

Property of CBA South Midlands

COUNCIL FOR

BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY

Regional Group 9

(Bedfordshire Buckinghamshire Northamptonshire
Oxfordshire)

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Editorial

We make no excuse about returning to the theme of rescue archaeology. Rescue has been the dominant archaeological problem since 1970 and is likely to remain so throughout the rest of the decade.

As predicted in earlier editorials there has been a reaction against rescue archaeology in 1975. Surprisingly this reaction has come, not from those who control the purse-strings, but from within the archaeological 'profession' itself. The general argument is that a great deal of money spent on rescue work over the past few years has been wasted and that we should return to research based investigation.

While there is little doubt that much is still wrong with the organization and implementation of rescue archaeology, this argument ignores much of what has happened in recent years. In many of our ancient urban centres we have organizations to deal with redevelopment threats. In most counties too we have an archaeological presence capable of making some sort of response to threatened archaeological deposits. In many counties archaeological considerations are now firmly embodied in planning procedure. We are now in the process of designing local, regional and national policies for rescue. There are hopes for substantial improvements too in the areas of publication, conservation, data storage, retrieval and training. In short there have been a number of substantial achievements on the organizational side.

The essence of the research argument is that there are a number of 'good' sites and that we should concentrate our resources upon these to obtain the 'best' results. We now know that there are very many more sites than we had previously anticipated. Our whole concept of the nature of ancient settlement and its distribution has been changed (or at least it should have been), therefore, until we are in a better position to judge the totality of our archaeological resource we are in no position to make a final, or even intermediate, decision on what is best. To ignore the destruction of the many small rural sites threatened by urban expansion, major road schemes, mineral extraction and so on, is to pre-judge the nature of the evidence and to insist upon making decisions based on comfortable but totally misleading data.

A second point which those in their ivory towers do not appear to appreciate is that archaeology is now in many areas a public service. Many rescue based organizations are performing a pastoral role in recording local information. To curtail this service would be to admit that archaeology in its widest sense had no, or little, social relevance.

It is difficult to know if those who are arguing for a return to the 'good old days' are serious or simply acting as devil's advocate in order to promote sensible research orientated rescue archaeology. If it is the latter they have our sympathy, if not, they should consider the damage they may ultimately inflict upon the whole of British archaeology by parading their antiquarian ideas.

It is astonishing that in some quarters archaeology is still largely equated with excavation, and that often of a particular period site. Certainly the material presented in this Newsletter shows a proper emphasis on survey, with a concern for above ground evidence and the continuous occupation of sites, which one hopes is gaining general acceptance. It is an omission not noted in the review on Archaeological Publications (p. 3) that the preoccupation there is almost entirely with the results of excavation. As said last year, the new and wider view presents difficulties of arrangement for editors, but we trust that these have been met. This year the Bradwell Abbey Field Centre (Milton Keynes) reports are grouped together, as again are those from the Oxford Unit, to facilitate separate distribution as offprints.

Finally, once again we appeal for news from more societies and institutions and for contributions earlier. The deadline for Newsletter No. 7 is, hopefully, 30 November 1976.

TREVOR ROWLEY
BILL FOWLER

CBA and CBA9 - W.J. Fowler, Hon. Sec. CBA9

The wide range of CBA activities during the past year is fully set out in "Archaeology in Britain 1974-5" (CBA 50p. post free), but, like every organization these days, the CBA now faces financial difficulties. One of the most promising proposals is to establish an

individual associateship with a newsletter from late 1976, which should enable many to become better informed on CBA affairs and help to overcome a major problem, that of communication with the "grass roots". This proposal was endorsed by the meeting of Group representatives in November, which otherwise your representatives found disappointing, as few firm proposals were forthcoming and not all Groups were represented.

Of the major matters reported last year, "Archaeology and Government" is now in the background as a basis for future discussions on the organisation of British Archaeology. Group reorganisation is proceeding, despite unresolved difficulties in some parts. We have formally lost Berkshire, where former members seem to be satisfactorily becoming associated with Group 12. But there seems no reason why members cannot also be members of Group 9, and we are happy to continue to publish appropriate reports in the Newsletter and to invite Berkshire speakers to the conference.

While the establishment of a British Archaeological Institution has been deferred, preparations for a certification scheme are actively in progress. Aimed at the full-time but unqualified field worker, the serious spare time archaeologist and the graduate wanting a career in field archaeology, seven certificates are envisaged, which can be taken in isolation or as a series leading to a diploma. Syllabuses will be laid down by a CBA examining board.

Most pleasing to report are the better relationships of the CBA with the DoE, particularly the twice-yearly meetings of the CBA officers with senior DoE officials. It is hoped that DoE funds for archaeology can be maintained at the present level in real terms.

The CBA sustained a great loss by the sudden death of Derek Allen, Hon. Treasurer, in June 1975. Peter Fowler resigned as Hon. Sec. in July after four years fruitful work, and has been succeeded by our Trevor Rowley, to whom we offer congratulations and good wishes. Barry Cunliffe has agreed to be nominated as President in July 1976 in succession to Nicholas Thomas, so that CBA9 can claim that its members are taking a large share of responsibility at national level.

The Group Executive has met twice and dealt with a variety of issues. Unfortunately last year's Newsletter incurred a financial loss, kindly covered by the Oxford University

Department for External Studies, but this year there must be a rise in subscriptions and a realistic price for the Newsletter.

The Report Conference again had an attendance of over a hundred. A useful innovation was an open discussion of what were then the major CBA issues, which was most informative to the Group CBA Executive representative. Outstanding during the year was the revival of the Autumn Meeting, at Bedford on 22 November, through the efforts of David Baker and Alan Ross. While the Group AGM in the morning, postponed from May, was attended by the "faithful dozen", it was heart warming to be present in the afternoon with some 200 others to hear stimulating papers from James Dyer, Chris Young, David Miles, David Hall and Peter Jarvis, on topics ranging from the prehistory of the Chilterns to the industrial archaeology of the South Midlands.

While it is doubtful whether 1975, as hoped, was the year of the Regional Groups, and our own role is not yet clear, the forthcoming conference and Newsletter 6 should provide sufficient justification for our continued existence and efforts will continue to be made to improve our internal communications.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PUBLICATION

The Berkshire Archaeological Journal, vol.67 1973-4. *Berkshire Archaeological Society* £2 Free to members. 1975.

Principles of Publication in Rescue Archaeology. *Department of the Environment*. October 1975.

Archaeological Publication - W.J. Fowler.

It has been an interesting experience for this reviewer to have these two publications come to his notice in quick succession. The first roused misgivings whether this latest volume of a long established county journal was as relevant to the present archaeological situation as it should or could be, while in the second these misgivings were seen defined as part of a scholarly analysis of the whole publication problem, with suggestions to remedy the situation.

Of the 103 impeccably produced pages of BACJ vol. 67, no fewer than 61 are taken up

by the full report, with specialist appendices, of the Late IA, RB, AS site at Upton Nervet, excavated in 1961-3. This is not a site of outstanding significance and careful excavation yielded uncertain results. One wonders first at the time lag, and whether the BAC will ever, under present conditions, be able to come up to date and, secondly, at the interest of the majority of readers in the detail given. Is it necessary, for instance, to devote a whole page (59) to a bone report which says all in the first sentence - "The small amount of material involved does not allow assumptions to be made..."? The rest of the page is occupied by such items as: "E. Trench, layer 5: cattle? fragment of a large long bone" on two lines. It is no criticism of the author, who excavated meticulously and prepared the report over years, in the days before we were aware of an archaeological crisis, to suggest that such detailed publication in such a journal is out of place today. Beyond that, one wonders how long subscribers in general will be content with a traditional journal in which, for one reader at least, only 8 pages on a C19 Reading ironworks really brought the past to life. And how many new subscribers will be attracted by such presentation?

The DoE Report, prepared by a Working Party of the Ancient Monuments Board Committee for Rescue Archaeology under Professor Frere, restates the responsibility of an excavator to publish and to conserve the significant material and records and, in the present publication crisis, caused not least by soaring costs, goes on to examine principles and to suggest the basis for an overall policy. This is primarily for the DoE and concerns rescue archaeology, but it is offered "as a guide for directors of excavations and excavating and publishing bodies" (p.1) and the Working Party considers that "the distinction sometimes drawn between rescue and research excavation has become unreal" (p.9).

Four levels of record are distinguished, of which Level III, full illustration and description, with finds lists and drawings and specialist analyses, has been the normal aim of publication. This could well become an economic impossibility and the recommendation is that Level IV, synthesised descriptions with only supporting data should be the objective in future, provided that essential conditions are fulfilled, namely that all the original material is readily accessible in an archive and that Level III data not generally published should be available on request in a

limited circulation. (p.3).

This is not the place to discuss the means suggested to achieve these conditions, but other relevant points noted are that publication should be as speedy as possible, that publication of evidence alone is not enough (p.3) and that interim reports "serve obviously valuable purposes" (p.4). This last is one of the main justifications of this Newsletter.

Another of the reasons noted for the publication crisis is that "more excavation is being done without a corresponding increase in the media of publication" (p.1). There is therefore all the more reason for making existing publications more effective. It is hoped that editors and editorial committees of our long established journals will heed the suggestions of the Frere Report, which the DoE has circulated widely, particularly the value of "good, firm editing", and early guidance to contributors, in effecting economies. Otherwise "there is danger that very shortly availability of these traditional and established publication media will become restricted because of sheer inability of the national and local societies to support the balance of the cost (after DoE grant) through membership subscriptions and voluntary editorial services." (p.7)

One dislikes crying "Wolf" and repeating the word "crisis", but the danger is real.

RECENT APPOINTMENTS -

BERKSHIRE -

Miss Susan Read - Assistant Archaeologist, Reading Museum; Roger Kent - Conservation Officer, Reading Museum; Grenville Astill - Director, Berkshire Archaeological Unit; Julian Richards - Field Survey Officer, Berkshire Archaeological Unit; Noel Green - Honorary Administrator, Berkshire Archaeological Unit.

MILTON KEYNES - Bradwell Abbey Field Centre

Bob Zeepvat

OXFORDSHIRE -

Don Benson left Oxford Department of Museum Services to become Director of the Dyfed Archaeological Trust; Mrs. Kirsty Rodwell has left the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit.

A FUTURE for PREHISTORY in the CHILTERNs -

James Dyer.

In 1964 CBA 9 held a Conference in Luton to survey and formulate a policy of research in archaeology in the S.E. Midlands. Eleven years later I would like to recall some of the main points raised in that Conference, and ponder on why hardly any of them have been realised.

I think that much of the blame for this failure can be placed on 'rescue' archaeology. For some ten years vast sums of public money have been lavished on a multitude of excavation projects, a great many of which have been of minor significance, and have diverted much needed finance from the carefully planned research projects suggested in 1964.

The result is that at present prehistory is marking time. We need answers to a great many questions which can only come from selective excavation or museum study, and it is high time that a policy for excavation and research was worked out so that public money could be allocated only to those projects which would most benefit scholarship. I am not suggesting that all rescue excavation should stop, but I would suggest that we take a careful look at what we are rescuing, and balance this against the major problems to which we need answers. I would also suggest that we take another look at some of the major monuments in the Chilterns, and elsewhere, and ask ourselves if we are not being rather complacent about their safety? I have a feeling that rescue archaeology should be directed towards some of them, and rather quickly. The gross destruction of the ranch boundaries at Danesborough hillfort at Woburn Sands earlier this year underlines this point most emphatically.

I would like to consider a few selected aspects of the prehistory of the Chilterns.

The principal field monuments of the neolithic are well known - causewayed camps, henge monuments, flint mines and long barrows. Because we think we know them so well we take them for granted. Yet what do we know of them?

The causewayed camps are the key to the neolithic period, yet in the Chilterns they are sadly neglected. Three possible examples are known - Pitstone in Bucks, Streatley and Maiden Bower in Beds. Others probably remain to be discovered, since there is a large gap between Abingdon and Pitstone.

The Pitstone site is partly under grass and partly under plough. The whole site is threatened by chalk quarrying. It is unexcavated. At Streatley the site photographed from the S. in 1962 is under continuous ploughing. Dr. Aitken's magnetometer survey failed to produce a plan due to the overhead power cables. Again it is unexcavated, but lies within 300 m. of two small henge monuments. The major threat is at Maiden Bower, daily getting closer to Dunstable. Half the causewayed site had been destroyed by quarrying by 1912, and although the quarry is no longer worked annual erosion is doing an equally good job and an average of 9" is being eaten away each year. But the quarry is not the only problem. Deep ploughing of the interior is cutting into the natural chalk. Although a 20' belt around the outside of the earthwork is unploughed - sometimes - to protect the filling of the ditch, nothing is being done to protect occupation material inside. Here two sites are being destroyed, not just one - a causewayed camp and an I.A. fortified village.

In 1952 Group 9 decided to sponsor a training excavation and Maiden Bower was chosen as the site, but the Director, Richard Atkinson, decided that it would be too complex, and Hunsbury was chosen instead. If any site in the Chilterns cried out for a total rescue and research excavation, it is this one. Not only will the results illuminate the neolithic, but a continuity of occupation through to the univallate enclosure of the early Iron Age.

What do we know of neolithic Maiden Bower?² Abingdon ware and an antler comb - bones split for marrow extraction - but little else. Of how many rings of ditches is it composed? What of its interior - this area is usually ignored in favour of ditches. Study of causewayed camps should lead to details of social organization during the earlier neolithic in parts of S. England, whilst the ditches should provide us with evidence for associations, technology, trade and subsistence economy. At Maiden Bower it seems likely that sections of the neolithic banks are buried beneath the I.A. defences, which may well have protected areas of the buried neolithic land surface and the environmental and land-use data that that can yield. We might also look forward to some radio-carbon

1. J. Dyer & A. Hales: Records of Bucks. XVII (1961) 49ff.
2. J. Dyer: Beds. Magazine, 7 (1961) 320.

dates, so far we have one from the Chilterns, and one date is no date.

Only three henge monuments are known to me in the Chilterns, and all in S. Bedfordshire. There must be many others to be discovered, probably by aerial photography, and a search should be made in suitable localities. We have a clue in their usual close proximity to water.

Of the safety of the largest henge, Waulud's Bank at Luton, little need be said, since it is mainly in a public park and unlikely to suffer any major damage. Dr. Wainwright's excavations at Mount Pleasant, Marden and Durrington Walls have demonstrated the former existence of complex timber structures. Unfortunately the internal features of Waulud's Bank are unlikely to reveal themselves in aerial photographs and the site has not responded well to the protonmagnetometer surveys.

The other two minor henges at Streatley have both been excavated,² although the adjoining pit alignments have only been partially examined. One of these pits had held a massive post. Buried at its base was the body of a middle aged woman, tightly rammed into the pit with 20 large flints. Another alignment 1 km. further S, to the E. of Galley Hill, has produced Hem-bury style pottery. The purpose of these alignments still eludes us.

A search for flint mines in the Chilterns led to the discovery of the small group on Pitstone Hill.³ Doubtless the paucity of flint in the neighbourhood counts for the small number of shafts. To excavate the mines could prove a difficult job, but an examination of the spoil heaps would be a valuable exercise.

The earliest field monuments in Britain are long barrows. Unfortunately, with the exception of the long barrow on Therfield Heath Royston, we are left in the Chilterns with a group of 'has beens'. Stukeley's 'Mill St.' barrow at Dunstable is no more, nor is the Biscot barrow at Luton. The Galley Hill long barrow was demolished in 1900. Only at Knocking Knoll, Pegsdon does half the barrow remain. A curious chance placed it half over the Beds-Herts boundary, and the Hertfordshire side has

been destroyed. Since it is being ploughed on all sides it is steadily being eroded away. It is 12' less⁴ in width today than when I surveyed it in 1954.

It is now recognised that round barrows were a normal element in neolithic burial practice: I believe I am right in saying that the only Chiltern barrows to be excavated this century have all been neolithic! Do we have any B.A. round barrows, or were B.A. bodies placed in neolithic barrows as secondary burials? We need new excavations and radio-carbon dates.

There is no time to dwell on the round barrows of the neolithic B.A. transition. The golf course at Royston has preserved the Five Hills group well. On Dunstable Downs this CBA group has been concerned with damage to the Five Knolls by a public footpath. The footpath is smaller, but the damage still continues. Ploughing is still the main threat to round barrows, particularly in the Royston and Bledlow Ridge areas. In the latter region our two finest bell-barrows on the N. edge of Lodge Hill urgently need excavation⁵ they have been sadly reduced in recent years.

As to B.A. settlement - where is it? It is almost unknown in the Chilterns. In 1964 Humphrey Case directed us to look to the spring-line of the chalk hills. Have we done so? I think not.

I want to pass on now to just one aspect of the I.A. - its hillforts. In one respect the Chilterns have led the way in pushing back the frontiers of the I.A. The Frere-Cotton excavations at Ivinghoe, 1963-5 led the way in suggesting that the origins of hillforts should be sought in the late B.A.; an idea borne out by the first excavations of the Dray's Ditches triple dykes at Luton in 1959 when late B.A. field boundaries were shown to have been adapted as I.A. territorial boundaries. Similarities in the layout of the Dray's Ditches ramparts and those at Ivinghoe are quite striking.

But what of the other hillforts? Barry Cunliffe has often spoken of continuity. He has demonstrated in S. England that hillforts frequently occur on hilltops already occupied by B.A. barrows, long barrows or causewayed camps.

1. A. Selkirk: Current Archaeology, 3 (1972-3) 173.
2. J. Dyer: Beds. Arch. Journal, 1 (1962) 1.
3. J. Dyer and A. Hales, *op. cit.* p.

4. J. Dyer: Arch. Journal, CXVI (1961) 14.
5. J. Dyer: *ibid*, 23.

A point, incidentally, also noted by William Cunnington as long ago as 1806! Can such continuity be demonstrated in the Chilterns? I think it can.

We have already spoken of Maiden Bower overlying its causewayed camp. Two other Chiltern hillforts excavated since the 1964 Conference have given similar clues to continuity. At Ravensburgh Castle, Hexton, in the past season plough marks associated with a scatter of beaker sherds indicate neolithic occupation of the hilltop. At Boddington hillfort, Wendover, John Jeffers' 1964 excavations revealed a flat-bottomed ditch below the early I.A. ramparts, which looks suspiciously neolithic to me.

Both Boddington and Ravensburgh are being badly disturbed by forestry making excavation difficult, but necessary, if we are to understand the complex nature of the I.A. in the Chilterns.

What, if any, is the relationship between Boddington and the nearby Chiltern Grim's Ditch? Recent excavation of the latter near Cholesbury was too limited to date the earthwork properly. More work is needed here. What of the minor banks and ditches that connect the Grim's Ditch to Cholesbury fort? Do these represent ranch boundaries of an open settlement, prior to univallation? What of Celtic fields in the Chilterns? Practically nothing is known of them. Yet strip lynchets abound - particularly around Ravensburgh Castle and Maiden Bower. Could these replace Celtic fields in the Chilterns?

There is one major problem that must be solved before this century is out. That is the question of the Catuvellauni. Not only is this a national problem, but it is also a local one in the Chilterns. We have already made some progress towards a solution but there is a long way to go. We can begin by dismissing practically everything that has been written about the Catuvellauni since Rice Holmes sowed the first red-herrings back in 1907 in his Ancient Britain and the invasions of Julius Caesar. We can also clear a lot of ground if we forget Wheeler's efforts to identify the Devil's Dyke at Wheathampstead with a non-existent oppidum, and instead see that earthwork as part of the later Prae Wood dyke system stretching between the Lea and the Ver. For those who still hanker after a Wheathampstead oppidum, let me remind them that the geomorphologists see the adjacent Slad valley as a purely natural feature, that 30 years of

aerial photography of the supposed site have failed to reveal any significant cropmarks, that Wheeler's limited excavation produced Belgic pottery 20 years later than Cunobelinus, and that the 1975 excavations on the E. side of the enclosure have only produced a little material of the earliest I.A.

There has been a tendency to forget that the Catuvellauni were a non-Belgic tribe who were proud of their native ancestry. At the time of Caesar they would have defended themselves in the native British manner. We should not be looking for a great oppidum in the continental sense at all. We should be seeking a native British hillfort built in the traditional native British manner, and this must be at the back of our minds when we consider Caesar's statement that 'the stronghold was protected by forests and marshes, had been filled with a large number of men and cattle, and was of great natural strength and excellently fortified'. This is not Wheathampstead - which is of no great natural strength, and its massive fortification is less than 500 yds long.

We should be spending our time and money lining up the possible contenders and eliminating by selective excavation those that do not meet the requirements. Names that come to mind such as Gatesbury at Braughing, and Welch's Farm near Welwyn seem on the coin and pottery evidence to be too late. The Aubreys and Cholesbury, long favourites with Christopher Hawkes, seem to me not to fit the Caesarian description - their ramparts are strong, but but their sites are weak. Traditional hilltop hillforts are more likely and I think that we have a choice of only two - Wallbury Camp in Essex and Ravensburgh Castle in Herts; 27 and 40 miles up divergent branches of the Lea valley respectively. Both are on steep sided promontories overlooking marshy ground, and both are very large by E. of England standards - over 25 acres. Both have been subjected to excavation in the past 20 years, though there has been no report from Wallbury Camp. The dating of Ravensburgh is initially to the early C4th BC, with a hasty refortification in the mid-C1st BC, clearly making it a strong contender, though its distance from the Thames, perhaps two days march, might be a disadvantage. Again there is nothing in Caesar to

1. R.C.H.M. Essex, 2 (1921) 93.
2. J. Dyer in D. Harding: Hillforts: a survey of research in Britain and Ireland (1976).

suggest that the journey was a short one, and it is not inconceivable that the region of the Icknield Way was reached.

I would like to see Wallbury and Ravensburgh in the forefront of Chiltern investigations during the next ten years. Shortly, a fifth of the trees at Ravensburgh will be felled and replanted. There will be a brief respite between the two events when four or five acres of the interior will be free for examination. This is the sort of rescue excavation on which I consider time and money should be spent. I have high hopes of a Chiltern 'Danebury' before many summers are out. Perhaps we can persuade our friends in Essex to have a closer look at Wallbury, and twist the arm of the earlier excavator, whose comments we eagerly await.

A SURVEY OF THE MEMORIALS IN THE CHURCHYARD OF ALL SAINTS CHURCH, MIDDLETON STONEY, OXFORDSHIRE - Fran Stewart, *Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society*.

Any churchyard and its memorials are part of the social history of the surrounding community, and are a potential source of information.^{1,2} So far, few churchyards have been studied in detail.

It is important for studies to be made now, for the following reasons. Firstly, the inscriptions and sculpture on the memorials will eventually disappear. Many of the earlier inscriptions are already illegible due to weathering, or aggravated by atmospheric pollution. Secondly, in many churchyards memorials have been, are being, moved from their original positions, to simplify maintenance, and in the process some of them have been, or will be, damaged or lost completely. Thirdly, many memorials have been intentionally destroyed or removed from the churchyard. The most worthwhile information will be derived from churchyards where little or no disturbance has taken place, and where there is a high proportion of decipherable inscriptions, if possible dating back to the earlier periods i.e. to the C.17th and C.18th.

1. Aston, M. & Rowley, T. Landscape Archaeology, David and Charles (1974).
2. Jesson, Margaret. The Archaeology of Churches, CBA (1973)

The survey of the memorials in the churchyard of All Saints, Middleton Stoney, was instigated as part of an archaeological training school organised by the Department for External Studies of the University of Oxford, in July 1974. The purpose of this survey was to extract from the churchyard as much personal detail as possible for the persons commemorated there.

Most of the memorials before 1850 required a great deal of scrutiny, preferably with the aid of strong side-lighting; this enabled many inscriptions, seemingly illegible when viewed under diffuse lighting, to be read quite easily by a persistent recorder. The side-lighting was provided by the sun if this was in the right position, or could be achieved by reflecting sunlight with a large mirror on to each inscription; this was a very rewarding two-man exercise, and the results were remarkably successful. Some of the inscriptions on the older headstones were found to extend some

way below the present ground surface. They were consequently quite easy to read as they had been protected from the weather. Considerable persistence was required to decipher many of the older inscriptions, partly because of the extravagant styles of writing.

There were 277 memorials in the churchyard (excluding the 27 Second World War RAF memorials, not used in the analysis). Approximately three-quarters of them commemorated one person, a quarter commemorated two persons, and a small fraction commemorated three or more persons. The inscriptions could be read on 95% of the memorials, providing information for some 350 persons.

The earliest memorials in the churchyard were for deaths which occurred towards the end of the C.17th. There were only a few deaths commemorated by memorial in each decade until 1790; from then on the numbers increased dramatically, rising to a peak during the years 1860-1869.

Decade	No. of Deaths	Decade	No. of Deaths	Decade	No. of Deaths
1690-99	3				
1700-09	3	1800-09	12	1900-09	15
10-19	1	10-19	22	10-19	9
20-29	3	20-29	17	20-29	12
30-39	2	30-39	17	30-39	19
40-49	1	40-49	23	40-49	15
50-59	6	50-59	18	50-59	15
60-69	2	60-69	33	60-69	20
70-79	3	70-79	23		
80-89	7	80-89	10		
90-99	20	90-99	14		

There was no significant difference between the total number of males and females commemorated.

From 1790 to 1969 there were enough deaths in each 30-year period for an analysis to be made of the ages at death of adults. (Prior to 1790 the sample was too small to provide useful figures). A surprisingly large percentage of deaths were in the younger age groups, particularly before the middle of the C.19th. It appeared that a person did not necessarily have to attain a great age in order to be commemorated on a memorial; whether he was or not probably depended more on the finances or wishes of his family than on his age at death.

For the period before the middle of the C.19th, graphs showed that there seemed to be approximately equal chances of dying at any age. However, despite the large number of early deaths in this period, some persons still managed to survive until their seventies or eighties. The average age at death showed a steady increase during the total period studied.

Period	Av. age at death (years)	Number of persons (aged 15 years and over)
1790-1819	44	51
1820-1849	55	46
1850-1879	63	63
1880-1909	62	35
1910-1939	68	37
1940-1969	73	46

These figures may not represent a true assessment of life expectancy, since as suggested by Rahtz (1974), the longer a person lived the more likely he was to achieve a permanent stone memorial. Therefore, the figures may be over-estimations of the true average ages at death in the village, and the increase in life expectancy between the periods 1790-1819 and 1940-69 may be even greater than the 29 years indicated.

The number of deaths in each month was studied for the period 1790-1969. There were, fairly consistently, more deaths in the winter half-year than in the summer half-year; 60% from November-April, 40% from May-October.

Up to the 1830's the majority of persons commemorated were given individual memorials; from the 1840's to the 1930's more persons were commemorated on shared memorials than on individual memorials; since the Second World War the fashion appeared to have returned to individual memorials for the majority of persons. The shared memorials of the Victorian, Edwardian and George V eras possibly reflect sentimentality rather than a reluctance to meet the cost of the stone. They always commemorated close members of a family; usually husband and wife, less frequently parents and children, or brothers and sisters, and occasionally grandparents and their grandchildren.

There was some variation in wording on the memorials in the period studied. During the C.17th and early C.18th it was very simple, then tended to become more flowery and informative in the later C.18th. It remained flowery, informative, and sometimes euphemistic, in the Victorian, Edwardian and George V periods, but has since returned to being more simple. There were a few examples in the C. 19th of the use of the word "relict", an old-fashioned word for widow. $\frac{1}{2}$, an old way of writing "the" was used quite often in the C. 18th. The more common Christian names were

often abbreviated in the C.18th and C.19th, e.g. RICH^d for RICHARD, W^m for WILLIAM, ELIZ. for ELIZABETH.

The Christian names were studied, by date of birth, from 1612 to 1900. Up to 1850 names which were popular were given to a very large percentage of the persons born. For example, in the period 1750-1800, of 47 males born, 13 were named WILLIAM, 11 were named JOHN, and 8 were named THOMAS. In the same period, of 50 females born, 10 were named ELIZABETH, 9 were named MARY, 6 were named ANN and 6 were named HANNAH. In the next period 1800-50, apart from HANNAH, the same names were still the most popular, and were used only slightly less frequently. However, in the last period, 1850-1900, there were many more names and non dominated as in earlier years.

Up to the end of the 1820's all persons (with one exception, Barbara Ann Izzard, born in 1778) were given a single Christian name. The majority of persons continued to be given single Christian names until the middle of the 1840's. From this time, however, most persons were given two Christian names.

Of approximately 140 surnames in the church-yard, almost half appeared only once. If more than one member of a family was commemorated, an idea of the minimum time lived by that family in the village could be ascertained from the dates on the memorials. In this way, it could be seen that about one third of the families lived at Middleton Stoney for fifty years or less, much less in many cases. However, certain families were commemorated over very long periods of years i.e. the LANDS, 1695-1809; the WILLIAMS (if these are all related) 1739-1883; the COGGINS, 1781-1898; the VARNEYS, 1817-1966; the TUGWOODS, 1843-1934; the VILLIERS, 1874-1969. The VILLIERS were members of the family of the Earls of Jersey, Lords of the Manor at Middleton Stoney since 1748, and hitherto had been commemorated inside the church.

Occupations were given for very few persons. Three were Rectors, one was a domestic servant, four were soldiers, and three were Clerks of the Parish. Apart from one death on active service, no causes of death were given on the memorials.

All the memorials at Middleton Stoney were made of stone, with the exception of one metal one, unfortunately not dated, but in a predominantly Victorian area. There were no

wooden memorials. Most of the memorials were in the form of headstones, but there were two altar tombs, and a small number of kerbstones, recumbent, and cross memorials. Some of the early memorials were decorated with sculpted flowers or cherubs, and in one case cherubs and a skull.

All the C.17th and C.18th memorials were situated on the S. side of the church. Together with many of the early C.19th memorials they were in very closely-packed rows or groups. Unless they had been moved up together at some later date it may be that in these earlier years it was not unusual for memorials to be arranged in this way.

The survey at Middleton Stoney enabled conclusions to be drawn both about the persons commemorated and the changing styles of commemoration. Some of the statistical information would also be available in the parish records, but would take a very long time to extract. Churchyard surveys provide results comparatively quickly, the majority of which cannot be obtained easily, if at all, from other sources. If supplemented with photographs, they are a valuable way of preserving this small, but important, facet of history.

PREHISTORIC

AERIAL RECONNAISSANCES 1975 - James Pickering

Twenty three flights were made from R.A.F. Bicester in mid April to record soil marks in clay as part of a wider study of soil marks from differential drying of soils of different natural structures. A number of indications of sites were recorded and these have been investigated by Mrs. Strong of Waddesdon.

In the first week of July 20 flights were made from R.A.F. Benson to record cropmarks in the area and as part of a wider study of the incidence of cropmarks in different soils. Whilst there was overlap with records obtained in 1974, many new features were recorded. In spite of the many years of air photography in the Thames Valley, a substantial amount of details in this year's photographs of the area for some miles around Benson are additional to those published in the recent archaeological survey of the River Gravels of the Upper Thames Valley by the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit. Additionally, despite the excep-

tionally favourable weather permutations this year for cropmarks, a large number of known sites in this area remained totally invisible or were more difficult to interpret than from photographs in earlier years. The same seemingly anomalous incidences of evidence have been noted in other areas of the Midlands under intensive observation for a number of years and this further confirms that areas and sites will continue to produce new evidence for many years to come. It is not yet possible to estimate the evidence that has been recorded in any area as a percentage of the potential available from aerial archaeology. Nor is it possible to estimate the ratio of the maximum potential from aerial archaeology to the total archaeology of a site or area.

The unusual weather permutations provided other evidence of significance to archaeology generally. The distribution of 'sites' is far less directly related to the gravel terraces than the published evidence suggests.

It is perhaps now necessary to do some re-thinking on what constitutes an archaeological 'site' and its relation to the society of its period. This year produced evidence of field systems of different kinds many miles from the river all out of phase with the field systems of today, although some elements in today's fields go back to the medieval period. Ring ditches were also recorded on ridges and higher ground in geology, away from the valley context. (Additionally some recent field work in N. Warwickshire suggests that unrecorded prehistoric burial mounds from scraped earth, that do not produce cropmarks, may also be numerous in other similar contexts). To what extent have those 'sites' such as ring ditches, that have attracted the excavation archaeologist, reflected those activities that permit an understanding of the society by which they were constructed? The total man hours required to create a barrow, or burial mound, can be less than the cultivation work for one single field in a single year.

The increasing evidence from aerial archaeology of land use outside those contexts accepted at present of "Soils suitable for the early settlers", must raise the question of the extent to which the known distribution of ring ditches along the river valleys, and now on higher ground and ridges, indicates areas of settlement and occupation, or whether these monuments were built on marginal land. Are the field systems, or the burials and monuments, the 'sites' that should be investigated?

Ref. Aerial Reconnaissances 1974,
Newsletter 5, pp.5-7.

WAWCOTT XXIII - F.R. Froom for St. Bartholomew's Grammar School Arch. Soc., Newbury.

A major excavation in 1971 showed that the flint industry of this late Mesolithic site has a microlith component dominated by scalene triangles (CBA9 Newsletter 2, 1972).

Situated on the edge of the Kennet flood plain, occupation was on silt deposited on clay. Subsequently the site was sealed by a series of alluvial deposits. In the closing stages of the 1971 excavations evidence was found indicating the existence of a pit extending into the then unexcavated area. The pit has now been cleared and the surrounding area examined, providing further details concerning the nature of the stratification.

The pit had been dug into sterile silt and proved to be small and shallow, approx. 3' diameter and 15" deep, and regular in outline. The fill was distinguishable by texture and colour and by the presence of charcoal flecks and worked flints. Although almost certainly artificial in origin, there was no indication of its function. The surrounding area yielded a further sample of the flint industry and a few faunal remains, the latter including a large rib, probably of Bos.

Recently a large pick-like tool from the 1971 excavation has been confirmed as being of chert, certainly not local and probably of S.W. provenance.

No further work is contemplated at this site and it is hoped that a full report will be published in due course.

A NEOLITHIC and BRONZE AGE SETTLEMENT at
BRIXWORTH, Northants. - D.N. Hall, P.W. Martin
for Higham Ferrers Hundred Arch. Soc.

The detailed field work required to find pre-historic occupation/working sites in central Northamptonshire continues (Newsletter 5, 1975). The sites, revealed by concentrations of worked flints, continue to be restricted entirely to light soils. The occupation remains range in period from the late Mesolithic to mid-B.A., and one wonders how primitive peo-

ple were able to find specific soil types with such success. Perhaps they sought out characteristic features, such as bracken and ling on sand, and the upcast from badger sets.

In the parish of Brixworth 10 flint sites are known so far, with more sandy fields yet to be investigated. It is proposed to collect sufficient flints from each area to make a statistically significant analysis of the types; in particular to try and assess what activity was going on at a given site. Only a few of these occupation areas are associated with cropmarks and usually these are mid or late B.A. as far as diagnosis is possible. The whole question of equating characteristic flints with different periods of the Neolithic and B.As. has recently become confused.

No type series has been published for a single Northamptonshire site, so a case study has been made of Upper Park, Brixworth, lying SW of the village. Some 2000 worked flints have been collected from this field in two separate areas, one producing leaf-shaped and the other barbed-and-tanged arrow heads. The first area has no narrow flakes, usually associated with the early Neolithic phase, but an abundance of broad squat flakes and some transverse arrow heads typical of the late Neolithic period. The other area has a large number of small rounder scrapers, which, with the barbed-and-tanged arrow heads, point to an early metal age phase: some of the blades and scrapers have silica staining on them, and several flints are reworked from older material. The re-use of material lying about on the land surface suggests that at least some of the adjacent area was open and probably cultivated. It seems that as a whole Upper Park had a lengthy period of occupation running from the late Neolithic into the early B.A.

Fig. 1 illustrates the principal standard types from this site. In future analyses of local sites we shall merely refer to these types in tables of statistics. We would like to thank R. Bradley for his comments on this material, and general interest in the project.

Figure 1.

- 1- 5 Various types of Neolithic leaf-shaped arrow heads, all bifacially worked.
- 6- 9 A series of transverse arrow heads with two cutting edges, all bifacially worked.
- 10 Part of a bifacially worked tanged arrow head, early Metal Age.

- 11-13 Parts of barbed-and-tanged arrow heads - no. 11 is reworked from an earlier blade.
- 14 Part of a dagger, bifacially worked, but with some cortex still surviving.
- 15 A spoke-shave.
- 16 Fabricator with signs of wear along the sides and point.
- 17 A scraper with deep-angled flaking.
- 18 Borer showing evidence of wear on all sides.
- 19-20 Beaker period thumb scrapers.
- 21 Scraper worked from a fragment of a Neolithic polished flint axehead.
- 22-27 Various scrapers; no. 25 is a side scraper worked with deep-angle flaking; no. 24 is an end scraper.
- 28-31 A series of knives.

CANNON HILL, MAIDENHEAD, Berkshire - W. Startin for the Berkshire Archaeological Unit.

The site was discovered by the Maidenhead Archaeological and Historical Society during demolition work. They excavated what remained in a cellar wall of a large (3.5m dia.) shaft to a depth of nearly 4m. The main filling was sealed by a hearth including a series of early Neolithic Grimson/Lyles Hill bowls and a small flint industry. A carbon date in the late 4th millennium BC is available from the charcoal from this hearth, while substantial parts of a single vessel of late Neolithic Fengate ware were found in a later layer over the shaft.

Since the site was scheduled for building, a larger scale excavation (of c.1000 sq m) was mounted on behalf of the Berkshire Archaeological Committee. Two further shafts were located, each only c. 1m dia., and the upper fillings of both were examined. A further funnel-shaped pit (2m dia. x 1.5m deep) also belonged to the Neolithic occupation. A length of shallow palisade trench might also be Neolithic. Dating evidence is limited, with a decorated sherd of Fengate ware from the top of one shaft and several plain Neolithic body sherds from the pit. Later features on the site included occasional I.A. postholes and extensive evidence of post-medieval landscape gardening. The site compares best with the complex of Neolithic shafts excavated at Eaton Heath, Norfolk.

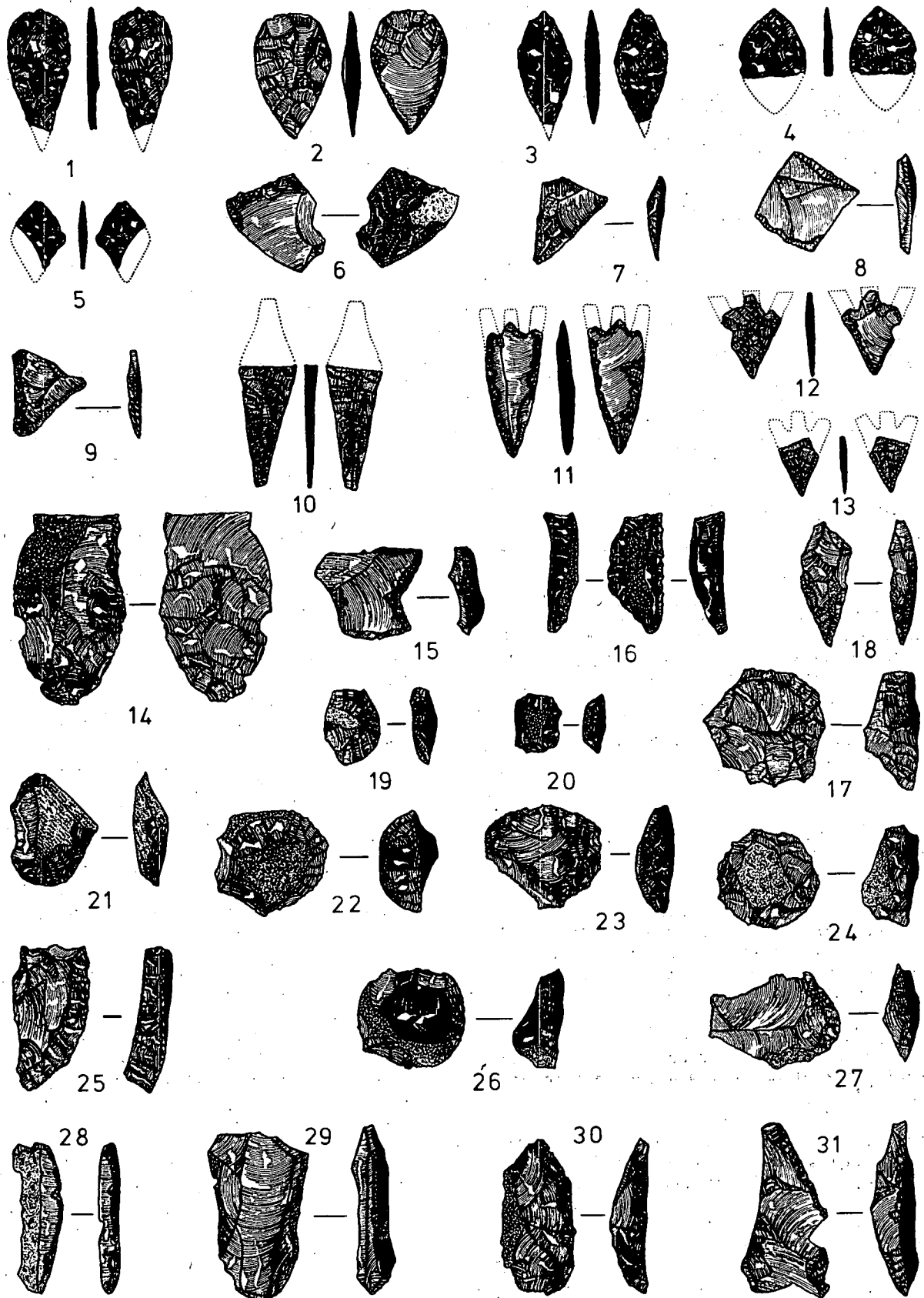


Fig. 1

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE BRONZE AGE URNS - D.H. Kennett

Between November 1968 and October 1975, the museum collections covering the county of Northamptonshire have been examined for their B.A. pottery and drawings made of all urns of which substantial portions survive. In all, 69 vessels have been located (in Northampton Museum, Kettering Museum, the British Museum London, the Ashmolean Museum Oxford and the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology Cambridge) and these include beakers, collared urns, Yorkshire vases, a number of nondescript vessels of general B.A. analogies and three miniature vessels (one of which is a pigmy cup). It is hoped to figure as many as possible of these vessels in an appendix to a forthcoming paper on 'B.A. Urns and Saxon Finds from Rothwell' in a forthcoming issue of Journal of Northampton Museums and Art Gallery.

WYMINGTON - D.H. Kennett

A late B.A. hoard was found about 1860 at Manor Farm, Wymington. "About 60 axes" were reported by Evans in Ancient Bronze Implements (1872) and of these 50 have been traced in various museums and are to be published with an extended discussion of LBA finds from the S. Midlands in a paper in Bedfordshire Archaeological Journal 10 (1975). The paper also illustrates for the first time C19th finds of LBA axes from Northamptonshire and a small hoard from Akeley, Bucks.

OUSE VALLEY RING-DITCHES - David Baker for Bedfordshire County Council.

Peter Woodward is embarking upon a study of B.A. settlement along the Ouse valley in Bedfordshire, arising from his work with Alison Taylor at Roxton, and at Radwell, and from work recently published by Stephen Green and Ken Field (Archaeological Journal 131, 1974). The survey work is being carried out within the rescue context for Bedfordshire County Council, Bedford District Council and the Department of the Environment.

The Roxton ring-ditches were large diameter barrows with shallow mounds, sometimes with berms and/or outer banks and with wide deep ditches. They dated from the B.A. period and had been constructed for burial purposes. They were located on the site of earlier habitation. Flint knapping probably continued on the site during the B.A. after primary use as a burial ground, but with no intensive habitation. I.A.

peoples used the field for agricultural purposes but did not attempt to fill in the ditches, though the whole site was ploughed out by the end of the R. period. The shallow earthwork of the residual ditch was still used for cremations and inhumations in this period. Excavations of ring-ditches in the upper Ouse valley at Milton Keynes by Stephen Green have similarly demonstrated that they were burial structures of early to middle B.A. date, and were generally associated with habitations of an earlier or contemporary date. Re-use of the site in the middle B.A. was also demonstrated.

A regular aerial survey of the river valley by Ken Field has given some information on distribution. The ring-ditches tend to cluster at intervals along the Ouse valley, and, sometimes, as at Roxton, appear as discreet organised groups. Extensive complexes only occur at Cople and Cardington in Bedfordshire. Ring-ditch cropmarks occur mainly on the gravels next to the river, and sometimes on the corn-brash above the river plain. They also generally occur with other types of cropmark: further analysis of this matter is necessary.

It is hoped that the projected survey campaign will include continued and regular aerial photography, and a resistivity survey of pasture land immediately adjacent to isolated ring-ditches, in order to ascertain whether or not they are parts of larger groupings. It is hoped to carry out a survey of this nature at Radwell. There will also be a fieldwalking programme to locate flint scatters and concentrations on selected areas along the Ouse valley, in order to obtain a distribution pattern for the Neolithic and B.A., to be superimposed upon the pattern produced by aerial photography. Flints, like ring-ditches, are being taken as indicators of habitation.

Fieldwalking will be concentrated upon three main kinds of land; the pin-pointed ring-ditches sites, selected blank areas on the Ouse valley gravels, and a sample cross-section across the river valley on to the surrounding uplands. It is hoped that some kind of quantitative result will be obtained from subsequent analysis of the material.

The excavation programme will largely be determined by the incidence of destruction threats, but it is hoped at least to sample ring-ditch sites. The information from this large scale investigation should allow a more selective and rational approach to excavation in the future.

It is hoped that this combination of survey and excavation will help to establish part of a general archaeological landscape for the B.A. in Bedfordshire. It might show how the ring ditches relate to earlier and contemporary habitation of this period, and could demonstrate whether such habitation is only associated with ring-ditches and the river gravels. It could produce a more definite pattern for B.A. settlement in the Ouse valley, by relating the excavation results and fieldwalking results to a general distribution pattern arising from aerial photography. It may be possible to relate ring-ditch structures to barrow structures of other areas, and to organise the period of ring-ditch construction through a matrix of radio-carbon dates. Further evidence could be gained for B.A. burial ritual in the lowland context, and for environmental conditions during the period of ring-ditch construction.

RADWELL - Peter Woodward for the D.O.E.

This ring-ditch site, on pasture land, had been located in a small trial trench by David Hall and John Hutchins in 1973. Excavations in May and June 1975 were intended to sample and examine the ditch in more detail, and to complete a section across the centre of the ring-ditch, drawing upon information gained from the five ring-ditches excavated at Roxton 1972-4.

The excavations at Radwell showed that the mound had been ploughed after the ditch had been almost totally filled. The old surface was not complete but there was enough of the buried soil remaining to show that there had been a central mound and berm, presumably formed from the upcast of the ditch. The majority of the worked flint was found inside the ring-ditch on the ploughed-out mound material and on the inner side of the ring-ditch silting. A few sherds of R. and B.A. pottery were also found in the ploughed-out mound material. The ring-ditch had a consistent fill, not showing the characteristic silt layers from the silting of an open ditch. A jet toggle, a glass bead and a B.A. body sherd were found half-way down the ditch with a concentration of charcoal and a few animal bones, suggesting the broken up remains of a burial of early or middle B.A. date. The primary filling of the ring-ditch was present on the inside top edge and on the sides only slightly, but was almost entirely absent at its base.

This evidence suggests a change of site usage from a fairly typical ring-ditch burial barrow to some form of habitation area, when the burial or burials were disturbed, the ditch cleaned out and refilled whilst the area was in use for habitation. Its wider interpretation must ultimately be set within the context of the Roxton ring-ditch excavations, recent work on the Ouse valley sites by Ken Field and Stephen Green, and the current fieldwork programme being undertaken by Peter Woodward.

KNIGHT'S FARM, BURGHFIELD, Berkshire - Julian Richards for the Berkshire Archaeological Unit.

Excavation in advance of gravel extraction revealed a number of pits associated with a ditch and several hearths. The pottery shows an association between finger printed wares paralleled in the early I.A. sequence of E. England, and decorated wares better paralleled with the Wessex early Iron Age. Carbon 14 suggests a date of c.700 BC. A ring-ditch in the immediate vicinity was also recorded during destruction.

Subsequent topsoil stripping approximately 300 m to the E. showed a further self contained group of basin profile pits containing organic and domestic material. The pits were associated with a single hearth and contained much carbonised material. Nearby linear features were proved, on excavation, to be of post medieval date. Much plain ware was obtained from the early features, mainly simple biconical jars with finger smearing and the occasional finger printed sherd. The largest pit produced a bun shaped "loom" or thatch weight. There are no fine wares. It is suggested that at least some of this material may pre date that previously excavated and may belong to the late B.A., the best parallel for such material within the region being in the Rams Hill sequence.

BIERTON, Bucks. - M.E. Farley, Bucks. County Museum

In April 1975 a quantity of Belgic pottery was found in a Bierton back garden. Shortly afterwards an application for development was filed which would affect land adjacent to the church near to the recently discovered site, and in an area known to have produced evidence for R.B. occupation. An exploratory excavation (ongoing December 1975) was mounted which to date has confirmed the existence of a large Belgic site in the village, with an extent of

at least 150m. A substantial enclosure ditch has been located and a number of minor Belgic features. R.B. occupation to date seems to be slight and probably did not extend past the later second C. AD in this area. A large late C17th pit with much animal bone is also being excavated.

Excavation at Bierton would not have been possible without the weeks of time generously given by members of the County Museum Archaeological Group.

ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM

The following prehistoric finds have been registered at the Ashmolean Museum in the period 1973-Oct. 1975. This list continues the reports of current accessions formerly appearing in the 'Archaeological Notes' section of *Oxonienisia*.

Marston St.	3 flint scrapers	1973.1028
Lawrence, Oxon.	(old find)	
Frilford, Berks.	stone axe	1973.1031
Standlake, Oxon.	I.A. pottery	1973.1036-
	(old find)	1044
Wheatley, Oxon.	flint core	1973.1053
Bullington, Oxon.	flint core	1974.313
Woodeaton, Oxon.	flint flakes	1974.347
	(old find)	
Islip, Oxon.	bronze gouge	1975.149
"Oxfordshire"	palstave	1975.310
	(old find)	
Dorchester, Oxon.	iron currency bar	1975.327
Penn, Bucks.	flint pick	1975.367

ROMANO-BRITISH

ODELL, Beds. - Brian Dix for *Beds.C.C., Bedford D.C., and the DOE*.

The Ouse valley gravels around the north Bedfordshire villages of Harrold and Odell have been favoured for human settlement and activity since at least the third millennium B.C., and several discoveries relating to the ancient settlement pattern of the area have been made during quarrying over the last 25 years. The present quarry, operated by Hall Aggregates (E. Counties) Ltd., is currently extending across the site of an early settlement which is now being excavated. The objective is to recover

a near complete plan of the settlement by total excavation: the willing cooperation of both local and regional quarry staff has been invaluable in this process, which is likely to continue until at least 1977.

The results so far obtained suggest that the main occupation of the site began towards the end of the I.A., although traces of earlier activity, including a possible funerary monument of the second millennium, have been noted. At some time in the period between 50 BC and the middle of C1st AD a farm was established and its territories defined by a series of ditches. The living accommodation within this settlement has at present only been partially investigated but would seem to have comprised several circular timber-framed huts of which curving 'eaves-drip' gullies and the holes dug to hold the upright posts survive. Similar construction persisted into the R. period, later in the C1st AD, and from this time onwards, various modifications were made to the farm layout. New ditches were dug whilst existing ones that had filled were often re-dug on slightly shifted alignments. Grouped strip or long fields were laid out and might have been used for winter grazing, and for the cultivation of root and fodder crops as well as cereals. Gravel was extracted from large, roughly circular, quarry pits, and wells were dug. The fill of the latter preserved organic materials such as wood, grass, snail and insect remains, which should provide evidence of environmental and agricultural usage.

Two small cremation cemeteries dating to the first half of the C1st AD have been discovered, one containing six urned cremations shallowly buried upright in small circular pits, the other comprising five larger pits, each containing the cremated remains of at least one individual scattered over the bottom, with associated food remains and whole pots. Several inhumations of a slightly later date have also been found.

The present available evidence suggests that R. activity on the site continued until perhaps the mid-C4th AD, after which there is a break in the archaeological record until the Saxon period. Two timber-lined wells of C6th -C7th AD date have been recovered. Both were set in specially dug circular pits, but were dissimilar in design. One was of simple construction, comprising a roughly square timber framework laid around four oak uprights, whilst the other was formed by enclosing a wicker basket within an oval framework of withies woven around short stakes, with a

'platform' of re-used planks for access to one side. To date, no associated settlement remains have been found.

NEWNHAM MARINA, BEDFORD - Angela Simco for
Beds.C.C., Beds.D.C. and the DoE.

Excavations were resumed in June, on the R.B. and pre-historic cropmark site at Newnham, S.E. of Bedford, in advance of gravel extraction (Newsletter 5, p.17).

Work continued on the area of the R. courtyard, revealing a cobbled surface of at least 300sq. m which was renewed in places with cobble and limestone patching, and was in use from C2nd - C4th. Several gullies and small ditches probably had a drainage function, though the profile of one suggested that it may have held a timber partition, perhaps serving as a stock-pen. Sealed beneath the courtyard surface were several Belgic features: a ditch, 2.5m wide, of at least three phases: two small parallel gullies; a pit 175cm in dia. and 70cm deep; and a timber structure at least 12m x 7m, one side being formed from a row of substantial stone-packed post-pits. The latest feature in this area was a posthole containing Saxon stamped ware, possibly related to two others at a stratigraphically comparable level, but no plan could be reconstructed.

A further area of 750sq m, covering a section of the field system, was examined, showing a succession of land use in the pre-historic and R. periods. Only two small early I.A. ditches were located. Of the Belgic period there were two substantial ditches; the earlier had at least four phases; the later was a single phase ditch, 2.5m wide, continuing in an almost straight line for at least 50m. Both ditches contained rubbish deposits with substantial amounts of pottery. A row of large post-pits extended at right angles from the later ditch for at least 12m, and may have been a palisade. The most numerous features were of the R. period. The main R. boundary ditch, appearing on aerial photographs as a rectangular enclosure with rounded corners, was sectioned in two places, and seems to have silted up naturally over a long period of time. A smaller R. ditch, running roughly parallel with and 2m to 3m S. of the later Belgic ditch showed continual re-cutting. Successive layouts of small plots were revealed by sections of parallel gullies.

Work on this area will be completed in the Autumn of 1975, and a watching brief will be carried out as the extraction programme proceeds across the area of densest cropmarks.

TOWCESTER - A.E. Brown, *University of Leicester*

The line of the Towcester-Alchester road was explored for a length of 500m. For the most part the road consisted of a strip of gravel 8-10m. wide and up to 15 cm thick, laid directly on the subsoil. The number of successive side ditches was variable, two being the norm on the S. side and three on the N. No reliable dating evidence was obtained from the road itself, but material from the side ditch silts ranged from C2nd to C4th. Where the road ran through marshy ground the northern side ditch was omitted and the southern deliberately filled in with material containing later C1st pottery; the width of the road had been halved at this point and efforts made to keep the metalling in position with wooden stakes. On the N. side of the road and opposite the circular workshop discovered in 1974 lay another some 8m in dia. overlying a clay pit and the silted up roadside ditch. Portions of the stone floor of the hut remained, incorporating a column drum and re-used moulded and sculptured stones in good quality classical style. The building belonged to C4th.

Approaching the Alchester road from the S.W. was another hitherto unknown road, defined by slight side ditches and consisting of a thin strip of gravel 6m wide. Pottery from the side ditches belonged to C3rd/4th. Both this and the Alchester road were bordered by field boundaries which tied in with the ditch system investigated in 1974.

ARDLEY GREEN WAY - G.H. Hargreaves et al

In Newsletter 3 the Green Way of the Ardley Saxon charter was identified as of R. origin. It has now been established that the R. road concerned runs from Upper Heyford to near Hethe, see figure 2.

The metalling of the road is 18' wide. The alignment S.W. from Hardwick projects to a ford in the Fewcott brook, but the road turns to remain on high ground and re-aligns to reach the ford, an example of Roman surveyors' practice. The sharp re-alignment is clearly visible on the ground. The road is easily seen from the cul de sac lane beyond the railway bridge as a fine high agger, and from the Ardley-Stoke Lyne road as a causeway over a hollow.

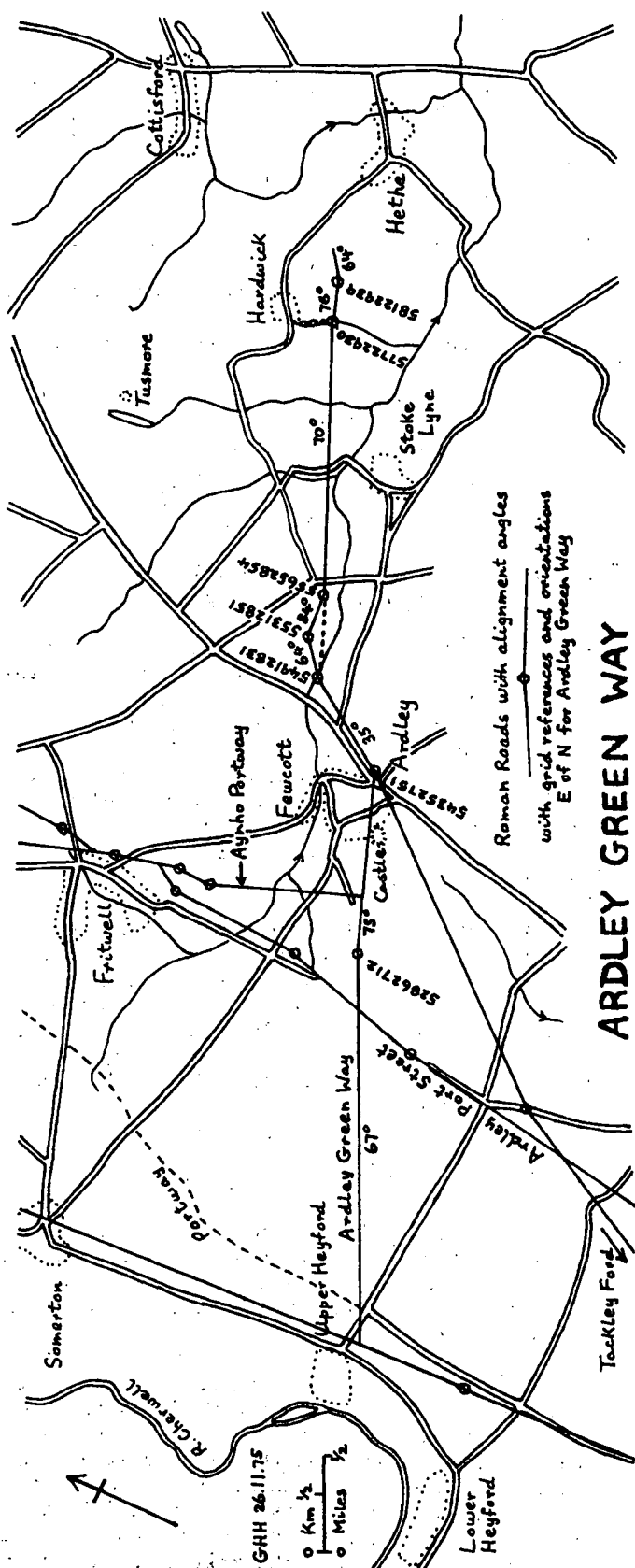


Fig. 2

The existence of the road indicates that there was either R. settlement at Upper Heyford or a R. crossing of the Cherwell there. Attempts to trace the road beyond Hethe have so far been unsuccessful, and its N.E. objective is unknown.

Newsletter 3 refers to the Roman road from Tackley Ford to Ardley as part of a road intended to connect Cirencester with Towcester via Akeman Street. Search to locate this road between Ardley and the Ouse having failed, it is thought that its building was discontinued after reaching the pre-existing Ardley Green Way.

The choice of the site of the C12th Ardley castle was evidently influenced by the existence of the R. road alongside it. Historians identify the site of the battle of Fethan Leag in 584 with a wood named Fethlee in a C12th charter of Stoke Lyne: if this identification is correct, it is suggested that these were located on the ground N. of the ford on the Ardley Green Way, which is in Stoke Lyne parish.

NEWBURY, Berkshire - S.D. Ford, Newbury Museum

No major excavation has been undertaken in 1975 but a successful weekend operation to locate the CALLEVA - CORINIUM road was carried out in May.

During the last few years information has been accumulated suggesting the course of the road through Shaw and Speen. The line resulting from this passed through Speen recreation ground and resistivity tests tended to confirm this. Permission to excavate a section was readily given by the Parish Council.

A scatter of gravel was encountered over primary metalling ultimately giving a width of 18-20'. Small ditches immediately adjacent were indicated by damp silt in the rather dry gravelly soil. Only a small quantity of primary metalling remained in place, no doubt due to ploughing. Furrow marks were observed nearby, well below modern levels, in soil leached free of humus. No artefacts were found apart from one or two worn sherds, not earlier than C16th from the upper levels.

The construction of the new link road through Shaw provided some confirmation of the suitability of the course. Deposits were uncovered suggesting that the river Lambourn previously looped S., presenting a course near to 90° to the line of the road at a very suitable crossing place.

There is little opportunity for further full sections in this stretch due to recent building, but work will be continuing in both E. and W. directions to complete the unclear sections.

OLNEY, Bucks. - M.E. Farley, Bucks. County Museum.

Construction of a new sewage treatment plant at Olney led to two pipelines being laid across the periphery of the well known R. site of Ashfurlong. At either end two substantial infilled Victorian gravel pits were exposed, which between them, had destroyed some 90m of the site. In the remainder were four R.B. ditches and a gully. The pipe trench was not deep enough to expose the base of all of these, but two at least were slightly over 1.50m deep. Two pits were exposed, one containing a S. Gaulish Drag. 33 stamped MIDI (retrograde); the other was filled with black sooty soil but containing sparse pottery and that with no trace of *in situ* burning. The most surprising discovery was of two adult male inhumations. Parts of a Nene Valley Barbotine Beaker with running scroll decoration may have accompanied one of these. A 1m wide strip of small limestone rubble (un-mortared) was the only indication of stone building, and building material generally was very sparse, likewise finds.

IVINGHOE and HAMBLEDEN, Bucks. - M.E. Farley.

The long dry summer proved very satisfactory for aerial photography. At Ivinghoe a known villa was photographed from the air, apparently for the first time, and a villa discovered in the 1950's at Hambleden also showed clearly. In the latter case it was possible to visit the site on the ground before the parch marks had disappeared and to plan the layout of the building room by room.

ROMAN PEWTER FROM NORTHAMPTONSHIRE - David H. Kennett.

In Autumn 1975, Northampton Museum were loaned two pieces of late R. pewter found during ploughing at Croughton. They are a flat plate of Peal's type 4(d)ii, dia. 396mm, and a castellated flat plate of Peal's type 3a, dia. 368mm. These are currently being studied with other pewter finds from Northamptonshire for a publication in the Journal of

Northampton Museums and Art Gallery. The other pewter pieces from Northamptonshire are all late C19th finds, and are two small bowls from a site at Whiston, in Cogenhoe parish; one complete and one fragmentary plate from Newbottle; a substantial fragment from a bowl (or cup) found at Irchester; and ten pieces from Samuel Sharp's excavations at Duston in 1870. The last have been most carefully examined and it would appear from the large pieces of mud still adhering on some of them and from the fairly uniform state of discolouration on all, that the find does represent a closed group. The mud further suggests that the find may have come from a well. However, the crushed state and bent appearance of these particular pewter vessels suggests that they may have been thrown into a well by labourers in revolt in 409, a facet of the end of R. Britain recorded by the Greek historian, Zosimus. If this is the case, Duston provides striking evidence comparable with that found at the villa of N. Wraxall, Wilts., as interpreted by Alcock. The present writer, however, does not favour mono-causal explanations for all finds of deposits of late R. pewter, bronze and ironwork. These should be treated with caution, and for each find individual circumstances of discovery need proper evaluation.

MEALES FARM, SULHAMSTEAD ABBOTS, Berkshire - Julian Richards for the Berkshire Archaeological Unit.

Gravel extraction revealed a rectangular timber lined pit, the sides formed of planks laid on edge and held in place by vertical corner posts. The rescue excavation which was carried out produced no dating evidence, but this pit may be associated with a linear feature of R. date which was revealed by a subsequent extension to the gravel pit.

ANGLO-SAXON, MEDIEVAL AND LATER

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE CEMETERIES: A Progress Report on Re-publication - David H. Kennett.

Northamptonshire is rich in A.S. cemeteries. A.L. Meaney's Gazetteer lists no fewer than 39 separate sites which can be verified. Since July 1966, a long-term programme of research

aimed at the selected study and re-publication of these has been in progress. This is part of a wider study covering the area of the rivers of the Wash; the Welland, the Nene and the Ouse valleys. In CBA 9 it includes Bedfordshire and N.Buckinghamshire as well as Northamptonshire, and outside the area to the E. all of modern Cambridgeshire and parts of the former county of W. Suffolk. For some purposes also, the former county of Rutland may be counted as part of the area.

The initial period of research has concentrated on one major site in Bedfordshire, the cemetery at Kempston, with some additional pottery studies including the reassessment of the site at Sandy. Work since then has been concentrated on Northamptonshire sites, where three lines of approach have been used.

The first group of sites to be examined is the cemeteries of the "Final Phase". A 'Gazetteer of C7th Cemeteries in the Ouse Valley' has been published and studies of the cemetery at Desborough and that at Cransley are in the press. It is suggested that the Desborough site may have had only the two rich graves now known as its most richly furnished graves and that the majority of the site may have consisted of poorly-furnished or unaccompanied burials. Grave A with the well-known Desborough necklace, of 37 pieces, of gold and with eight garnet-set pendants, has objects acquired over a long period and includes repaired and replacement items in the garnet-set pendants and two end beads which may be much earlier than the remainder of the necklace. Grave B contained a skilnet and other objects, most probably the remains of an iron-bound wooden box and its contents. The Cransley finds were made in 1879 and consisted of a spearhead with a skeleton (or skeletons) and possibly other ironwork, and a single burial with a silver wire ring, a sword, a skilnet and a workbox. Two brooches and two pots are also recorded. One of the pots is almost certainly B.A., and a B.A. collared urn survives in the

collections of the British Museum. The sword is the most reliably recorded example from the old discoveries of A.S. cemeteries in Northamptonshire, though these are rare in C7th graves. The workbox is a woman's accoutrement, and the deposition of this in the skilnet suggests affinities in rite with the Sutton Hoo and Broomfield burials. The skilnet is non-indicative of sex and the finds may represent a case of suttee!

A systematic approach is also being made in the study of cemeteries of the C5th-6th. One which lay between Barton Seagrave and Burton Latimer was found between 1880 and 1885, and produced a group of women's objects, a shield-boss with an ornamented top knob and a group of 17 pots. The second parish to be examined is Rothwell from which finds were made between 1905 and 1913 and in 1912-13 but seemingly from two separate sites. The latter in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, have not previously been figured, except in general surveys of individual types of objects; the former were the subject of a brief study with a single plate in 1918. As both these groups seem to have a direct connection with a B.A. pot, an examination is being made of the connection between B.A. urns (signifying barrow groups now ploughed out) and Saxon cemeteries. The correlation may be seen in the cemeteries at Woodstone, Hunts., Kempston, Beds., Desborough III, Northants., as well as at Rothwell and Cransley.

The third approach is to look at individual types of objects. Using the Kempston material as a basis, this has been done for the range of A.S. shield fittings, and based on the four surviving examples in Northampton Museum for the florid brooch also. A completed survey will look at the cruciform brooches of Northamptonshire. A further examination hopes to look at "Man and Horse in Saxon Northamptonshire" and proposes to illustrate the horse-gear of Saxon date from Northamptonshire and will also include a section on the evolution of words for horse-gear.

QUINTON, Northants. Site 'B' - R.M. Friendship-Taylor for *Upper Nene Archaeological Society*

Work during 1975 concentrated on an area some 100' to the N.W. of that dealt with in the 1974 season. (CBA 9 No.5). Spreads of limestone surfaces were found, which had, in places, been severely disturbed by medieval ridge and furrow ploughing. However, several areas were relatively intact, though unfortunately even these are now being seriously eroded by modern ploughing.

1. D.H. Kennett, 'C7th Cemeteries in the Ouse Valley', *Beds. Arch. J.* 8 (1973), 99-108; 'C7th Finds from Astwick', *Beds. Arch. J.* 7 (1972), 45-51.
2. D.H. Kennett, 'C7th Cemetery at Desborough, Northamptonshire and its context reviewed', *Med. Arch.*, forthcoming; 'The lost A.S. finds from Cransley: a forgotten site', *J. Northampton Mus* forthcoming.

The pitched stone foundations of another building were found similar to that located on site 'A' (Journal of the N'pton Museum No. 11 1974) and lay on a similar alignment, but approximately 150' away to the S.

Beneath the stone spreads were several earlier features associated with C1st AD. A sub-rectangular pit contained Belgic pottery and iron slag, presumably indicating the existence of nearby iron smelting. Only 3' from the above pit, was a 'V' shaped ditch running in a N.-S. direction, this was some 2' deep x 2'6" wide of similar date. The filling was similar to that of the nearby pit. Cutting through the stone surface and at right angles to the above ditch was another ditch, 'U' shaped and recut once, 3'3" wide x 2'6" deep. It contained building debris, burnt limestone and bunter pebbles. A coin of Tetricus was found in the top filling. A small paste intaglio depicting Bacchus, surrounded by a wreath of vine leaves, a bronze needle, a fragment of a silvered bronze mirror and various fragments of scrap bronze were found amongst the stone surfaces. A bronze manicure set and ring from the sub-rectangular pit, dated to c.AD70. and two Urbs Roma coins were found in the soil above the stone spreads.

QUINTON - The Moated Manor - R.M. Friendship-Taylor. (Fig. 3)

Excavation has progressed at the Moated Manor site (Med. Archaeol., XV (1971), 164) and the examination of approximately one third of the site has now been completed. The earliest structures are of wattlework phase dating from the C11th-C12th. No coherent plan of these features has emerged, and only scatters of stake holes have been found. Late St. Neots type pottery was found together with a sherd of Badorf ware associated with these features.

Several depressions and gullies have been located, and a large sump or pit within which were several sherds of Lyveden ware.

The main activity on the site took place during the C13th-C14th. Room D contained two ovens, the oval example containing the remains of a central pedestal. Apart from charcoal, all that was found was 5lb of lead, the structure being very heavily burnt. The W. side of the oven utilised the W. wall of room 'D' reducing the limestone to powder. The second oven was rectangular in shape and was little burnt. Its floor utilised the stone lined

drain, which passed underneath at this point. A few charred grains of wheat were found within the charcoal.

A fine C14th kitchen (J) was added to the N. of the ?hall. This contained two ovens located in the S.E. and S.W. corners, and an open hearth set against the W. wall. Adjacent to the N. wall was a triangular feature, edged with upright limestone slabs, and filled with pitched limestone.

During the early C14th the W. end of the hall (M) was reconstructed and the depression at the W. end levelled up to the main floor area. In this floor make-up was found a unique piece of sculpture in local Northamptonshire ironstone depicting what appears to be a monkey banging a tabor and holding a key. Carved on the side of the sculpture is a representation of a human skull. Also found in the same make-up were two personal seal matrix of Thomas de Longueville. The de Longuevilles married into the de Quentone family in about 1347.

At the extreme end of the site is a lime kiln, some 9' in dia., dating to about the C13th, and is presumably related to the contemporary building activity.

GROVE PRIORY, LEIGHTON BUZZARD, Beds. - Humphrey Woods & Dominic Powlesland for Bedfordshire C.C. and the DoE.

Excavations begun in 1973/4 by Mrs. Evelyn Baker were continued in 1975 on this alien priory of the order of Fontevrault (mid C12th-early C15th), to be destroyed by sand quarrying.

Humphrey Woods exposed a large structure in what is tentatively identified as the main claustral area. It measured 12m x 6.8m and was pierced by doors on the W, N. and S. A range of buildings returned N. and S. from this structure, though only a small part of the range lay within the limit of excavation. A porch protected the W. entrance. The structure itself had been robbed to its footings except along a short length of its E. wall. The footings were of pitched carstone whose style suggests a date in the late C12th or early C13th. A layer of destruction debris sealed the structure and from this large quantities of glazed roof tile, including decorated finials, clunch mouldings and painted window glass were recovered. These indicate that the building must have been elaborate when standing, and of first importance in the priory.

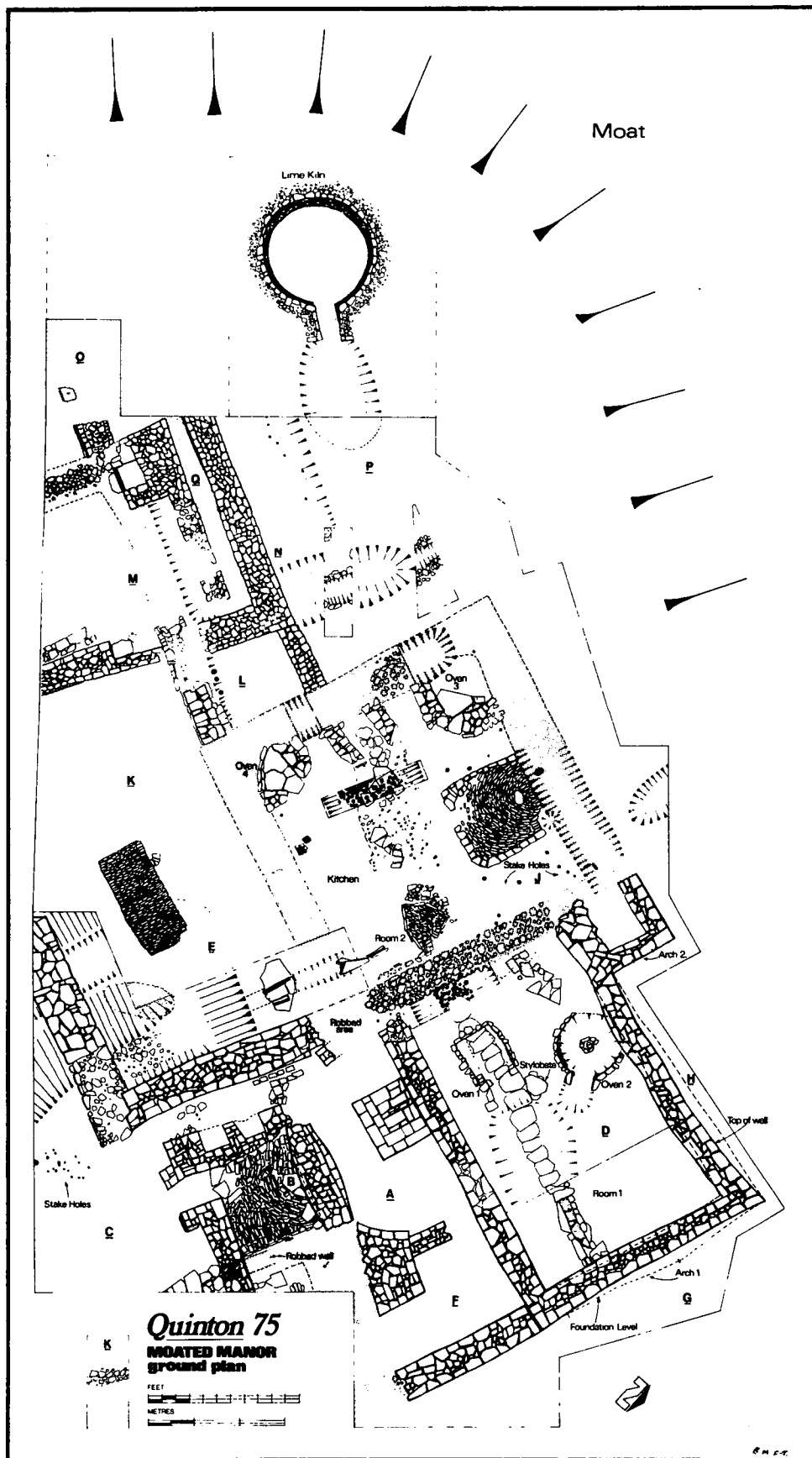


Fig. 3

The range was of secondary build to this structure. To the S. it survived intact to within a few cms. of the present ground surface, but was damaged to the N. An outstanding small find in one of the rooms to the N. was a lead bulla of Pope Alexander IV (1254-61).

Dominic Powlesland commenced the excavation of an area about 20m x 22m S.E. of the other trench, and several phases of timber and stone structures were recognised: the former included postholes and slots probably pre-dating the first stone buildings of the priory.

The area chiefly contained a rectangular robber trench, over 1m wide, for a building on an E.-W. axis, with internal dimensions of about 12m x 4.4m. To the W. of this building was a range of rooms represented by dwarf walls, only partly lying within the area excavated. There was a small lean-to structure against the S. side of the main building, containing two C13th stone coffins.

The main building in this area, unlike the others excavated to the N.W., continued in use after the dissolution of the priory, presumably in the early C15th. Alterations including the insertion of a large fireplace may suggest conversion to a farmhouse, which, on coin evidence, remained in use until at least 1700.

FLEET MARSTON, Bucks. - M.E. Farley & W.J. Lindsay for Bucks. County Museum

As the nave area of this redundant church was due to be lowered prior to laying a concrete floor, the architect acting for the Redundant Churches Fund invited advance excavation, and this was carried out during October and November 1975 with considerable assistance from members of the County Museum Archaeological Group. Under-floor heating and Victorian box pews had destroyed much, and numerous graves intersected the remaining area. None of the graves were excavated.

Although C12th occupation was present, it was of a domestic nature and the excavation substantially confirmed the Royal Commission on Historic Monuments assessment of the structure. The earliest phase was represented by a small rubble-filled trench crossing at the chancel arch and integral with the first arch. This trench never carried a wall and had a lime floor laid immediately on top. It incorporated pieces of peg-hole tile of a fabric unlikely to occur before AD1200 and can be

considered to date the first phase of construction of the church, unless evidence sealed beneath the chancel floor should prove otherwise. The rebuilding of part of the south wall of the nave, probably in the C14th-C15th was also confirmed.

WOODSTOCK, Oxon. - George Speake

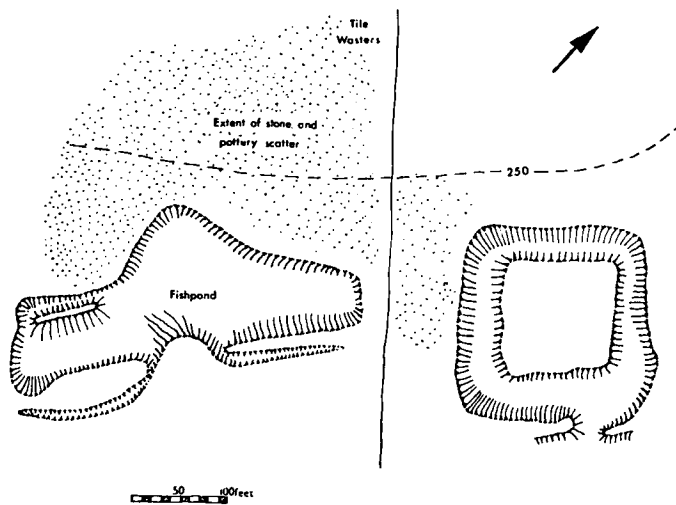
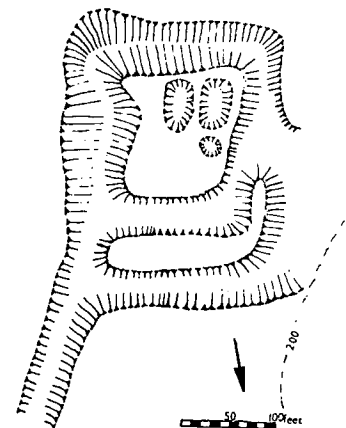
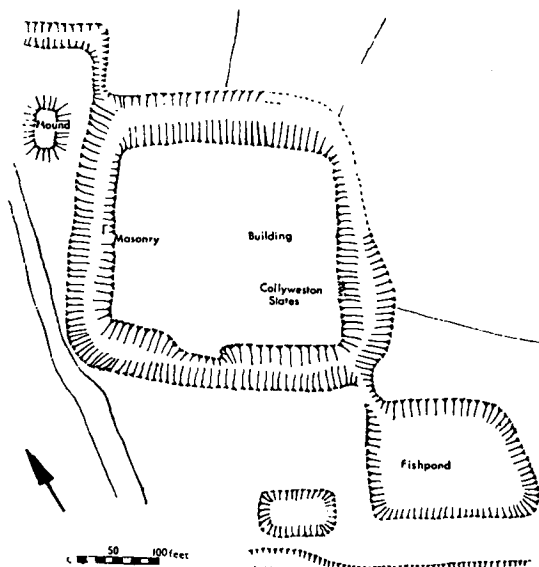
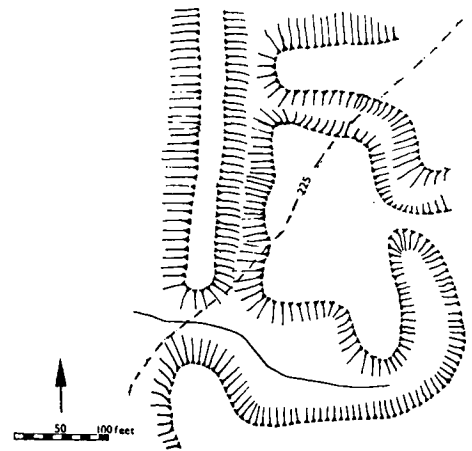
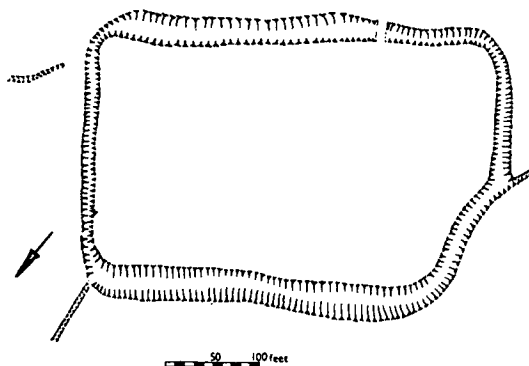
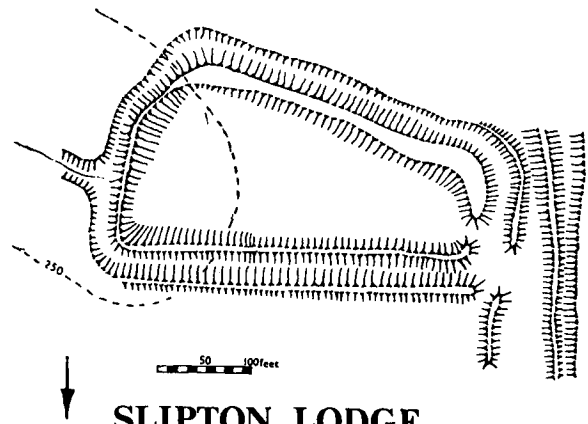
Fragments of medieval floor tiles, undecorated apart from a greenish-black glaze, were found in the bank of Blenheim lake, near the site of the 'King's Palace' Blenheim Park.

SOME NORTHAMPTONSHIRE MOATED SITES

BARTON SEAGRAVE - J.M. Steane, J.N.R. Harker & Kettering Grammar School Local History and Archaeological Society. (Fig. 4)

A survey was carried out of the two moated sites called "Castle Earthworks". Nicholas de Segrave obtained a licence to crenellate his dwelling-house at Barton in Edward I's reign. (Cal Pat.R.1307-13, 303) and the site is referred to as a castle in the time of John de Segrave (Inq.P.M. 27 Ed.3. Bridges MS Bodleian MS Top Northants C3 p.102). The more S. of the two sites is situated on the 225' contour line below the village of Barton Seagrave overlooking the valley of the River Ise. It consists of a rectangular platform, 210' N.-S. and 125' E.-W. Part of the platform has been dug out at the S.W. corner. An elderly inhabitant of Barton Seagrave remembers stone being taken earlier in the C. to build the stables at Barton Hall. A moat of varying width, 50'-70', completely surrounds the platform except for a narrow causeway on the E. side facing the present village. The moat was clearly meant to be filled with water. There is a spring on the S. side and a stream trickles down the hill towards the river. Substantial banks ring in the moat on the W. (208' long) and N. (165' long) sides.

Irregular bumps in the field between this and the more N. earthwork may indicate former croft boundaries. The second site lies between the 225' and 220' contour line. It is on the same alignment as the first and consists of a roughly 25' square platform. Again considerable trouble has been taken to ensure a wet moat. A stream flows past the earthworks on the N. side and is diverted into the moat which retains it by a large bank 130' long with a W. right angled extension of 80'. The cen-

**BENEFIELD****BARTON SEAGRAVE north****TITCHMARSH****BARTON SEAGRAVE south****HIGHAM FERRERS****SLIPTON LODGE****Fig. 4**

tral platform is cut into by three excavations; two 52' x 20' and one 20' x 20'. In a previous report it has been suggested that these are breeding tanks for a fishpond. Certainly they are similar to those on islands on the fishpond complex at Braybrooke (Northants. Past & Present IV, 5, 1970, p.300). It is possible, however, that they may be stone pits cut at a later date.

A C13th date to the N. moat is suggested by sherds of developed Stamford wares, an early medieval shelly ware rim and a Lyveden jug fragment with olive green glaze over white slip stripes. (Bulletin of Northants. Fedn. of Archaeological Societies, 7, 1972, p.43).

BENEFIELD

This is a homestead moat with fishponds and extensive stone scatter lying on the side of the hill overlooking the Lyveden valley. This is probably the site of Parva Lyveden which lay to the E.-W., Potters or Great Lyveden (see Journal 12 of the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery, 1975, p.46). To the N. of the moat along the hedgerow a site of a tile kiln was observed, producing white and green floor tiles and green ridge tiles. (Bulletin of Northants Federation of Archaeological Societies, 3, 1969, p.20). The platform is roughly square in shape and measures 115' E.-W. and 13' N.-S. The moat varies in width from 30' to 70'. A thick limestone spread with pottery scatter extends about 100 yards N.-W. of the moat; it seems to be the ploughed out foundations of medieval houses and is exactly paralleled by the site at Potters Lyveden, half a mile to the W. Bordering this spread to the S. are two irregularly shaped fishponds separated by a dam with an island in the W. one. They are embanked to the S.

HIGHAM FERRERS

A survey was made of a moated site three miles to the S.E. of the castle. The history of the park is described by M.W. Beresford (History on the Ground, London, 1957, pp.267-8). It appears to date from the C12th. Near its N.-W. corner stands a C16th-C17th house known as Higham Park, below which lies a moated site. It consists of a rectangular enclosure 395' S.-W. - N.-E. and 230' S.-E. - N.-W., with a moat varying in width from 30' on the E. and W. sides but only 12' on the N. and S. sides. It was evidently a wet moat with streams feeding in on the S. side and draining into fishponds

on the N. side. It seems rather low lying for a homestead moat and is also rather large by comparison with other Northamptonshire moats. It may well be a stock enclosure (cf. Slipton Lodge). For Higham Park see Northants. Past and Present V, 3, 1975, pp.226-7.

SLIPTON LODGE

This is a moated earthwork a few hundred yards N.-W. of the farm at Slipton Lodge. The site is roughly wedge shaped and consists of a bank enclosed by a ditch. The moated site is in its turn enclosed by the linear park pale of Drayton Old Park. The N.bank is 355' from E. to W. The bank at the wide end of the enclosure is 210' N. to S. and the S. bank is 335' from E. to W. At the funnelled end is a causewayed entrance. The moat is embanked on both sides on the N.side and is clearly meant to hold water since the E. end is flooded and the run-off goes into a stream which goes to the S. There is a slight bank and ditch 60' from the W. end. The moat is shown in C18th maps in the Northants. Record Office (maps 1402, 1403) as being at the S.-W. corner of Drayton Old Park. It may well be a stock enclosure rather than a homestead moat connected with hunting; in size and positioning it is comparable with the moat in Higham Park. (For Drayton Park see Northants. Past and Present, V, 3, 1975, p.221-3).

TITCHMARSH "CASTLE"

This lies to the S. side of the village street, in a field known as "Castle Park", and consists of a rectangular moated area with a fish pond complex to the S.E. The area was excavated by Sir Henry Dryden in 1887 (Associated Architectural Society Reports xxi, 243-52). John Lovel of Titchmarsh obtained a licence to crenellate his manor in 1304 (Cal. Pat. R. 1301-7, 290). The features visible on site include (1) a small flat topped rectangular mound about 7' high to the N.-W. of the site, 40' long N.-S. and 25' wide E.-W. This does not seem large enough for a motte. Its dimensions suggest a pillow mound. cf. Fotheringhay for a similar feature. (2) The main moated enclosure is almost square and measures 212' E.-W. and 170' N.-S. It consists of a platform with remains of buildings. Dryden shows external walls inclosing an irregular parallelogram with five-sided towers projecting from the walls at three of the angles. The remains of a building 38' E.-W. and 13' wide were

noticeable in the centre under the grass. Mr. Babbs, farmer, recalled that "there is stone paving which looks like a chequer board when you slip a spade in". A heap of Collyweston type slates was found jutting out of the side of the internal bank near the S.E. corner. Two fragments of Lyveden type pottery, pink fabric with grey section, were found with the slates. (3) A sizeable piece of ashlar masonry consisting of three ashlar blocks laid in line was noticed in the centre at the foot of the moat on the W. side. This may be the abutments of a bridge. (4) The moat varies from 35' to 50' wide, but has been partially filled in places. (5) To the S.-E. are two rectangular ponds, one dry; the other 80' N.-S. and 140' E.-W. half full of water, joined to the main moat by a channel. A further dry channel runs E.-W. to the S. (6) Two further ponds separated by the lane which runs N.-S. past the "castle" may have originally been part of the complex.

WILSTEAD BY-PASS - Peter Woodward for Bedfordshire C.C.

Wilstead By-pass, constructed during the autumn of 1974/5, takes the A6 from Luton to Bedford around the E. edge of the village of Wilstead. The line of the road passed through no known features of archaeological importance apart from ridge-and-furrow, which was recorded before construction works were begun, but a watching brief on preliminary grading works was carried out.

During construction, pitched stone foundations of limestone were found at the N. end of the by-pass near Duck End. Some sherds of local medieval and post-medieval pottery (C14th and C19th) lead window cames, glass and an iron catch were found in association with the footings. Although grading for the road had disturbed all occupation levels, the finds and the plan form indicated a projecting chimney to a house.

On the enclosure map of 1804 there is no building mentioned for this piece of land, which was part of an old enclosure known as Nortons Closes. At enclosure, Nortons Closes were exchanged by Samuel Whitbread: an examination of Whitbread documents in the Bedfordshire County Record Office allowed the tracing of a likely descent. A house seems to have been built on Nortons Closes between 1639 (when no house is mentioned) and 1648, when closes with cottage, in which George Warner was living, were settled upon

his grandson of the same name. It was still standing in 1696, but was probably demolished by 1725 (when a toft is mentioned), and was definitely demolished by the time of enclosure in 1804.

It seems probable that the foundations excavated belonged to some period of the construction of this house.

CLAPHAM MANOR HOUSE, Bedfordshire - Bedford Archaeological Society

Excavations have continued on this site throughout the summer of 1975. This year's work was planned to find the limits to the medieval and Elizabethan Manor Houses. Early in the summer a mass of building stone was uncovered over an area some 30' across; fortunately it was found possible to remove much of this by mechanical means from the inside.

The base of a circular dovecote about 25' in dia. was thus uncovered, with surviving walls up to 4' high containing tiers of nesting boxes. The floor was of packed clay, with accumulations of bird droppings to a depth of 6" to 8"; this contained pottery not later than the early C14th.

Examination showed that the dovecote was built of a very porous limestone, with ironstone faults, on a water-logged clay base, and that these facts had led to the collapse of the building on one side under its own weight. A number of bird skeletons were found in the rubble indicating that the building fell suddenly, trapping the inmates.

Several large rubbish pits were found round the dovecote; these contained much pottery and bone and a halfpenny of H.II.

The discovery of the dovecote has delayed the work which had been planned for 1975 and there will probably be a further season's work in 1976 in an attempt to complete the programme.

PINKIES COWHOUSE, FLITTEN, Beds. - K.J.Fadden for The Ampthill & District Archaeological and Local History Society

This small C16th building was excavated during 1975.

The original purpose of the structure has not yet been established but it was built on

the site of an earlier building and a medieval wall was re-used in its construction. The C16th building materials are red bricks and red roofing tiles. Domestic artefacts discovered included several coins, four jetons, a drinking glass bowl, a bronze spoon and many early clay pipe bowls.

The medieval foundations are of a stone building dated provisionally to the C12th from pottery evidence. The only notable artefact of this date found so far is a zoomorphic gable end ridge tile, of coarse brown fabric with three monkey faces pressed into the clay.

The site, which is under threat from agricultural reclamation, is within a large moat; only recognised this year. A large area remains to be excavated and several seasons' work can be foreseen. We are very grateful to the landowner, Mr. P. Tookey for his co-operation and help.

BRILL, Bucks. - M.E. Farley for Bucks County Museum

Subsequent to last year's chance discovery of a C17th multi-flued kiln in Windmill Street, Brill, a further post-medieval kiln was exposed in house footing trenches at the top of Tram Hill. The site is remembered locally as the 'clay sheds', and belonged to the Hubbock family, the last family of potters to work in the village. The structure was brick built, circular, and had arched flues. There was no evidence for a cavity floor. At a level with the interior floor, which was tiled, was a firebrick grating set into the visible flue arch. The whole was incorporated into one end of a pot-shed. The kiln appears to be totally C19th in date and the products remain to be studied.

Also on the site were two burnt hollows containing C17th ceramic, probably also kilns, although the constraints of footing trench excavation only permitted a sectional view.

SURVEYS

THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE PARISH SURVEY - D.N. Hall et al, *Higham Ferrers Hundred Arch. Soc.*

The county parish survey continues according to the scheme outlined in Newsletter 4 (1974).

In the season 1974-5 a further 11 villages were investigated, covering an area of 21,000 acres. An overall total of 63 parishes has now been completed scattered throughout the county, both in small and large adjacent blocks. At the request of the Royal Commission for Ancient Monuments, and others, we have included parishes to the NW of Northampton where little previous work has been done. This area is also threatened by a new road connecting the A1 and M1.

The sample of the county studied is now large enough for tentative comparisons to be made. It is quite clear that I.A. and later sites can be found on any type of soil, including heavy clay, in central and E Northamptonshire, but in contrast the NW of the county has pre-medieval sites limited strictly to light soils. The parish of Maidwell is discussed in a fuller article on p. 29 and is a good case study of a NW village; wherever there is a deposit of glacial gravel or an outcrop of limestone or ironstone there is an ancient settlement. The extensive tracts of clay are, however, barren.

The picture in the SW is more uncertain because of a much greater area of grass land - but many R.B. sites are known on clay, e.g. at Weston, Astwell and Stuchbury etc.

Summaries of the parish surveys are given below. Further investigations, when fields now under grass are ploughed, will no doubt yield further evidence. In some cases no check of the historical record has yet been made.

The sand-ironstone crescent running N around Northampton continues to produce abundant evidence of Neolithic and B.A. domestic and working sites, represented by concentrations of flints. A case study of a single site in Brixworth is given on p. 11.

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At the E side of Astwell parish are 13 black charcoal areas representing the clearance of medieval woodland (Whittlewood Forest). At Old Mountains is an extraordinary moated site with linear ramparts running for over $\frac{1}{2}$ mile away from it. The main site is well-preserved and covered by trees but the ramparts are now mostly demarcated by soil marks. The moat is marked as a wooded copse on a late C16th map at Merton College Oxford. This map also marks the pale of the park created by the Lovett family; the boundary is still represented by modern hedge lines without banks. Perhaps the Old Mountains ramparts belong to an earlier medieval deer emparkment, although they do not enclose an obvious park-like area.

Blisworth This parish is much mutilated by quarrying and parts are suffering from deep plough damage. Two R.B. sites were noted,

one on a restored hand-dug quarry. Some good examples of ridge and furrow survive at the N and SW of the parish.

The village is noted for the course of a very early horse drawn railway linking the two ends of the Grand Union Canal which is still clear from cuttings and embankments. In 1812 the railway was replaced by a tunnel, the earth being disposed at intervals through vertical shafts and left in great heaps which remain on the fields above.

Church Brampton Like adjacent Chapel Brompton the light soils of this parish abound in prehistoric sites. Four complexes have been identified, some with cropmarks yielding Beaker period flints.

The S part of the parish was described as heathland in the C16th, but nevertheless contains ridge and furrow, surviving on a golf course. To the W is a long tongue of land, alongside a brook which was presumably originally meadow, but now contains a series of very short lands or butts.

Crick An early I.A. site was found on clay and 2 R.B. sites on a ridge of gravel, one partly destroyed by the M1. An A.S. burial was uncovered during road works for an M1 feeder carriage way.

The parish is mostly grass with some very exceptional ridge and furrow surviving to a height of 3'. Many furlongs have 'double-headed' headlands which were caused by leaving the headland to grass over and turning the plough around a short distance away. There are good village earthworks and sunken roads E of the church; also well-preserved are the fishponds and a windmill mound. Some of the small quarries (mostly for gravel) are quite early because ridge and furrow originally disturbed was reploughed into them. There is a canal tunnel (1812), which, like Blisworth, is marked by a line of spoil heaps on the fields above it. One of these heaps appears to have ridge and furrow crudely ploughed onto it, even though the parish was inclosed in 1775.

Doddington There are 3 previously known R.B. sites and an I.A. enclosure here. The latter produced a limestone loom weight and also some R.B. sherds. A new site was found to the NW of the village which yielded a few R.B. and some hand-made Saxon sherds. The red-land contained a few worked flints of late date.

the site of an earlier building and a medieval wall was re-used in its construction. The C16th building materials are red bricks and red roofing tiles. Domestic artefacts discovered included several coins, four jetons, a drinking glass bowl, a bronze spoon and many early clay pipe bowls.

The medieval foundations are of a stone building dated provisionally to the C12th from pottery evidence. The only notable artefact of this date found so far is a zoomorphic gable end ridge tile, of coarse brown fabric with three monkey faces pressed into the clay.

The site, which is under threat from agricultural reclamation, is within a large moat; only recognised this year. A large area remains to be excavated and several seasons' work can be foreseen. We are very grateful to the landowner, Mr. P. Tookey for his co-operation and help.

BRILL, Bucks. - M.E. Farley for Bucks County Museum

Subsequent to last year's chance discovery of a C17th multi-flued kiln in Windmill Street, Brill, a further post-medieval kiln was exposed in house footing trenches at the top of Tram Hill. The site is remembered locally as the 'clay sheds', and belonged to the Hubbock family, the last family of potters to work in the village. The structure was brick built, circular, and had arched flues. There was no evidence for a cavity floor. At a level with the interior floor, which was tiled, was a firebrick grating set into the visible flue arch. The whole was incorporated into one end of a pot-shed. The kiln appears to be totally C19th in date and the products remain to be studied.

Also on the site were two burnt hollows containing C17th ceramic, probably also kilns, although the constraints of footing trench excavation only permitted a sectional view.

SURVEYS

THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE PARISH SURVEY - D.N. Hall et al, *Higham Ferrers Hundred Arch. Soc.*

The county parish survey continues according to the scheme outlined in Newsletter 4 (1974).

In the season 1974-5 a further 11 villages were investigated, covering an area of 21,000 acres. An overall total of 63 parishes has now been completed scattered throughout the county, both in small and large adjacent blocks. At the request of the Royal Commission for Ancient Monuments, and others, we have included parishes to the NW of Northampton where little previous work has been done. This area is also threatened by a new road connecting the A1 and M1.

The sample of the county studied is now large enough for tentative comparisons to be made. It is quite clear that I.A. and later sites can be found on any type of soil, including heavy clay, in central and E Northamptonshire, but in contrast the NW of the county has pre-medieval sites limited strictly to light soils. The parish of Maidwell is discussed in a fuller article on p. 29 and is a good case study of a NW village; wherever there is a deposit of glacial gravel or an outcrop of limestone or ironstone there is an ancient settlement. The extensive tracts of clay are, however, barren.

The picture in the SW is more uncertain because of a much greater area of grass land - but many R.B. sites are known on clay, e.g. at Weston, Astwell and Stuchbury etc.

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There are good village earthworks and

sunken roads to the SE; also crystallized in the ridge and furrow near the village are the ditches of a network of medieval enclosures.

To the far NW is the completely deserted and ploughed-over site of a village called Doddington Thorpe. Various terriers refer to this as 'ancient inclosure'. There is the usual scatter of building stone and late medieval pottery. The site was not described in previous publications. Adjacent to the village is a ruined C19th brick kiln.

Greatworth No pre-medieval sites found here yet, partly because of the presence of extensive tracts of grass land. The furlong pattern is fairly simple in a landscape consisting principally of a series of parallel brooks and watersheds. The parish was enclosed by agreement in 1634.

Halse A large percentage of grass prevented the discovery of any pre-medieval sites. The village is shrunken, but once was considered to be the parish to which Brackley belonged. There are good earthworks at Manor Farm. The ridge and furrow has been flattened, consistent with the early enclosure (before 1634), according to the map of adjacent Greatworth. Away from the village there are earthworks and hedge banks of earlier inclosures and farmsteads - off the Greatworth road is an almost village-like looking area.

Hannington A known cropmark site yielded a few I.A. and R.B. pottery sherds. Some worked flints (probably of B.A. date) were located on a spur of red-land. The parish is mostly a heavy clay under intensive agriculture. Only a few eroded village earthworks survive and no good ridge and furrow.

Old NE of the village there is a small B.A. flint site on ironstone soil. The greater part of the parish is clayland and appears to be devoid of ancient sites. SE there are a few shrunken village earthworks and sunken roads. Just off the Walgrave road is a large windmill mound.

Pilton There are 4 I.A. sites on clay and limestone soils and 4 R.B. sites, one of them newly discovered; 2 are on light gravel soils, and 2 on very heavy boulder clay. The N extremities of the parish contain part of the deserted medieval pottery-making village of Lyveden. Bearshank wood appears to be medieval - there is no ridge and furrow in it, and frequent references from the C16th onwards. N and W of the wood are rampart boundaries,

characteristic of medieval woodland. Adjacent are 3 black charcoal patches representing wood clearance.

Spratton There are two B.A. flint sites one with cropmarks on the light soils. If these cropmarks are not geological cracks then they represent a network of field systems. A Roman site is situated on clay and 2 early Saxon sites occur on gravel and ironstone soils. E and N of the village are shrunken settlement earthworks.

Stuchbury A single R.B. site and one yielding early Saxon pottery have so far been identified. Apart from one farm the village is deserted. The earthworks, fishponds and road systems are well preserved. In the C18th there was a legend that the village was destroyed by the Danes; it is almost certainly a sheep enclosure desertion which occurred before 1535.

MAIDWELL PARISH SURVEY, Northamptonshire - A. Goldsworthy et al. for the Northamptonshire Field Group.

Maidwell lies in the NW of the county, an area which has received little study until recently. It contains rather more pre-medieval sites than most of them because of the occurrence of a fair proportion of light soils; the clay in the N half seems to be barren. Site M8 and M1 are E.A., and M1 and M3 are early I.A., M4 Belgic and R.E., M7 R.B., M2 and M6 R.B. and Saxon and M5 and M9 Saxon. M1, M3 and M6 are on windswept spurs of ironstone, and could have had defensive origins. M6 is a villa producing stone and ceramic roofing tiles, and hypocaust box tiles. The occupation layers and floors seem to be well preserved under the building rubble. It is interesting to see the continuity into the Saxon period on sites M2 and M6.

The medieval village is moderately shrunken and formerly consisted of 3 or possibly 4 loop road networks. There are good earthworks, sunken roads, and a drained fishpond to the SW of the village. The earthworks of a mill-race still exist between furlongs 51 and 53 (fig. 5), and there is a possible windmill mound and dovecote on furlong 48 overlooking the fishpond. These mills are mentioned in a document of 1589. Another windmill site is suggested by the modern field names N (or NE) of furlong 98 (Northants Record Office (NRO) SC 2, (1883)).

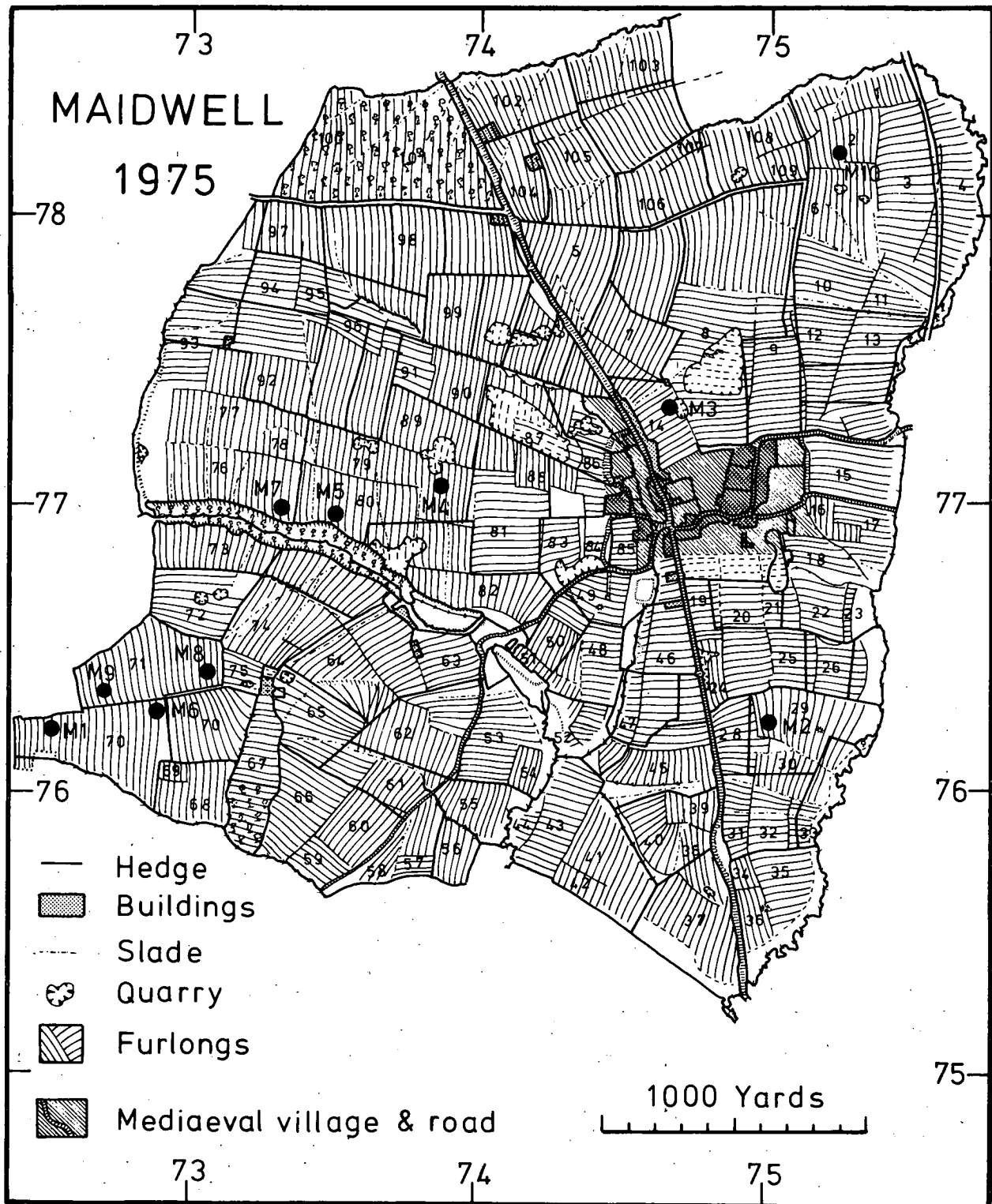


Fig. 5

The village contained two manors, and, rather surprisingly, two churches. The church of St. Peter was destroyed in about 1535 and stood N of the surviving St. Mary's church near the Old Rectory (at the E end of the village). One manor stood at the W of the village near the present manor farm. The flat areas of land near furlong 84 are typical of manorial and demesne enclosures: the fishpond to the S may belong to this manor. The other manor site now has the Hall and gardens built over it; the ornamental fishpond may be an enlarged manorial one (W of furlong 18).

The parish was totally ploughed apart from very limited areas of flooding meadow in medieval times, and the furlong pattern is given on fig. 5. Some areas to the SW and near the village were enclosed by the C16th. Other areas were set down to grass (leys) according to the 1686 glebe terrier, and also from the evidence of the 1883 modern field names which contain many 'leys' and 'furze' elements and lie on the parish periphery. All this is consistent with the usual village shrinkage and arable land in late medieval times. The parish was inclosed privately between 1686 and 1711 (glebe terriers).

Limestone has been quarried in the area for sometime. Furlong 86 was known as standelvis in 1316. There exists a note of ca. 1805 describing the nature of the stone and the lime produced from both series of quarries NE and NW of the village. (NRO, IL 2829).

The modern field containing furlong 26 has C19th steamplough ridge and furrow in it. On furlongs 8 and 66 there were C19 brick kilns.

Field Names No extensive terriers have been found yet so a complete list of furlong identifications is not possible. The modern field names are given in the 1883 sale catalogue, and some of these can be identified in the 1686 glebe terrier and in medieval documents. Maidwell is unusual in that the manorial courts began to regulate the running of the open fields as early as the C15th by issuing court orders, e.g. FH 39 4-6 (1425-40). These are the beginnings of the complex series of orders so familiar in C17th court rolls.

The names of two of the expected three great fields have been identified so far, - Dale field (to the NW) and Neather field (to the S).

Furlongs positively identified are tabulated below; the two longest terriers are

those of 1686 (NRO Maidwell glebe) and 1316 (NRO, FH 3021).

<u>No. on</u> <u>figure</u>	<u>1686</u>	<u>1316</u>
3	warth furlong	
5	long furlong	
9	Redhill	Redehill
10	Whitehill	
12	Littlewell	
16	Banhill (1883)	Balderekesbenhil
46	Great Berrystead (1883)	Berystead Close (1555)
63	Hillcraft	
67	Berry dale (1883)	Berry dale Close (1591)
86	Dale stone pits	Standelvis
92	Milkwell meadow	
100	Townsend	Croftshire
108	Madge furlong	

Other furlong names not yet satisfactorily located are; (1686) frangham, crossirons, hogpitts, longacre hedgedike, lawnsell, setcraft, waterholes, whiterood, dry pitts, dale dean hedge corner, ambles fen; (1316) Greneakerslade, pluntrefurlong, howes, smalethorneg, dedemor, holseherd, 1448 hamondsplott in le dale, west crosse, strongland, and steyland. 1384 (FH 418) hyldewell, lakesbek.

N.W. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE - A.E. Brown for
Leicester University Adult Education
Department.

Continuing work by extra mural groups (Northants. Archaeol. 9 (1974) 115) has resulted in 1:1250 surveys of village earthworks at Welford, Clipston, Hothorpe, Sulby, Naseby and Little Oxendon. Documentary work proceeds, including work on Kelmarsh and Maidwell court rolls and manorial accounts.

SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP
C.A. Graham Kerr.

Survey of Medieval Decorated Tiles Since 1973 over forty members of SOAG, working in small groups, have taken part in this survey,

organised by the British Museum through local museums, visiting 97 sites, mainly churches, in South Oxfordshire. Medieval decorated tiles were found and recorded in 29 cases: most of the other churches have undergone Victorian restoration when earlier tiles were often thrown out.

Details of size, thickness, colour, glaze, design and location were recorded on forms provided by the Oxford Museum Service, tracings were taken of each different design and the sites plotted on 2½" OS sheets.

No fewer than 145 different designs were noted, many unique in our survey but others recurring, exactly or almost so, on different sites. This suggests different makers using basic designs and, while some copies were clumsily and carelessly made, the original designs were executed by good artists able to simplify complicated subjects. Many of the tiles are similar to those from Penn, the nearest known kiln. The commonest designs include stylised fleur-de-lis, ecclesiastical signs and trefoils, the pattern made up over a square of four tiles. Others are geometric; there are birds and animals, especially lions, and simply drawn figures and heads, for instance an unidentified king at Chinnor. Decorated tiles seldom occur in secular buildings, and these usually have ecclesiastical associations.

In Nuffield Church the whole sanctuary is tiled, with the greatest variety of design found. A complicated plan had to be made hastily as one corner was collapsing into the vault below and the whole floor had to be repaired. At Checkendon there are only a few tiles but one design had M and R interwoven, which may derive from Mary Reade, a local lady of consequence.

At Great Haseley a considerable number of tiles survive on two walls. One matches exactly a design at Goring, where a few from the long demolished nunnery have been fixed haphazardly on the vestry wall.

The only significant secular example was found at the unoccupied Culham Manor, on the floor of a magnificent room. This manor once belonged to Abingdon Abbey.

These tiles, from 4½ to 6 square, (most commonly brown with yellowy designs and 'toughly glazed') are rough textured by contrast with the smooth, shiny Victorian and later tiles and are often so worn as to go unnoticed. Opportunity was taken when necessary to draw

the attention of incumbents to the importance of conservation. Every site visited yielded something of interest, even if there were no tiles, and much else was noted: we even recruited new members.

COUNTIES AND UNITS

THE BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMITTEE - *Grenville Astill for the Berkshire Archaeological Unit.*

1975 has seen the initiation of a coherent policy towards rescue archaeology in the county. The Committee has been reconstituted as a charity and a Management Committee is now responsible for discussing and formulating county policies. Working within the general programme of survey and selective excavation, the Unit has concentrated on producing survey/policy documents for critical areas and establishing a structure for archaeological consultations in the planning processes.

Tim Gates has produced, with the help and advice of the OAU, a survey of the Middle Thames gravels on the lines of the Upper Thames report, which should ease the implementation of a coherent policy for the Thames valley. A survey of the urban areas is also in preparation.

There is however a desperate need for more information about other areas of the county and to help meet this need the Unit has assumed the responsibility for setting up and servicing a county Sites and Monuments Record. Local societies are also encouraged to start parish studies, and a newly formed group are looking at the forested areas around Bracknell to provide a basis for a forestry survey.

More rescue-oriented reconnaissance has also been initiated, (with the help of the Field Research Group of the BAS and the Newbury Group), for the proposed gas pipeline going through the west of the county in 1976 and for the Wokingham Ring Road.

Relations with the planning authorities are encouraging and are proving mutually beneficial. Archaeological 'inputs' are being provided for the three county Structure Plans and Area 8 Plan and also for Local Plans, starting with the important Old Windsor Area. The processing of planning applications has been put on a more efficient basis by supply-

ing the County and District Councils with archaeological constraint maps which should give us an early warning system. Archaeological conditions on planning consents have been made in the Reading and Maidenhead Districts which will hopefully be useful precedents for the other Districts. This early warning system is also being extended to cover the large estates in the county which will give some information about the types of destruction not dealt with by the planning authorities.

Although the Unit has concentrated on survey work during the past year, selective excavations have also been carried out. Excavations have taken place on prehistoric sites in advance of gravel extraction and building at Knights Farm, Burghfield; Cannon Hill, Maidenhead (in conjunction with the Maidenhead Society) and at Meales Farm Sulhamstead. Two medieval sites were also excavated one near Reading Abbey the other at Wokingham. Watching briefs were also carried out on large housing developments near Reading at Calcot, Purley and Theale; the floor of St. Michael's Church Tilehurst was also examined, and three pipelines were observed at Padworth, Spencers Wood and Nine Mile Ride, again with the help of Reading University students and local societies.

This type of work emphasises the advantages that can be gained from the local groups and the Unit working together; considerable progress has been made in the east of the county where the local groups and the Unit have combined to introduce a coherent approach to the threats in their areas. One of the Unit's main aims in 1976 will be to extend such arrangements to the other parts of the county.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY MUSEUM ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP - M.E. Farley for Buckinghamshire County Museum.

The Group has continued to meet weekly throughout the year, both during the day and evening. Help has been given on a number of excavations, including those at Bierton, Brill and Fleet Marston, and members continue giving considerable assistance in processing the resultant material.

Parish study has continued to form an important part of the workload. This year Whitchurch, Hardwick, Oving and Pitchcott were selected for attention and after preliminary research several fieldwalking ses-

sions were held. The project resulted in ridge and furrow maps for all parishes, field names for most of the area and the discovery of a number of sites, including seven new R.B. sites, more than doubling the known total. The discovery of a Palaeolithic handaxe at Hardwick, deep in the Vale of Aylesbury, upsets pre-existing ideas about the distribution of Palaeolithic sites in the county.

A number of members have made significant discoveries on their own, including windmill mounds, house platforms, a post-medieval kiln site, and further R.B. material. Results of this and other work will be published in the Records of Bucks, 1975.

Individual research projects continue, including one on monastic sites in the county, another on the Viatores 'roads', and a recently inaugurated survey of windmill sites. A new slant was given to the Group's work when a day was spent recording gravestones in Foscott Churchyard before their removal, and planning their location and the surrounding Deserted Medieval Village.

The Buckinghamshire Archaeological Committee was established as an advisory committee of the Buckinghamshire County Council Museums and Libraries Committee. The aim of this committee is to establish an effective archaeological Service in the county. The first priority is to develop the Sites and Monuments Record based on the County Museum at Aylesbury. It is hoped to work towards the establishment of a County Unit.

NORTHAMPTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT - John Williams, Archaeological Officer.

During 1975 considerable effort was devoted towards publishing the medieval excavations carried out in recent years within the town of Northampton as well as some Roman sites outside and several reports should appear in 1976. The major excavations undertaken in 1975 were:

Briar Hill The plough soil was first stripped by machine from an area 90m x 120m, comprising about a quarter of the whole site on the NE side. This was done to a high degree of accuracy, so that most, if not all, of the undisturbed archaeology of the site was preserved. The local geology, however, is such that manmade disturbance is often not easily distinguishable and it was quickly realised that careful trowelling of the subsoil surface

was essential, followed by the drawing of detailed plans. The most effective method of recording was found eventually to be a dual system using photomosaic techniques and outline plans, backed up by a plot of the positions of all finds from the subsoil surface.

An area of 90m x 12m, including parts of the inner and outer ditches of the causewayed camp and of the interior of the enclosure was selected for investigation first, and 1800sq m had been excavated. The inner and outer ditches of the enclosure were located, and demonstrated to be neolithic and consistent in general character with the ditches of other known causewayed camps. The trial excavation in 1973 showed that there had been occupation of the site by I.A. peoples, so that the discovery of pits containing I.A. pottery in the fill was not surprising. More unexpected was the discovery of Saxon Grubenhäuser, indicating the existence of a possible Saxon settlement on the site.

This season's work has demonstrated the accuracy of the magnetometer survey done in 1973 by staff of the AM Laboratory in tracing the outline of the ditches and major features. This has been and will be of great help in the preliminary work.

Pre-Neolithic No features earlier than those of the neolithic period were identified, but a number of microlithic flints were found.

Neolithic Neolithic flints, including leaf-shaped arrowheads, knives, scrapers, saws, and cores and other flint working debris, were found scattered over the whole site, both in the plough soil and on the surface of the subsoil, but no features which can be shown to be neolithic have been found within the small area of the interior of the enclosure which has been excavated so far. The quantity of finds is not sufficient to suggest continuous occupation of the site.

The Inner Ditch Slightly over 30m of the inner ditch was excavated and was found to consist of a series of short segments varying between 3m - 10m in length, and 1.5m - 2m in depth, steep-sided and flat-bottomed and separated by 'causeways' often no more than 0.50m wide.

Opposing quadrants of each ditch segment were excavated so as to provide complete axial sections as well as cross-sections, a method which was justified when the axial sections yielded information which might otherwise have been lost to the record. The longest of the segments proved to have been lengthened

at some time following its original excavation, and the sections indicated that it had also been cleaned out and perhaps partially recut at least once.

The lower and middle fills have produced pottery of a type current in the early to middle neolithic period, and the top fills pottery of late neolithic type and Beaker sherds datable to around 2000 BC - 1800 BC. Other finds from the inner ditch segments include a group of three discoidal scrapers found together, and a chip from a polished stone axe, possibly a product of the Great Langdale axe factory in the Lake District.

The Outer Ditch A similar length of the outer ditch was excavated, consisting of a single long segment, rather narrower than those of the inner ditch, but similarly steep-sided and flat-bottomed. This segment seems to have silted up almost entirely when a series of shorter segments were cut into the fill.

Finds from the outer ditch came almost entirely from the upper fill, and consist of Beaker pottery and flints, including a plano-convex knife of late neolithic type.

On analogy with other known causeway camp sites it is likely that the enclosure on Briar Hill had banks as well as ditches, but if so, all trace of them has been removed by the plough. The former existence of banks might be inferred from the character of the ditch infill, since a proportion of the material from a bank might be expected to collapse or be washed into the ditch alongside, but the evidence so far is not conclusive.

Saxon A high proportion of the total quantity of pot sherds on the site have been identified as of Saxon type. 4 Grubenhäuser were discovered, each consisting of a rectangular dug-out approximately 30cm deep in the subsoil, and measuring around 2m x 4m, which would have formed the base of a hut. In one of these there was a well defined, deep post socket at either end, to take the uprights which supported the roof ridge. In the others, post holes have been identified but they are not so well defined. One Grubenhaus produced abundant evidence of domestic activity in the form of sherds of pottery, a bronze wire bracelet, two iron knives, two lead weights, probably for use on an upright loom, part of a rotary quern and quantities of animal bone - chiefly pig and cow. The other three produced few finds by comparison, chiefly pottery and, in one instance, a glass bead, but what there is is consistent with a Saxon date.

Medieval and Post-Medieval Superimposed on the earlier features are a series of shallow linear furrows about 1m wide and 7m - 8m apart and running N/S. These contain medieval and post-medieval pottery, and are the traces of the medieval ridge and furrow system.

Conclusion The importance of the Briar Hill site, already considerable, since the total number of causeway camps known is not great and much remains to be learnt about them, is increased by the demonstration that it is a multi-period site, and that its excavation could add a very great deal to our knowledge of early settlement in this part of the Nene Valley.

Duston Romano-British Settlement Duston lies c. 2 miles W of Northampton on the N slope of the Nene valley. During ironstone quarrying in the C19th finds of the C1st - 4th AD were found over an area of some 8 acres but no systematic records were kept. It had been assumed that the quarrying had completely destroyed the site but topsoil stripping in advance of extensions to Northampton refuse tip uncovered evidence of R.B. settlement extending c. 260m NS x 80m EW.

Two areas were excavated: area I (90 x 10m) was sited on the valley slope with area II (60 x 30m) to the S.

Area I: Several neolithic gullies formed no obvious pattern. A series of shallow ditches of mid to late C1st AD were succeeded by a timber building of uncertain plan and later (C3rd - 4th) by a stone building c. 12 x 6m containing a drying oven and surrounded by a yard. Two burials in prone position with skull between the legs were thought to be late R.B.

Area II: A substantial metalled road originated in the C1st AD and continued in use through the Roman period. A parallel ditch to the S, twice recut was of mid C1st date. Traces of a timber building and a later stone building were also found.

Evidence for several other stone buildings was found outside the excavated area and a few burials were located to the S of the site.

In spite of the considerable late disturbance, there would appear to be evidence for occupation throughout the Roman period. It is noticeable that a large number of features of all dates respect the line of the

road in area II, perhaps implying some form of settlement organisation.

Northampton Castle (Chalk Lane) Excavations commenced in July and August 1975 on an area 40m x 20m on the site of the bailey bank of Northampton Castle. The bank itself had been largely destroyed in the C19th and the object was to recover evidence of pre-castle Saxon occupation. Up to c. 0.50m of bank survived, but in places its was totally removed by later disturbance. The inner lip of the castle ditch was also located.

Beneath the bailey bank were pits and surfaces associated with late Saxon pottery and two coins and in some areas evidence for earlier, probably Middle-Saxon, occupation was beginning to emerge. Further work on the pre-Conquest levels will take place in 1976.

Watching briefs were kept on sites both inside the town and in the surrounding countryside. Detailed records will be deposited in Northampton Museum. As in previous years the work of the Unit was aided by a generous grant from the Department of the Environment to whom we are very grateful.

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL DEPARTMENT OF
MUSEUM SERVICES - James Bond

FIELD SECTION

In many respects 1975 has been a difficult year for the Field Section. The departure of Don Benson in July to take up the Directorship of the Dyfed Archaeological Trust after giving some ten years' service to the Department left a gap which would, under any circumstances, have been difficult to fill adequately. In the event the financial stringencies within local government have enforced the temporary 'freezing' of the post and it will not be possible to appoint a new Keeper until early in 1976.

Field Survey The difficulties outlined above have thwarted the Department from developing the more systematic field survey programme which it had hoped to achieve. Ad hoc responses to requests from various sources for individual site inspections have continued to dominate the Section's field work. Such visits are an essential part of the Section's responsibility, and are often of great value in contributing significant new information to the Sites & Monuments Record; but the level of information gained from inspections of random

SHENINGTON, OXON.
Fishponds S.E. of Mill Farm
SKETCH PLAN

PRN. 5846

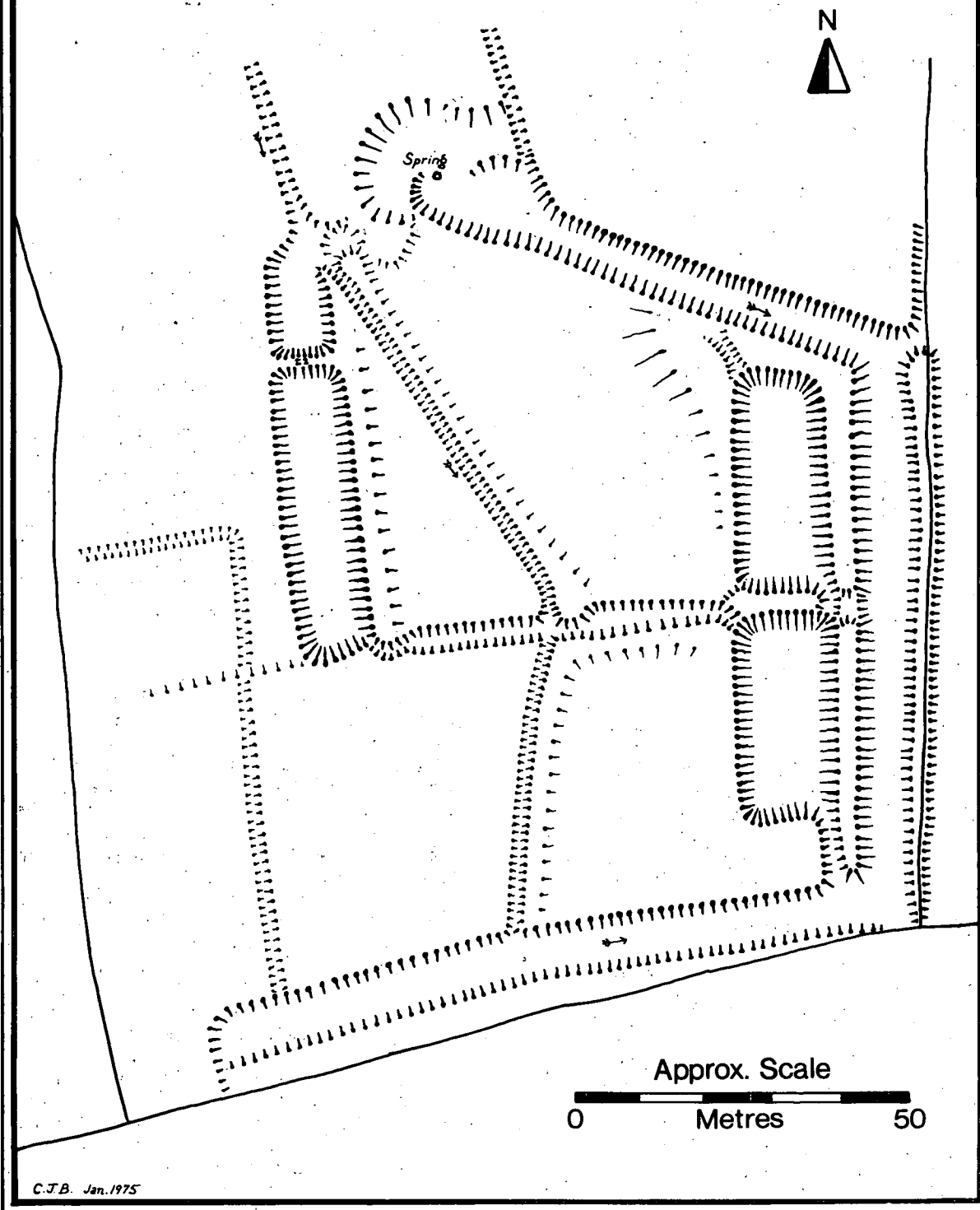


Fig. 6

and unrelated sites is inevitably lower than that derived from planned intensive field work, and the overwhelming proportion of time taken up at present by the former must be regarded as fundamentally unsatisfactory. In the same way that the limited funds available for rescue excavation have led to the tendency to concentrate resources on a smaller number of excavations which are research-orientated within the rescue context, rather than attempting to respond to each individual threat, so we need to reappraise the nature of our field survey commitments.

Intensive survey work has been restricted to two main areas. The Tackley study group begun by Don Benson has continued its analysis of the topography of that parish, while the landscape history of the former parish of Cogges is being studied in association with the Manor Farm museum project. In both cases work is still going on, so neither is reported in detail here.

(i) Earthworks Earthworks have been examined on various sites during the year. A complex of medieval fishponds at Shenington (PRN 5846) discovered by Mrs. N. Clifton was recorded by sketch survey (Fig. 6). The ponds appear to have gone out of use before 1732, when an Oriel College estate map shows only the field-name Pool Close. The earthworks of the C12th Ardley Castle (PRN 2526) were examined and found to consist of a dry ditch, averaging 7m. wide x 2.3m deep, enclosing a roughly oval area, the overall dimensions of which were c. 62m E-W x 80m N-S. Its interior is raised appreciably above the exterior ground level, and its perimeter was reinforced by a low rampart, of which discontinuous stretches remain. There is a causeway entrance, probably original, on the NE corner. The interior has been considerably disturbed by ancient surface quarrying and is densely overgrown by trees and scrub, but it is possible that one or two medieval building platforms survive. An attempt was made to assess the extent of the deserted village of Cadwell (PRN 864). No clear earthworks remain here, and although most of the land is under the plough, conditions for collecting pottery were not good at the time of the investigation. The only medieval finds were from the field immediately E of Cadwell Farm, and included a C12th cooking-pot rim and C14th glazed jug handle. The evidence for the moat around the farm shown on the O.S. is not convincing. The best remaining portion of the deserted village of Wilcote (PRN 1103) was threatened by ploughing in September, and the site was recorded with members of the

Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit. A sketch survey is included here (Fig. 7).

(ii) Buildings In the course of preparing an exhibition to mark European Architectural Heritage Year, the Department of Museum Services commissioned the photography of over 150 buildings. Measured ground plans were made of Sparks Farm, E Hendred (PRN 9258); No. 2, The Green, Lyford (PRN 9805); estate cottages at Charney Bassett (Nos. 30-31 New Road - PRN 9804); and Style Cottage, Upper Common, Uffington (PRN 9814).

Amongst the other buildings examined and recorded have been the following; a box-framed granary on staddles at Coppice Leaze Farm, W Challow (PRN 9447), which retained traces of a rendering scoured to simulate ashlar; and the remains of the tannery in Eynsham (PRN 9787) from which Tanners Lane is named, the subject of a demolition application in July (Fig. 8). The cruck-framed Barley Mow at Clifton Hampden (PRN 9354) was examined and surveyed after the fire there on July 3rd, by Maddy Clapcott of Dorchester. At Crown Farm, Ascott-under-Wychwood (PRN 9445) a small wall-painting was recorded on the upper floor of the mid-C16th wing: it consisted of a six-line rhyming inscription with the name Math. Hill in C17th script. Repair work on the roof of N Leigh church (PRN 4042) in October resulted in the discovery of a large semicircular carved screen, facing E, immediately behind the chancel arch. Botany Bay, Playhatch, Eye and Dunsden (PRN 9786), a long single-storeyed box-framed range with timbers of slight scantling, whitened brick infill and thatched roof, was examined prior to the improvement of the A.4155. A small subterranean brick structure was discovered during alterations at Chandlings Farm, Kennington (PRN 9449): 1.5m deep, it was entered from the top by a circular aperture 0.6m in diameter. Its interior was domed, broadening to a diameter of 1.5m at the bottom. Its floor was slightly dished. Its function is not at present understood; possibly it is a small icehouse of somewhat unusual form.

During the year under review the Nettlebed Brick Kiln (PRN 414), now owned by the County Council, was placed in the care of the Department and an interpretative panel was provided on site to enable visitors to understand the functioning of the kiln.

Sites & Monuments Record Routine additions to the Record have continued, and the index now contains details of some 10,500 sites. The breaking of the '10,000 barrier' has neces-

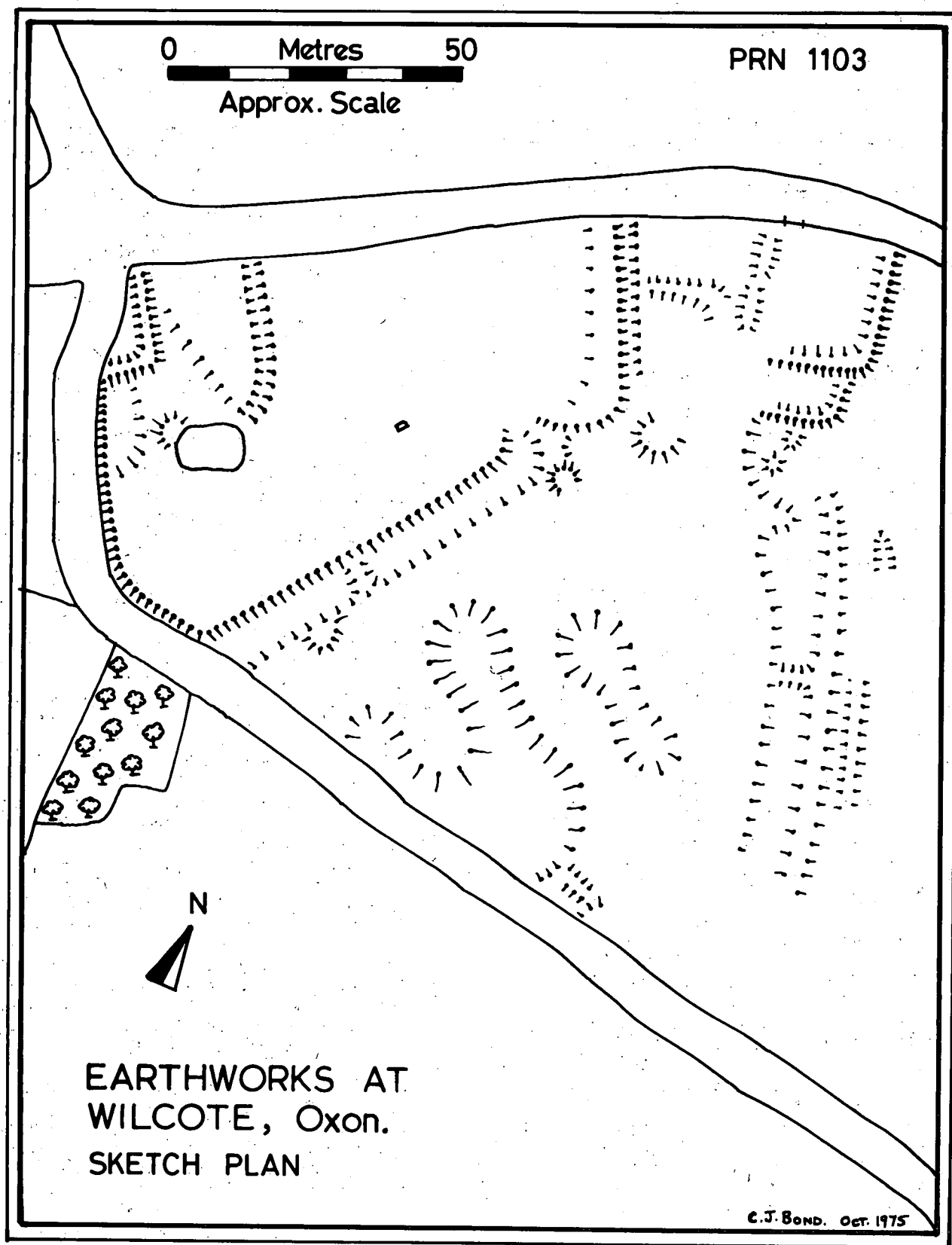
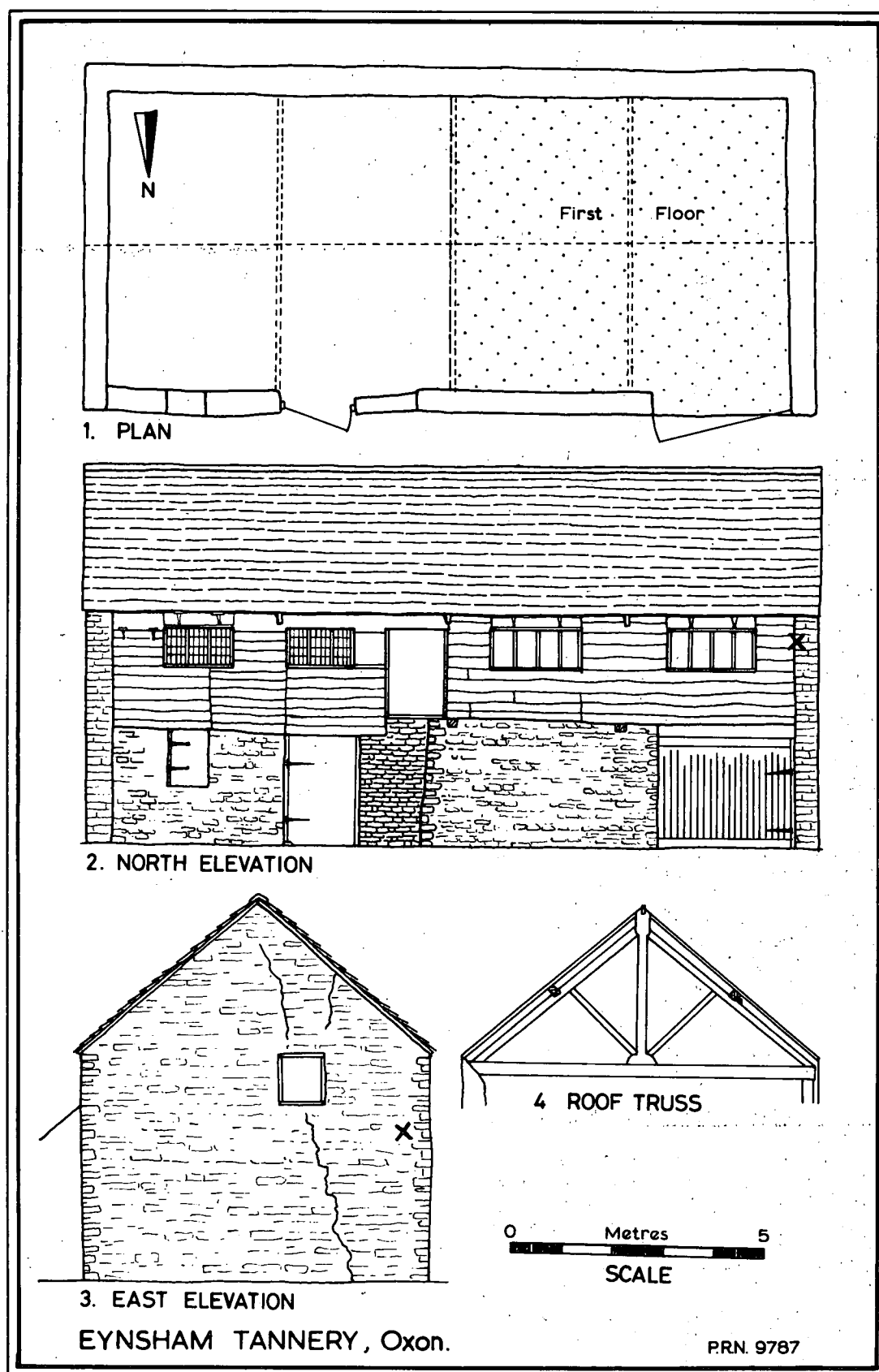


Fig. 7



sitated some internal reorganisation, including the complete doubling-up of the punched feature card cross-index system.

A valuable supplement to the Record has been the deposition with the Museum of the 4,000' vertical air photograph cover of the whole of the old Oxfordshire N of Wallingford taken for Oxfordshire County Council by Fairey Air Survey during May-August 1961. This has yet to be examined systematically, but already new sites have been coming to light. A further major addition has been the Ordnance Survey records for the Vale of the White Horse, formerly N Berkshire, which are being integrated into the Record.

Enquiries addressed to the Record currently average c.30-40 per week. The overhauling of difficult areas and the revision of some of the earlier sections, compiled originally when the techniques were less precise than those now in use, continues.

Planning Aspects In consultation with the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit, the Department continues to be involved in various aspects of planning liaison. Information on the historic content of the environment has been supplied to both County and District Planning Departments in connection with local plans, conservation areas, mineral extraction and road schemes. The compiling of development control maps presenting the archaeological and historic landscape constraints for District planning authorities is now substantially complete, and it is hoped to bring them fully into use very shortly.

Museum Study Group The Museum Study Group has continued to meet on Tuesday evenings, and it is hoped to publish Mr. Keith Lawrence's surveys of milestones, tollhouses and turnpike roads in the form of Information Sheets early in 1976. Similar publications resulting from the work of other members of the Group should follow in due course.

Oxfordshire Field-Names Survey The Oxfordshire Federation of Women's Institutes have continued to collect information on field-names in Oxfordshire from both local enquiry and documentary sources. Work has been completed during the year in Cassington, N Aston, Duns Tew, Over Worton, Sandford St. Martin and Westcot Barton, and is well advanced in several other parishes. The completed surveys are being incorporated into the County Sites & Monuments Record by means of transparent overlays to the Record Maps.

Branch Museums The Museum of Oxford, sited in the old City Library in St. Aldate's will be opening to the public in December 1975. Its permanent display will tell the story of the City of Oxford from earliest times to the present day, while frequent temporary exhibitions, lectures and demonstrations are also projected.

The Department of Museum Services also now manages and assists in the running of the Museums at Banbury, Wantage and Abingdon, in partnership with Cherwell District Council, Wantage Town Council and Abingdon Town Council.

MILTON KEYNES DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

ANNUAL REPORT ON ARCHAEOLOGY 1975

Introduction

Archaeology in Milton Keynes is divided between a Prehistoric/R.B. section directed by H.S. Green, and a Post-R. section directed by D.C. Mynard; but planning, conservation and administration are handled jointly. Sites discussed below are mapped in Fig. 9.

Prehistoric/R.B. Section

No prehistoric sites were excavated in 1975. Large-scale excavation took place on two R. buildings at Stantonbury but only relatively small-scale excavations took place at the Bradwell R. villa. The staff and pupils of the Bridgwater school gave considerable assistance with the former project, while a party of students from the University of Khartoum contributed greatly to the success of the whole season.

Excavations were undertaken on a Belgic/R.B. settlement near Woughton-on-the-Green; exploratory excavation took place at three R.B. sites and at a cropmark site near Fenny Stratford.

Publications

Publications which have appeared during 1975 comprise:

1. Green, H.S. 'Burial, Territory and Population in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, and the Great Ouse Valley', Archaeological Journal 131 (1974), 75-139.
2. Green, H.S. Guide to the Exhibition of Prehistoric Archaeology in Milton Keynes at Buckinghamshire County Museum 1975.
3. Green, M.J. "The Bradwell Roman Villa: First Interim Report", Occasional Papers in Archaeology No.1 (1975), Milton Keynes Development Corporation.

POLICY

The large number of archaeological sites in Milton Keynes, combined with the rapidity of development of the City, renders essential a clear but flexible excavation and research strategy.

Prehistoric

The Ouzel terrace gravels in the area of Hartigan's gravel pit are to be regarded as a key area. Relatively small-scale excavations have already yielded important B.A., I.A. and Saxon sites. An enclosure complex is to be excavated in 1976 as a prelude to large-scale excavation of other cropmark sites.

Romano-British

One regional group of sites only is to be fully excavated, at the Bradwell Villa, Wymbush, Stantonbury and Wood Corner sites.

Other Sites

Trial excavations will take place at new sites to determine whether their discovery might prompt a review of the above excavation policy.

Interim Reports on Excavations

BRADWELL ROMAN VILLA (MK105)

Plans for large-scale excavations were postponed when the Anglian Water Authority rerouted a sewer which would have destroyed a large area of the site.

Excavation discovered a stonewalled enclosure between the main building and the Loughton Brook. Two trenches were located in line with the main building 50m S.W. of the 1974 excavation. It was established that the main building must terminate short of this; the two principal features discovered (Figs.10,11,12) were a circular house drainage gully (F.202) and a segment of ditch (F.200). Finds suggest a late C1st - C2nd A.D. date apparently earlier than the main villa. Early activity at the site is attested by the unstratified find of a coin of Tasciovanus.

STANTONBURY (MK301)

Stripping before construction work on the Educational Campus revealed two buildings. Building 1 (Fig.10). Only the pitched foundation course of this structure survived. This had suffered damage from the contractor's box scraping and from the shallow furrows of a ridge and furrow system.

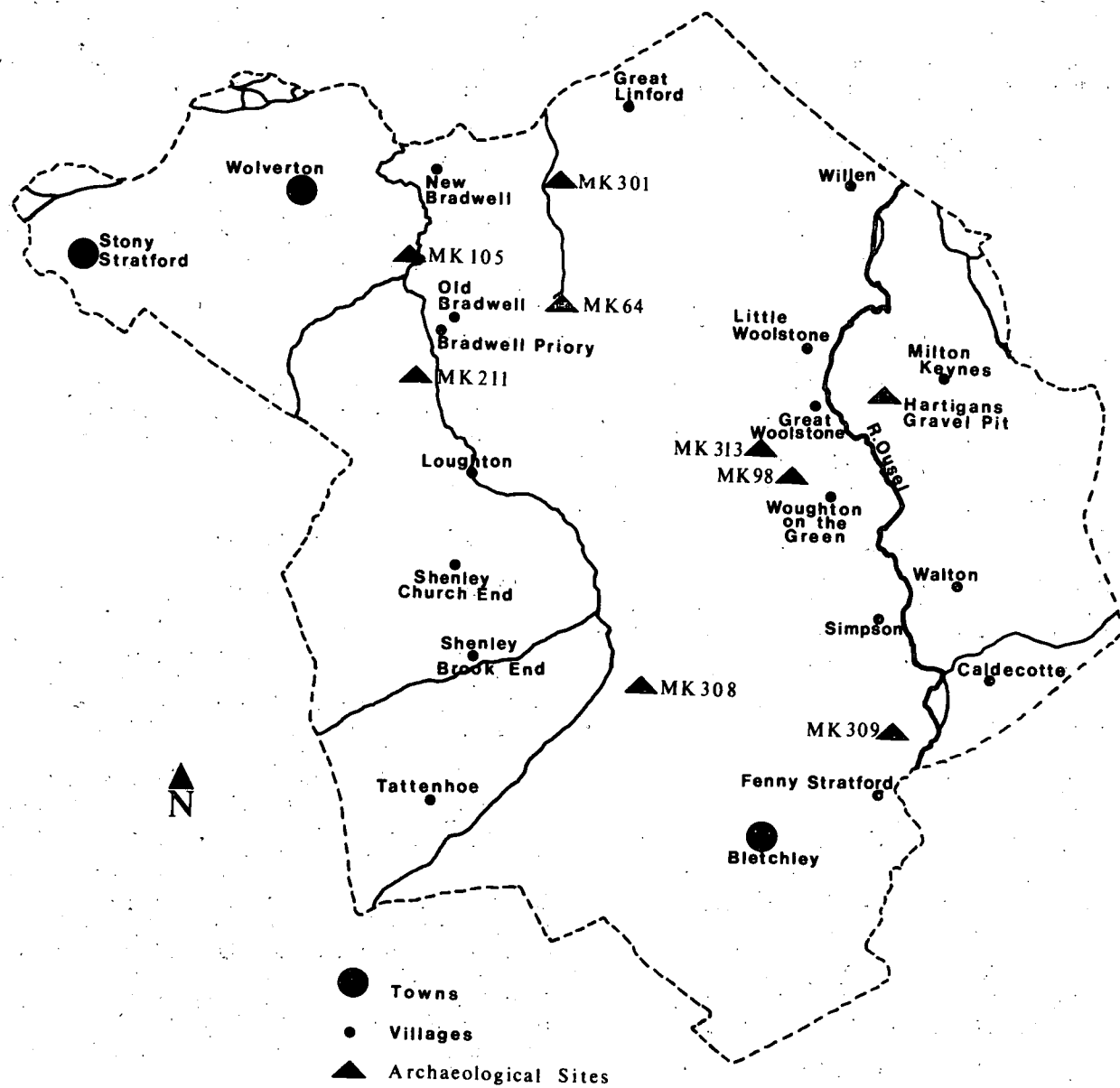


Fig. 9

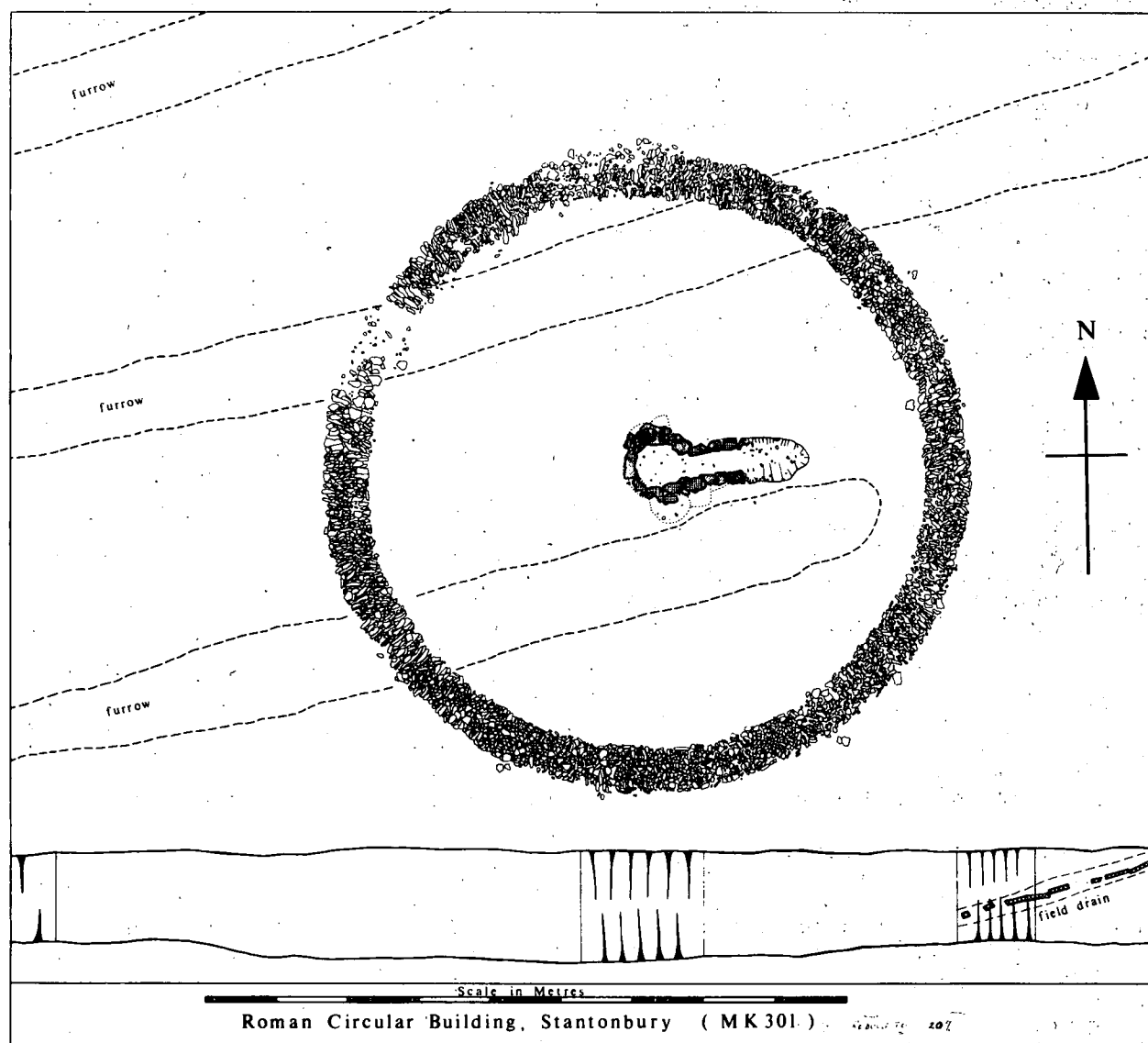


Fig. 10

Within the house, and probably contemporary with it, was an oven. The discovery of a small iron bar in its fill points to a possible industrial use as a smithing hearth. Pottery in the fill of the hearth suggests a C3rd - A.D. date.

Some evidence of the history of this circular house was retrieved from the adjacent ditch since a scatter of stone slabs similar to the house's foundation course was present only in that section of the ditch closest to the house. Pottery from the ditch is consistently R.B. and of the C3rd or later. This building is regarded, therefore, as an industrial structure rather than a dwelling. Building 2. This was rectilinear with hypocaust heating system and opus signinum floors. Excavation is incomplete and finds all derive from collapse or demolition deposits consistent with a C3rd - C4th date. Yards adjacent to the building are defined by stone walls.

This structure was interpreted as a well-built farmhouse or minor villa. Its relationship to the circular house is not certain nor is it clear whether they were successive structures or whether the two formed part of the same socio-economic unit.

WYMBUSH (MK211)

Two trenches were cut by machine to determine the extent and nature of this site and the threat of present ploughing.

A small stone-founded building of uncertain dimensions, almost totally ploughed out, was discovered. The comparative rarity of building stone on the site suggests that the house was built largely of timber. Abundant fragments of tegula and imbrex indicate the method of roofing. Flue tiles and flooring evidence are absent. The site was probably a small native farmhouse or barn of the C3rd - C4th A.D.

WOOD CORNER (MK64)

Two trenches precisely located this site, from which surface finds of C2nd - C4th A.D. date were made. The building was probably of timber with a tiled roof, without evidence of heating system or flooring.

FENNY STRATFORD (MK309)

Trenches dug to determine the nature of two parallel ditches, known from aerial photography, showed one to be a modern hedge ditch and the other to be illusory. Further trenches located a ditch producing animal bones and R.B. pottery.

BLETCHLEY (H8) (MK308)

A pottery scatter investigated by trial trenching produced a ditch containing animal bones and pottery. Mortarium sherds on the ditch floor suggest C2nd - C3rd A.D. date.

LOUGHTON VALLEY TRUNK FOUL SEWER

The digging of the Loughton Valley sewer trench is being carefully monitored and has produced three sites to date. MK307: R. pits or ditches, only 300m S.E. across the Loughton Brook from the Bradwell Villa. MK311: a layer of dark soil and charcoal stratified in post-Glacial alluvium. A radiocarbon date from it will be of relevance to the study of the post-Glacial history of the Loughton Valley. MK312: Middle I.A. pits or ditches, stratified on alluvium. Nearer to the junction of the Loughton Brook with the Great Ouse, the Institute of Geological Sciences has obtained radiocarbon dates of 1863±45 B.C. (SRR-135) and 1602±40 B.C. (SRR-136) from at and near the base of the alluvium respectively.

WOUGHTON (MK313)

Trial excavations are taking place at a R.B. site discovered by the Milton Keynes and District Archaeological Society N. of the Woughton site (MK98).

WOUGHTON (MK98)

Rescue excavations and observation of construction work by R.W. Griffiths at the intersection of grid roads V7 and H7 during 1973 revealed a complex multi-period C1st - C4th A.D. site on the Boulder Clay plateau overlooking the Ouzel valley. Features found included late I.A. (Belgic) hut circles, R.B. timber-framed buildings and a metalled roadway.

Small-scale excavations by J. Barnbrook, from December 1974 to July 1975 along the N. embankment of the roundabout, produced a complex series of ditches and gullies of C1st A.D.

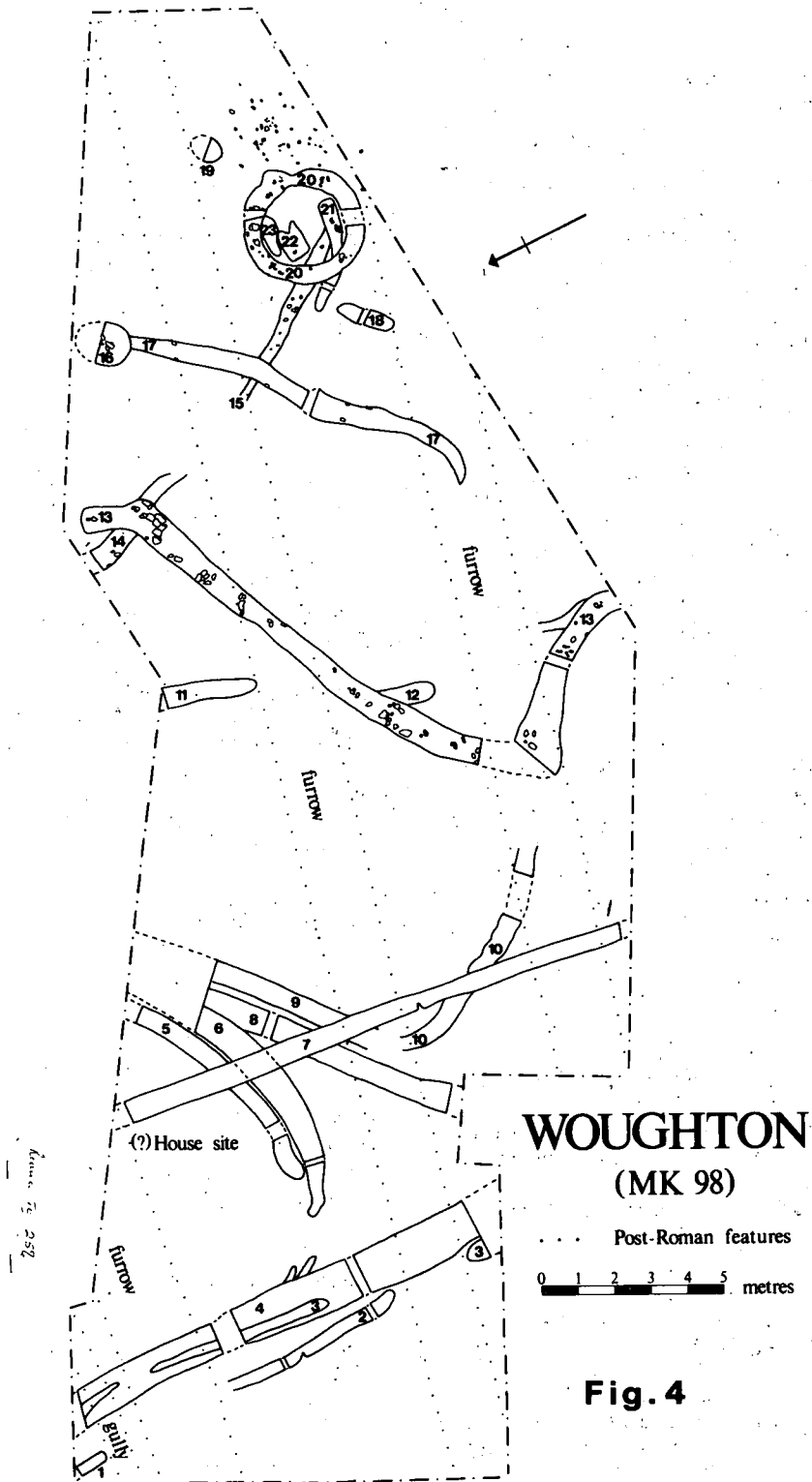


Fig. 11

date (see Fig. 11). No evidence was found for continuation of the R.B. features discovered elsewhere in the area.

Two circular features were found, a probable house site of c.8m dias. bounded by concentric gullies 5 and 6, with S.W. entrance, and a much smaller (? work) area of c.2m. dia. within the continuous gully 20. The inner gully (5), very shallow, may have been a foundation trench for the house walls, while the outer, deeper gully (6) may have provided drainage. Alternatively, these concentric gullies (5 and 6) may suggest a renewed structure. Features 1 and 2 may have held posts of a small palisade around the house site. Features 3, 4 and 7 post-date the house.

Although continuous, gully 20 varied considerably in depth, being very shallow at the E., where there was a concentration of small stone, and deeper along the N. and N.W. where the fill was very dark and rich in pottery and bone. Small concentrations of larger stones may have been packing around posts.

Features 10, 13 and 17 may have been palisade trenches. 10 and 17 were quite shallow and may have contained smaller posts, while 13 was deeper with concentrations of large stones, probably packing around larger posts. The N. and S.E. ends of 10 and the W. end of 17 were obscured by medieval plough furrows.

POST ROMAN SECTION

The large-scale excavations at Gt. Linford were continued from April to October. A survey of the village earthworks was completed and documentary research into the history of the village has progressed to the stage where we can identify the owners of certain of the post-medieval houses excavated.

Fieldwork undertaken jointly with the Pre-historic and R. section, has resulted in the discovery of several new sites.

The programme of surveying all earthwork sites and, where possible, carrying out limited rescue excavations in order to date them, has continued.

The important manor site at Bradwell, called Bradwell Bury, was the subject of rescue excavation during the winter months January to March and produced evidence of C11th - C13th

occupation. Several other sites reported below were the subject of small rescue digs.

At Bradwell Abbey an area 5 x 5m was excavated in order to complete the plan of the W. end of the Priory church. This was a non-rescue venture involving members of Bradwell Abbey Field Centre and the Bletchley Historical and Archaeological Society.

Talks on the work have been given by D.C. Mynard to 24 local organisations. Members of the team, as members of the Field Centre Trust, were instrumental in arranging the opening of the Field Centre and Priory site to the public on Sunday afternoons. In August an exhibition of the results of the Gt. Linford excavation was arranged there in association with the centenary of the village school. Later, in September, we also co-operated with the school in arranging an illustrated evening lecture on the archaeology and history of the parish.

Groups of children, notably from the Ousedale School, Newport Pagnell, Radcliffe School, Wolverton and the Stantonbury Campus have worked on the excavation at Gt. Linford, while exhibitions have been held at the Stantonbury Campus and the Lord Grey School, Bletchley.

GREAT LINFORD

Excavation continued on the two areas opened last year; the first a house platform 250m S. of the village green, covering an area of about 300 sq.m in Great Picknuts field; the second in Hern's Close, a field S. of the green covering a total of about 4600 sq.m. In addition, a survey was carried out of the medieval and post-medieval earthworks around the village.

GREAT PICKNUTS

An area was opened immediately to the S. of the 1974 excavations to determine the extent of the medieval and post-medieval buildings already uncovered.

The remainder of the C17th stone building located in 1974 was excavated, but was so badly disturbed by stone robbing that the final plan of the building remains uncertain. Additional medieval evidence was represented by a number of isolated walls and surfaces, badly disturbed by robbing and later C17th building.

HERN'S CLOSE

Excavation of the buildings uncovered in 1974 (Nos. 4, 5 and 6) was completed and about 3400 sq.m were cleared, half by hand and half by machine, across the N. side of the field. The remainder of the field was also trenched by machine to search for any outlying buildings, of which 11 were uncovered.

EARLY FEATURES

Before excavation it was hoped that this site would produce evidence of late Saxon occupation, as Great Linford is thought to have a Saxon charter. However, evidence of occupation in this period has been slight, only a scatter of late Saxon sherds in the area of buildings 5, 6 and 14 on the surface of the natural clay subsoil. A number of post-holes and beam slots cut into natural beneath buildings 5 and 6 produced no dating evidence, and may be connected with these later stone buildings. The only definite Saxon features were two 'V' section ditches, 35cm across, aligned E.-W., to the S. of building 14. Near these, on the subsoil, was found a large sherd of a Stamford Ware spouted pitcher.

THE BUILDINGS

Building 5

The two-bay C17th building excavated last year was shown to have a third bay at its W. end, making the structure 17m x 5.5m. Built onto the N. side of this bay was a further room, measuring 3m x 3m. In the angle between this room and the main building was a stone structure 2.4m x 1.5m, tentatively identified as a staircase.

To the W. of Building 5 a further C17th building (Building 7), 8m x 5.5m, was uncovered. This appears to have been an outbuilding associated with Building 5.

Building 8

This building, which measured 10.5m x 6m, had been badly robbed, and was identified on the ground by the edges of the surrounding yard. It contained a well-built flagged hearth in its E. bay and a rough lean-to, represented by four post-holes, was built onto its E. end. The earliest pottery from this building was C14th, but from scattered sherds

in destruction levels and a rubbish tip on the S. yard occupation appears to have continued into the C17th.

Building 9

Like Building 8, this structure has been almost completely removed and was only identified by the surrounding yard edges and the internal floor of crushed fossiliferous limestone. This C17th building measured 13m x 5.5m. No internal features were noted, but a well-laid pitched stone path 1.2m wide led N.

Building 10

A substantial five-bay building, dating from the C13th, 22.5m x 5m. The W. bay, which had been cut by a (c.C18th) drainage ditch, contained a square stone hearth and the E. central bay a circular stone-lined oven, 1.2m dia., set into the floor. The E. bay was surfaced with pitched stone. A ditch running along the S. side of the building yielded large quantities of Potterspury and other C13th-C14th sherds.

Building 11

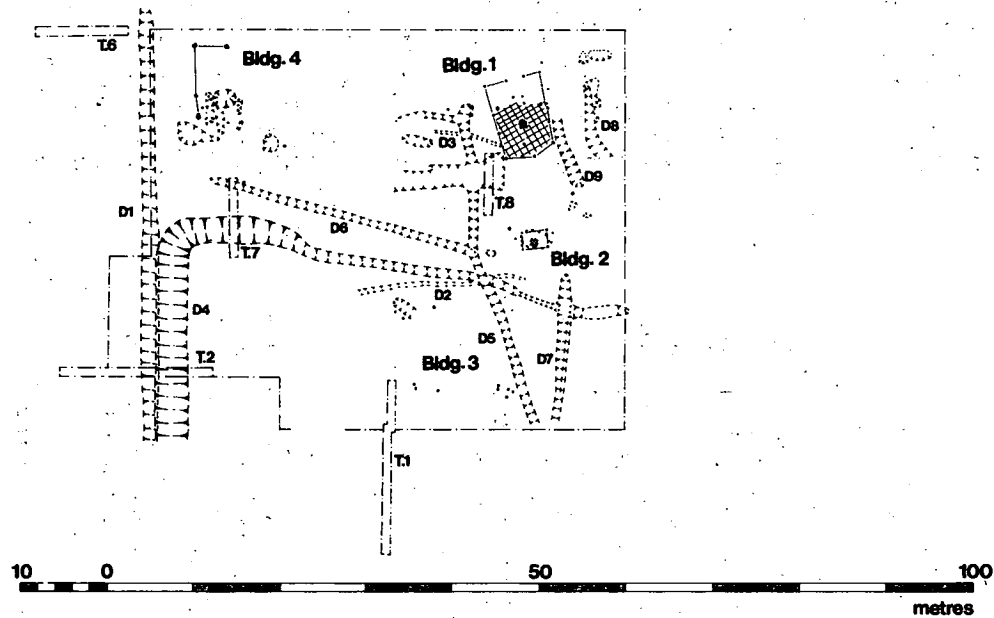
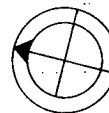
Situated 3m N. of Building 10 and separated from it by a cobbled yard, this building measured 13m x 5.5m. In its N.E. corner was a rectangular kiln (malt?) 1.2m x 1.6m, with a stokehole at its W. end and stone walls, battered outwards. A flagged path ran down the centre of the western bay, cutting a substantial stone wall which may have been the original end of the building. From the finds, this building is contemporary with Building 10, for which it was probably the kitchen/brewhouse.

Building 12

Approximately 17m x 5.5m, this building was badly damaged by robbing, and a C19th pond system. Pottery and a quantity of tile found in destruction levels points to the continued existence of this C13th building into the C17th.

Building 13

A small building, 8m x 6m, to the N. of Building 8, mud sealed by a post-medieval surface in the yard of Building 8. Inside the

BRADWELL BURY '74/5**PHASE I****Fig. 12**

building at its E. end was a stone lined kiln, similar to that in Building 11. Adjacent to this, built into the N.E. corner was a semi-circular oven base. A stone-lined drain, aligned N.-S., crossed the clay floor inside the building. Building 13 appears to have been C13th serving as a kitchen/Brewhouse for Building 8.

Building 14

Aligned N.-S., 2.5m west of Building 13, this building was revealed during machine stripping. It was 6.5m wide and at least 8m long, the S. wall having completely disappeared. No internal features were noted and the building appeared to have been built into the side of the slope. Finds from the interior were few, but pointed to a late C12th - early C13th date.

All the buildings detailed above appear to have been of timber construction with dwarf walls. Buildings 11, 13 and 14 have no apparent underlying platform, whilst 4, 5 and 9 are constructed on platforms of grey-brown clay laid on the natural clay subsoil. The remaining buildings are all situated on platforms cut out of the subsoil. All buildings are associated with yards, roughly surfaced with limestone cobbles, with occasional patches (repairs?) laid with Bunter pebbles. The majority of internal floors are packed clay; Buildings 5 and 10 each have one end bay surfaced with pitched stones/cobbles, and Buildings 4, 5, 6, 9 and 12 have crushed fossiliferous limestone floors. This material is also used as surfacing in the entrance (?) of Building 8.

Village Green

Machine stripping of the site uncovered a stone wall, about 80cm wide, running SW-NE across the N. side of the excavated area. This marked the former S. boundary of the Green and appears from local conversation to have remained standing until about 1920, when the S. part of the Green was taken into Hern's Close. On the S. side of the wall was a broad ditch, which appeared to have taken surface water from the ditch system around the house sites out of the field, into a pond, still extant, by Grange Farm, N.E. of the site. This system appears to have functioned until the construction of the present pond, sometime in the C19th, into which the field drainage was diverted. The finds include large

amounts of medieval and post-medieval pottery and ironwork.

BRADWELL BURY, BRADWELL

The excavation of the N. two-thirds of this moated site was carried out in two stages. Before development an area of 55m x 46m was excavated. Later, when development took place, the whole site of 110m x 80m was watched by P.S. Smith. The operation was financed by the Development Corporation.

A scatter of handmade gritty Saxon sherds suggest occupation earlier than Phase I. Definite occupation is represented by three main phases:

- I. C11-13th; timber buildings within areas defined by gullies and larger ditches.
- II. C13-15th; stone buildings within a moated enclosure; III. C16-19th; the moat is reduced in size and the northern part becomes a close which contains a barn and dovecote.

PHASE I - C11-13 (Fig 12)

This is represented by four timber buildings on crofts defined by drainage/boundary ditches c.1m wide and 1m deep. These crofts may have been enclosed by Ditch 1 which only survived on the N. side of the site.

Building 1

In the S.E. corner of the site was a rectangular timber building aligned E.-W., 6m x 9m. The average distance between post holes was 2m, the only evidence of a cill beam being on the E. side where a very clear timber slot survived. The building may have been internally divided, the W. and largest part with a hard clay floor on which was a central hearth.

Building 2

W. of Building 1 and within the same croft, a small rectangular building, 3m x 2m aligned N.-S. and containing a central hearth.

Building 3

A row of post holes running N.-S. represent the E. wall of a timber building at least 12m long, largely destroyed by the construction of the moat (Phase II).

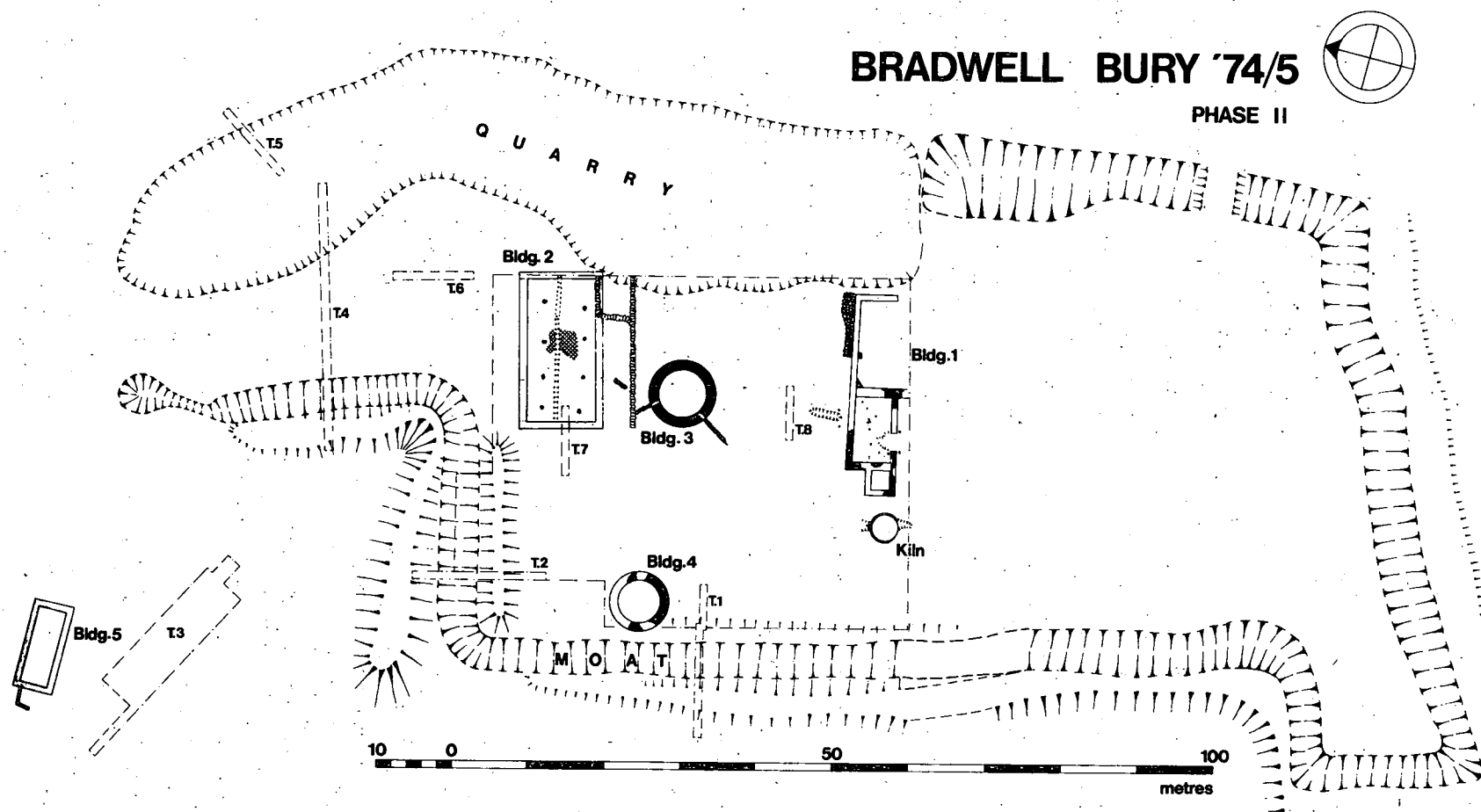


Fig. 13

Building 4

Traces of a timber building 4m x 8m, aligned E.-W. The evidence of contemporary finds, mainly St. Neots' type pottery and some Stamford Ware, confirms that these buildings and Ditches 1 to 9 are all roughly contemporary.

The small number of rubbish pits is explained by an accumulation of dark silty soil around each building, particularly Building 3, where it was up to 35cm. thick. These silts represented long accumulations of domestic refuse and contained much pottery and bone.

PHASE II - C13-15 (Fig 13)

Four stone buildings and a limekiln were erected and enclosed within a rectangular moat 5m wide, enclosing an area 115m x 50m, aligned N.-S.

The projection at the S.W. corner may be original, but is probably the product of landscape gardening; an estate map of 1792 shows the S. arm of the moat as a large pond, 27m wide.

The N. arm of the moat turns N. 40m from the N.W. corner and runs N. for 50m to a bulbous end. The N.E. corner was not located by Trench 5 nor seen when the site was levelled. If it existed it must have been destroyed by quarrying.

Building 1

This was in the S.E. corner of the excavated area, S. of the site of the Phase I, Building 1. The limestone building was 22m long, and divided by a cross wall. The external walls were 1m thick and the cross wall 1.4m. The W. room was 4.2m x 8.7m; a doorway in the S. wall, 2.5m from the S.W. corner, was 2.2m wide. Post holes inside the door suggest an internal screen. A hearth, with 2 post holes 1.5m apart, was situated to the E. of the centre. A garderobe, 1.2m x 2m, projected west from the S.W. corner. The E. room was 11.7m long and of uncertain width, the S. wall having been removed by the later reconstruction of the moat. In the W. half of this building was found a complete Penn floor tile, and part of another was found in a pit full of destruction material outside the N. wall.

Pottery was of C13th - C14th and included Brill and N.W. French imports, in addition to

local wares. Other finds included a bone chessman, a Henry III short cross penny of 1216-30, and part of a Purbeck mortar. Worked stone found in the destruction levels suggest that this was a substantial building of some quality.

Building 2

This was on the same alignment and replaced the Phase I timber building 4. Robber trenches 1m wide survived on the N., W. and partly on the S. and E. sides. The plan of the building was, however, clear from the junction of the clay floors and stone yard surfaces.

This building was an aisled barn, 19m x 9m. Eight stone post settings show that it was divided into three bays with half bays at either end.

Building 3

To the S. of the barn there was a probable circular dovecote. The internal diameter was 6m and the walls were 1.5m thick. Two capped stone drains ran from the W. side of this building.

Building 4

Another possible dovecote lay to the W. of Building 3, the internal dia. was again 6m, but the walls were only 1.2m thick.

The Limekiln

This was 2m W. of Building 1, constructed in a pit 3m in dia. and 1m deep. Natural cornbrash formed the bottom and lower parts of the walls, which were lined with larger stone towards the top. There were two stoke holes, to the N., and to the S.E., the former retaining a well-preserved cross lintel flue arch.

All of the buildings located on the site were of dry construction, suggesting that lime was produced for agricultural purposes only.

PHASE III - C16-19 (Fig 14)

The moated enclosure was reduced in size to 49m x 55m by the excavation of a new N. side to the S. of Building 1 (Phase II). The

BRADWELL BURY '74/5

PHASE III

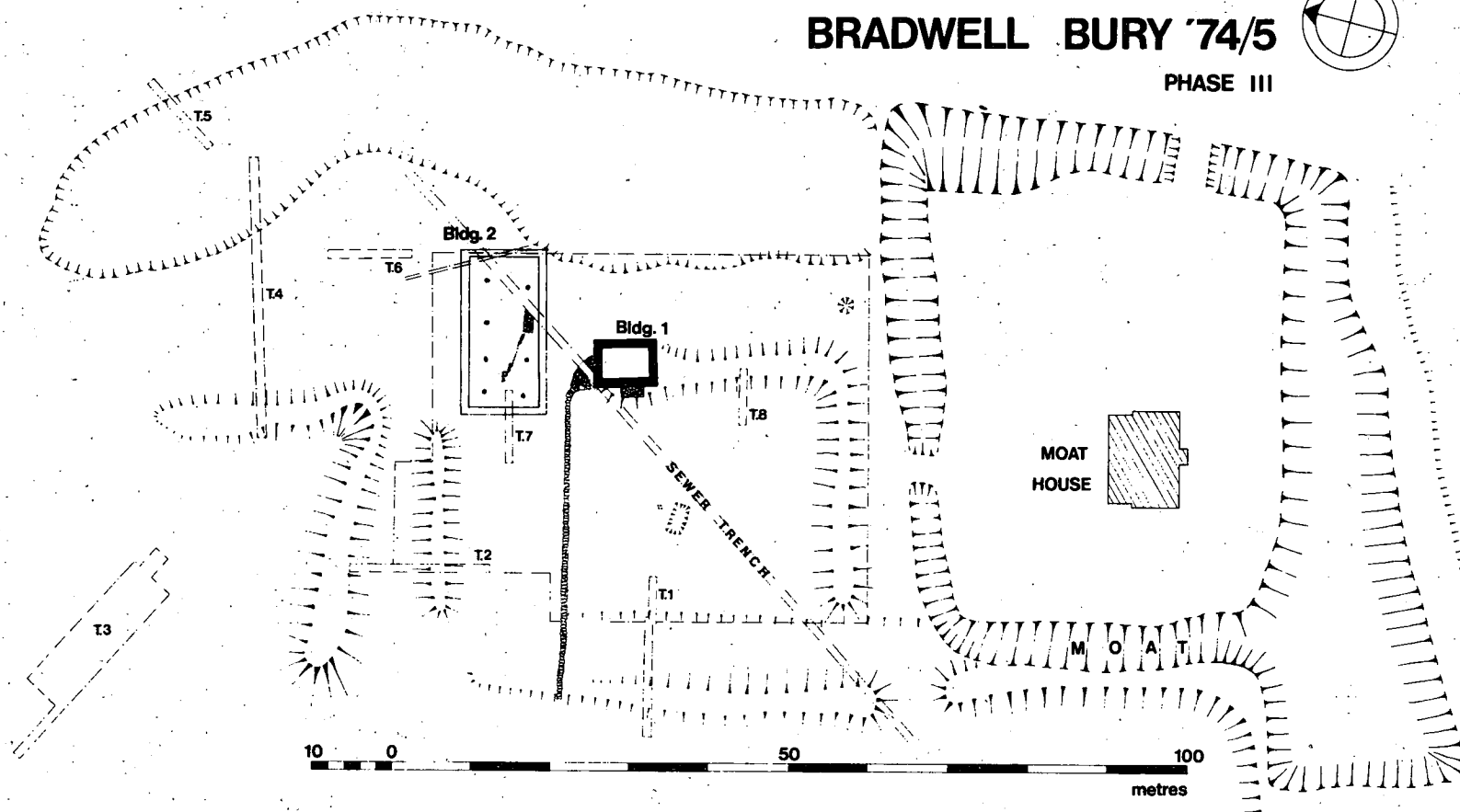
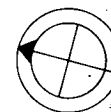


Fig. 14

remaining N. half of the W. side and the N. side and N. arm were back filled. A bank probably constructed of excavated material from the moat sealed Building 1 (Phase II) and ran N. to the site of Building 3 (Phase II) which was sealed by the erection, on top of its robbed walls, of a new rectangular dove-cote, Building 1, 6m x 4.5m internally and with walls 1m thick.

On the N. side of this building a stone yard was drained by a well constructed stone drain which ran W. for 40m. This building was demolished in the mid C19th, pottery of that date occurring in the destruction levels.

Building 2

The Aisled Barn (Phase II, Building 2), continued in use until the early C19th. It is shown on a 1792 estate map but not on the Tithe Award map of 1839.

The Cow Pit

In an almost central position within Dove-cote Close, a pit 4m x 2m and 1m deep contained the articulated skeletons of eight cows, two of which were in calf. Pottery evidence from the pit dates it to the late C15th - early C16th. These must belong to a small herd which died as a result of an epidemic and were buried immediately. An assemblage of this type and date is rare and is currently being analysed.

Moat House

This is a stone structure with a date stone over the door bearing the inscription 'T.M. 1784'. Thomas Mercer acquired the Manor of Bradwell in the mid C18th and rebuilt or restored the house. The Antiquary, Browne Willis, who visited it before 1760 described this as a "good sized comfortable cottage, the remains of the Ancient Manor House".

BRADWELL

To the N.W. of the Bradwell Bury moated site and on the S. side of the sunken lane leading from the village to the Abbey, an isolated medieval building was revealed when the Sportsfield site was levelled in June 1975. The rectangular stone building 10m x 4.5m, aligned E.-W. had walls 0.75m thick.

The floor was of clay apart from the E. 2m which were paved and drained into a central gully. In the centre of the clay floor was a rectangular hearth, 1.5m x 1.2m, of large pebbles with limestone revetting.

Pottery from the floor was of C13th - C14th. Outside the building on the yard surface to the S. was found a complete Penn floor tile.

LOUGHTON (MK.M152)

Roadworks associated with the construction of the Loughton Valley Trunk Foul Sewer cut through a rectangular house platform, the N. side of a water leet which ran from a nearby moat and associated fishpond. The leet narrowed as it ran by the platform suggesting that it may have been deliberately channelled.

Rescue excavation of the platform revealed traces of a building 6m x 4.2m aligned N.-S. The largely robbed footings were of limestone and large pebbles, with traces of a central hearth. On the floor was a considerable amount of late C14th - C15th pottery. No evidence was found of any industrial use.

BRADWELL PRIORY

Further excavation to the S.E. of the Chapel revealed the robber trench, 1.8m wide, of the W. wall of the Priory Church. The wall was totally robbed but a buttress, which had been in line with the S. arcade, remained.

The nave was approximately 8.5m wide, and traces of its mortar floor remained. Fragments of Little Bricknill floor tiles, window glass, lead and pottery were found.

GREAT LINFORD, SMITH'S CLOSE

During the construction of old people's flats in Smith's Close, Great Linford, a medieval building N.-S., 6m wide, uncovered during topsoil removal, was excavated. Only the S., E. and W. walls were excavated as the N. wall had already been destroyed. The building, 6m wide, had a minimum length of 7.5m but observation of the destruction trench suggested a total length of some 12m. The three remaining walls, which had all been robbed down to floor level, were c.0.5m wide. The internal floor was of packed clay with a strip of rough stone paving running along its centre. Pottery suggested occupation in the C14th - C15th.

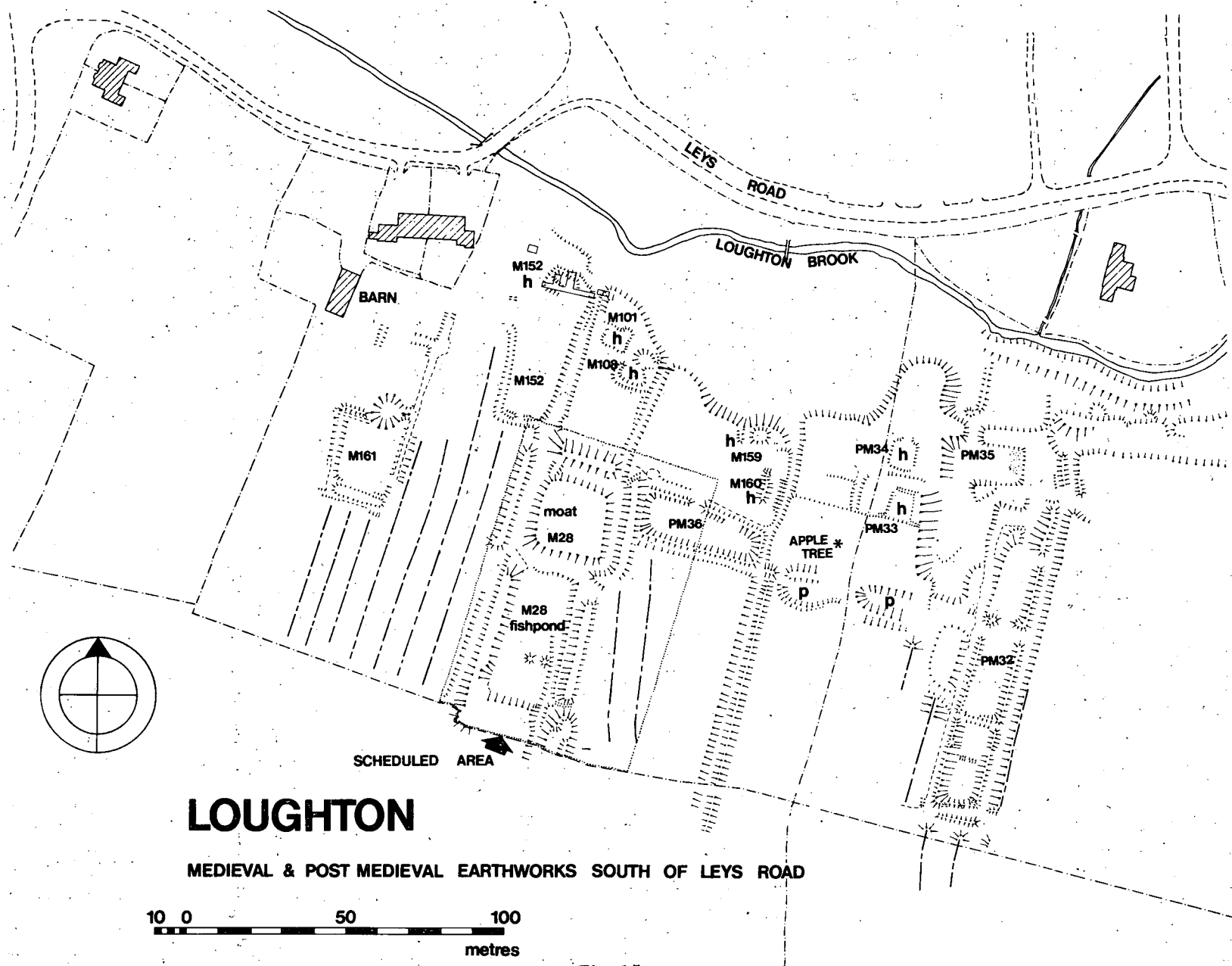


Fig. 15

EARTHWORK SURVEY

Much of the ridge and furrow in Milton Keynes new city has already been planned at 1:500, as have medieval village sites at Great Linford, Walton and Woughton on the Green. This year the programme of surveying continued on all the medieval and post-medieval earthworks within the city area. Mrs. Charmain Woodfield has surveyed extensive earthworks associated with scheduled Ancient Monument sites at Loughton, Great Woolstone and Great Linford. Paul Smith and Julia Bradley are at present surveying the Tattenhoe D.M.V.

Loughton (Fig. 15)

To the S. of Leys Road and Loughton Brook an area 250m x 150m is covered with earthworks of medieval and post-medieval date. Most prominent are a scheduled moat and fishpond (M28). These are, however, only part of a complex range of earthworks consisting of house sites, ponds, leets and enclosures.

House Platforms (marked 'h' on plan)

Seven previously unrecorded building platforms were surveyed, of these M152 was certainly of medieval date and a wall of C18th bricks was found protruding through the turf of PM33. M152, M101, M108, M159 and M160 all flank the course of the old Loughton Brook which was superseded by the modern channel in the 1930's. These platforms are all associated with leets which ran into the brook from the moat or other earthworks, the presence of which suggests an industrial use related to water power.

M152, lay in the path of an access road, and was surveyed as a possible building. This was confirmed when the S.W. corner was cut and a quantity of late medieval pottery was found. To the S. is a croft enclosed by ditches with a S. entrance. To the W. a further complex of ditches (M161) may represent the croft associated with a building now lost beneath the two modern bungalows, Nos. 2 and 4 Leys Road.

M101 and M108 both share a croft which runs S. to the N. bank of the moat with leets from the moat on both sides. M159 and M160 share a croft which includes a later ? (PM36) enclosure.

The moat and fishpond would appear to be contemporary with the building sites, although on the E. side they appear to overlay ridge and furrow, which runs under the banks at an angle.

The fishpond was fed in part from the Fountain Inn and the small stream from that source, now culverted underground at the S.W. corner of the fishpond, continued to run during the particularly hot summer of 1975. The main supply of water was at the S.E. corner where ditches drain a well preserved ridge and furrow system. There are also indications of a sluice or overflow channel running from the N.W. corner into the W. ditch of the moat. A further sluice is indicated where the ditch narrows at the N.W. corner of the moat. At this point four footpaths meet at a footbridge and it seems probable that there has been a bridge and sluice here for some time.

Post Medieval Earthworks

The large enclosure PM32 overlies ridge and furrow running in the same direction as the long N.-S. banks. This probably represents stock, perhaps lambing, enclosures, constructed on an amalgamation of strip holdings. To the west PM33 marks the site of a cottage, recalled by old inhabitants of the village, c.1960, and associated with an apple tree which still survives and is shown on the plan. A County map of 1762 shows two houses on the S. side of the brook, one of which may be PM 33 since C18th bricks were found just under the turf when the platform was surveyed. The other house was further to the W. in the area of M159-M160.

When bulldozed C17th material was found in the banks of the pond PM35, and the house PM34 may be associated and of similar date. Most of these earthworks remain intact, only part of house platform M152 and the pond PM35 were destroyed by the Loughton Valley Trunk Foul Sewer.

GREAT WOOLSTONE (Fig. 16)

To the S. and W. of Gt. Woolstone church there are a group of scheduled fishponds situated in meadowland on the W. bank of the Ousel. The proximity of the church and the faint traces of a moat in the same field have always suggested that this is a potential manor site.

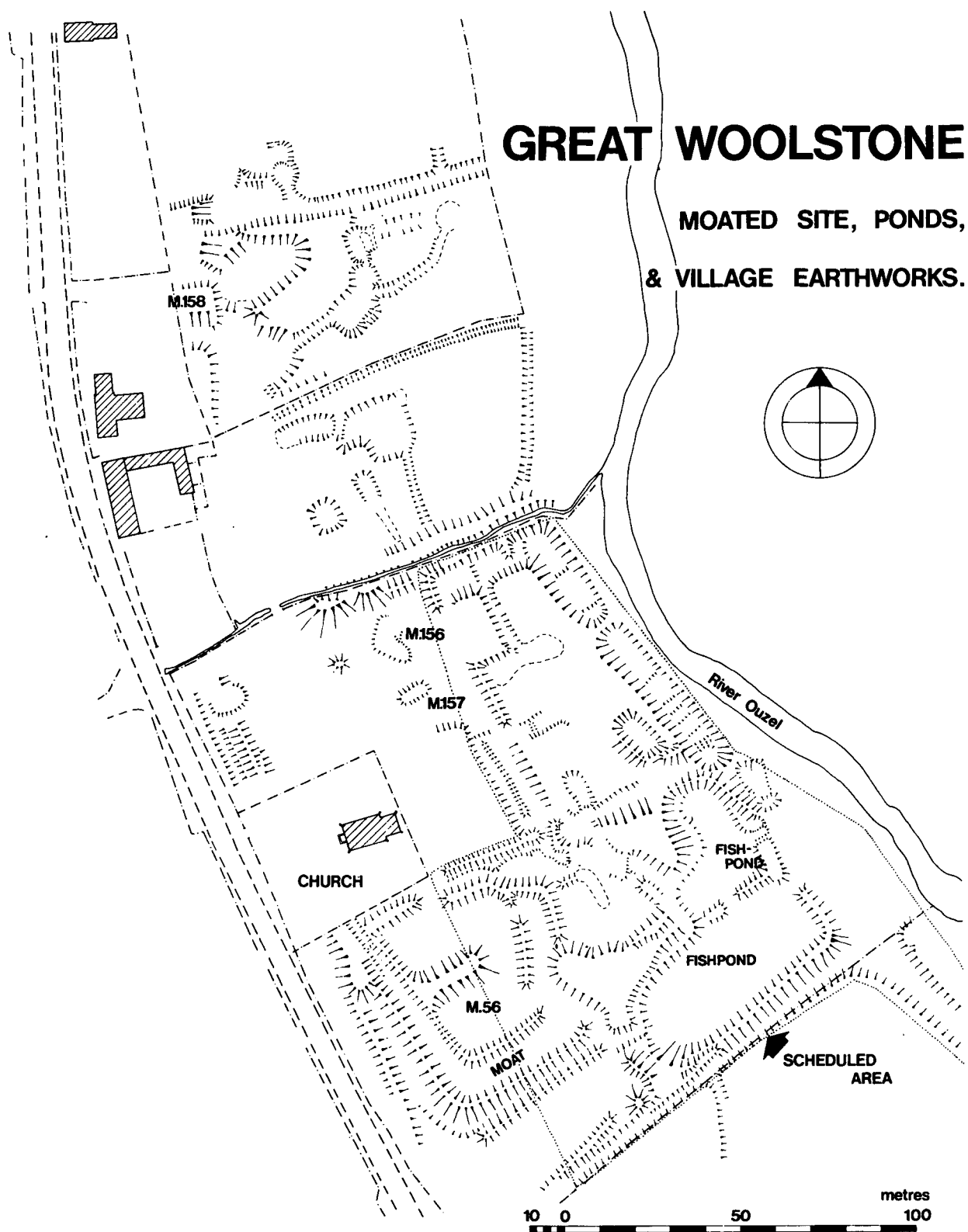


Fig. 16

A detailed survey of the site confirmed the existence of the moat (M56) and revealed an extensive system of smaller fishponds, some of which showed as darker marks in the parched grass during the hot summer of 1975.

The church is a Victorian replacement of a Norman structure which had a larger churchyard, the E. boundary of which remains some 30m E. of the present church. To the N.W. of the fishpond complex M156 and M157 may represent house sites.

The survey of the field to the N. is not complete, but the general picture is of house platforms on the E. side of the village street with long narrow crofts defined by ditches running E. to the river. Within these crofts are excavated areas representing gravel pits.

The Fishponds

This complex, situated between the church, moated site and the river, is considered to be the remains of a medieval fishery. This consists of two large ponds E. of the moat (M56), while N. of these several rectangular ponds are sub-divided internally suggesting breeding tanks. Other lesser ponds drain into the larger ones.

In the field to the S. of the surveyed area traces of another large pond were destroyed by levelling and ploughing in July 1975.

POST EXCAVATION WORK

The last three years' excavations have produced 289 boxes of finds. These include vast assemblages of pottery and over a thousand small finds of iron and copper alloy. Work has continued on the processing of these finds. It is anticipated that the final results, which will include the total excavation of the shrunken village earthworks at Great Linford, parts of the village sites at Walton and Woughton-on-the Green, and moated sites at Willen and Bradwell, will be combined to form a monograph on medieval settlement in the area.

DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH

Work has also progressed on the documentary sources of history for the Development Area. During the past year work concentrated on those which had already undergone excavation:

Bradwell, Bradwell Abbey, Great Linford and Woughton-on-the-Green; and this selection demonstrates the differential survival of documentary evidence. Research has been restricted to the medieval and early modern periods, although a survey of the C19th and C20th Census Returns for all parishes is in hand.

Bradwell (Bradwell Bury)

Excavation revealed several possible early sites for one of the manor houses, now known as Moat House. No documentary evidence has been discovered so far which can be identified with these sites as opposed to the other manor house, now Manor Farm. The main early source found is a cartulary at Northampton which gives 79 charters dating from the mid-C13th to mid-C14th, relating to land in Bradwell and Stantonbury. From this it is possible to identify many of the major landholders and to compare the field names with more modern equivalents. Another cartulary lists extremely contracted charters of the mid-C13th to mid-C15th. No court rolls have yet been found. The descent of several farms has been traced from original deeds, including Manor Farm and Cooks Farm. A good selection of wills of the C16th and C17th indicate the status and life-style of a cross-section of the community.

Bradwell Abbey

Much of the limited history of the Benedictine Priory and of the lay estate which followed the dissolution has been known for a long time. Additional information about the first tenant of the lay estate implies that he was a member of the family of Wogan of Wiston, Pembrokeshire, and was a gentleman usher under Henry VIII. A copy of another estate map of 1878 has been made from the original in the possession of Mr. Punter, whose family were tenants of the Abbey Farm for 60 years during the second half of the C19th and early C20th.

Great Linford

The Abingdon Chronicle gives the text of a Saxon charter relating to Linford (Bucks). It is possible that up to three other Saxon charters can be claimed as well.

From the Uthwatt collection at Aylesbury come indications that the earliest known site for the present manor house is beneath the

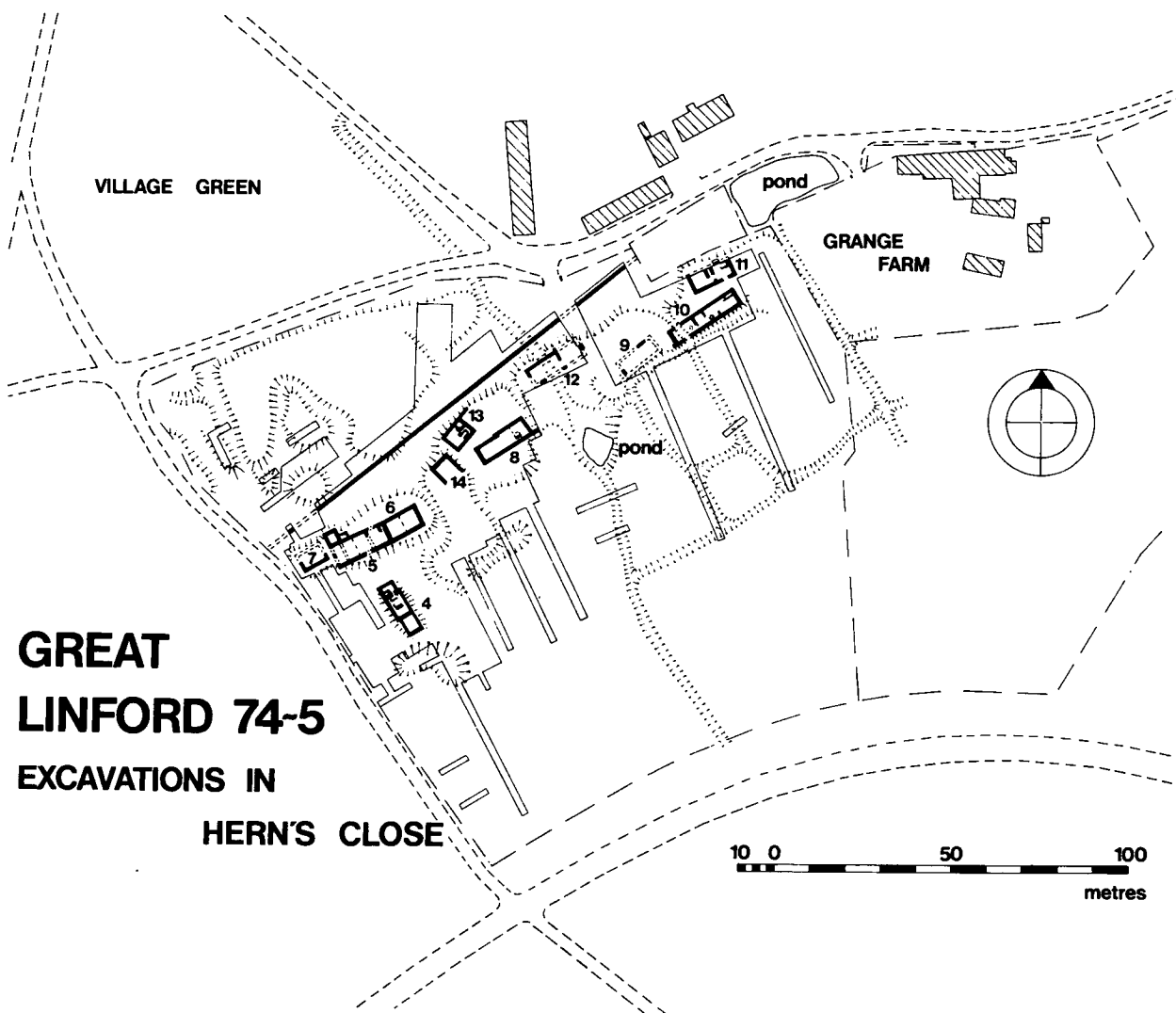


Fig. 17

Old Rectory and from there it moved N. to a position opposite the present house. There are references to a second manor, Pipards, in the C15th based on the Pipard estate of the C13th, but an inquisition Elizabeth I, decided against its existence as a manor. It is hoped that detailed study of the Uthwatt papers, together with a large number of other deeds, rentals, wills and the two estate maps of 1641 and 1678 will help to identify some of the householders of the deserted house sites revealed by the recent excavations (Fig. 17).

Woughton-on-the-Green

There are few surviving documents for this parish, apart from the subsidy assessments, muster returns, etc., common to most places, and a handful of late deeds, some concerned with the manor house and its estate cottages. There is a collection of glebe terriers at Aylesbury and Lincoln, but the total absence of early maps has made field identification difficult. An attempt is being made to compile a map from the Enclosure award of 1769 which may then be used for earlier documents.

OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMITTEE 1975

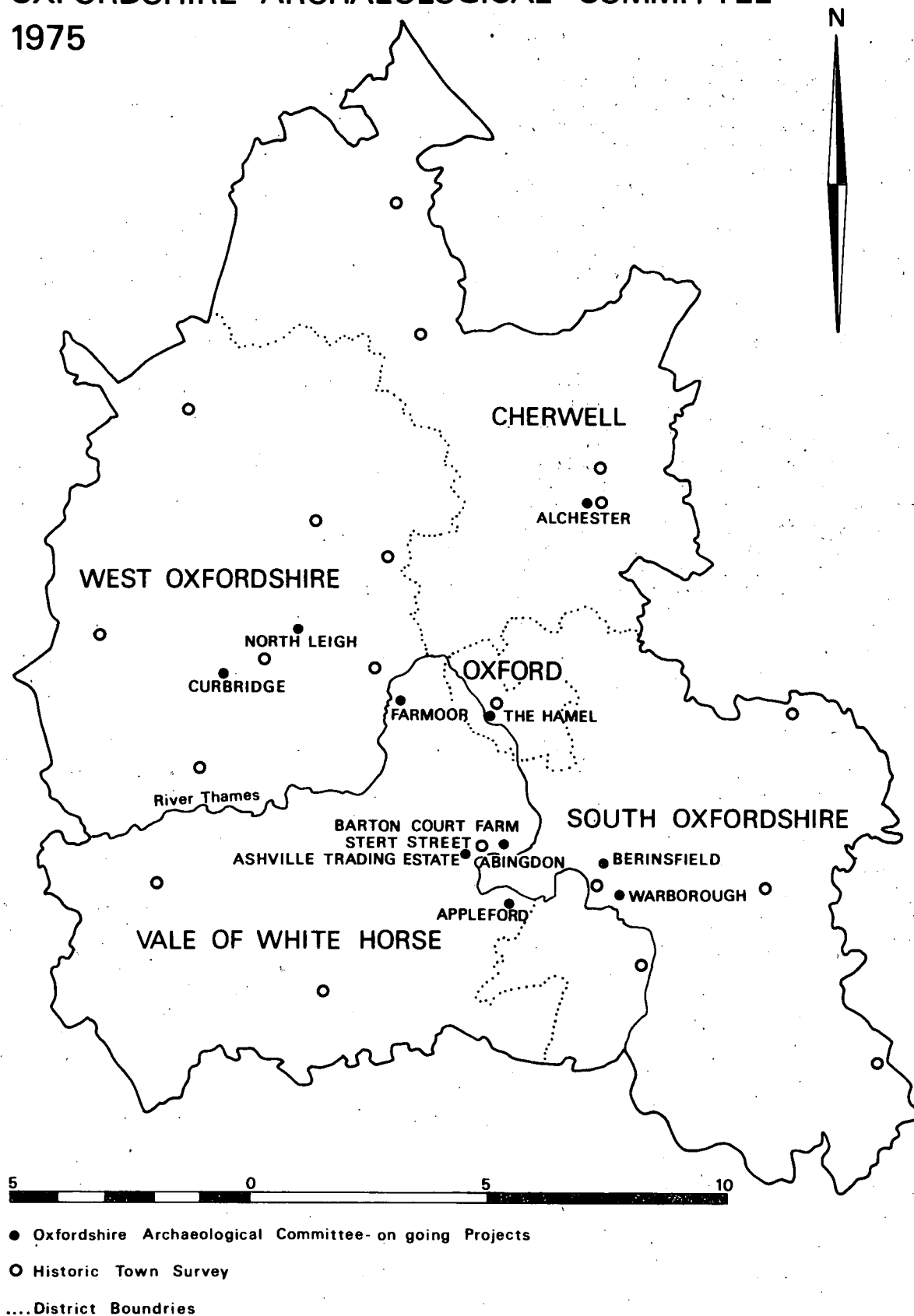


Fig. 18

THE OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMITTEE IN 1975

1975 has been a year of consolidation and retrenchment for the Oxfordshire Archaeological Committee and its executive arm, the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit. The effects of the national economic situation inevitably have had their local archaeological repercussions. The number of archaeological emergencies caused by housing schemes and commercial redevelopment has dropped dramatically and the county appears to be indulging only in a temporary boom in road building. This cut-back, coupled with the effects of inflation on salaries and other costs, has meant that by the end of the calendar year the Unit had not been able to replace two field officers. The one benefit to be felt was that work on the publication of sites excavated in 1974 has been able to proceed rapidly.

The county-wide series of surveys has continued. Don Benson and David Miles The Upper Thames Valley: an archaeological survey of the river gravels has now been followed by Kirsty Rodwell's Historic Towns in Oxfordshire: a survey of the new county. This Survey the Unit's contribution to European Architectural Heritage Year was officially launched by Robert Weir, the Chairman of Oxfordshire County Council, in October. The Survey covers the 20 historic towns in the county and it discusses the state of archaeological, historical and architectural information in each town. The information is presented in a uniform way with an explanatory text and four maps for each town (with the exception of the extinct Roman town of Alchester). The maps show the location of each town; archaeology and topography; age of buildings and statutory protection and past excavations. For each town an oblique air photograph was taken for the Survey by Brian Durham and these have been published together with a key. An important feature of the Survey is Kirsty Rodwell's introduction discussing town plans and buildings. The survey shows every prospect of following its predecessor as a model of its kind.

While the Historic Towns Survey was published in 1975 George Lambrick began the difficult task of compiling material for the proposed third survey which is concerned with the relationship between archaeology and agriculture as a destructive agency. In January and February the Unit was commissioned by the Department of the Environment to prepare

a report on the feasibility of conducting such a survey. The work so far is described in detail below.

The threats to archaeological sites posed by agriculture are difficult to define and to locate since they do not appear through the planning processes. Those threats which do appear through planning applications have continued to be monitored by the Unit, assisted by regular fortnightly meetings between the Director and the Field Department of the Oxfordshire Department of Museum Services (previously the Oxford City and County Museum). The transfer of information from the Department's Sites and Monuments Record to development Control maps has nearly been completed. Once complete the maps will be deposited in the relevant planning office and should assist the early warning system.

It remains clear that the preservation of sites in the county can often be best achieved by using the planning process rather than by relying on the scheduling of sites. In this respect 1975 has been the year of Wallingford Castle. The Committee was actively involved in the various events which finally led to the calling in by the Secretary of State for the Department of the Environment of the current planning application which affects the outer bailey of the Castle. The enquiry will be held next year and the Unit will be giving evidence. The appeal relating to Alchester referred to in last year's report has been withdrawn, although a second revised application may follow; a further outstanding appeal relates to the cropmark complex at Northfield Farm, Long Wittenham. These three sites are interesting cases in an emerging policy for the conservation of the county's archaeology.

Excavations have continued during the year but on a much reduced scale from 1974. (see Fig.18). It was hoped that the major excavation this year would have been the continuation of the I.A. site at the Ashville Trading Estate at Abingdon. In the event no further work was possible. However, four of the excavations described in last year's report were continued: Abingdon/Radley, Barton Court Farm; Berinsfield; Farmoor and Oxford Blackfriars. New sites this year included: medieval tenements at Stert Street, Abingdon; medieval tenements at the Hamel, Oxford. Various rather limited excavations and observations were made throughout the county and these are listed below.

The post-excavation programme is progressing satisfactorily and some of the details are listed below. A publication policy has been decided - in future interim reports and short notices will appear in CBA Group IX Newsletter: medium sized reports and the Oxford excavations will be published in Oxoniensia. It is hoped that major reports will be published in the new monograph series proposed by the CBA.

1974-5 has been the first full year worked by the three environmental specialists. M. Jones has been working on carbonised cereal and weed seeds, R. Wilson on domestic animal bones and M. Robinson on Mollusca, waterlogged seeds and insect remains. Mary Harman has been carrying out specialist work on a part time basis on skeletal remains from various sites.

What has emerged is the importance of being able to work on site alongside the archaeologists so that good samples can be taken as soon as suitable deposits appear and the direction of excavation influenced towards the best recovery of the environmental evidence. It has also been found more worthwhile to carry out research projects examining one site or group of related sites in great detail rather than doing a limited amount of work on every site.

The main environmental archaeology project is on the Thames gravels. The closeness of the water table to the surface on the first terrace means that waterlogged remains are to be found in the bottom of many archaeological features.

This year has seen the completion of work by Mark Robinson and the examination of most of the I.A. and Roman Samples from Farmoor and the excavation of a Roman Well at Barton Court Farm, Abingdon/Radley to provide comparative material.

As a result of the success of the past year's work it is hoped that environmental archaeology in Oxfordshire will be put on a more permanent footing with better facilities and funds.

There have been various staff changes during the year. Kirsty Rodwell has now left the Unit and followed her husband to Bristol. For the time being her post is not being filled. Veronica Ashcroft, the Unit's secretary and administrative assistant, has left to join the Civil Service in London. Amongst the specialists who prepare reports for the Unit,

Maureen Mellor has continued the work of Regina Haldon on medieval pottery from Oxford. From October Mike Wilcox began the in-service training scheme organised by the Oxford University Department for External Studies and the Department of the Environment, while staff from other Units have been seconded to Oxford.

The work of the Unit depends not only on the Unit staff but also on the volunteers and specialists involved with the excavation and survey. In particular the Unit relies on the assistance of the members of many local groups and societies, in particular, the Abingdon Area Archaeological and Historical Society, the Oxford University Archaeological Society, South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group, the Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society and the Witney Archaeological Group. While it is invidious to single out individuals we would particularly like to thank John Blair, John Carter, Pat Granados, Clive Hart, Julian Munby, Nicholas Palmer and Geoff Williams who have assisted the Unit throughout the year.

The Committee has also provided backing for the Unit's staff. Professor Barry Cunliffe retired as Chairman and his place was taken by Trevor Rowley, formerly the Hon Secretary. David Brown became the Hon Secretary. The County Treasurer and his staff, in particular Alec Ritchie, Brian Causby and Lloyd Adams, have continued to provide financial servicing at no cost to the Unit. Constance Preston continued to serve as Hon Assistant Secretary to the Oxford Archaeological Excavation Committee. The Unit's professional colleagues also continued to provide help and advice. The Unit is particularly grateful to Brian Davison, Peter White, Tony Fleming and Jeff West of the Department of the Environment and to the Ashmolean Museum and the Department of Museum Services.

The Committee itself could not survive without the continued support of its donors, notably the Department of the Environment, the County Council, the Oxford City Council, the Vale of White Horse District Council, the S Oxfordshire District Council, the W Oxfordshire District Council, also the Amey Roadstone Corporation and the British Academy.

CONTINUING PROJECTS

ABINGDON, Ashville Trading Estate, Marcham Lane, Michael Parrington et al.

During 1975 work has been continuing towards the publication of the 'Ashville Site'.

ABINGDON
BARTON COURT FARM
1972-75

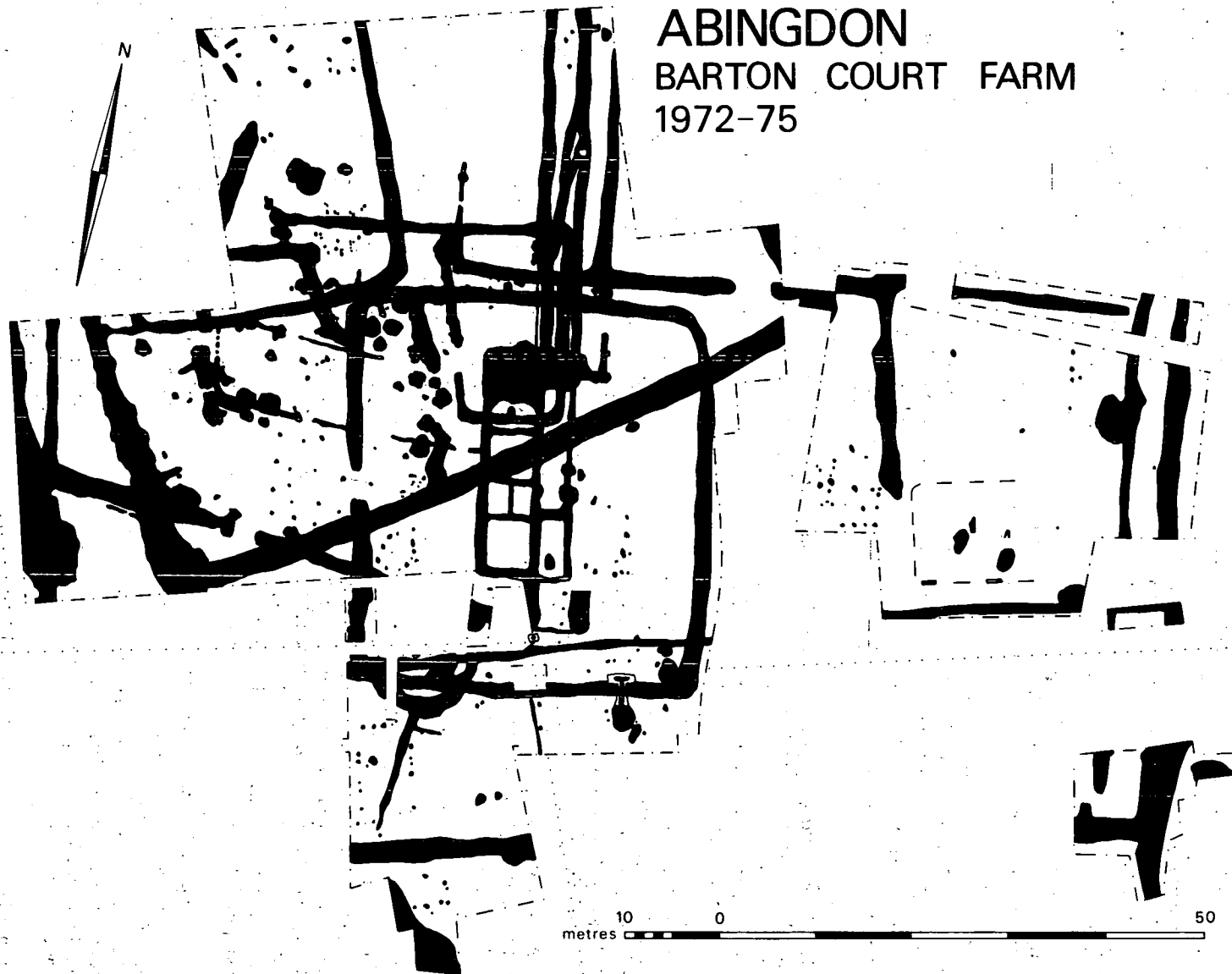


Fig. 19

The text of the excavation is at an advanced state of preparation and many of the drawings, by Mrs. Robin Spey, are in hand. Dee de Roche has produced a type series for pottery fabrics and forms and a quantitative record of the recovered pottery has been made by weight and number of sherds. The chronological groups are being compared and a pottery report is in progress.

The bones from the site make up the first large sample of I.A. animal bone to be excavated in Oxfordshire and will provide useful data on the size variation of domestic animals. Commencement on the sample indicates a similar pattern of animal husbandry elsewhere on the Thames river gravels. The bones are well preserved and have often been clearly marked by butchery.

One of the important aspects of the post-excavation programme on this site has been the analysis of carbonised seeds by Martin Jones. These seeds were found to occur in every stratified deposit, and were finely distributed through the soil.

As little research has been done into the problems associated with interpreting carbonized seeds, it was considered worthwhile to thoroughly examine the material from this site not only to add to aid interpretation, but also to serve as a methodological study, to help determine how to maximize the amount of reliable information that can be gained from such a site, given a limited amount of specialist time.

After having studied over seventy samples from this site, conclusions are beginning to emerge on a number of points: about what kinds of qualitative and quantitative information can emerge at what stage; about which features appear to be chiefly responsible for the variation between different samples; and about what kinds of bias might be expected to arise with different techniques of sampling.

A fairly complete species list similar to the list from Barton Court Farm emerged quite quickly. The recovery of numerous fragments of cereal chaff and rhachis from the samples has allowed some observations to be made on the genetic makeup of the prehistoric cereals concerned.

The quantitative data is to be analysed with the use of a computer, in order to detect relationships that might not be obvious by simply scanning over the large body of data by eye.

ABINGDON/RADLEY, Barton Court Farm (Fig 19) David Miles et al

Excavation of the late R.B. 'smithy' building uncovered in 1974, was completed. To the E of this building a square stone-lined well was located. Although the well shaft was only 50cm square it was found to be 7m deep. The well was made of large blocks of Corallian Ragstone built-up inside a clay lined construction shaft. Each course of ragstone was bedded into a thick layer of moss laid on top of the underlying course. At the base of the well the stone shaft was erected on top of a square wooden box of logs (oak?) two courses thick. The well was permanently waterlogged from 2m below the surface providing vast quantities of environmental material. Six leather shoes were found in the well, also a large quantity of pottery with many vessels almost complete. These suggest a late C4th date for the well. Near the bottom of the well was a considerable quantity of iron work in very good condition including latch-lifters, a spearhead, the well-hook and iron bucket binding.

Four small trenches were opened to the E and S of the main excavation in order to clarify the plan and sequence of the late R.B. paddocks.

Work is progressing on the analysis of the stratification of the site and many of the drawings by Wendy Lee are in hand.

Bob Wilson has been examining the bones (about eight thousand) and shell fragments from the site. The results are still being analysed from late I.A. to late R.B. features. Half of the bone and shell remains are from the late R.B. period of the main villa building and its destruction.

Problems associated with fragmentation and bone dispersal over the features are being investigated and may qualify the estimates of animal abundance. Sheep appear more abundant than cattle, while pigs and horses were less common. The proportions of these animal bones indicate little change in the domestic animal economy except that sheep bones are less numerous in the only R.B. sample. Age data tends to confirm the findings for the Appleford site. Pathological bones are moderately common.

The R.B. dogs show a wide range of size which may be associated with the occurrence of hunted animals such as red and roe deer and hares but wild animal bones are relative-

ly rare. Oyster shell is common so far inland and indicates moderately rapid transport from seaports, and perhaps, some prosperity during late R.B. times. The bird bones and Saxon freshwater fish bones are being examined elsewhere.

The remains of twenty-five babies, some new born, some possibly a few weeks old, were in an excellent state of preservation. Many were represented by virtually complete skeletons, some by parts of skeletons disturbed in antiquity, and there was a further scatter of infant bones on the site from various features, presumably derived from disturbed burials. Infants appear to have been buried throughout the occupation of the site, but there were also some adult burials; two crouched burials probably of I.A. date, one male and one female, the former having a very rare dental anomaly: the existence of two small supernumerary teeth behind the upper wisdom tooth; one female, probably late Roman; and from the Saxon period, four people, one male, three females, two of these having newly born babies buried with them, suggesting both mother and child may have died during the birth.

During the 1974 and 1975 seasons of excavations, a large number of the stratified deposits at Barton Court Farm were screened for carbonized seeds. Material from these deposits, and from a few other soil samples stored from excavation in previous years, were examined in the early part of this year and a report prepared for publication. The samples ranged from B.A. to late Roman in date.

Archaeological records of the crops in the Upper Thames Valley have hitherto been extremely fragmentary and the Barton Court Farm samples have provided some useful original information in this field; I.A. deposits produced hulled six-row barley and three species of wheat: spelt, emmer and bread or club wheat; and Roman deposits produced the same species of barley, spelt wheat, club wheat, flax, celtic bean and vetch. A grain of barley was recovered from a B.A. sample.

Seeds from over fifty species of weeds and wild plants were also recovered yielding information on the environment in which the crops were grown. Eleven of those species, most of which occur in only the Roman samples, show an ecological preference for damp conditions, and one of those species prefers sticky clay soils. A hypothesis was proposed explaining the species lists in terms of an increased pressure on land in the Roman period, forcing the arable farmer onto damper ground.

Various other possible lines of research have emerged from studying these samples, as well as certain unanswered problems, such as why there is a considerable range in the proportion of weed seeds in grain samples. It was considered that further conclusions will have to await the study of grain samples from other sites.

ABINGDON, Stert Street - Michael Parrington and Bob Wilson

While most of the Abingdon urban sites have been sent off for publication the only conventional excavation to take place has been on Stert Street where members of the Abingdon Area Archaeological and Historical Society have been excavating under Unit supervision.

The excavations on this site have revealed a complex series of building phases despite the small area under investigation and post-medieval disturbances. Three successive stone building phases have been recorded and an earlier timber cill beam structure. A number of medieval pits have been excavated, two of which contained coins (as yet undated) and two stone-lined post-medieval pits. A small amount of residual Roman pottery has been recovered which may be indicative of Roman features at a lower level.

During this excavation samples have been sieved to ascertain the efficiency of bone collection from the soil. The short list of animal species for medieval Abingdon has been considerably increased, particularly for fish. This sampling should also allow some reinterpretation of previously excavated material.

ALCHESTER - Mark Robinson

During the year environmental samples were examined from the old ground surface beneath the site, the early Roman ditches under the defences and the late Roman town ditch (see CBA Group 9 Newsletter 5, 1975).

The Mollusca indicate that the town was built on what once has been a marsh. The snails and seeds show the early Roman ditches did not contain permanent water and were probably set in rather damp grassland with such plants as meadow rue (Thalictrum flavum) and yellow rattle (Rhinanthus cf minor). 'Spike rush' (Eleocharis sp) indicates that the plants of the ditches were subjected to mowing or grazing because it requires open vegetation. The most numerous group of

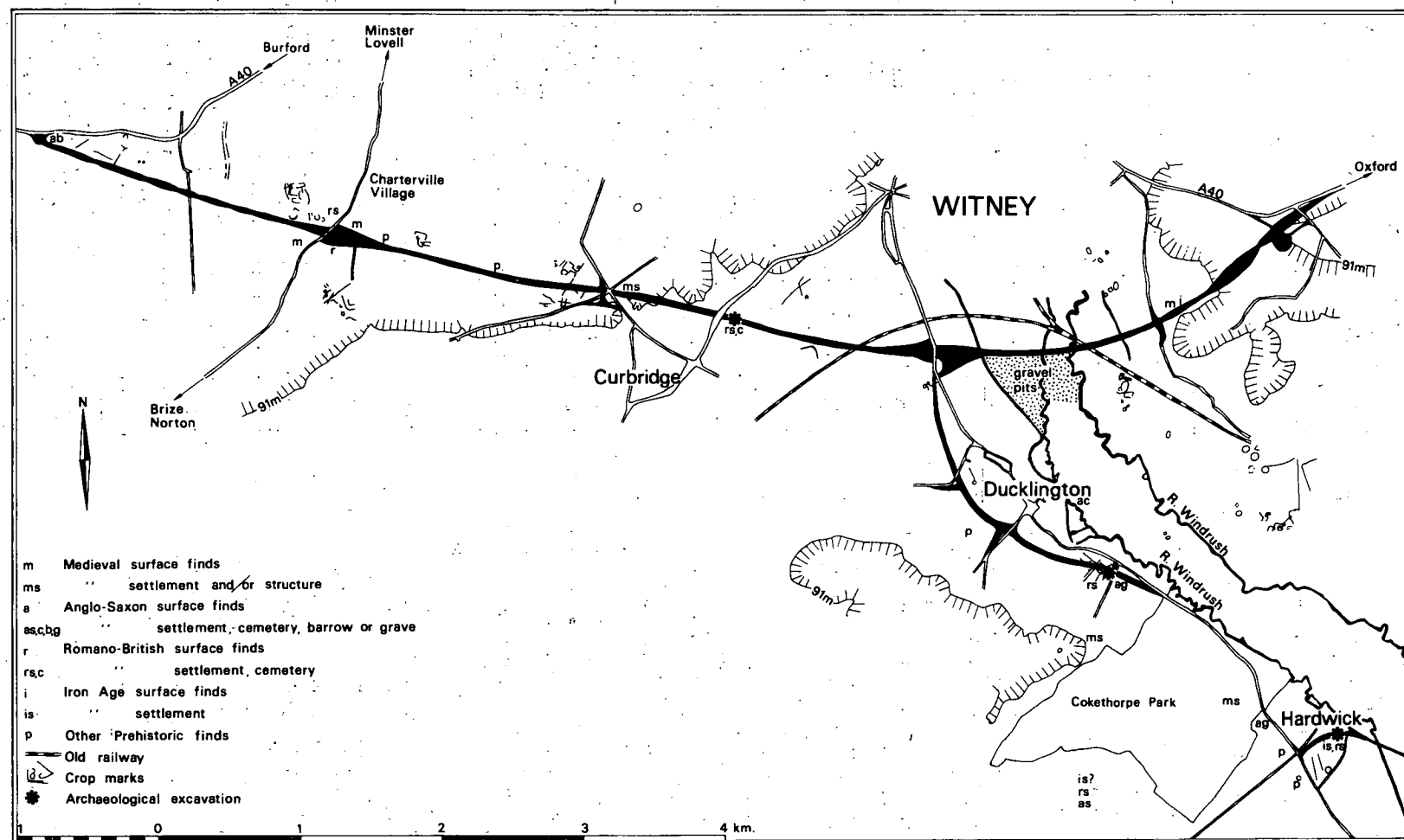


Fig. 20

beetles from them are dung beetles and were probably associated with domestic mammals on the grassland.

The molluscs, seeds and insects show that the late Roman town ditch was very different from the earlier ones for it contained clean flowing water and a good growth of aquatic vegetation including water crowfoot (Ranunculus S. Batrachium) and pondweed (Potamogeton spp). The vegetation of the ditch was not grazed or cropped because it contained bur-reed (Sparganium erectum). Whilst the grassland element in the fauna and flora was not present, it seemed to have replaced by scrub including hazel (Corylus avellana) and white bryony (Bryonia dioica). Weeds of disturbed ground from both this ditch and the earlier ones could be from building sites and gardens in the town or arable agriculture.

A seed of coriander (Coriandrum sativum), from one of the early ditches, was of particular interest; this was a plant much valued by the Romans for its flavouring. Fragments of both adult and larva of the great silver beetle (Hydrophilus piceus) indicate that this rare beetle, now extinct in Oxfordshire, bred in the ditch.

APPLEFORD - Bob Wilson

The analysis of waterlogged samples and bones from John Hinchliffe's excavation of 1973 is nearing completion. Nearly 2,000 bones and shells were collected from 50 I.A. and R.B. features.

The numbers of bones in the hoof, hock joint and vertebrae of sheep are markedly lower than the numbers of the equivalent bones in cattle, while the estimates of their minimum numbers indicate they had populations of about equal size. It is shown that with decreasing size of bones there is a decreasing chance of being collected and the lesser quantities of sheep bone in 'the sample' is largely attributed to such bias. Interpretation of the results is further complicated by a substantial difference between the proportion of sheep bones in the pits and that in the ditches.

Cattle, sheep, horse, pig and dog are the most common animals. No goat bones were distinguished from the 'sheep'. Two red deer bones and three shed antlers of red deer, an I.A. hedgehog and R.B. oyster shell were also present.

Most horses appear to have been kept to

maturity and the modern age equivalent of one mandible suggests up to 21 years of age. Cattle and sheep were slaughtered at earlier developmental stages and pigs earliest of all. Butchery marks indicate that horse was occasionally eaten at least. A dog's skull was found which appears to have been chopped off the spine and its muzzle shows knife marks, perhaps as a result of skinning.

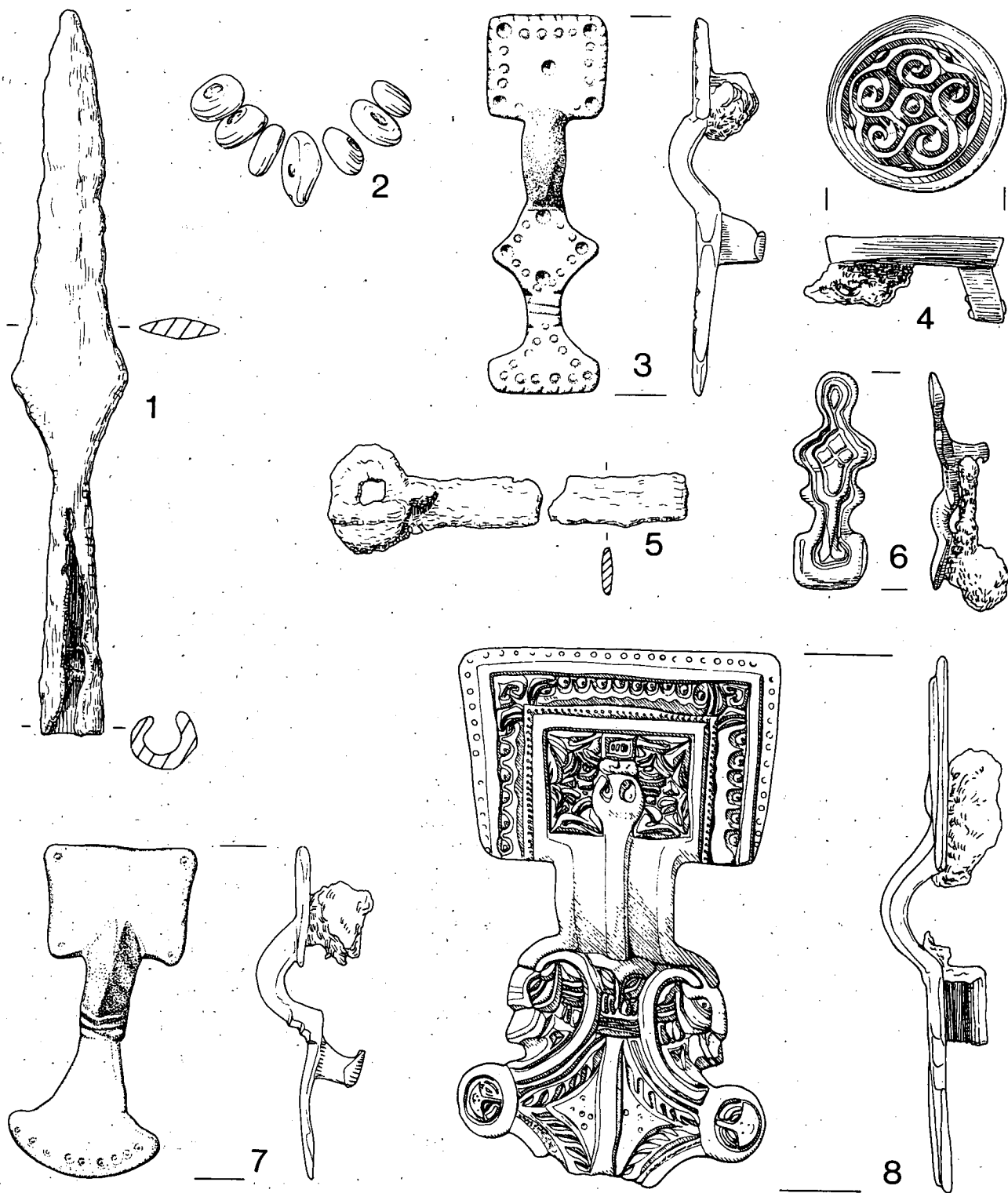
BERINSFIELD - David Miles and Mary Harman

Excavations continued on the Amey Roadstone Corporation's site at Wally Corner. The area to the W and N of the 1974 excavation was trial trenched prior to extensive topsoil removal by ARC. No archaeological features were found and the limits of the Saxon cemetery seem to have been reached on the N, W and E sides. Further trenches were excavated to the S, between the gravel pit and the road to Berinsfield. A series of R.B. ditches (1st to C4th AD) were found and between them were a further three Saxon inhumations. One had been buried with a spear and knife, the other two were without grave goods. All were aligned between E-W and S E-N W. A total of 103 inhumations has now been found.

The examination of the skeletal remains excavated in 1974 has been completed by Mary Harman. The remains of 99 individuals were mostly in good condition, though preservation depended on local soil variations. Of these, 28 were male, 29 female, 10 adults of undetermined sex, and 32 children. Only one newly born infant was found although there was a high child mortality, probably indicating that babies were buried elsewhere, possibly at the settlement. On the whole the women died earlier than the men, and few people survived beyond forty years. Dental health was good, heights average, and there are no startling abnormalities. It is expected that this group and the late R.B. Queenford Farm group to be seen later in the year will provide interesting comparisons.

CURBRIDGE (Fig 20) - Richard Chambers

A small, provisionally late R.B. period cemetery and R.B. settlement site has been revealed at Burbridge during the construction of the Witney by-pass by the A.R.C. An excavation recorded approximately 30 shallow inhumation burials of differing orientations. In three burials the head had been cut off and placed between the legs. Sets of hob-nails were also recovered from several graves.



A selection of objects from the Anglo Saxon cemetery at Berinsfield: 1974 excavations. 1. Spearhead, grave 26; 2. Amber and glass beads, grave 49; 3. Small-long brooch, one of a dissimilar pair, grave 104; 4. One of a pair of saucer brooches, grave 73; 5. Iron buckle, grave 32; 6. Miniature gilt bronze brooch, found at the waist, grave 77; 7. One of a pair of small-long brooches, grave 91; 8. A broken great square-headed brooch, paired with a saucer brooch, grave 107. Scales: spearhead and buckle 1 : 2; remainder 1 : 1.

The graves cut into underlying pits and ditches from the R.B. settlement which appears to have existed from the 1st - 4th AD. Several of the pits, ditches and post holes were sectioned and several flimsy rubble footings belonging to timber buildings within the settlement were found.

FARMOOR (Fig 21) - George Lambrick and Mark Robinson

Salvage work continued intermittently on the new reservoir site at Farmoor following last year's excavation. The initial interpretation has been largely confirmed by the discovery of new features. The most important of these was another complex of I.A. enclosures. These consisted of a series of interlinked polygonal and sub-circular enclosures with a later, more typical, penannular gully dug into them. Opposite the entrance one of the earlier ditches was filled with stone and in the ends of the penannular gully were found the upper and lower halves of a horse skull. The complex was dated to the late pre-Belgic I.A.

Stratigraphical and environmental evidence have proved that this and the other I.A. complex in the flood plain found last year were both subject to flooding and were only occupied (presumably seasonally) for between three to five years.

Little more R.B. settlement evidence has been discovered, however the driveway which crossed the site probably turned and ran along the line of an old river bed marking the edge of the alluvial plain rather than simply giving access to the meadows on the flood plain.

The site is providing valuable evidence for the respective I.A. and R.B. settlement patterns on the first gravel terrace and flood plain of the Thames and environmental work is also providing important evidence to support this and to build up a picture of the respective economies.

Over 200 species of insect and 90 species of plants have been identified from Farmoor to date. The most recent hut circle gully to be excavated contained seeds of several species of aquatic plant including water crowfoot (*Ranunculus* s *Batrachium*). It is therefore difficult to interpret it as the wall trench for a Little Woodbury type hut.

The environmental work is also indicating

the type of settlement at Farmoor at different dates. Those of the I.A. are temporary and set in an expanse of grassland, whilst in the Roman period there were more permanent laid out fields with hedges. Both R.B. and I.A. settlements seem to have suffered from limited flooding.

NORTH LEIGH, North Oxfordshire, GRIM'S DITCH - David Fine

An excavation of the Grim's Ditch in advance of a water-main was carried out. The Ditch is a discontinuous earthwork which encompasses twenty two square miles. Previous excavations (Haverfield. Proceedings of the Society of Antiquities, London 1899, Vol. XVII; Harden Oxoniensia II 1937; Thomas Oxoniensia XXII 1957) have concentrated upon the N sector where the Ditch is on cornbrash and was postulated as being late I.A.

The 1975 excavation was on Oxford clay and two phases of ditch and associated bank have been found, and these possibly are analogous with the previous excavations to the N. However no attempt can be made to date more closely the Ditch as no artefacts have been recovered at all. This sparsity of occupation debris is similar to the previous excavations and may indicate a boundary rather than mound defence function for the Ditch. The bank has been eroded by medieval ploughing which has also been eroded by post medieval levelling which included the insertion of a field stream in the ditch.

OXFORD, THE HAMEL - N. Palmer

An excavation lasting a total of twelve weeks, in advance of redevelopment by Christ Church College, was carried out on medieval tenements and abandoned street frontage on the corner of the Hamel with St. Thomas's High Street. At the S end of the site, part of the tenement known in the medieval documents as the Hall of St. Helen was found to have three main building phases (Fig. 22 II, III & IV) from the mid-13th to the mid-19th, of which the earliest was very substantial (walls 1.20m wide). The tenement to the N, known as Bretel's, had two main phases (II & IV) from the mid-13th to the mid-19th.

The earliest buildings on the site (I), dating from the late 12th, consisted of a row of houses separated from an area of pits and ditches by a narrow path at right angles to the High Street. At some time in the mid-

FARMOOR Area III

IA Enclosures 3

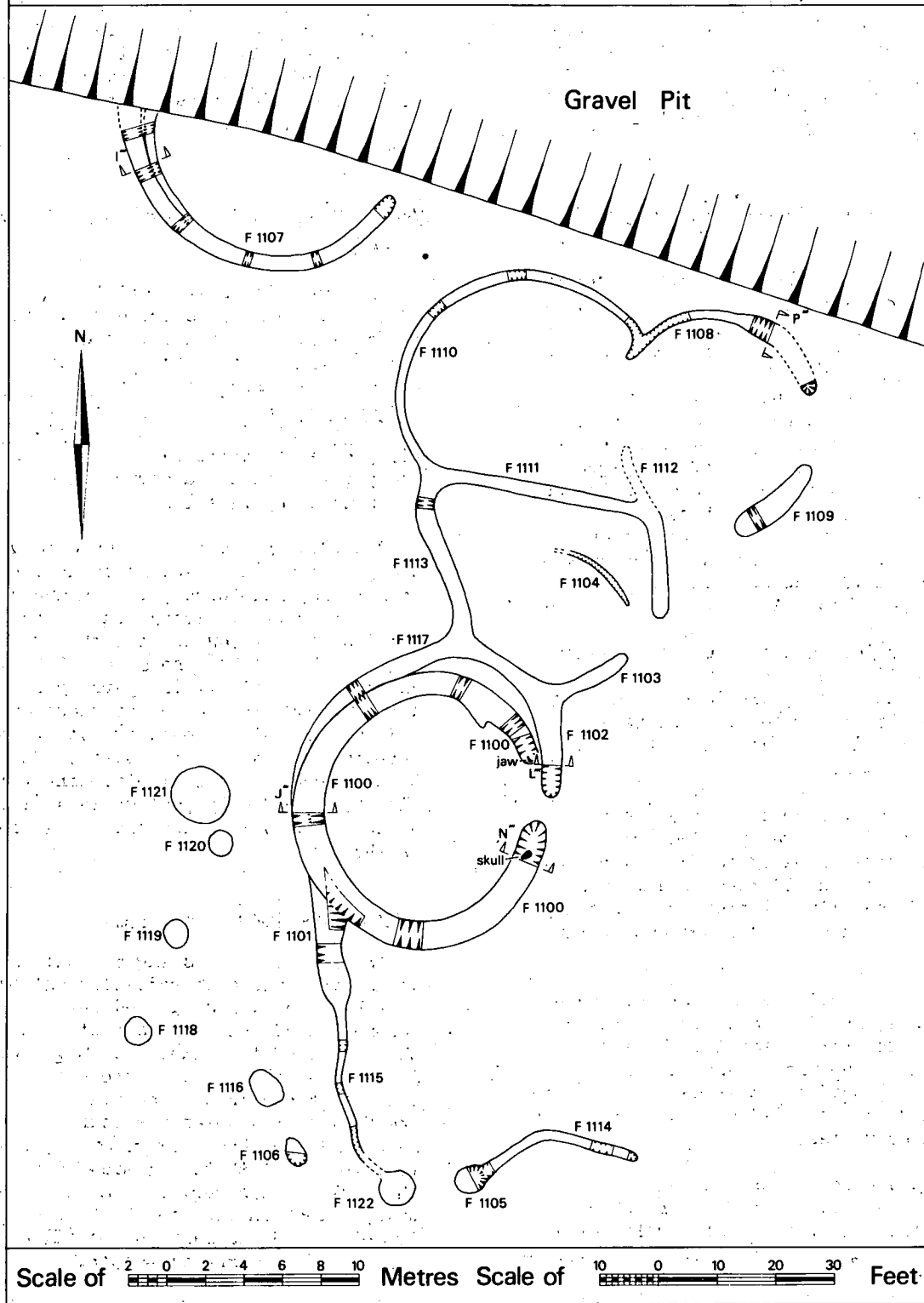


Fig. 21

Oxford, The Hamel: Main Building Phases

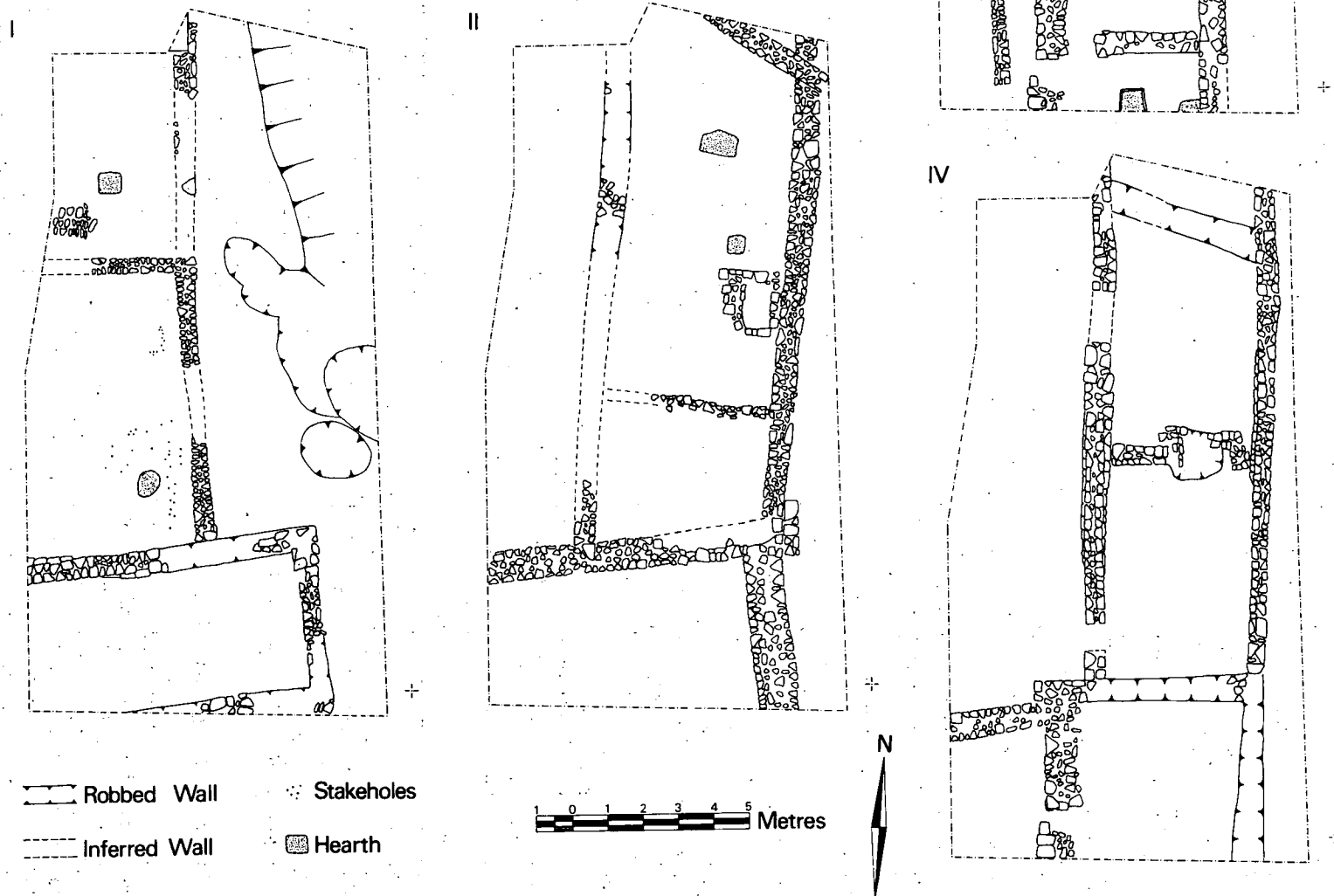


Fig. 22

C13th the pits and ditches seem to have been infilled, so that the Hamel, the road to Geney Abbey, could be laid out on top of them; simultaneously the frontage of the houses was moved forward to the line it occupied until the C19th. Another trench, currently in progress on the High Street frontage to the E of the main site, has produced similar evidence of C13th building over infilled ditches.

A further, more extensive, system of ditches, some of them lined with wattles, predates the buildings discovered and may represent the remains of an earlier C12th field system. The latter features contain waterlogged deposits which have produced an interesting group of C12th leather shoes and other artefacts. Underlying the medieval features some of B.A. date were encountered, and it is hoped that these together with the rest of the C12th system can be further investigated.

WARBOROUGH - George Lambrick & Mary Harman

A trial excavation was conducted at a known cemetery site at Warborough after a lead coffin had been discovered during subsoiling. Two trenches were dug to determine the damage caused by the work, and to recover dating evidence. The subsoiling had disturbed one other burial in the same area as the coffin and another in an area with deeper soil where the burials were generally deeper. The lines of disturbed soil 18" to 20" deep with a V-shaped profile were easily recognizable, as was the hard-packed soil 'pan' which the operation was intended to break up. The cemetery's main enclosure ditch provided a group of largely C4th Roman pottery. This feature also produced residual I.A. and early Roman material. The possibility that the site is early Christian (suggested by the E-W alignment of the graves, the lack of grave goods and the field name 'Church Piece') has not been disproved.

PLOUGH SURVEY - George Lambrick

The Unit was commissioned by the DoE to prepare a report on the feasibility of conducting a survey of the effect of agriculture, especially ploughing, on archaeological sites. This report was presented to S Midlands Archaeological Working party in March. It recommended that a survey should be carried out on the basis of sampling areas for study on different geological deposits in the region. It was suggested that the examination should be on a county basis because of the existing agricul-

tural and archaeological organization, but that separate work in the different counties (Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire) should be integrated to provide up a regional picture. The sources of information for a survey were assessed and it was clear that the work would have to be based almost entirely on field observation and discussion with the farmers concerned. Such a survey will differ from Gravel and Town Surveys in that threats are extremely difficult to define or locate since they do not appear during the planning processes. Agricultural threats consist of four main elements: 1. the ploughing up of permanent grassland; 2. the use of more damaging techniques on existing arable; 3. the encouragement of erosion by normal ploughing; 4. other activities such as forestry, hedge removal, drainage, levelling, etc. These affect both earthwork and non-earthwork sites, and the report recommended that the survey should not be confined to earthworks as they would constitute an unrepresentative sample of sites, and of the conditions under which damage may take place. Although a detailed sampling survey was the chief recommendation it was also suggested that more detailed consideration of the agricultural treatment of the land should be encouraged amongst field workers. The work for the report also revealed the ignorance of most archaeologists about technical aspects of cultivation and, as an immediate result of the study, a booklet explaining modern cultivation methods is being prepared for publication in 1976.

OTHER SITES RECORDED DURING 1975

ABINGDON, ABBEY HOUSE CAR PARK

A number of human burials were recovered here during the construction of an office building. The burials were on an E-W alignment and are presumably associated with the lay-cemetery of Abingdon Abbey which is known to be in the area. A small quantity of Roman pottery was also recovered.

CUMNOR BY-PASS

Field work by the Oxford University Archaeological Society on the route of the new Cumnor Hill By Pass revealed no major sites. One deserted farmstead, Busby's Farm, was identified, part of which was used until the 1940's and was still standing to a height of

over 1m. Other buildings and a garden at the rear were identified and a holloway was found to run from Wytham Hill, past this farmstead across the valley to the hamlet of Chawley, now almost engulfed by suburban development. A small trial excavation at Busby's Farm revealed evidence suggesting a medieval origin. The farm is situated on the spring line below Wytham Hill at the junction of Corallian beds with the Oxford clay beneath. This conforms to the pattern in the area, there being several settlements in a corresponding position below Wytham Hill.

DORCHESTER, 7 Rotten Row

Foundation trenches at the rear of No. 7 Rotten Row, Dorchester, uncovered a shallow, supine E-W adult burial and the scattered remains of at least three other inhumations. The single, undisturbed burial, with its head to the W, may have been buried in a coffin as an iron nail was found against the lower spine.

Burials had already been uncovered under nos. 5-6 Rotten Row and also beneath a previous extension to no. 7. These burials appear to represent part of a cemetery which lies within the Roman walled town, and a short distance S-W of the abbey. This may indicate the position of one of the three parish churches recorded by Leyland in 1542 all of which lay close to the abbey and have since disappeared.

EYNESHAM, High Street

Mechanical excavation for a 9.5m x 4.5m swimming pool at the rear of 'The Shrubbery', High Street, Eynsham, revealed late R.B. and A.S. pottery. The swimming pool cut into the underlying gravel to a depth of approximately 1m and many post and stake holes were revealed cutting into the gravel in the sides of the trench. The E end of the trench revealed a buried turf line at 0.5m, which sealed a layer of occupational debris. Animal bone, late R.B. coarse wares, two fragments of grass-tempered pottery and a doughnut-shaped loom weight were found in spoil excavated from this layer. This site is approximately 55m N of excavations carried out within the precincts of Eynsham Abbey by Margaret Gray in 1971 when Prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and Saxon-Norman pottery was recovered (CBA Newsletter no. 2,). A small group of bones representing at least

two adults was seen.

EYNESHAM, Tanners Lane, Off Queen Street

Excavation for the foundations of a new house in the garden of Hythe Croft, adjacent to the former Tannery, produced substantial pieces of C4th R.B. grey wares and three large sherds of grass tempered pottery of A.S. type. There was also a hone. Various features could be seen cut into the natural gravel but their functions were uncertain with the exception of a tan pit. Roman finds have frequently been made in the area including a *Follis* of Constantine.

FARMOOR-SWINFORD PIPE LINE

A water pipeline from Farmoor Reservoir to the treatment works of Swinford necessitated the stripping of a 15m wide corridor between the two terminals. A scatter of R.B. and medieval pottery was found along the N half of the pipe-line S of Swinford Farm. A complex of Roman features with associated late R.B. pottery was found cut into the gravel.

GREAT MILTON, Views Farm

A small cemetery was located in the course of excavating the foundations of a new bungalow at Views Farm. The site was visited as a result of a report appearing in the Oxford Mail; unfortunately the skeletal material had been removed by the police and incinerated on the orders of the coroner. Approximately six graves could be seen in the sections of the foundation trenches aligned N-S and pottery in the graves, including a small beaker, indicates a R.B. date for the cemetery.

KINGSTON BAGPUIZE, Kingston Hill Farm

Roman pottery, masonry and a mortar floor were recorded in a pipe trench on this site. A trial excavation in the vicinity of the pipe trench revealed the extent of the floor and more pottery and large numbers of cow horns were recovered.

KINGSTON BLOUNT

Two late I.A. cremation vessels were discovered in a pit by the side of 'Elizabeth Villa', Kingston Blount, by Mr. Collett whilst digging a sewer pipe trench.

Each vessel contained a cremation; the larger vessel contained that of an adult and the smaller bead rim bowl contained the remains of a child. The larger vessel, a jar, was of a general late Belgic shape and, in common with a necked bowl from the nearby late Belgic cremation burial at Watlington (*Oxoniensia* XXIII 1958, 139-41), exhibited a false cordon at the base of the neck, lightly incised grooves below the shoulder and a low foot ring. The Kingston Blount cremations appear to provide more evidence for a late spread of Belgic burial practise into the Upper Thames Region.

OXFORD, Austin Friars

Two small excavations were carried out to establish the origins of a small stone building against the E boundary wall of the college. The conclusion was that it had been adapted from a Friary building, but that the visible stone mouldings were reused and had been inserted since the Dissolution.

OXFORD, Blackfriars

Two small trenches were dug at the W end of the church to facilitate the interpretation of the site. The excavation established the probability that the N Aisle of the Nave belonged to the first phase of construction, and the possible porch, was shown to have been added at a later date. The existence of a probable Galilee found in 1974 outside the extended W End of the church was confirmed. Work on the final report of the excavations 1961-1975 should be ready for publication in 1976.

OXFORD, CHRIST CHURCH

The reflooring of basements in the E range of Peckwater Quadrangle exposed a large area of unstable fill which must represent the cellars of the C17th quadrangle. In the S range of the cathedral cloister, builders dug

up two unused late medieval printed floor tiles, again from the fill of an old cellar.

OXFORD, Greyfriars

Excavations on the N and S of Turn Again Lane have exposed walls and robber trenches of the S and E ranges of the Great Cloister. Associated floor surfaces were encountered including an area of 16 inlaid tiles in situ in the alley of the E range. Stoneware found in the robber trenches suggests a C17th date for the robbing of the footings. Further excavation is planned.

OXFORD, Osney Abbey

Widening of the Mill Stream exposed a massive rubble footing and a parallel stone drain, probably associated with one of the Abbey's waterfront buildings.

OXFORD, 51-55 Holywell Street

Two small trenches were dug to establish the line of the outer medieval town wall (a defensive feature, apparently unique in England). The trench coincided with a blocked postern gate, approached by a stair on the town side, the threshold being 3m below modern ground level and probably very close to the medieval water level. Subsequent salvage work exposed more of this wall, which must have formed the S bank of the town ditch until the C17th. The N bank was also recorded beneath the Holywell Street houses.

OXFORD, 14-15 St. Ebbe's Street

Numerous medieval pits were observed during the contractor's excavation, and a small section was recorded through the earliest road surfaces of Beef Lane.

OXFORD, St. John's College

Staircases 9 and 10, Canterbury Quad, were observed and recorded. A sequence of decorations was noted and early C10th deposits recovered from beneath the floors.

WALLINGFORD CASTLE, ABS Site

In November the Architects Benevolent Society excavated a trench 6m x 1m to a depth of 1m 50cms in the Outer Bailey of the Castle in order to keep its planning permission valid on the site. The stratigraphy of the tip layers containing 12th and 13th pottery was similar to that recovered in the 1972 excavation.

WALLINGFORD, Milbrook Development Site

Trial excavations were carried out on this site by R. Thomas and the Wallingford Society. Two Victorian pits and a ditch of I.A. date were the only features located.

WANTAGE, Belmont Park

A series of trial trenches was dug at the above site in order to learn something of the nature of Roman occupation in the area which has produced material in some quantity. No evidence was found of Roman occupation and the only feature located was an undateable round-bottomed ditch.

WEST HAGBOURNE, Hagbourne Hill

A proton-magnetometer survey was carried out along the line of the A34 extension in this area by the Oxford Research Laboratory for Archaeology and some of the in-service training students, with negative results.

WILCOTE

A measured survey of the earthworks of the shrunken settlement of Wilcote was made in the face of a threat to plough the previously unploughed site. A small amount of excavation revealed the outline of a stone building and a patterned pitched stone cobbled yard of two phases. No dating evidence was found. On seeing this stonework the farmer decided that it would be of no advantage to complete the work. A minimum of disturbances had been caused to the previously unploughed part of the site.

ABINGDON AREA ARCHAEOLOGICAL and HISTORICAL SOCIETY - J.B. Carter

In late 1974 the Society's digging activities were centred on the Ashville Trading Estate site. In July work began at Langfords Garden Centre, a town site in Stert Street. In both instances these sites were excavated under the direction of the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit.

As a result of an enthusiastic response to an open day at Ashville in November 1974, with more than 3000 visitors, the Society was prompted to promote an exhibition called 'A Day of Archaeology' in May 1975 at Abingdon Abbey. Although the exhibition hinged on the Ashville site, it also attempted to show other aspects of archaeological work such as conservation methods, seed/bone analysis, and historical research. The whole 'Day' was also designed to attract anyone interested in the history of Abingdon. The success of the exhibition, which attracted 4000 visitors was due mainly to the enormous amount of work on the part of our own members; however, without the whole-hearted co-operation of the professionals from Abingdon and Woodstock Museums and the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit, it would have been much more difficult to organise.

During the past two years the Society has been increasingly involved with historical research. Members have for some time been pursuing the following projects; the transcription of Borough leases of the mid C16th to mid C19th, the copying of old Abingdon photographs, and the distribution of public houses in Abingdon in the past. At a meeting in June this trend was reflected in the Society's decision to change its name to the 'Abingdon Area Archaeological and Historical Society'. Our principal aims for 1976 will include a closer liaison with other organisations concerned with promoting the history of Abingdon.

BOROUGH OF ABINGDON "OLD PHOTOGRAPHS" - R. James for Abingdon Area Arch. & Hist.Soc.

This project, started in June 1974, to collect and preserve old Photographs of Architectural and Historical value has produced some very good results, and this year, owing to extra help with photography and research should move forward rapidly. We now have well over 200 photographs copied and these are used for Society displays, local

fetes, and schools, thus advertising the project to increase our coverage.

CHESS VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL and HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This year the Society has started a Field Survey of the Chess Valley, which includes parts of Hertfordshire.

Some months were spent on the initial planning, buying maps, finding out what work had been done there in the past, obtaining permission from landowners, and in working out an acceptable format.

A regular field walk now takes place once a month and there are evening meetings for planning, recording and processing finds.

We are working within the Bucks County Antiquities Survey which is organised on a parish basis, and while our documentary research, which unfortunately lags behind field work as it is less attractive, follows these lines, field work is largely governed by which areas are available. We are also in contact with the Herts Antiquities Survey and provide them any relevant information.

An area of R.B. occupation has been found about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the known Sarratt Roman building, of C2nd - C4th A.D. and a concentration of Mesolithic flakes, blades, microliths and cores has been found at Latimer Park Farm. Various surface formations, 2 meadow flotation complexes and possible fish ponds, have been recorded and drawn on 1:1250 scale and finds are recorded on OS 6" maps and on index cards supplied by the County Museum, Aylesbury and the Herts Archaeological Department. Copies are returned to us for our own finds index.

Collectors with metal detectors are active in the Chess Valley; we have made contact with them and have been allowed to photograph their finds and record as near as possible where they were found. In return we give them copies of the photographs and have had some of the coins identified for them.

AMPTHILL & DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL & LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY - K.J. Fadden

A project for studying aerial photographs of Bedfordshire, taken by Hunting Survey Ltd.,

for the National College of Agricultural Engineering at Silsoe was reported in 1975 (Newsletter 5).

The photographs covered an area of approximately 320 square miles and were taken on July 21st, 1974 from 6,000' in a vertical plane giving a reduction of 6,000' to 6". Each photograph overlapped the next by 50% giving complete coverage and allowing the use of a stereoscope for this study. A second set of photographs were taken at the same time by a camera which took four exposures simultaneously, on film sensitive to a) infra red b) orange c) green and d) red. The four exposures were printed on the same sheet to facilitate easy comparison. The scale used was 6,000' to 4". The timing of the survey was ideal as it followed almost drought conditions just before most cereal crops had turned colour.

The Society was allowed to use the photographic laboratory at the college. To assist in recording, a series of cards were printed with columns for O.S. reference, name of the Parish, and a description of the feature. Each photograph was allocated a card, which was numbered accordingly.

The photographs were scanned in a set order at least three times 1) for square features 2) for round features 3) for linear features. When a possible crop mark was found it was entered on a card with a brief description and grid reference.

The information from completed cards was transcribed onto lists and made into booklet form, copies of which were passed to the Bedfordshire Sites and Monuments Record and to other responsible bodies in the County.

This project, was carried out by members of the Society, many of whom were initially completely inexperienced in aerial photograph scanning. The crop marks recorded must obviously be treated with caution, as they need not necessarily be archaeological in origin, but already DMVs have been identified. A number of suspected barrows were located in areas known to show surface scatter and at least one R.B. villa has been found.

WRAYSBURY HISTORY GROUP - Victor Marchant

MANOR FARM

The excavation, which commenced as a rescue

operation, is at an early stage and at present has enigmatic features. The site gently slopes away from the parish church of St. Andrews, which marks the highest point in this low-lying area, close to Runnymede.

Immediately below the plough line in most of the trenches so far dug, a thin layer of gravel lying flat is evident. In some trenches this appears to be a compacted surface, or the remains of one, but no clear edges to it have yet been determined.

Intermingled with this gravel are flint artefacts apparently of neolithic and earlier date, potsherds (over 5,000 so far) mainly early Saxon to high medieval, many animal bones, some with signs of butchering, and much iron slag. It seems reasonable to assume from the unrolled state of the flints that they derive from somewhere very near and that they are in their present position owing to disturbance in antiquity or more recently, or soil-creep down the slope.

The gravel "surface" has also produced a late Roman coin of Valens (364-378, copper or bronze, minted in Arles) and a silver Saxon sceatta of about 680-720 AD. The sceatta has E-Kent links; they have been found sporadically along the London-Oxford axis and along the Icknield Way and the largest hoard has been found at Aston Rowant where these routes intersect.

Amongst the small finds are some possible iron knife blades, two lead loom weights, part of a bone comb and a blue glass bead.

Excavation continues in the directions indicated by a geophysical survey.

PUBLICATION IN CBA 9 REGION

BEDFORDSHIRE

Bedfordshire Archaeological Journal published annually by the Bedfordshire Archaeological Council, price £3.00 plus postage, subscription price £2.50 plus postage. Volume 9, 1974, was used as a volume of essays in honour of the retirement of F.W. Kuhlicke as Director of Bedford Museum and Hon. Curator of the Pritchard Museum of Bedford Modern School.

Volume 9 appeared in October 1975; volume 10, 1975, is in the press and due to appear June 1976.

Editor, David H. Kennett, 55 Mount Grace Road, Stopsley, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU2 8EP (0582-24654)

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Journal of Northampton Museums and Art Gallery
10 (June 1974) and 11 (December 1974)

BERKSHIRE

The Berkshire Archaeological Journal vol. 67
1973-4 issued free to members of the Berkshire Arch. Soc. £2 from Hon. Sec., Turstins, High St., Upton, nr. Didcot, Oxon. (v. review article earlier in Newsletter)

CBA Group 9 Newsletters 2 (40p), 3, 4 (45p) 5 (50p) are available from Department for External Studies, Rewley House, Wellington Square, Oxford.

List of CBA Publications

(a) Publications from Headquarters

A Survey and Policy of Field Research in the Archaeology of Great Britain, Part 1 (1948). Price 28p post free.

The Council for British Archaeology: The First Decade, by W F Grimes. Reprinted from *The Archaeological News Letter*, 8.5 (January 1955). Price 7p post free.

Archaeological Bulletins of the British Isles (title changed to *Archaeological Bibliography* in 1954).

1940-46 (1949) Price 20p post free

1948-49 (1952) Price 20p post free

Archaeological Bibliography for Great Britain and Ireland

1950-51 (1954) Price 20p post free

1954 (1956) Price 40p post free

1957 (1958) Price 40p post free

1961 (1964) Price 70p post free

1967 (1969) Price £1 post free

1968 (1970) Price £1 post free

1969 (1971) Price £1.50 post free

1970 (1972) Price £1.50 post free

1971 (1973) Price £1.50 post free

1972 (1974) Price £1.50 post free

1973 (1975) Price £3 post free

British Archaeological Abstracts: issued half-yearly: Annual subscription £9 for institutions. £4.50 for individuals. Back numbers available from Vol. 1 (1968) at £7 for institutions. £3.50 for individuals.

Archaeological Site Index to Radiocarbon Dates for Great Britain and Ireland: Price 35p

Supplement for 1971 (1972). Price 75p post free

Supplement for 1972 (1973). Price 75p post free

Memorandum on the Ancient Monuments Acts, 2nd Edition (1954). Price 4p post free.

Current Archaeological Offprints and Reports, issued yearly: Annual subscription 80p post free.

Calendar of Excavations, issued monthly from March until September, November with January summary. Annual subscription £1.75 post free.

Archaeology in Britain. CBA Annual Report. Price 50p post free.

CBA Research Report No. 9, 'The Iron Age in the Irish Sea Province' (1972). Price £1.50 post free.

CBA Research Report No. 10, 'Current Research in Romano-British Coarse Pottery' (1973). Price £4 post free.

CBA Research Report No. 11, 'The Effect of Man on the Landscape: The Highland Zone' (1975). Price £7.50 post free.

A Guide to British Topographical Collections (1974). Price £4 post free.

The Erosion of History: Archaeology and Planning in Towns (1972). Price £1.25 post free.

Responsibility and Safeguards in Archaeological Excavation (1972). Price 15p post free.

Handbook of Scientific Aids and Evidence for Archaeologists (1970). Price 35p post free.

Standard Record Cards (8in. x 5in.) 50p per 100 plus postage.

Industrial Record Cards 50p per 100 plus postage.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Record of Bucks 1974

Milton Keynes Journal 1974

OXFORDSHIRE

Oxoniensia vol. xxxix (1974)

C.B.A. 9 MEMBERSHIP 1975-6

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