass and its wing and eye are enamelled. The enamel technique was most common in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.



# RAMSONS (Wild Garlic): Why Ignore This English Spring Blessing?

Garlic has been used for over 7000 years. It was known to ancient Egyptians and the Romans used garlic to boost strength and prevent diseases. In the Middle Ages garlic was used to combat the plague and hung across the entrances of houses to prevent evil spirits from entering.

Our County Archaeologist, Vince Russett, is very keen on wild garlic. This is an extract from a piece he has written which will appear in full on our website.

“We all (officially) love our garlic now, don't we? We buy the expensive bulbs in supermarkets (I nearly used the T-word there), flavour our chickens and fish and stews with it, tell each other how good it is for blood pressure, has antibiotic properties, how it combats cholesterol levels, wards off vampires... you catch my drift. The bulbs are imported in vast numbers from Spain, France etc, and cost about 50 – 70 pence a bulb, most of which (let's face it) is either not used, or



dies a lonely death in the back of a cupboard in a foreign land, greenly sprouting and unloved.

And yet every spring, in most woodlands or old hedges in England, our very own native garlic grows, is admired for its white flowers (which are stunningly beautiful), and blamed for its smell (which can

indeed be completely overpowering). In the picture above (a local woodland) many *tons* of leaves grow every spring, and every spring, no-one (except me!) picks any or cooks with them. And yet, this is our native garlic, with all the good medicinal effects (and some say a better flavour) than the bulbs we cook with. They are brilliant for anyone with a salt restricted diet,

too. And the practice is sustainable, since we don't harvest the bulbs – just the leaves! I want to urge you to at least try our native garlic: some of you will want to repeat the effort yearly, hopefully – just one more way our ancient woods and hedges can be appreciated.

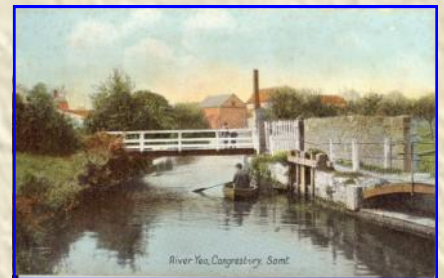


## Somerset Dialect Place and Feature Names

The point has been (well) made that occasional West Country dialect terms find their way into YCCART reports (it can sometimes be difficult to entirely remove one's self from one's roots).

We are compiling a glossary which will convey some of the meanings which we will include on our website.

Below are a few examples. Please contact us with any suggested words which you consider should be included.



River Yeo (see below for definition of yeo)

| Drainage and water |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Bend               | The flat area between two <i>grypes</i>   |
| Blind (of a river) | A river that does not itself flow directly into the sea, but into a second larger river   |
| Bow                | Hump-backed stone bridge over water-course, usually a <i>rhyn</i> or <i>river</i>   |
| Clyce              | An opening in a <i>yere</i> (dam) at the mouth of a river, with a flap on the outside, forming a non-return valve, allowing river water to escape at low tide, but keeping sea water out at high  |
| Decoy pool         | Artificial pond for the breeding and gathering of waterfowl, particularly ducks, as a food supply. Usually supplied with water by a <i>leat</i> . Often pronounced ' <i>quaiple</i> '.  |
| Ditch              | A small watercourse forming the edge of a field. Often man-made, but sometimes following the course of natural pre-existing water ways. Receives water from <i>grypes</i> , and passes them into <i>rhynes</i> .  |
| Drinking Pool      | An artificial slope, cut in the side of a watercourse, often reinforced with dumped stone, to allow animals (especially cattle) to access water in <i>ditches</i> , <i>rhynes</i> or <i>rivers</i> to drink   |
| Drove              | Track, usually not public, to access fields. In the <i>Northmarsh</i> , often with a large ditch on either side, and sometimes not surfaced. Often deeply rutted and impassable in winter. (Note: term also used on higher ground, when hedges or walls mark the sides) |
| Yeo                | Large (mostly) natural water course, often embanked against floods or incursions of sea water in North Somerset. Receives water from rhynes, passes it to the sea (SE <i>River</i> )  |

# Romano-British Pottery Manufacturing in Congresbury

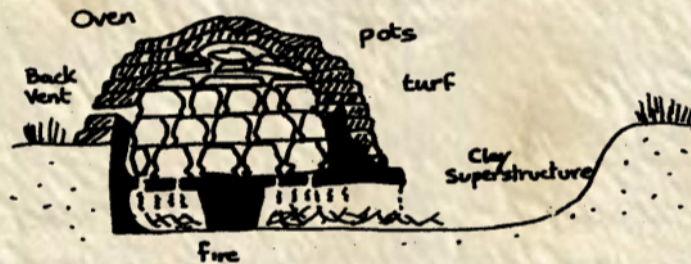
Over the last month or so, members of YCCCART have carried out "field walks" in the Yatton area. Field Walks are carried out after fields have been ploughed and before planting. We walk the field in a pre-determined pattern and pick up and record any pieces of pottery or metal found. Such finds can provide valuable evidence of early habitation patterns in the area.

In these walks we have collected a large number of pieces of grey, unglazed pottery. They look very uninteresting but they reveal the presence of a substantial local pottery in this part of Roman Britain. This pottery was made in Congresbury and is known to archaeologists as Congresbury Ware.

Archaeological digs carried out by Derek Lillie and Grey Usher in 1963 and 1966 uncovered the sites of several small kilns in Congresbury. This must have been one of many in the village. The kilns were small and a typical one is shown in the attached sketch.

In later years members of Congresbury History Group discovered a number of sites where large numbers of pots broken in the erratic firing process had been dumped. The abundance and variety of pot styles was a considerable surprise and the Group produced a number of drawings of different

styles. One of these is shown here. The photographs will give you some further help in identifying Congresbury Ware.



One of YCCCART's long-term projects is to determine the size of the manufacturing facility, the period over which it was produced and in which part of Britain it was used.

How far have we got? We know that the pottery was being produced and or used at the same time as Oxford Ware which was being produced in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. We do not know whether it was being produced before this although we know that similar pottery was being produced in Dorset at the time of the Roman conquest. It is possible that Congresbury Ware could have been produced after that date. We require positive dating evidence.

The geophysical work carried by YCCCART has revealed the possible sites of a number of kilns on the eastern side of Congresbury. We intend surveying as much of Congresbury as we can to try to determine the scale of production. We hope that excavating one or more of these sights might provide dating evidence.



## Why Drink Cider?

One of the earliest references to cider was by Charlamange at the beginning of the 9th century, but it was after the Norman Conquest that cider production really began and became the most popular drink in the British Isles.

Cider drinking was supposed to promote health and longevity some records show it was a cure for a whole range of illnesses such as scurvy, melancholy, rheumatism, fevers, spots and so on.

The supposed longevity and health of drinking cider and the array of illnesses it is said to cure might be the ideal drink for the YCCCART team. There is so much to find and investigate in the area we all need longevity and health to finish the work, we mustn't be under the weather, melancholy, rheumatiky, spotty, or feverish this could stop the busy task moving along. So whether we bathe in it, rub it in or drink it or all three things should cider be the chosen drink for the YCCCART team?

## To Make Good Puddings

Take grated bread, the yolks of six eggs, a little Synamon and Salt, Currans, one minced Date, and the suet of Mutton minced small, knead all these together, and make them up in little balls, boyle them on a chafingdish\* with a little Butter and Vinigar, cast synamon and Sugar thereon, and so serve the in.

\*A chafingdish is a very small 'frying' pan used at the table over some coals from the fire.

## New Members Welcome

If you are interested in joining the team you will be very welcome. No experience is required as training will be provided. You do not even need to be interested in archaeology or history – we also need people that have skills in topics such as photography, web design, data processing, technology or you may just enjoy spending time out doors with a friendly group of people.

For further information please contact Brian Bradbury on 01934 838 018

Read our reports and catch up with our progress on  
[www.ycccart.co.uk](http://www.ycccart.co.uk)

