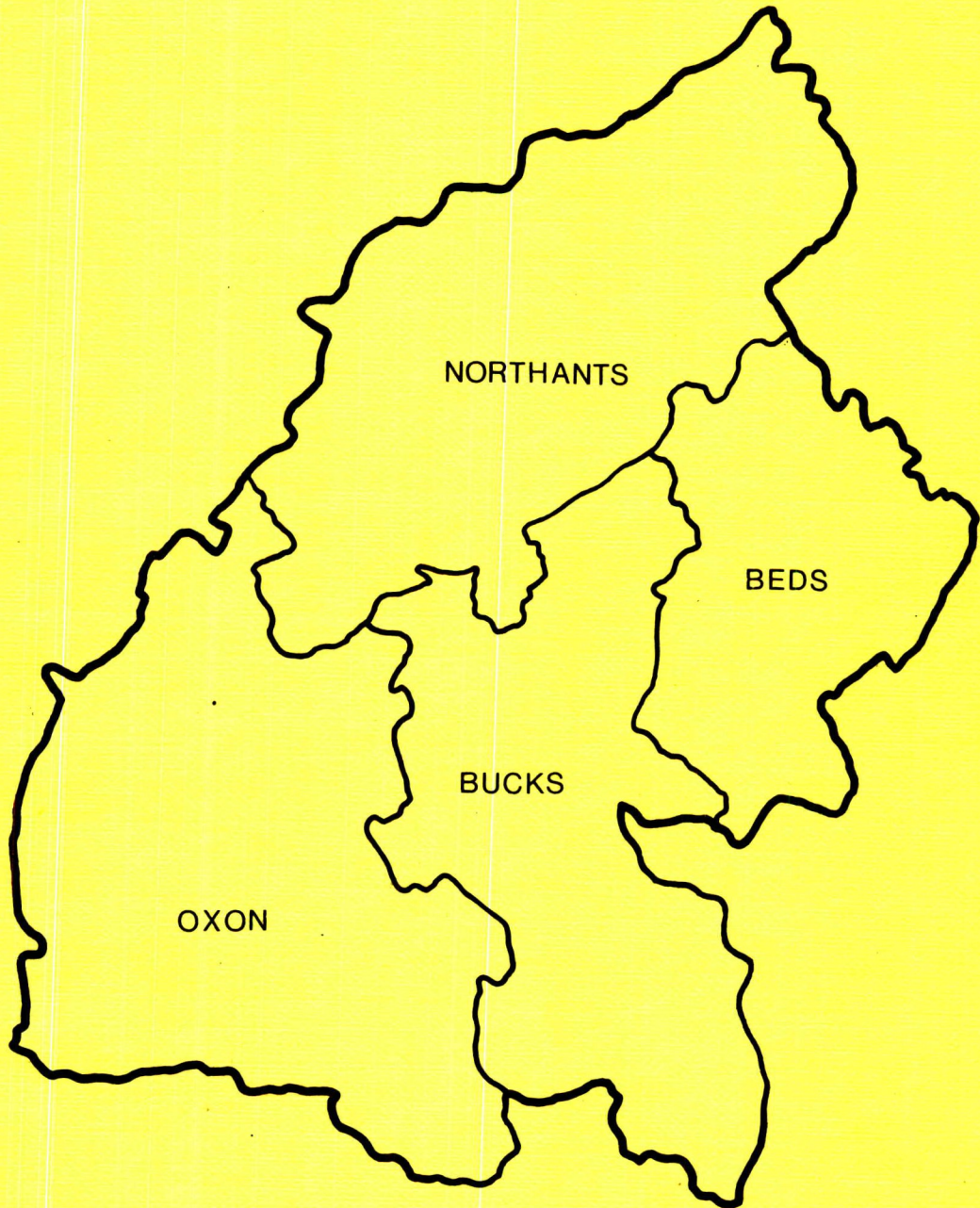


C B A 9



NEWSLETTER 8 1978

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COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY

REGIONAL GROUP 9

(Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire)

NEWSLETTER No. 8 1978

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EDITORIAL

The arrangement of this Newsletter is in chronological sequence except that most of the units require separate offprints which necessitates keeping their reports together. This year the entries of the units are very much longer than the sum of the contribution by part-timers so the overall chronological sequence is quite disturbed! In spite of this societies and other bodies are invited to consider taking offprints in future years.

If the number of part-time contributions, and the worries about the lack of support expressed by the Chess Valley Society, represent the true picture, then we are witnessing a fall-off in work by part-timers. This is most worrying, perhaps an inquiry into the causes and possible remedies could be a topic for discussion at the Annual Conference. Have the professionals warned off amateur groups too much? Many of the small-scale excavations on unthreatened sites carried out 10-15 years ago, although then contributing to archaeological knowledge, would not now do so. However, this does not mean that there is now no place for small-scale excavations. Some threatened sites have had to be abandoned by the DoE and units because of lack of resources. Many apparently less important sites, such as village earthworks, never even come to the attention of the professionals. Small-scale work on such sites before destruction would be most useful to confirm that they were indeed not important. Sometimes of course there are surprises. The Saxon site at Raunds, Northants, was discovered by an excavation of two weeks by six part-timers. The expected C13th buildings were found but overlaid an Anglo-Saxon graveyard. The site has now become a full scale professional excavation under the auspices of the DoE and the Manpower Services Commission (p. 14).

If excavation is not a society's choice then there are such invaluable activities as grave-yard recording and fieldwork. Many would claim that fieldwork was more important than excavation. Any group feeling it does not know what to do usefully should contact their local Unit, County Authority or Museum. In all the regions advice will readily be given on what wants investigating most urgently.

On a more cheerful note it is good to see the contributions on buildings - the new group based at Dunstable is doing excellent work. Perhaps one day we will even have some information from an industrial archaeologist.

This Newsletter has been collected together even more rapidly than usual and I have not had time to follow up contributors for the projected longer articles and regional reviews of various topics. This will be pursued next year.

I would like to thank Trevor Rowley and the secretarial staff at Rewley House for the actual production of the Newsletter and seeing it through the press in time for the Annual Report Conference. I would also like to thank Bill Fowler for all his work with many previous Newsletter editions.

David Hall

PREHISTORIC

MARSWORTH, Buckinghamshire (SP 932145) - *Pitstone Local History Society*

Stripping of topsoil by quarry excavators in the summer of 1976 revealed quantities of large Pleistocene mammal bones. These were lifted as an urgent rescue operation and sent to the Palaeontology Department of the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) for identification. An enforced halt in quarrying meant that work could proceed in 1977 under more orderly conditions with the approval of the County Museum at Aylesbury, and, more recently, under the personal direction of Andrew Currant of the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) many more specimens have been recovered. The species including Hippopotamus Amphibius, Megaloceros, Gigantius, Cervos Elaphus, Bos Primigenius and Elephas Antiquus. These are all thought to date from the last interglacial period at an estimated age of 120,000 years. Finds extend over a linear distance of $\frac{1}{4}$ mile and the width of the deposit is not yet apparent: the ideal conditions for studying the stratigraphy make the site of unusual value.

BRIXWORTH, Northamptonshire - Paul Martin

Work continues to be carried out on the distribution and settlement pattern of prehistoric sites in Northamptonshire. More Neolithic and Bronze age sites are being located by flint scatters in the county and an interesting settlement pattern is gradually emerging. Earlier sites dating to the Mesolithic period are also being located in similar fashion. This season's work has so far located four sites dating to this period.

Scatters of flint characteristic to the period have been found in four parishes and all seem to favour heath land or river sands: Maxey TF 124089; Southorpe TF 077022; Wittering TF 047015; Wollaston SP 896646.

Two of the larger scatters of flints dating to the Mesolithic period were identified at Brixworth (Kidway SP 751698; 2nd and 3rd Whaddon SP 734681). Both sites seem to represent the later Mesolithic period and were located again on light soils.

Analysis of the flints from these two sites gave emphasis to the patinated material rather than the non-patinated.

On acid soils heavier patination on flints indicates an early dating. In this assemblage the early implements (scalene triangles, blunted points etc.) are patinated and that non-patinated material indicated Secondary Neolithic occupation in forms of polished axe fragments and transverse arrow-heads.

It was interesting to note that on all six sites Secondary Neolithic material was obtained.

Analysis of the artefacts from the two sites in the parish indicated later Mesolithic occupation by the standard types associated with the period.

Scalene triangles and rod-forms were found, but an abundance of waste-flake material dominated the assemblage which was in association with blade cores. The flint-scatter in Whaddon field covered around 3 acres whereas the Kidway field covered only $\frac{1}{2}$ acre. It was interesting to find that both sites occupied positions close to water sources.

Illustrations of the artefacts are given from the two sites in Fig. 1.



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25



26



Figure 1

Mesolithic flints from Brixworth, Northants
No. 1-10 ($\frac{1}{3}$); 11-26 ($\frac{2}{3}$)

The number of flints illustrated represents 1.7% of the two assemblages put together.

Key to figure:

1 - 5	Blade cores,	Whaddon field
6 - 10	Blade cores,	Kidway field
11 - 12	Blunted points,	Kidway field
13 - 14	Blunted points,	Whaddon field
15	Scalene triangle,	Whaddon field
16	Scalene triangle,	Kidway field
17 - 18	Blunted points,	Whaddon field
19	Hollow based,	Whaddon field
20	Rod form,	Whaddon field
21	Blunted point,	Kidway field
22 - 23	Rod forms,	Kidway field
24 - 25	Rod forms,	Whaddon field
26	Rod form,	Whaddon field

GRENDON, Northamptonshire (SP 878023) - Glen Foard *for DoE and Northamptonshire County Council.*

Watching brief maintained on an extensive area of cropmarks during top-soil stripping prior to gravel extraction. Cropmarks revealed a number of ring ditches, including one large barrow with stone kerb, with later or earlier linear ditches.

Observation began in 1976 and has continued intermittently.

At least one linear ditch was shown to pre-date one ring ditch. Several collared urns containing cremation burials were recovered from within the ring ditches, in addition to one crouched inhumation. Extensive evidence of Saxon occupation was also recovered, including several grubenhauser, three of which were fully excavated, and which contained pottery with boss and stamp decoration. Several linear ditches and pits were also shown to be of Saxon date, one containing an inhumation. Traces of several ironsmelting furnaces were also recovered but these are of uncertain date.

Observation will continue as gravel extraction proceeds.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, Quarries - Denis Jackson *for DoE and Northamptonshire County Council.*

Rescue work ahead of gravel quarrying has been carried out on pit alignments at Ringstead (SP 979750) and at Grendon (SP 878620). The pits in both alignments were typically of even depth and spacing and each had squared corners. A small complete vessel dating to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age period was found in one of the pits at Ringstead and the pit alignment at Grendon was found to pre-date a presumed late Iron Age enclosure.

The work at Ringstead and Grendon raises interesting questions as to the date of pit alignments. It is hoped that further work will help to throw more light on this problem.

Rescue work ahead of ironstone quarrying has continued in 1977 on the extensive Iron Age and Romano-British settlement at Weekley (SP 884818). Early Iron Age round-houses have been investigated at Geddington (SP 875826) and at Oakley (SP 880868).

It is hoped that further work will be possible at Weekley and Oakley.

ROMANO-BRITISH

DORCHESTER, Oxfordshire - G.H. Hargreaves, R.P.F. Parker and A.W.F. Boarder

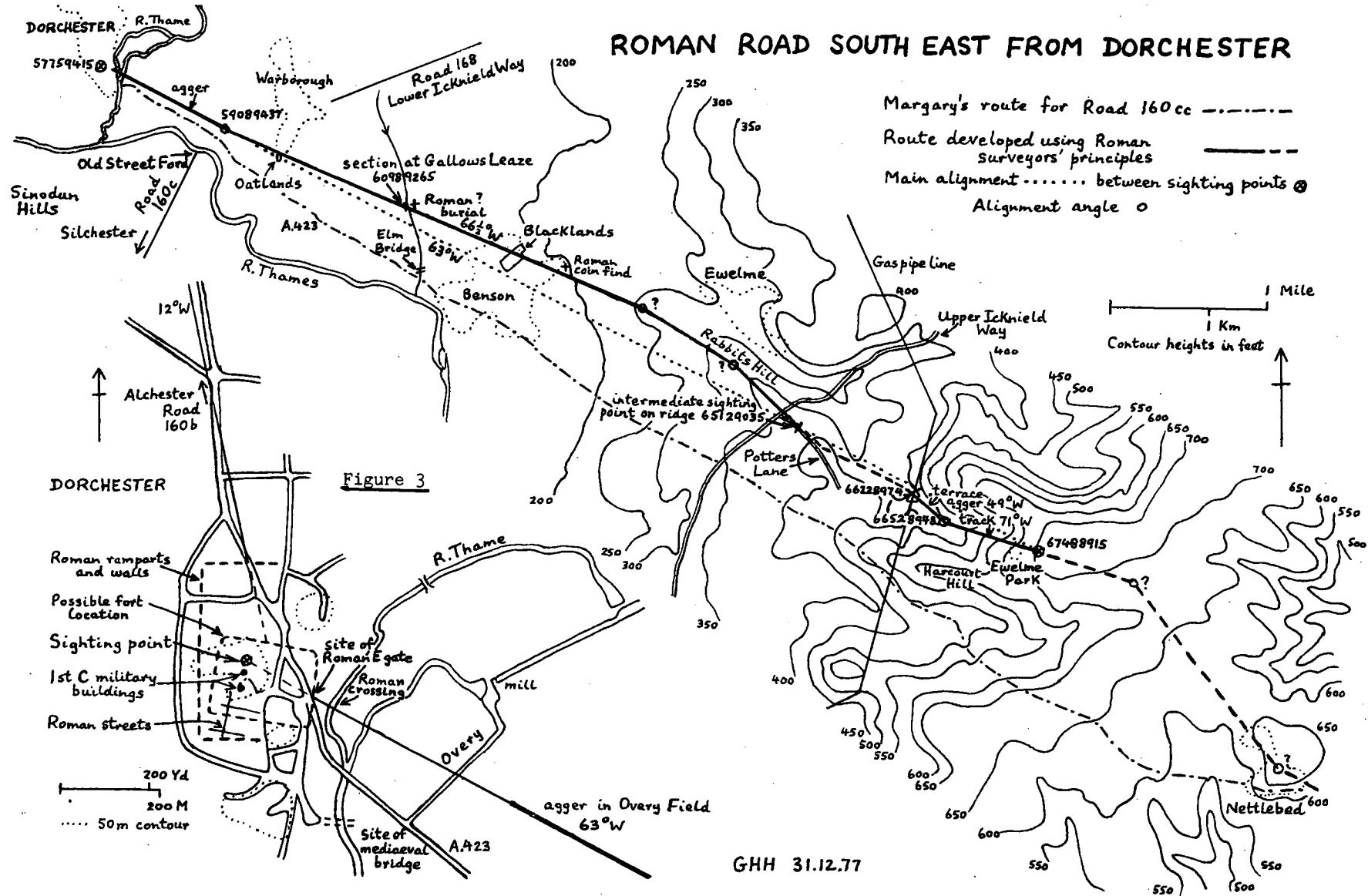
This note gives the results of a field survey carried out with the object of locating the Roman road directed SE out of Dorchester (Fig.2). In 1903 Codrington suggested a Roman road from Dorchester on the line of the A 423 to Benson, which has Roman settlement. Margary designated it Road 160c and indicated a route continuing via Nettlebed (see Fig. 3) to Henley, but no direct evidence of this road has been reported W of Henley. Road 160c from Silchester has been considered to connect with it over Old Street Ford, and Road 168 (Lower Icknield Way) must also connect to Dorchester from the SE. In the few literature references to the Roman crossing of the Thames into Dorchester this is assumed to be at the site of the medieval bridge, but this location is unlikely because it is not closely dominated either by the C2nd ramparts or by any fort represented by the C1st military buildings within them reported by Frere and by M. Hassall.

In Overy Field N of A 423 is an 800 yd. long broad, raised line visible from as far as the top of the Sinodun Hills and having a form, location and direction consistent with the agger of a Roman road leading from a Thames crossing directly out of the walled town. Careful measurement showed it would accord with an alignment sighted by a Roman surveyor directly between a high point adjacent to Hassall's military buildings and the edge of a high plateau at Ewelme Park in the Chilterns some 8 miles away. Study of the topography on this alignment indicated that a Roman surveyor setting out a road based on it would diverge N from it at a small angle to ascend the Rabbits Hill spur E of Benson, and the location of a hypothetical secondary alignment was deduced accordingly.

An opportunity to test this hypothesis was provided by the widening of a N-S drainage channel close to the boundary between Warborough and Benson, which left a W bank with a clean sloping face uninterrupted for more than a mile northwards from Elm Bridge. On this face, at Gallows Leaze, exactly on the postulated secondary alignment and 150 yd. N of the direct line between the sighting points, was found 18 in. below the modern surface a 6 in. thick 30 ft. long layer of flat limestone pieces surfaced with sandy gravel and on a thin foundation layer of debris laid directly on loam. This accords with the section of a 28 ft. Roman road. It was the only thing of its kind on the whole length of the face.

Apart from a low agger showing a few limestone pieces in the arable just W of the section, there is no surface sign of the road between Oatlands and Potters Lane, but alongside the secondary alignment are a burial long suspected to be Roman, a field suggestively called Blacklands, and a Roman coin find. By Potters Lane the course of the road in an area of old gravel pits is uncertain, but what appears to be its continuation has been found by a gas pipeline trench at the foot of the escarpment as packed flint-and-pebble laid on the chalk and buried under 3 ft. of loam. It lies beyond the W end of a terrace agger from which an ancient track leads straight up to the plateau sighting-point. The identification of this as the continuation is supported by the absence of any road in section in the gas pipeline trench on the ridge leading up to Harcourt Hill. It is expected that the road continues through Nettlebed down the spur with the Eix villa to Henley.

Assuming the agger in Overy Field has been correctly identified, it points to a Roman crossing of the Thames just below the N end of the modern bridge,



which is thus indicated to be the site of the E gate of the Roman town (see Fig. 3). The last Alchester road alignment is not directed on the high point in Dorchester, but to some other objective, consistent with it post-dating the initial Roman settlement. It is suggested that the Ewelme Park road is a military road contemporary with an early fort at Dorchester to whose E gate it leads, with the Alchester road directed to the fort N gate, and the N gate in the C3rd town walls located on it. Such an arrangement places constraints on the location of the fort, and one possibility for this is shown in Fig. 3.

DUNSTABLE, Bedfordshire - C.L. Matthews, *Manshead Archaeological Society*

The Manshead Society have continued rescue excavations in the SW quadrant of modern Dunstable, confirming that here was the cemetery of C3rd - C4th Roman Dunstable (Durocobrivae) and during the year 53 graves have been excavated bringing the total to 96 burials.

Some surprising burial customs are being discovered. Nine of the 53 had been beheaded but this need not mean that they were outcasts as some had been buried in substantial wooden coffins. At least one other man had died a violent death. He had been hit with a heavy sharp tool on the bridge of his nose, taking off the nose, the points of his cheek bones, and his upper lip. The body had been buried in the already existing grave of a young woman, probably from an influential family as she had been buried with a little box containing her personal jewellery. Was this a Roman murder and had the body been concealed in the existing grave?

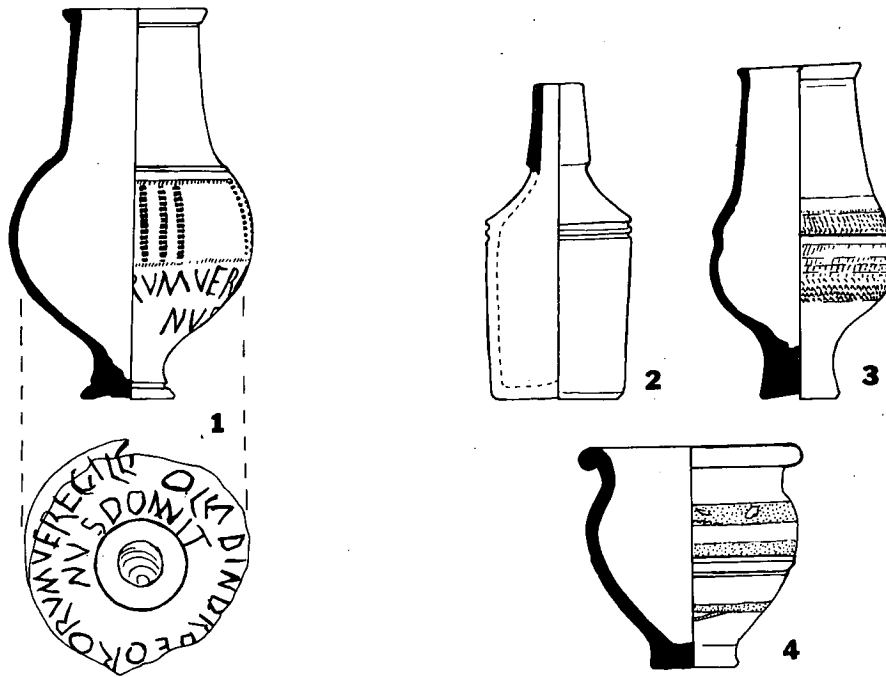
Several graves contained 'goodies'. A child (age 5/6) had her jewellery buried with her, probably in a bag or box as it was found in a small heap. These were of bracelets in shale, jet and gilded bronze, necklaces of beads (two of small glass beads on bronze wire), a fine woven bronze chain and pins of bronze and jet.

Several complete pots have been found, one being a small 'parchment ware' vessel probably from the Oxford kilns (Fig.4 No. 4). Perhaps the most interesting has an inscription scratched around the base which reads "OLLA DINDROECRORVMVERECILLI NVSDONVIT" (Fig.4 No. 1). (Translations will be welcome.) Other finds include a fine glass goblet and an unusual ceramic bottle. It is fired black and is highly burnished similar to the common 'pie-dish' (Fig. 4 No. 2 and 3). This was found with the colour-coated vessel No. 3.

Some of the bodies had apparently been quick-limed, causing the complete decay of parts of the skeleton. Fortunately the amount of lime used had in many cases been nominal, perhaps just a little scattered on the torso, enabling identification of all of the skeletons as male or female, young or old.

The cemetery appears to have been bounded by a shallow ditch and this had been used for some of the burials which are certainly no earlier than the last quarter of the C4th. The ditch had been destroyed in areas by even later activity, such as round hollows, probably used for winnowing grain and for corn drying kilns, suggesting that Roman life was still continuing in Dunstable well into the C5th. Another activity in this area was iron smelting. Slag is found in quantity scattered all over the area but no definite iron-smelting hearth has yet been identified.

Excavations continue.



Key for Figure 4

- No. 1 Beaker with brown slip on red paste. Inscription scratched into the fabric of the pot after firing. (Found in the grave of a young man aged approximately 20 years.)
- Nos. 2 and 3 (Grave group found with a beheaded male buried in a coffin.)
- 2 Ceramic bottle in coarse grey ware, burnished and fired black. Tooling marks on body of vessel.
- 3 Beaker in orange paste with light grey metallic slip.
- No. 4 Cream vessel with red painted bands. (Found in the grave of a beheaded male.)

HARRINGWORTH, Northamptonshire (SP 934980) - Denis Jackson for DcE and Northamptonshire County Council.

Rescue work ahead of ironstone quarrying revealed further Roman stone foundations, ditches and evidence of iron working in 1977 (see Northants. Archaeol. 9 (1974) 89). The date range of the site has been extended from the 1st to the C4th.

ODELL, Bedfordshire - Brian Dix *for DoE and Bedfordshire County Council.*

THE LATER IRON AGE AND ROMAN FARMS: AN INTERPRETATION

A further year's work at Harrold Gravel Pit, Odell, has continued to reveal much evidence of land-use and farming practice in the area during 'Belgic' and Roman times (cf. CBA Group 9 Newsletter, 7, 1977, 9-10 which, in offering a chronological summary not radically altered by recent work, has this note as its natural corollary).

The 'Belgic' farm established at the turn of the millennium was based on a sub-rectangular compound containing several circular post-built huts. To one side several large contiguous enclosures formed an area of arable fields. Other groups of smaller enclosures or paddocks had their ditches interrupted in a way more suited to controlling and penning livestock.

The provision and maintenance of permanent ditched boundaries implies that at least some aspects of the system of land-use were also permanent in the sense that similar requirements arose each year and it is likely that some variant of the infield-outfield system was used. Ditched drove-ways permitted the movement of livestock through areas of arable fields which might themselves have been grazed on occasion as subdivisions within them perhaps suggest.

Such evidence shows the processes of rural organisation to be already well advanced in the area at the eve of the Roman Conquest and industrial development might reasonably be expected to have reached a similar level. Certainly in the ceramic record at the site there is no clear Conquest horizon and forms continue into the second half of the C1st A.D. in the 'native' fine and coarse ware traditions. Indeed, the eventual ascendancy of the grey wares and the subsequent developments of the C2nd A.D. would seem to owe more to earlier 'Belgic'/Catuvellaunian influence than to Roman innovation. The 'Romanisation' of the local countryside was therefore merely hastened not engendered by the Roman Conquest, which, even then, probably did not stimulate commercial activity in the area to any great extent until a generation or so after its beginning.

It was presumably as a response to such economic improvement that changes began to occur in the farm layout towards the end of the C1st. The homestead, although now transferred to a more open situation, continued as an integral part of the surrounding field system. A succession of circular and rectilinear timber-framed buildings evidence the longevity of occupation at the new site which culminated in the C4th with the construction of a fairly substantial 'cottage-house'. Lying to one side of the living area was a yard containing two stone-lined wells and a covered drying-kiln in addition to other ancillary structures such as a circular hut.

The associated field system continued in use with its main boundary ditches being frequently re-cut. During its long period of use changes were made to the size of individual fields and entrances were often modified. However, it would appear that the farming system which followed continued the practices of earlier times. Live hedges probably perpetuated some of the field boundaries after the ditches themselves had finally filled, thereby explaining the limited evidence from the latest phases for linear features when compared to such other landscape features as quarry pits, wells and structures.

With the close of the Roman period there is a break in the settlement history of the site until the Middle Saxon period.

EXCAVATIONS AT MIDDLETON STONEY, Oxfordshire (SP 534233) - Trevor Rowley,
Oxford University Department for External Studies

The eighth and final season of excavation during the current programme of work at Middleton Stoney took place in July and August 1977. Work continued to be concentrated in the eastern enclosure in order to define the extent of Romano-British and Iron Age occupation and to date the enclosure boundary (see Fig. 5).

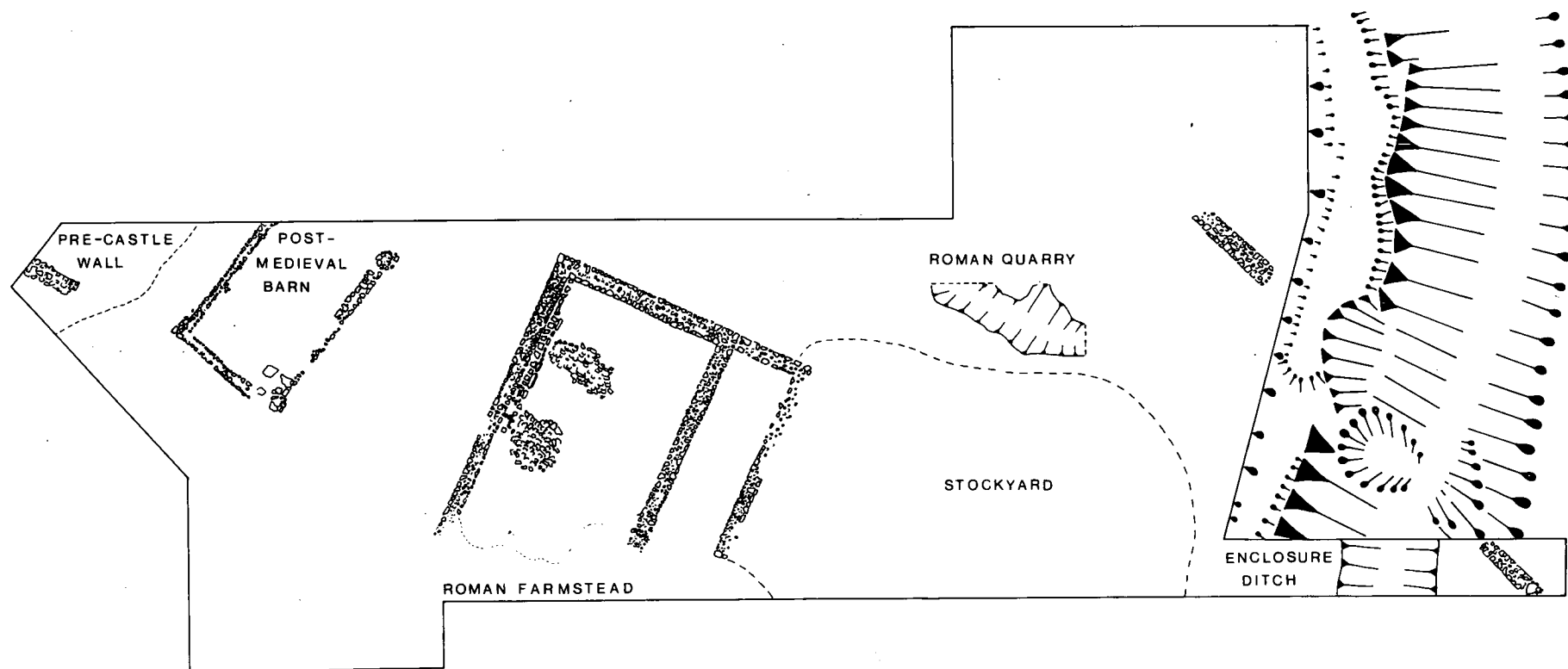
A section across the eastern ditch revealed it to be rather deeper (c. 2.50 m.) than its equivalent on the southern side (c.1.5 m.). Considerable quantities of worn Romano-British and Iron Age pottery were found in the primary silt and in lesser quantities throughout the rest of the ditch-fill. Only a scatter of medieval sherds were found in the upper layers. Extensive investigation under the rampart revealed considerable Romano-British stratified levels, including the remains of some considerable stone based structures which in turn lay on top of post-hole buildings of indeterminate date.

Two other finds were of particular importance, a large stone wall with distinctive coursing which lay on top of the Roman layer, and fragments of an early Saxon pot. On the basis of this evidence and the absence of medieval sherds from the make-up of the rampart it is possible to date the bank and ditch to somewhere during the late Anglo-Saxon period. The evidence is insufficient to indicate the nature of the structure, but it is tempting to link it with the late Saxon site at Sulgrave and tentatively identify it as a burgwerk.

Of the interior structures identified the largest was a curious structure measuring 5 m. by 4 m. consisting of pieces of slate/limestone set at an angle within shallow gullies. The form and function of the structure is not clear although it would appear to have been a fairly flimsy timber building almost certainly associated with the Romano-British farmstead.

The evidence from Middleton Stoney would now suggest the following chronology: 1) an Iron Age settlement, probably a farmstead of indeterminate size dating from c.200 BC to the Roman occupation; 2) a Romano-British farmstead dating from the late C1st through to c.200 AD; 3) the replacement of this structure by a villa/farmstead to the E, so far unlocated but identified through the sealed layers beneath the rampart; 4) possible post-Roman occupation, so far identified by a single pottery find; 5) a late Saxon fortification/enclosure, traces of which have now been found beneath the rampart and the make-up for the base of the Norman keep; 6) the Norman stone keep; 7) the C13th manor house, built in the eastern and western enclosure of the dismantled castle.

While it is not possible to talk confidently of continuous occupation on the site, it now seems reasonably clear that the site at Middleton Stoney has been the focus of occupation for over 2 millenia. This pattern of repeated occupation of a site or area over a considerable time-span is now apparent at a number of sites in the region.



Cutting 1 Excavated area showing Roman farmstead and enclosure and the post-Roman features

Figure 5

ANGLO-SAXON

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE CEMETERIES - David H. Kennett

In CBA Group 9 Newsletter, 6, 1976, 19-20, a preliminary note appeared on work done towards the long-term republication of the material from Anglo-Saxon cemeteries found in Northamptonshire before 1914. This note reports work done in the period August 1975 to November 1977.

1. Brixworth

Two cemeteries are known in this parish; neither is exactly located, and the material from both, now in Northampton Museum, is kept as a single group. Selected items have been drawn for use in general surveys of objects or aspects of the period. These include cruciform brooches and some of the pottery which is a valuable collection containing both cremation urns and accessory vessels from inhumation graves.

2. Cruciform Brooches

All cruciform brooches found in the county before 1914 have been drawn for a short survey. Only one from Holdenby is reliably associated.

3. Newnham

The material from this cemetery was drawn in 1975 as part of the preliminary work for a survey of the problems of Northamptonshire cemeteries.

4. Kettering, Stamford Road

This is the major task of the project to examine the Anglo-Saxon material of Northamptonshire. All material in Northampton Museum (mostly 1903 discoveries) has been drawn, as has much, but not quite all, of that in Kettering Museum (1929 discoveries). The Kettering long-boss potter with elaborate panel-style decorations has been shown to have products also at Thorpe Malsor and at Newton-in-the-Willows.

5. Pottery

In addition to the cremation urns from Kettering a corpus of the Anglo-Saxon pottery of Northamptonshire is being made; this has been drawn upon in Anglo-Saxon Pottery (Shire Archaeology, 1978).

6. Publication

The following papers have been accepted by the Journal of Northampton Museums and Art Gallery:

- 'The lost Anglo-Saxon finds from Cransley: a forgotten site';
- 'Burton Latimer: a group of Anglo-Saxon finds made in the late C19th';
- 'Bronze Age Urns and Saxon Finds from Rothwell, with an illustrated catalogue of the Bronze Age urns of Northamptonshire'.

In active preparation is:

- 'The cruciform brooches of Northamptonshire: cultural connections in the C6th'.

EAST SHEFFORD, Berkshire - David H. Kennett.

Finds were first made from the Anglo-Saxon cemetery at East Shefford, Berkshire in 1890; subsequent discoveries were reported in 1893 and some excavation was carried out in 1912. The material is in four museums: the British Museum, London, with the bulk of the 1890 material; Reading Museum, and the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford which have small groups of the C19th discoveries; and Newbury Museum for whom the 1912 excavations were conducted. The material was examined and drawn by D.H. Kennett in 1968-72, when Berkshire remained part of CBA Group 9. It is reported here as it raises important questions of the siting of cemeteries and their contents. Unfortunately, except for the 1912 finds, few grave associations have been preserved.

The range of finds is wide and rich. The pottery indicates the time-span covered by the site. From the C5th there are two small Buckelurnen of Myres' Group III, so similar as to suggest the same potter, and a small globular urn with an everted rim. From the second half of the C6th panelled ornament on an accessory vessel is one representative and the long-boss style stylised as vertical grooves is another.

Roman material is not uncommon: two disc brooches, not a pair, a bronze spoon shank, and a variety of coins (originally one assumes part of bead necklaces). One example of a bronze tubular object, comparable with the well-known one in grave 13 at Reading, can be matched by a buckle whose circular plate recalls the disc attachments of the military metalwork studied by Mrs. S.C. Hawkes and Dr. G.C. Dunning. An associated grave group from the 1912 excavations included two early cruciform brooches.

The site clearly has an early beginning, yet its position is curious. There are few other finds from the Lambourn Valley: a late C6th great square-headed brooch known from its bowl only was given to the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford in 1955; a grave with weapons - sword, axe, spearheads - was found at Ash Grove, Lambourn, before 1856. The site at East Shefford is away from the Roman road which runs along the top of the downs rather than the valley bottom. There is a fragment of Hug Ditch in the vicinity. It is tempting to suggest that the cemetery at East Shefford represents a group of people placed on the fringe of the Silchester region early in the C5th which then continued to prosper.

Prosperity is difficult to gauge from a mass of three hundred unassociated objects but five glass vessels at any site in England beyond Kent is unusual. Islip, Northants. with three pieces is a ready parallel from a comparable quantity of objects. There is a bowl and a cone beaker, both probably late Roman in origin, and two Kempston type cone-beakers and a C6th claw beaker in a distinctive amber metal. Perhaps the Silchester connection is relevant for the two late Roman pieces. Perhaps glass vessels were used in richer graves where buckets sufficed in other cemeteries. Only one bucket is known. Here to have the associations would be a great advantage.

Due to the lack of recorded associations, more is missing at East Shefford than is always missing in the archaeological mosaic. For distributional studies a catalogue of objects is being prepared, with grave association where known; the 1912 material is to be republished as integral to the whole site.

The most useful question that can be asked remains the reason why it is there. The postulations here made may prove on reflection to be less than the complete answer.

RAUNDS, Northamptonshire (SP 998734) - Andrew Roddington *for DoE, Northamptonshire County Council and Manpower Services Commission*

Two trial trenches by David Hall in 1975 revealed substantial stone walls and several burials, two of which had carved stone covers thought to be Saxon in date. From the trenches the relationship between the burials and the stone walls was not clear. The site was considered suitable for a largescale excavation because of its apparent continuity from the Saxon to Medieval periods and because of the possibility of an Anglo-Saxon church associated with the burials.

An area of some 1300 sq.m. has been stripped of topsoil by machine and several outlying trial trenches dug. Beneath an extensive spread of demolition rubble the walls of a manor house have been revealed, this building is some 29 m. long and 7 m. wide at its latest phase. Fragments of pottery date the demolition of the building to the late C13th or early C14th. At the W. end of the building, adjacent to what is apparently the service wing is a large circular stone building with walls some 1.1 m. thick, apparently a dovecote. The walls of this survive to a height of 0.6 m. and show a definite taper. Three more burials have been found to the SE of the manor and there is the possibility of several more.

Work is currently concentrating on the area of burials and the E. end of the manor in an attempt to solve the question of a church. As yet it is not certain whether there are a few burials associated with a manorial chapel or a number associated with a pre-manor church.

MEDIEVAL

BEDFORD, Peacocks Yard and Salvation Army Sites (TL 048496) - Jane Hassall and Peter Woodward *for North Bedfordshire Borough Council and the Bedfordshire County Council.*

Redevelopment of the area between River Street and Horne Lane presented a threat of total destruction of the archaeology of the area. Middle Saxon pottery had been recovered from the Midland Road to the N and the brewery site to the S, so that a possible early settlement was suspected. The site also lies across the suspected line of the later Saxon town-boundary and the Saffron Ditch, featured on Speed's map of 1610. The relationships between these features was of prime importance in tracing the urban origins and development of Bedford N and W of the river. Consequently rescue excavations were planned and undertaken in the form of trial trenching. This proved to be the most productive and economical way of testing a large area, and machine trials were backed up by several small hand-dug trenches to provide more detailed contextual information.

No traces of a Middle Saxon settlement were uncovered, but many later features were found. Saxo-Norman to Early Medieval rubbish pits occurred right across the area, but tailed off westwards, stopping altogether a little short of River Street. Several large stone wells with the remains of stone steps attached to them were uncovered, reminiscent of that found at St. Johns Street, Bedford in 1976.

The Saffron Ditch was discovered below 1.5 m. or so of overburden. It was a wet ditch still, some 10 m. wide with sloping sides. Material of chiefly C17th date was recovered from it. A small boundary ditch was uncovered to the W on the Salvation Army site. This was 2.40 m. wide with flat base and steep sides and running NNW-SSE. No dating evidence was recovered, but the feature was sealed by C12th rubbish pits.

There is no chance of any further work because of redevelopment of the entire site. The results of excavation will be published as part of the Bedford Monograph volume of the Bedfordshire Archaeological Journal vol.13. 1978. The finds are deposited at Bedford Museum.

GROVE PRIORY, Bedfordshire (SP 923226) - Evelyn Baker *for Bedfordshire County Council.*

Work has continued almost without break since September 1976 on this alien priory of the order of Fontevrault in advance of sand extraction under the direction of Evelyn Baker. This is a rare opportunity to strip most of a small complete priory site with possibly an unusual plan. The illustration (Fig.6) is from a drawn survey by Peter Woodward assisted by Mark Gregson, and shows areas examined since 1973.

David Devereux supervised excavation during the autumn and winter of 1976 on area C, to determine the function of one of the closes in the SW of this well-preserved earthwork site, and to determine the chronology of the ditches relating to it. The earliest activity here took the form of a gully containing pottery of the mid C2nd, but there were a few sherds which may be Iron Age. A grubenhaus of the two-post type, with early middle Saxon pottery was found, giving the first structural evidence for Saxon occupation. Saxon pottery and indeterminate features had been found elsewhere on the site in areas A and B. A sequence of ploughing activity from the Saxon period through to medieval ridge-and-furrow was demonstrated. The latest features were flimsy timber structures, possibly animal sheds, but more probably associated with cattle penning; they were functioning in the C13th to C14th. Thereafter, the close seems to have been used for grazing.

Richard Thomas supervised the examination of area D in the summer of 1977, to establish the sequence of boundary ditches and examine close function. The boulder clay which overlies the sand proved to be particularly difficult here, but the indistinct linear features cut into it were probably the result of ploughing activity. The stripping of the close just to the N of the area by quarry scrapers revealed a cobbled trackway and traces of buildings. These were fragmentary and almost certainly post-medieval.

During the summer the redundant Grove Church, across the county boundary in Buckinghamshire, underwent conversion to a dwelling house. The church is only a few hundred yards from the main site, and is probably constructed at least partially from priory material. Robert White supervised the excavation of service trenches in and around the church with the agreement of Buckinghamshire County Museum. Two medieval burials were found, one in a stone coffin; they were subsequently re-interred. Re-used architectural fragments built into the walls of the church were recorded by David Wilkinson.

Since June 1977 work has been concentrated on the claustral area, B. The trench unfinished in 1976 has been extended, and an area totalling 1500 sq.m. is being examined. Turf was removed mechanically, revealing

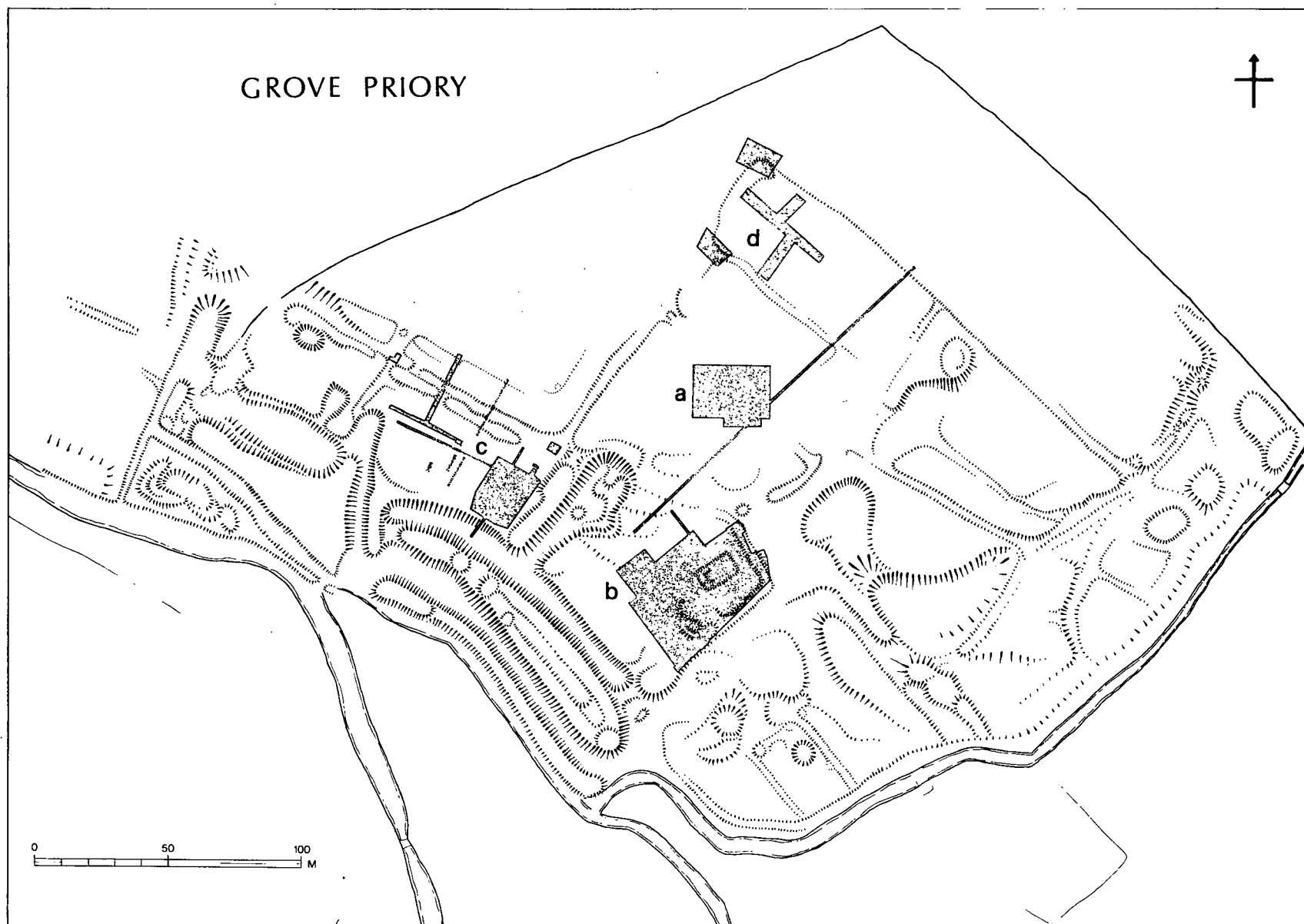


Figure 6

dense areas of collapsed and robbed buildings. Three ranges of post-medieval buildings were recognized, together with many modifications and extensions. They probably represent the farm which replaced the priory. They have flimsy carstone footings laid directly onto the previous ground surface, and would have carried timber superstructures. The large quantities of ceramic roof-tiles overlying them indicate the roofing material. Two of the ranges appear to have been domestic, and contained hearths. The third may have been a stable block or dairy. Pottery ranging from the C15th to C17th was associated with them, together with a great many iron objects. These late buildings are partly re-using the more substantial footings of earlier structures, and even the terraced cobbled yards incorporate levelled walls.

The medieval pattern of walls appearing beneath the post-medieval sequences is becoming extremely complex. At present there is no discernible conventional monastic plan. Even the position of the church is not certain, though a possible monastic graveyard, bounded by a stone wall on its western limit, is situated to the S of a large rectangular building discovered in 1975. Already it is clear that there are several periods of major stone buildings, with re-building and modification. One broad foundation may have been turned 'inside out', with its external face providing an internal one at a later date.

Work will continue on this important and productive area until spring.

OXFORD, Paradise Street - *Oxford University Archaeological Society*

Excavation of two trial trenches to discover if there were any occupation layers or waterfronts between the castle and the Isis was carried out by the Oxford University Archaeological Society.

The first trench exposed some evidence of C11th occupation as a thick clay daub spread. This had been flooded and covered by river silts until the C14th when a building of sleeper wall construction was erected and occupied. This structure was then covered by soil deposits and finally by buildings and rubbish of the C19th brewery.

The second trench exposed a number of river walls. The first consisting of a line of posts (c15cm. diameter) of C14th date. In the C15th a stone wall with facing stones on the riverside, superseded the wooden posts and probably lasted until it was robbed to provide stones for an C18th wall and towpath. This wall formed the footing for the present river wall, which also shows several re-builds up to the C19th.

The field survey group of the Society has discovered an Iron Age site and investigated the extent of plough damage to the Roman Villa in Cumnor Parish.

The Oxford University Archaeological Society hopes to continue excavating in and around Oxford and also hopes to complete the field survey of the Parish of Cumnor.

SEGENHOE CHURCH, RIDGEMONT, Bedfordshire - John Bailey

Regular visits have been made during 1977, following the complete measured survey of this derelict church made by the group in 1975, to note additional details that are revealed as plaster falls from the walls as a result of weathering.

The decay of this church was inevitable following the building of the fine Bedford church to Sir Gilbert Scott's design in the 1850s, which took over as the parish church. Segenhoe was left lost among the remains of the deserted village from which the church was named, and is now part of Ridgemont.

The church was much modified in the Georgian period with the addition of a new E window in the chancel and in the nave and with the addition of a new tower at the W end.

There is, however, considerable evidence of the details of the C11th Norman chancel with the complete chancel arch and two complete N windows, one of which has a remarkable lintel decorated with primitive design of saltire crosses and circles which has the 'feel' of Saxon work.

The nave is C14th/13th work with only the N of the two original aisles remaining. Details of the medieval windows blocked in the C18th can now be seen in the gaps in the plaster.

A repositioned Norman door in the S wall of the nave with billet decoration survives complete.

A set of scale plans, elevations, and sections has been made of the church in its present state, so that there is a basis for further survey work if it is finally demolished, falls into complete decay, or is subject to an archaeological excavation.

THRAPSTON, Northamptonshire (SP 996788) - David Hall and Denis Jackson for the Northamptonshire Field Group

At Thrapston there is a low motte-like platform raised only a few feet above the surrounding level. It has been much mutilated over the centuries and has several houses cutting into it. A section revealed by a sewage trench a few years ago suggested the platform was more complex than expected. A short distance in from the mound edge the strata began to tip downwards again (Fig. 7). The structure would therefore appear to be a ringwork subsequently built up in the interior at a later period, similar to Sulgrave. Pieces of pre-Conquest St. Neots wares were recovered.

Further work is required to investigate the true nature of this mound.

SURVEY

CHESS VALLEY, Buckinghamshire - J.S. Midford, *Chess Valley Archaeological and Historical Society*

A survey of the Chess Valley to identify archaeological sites and features has produced the following results.

In 1976 a field on Latimer Park Farm yielded over 1000 flints of a mesolithic industry but only 10 with identifiable retouch. In 1977 the next field downstream was cultivated and yielded over 100 flints of a similar industry. The flints are found associated with calcined flint pieces

Thrapston 1973

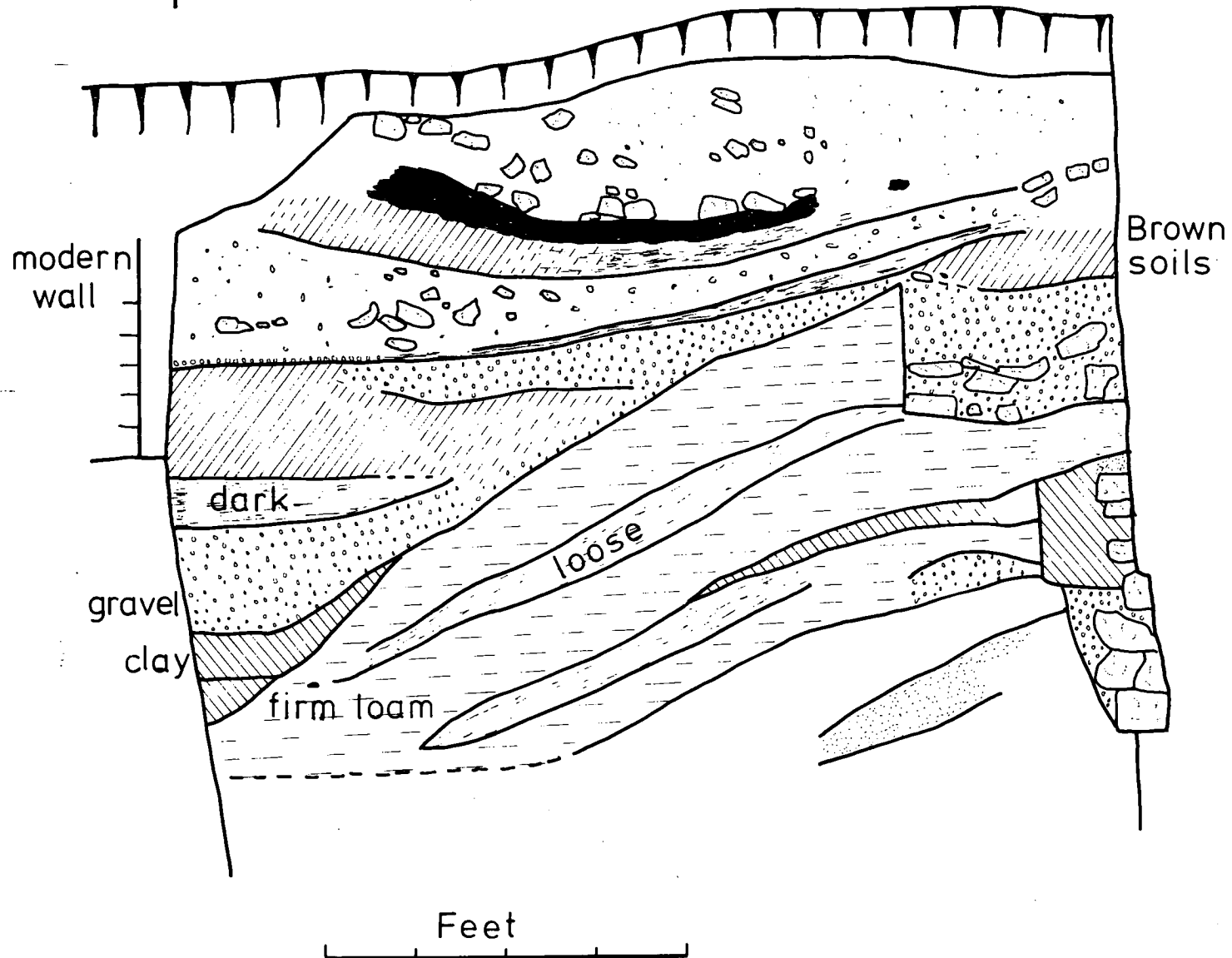


Figure 7

in an otherwise unflinty very dark soil, containing many small mollusca and normally stratified beneath topsoil with clayey lenses and over limey silt on top of coarse gravel. Similar flints were found along the bottom of a sloping field on the opposite side of a small lake from the original site. On various previous occasions such flints have been found on bare patches in other uncultivated fields throughout the length of the valley covered so far, suggesting the possibility of a mesolithic horizon rather than individual sites.

The group of woods in an arc to the N of Valley Farm, Sarratt, Herts, were surveyed, except the enclosed conifer plantation areas. A bewildering number of features, mostly bank and ditch, included a regularly terraced projection and a suspected walled rectangular enclosure in Limeshill Wood, a bluebell wood. In Hanging Lane Wood is a deep narrow hollow way leading down to a well built terraced trackway to Valley Farm.

Interest in the survey, particularly by more experienced members, has wained. Finds processing is lagging considerably and research work is non-existent. Unless current attempts at revitalisation are successful, the survey will have to be suspended. The main problem is lack of direction and organisation.

KEYSOE FIELD SURVEY, Bedfordshire - John Bailey

Extensive field work is being carried out in the parish and this is being supplemented by documentary research.

The parish was enclosed in 1806 and an elementary map with documents exists but unfortunately a pre-enclosure map has not survived. A helpful document of 1625 has survived, the Evans Mouse Survey, which gives a fairly detailed written description of the land use and ownership within the parish. The Group is in the process of preparing a detailed reconstructed map for 1625 based on the Evans Mouse Survey, various later documents and the evidence of Medieval earthworks and C16th/17th enclosures that still survive on the ground or can be identified from air photographs.

MILTON KEYNES, Buckinghamshire

Whilst fieldwalking in the parish of Leckhampstead, members of the Milton Keynes and District Archaeological Society located the site of a Roman building, evidenced by stone scatter and numerous pot sherds, at SP 723389. The pottery has been dated by Charmian Woodfield to the late C2nd, through to C3rd and C4th. The finds have been deposited with Bradwell Abbey Field Centre.

We have also assisted Milton Keynes Development Corporation archaeologists in excavations at Walton Church and Great Linford Shrunken Medieval Village.

In addition, members have carried out surveying at Chicheley in North Bucks, and gravestone recording at Hardmead Church (now redundant).

Together with other local societies we have taken part in an excavation at Downs Barn, SP 860400 within the New City area. This was an attempt to section a presumed Roman road, and to discover an associated building, suspected due to pottery scatter. So far the results have proved to be disappointing, but excavations are continuing.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE PARISH SURVEYS - David Hall and Paul Martin, *Higham Ferrers Hundred Society and Northamptonshire Field Group*

The field by field parish surveys continued using the techniques described previously (Newsletter 4, 1974). Eight parishes comprising 16,000 acres were completed, including Eye in the Soke of Peterborough (now administered as part of the new Cambridgeshire).

The rate of progress was slower this season, partly because of the wet conditions and partly because of work undertaken in other counties.

The general pattern of settlement distribution described in Newsletter 7 (1977) continues to be established. Pre-Iron Age sites only occur on light soils, whereas Iron Age and later sites occur on any soil type. North-west Northamptonshire is sparsely settled compared with the central Nene Valley.

A summary of the fieldwork findings is given below. Generally no cross referencing with the County Sites and Monuments Record has yet been made nor any historical back-up undertaken.

Castle Ashby

Neolithic flints and part of a Langdale polished axe were found at SP 856609 and a tanged arrowhead at SP 85836108. An area of dark soil containing Iron Age pottery is centred at SP 857604. Romano-British sites were represented by pottery and building stone scatters at SP 859607 and SP 808585. A few Saxon sherds were recovered from SP 858602.

Some of the medieval village has been lost under the gardens of the great house which was built in 1574 onwards on the site of an earlier 'castle' (fortified manor?). Formal gardens were originally laid out and four avenues of trees added in 1695. The area was landscaped by Capability Brown in 1761-7; many apparently isolated trees and other features line up to give the outline of the earlier geometric design.

Ridge-and-furrow is well preserved in the park and represented by ploughed-over headland-earthworks elsewhere.

Eye

Many pre-medieval sites occur in this fen-edge parish, especially on the gravel terraces at the N and SE. Bronze Age barrows (surviving as mounds or cropmarks) lie at TF 233012, TF 248062, TF 249059. A Bronze Age domestic site with an abundance of hard sherds lies in former fen at TF 217015. A single Iron Age site was found at TF 218016, also in former fen. Romano-British occupation debris laid at TF 241022, TF 242042, TF 251051, TF 252053 and TF 213030. A Saxon cemetery was located at TF 229035 in the C19th.

Four separate monastic sites lie on peninsulas of the parish, the chief being Eyebury; Northolm still has some moats and vague earthworks.

The ridge-and-furrow pattern was very difficult to establish except in the small area that remained open field until 1819. The remainder was inclosed at an early date by the monastic sites.

Long Buckby

This NW Northants clay parish contained several areas of gravel and high ground with outcrops of ironstone; as usual these light soils produced early sites.

Neolithic flints and parts of polished axes were found at SP 650679; Bronze Age flint concentrations also occurred on the high ground at SP 646688, SP 647684 and SP 633695. Lesser concentrations of flint occurred on glacial gravel deposits at the southern part of the parish. Romano-British occupation remains laid on the clay at SP 625685 and sherds are reported from SP 646678.

The medieval village area is interesting. Fine earthworks and sunken roads survive at the W end (including a motte and bailey). They continue without a break into the DMV of Murcott in Watford parish.

Cotton End to the E (SP 640679) produced some medieval sherds but there is no evidence that there is anything medieval between the Market Square and Cotton End.

A rabbit warren lies at the E parish extremity centred at SP 650682. It may have been a former deer park according to the ramparts evident.

The open field pattern was satisfactorily recovered, and the names are being worked out by a Local History Group evening class.

Murcott (SP 620678)

The DMV of Murcott is now split between Long Buckby and Watford, but from C18th maps seem to have been part of Watford parish. The earthworks are well preserved and lie next to Long Buckby, separated by a stream.

The associated former open fields are fairly typical.

Rothersthorpe

Is a clay parish with some areas of gravel and sand. Some possible Bronze Age flints were found on glacial gravel outcrops, especially at SP 713562. Iron Age sherds were recovered at SP 715764 and Romano-British occurred at SP 713562. Not far from the village an area of Saxon sherds laid on gravel.

The medieval village is centred on the Bury, a motte-like structure with an accompanying ditched area. To the S are extensive earthworks and sunken roads of part of the village, still in use in the early C19th.

The open fields were easily plotted from the large furlong boundaries surviving. Several fields of undamaged ridge-and-furrow survive.

Sulgrave

A SW clay parish with a single outcrop of ironstone that yielded a few worked flints at SP 574474. A Romano-British site was discovered on clay at SP 579450.

The medieval village is famous for its Norman ringwork which has buried a late Saxon stone-built manor. At the NE part of the village earthworks are ploughed out and yielded C13th/14th pottery.

The open-field pattern is well preserved with extensive areas of unploughed grass ridge-and-furrow.

Titchmarsh

The soils of this parish vary from river gravels to limestone and clay. Extensive cropmarks occur at TL 020810 and include eight ring ditches. Iron Age sites occur at TL 016803, TL 03107707, TL 005794 and TL 037775 and Romano-British at TL 005794, TL 016803, TL 032788, TL 037775, TL 033798, TL 023802, TL 03107707, TL 036788 and TL 014803.

The medieval village has many surviving earthworks including a moated manorial site, fishponds and hollow ways. Saxon pottery has been found at the W end of the village at Islington.

The open fields covered the whole area as well as the Warren at the far E of the parish. There are a few interesting discontinuities that may reflect earlier land-use. Near the village a furlong was partly inclosed in the C13th leaving the remainder to be ploughed until the C18th; thus affording a glimpse of the same furlong at two stages of cultivation 500 years apart.

The C16th and C17th furlong names have been worked out. At the N and E of the parish the land had been inclosed before 1560.

Whiston

A Nene Valley parish with soils varying from river gravel to limestone, ironstone and boulder clay.

A few worked flints were discovered on ironstone soils. Iron Age sherds occurred at SP 840599 and SP 844593.

Considerable quantities of Saxon pottery were found in a field called Saucott at SP 850601.

The medieval village is very shrunken and many ploughed earthworks exist. To the SW is the warren, a partly walled ancient inclosure.

The medieval fields covered the whole parish. The tongue of land to the SE has been acquired (from Castle Ashby?); the original parish boundary was easily established.

We are grateful to the Department of the Environment for a travel grant for this work.

DUNSTABLE, Bedfordshire - John Bailey, Dunstable Historic Building Study Group

During 1977 the majority of the groups major historic building recording work has been in the N of Bedfordshire.

The surveys have been in five categories:

1. Detailed surveys during restorations of groups of buildings and of individual buildings.
2. Recording of buildings of high architectural interest that are not threatened.
3. Recording of stone buildings that are subject to decay by weather action.
4. The detailed measured survey of timber-framed buildings to be rebuilt on another site or rebuilt at an open air museum.
5. The surveying of buildings threatened with destruction or in ruinous condition.

The following are the main buildings which have had a complete measured survey carried out on them.

A. Range of timber-framed buildings at High Street, Elstow

Work is nearly finalised on the detailed measured survey that has been carried out over a period of two years during restoration work to the important range of 15 buildings running along the E side of High Street Elstow. These timber-framed buildings date from the C14th to C18th and have provided valuable evidence of the various forms of buildings that were constructed

in a single village. It also gave an ideal opportunity to establish the chronological sequence of the majority of the buildings. A series of late C16th wall paintings were uncovered during restoration. It was possible to record every detail of the buildings including the carpentry details.

B. Sun Street Potton, Sun House

A fairly substantial timber-framed hall with jettied cross-wing was surveyed in detail during restoration.

C. Keysoe, Hardwick End (TL 062623)

A further building surveyed during restoration. This was supplemented by an extensive survey of the remaining medieval earthworks, including ridge-and-furrow, in the fields surrounding the building.

D. Hillersdon Manor, Elstow

A very detailed survey was carried out of the remains of the Jacobean Porch. Precise measured drawings were prepared showing the elaborate mouldings and strap work.

This building is of soft clunch and subject to weathering and it was important that a precise record was made.

E. Rowe's Cottage, Little Barford

A total survey had to be made of this 'Wealden' house which was dismantled and re-erected at Glatton in Cambridgeshire. Drawings of every timber and detail were made voluntarily by the Group and reconstructions made and detailed plans and sections prepared. These were used by the building team, who moved the building, for labelling the timbers, and the drawings will also be used for the basis of the reconstruction.

A reconstructed isometric drawing is illustrated in Fig. 8.

F. 7 West Street, Dunstable

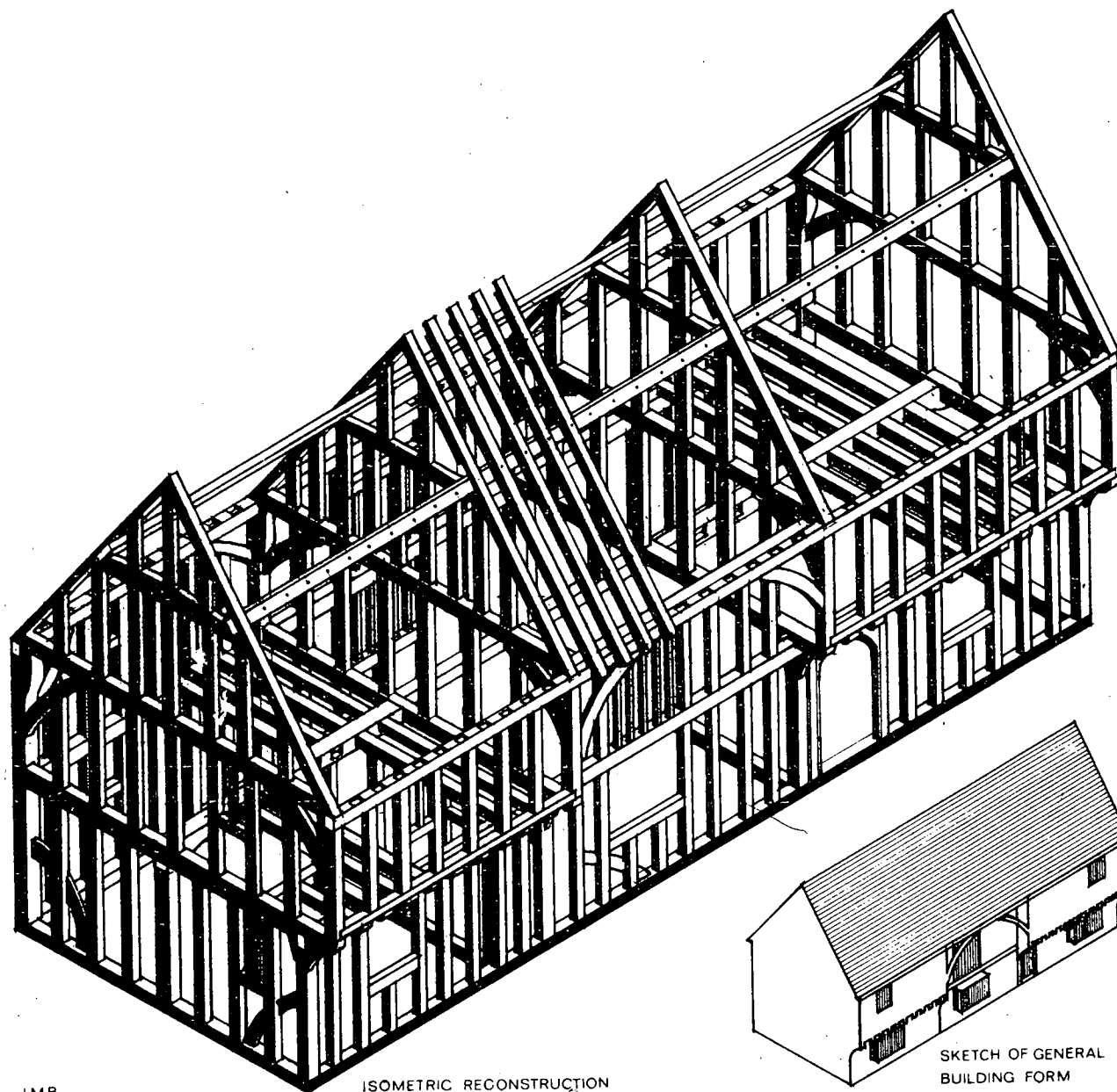
This was another major total recording exercise that had to be carried out with great care, as the building was dismantled by the Chiltern Society for re-erection at their open air museum. The building is a jettied shop with a hall at the rear.

G. Chapel Farm, Meppershall

A detailed measured survey was made of this Norman/medieval chapel that was once associated with Chicksands Priory. It is now used as a farm building but has recently been carefully restored by the DoE.

Other work carried out by the group was the general investigation of buildings in several villages to confirm their date and establish if there is any early work hidden behind later facades.

Members of the group are amateurs and they survey buildings anywhere in Bedfordshire and, on some occasions, in adjacent Counties. All work is voluntary and the most important buildings are published. It is anticipated that a similar variety of work will be carried out by the Group during 1978; but some time will also be given to limited surveys of a larger number of buildings.



JMB

ISOMETRIC RECONSTRUCTION

SKETCH OF GENERAL
BUILDING FORM

Figure 8

AERIAL SURVEYS - Jim Pickering

A number of flights were made in 1977 from the Market Harborough area to the W of Northampton, Stowe Nine Churches, and Daventry en route to other areas of survey. Weather permutations were not ideal for the extensive development of crop marks in this area and although most known sites remained invisible, some new sites were recorded. The cumulative evidence of several years' cover of Stowe Nine Churches suggests that this is an important area with extensive prehistoric, Iron Age and Romano-British occupation.

Areas where similar evidence is accumulating are being found in many parts of the Midlands and in widely different soil and geological contexts. It cannot now be assumed that by the late Iron Age, or early Romano-British period at the latest, most of the Midlands may have had a man-made landscape (except for those substantial woodlands that until recent times have been an essential element of a rural economy); but rather that the cultivation of this landscape destroyed an extensive prehistoric landscape in much the same way that the Saxon and medieval ploughing destroyed the Romano-British landscape.

In considering the prehistoric landscape a length of triple parallel ditches extends over several fields on a roughly NNE-SSW orientation to the W of Northampton. A number of similar monuments have been recorded at many places throughout the Midlands, and what appear to be variations of this construction such as four ditches, four pit alignments of similar spacing and two ditches plus a pit alignment. Re-assessment of some double ditches suggest that these are not necessarily trackways and some might be substantial banks between two ditches.

When considered singly, these features make no sense, but when plotted onto maps, some appear to line up onto a roughly single orientation that would logically connect up over many miles and adjacent exceptions to single orientations are at 90° to it. As an example, the Northampton length points directly southwards to another length of the same orientation at Stowe Nine Churches. Northwards it lines up approximately with lengths to the W of Uppingham, to the E of Oakham, to the W of Grantham and to the S of Newark, where this is a junction of four such features in a most complex area of archaeological sites. Extending the same line northwards it links up with interrupted lengths over two miles to the E of Lincoln recorded by Paul Everson and this in turn is orientated to several lengths between Lincoln and the Humber.

There are other disarticulated lengths in the Trent Valley, the Nene Valley and the Fens, and Derek Edwards reports one near the Norfolk Suffolk border. There is a known extensive system of such boundaries on the Yorkshire Wolds.

There is enough evidence to suggest the possibility that there is a previously unknown system of prehistoric boundaries in the Midlands, some lengths of which required the movement of 30,000 tons of soil per mile. The effect of this on present estimates of prehistoric population, societies, and land use must be substantial.

UNITS AND COUNTY BODIES

BEDFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRAMME, Retrospect 1972-1977
- David Baker

In December 1977, at their request, a report was made to the Committee for Rescue Archaeology of the Ancient Monuments Board (England), on the organisation and work of the Bedfordshire County Council in rescue archaeology.

The opportunity was therefore taken to prepare a slightly expanded report, mainly covering organisational matters. Much of the material in the report, particularly on individual sites, has already appeared in this Newsletter, so selected extracts are offered by way of a retrospective view after five years.

The report does not cover directly the work of local societies and individuals, since this was outside its terms of reference. Nonetheless the contribution of the constituent members of the Bedfordshire Archaeological Council over this period to Bedfordshire archaeology in general should be underlined here.

Copies of the original Report are available from the Conservation Section, Planning Department, County Hall, Bedford MK42 9AP.

1. The Development of the Rescue Archaeology and Historical Conservation Provision in Bedfordshire County Council

Before 1972 the County Council had no direct involvement in rescue archaeology: work was undertaken on a small scale by local societies or by outsiders coming into the County for specific projects. On 1st January 1972 the present writer took up duties in the new post of Archaeological Liaison Officer in the County Planning Department, having been responsible for excavations at Elstow Abbey (1965-72) and Bedford Castle (1969-72), for the Bedford Archaeological Society and others.

The job description of the new post included: advising the Authority on archaeological matters; maintaining a register of sites; liaising as necessary with public and private bodies. Excavation was not envisaged as a primary function of the post holder.

Temporary assistance was provided for the early stages of compiling the Sites and Monuments Record, with several short-term employees in the period up to mid 1974.

In response to continuing development pressures in the County town of Bedford, the then Bedford Borough Council in July 1972 appointed Miss Jane Hassall to the new post of Archaeological Assistant, with responsibilities divided evenly between Bedford field duties and curatorial responsibilities indoors.

A programme of rescue excavations developed largely on an ad hoc basis as threats to sites from existing planning permissions became apparent in the early days of data collection. Early in 1972, Professor J.K. St. Joseph alerted the Planning Department to the imminent destruction of five Bronze Age ring ditches at Roxton. By autumn of that year, Miss Alison Taylor, joined later by Mr. Peter Woodward, had commenced work on four of the five, the other being examined by Mr. G.T. Rudd of Longsands School in St. Neots. Miss Angela Simco had conducted a trial excavation on another gravel ex-

traction site at Newnham near Bedford in summer 1972: on graduation in July 1973 she was appointed on a temporary basis to excavate this mainly Roman villa/farmstead site.

1973 saw all these individuals working in the field, mainly in an extended summer session, when four large excavations were run simultaneously from one large volunteer camp in Bedford (Bedford, Willington, Roxton and Newnham). Additionally, Mrs. Evelyn Baker, who had been responsible for sites at Bedford Castle and Elstow Abbey, excavated a site in Cauldwell Street, Bedford and had commenced work at Grove Priory, near Leighton Buzzard with a session in March to May.

In the period up to local government reorganisation the organisational structure for rescue archaeology was evolving. Cash grants were being made by the DoE, Beds CC and Bedford Borough. Staff were held on an anomalous mixture of temporary employment and fee payments. Facilities were generally limited, with site management having to operate from a desk in an open plan office, and some restricted facilities being generously made available in Bedford Museum by the then Director, F.W. Kuhlicke, including some storage and working space.

At local government reorganisation, the framework for rescue archaeology was regularised and improved. The new County Planning Department gained a Conservation Section in its Implementation Group, covering historic buildings, conservation areas and design, and field archaeology: 'natural' conservation was the responsibility of a parallel Forestry and Landscape Section.

The duties of the new Section included the provision of a direct officer-level advice service on conservation matters to District Planning Officers thus reflecting the shift of detailed planning responsibilities from County to District level. The Sites and Monuments Record became even more central to the work of the new Section. Duties of advising the County Council on an expanded range of matters and of liaising as necessary with local and national, public and private bodies continued.

The present writer was appointed Principal Conservation Officer and Miss Simco, Senior Conservation Officer (Field Archaeology), with Mrs. Elizabeth Marten joining as her equivalent for Historic Buildings. Mr. Alan Cox was appointed as Assistant Conservation Officer in charge of the Sites and Monuments Record and with responsibility for industrial archaeology and general publication matters; Mr. Stewart Cuff in a similar post was to have responsibility for Conservation Areas and Design work. A Field Archaeological Team was formalised and permanent contracts issued to two Field Officers (Miss Taylor and Mr. Woodward) and four Field Technicians, the County Council taking the view that an open-ended work programme required open-ended contracts in fairness to employees, even if grant support was not guaranteed in the same way. Salary scales were established for the Field Team as AP3 for Field Officer, AP2 for Field Supervisor, and T1 for Field Technician.

Both Conservation Section and Field Team have subsequently undertaken a wide range of work, assisted at various times by volunteers, part-time fee-paid helpers, temporary contract workers and the Job Creation Programme of the Manpower Services Commission (from April 1976). The title Field Team was adopted in preference to the more usual Unit to reflect the view that rescue archaeology fitted naturally in with other local government activities, rather than being so esoteric that independence and self-sufficiency needed underlining. Close contact has been maintained throughout with the Bedfordshire Archaeological Council, which is the federal County forum for local archaeological interests, and with the Bedfordshire Preservation Society, its equivalent on historic buildings and conservation planning

matters. The partnership with the (now) North Bedfordshire Borough Council developed further from 1974 with the appointment of a full-time Curator in Mr. H.J. Turner, following the retirement of Mr. Kuhlicke. The entire County field programme is administered from County Hall, and the cash budget is handled in one unit by the County Treasurer: the Museum, with expanded premises ironically becoming available due to the lack of resources for developing the projected new Museum, provides the base for materials, equipment and finds. Though North Bedfordshire is only one of four County Districts, Luton Borough also having a museum, it has constructively and realistically been prepared to provide temporary space for material from all the County pending its final deposit elsewhere.

Like most of the new rescue archaeological units, the Bedfordshire Field Archaeological Team grew on the need to excavate, and upon the grants this could attract for staff and services. By 1974/75 this was leading to a serious backlog of post-excavation work and a relative neglect of the intelligence-gathering survey side of work: yet the pressure to excavate threatened sites was not conspicuously lessening.

This situation was greatly eased by the introduction of Job Creation Programmes by the Manpower Services Commission, enabling the undertaking of work which could not otherwise have been done. Over 30 posts have been provided between April 1976 and March 1978, and care has been taken to employ a judicious mixture of unemployed school leavers (for whom the scheme was primarily intended) with maturer employed and unemployed graduates in order to achieve a practicable mix in the project labour force.

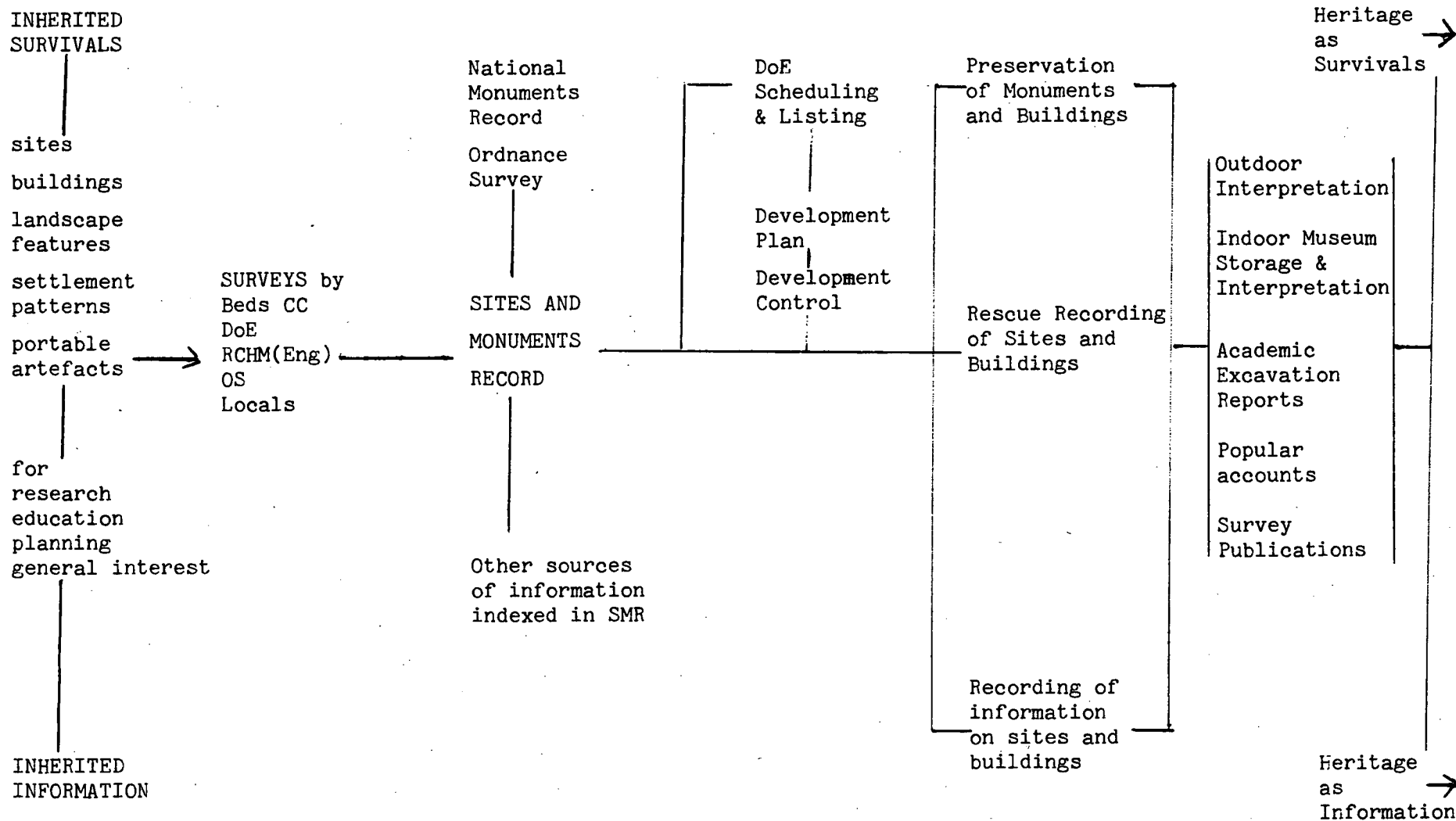
The Job Creation Programme has enabled two long-term field projects, at Odell and Grove Priory to be continued rather than abandoned: continuous all-the-year-round work has been in force since September 1974 and October 1976 respectively. It has also been possible to devote sufficient resources to a rapid parish field survey programme which has now covered over a third of the County, involving students on the Oxford University/DoE In-Service Training Course. The Job Creation Programme has also provided valuable assistance with post-excavation work, enabling a determined assault upon completed but unpublished sites, notably through the monograph on 32 Bedford sites now in preparation.

Recent developments include a travelling exhibition on results of work from 1972 to 1976, which was seen throughout the County and at the CBA Council meeting in January 1977. With a tendency for the flow of grant-aidable projects to decrease, advantage has been taken of 'natural wastage' to reduce the size of the Permanent Field Team from 6 in January 1977 to 3 in October 1977. The gap is made up with temporary contract posts which are now felt to be a more realistic and fairer provision for additional staff in these times of uncertainty.

Discussions are currently being held about the publication of survey results, relating to all aspects of the historic environment, in a format designed to serve all major local interests as well as the requirement for some kind of academic inventory.

2. Rescue Archaeology and Historical Conservation

The diagram below gives an indication of the relationships between the various activities in historical conservation, as seen from the Local Authority viewpoint. It does not necessarily mean that all these functions are carried out in Bedfordshire.



3. Survey Programmes

	<u>Field Archaeology</u>	<u>Historic Buildings</u>
<u>Level 1:</u> Statutory Protection	Assistance to DoE Inspectors on Examination of monuments to be considered for scheduling or extension of scheduled area; also assistance with casework. Potential use of Section 52 agreements (TCPA 1971) for protection of unscheduled field monuments.	Assistance to DoE Investigators in revision of statutory lists through execution of local surveys and making of recommendations. Recommendations for spot-listing. Service of Building Preservation Notices, or advice to District Planning Officers on same.
<u>Level 2:</u> Rapid Systematic Survey	Rapid parish survey programmes: commencing with existing state of knowledge in Sites and Monuments Record, checking standard list of documentary sources, checking in field, and finally, revising SMR.	Preliminary investigation of basic characteristics of vernacular and other buildings in conjunction with programme of survey for list revision. Accession of details to SMR.
<u>Level 3:</u> Detailed Recording	Some detailed earthwork recording. Rescue (and other less urgent) excavation would presumably also fall into this category Detailed field surveys such as work by D.N. Hall and J. Hutchings covering north-west Beds parishes with specific but detailed survey objectives: see <u>Beds Arch J</u> (passim)	Voluntary detailed recording executed by local workers, mainly by J.M.Bailey, usually in advance of renovation or demolition.

This table analyses the survey programmes carried out, by or coordinated by, the Planning Department Conservation Section. The distinction between three levels of activity has emerged naturally in the process of development chiefly in response to the need for some system of priorities in the use of limited resources.

Fig. 9 shows the progress of level 1/2 building and parish survey programmes in Bedfordshire to October 1977

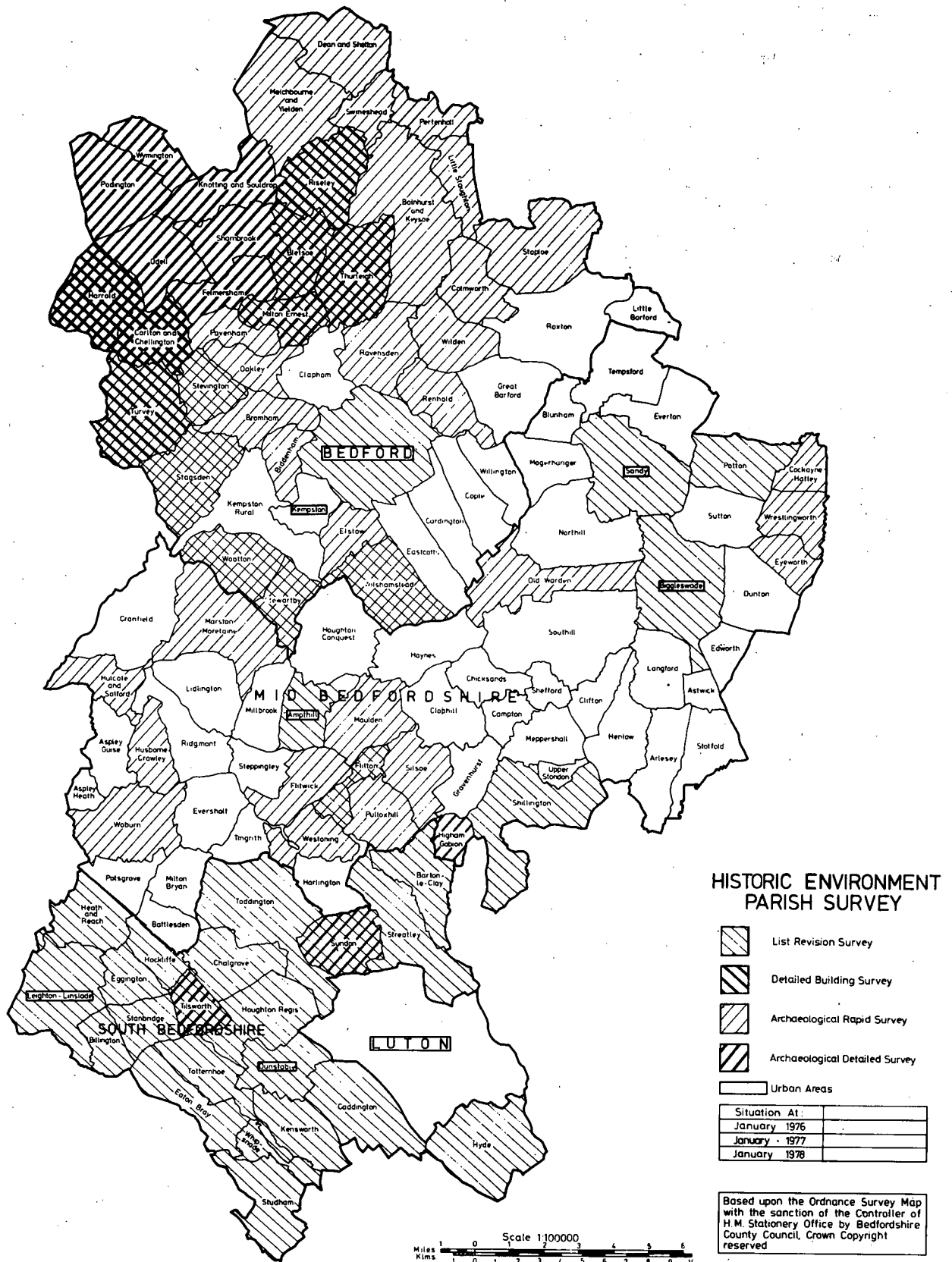


Figure 9

Procedures for Rapid Parish Survey

In a County with 124 parishes, many surveyors will be involved in the work programme. It is essential to ensure a uniform level and standard of search, so that the survey of a given parish may be used or revised at a future date against a background knowledge of what sources have been consulted and what procedures followed. Accordingly, the following check-list has been evolved: it is normally laid out so that each item must be ticked as it is completed. The check-list has a particular training value in that parish survey is the main activity of students from the Oxford University/DoE In-Service Archaeological Training Course seconded to the Bedfordshire CC Field Archaeological Team.

1. Pre-Field

Preparation of Working Maps: dyeline relevant maps from SMR transparent master copies; add material from office master paper copy, from paper copy maps held in Luton/Bedford Museums; dyeline blank 6"/1:10,000 maps to record documentary information.

Primary Record Cards: itemise on separate sheet all PRC numbers relating to chosen parish as check list of items to pursue in pre-field or field searches; check small-items boxes for extra information; check planning department parish admin file for extra information; note separately historic buildings and dates as a guide to development of settlement.

Maps: (CRO) pre-enclosure and estate maps; Enclosure Award and field names; Tithe Award and field names; County Maps - Jeffreys, Bryant etc.

OS Map check: early editions of OS 25", 6" and 1" maps for marked sites and unmarked features; current OS maps for same; 1937 Land Utilisation Survey.

Aerial Photographs: SMR photographs, ordered by parish; 1940s RAF coverage; Hunting Surveys 1968, 1974, 1976.

Printed Sources: (mainly CRO & Local History Library): Bedfordshire Bibliography 3 Vols; VCH (1900s); County History (Godber); Place-names of Beds; Beds Hist Rec Soc publns (esp. Coroners Rolls); Beds Notes & Queries; Parish Registers (CRO publ'n series) for references to occupations/industries.

County Record Office (CRO): CRO Transcripts series; pamphlets and publns series; main CRO parish index.

Local Contacts: Local Archaeological or Historical Soc.; local historians, worthies, vicar etc.

Collation: Prepare lists for field checking with sites already on SMR, sites suggested by pre-field documentary search.

2. Field

Known or suspected sites: ascertain ownership and/or tenancy; check condition and record by sketch/photograph/description as needed; note landscape and settlement context; note adjacent land-use; note any local traditions.

Check sensitive areas

Check historic boundaries, noting nature and condition

Check any other possibilities

3. Post-Field

Revise SMR, following accessioning check list: enter documentary references on Primary Record Card and Secondary Record Sheet as appropriate; add details

of owner and condition of site; file detailed notes, field sketches etc. in small items boxes.

Written report: including topography, geology, historic summary, development of landscape, settlement and communications; current situation, trends of land-use; list briefly all documentary references from CRO parish index; list of all sources consulted, including those which provided no information; list of landowners/local contacts.

Parish Map: to cover information from CRO maps, with colour code for different dates; include all field names, show areas of old enclosure/open field, if known; show destroyed boundaries with dotted line; show new development and modern land-use changes since publn of 6"/1:10,000 map.

4. The Bedfordshire Sites Monuments and Buildings Record

The following is the text of a general introductory leaflet prepared for users of the Record. (adapted)

The Bedfordshire Sites Monuments and Buildings Record was begun in 1971 and is modelled upon a system pioneered in Oxfordshire City and County Museum. Its aim is to provide a record of all features appertaining to Bedfordshire's historic environment, including archaeological sites, historic architecture, industrial archaeology, and historic landscape features.

The Record has five main components:

1. Primary Record Card

Each feature in the Record is given a unique accession number and this together with some basic details is entered on a record card. These cards are filed in numerical order. A new type of Record card has recently been introduced, capable of being used for archaeological features or historic buildings, which previously had to be entered on two different types of card. The opportunity was taken to convert to a metric size and redesign the card so that the information is more tightly organised and capable of being photocopied or transferred into another information system.

2. Secondary Record Sheet

Further details such as quotations from references not considered essential for the Primary Record Card are entered on specially printed A4 Secondary Record Sheets which are stored by numerical order with the additional material (see 4 below).

3. Maps

Historic features identified by their accession number are plotted on a series of maps at different scales, the basic ones being 6" or 1/10,000 and 1/2500.

4. Additional Material

Any additional material relating to a particular site in the form of photographs, notes, correspondence, plans, drawings, etcetera, is identified by the accession number and filed in numerical order.

5. Information Retrieval System

The use of optical coincidence punch cards allows a complex range of information to be obtained from the basic record. The main categories of this system are: Period, Parish, Subject, Status, Condition and Record Type.

All information in the Record includes its source so that its reliability can be assessed. At the present time the Record contains about 8,500 items, and is growing rapidly as the parish and buildings survey programmes proceed across the County.

The purpose of the Record is to make its collected information available for a number of different uses. These include:

1. a basic core of material on the Bedfordshire heritage, together with local Libraries, Museums and the County Record Office, with which interchange of information takes place;
 2. a local detailed record source for national bodies and records, such as the Ordnance Survey, the National Monuments Record and the DoE;
 3. information for planning purposes, in the making of local plans and in routine development control;
 4. information and references for local and national research. Occasionally there may be limitations on certain material due to requirements of confidentiality;
 5. the provision of material for various booklets, charts, maps, illustrations and exhibitions available to the general public, teachers and students.
5. Excavation, Post-Excavation and Publication: 1969 - 1977. See page 36.
6. Publication Outlets

The main vehicle for the publication of academic archaeological reports is the Bedfordshire Archaeological Journal, edited by D.H. Kennett for the Bedfordshire Archaeological Council. This appears annually, and shows every sign of continuing to flourish at a time when other County journals are often in difficulties. Major articles are being offered to national journals. No plans exist for publication of primary reports by the County Council, which prefers to grant-aid the County journal, thus benefiting from its circulation.

At this time, consideration is being given to the publication of a 'Survey of Bedfordshire', in order to broadcast the results of various survey programmes contained in the Sites and Monuments Record. Covering historic buildings, archaeological sites, monuments, landscape features and settlement patterns, this would attempt to provide simultaneously a preliminary research index, educational resource material, and information for the generally interested layman. This would be achieved through the issue, over perhaps a ten year period, of a serial publication in about 200 parts, covering subjects, periods and location by parishes. Implicit in the scheme is that sections could be published when they have been prepared without any delay that would make them obsolete, and that sections could be revised and re-issued when they do become outmoded by new material or a new interpretation.

Building Recording

Detailed recording of threatened buildings is arranged in conjunction with voluntary bodies and individuals, notably through the work of John Bailey, who has produced a meticulous series of records covering many timber-framed buildings throughout the County.

7. Other Historical Conservation Work

This leaflet is primarily concerned with rescue archaeology, but that activity is only one responsibility of the Planning Department's Conservation Section.

5. Excavation, Post-Excavation and Publication: 1969-1977

Size	Site	Field Officer	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	P/EX Completion
L1	Elstow Abbey	DB & EM Baker	(1965)	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	-----							1979
2	Bedford St Johns	DB Baker	(1967)	--PUB								
2	do Mill Street	DB Baker			xxx-----							PUB
3	do Rays Close	JM Hassall			xxx-----							PUB
1	do Castle and Town remaining 26 sites	DB & EM Baker JM Hassall AH Simco et al			xx	-----					xxxxxxxxxx	1978
1	Newnham Marina	AH Simco					xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	-----				(part PUB) 1978
1	Roxton R/Ditches	AS Taylor, PJ Woodward, GT Rudd					xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	-----				1977
2	Dunstable Friary	A Havercroft					xxxxxxxxxxxxx	-----				1977/78
2	Willington Docks	JM Hassall					xxxx-----					PUB
3	Cainhoe Castle	AS Taylor, PJ Woodward					xxxx-----					PUB
L1	Clapham Manor Hs	PG Tilson & Bedford Arch Soc					xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	-----				1978
1	Grove Priory	EM Baker et al					xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	-----				1980 +
2	Warden Abbey	EM Baker					xxxx-----					1978
1	Odell Quarry	BF Dix					xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	-----				1979
3	Radwell Quarry	PJ Woodward (D Hall)					xxxx-----					1977p
L3	Stotfold School	AH Simco					xxxx---					PUB
2	Thurleigh Castle	EM Baker, AH Simco							xxxx-----			1978/79
2	Elstow Pear T Fm	PJ Woodward							xxxx-----			1977p
2	Flints/Fldwlking	PJ Woodward							xxxx-----			1977p

L = Locally financed only.

xxxxxxx = excavation in progress.

PUB = site in print.

Project Size: 1 = large. 2 = medium, 3 = small/trial

----- = excavation completed, site unpublished

1977p = post-excavation work completed but site not yet in print.

Historic Buildings Grants under the Local Authorities (Historic Buildings) Act 1962 have been given by the County Council for a number of years. Since 1974, the following grants have been made:

1974-75: 28 1975-76: 30 1976-77: 37 1977-78: (21)

Building Preservation Notices have also been served regularly since the creation of the Conservation Section, usually by the County Council, but on occasions by a District Council with County officer advice. The figures for this are:

1974-75: 6 1975-76: 12 1976-77: 12 1977-78: (6)

Grants have been given and grant-aid arranged in conjunction with the Ancient Monuments Inspectorate, to deal with various major monuments in the County. In some cases the County Council has arranged for the execution of necessary works on behalf of the owner.

Recent projects include:

St. Thomas Chapel, Meppershall: collapse of a late Norman door was averted and major repairs to walls and roof carried out;

Warden Abbey: a grant was given to the Landmark Trust for their restoration works;

Clophill Old Church: a late medieval ruined church on a prominent hill-top site was consolidated as a monument in County Council ownership following a declaration of redundancy.

Somerley Castle, Hyde: general repairs to late C15th gatehouse and chapel;

Elstow Abbey and Mansion ruins: emergency and general repairs in progress.

Grants have recently been given and restoration arranged for three large late C16th and early C17th wall paintings in Ampthill, Kempston and Dunstable.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY MUSEUM - Mike Farley

The presence of a DoE funded post to improve the County Sites and Monuments Record has meant that major advances have been made in this field and the completion of a good basic index now becomes a possibility in the foreseeable future. Effective use of the Record in the planning process, which should be one of its major roles, would require that such a post become permanent. Nevertheless in the course of the year it has been possible to make some progress in the planning field and to contribute to both Structure and Local plans, as well as vetting mineral applications and certain other works. A reappraisal of categories of sites scheduled within the county has also taken place and new proposals are being put forward.

The long-planned A5 diversion around Magiovinium becoming imminent, the County Archaeological Advisory Committee eventually decided to invite the DoE's Central Excavation Unit to handle the excavation in view of the scale of work required and the critical timing. Work commenced in October under the directorship of David Neal and is planned to continue until January or February 1978. Despite the welcome bonus for the county that this large scale excavation provides, the continuing loss of smaller sites without excavation shows that the situation remains unsatisfactory.

The assistance of the County Museum Archaeological Group enabled very good cover to be provided for the natural gas pipeline crossing the county during the year. A number of flint scatters were located, four Iron Age

sites and five sites at which Romano-British occupation was indicated by the presence of both features and pottery. Two Iron Age sites are of more than local importance, one a 'Welwyn-type' burial was fully excavated, the other, a sealed ground surface will shortly be re-examined for environmental data. The latter site at Woodham is of particular significance as it lies in the flat clay Vale of Aylesbury. The County Museum Archaeological Group continued to contribute substantially to the total of Buckinghamshire sites by systematic fieldwalking and aerial photography within the county revealed more. Electronic survey was carried out on two sites, successfully in the case of a recently discovered Anglo-Saxon cemetery, but less so on a Romano-British site.

A number of talks were given in the course of the year to outside bodies; particularly successful was an 'archaeology day' in conjunction with the Buckinghamshire Federation of Women's Institutes. The year has also seen the formation of an Industrial Archaeology Group which is associated with the Bucks Archaeological Society. The Museum continues to benefit from the many hours freely given by members of its Archaeological Group, whose activities are reported elsewhere. Very welcome also was the presence of two OUDES In-Service trainees during the course of the year.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY MUSEUM ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP - Mike Farley

During 1977 the County Museum Archaeological Group has continued to provide active support to the Museum in a number of ways. The most significant external activity of the year was the extremely full cover given by the Group to the natural gas main as it was laid across the county from W to E, a distance of some 23 miles. The line was first walked well in advance of pipe-laying which served to locate a few previously unknown sites, then immediately after the topsoil had been stripped, which located a few more, and finally as the trench was being cut. The latter process exposed two Iron Age sites of far more than local significance. Some 25 members of the Group were involved with the whole pipeline operation, and whilst the pipe was being cut it was found possible to give good cover three times a week over several months with volunteers on each occasion. Once agreement had been reached on the nature of the access, the personnel involved and certain obvious safety requirements satisfied, the British Gas Corporation gave their full support to the project and some of the results have since featured in the Corporation's house magazine HQ News for October 1977.

Other outside activities have included a continuing programme of parish survey, attention being focused on Haddenham, a large parish with much arable and of which virtually nothing was previously known archaeologically. Fieldwalking has already produced a number of new flint sites and several scatters of Romano-British material. Members of the Group have also assisted with excavations at Dorton and Magiovinium as well as undertaking their own fieldwork.

Work continued weekly at the Museum in both day and evening sessions processing incoming material, researching specific themes relevant to the county and improving various aspects of the Sites and Monuments Record. Much attention has recently been paid to integrating contemporary field names acquired as a result of appeals to Women's Institutes and other bodies. It is likely that the Group's work on windmills in the county will shortly be ready for publication and will appear in a similar format to their earlier work on moated sites.

NORTHAMPTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION - John H. Williams

Although the pace of development has for the time being slowed down, the pressure for archaeological work has been unabated. Watching briefs have been maintained on various sites in and around Northampton. Excavation has been continuous apart from July - September and interim statements are published below. A considerable effort has been devoted to post-excavation and publication. Most of the site records have been microfilmed as a security archive. Work is in hand in linking the documentary evidence for Northampton with the archaeology. Thorplands Roman site and a post-medieval pottery group, as well as a survey of Little Billing by David Hall, were published in Northamptonshire Archaeology Vol.12. Articles on 'The Early Development of Northampton' and 'Planning and the Environment in a New Town' were contributed to 'Mercian Studies' (ed. Dornier) and 'Planning and the Historic Environment Vol.2' (ed. Rowley and Breakell). The Greyfriars excavation will be appearing in the next volume of Northamptonshire Archaeology (Vol.13) and 'Excavations in St. Peters St' will be published in 1978 as NDC Archaeological Monograph No.2.

During the year the unit lost M. McCarthy who left to become Director of the new Carlisle Archaeological Unit and Richard Hunter who departed for America. Mary Gryspeerdt has joined the staff as Pottery Researcher and Michael Shaw as an Assistant Field Archaeologist.

BRIAR HILL, Northampton - Neolithic Causewayed Enclosure (Site Code P76)
Grid Ref. 735594 - Helen Bamford

During the past 12 months a further 3,400 sq.m. of the interior of the site have been excavated, completing the investigation of the inner enclosure formed by the inward spiral of the inner ditch in the eastern half of the site.

The Neolithic Ditch

The 'ditch' which forms the western side of the inner enclosure was proved to consist of closely spaced pits, considerably smaller and shallower on average than the segments of the main ditch circuits so far excavated to the N and E but, like the latter, showing evidence of extensive recutting. On the NW side of the inner enclosure these pits are no more than 1.00m. to 2.50m. long and between 0.30m. and 0.60m. deep and flank a possible entrance. They contained numerous sherds of undecorated Neolithic bowls, fragments of rubbing stones and saddle querns and flints.

The Interior

In the middle of the southern half of the inner enclosure are the foundations of a rectangular timber structure measuring 5m. by 2.50m. and apparently of Neolithic date. Immediately W of this are 3 post-holes and a slot which may represent a second structure. Finds from the post-holes included sherds of late Neolithic grooved ware. In the same area are several small pits which may also be Neolithic.

The remainder of the current season of excavation will be devoted to an examination of parts of the outer enclosure and of the inner and outer ditch on the W side of the site. Work is expected to finish in June 1978.

NORTHAMPTON CASTLE (Site Code M139) SP 47492605 - J.H. Williams, R. Hunter and M. Shaw

Work is continuing on an area 40 by 20m. on the line of the inner bailey bank of Northampton Castle to the S of the area excavated by Dr. J. Alexander (Medieval Archaeol 6-7 (1962-3), 322f; 8 (1964), 275f; 9 (1965), 191. See also CBA 9 Newsletter 7 (1976), 16). The main objective is to examine the Saxon levels sealed below the bailey bank of the castle.

The site is still imperfectly understood because of the complex stratigraphy in a difficult soil but a fairly long sequence is being defined with up to 1m. of pre-Conquest deposits.

1. There is a considerable scatter of work flints of mesolithic and later date.
2. No Early or Middle Saxon structures have so far been securely identified but there is a substantial collection of pottery of the period.
3. In the Late Saxon period mini-sequences can be seen in two areas:
 - (a) a post-built structure is cut by a simple 2-post grubenhouse and overlaid by cultivated soil
 - (b) a 6-post timber structure c.10 by 5m. with a cellar at one end has an attached grubenhouse at the other end and is dated to the early C10th; this is overlaid by a timber hall with close set posts associated with a yard area, pits and cultivated ground.

There is clearly a long sequence of Saxon occupation on the site, the detailed interpretation of which awaits completion of excavation.

MAREFAIR, Northampton (Site Code M178) SP 47502604 - Frances Williams

From January to July 1977 excavations were carried out on a site on the N side of Marefair, Northampton, opposite St. Peter's Church and adjacent to Barclaycard House. An area c.16 by 12m. was opened (divided into two trenches).

Trench A

A single house property fronting on to Marefair was excavated from Victorian levels down to its medieval origin. To the rear of the house a sequence of metalled yards and various outbuildings including a C15th-16th malt-roasting oven, and rubbish/cess pits were found.

Trench B

No late-medieval buildings survived in this area. The Saxon/early medieval levels produced traces of a variety of timber structures although the exact form of the buildings or fences in most cases was not apparent. Nevertheless perhaps the most interesting evidence on the site was the corner of a substantial rectangular timber building, apparently aligned on Marefair. Part of a similar structure also aligned on Marefair was found below the house in Trench A.

The results of the excavation are clearly important in adding to the evidence already gained from the St. Peters Street excavation (M115) and the castle site (M139), filling out our picture of Saxon and medieval Northampton. The report will probably be published in Northamptonshire Archaeology.

The NDC wishes to thank the Manpower Services Commission for providing funds for the excavation and Centros Ltd. and Northampton Borough Council for allowing access to the site ahead of development.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

It is now several years since the NAS was formed (having developed out of the Federation of Northamptonshire Archaeological Societies) with the object of making more people aware of, and involving more people in, the local archaeology, through lectures, exhibitions and publications. The annual journal 'Northamptonshire Archaeology' has proved a most valuable medium for the rapid publication of archaeological work in the area including a number of substantial excavation reports. It has now been decided due to the ever increasing cost of publication and the rather specialist appeal of the journal, to develop a two-tier publication system with major articles still going in the journal but with an expanded form of the cheaply produced twice-yearly Newsletter/Calendar now to include short articles of general interest.

Membership is increasing steadily but new members are of course, always welcome. Further details from: The Secretary, 41 Stannard Way, Brixworth, Northants.

MILTON KEYNES DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

ANNUAL REPORT ON ARCHAEOLOGY 1977 - D.C. Mynard

INTRODUCTION:

The emphasis on excavation dictated by the large-scale development of Milton Keynes continued throughout the year. However, the reorganisation of the Unit into one team and the replacement of two staff vacancies will allow for considerable emphasis to be placed on Post-Excavation work from now on.

The staff structure from January 1978 will be as follows:

D.C. Mynard, Senior Archaeologist
Martin Petchey, Asst. Senior Archaeologist

and four Assistant Archaeologists, each supervising work in the following areas:

Roy Adkins	- Fieldwork and Sites & Monuments Records
John Barnbrook	- Prehistoric and Roman sites
Bob Croft	- Medieval Village Survey, Exhibitions and Schools liaison
Bob Zeepvat	- Saxon-Medieval and Post Medieval sites

In addition, two Archaeological Assistants, Ros Tyrrell and Anne Kluz help with finds, excavation, and post-excavation records.

FIELDWORK

During the early months of the year Paul Smith and Julia Bradley (Job Creation staff) carried out an extensive programme of fieldwork. In particular they walked the line of the A5 and other areas threatened with development. They also visited all Scheduled Sites and all known sites and find-spots, reporting on their present condition. Their activities produced a considerable amount of finds, several from new sites. The most interesting discovery was that of a spread of Early-Saxon pottery in an area of the Ouzel Valley on the opposite bank to Caldecotte, suggesting extensive Saxon occupation of the valley just north of the Romano-British posting station of Magiovinium. They also located areas of Saxon occupation at Great and Little Woolstone, again in the Ouzel Valley. Both Paul and Julia have now left Milton Keynes, having been offered places at University in September.

The Unit's Fieldworker, Jill Paterson, resigned early in the year and since her departure responsibility for fieldwork has been delegated to Roy Adkins. Roy's main activity, apart from excavation and subsequent reports, has been to watch all current developments and to respond to threats as they arise. During October the construction of the new grid road, Danstead Way, revealed several features at a point where previous fieldwalking had produced Belgic and Romano-British sherds. Roy spent three days on site recording. Finds from the site included a quantity of Belgic and early Romano-British pottery, several burnt stones, (?pot-boilers), and some flint waste-flakes.

The physical survey of all medieval earthwork sites in the city is now almost complete and the work of interpretation and preparation for final publication is in the hands of Bob Croft.

The Sites & Monuments record has been brought up to date and copies of record cards have been given to the County Museum at Aylesbury.

In addition, all the pre-excavation, excavation, and post-excavation records have been assimilated into a logical records system.

Arrangements are in hand for all the Unit's records to be microfilmed by the N.M.R.

EXCAVATION

A further area of the Iron Age/Romano-British site at Woughton was excavated from June to December by John Barnbrook.

At the Bradwell Roman Villa several problems were solved by a month's work carried out in May prior to an Open Weekend at the site. The future of the site is still uncertain, at the time of writing the Development Corporation has just allocated additional funds for further work to be carried out in the current financial year. The objective is to recover the total extent of the site and to complete the plan of the main building. As a result of these further excavations the Corporation will decide whether to cover and preserve the site or to consider its conservation and display.

At Wood Corner, one mile to the west of the Bradwell Villa, a minor Roman site, thought to be that of an outlying farm on the Villa estate, was excavated by Roy Adkins from February to May. The site was found to be of a farmyard flanked by three circular buildings and a pond. Occupation of the site commenced during the C2nd and it was probably the successor of the small Belgic/Roman site reported above (see Fieldwork section), situated only 200 yds. away. The site flourished during the C3rd and C4th and perhaps later; one of the best finds being a large sherd of the so-called Romano-Saxon pottery.

The Secklow Mound, on the site of the Meeting Place of the Secklow Hundred, came under the threat of landscaping and in June-July Roy Adkins carried out a limited rescue excavation. This having confirmed the existence of the mound, it is now no longer threatened but is to be re-instated and will once more assume its rightful position, although now at the centre of a city not a Saxon Hundred.

The final season's work at the Great Linford Village site was again carried out by Bob Zeepvat. This year another medieval farm complex and adjacent buildings were uncovered. Beneath the yards and buildings was much more evidence of Saxo-Norman occupation in the form of numerous features, gullies and postholes. Final analysis has not been completed but it is unlikely that we will be able to reconstruct the plan of a Saxo-Norman building since the later medieval occupation created so much disturbance.

The excavation of the Windmill mound was extremely successful.

Other minor work and watching briefs included Walton Church, where the area of the floor in the tower became available after the removal of paving. Several burials were noted and the original W wall of the church, breached when the tower was added, was found to survive intact just below the floor level.

WOUGHTON

The area along the N embankment of the V7 and H7 grid-roads roundabout excavated in 1974-75 (reported in CBA9, Newsletter 6), was re-examined and extended as far as the line of a high pressure water main (Area A), and a

small area beyond the water main was also investigated (Area B), (Fig. 10). In addition, a large area was stripped by machine on the S embankment of the roundabout following the provisional results of a magnetometer survey undertaken by the Ancient Monuments Laboratory of the DoE (Area C).

Several new features were found in Areas A and B, and this, together with re-interpretation of those already discovered, has necessitated re-numbering of some of the features described in the earlier report. Later disturbance of the site resulted from ridge-and-furrow ploughing, a hedgerow gully, and the insertion of land drains. Nearly all of the features found were of Late Iron Age (Belgic) date, probably C1st AD. Only feature 25, a shallow gully, failed to provide any dating evidence whatsoever.

Feature 1, 2.5m. wide and 1m. deep was exposed for a length of 13m. from its butt. It ran in a SW direction and may have been part of the same enclosure ditch (also of Belgic date), a length of which was exposed and planned during construction of the roundabout.

Features 2 and 3 (gully and ditch found in the 1974-75 excavations) were found to continue, Feature 2 for a total length of 16.0m., when it merged with 3, and Feature 3 for a total excavated length of 37.0m. Feature 2 probably contained a palisade fence around the house site represented by circular gullies 5 and 6. Ditch 3 post-dated these features and may have formed, with Ditch 24, another smaller enclosure.

Features 4 and 8 and 26 were only visible in a fragmented state owing to later disturbance. Gullies 7 and 9 were probably dug for drainage, 9 possibly being contemporary with circular gullies 5 and 6, while 7 post-dated these features and gully 10. This feature, which may have contained a palisade fence probably formed part of an enclosure system with similar gullies 11 and 12. Gullies 15, 16 and 17, probably for drainage, seem to have pre-dated these features.

Slightly later than these enclosures was one formed by a more substantial feature Ditch 13, which contained concentrations of stone packing, presumably for quite large posts. This butted at its N end and may have continued as Feature 14. Within this enclosure was a small, shallow pit (19) and a complex of features 18, 20, 21, 22 and 23.

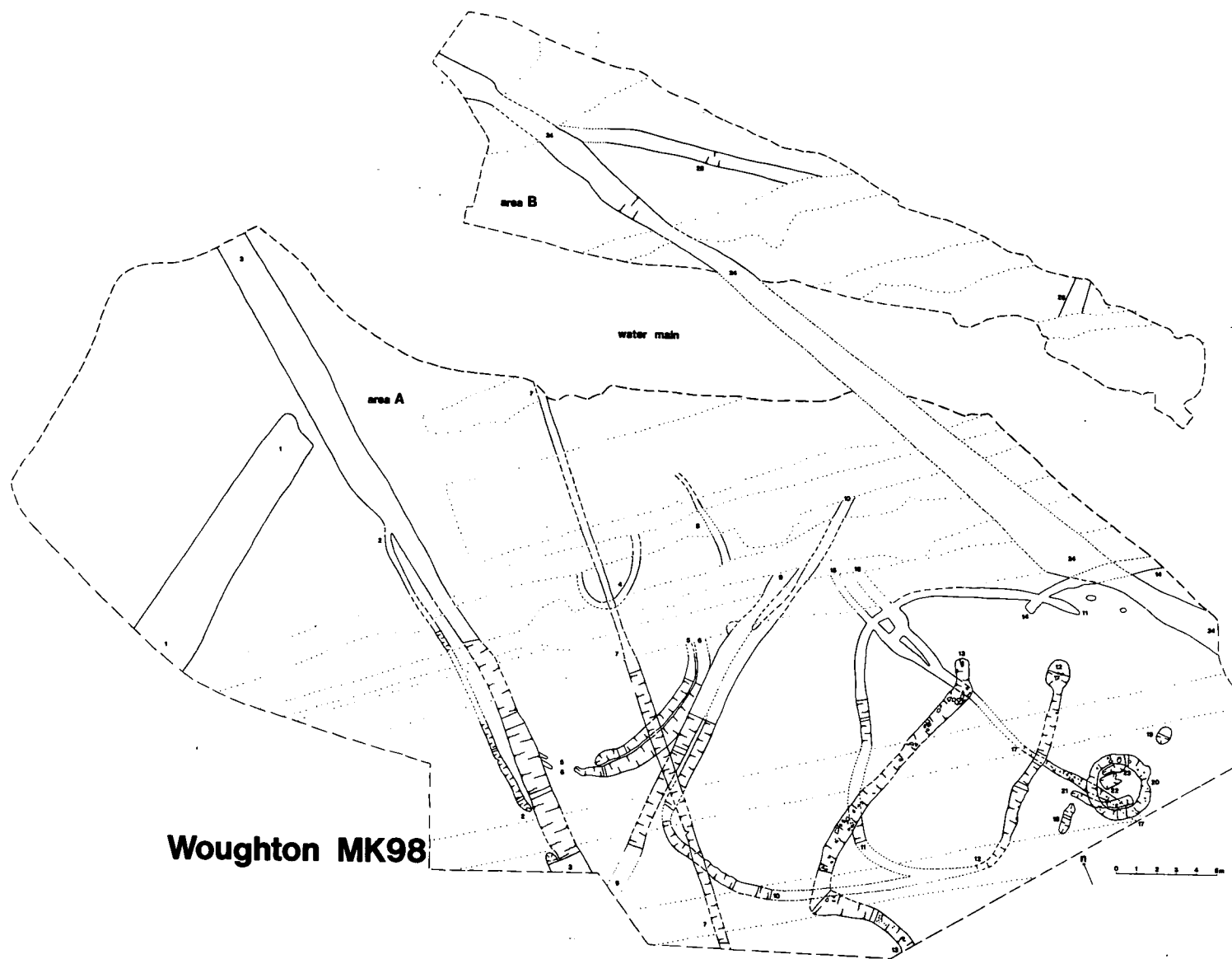
Feature 18, a long, narrow post pit, may have been associated with the banana-shaped gully 21, roughly at right angles to it, together forming part of a small structure.

Feature 20 was a continuous, roughly circular gully, with a diameter of 2.5m. It was later than 21 and may have had a small stone causeway at the E. Within it were two shallow, irregularly shaped pits - 22 and 23. The function of this small circular structure was not clear; hardly large enough for a dwelling, it may have been used as a store or workshop.

The magnetometer survey of Area C showed several linear features and two very large anomalies which appeared to be pits. Work is still in progress (December 1977) on the stripped area, which corresponds to a substantial part of the area surveyed, but excavation has already confirmed several of the features shown by the survey, as well as revealing the presence of many more, too small to have registered as anomalies.

Features investigated so far include enclosure ditches, a large pit, and several gullies, all containing Roman material, and smaller, less distinct features containing Belgic material similar to that from Areas A and B.

Work will continue on Area C during the winter, after which the results of these excavations and those of 1974-75 will be combined with those of the



Woughton MK98

Figure 10

salvage operations which took place during road construction, to provide as detailed a picture as possible of this complex, multi-period site.

Report by J. Barnbrook, Site Supervisor

BRADWELL ROMAN VILLA

Further work on this site (reported in CBA IX Newsletter 7, 1977 pp. 79-85) took place in May, with the objects of investigating the possible Saxon grübenhaus and Outbuilding 2 and preparing the site for public exhibition on the last weekend of the month.

The "grübenhaus" proved to have been the butt of a Roman ditch, partly stone-filled. The external walls of Outbuilding 2 (18.5m. x 8.5m.) were confirmed to have been as they appeared on the previously published plan (Newsletter 7, p.80), though appearing only as robber trenches for much of their lengths. Buttresses had been built at intervals along the outside of the long S wall, which also had a porch situated midway along it. Within this was a narrow area of limestone paving which gave way to pitched foundations at the E end. The remainder of the interior was bisected longitudinally by a narrow drain. The building, a barn, was probably used for housing animals.

Work preparatory to opening the site to the public provided a little more information about the main building. A portion of the W wall of Room 1 was discovered, of sufficient dimensions to suggest that it was external. A further portion of the corridor was uncovered at its S end, the additional design and easterly projecting wall of which suggested a central vestibule. The stoke hole (Room 3) probably serviced a small bath suite adjoining the main building on its N side and continuing as far as the W side of the corridor. The presence or otherwise of a hypocaust has not yet been confirmed.

The success of the open weekend, when between three and four thousand local people visited the site, and its importance locally as a cultural amenity in the New City, have prompted the Development Corporation to provide sufficient funds for further excavation commencing next February.

Report by J. Barnbrook, Site Supervisor.

WOOD CORNER, BRADWELL, ROMAN OCCUPATION SITE

The site, situated at National Grid Reference SP 84503974, to the SW of Stanton Wood, was first noticed in 1961 when D.C. Mynard found a scatter of Roman material after ploughing.

In 1975 the site was accurately located by trial trenches, but since, at that time the site was not threatened, no further work was done.

In October 1976, after receiving information that the destruction of the site by the construction of a new road (Dansteed Way (H4)) was imminent, a small rescue excavation was started, but in the face of worsening weather conditions work had to be postponed until the following spring when the site was excavated during the period February to May 1977. In all, an area of some 2,300 sq.m. was stripped of topsoil, but throughout the excavation poor weather conditions and bad flooding proved a constant hindrance. Consequently only the central area (some 1,500 sq.m.: the most important part of the site) was investigated in any detail. The most modern features (see plan Fig. 11) were two patterns of field drains, probably dating to the latter half of the nineteenth or early twentieth century. Many of which were laid within the remains of the furrows of a medieval ridge-and-furrow system. These drains and furrows and the ravages of modern ploughing had caused considerable damage to the Roman levels.

Wood Corner (MK 64)

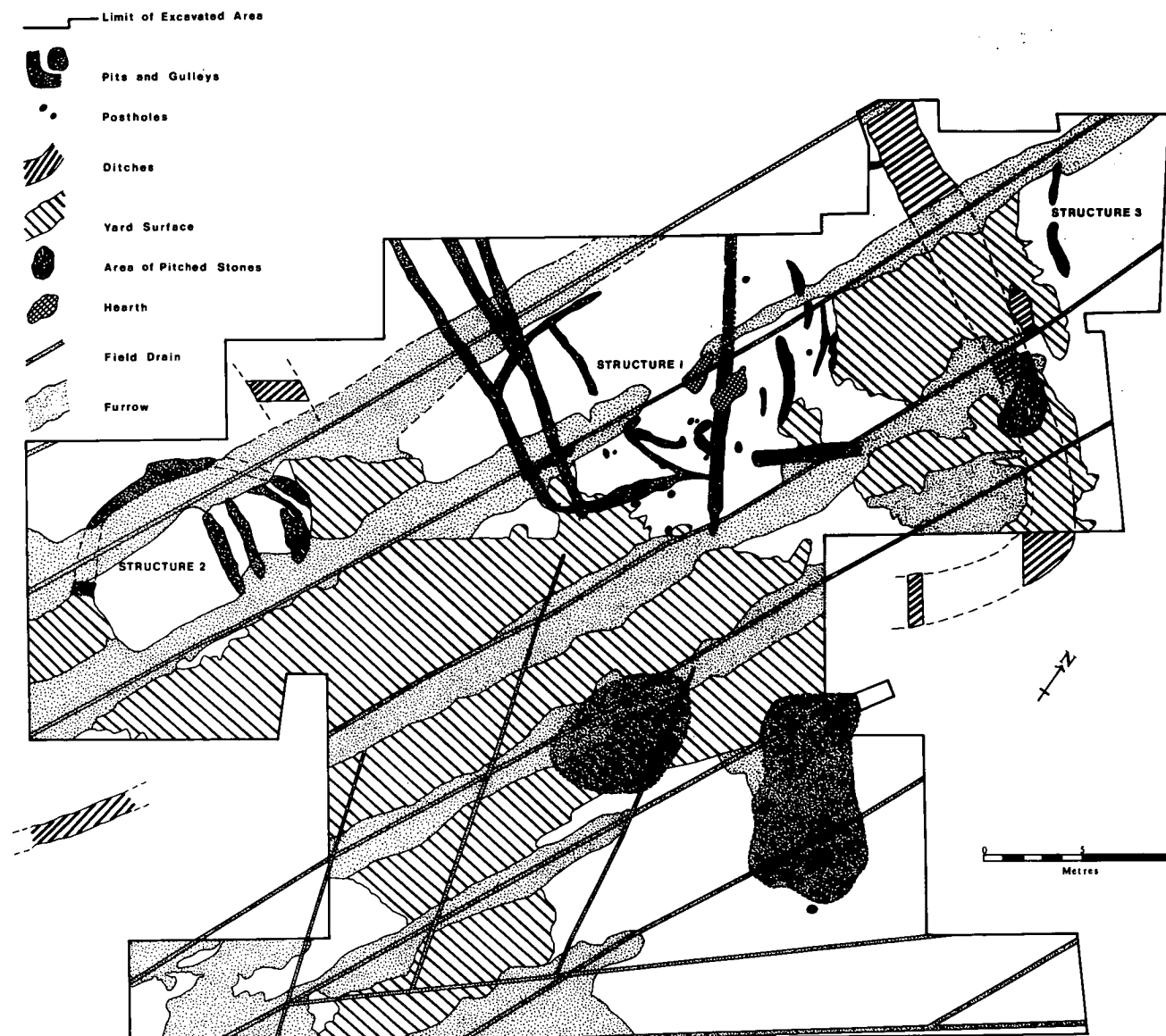


Figure 11

THE ROMAN FEATURES

In its earliest phase, the site consisted of an enclosure. The size of this enclosure is unknown, the remaining part of the ditch consisted of a 25m. run, aligned NW to SE, with a right angled corner at the SE end turning to the SW and continuing for a least 8m., where it was confirmed by a trial trench. Beyond this point it was not visible in the excavated surface nor was it located by mechanically cut trial trenches. The enclosure appears to be aligned NE to SW, on which axis the yard surface of the later occupation phase on the site also lay.

The dating evidence for the enclosure ditch consists of C3rd and C4th pottery from its fill and the fact that it was covered by the later yard surface which also contained C3rd-4th pottery. The early focus of site is within the enclosure around Structure 1, here late C2nd to early C3rd pottery may well be associated with a timber structure underlying Structure 1, suggested by the gullies and post-holes at this point. At the W end of the site two other ditches which may belong to this early phase were observed.

The later and most evident phase of occupation dates to the C3rd and C4th by which time the enclosure was overlaid by a roughly rectangular yard surface with three circular buildings on the NW side, and two large pits on the SE, each 2m. deep, possibly originating as clay pits for cob for the buildings, and later serving as watering places for stock. The yard surface had a build-up of black clayey soil with an average depth of 20 cms. There were clearly several phases of make up defined by patches and layers of hard core. At the NE end an entrance to the yard is defined by an area of pitched stones set in the top fill of the earlier enclosure ditch.

THE STRUCTURES

Structure 1

Here probably two phases of circular buildings, one superimposed on the other were observed, but the presence of gullies and post-holes, the sequence of which has not been finally considered, may alter this interpretation. The first phase consisted of a hearth and traces of a circular gully to the SW and the N. The second phase was the best preserved and consisted of a circular gully approximately 8m. in diameter with a central hearth. The W side of the gully was destroyed by medieval ploughing, the remaining parts were on average 20-30 cms. wide and contained footings(?) consisting of a single line of large stones and pebbles. A right angle turn on the S side may be the site of the entrance. Pottery from this structure was of C3rd date with C4th sherds coming from a post-hole within the building.

Structure 2

Here traces of a circular gully, 10-11m. in diameter defined the site of another building. On the N side two gullies were present suggesting two phases of building. It was noted that the yard make-up partially covered this structure suggesting that it went out of use at an early stage.

Structure 3

Two fragments of circular gully were thought to be part of another building.

CONCLUSIONS

The importance of this excavation lies in the fact that it is the first attempt, in the Milton Keynes area, to totally excavate a minor Roman site. Admittedly the excavation was not as complete as one would have wished, due to the necessity to dig in adverse winter conditions, which meant that the best return was not obtained for the amount of money available. However, the results have shown a minor agricultural site commencing in the Antonine period and flourishing during the C3rd and C4th. That it was part of an estate run from a nearby 'Villa' may be a distinct possibility. The accessibility to good quality building rubble for use as hardcore (even painted wall plaster was found in the fill of the gully of Structure 3), suggests contact with a nearby villa, such as Bradwell, which is the only known major villa within a mile of this site. The excavation of the site is part of our programmed policy of totally excavating the Bradwell Villa and all other Roman sites in its immediate neighbourhood.

Report by R. Adkins, Site Supervisor.

SECKLOW HILL - A HUNDRED MEETING PLACE

The site is situated at NGR SP 85133918, which is the meeting point of the ancient Secklow Hundred at the boundaries of the three ancient parishes of Bradwell, Great Linford and Woolstone. The site has also been suggested as that of a Roman crossroads, (see Viatores, Roman Roads of South East Midlands, p.324).

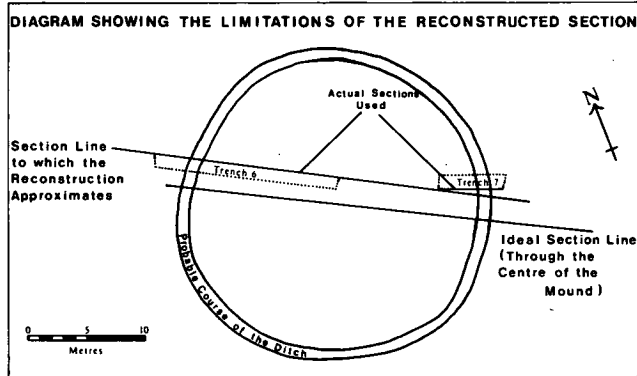
The surface geology is Boulder clay. The possibility of a mound at this point has been known from historical evidence for a considerable time and on a 1641 estate map for the parish of Great Linford the mound is marked as a prominent hill called "Selly Hill". In the C18th the site was described by Browne Willis as "An hillock at the top of Linford Ground leading into Bradwell Field". The place-name evidence suggests that "Secklow" is a corruption of the Anglo-Saxon "Sigelai" meaning "Victory Mound, or 'Warriors' Mound" and points to a Saxon or pre-Saxon date.

Early in 1975 when the construction of the City Centre proved a threat to the site, a contour survey made of the area did not confirm the existence of a mound. The site was then trial-trenched by machine and the trenches located a curving ditch. Unfortunately the site proved to be severely waterlogged and in the face of worsening weather conditions further work was postponed. Soon after this it was decided that the trees on the site were to be preserved and since this suggested a 'safe period' for the site, no further work was carried out until 1977 when proposed landscaping constituted a serious threat.

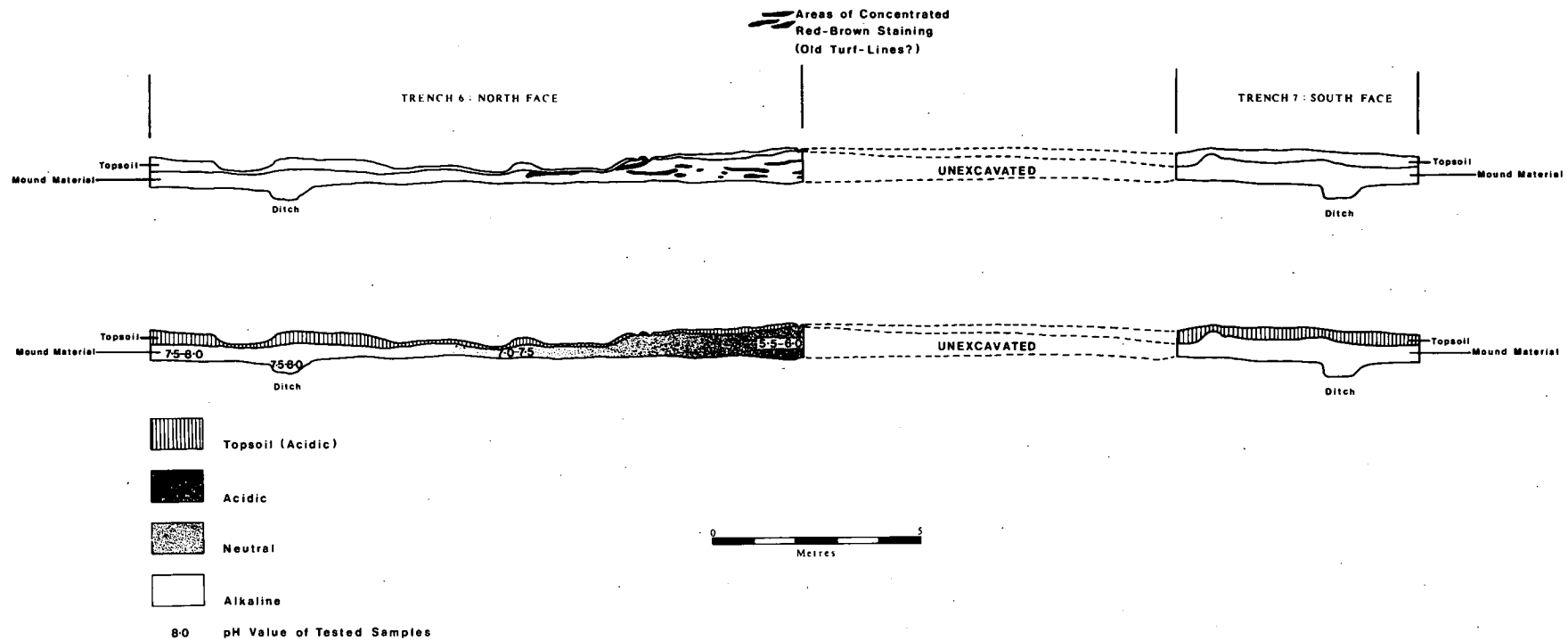
A small rescue excavation was organised, but the presence of the trees which were still to be preserved meant that the excavation was not conducted in an orthodox fashion. Instead, trenches were cut wherever possible without damaging trees or their roots. It was hoped that their preservation might protect any remains immediately surrounding them from the ravages of landscaping.

The trenches rapidly established the presence of a roughly circular ditch with an average diameter of 25m. The ditch was an average of 1m. wide and was cut to a depth of between 30 cms. and 50 cms. into the natural clay. The existence of a mound was harder to establish, the ground surface suggested only the slightest indication of a mound (not confirmed by the contour survey), and the layers observed in the sections showed no slope suggestive of a mound. Indeed, it was very difficult to distinguish any separate layers between the bottom of topsoil and the surface of the natural clay. Although changes in soil colour and texture could be observed, there were no clear boundaries

Secklow Hill (MK 300)



Reconstruction Of A Section Through The Mound



The Reconstructed Section Showing The Variation In pH of The Mound Material

Figure 12

between them (Fig. 12).

This blurring of layer boundaries seems to be a combination of several factors. A large amount of disturbance by roots and animals was visible in most sections, and this would contribute. Similarly, most sections showed evidence of worm-sorting, and some appeared completely stone-free from the topsoil down almost to the surface of the natural clay. In the E end of trench 6, red-brown lines resembling old turf lines could be seen in the sections. These became fainter and finally disappeared towards the W end of the trench. (see reconstructed section). The hypothesis was put forward that since the circular ditch was not of sufficient size to account for the existing depth of soil within, let alone any mound that had been previously visible, the mound must have been made of turf and soil and the red-brown lines were the last vestiges of the stacked turf. To test this, soil samples were taken along the sides of Trench 6 and tested for pH value. These tests showed a change from acidity to alkalinity moving from E to W along the trench (see reconstructed section). These results would seem to be consistent with the theory of a turf mound since the only soil on site that proved to be acidic (other than the highly humified topsoil) was the soil in which the "turf lines" were visible.

On balance, it seems most likely that originally the site consisted of a low turf mound surrounded by a shallow circular ditch. The mound then weathered and/or was deliberately levelled, and any remaining layers were disturbed by roots, animals and earthworms.

Very few finds were made but pottery of Roman and medieval dates and some possibly Belgic was recovered from the fill of the ditch. Only one feature was discovered beneath the mound in the area excavated: this was an irregular hollow or shallow pit cut into the natural clay. It varied between 80cm. and 2.80m. wide, and was 20cm. deep, and contained a few sherds of Saxon(?) pottery. It is most probable that this was an earlier feature that had already silted up before the mound was built. Roman sherds were found just above the natural clay within the ditch in what could be the old soil level under the mound. The absence of an observable buried soil and the abundant evidence of the activity of earthworms, however, cast doubt on the possibility of these finds being in situ.

Just outside the circular ditch was a shallow gulley running at an acute angle to it. This gulley, 50cm. wide and 20cm. deep, did not meet the circular ditch within the excavated area, thus the relationship between these two features could not be established. To the S, another shallow gulley was discovered running approximately EW. This gulley, which produced a few Roman sherds, was 50cm. wide and 20cm. deep and its course was traced for a distance of 16m. It seems quite likely that this is a drainage gulley running alongside a medieval or possibly earlier trackway shown on old ordnance maps, perhaps even a Roman road, although this is not on the line of the roads suggested by the Viatores. Two other features were observed, both under the nearby disused road (Common Lane). One of these was a ditch or trench 2m. wide and 60cm. deep that had been cut along the line of the road. It was traced for 23m. and its fill was heavy blue clay with occasional pieces of limestone. It appeared to have been cut through one layer of hardcore laid down for the road and the subsidence in the top of its fill had been filled up with large limestone rubble in order to make a good road surface. No pipes or cables were found within it, and although it is probably a modern feature, its date, purpose and exact relationship to the road are unknown.

The other feature found under the road was a gravel layer lying on the surface of the natural clay. This gravel layer was very thin (3-4cm.), but

did seem to be specifically concentrated beneath the road. Elsewhere on the site patches of gravel lying on the natural clay were observed and these are not an unusual natural phenomenon on Boulder clay. On the other hand, it does seem fortuitous that such a natural phenomenon was more concentrated beneath the road than elsewhere on the site.

Report by R. Adkins, Site Supervisor.

GREAT LINFORD MEDIEVAL VILLAGE - SP 854421

Excavations continued at Great Linford from May to November on a site some 200m. E of the High Street in an area known as Pearson's Close, after its late C17th owner. The area was shown on a 1641 estate map of the parish as being on the E side of a lane running parallel with and to the E of the High Street and containing a single dwelling. Prior to excavation this appeared on the ground as a hollow representing the lane, with two substantial building platforms alongside it.

As in previous years, a Massey Ferguson MF50B was used to trial trench the whole field, and topsoil was then stripped from areas showing signs of occupation. In all, an area of about 2200 sq.m. was opened.

Early Occupation (C11th-C13th, Fig.13)

The site appears to have been first occupied in the C11th. This period was represented by a number of gullies cut in to the clay subsoil, aligned NS (F20, 25, 27); a silt spread underlying the N end of Building 31, and a post-hole group, also beneath the S end of Building 31. In addition, a ditch 1-1.5m. wide (F36) crossing the site on an E/W alignment beneath Buildings 28 and 29 appeared to have marked a boundary to the N of the above features. This ditch connected with a second ditch (F98) running beneath the E side of the lane, marking the W limit of occupation. The group of post-holes of F28 suggests the presence of a timber-framed structure about 6 x 4m., though no evidence of hearths or other domestic structures was found. All the features described above yielded quantities of St. Neot's type inturned rims, and several sherds of Saxon type.

The Farmstead (late C13th-mid C17th, Fig.14)

This group of buildings, consisting of a house with adjoining kitchen, fronting the lane, and a number of outbuildings and a barn grouped around two cobbled yards, formed the main period of occupation on Pearson's Close.

Building 26

This building, situated beside the lane, appeared to have been the farmhouse, presumably the dwelling shown on the 1641 estate map. The structure had been badly disturbed by post-medieval stone robbing, but sufficient remained to show a structure 6 x 14m. divided internally into three rooms - a small N bay, a large central room probably the living area, and a N bay containing a hearth set against the W wall, opposite which was a curious semi-circular stone structure 2.4m. in diameter. It is possible that this bay was a later addition to a smaller structure about 11m. in length, filling the gap between it and Building 27, with which it shared its N wall. Internal floors were laid on the clay subsoil, except in the N bay where the floor was formed by the compacted surface of the silt fill of F36.

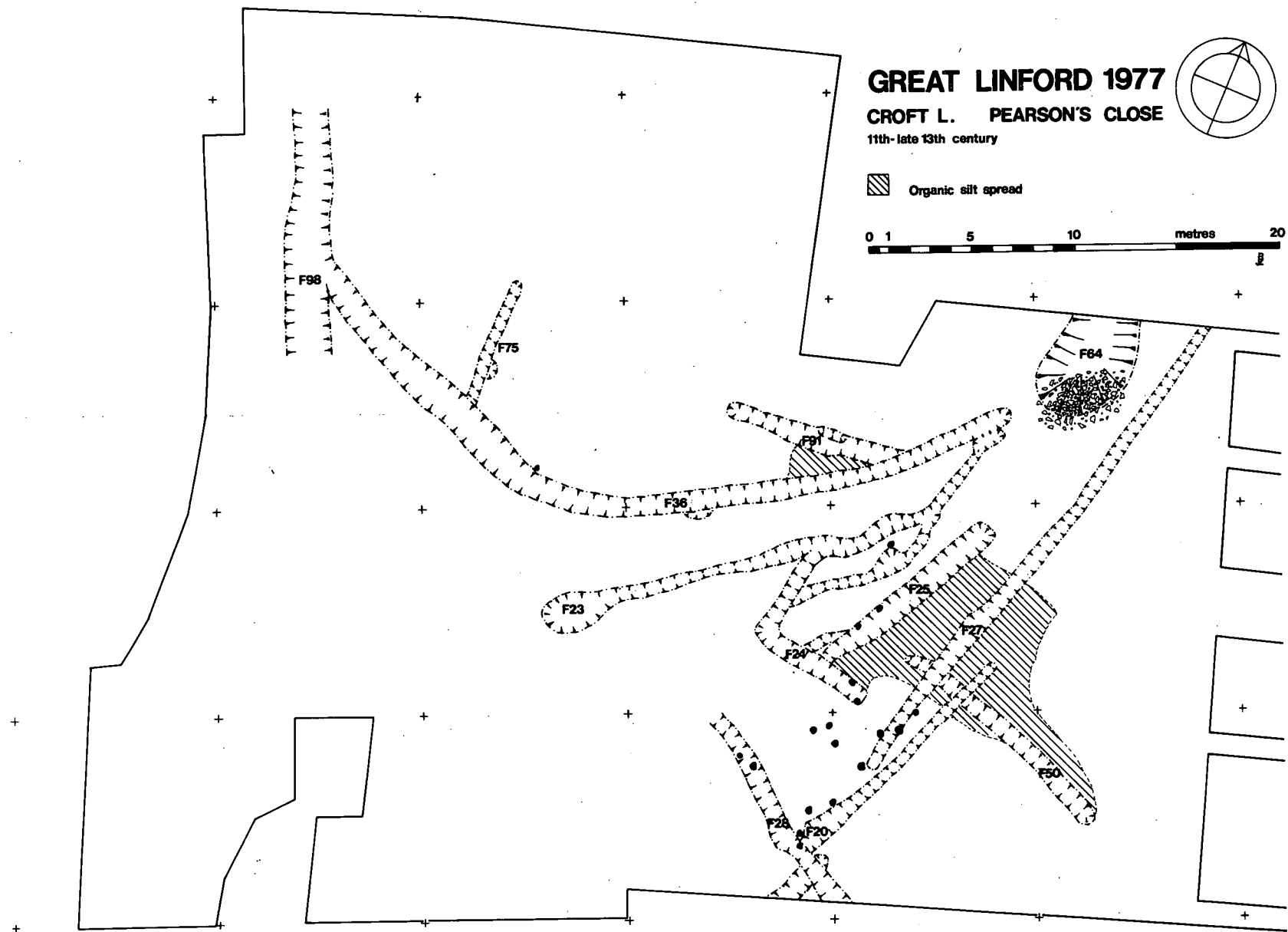


Figure 13

LINCOLN 13

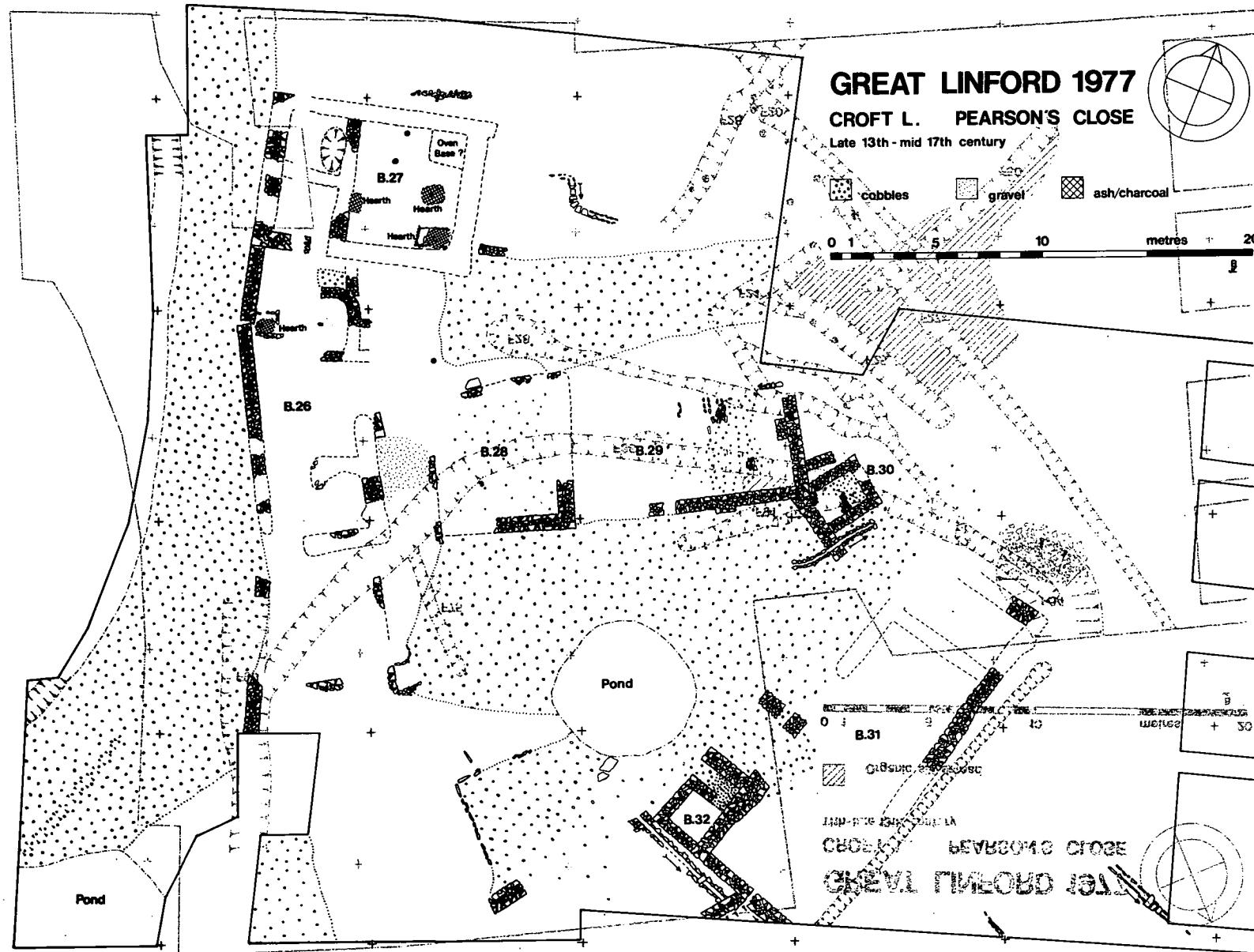


Figure 14

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Building 27

This also lay alongside the lane at the N end of Building 26. It measured 10.4 x 7.5m., aligned EW, and was divided internally into a large E room, 5 x 5.5m., and two smaller rooms, each 2.5m. square, at its W end. The E room contained three hearths, and a rectangular depression 1.5 x 1.8m. in its N-E corner, which probably marked the site of an oven. The compacted earth floor was sealed by a layer of charcoal, probably the result of extensive use of the building, which appears to have been a kitchen. A gap in the S wall of the SW room marked a connecting doorway leading into the house.

Building 27 had been badly damaged by stone-robbing, the N, S and E walls being represented by robber trenches about 15-20cm. deep and at least 1m. wide. From this depth of foundation and the thickness of surviving parts of the W wall, it appears that the building may have had an upper storey.

Building 28

This structure was situated 2m. east of Building 26, being separated from it by a roughly gravelled area suggesting a passageway. It measured 7.5 x 6m. and like the structures described above, had been damaged by stone-robbing, only the SE corner surviving to its full width. There were no internal features, the floor being of roughly cobbled clay. A large limestone slab by the N wall may have marked an entrance.

Building 29

This lay immediately E of Building 28, and the E wall of which it was butted on to. Building 29 measured 11 x 6m. and, like the other buildings, had been damaged by stone robbing, about all its N wall having been removed. The S wall, the most substantial surviving wall, was found to have been built into F36. Internally, the W half of the floor was of clay, whilst the E half was surfaced in cobbles and pitched stone. Two stone-lined beam slots adjacent to the line of the N wall suggested the presence of an entrance into the N yard.

Building 30

This was a small structure 2.7 x 3.5m. built onto the SW corner of Building 29, and the E side of the wall forming the E boundary of the S yard. The internal floor of the building was surfaced with limestone cobbles, with two small areas of pitched stone. The function of the structure remained uncertain - one notably absent feature was a doorway!

To the S of Building 30 was a stone-lined drain, parallel with the S wall of the structure running through the boundary wall of the yard, which it apparently helped to drain.

Building 31

This building, measuring 19.5 x 6.5m., aligned NS, lay on the E side of the yard. Here again, stone robbing had taken place and only the S wall and portions of the E and N walls survived. The only internal feature noted was a dividing wall 3m. from the N end, and from this and the building's great size it would appear to have been a barn. Eavesdrip gullies were found alongside the N and E walls, and a more elaborate stone-lined drain ran parallel to the S wall, apparently draining the yard into a field boundary ditch to the S of the barn.

Building 32

This was a small lean-to built onto the W side of the barn, at its SW corner. It consisted of a rectangular structure 3 x 4.5m, with an entrance 1m. wide in its W wall. The entrance passage was surfaced with closely packed limestone rubble fragments, though this ended abruptly on reaching the interior, which had a clay surface.

The Lane

To the W of the farmstead was uncovered a section of the village back lane. This was surfaced with closely packed limestone and flint rubble, and varied in width from 3.5-7m. The surface, which showed signs of general wear, was cambered to the W, on which side was a drainage ditch. In the SW corner of the site, where the lane turned W away from the farmstead, a second drainage gully appeared in the road surface, running parallel to and 3.5m. from the main drainage ditch.

Report by R. Zeepvat, Site Supervisor.

GREAT LINFORD WINDMILL MOUND (SP 857422)

Excavations took place on a possible windmill mound at Great Linford in July and August 1977. The site was situated about 400m. E of the village, at a height of about 80m. O.D. - the highest point in Great Linford parish. The earthworks, which were surveyed prior to excavation, consisted of a 'C' shaped ditch about 40m. in diameter and 14m. across, facing SE, enclosing a mound about 9m. across. To the SE of this was a plough headland, alongside which ran a trackway, now a public footpath, connecting Great Linford and Newport Pagnell. The site of the mound is shown on the 1641 estate map of Great Linford as "Windmill Hill", and the adjoining fields have names referring to a windmill, though there is no representation of the mill itself on the map.

The excavation

Initially, the earthwork was divided into four quadrants, and the topsoil stripped from two of these by machine. An area was also opened on the top of the mound (Fig. 15). Sections cut across the ditch showed it to have been about 2m. deep on its E and W sides. The N section was taken to a similar depth but not bottomed, owing to a constant inflow of water from the surrounding gravel. An assemblage of pottery from Roman to Victorian was recovered from the sections; this may have been produced as the result of dumping from gravelling operations in the adjacent field in the C19th.

The top of the mound was found to contain a cross-shaped feature, about 7m. across. When excavated, this was found to be the trenches for the base timbers of a post-mill. The trenches, which were about 1m. deep and 1-1.4m. wide, had been cut in the gravel subsoil, which had then been packed tightly back into the trenches after insertion of the beams. The beams themselves were marked by stone packing in the bottom of the cross. The EW beam was 30cm. square and 4.9m. long, while the NS beam appeared to have been in two parts, upper and lower, separated by a layer of large stones, each measuring 30 x 15cm., and about 6m. in length. The beams were presumably jointed together at the centre, and the centrepole slotted over them. Sufficient amounts of timber remained from both arms to allow the types of wood used to be identified. No dating evidence was found in the fill of the cross, but the type of construction points to a medieval date for the mill.

Report by R. Zeepvat, Site Supervisor.

GREAT LINFORD 1977
M109 WINDMILL MOUND

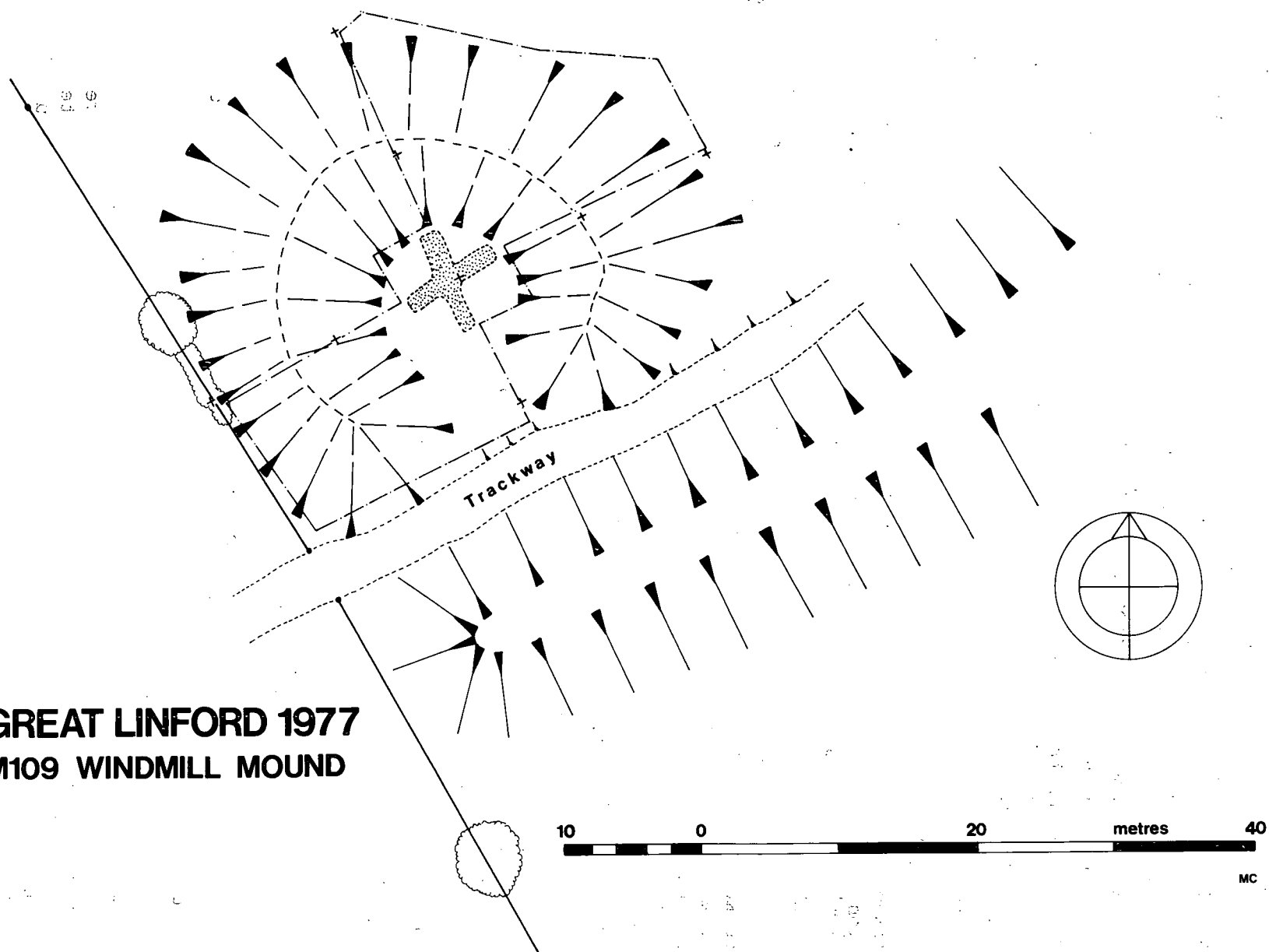


Figure 15

POST EXCAVATION

Roman

The Bradwell Villa report has been completed for the work so far undertaken. It is intended to publish the site in full after the coming season's excavation.

A comprehensive archive report for the Wood Corner site has been completed by Roy Adkins, who now awaits pottery and other specialist reports.

The report on the trial excavation of a Roman site at Walton in 1972 has been completed by D.C. Mynard and will be published in the next issue of the Records of Bucks.

Medieval

Now that the Great Linford excavation is complete, the final report can be commenced. It is anticipated that processing of all the finds and preparation of specialist reports will take at least a year.

General Publication

Work is in hand on the monograph to be entitled 'The Archaeology of Milton Keynes'. A meeting has recently been held with the RCHM and we envisage a joint publication. The work will consist of separate chapters on the various Prehistoric, Roman and Early Saxon periods. The later periods will be dealt with as individual parish studies. Bob Croft is currently working on the medieval section and has supplied the following notes:

The aim is to produce a monograph describing each known medieval village within the Milton Keynes new city area. The study will attempt a microtopographic approach to study each settlement within its total medieval environment, the basic information being presented on a parish or hamlet map at 1:5000 scale. A detailed plan of each village and its earthworks will also be included where appropriate.

The following headings briefly outline the main areas of the research directives:-

Earthwork Survey

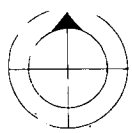
A series of 17 medieval earthwork sites have been surveyed mainly at 1:500 scale. These earthwork surveys will be used in the final report to supplement the information shown on the 1:5000 maps. A copy of the earthwork survey of Caldecotte (SP 891354) (MK18/19/85) is shown in Fig. 16. This village site is scheduled to be excavated by Milton Keynes Development Corporation starting in the spring of 1978 due to the threat of gravel extraction and the construction of Caldecotte balancing lake.

Air Photographs

Both vertical and oblique photographs from a number of sources have been used in the investigation of all the known earthwork sites and have often proved useful in the interpretation of village layout within its surrounding field system.

Cartographic Investigation

Following on from the work done by Liz Baines on the tracings of some



CALDECOTTE

DESERTED VILLAGE EARTHWORKS

50 0 100 METRES

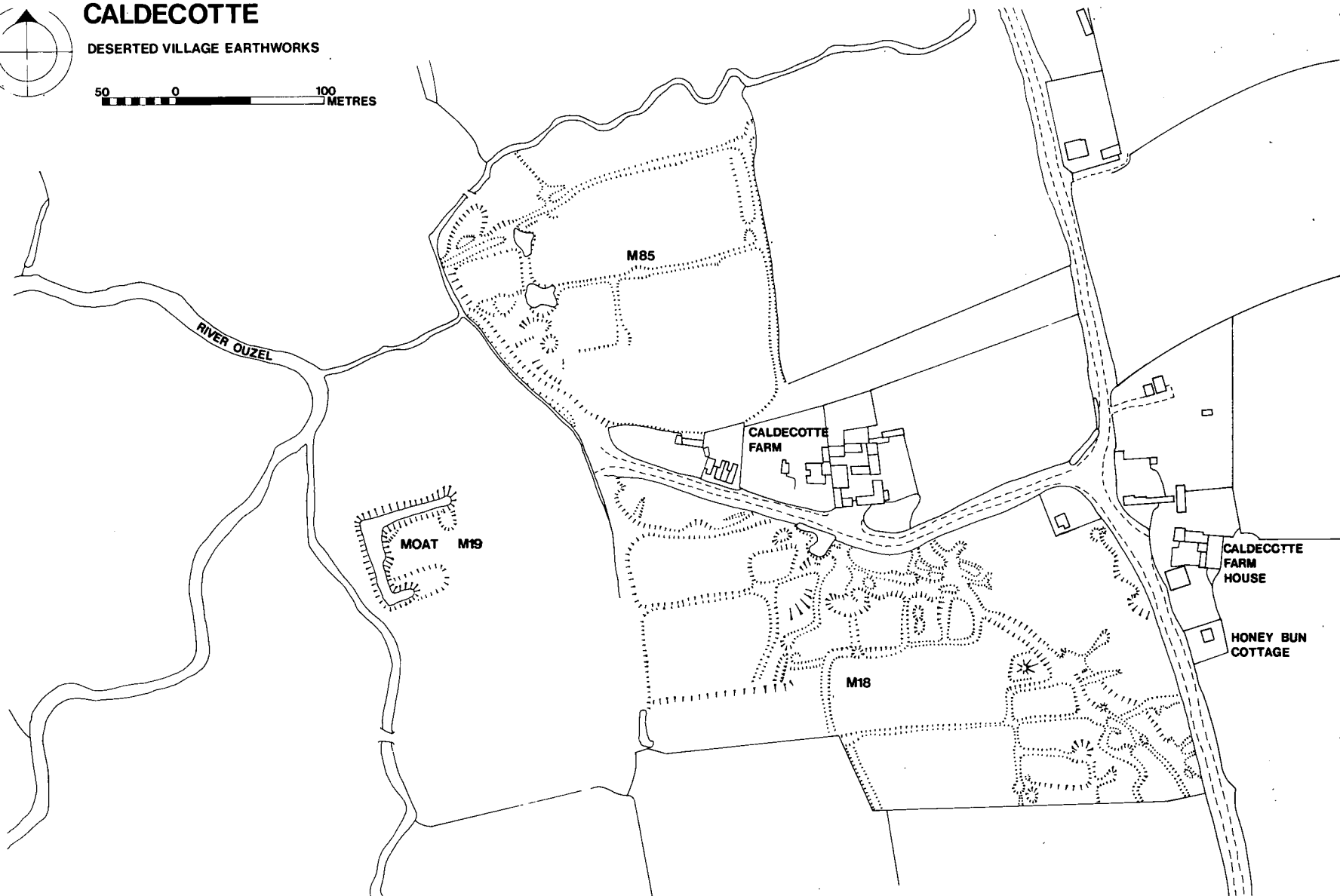


Figure 16

twenty early maps of villages within Milton Keynes, it has been possible to follow the development and decline of several major village sites. At Shenley Church End (SP 832366) (MK39/40/41) the positions of several houses shown on C17th estate maps can be fairly accurately located as occupying house platforms shown on the earthwork surveys.

A list of all the tracings done by Liz Baines is given in CBA IX Newsletter 7, p96.

Place and Field Names of Archaeological Interest

In combination with cartographic and documentary research a record card has been designed to record any place or field names which may be of archaeological interest. Whenever a name is discovered it is given a possible grid reference and meaning and this is then investigated on the air photographs and on the ground.

First Edition 1:10560 Ordnance Survey Map

Attention is drawn to investigators in other areas of the value of this map as both a cartographic and documentary record of landscape history.

This map proves to be a useful joinder in locating place and field names and also field boundaries shown on estate maps with features shown on more recent O.S. maps. The scale of 1:10560 is similar to that of many vertical air photographs and thus facilitates the location of field boundaries, many of which have been removed with the development of the City.

Ecological Information

In conjunction with the work being done by the Milton Keynes Development Corporation's Ecology Section details of areas of ecological diversity, in particular woodlands, are being plotted onto 1:5000 parish maps. From this information it may be possible to locate some areas of ancient woodland and meadow and thus ascertain a more complete picture of the medieval landscape.

A detailed report on the dating of some hedgerows within Milton Keynes has been prepared by Kate Swabey of the Ecology Section based upon the methods developed by Hooper.

CONSERVATION

The scope of the Conservation Laboratory has been considerably increased during the year with the acquisition of a fume extraction unit, an ultra sonic cleaning tank, a drying cabinet, a conductivity bridge, and several smaller items of equipment.

During the year over a thousand items have been treated, these include painted wall plaster from the Bradwell Roman Villa, ironwork, copper alloy and lead objects from our various Roman and Medieval excavations. Several problem items have been taken to Northampton Museum for advice. The laboratory has given advice to members of the public who brought in finds from Milton Keynes and where possible these have, if necessary, been conserved and added to the Museum Collection of the Field Centre.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

All members of the Unit have been involved in giving talks to local groups, organisation, and societies. Several parties have also visited the Field Centre.

The major event of the year was the Open Weekend at the Bradwell Roman Villa which was attended by approximately 3500 people. The local societies have been encouraged to assist with fieldwork and excavation projects, the latter being on a Roman site in Gt. Linford parish where the Unit provided a hut and equipment. At the time of writing several trial trenches have been dug and work has been abandoned for the winter months.

This Annual Report has been compiled by members of the Archaeology Unit of Milton Keynes Development Corporation and edited by D.C. Mynard, Senior Archaeologist to the Corporation.

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL DEPARTMENT OF MUSEUM SERVICES

FIELD SECTION - John Steane and James Bond

SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

The addition of new material to the County Sites and Monuments Record continues, and at the time of writing, the record contains details of some 11,200 archaeological sites and buildings in the county.

The major event of the year has been the transfer of the Sites and Monuments Record, together with the Field Section offices, the Antiquities Section, and the Biological Record Centre, into more commodious accommodation in a new building in the garden of the Oxfordshire County Museum at Woodstock. This opened its doors to the public in October 1977. For the first time for some years all components of the Record can now be housed within a single room, which makes retrieval a much easier process.

The most important single bulk accession to the Record this year has been the papers of the late Mr. Peter Spokes, comprising a vast quantity of photographs, drawings, notes, and correspondence on Oxfordshire buildings. This material is currently being processed for inclusion into the Record by Elizabeth Leggatt.

A further major contribution to the Record has come from Mr. & Mrs. Eric Eustace of Kirtlington, who have redoubtably continued their county-wide survey of Non-conformist chapels, and have added no less than thirty to the Sites and Monuments Record this year. They have researched into the documentary history, including Bishops' Registers, Directories and 1851 Religious Census, and have described the buildings themselves, their locations, furnishings, memorials and gravestones. Another significant addition has been the survey of buildings in Lewknor parish by the Lewknor Historical Society. Further air photographs have been received from the National Monuments Record and from Professor St. Joseph.

PLANNING MATTERS

The work of liaison with the County and District Planning Departments continues to be operated jointly by the Department of Museum Services and the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit.

Perhaps the greatest success of the year has been the decision of the Secretary of State over the appeal against the refusal of planning permission for sand and gravel extraction at Northfield Farm, Long Wittenham. The Inspector accepted the great archaeological importance of the area, the fact that rescue excavation at this stage would be both unsatisfactory and costly, and the need to retain the area as a reserve for investigation by future generations. The appeal was dismissed on the grounds that the need for minerals did not outweigh the archaeological and environmental objections to the proposed development.

The development of minerals policies for the county continues to carry important archaeological implications. Gravel areas in the Windrush valley are currently the subject of a Local Plan, in which the archaeological factor has been fully considered from the early stages. In the ironstone areas of north Oxfordshire the Museum was requested to carry out a survey and evaluation of the historic landscape of 38 parishes for the County Minerals Working Party.

Individual planning applications continue to be scanned through the medium of the weekly schedules received from the districts, but an improved screening system has been introduced in two of the five Districts, South Oxfordshire and Cherwell, involving the use of revised and overhauled development control sheets.

The Museum has provided advice on proposed Conservation Areas at Drayton (N. Oxon), Wroxton, Rousham, Stanton St. John, St. Clements (Oxford), Headington Hill, Ewelme and Goring and also on the modification of an existing Conservation Area at Ock Street, Abingdon.

MEDIEVAL POTTERY

Two groups of medieval pottery have been found in the Faringdon area. A group from the River Thames, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile W of Tadpole Bridge was brought in by Mrs. Allen Stevens of Faringdon. Maureen Mellor of Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit recognises jugs similar to the Gloucester type 44 and cook pots or large storage jars of Chiltern type fabric of the late C12th to the C14th. The other group from Sudbury House, Faringdon (kindly lent by Dr. Glock) included a wide range of medieval and post-medieval ware. The medieval pottery could be divided into three groups: 1) Sandy wares of a type similar to those from kilns at Mounty, Wiltshire or perhaps Gloucestershire (23 sherds). 2) Pottery with a flinty/chalky fabric derived from the chalk ridge S of Faringdon, 12th - C15th (24 sherds). 3) Oxfordshire Brill/type wares of the C14th and C15th with red slip applied strips and mottled green glaze on the characteristic biconical C14th jugs (90 sherds).

Faringdon is about 30 miles from Brill as the crow flies but it was recently noted that Brill type wares were made 12 miles S of Brill.

EARTHWORKS

A previously unknown long barrow (PRN 10,925) on Well Ground, SE of Ascott-under-Wychwood village, was discovered by John Campbell in October 1976. It lies across the top of a spur, with its long axis aligned approximately NE - SW. There are quarry ditches on either side, and a dense scatter of stone along the mound, which is absent from the remainder of the field. A survey was carried out by Lisa Brown, to be published in *Oxoniensia*.

A previously unrecognised hill-fort at Abingdon was located by scanning aerial photographs taken in 1970 by the National Monuments Record (PRN 10,958). It consisted of an oval enclosure, approximately 100 m. E-W and 300 m. N-S on a spur above the River Ock, about 200 ft. above sea level, with extensive all-round views, one and a half miles SW of Abingdon. The site had been ploughed out (cf. Ram's Hill) but Nancy Stebbing, Lisa Brown and John Steane picked up Iron Age pottery at SU 485959 and Romano-British pottery at SU 483958. A mesh of cropmarks of Iron Age and Romano-British date is found outside the hill fort to the N and W.

A survey of the ploughed-out remains of the Iron Age hill fort at Madmarston (PRN 1592) was carried out by Ival Hornbrook and John Steane helped by children of Sibford Gower Primary School. A 20 m. grid was extended over the whole site and artefact counts made. The exercise pointed to Neolithic and Bronze Age activity on the hill top; 106 worked flints and flint flakes and cores were found within the ramparts of the Iron Age Fort. Only two sherds of Iron Age pottery were picked up but there were

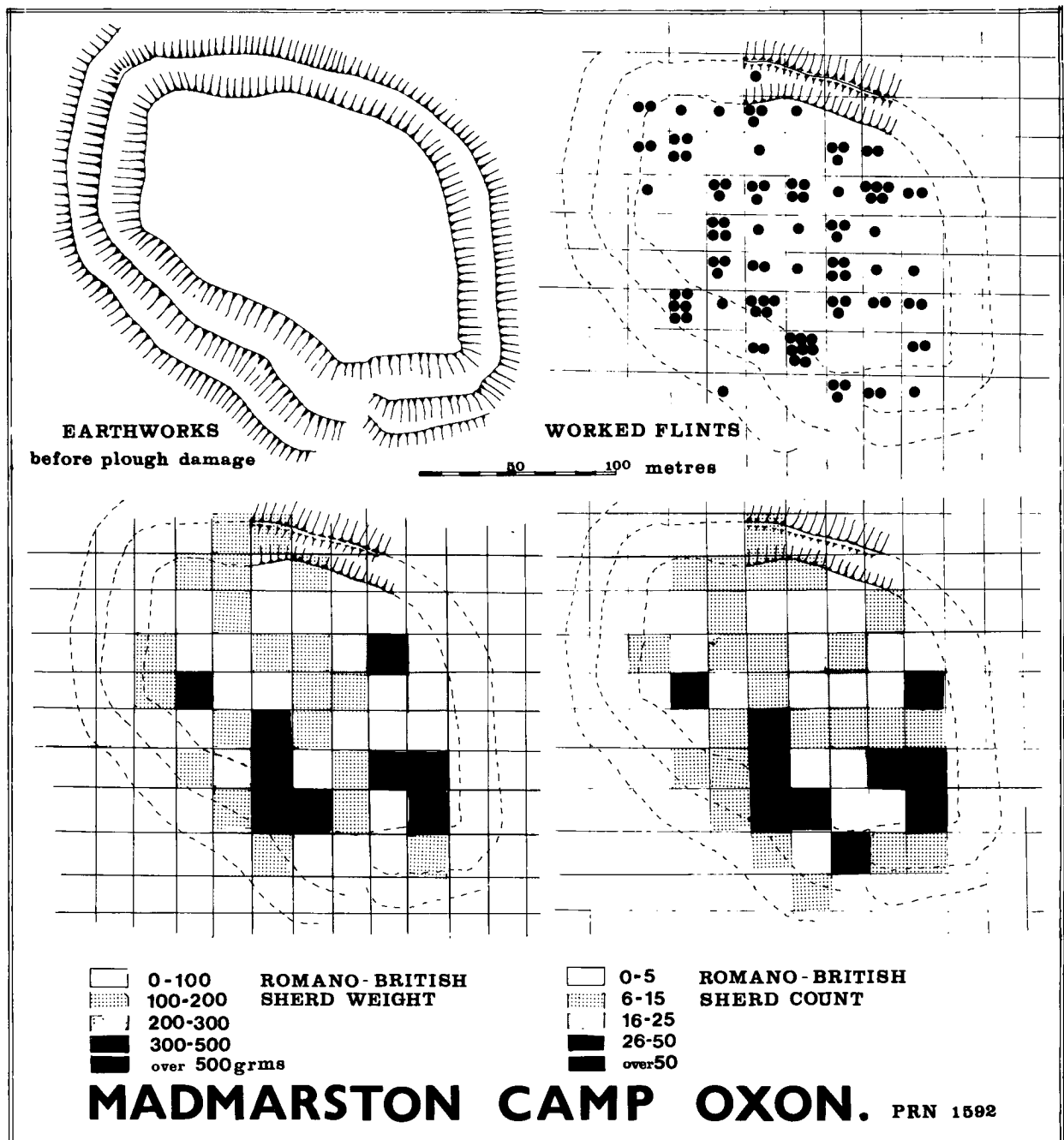


Figure 17

650 Roman sherds. Christopher Young has identified mortaria and colour-coated vessels from the Churchill kilns and other kilns in the Oxford area as well as a scatter of Nene Valley wares. The dating of Roman re-occupation of the hill fort seems to be late C3rd and C4th A.D. Maps accompanying this note compare sherd weight and sherd count and indicate that the Roman settlement was centred in the eastern and south eastern corners of the hill fort (Fig 17). Burned daub was found in this area and may indicate the presence of ovens under the shelter of the rampart.

Two archaeological features of interest in Eynsham have been recorded this year. Jean Mitchell has picked up over 200 sherds of medieval pottery on the site of the new pavilion which has been built on the recreation ground to the E of the site of Eynsham Abbey (PRN 11,255, SP 43580915). They suggest that early medieval Eynsham extended farther along High Street towards the Swinford crossing of the River Thames than appeared likely when K. Rodwell produced her map in *Historic Towns in Oxfordshire*, 1975, p.115. Mr. H.C.D. Cooper has noticed that the moated enclosure S of the Eynsham Abbey fishponds may well be the land belonging to "Herveus filius Petri" which included "the whole house plot with hall and garden ... across the river towards Stanton". (H.E. Salter (ed) *Eynsham Cartulary*, Vol.1, 161) John Steane has followed this up with a survey of the fishpond earthworks which seem to have been under construction 1213-28. The plan (Fig 18) suggests an interpretation of the possible sequence of monastic activities in this area. The line A-A represents the former course of the Chil Brook diverted by the abbey by the construction of a weir somewhere near the present site of the bridge across which Station Road runs S. A dam was built at B blocking the stream and creating a water supply for the bays of the fishponds (1-6). C is a moated enclosure, very likely the house plot of Hervey, mentioned above. The line D-D is the suggested site of a former

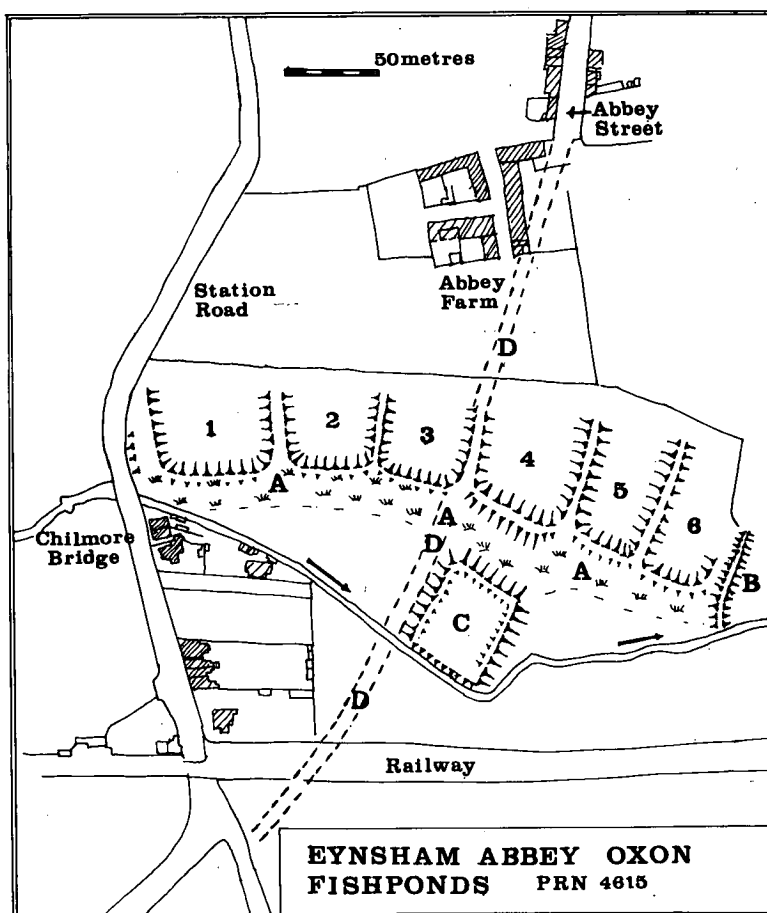


Figure 18

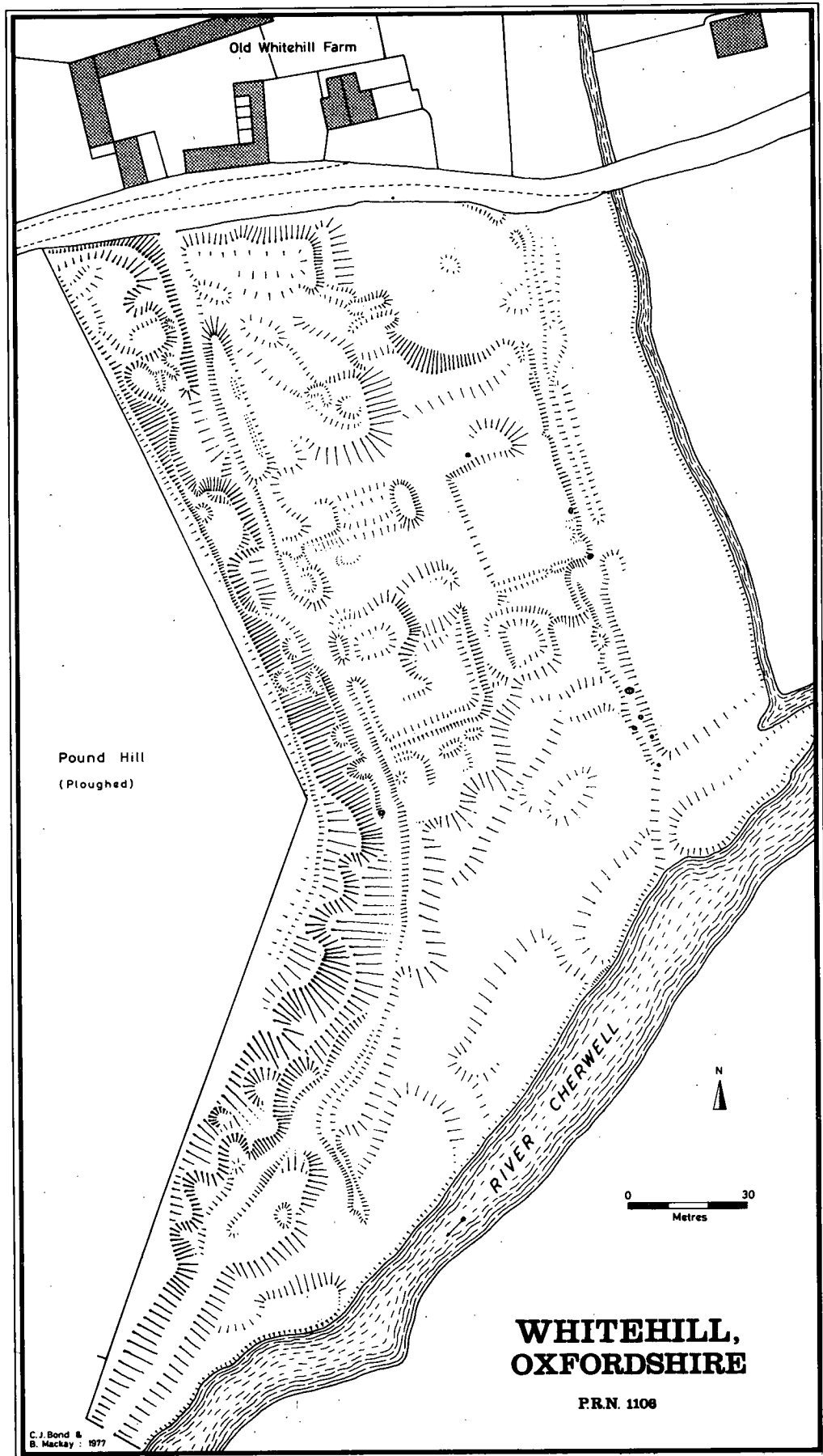


Figure 19

route across the Chil Brook stream connecting the line of Mill Street, Lombard Street, Abbey Street and the road to Stanton. This road was diverted to the W when land belonging to 'Radulfus filius Walteri' was acquired by the Abbey (Eynsham Cartulary p.165). The plan is based on a study of the present earthworks - already partly destroyed by tipping, the splendid air photograph taken in May 1961 (Faurey Air Surveys 4031) and the 25" to 1 mile O.S.

Survey work on other medieval earthworks of Oxfordshire continues. John Steane and James Bond, helped by members of an Oxford University Department for External Studies class at Bicester, carried out a survey of the deserted medieval village of Wretchwick (PRN 3257), where the enclosure of 200 acres and destruction of 5 houses in 1489 by Bicester Priory is reported in the 1517 Depopulation Inquiry. This record probably represents the final stage in the extinction of a community which in 1279 had comprised the holdings of 25 villeins and 7 cottages. The site occupies two fields to the SW and one field to the NE of the present Middle Wretchwick Farm. The area to the NE is on slightly higher ground, and is perhaps the earlier part of the settlement. A central hollow-way divides a somewhat irregular series of crofts and building platforms. The earthworks to the SW are more regular and perhaps represent a later, planned extension to the original settlement. There is clear evidence of much post-medieval alteration to the earthworks, including the excavation of deep drainage ditches apparently along the line of alternate croft boundaries, ditches around the existing fields, and various irregular hollows and mounds interpreted as claypits and dumps. Allowing for the part of the site obliterated by the existing farmyard and buildings, over 30 separate crofts can tentatively be identified on the ground, which corresponds well with the documentary evidence. Thanks are due to the farmer, Mr. Keene, who willingly allowed access onto his field.

The deserted village of Whitehill (PRN 1106) was surveyed by James Bond and Barry Mackay (Fig. 19). The depopulation of this site is less well documented; but several houses and open fields still survived in 1605. A hollow-way follows the contours of the steep western side of the Cherwell valley. Along its eastern side 6 building platforms, some of which appear to be long-houses at right-angles to the street, and croft boundaries, occupy the sloping ground down to a boundary ditch parallel with the river.

At Sugarswell in Shenington (PRN 983), where there is a reference to houses being burned down in 1318, field investigation by David Hall and Paul and Sarah Gosling revealed the extensive earthworks of a deserted village site, together with a previously unknown double-islanded moat (PRN 10,782).

A moated site at Standlake (PRN 4127) was surveyed by James Bond and Louise Armstrong with the help of a group of teachers on an In-Service Training Course on Archaeology for Schools, arranged by the Department's Education Section (Fig. 20).

Following a suggestion to clean out, deepen and establish a fishery at the Oxfordshire County Council's property at Holton Park Moat (PRN 1771), a survey was made of the archaeological potential of the moat. Its most likely construction date was in the late C13th: a reference exists to the manor house and dovecote in 1317. By 1665 a large house with 18 hearths stood on the island, and this had become ruinous by 1801, when a drawing in the Bodleian Library shows it as a rambling, L-shaped building with three storeys and a penthouse, apparently of C15th to C17th date. This house was pulled down in 1805, but the stone dovecote and C18th stables still survive. The stone-revetted moat is 65 m. from the NE to NW corners and 106 m. from NE to SE. It is partly cut out of the oolitic limestone on the higher western

Earthworks at Standlake, Oxon.

RIGHT: Position of PRN's 4127 & 4128,
plotted from aerial photographs



BELOW: PRN. 4127, measured ground
survey, 25.10.77.

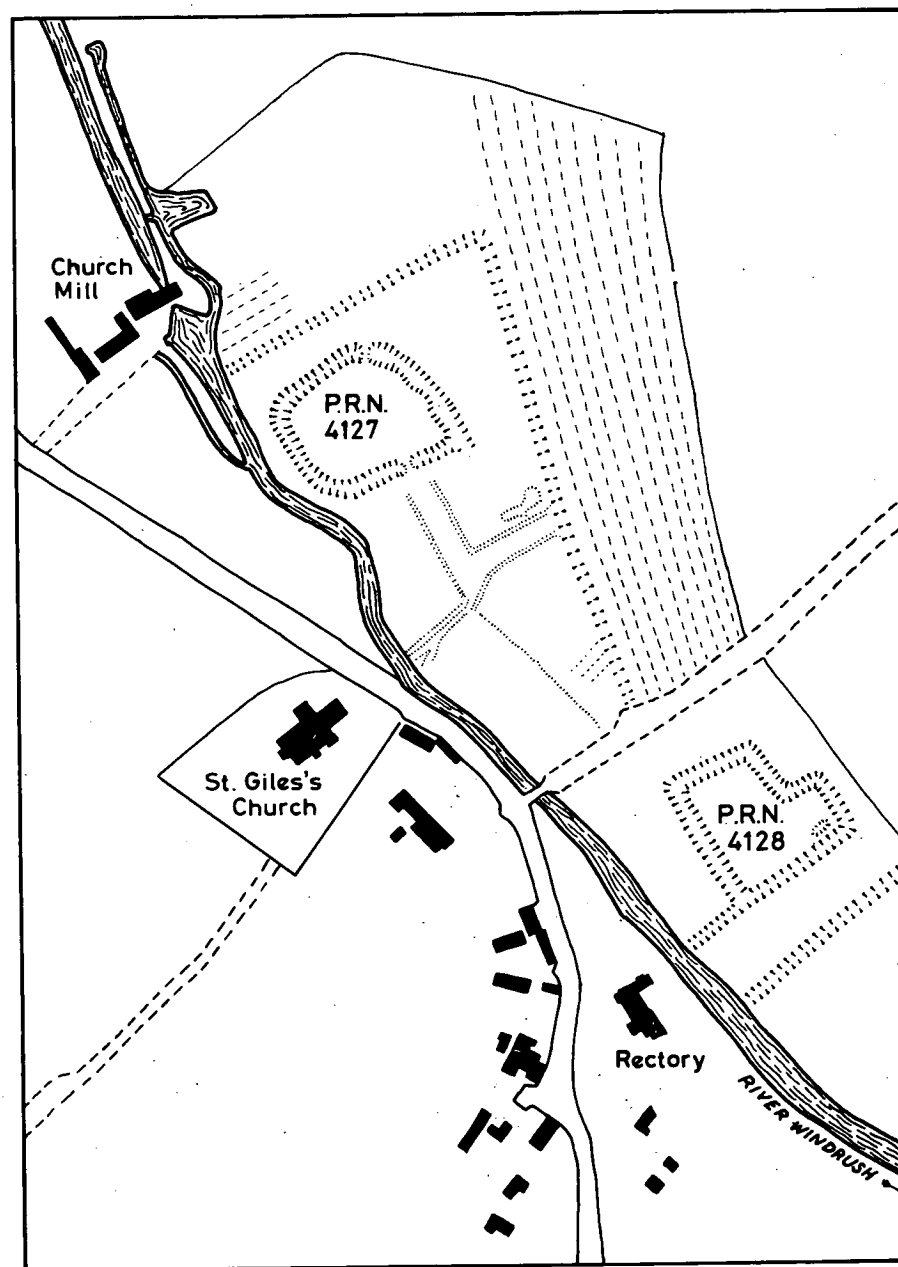
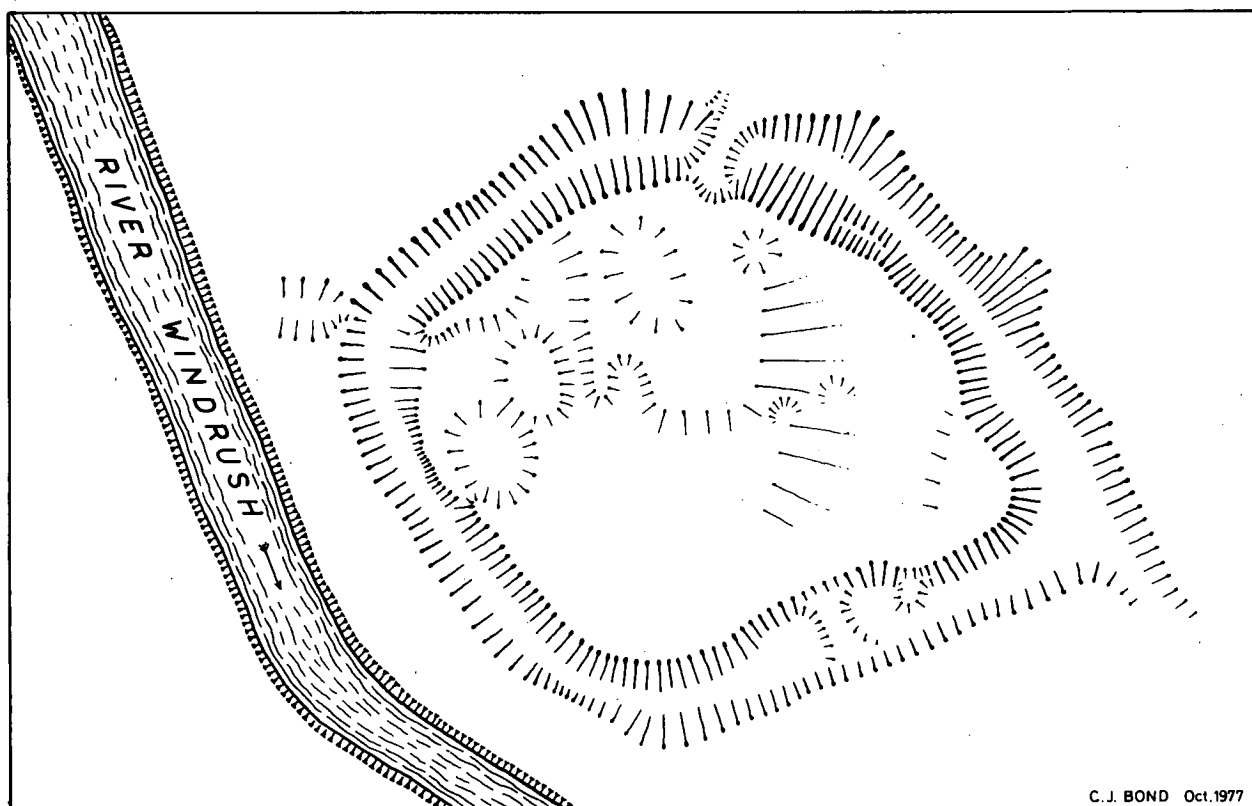


Figure 20a



C.J. BOND Oct. 1977

Figure 20b

side and is retained on the opposite side by a dam, 4 m. high, which carries the approach road to Holton House. The width of the moat varies from 10 to 25 m. As a scheduled area, the site is protected to some extent by legislation; any dredging operation would have to be carefully supervised to safeguard the banks.

A geophysical survey was undertaken at the Museum's site at Cogges Manor Farm (PRN 4601) to locate and identify remains of earlier buildings in the immediate environs of the house, and to reveal any structures associated with the northernmost of the two moats which lie near the Windrush crossing between Cogges and Witney. Dr. A. Aspinall and R. Walker of Bradford University Department of Archaeological Sciences detected a number of buried anomalies with their resistivity instruments using a two-probe array. Low-resistance readings, characteristic of ditches, were found to the E of the house. High-resistance areas, indicating buried walls and possible rubble areas were found between the house and the school: several of these linear anomalies seemed related to the present structures. Below the centre of the northern moat was the vague circular outline of a large banked structure, possibly a levelled motte. Other structures located indicated possible lines of post-holes and walling. It is hoped to plan a programme of archaeological excavation integrated with the long-term plans for turning the site into a museum of agricultural history. The western side of the moat, where tree planting to replace dead elms will be necessary is one area where excavation will be essential.

BUILDINGS

(i) Domestic Buildings

An investigation of the roof of the Old Rectory, Ducklington (PRN 11,207) was made by John Rhodes, Ahmed Shishtawi and John Steane, at the invitation of Mrs. Craig the owner. A series of medieval painted beams was found built into the roof timbering. They were covered with heraldic insignia which were traced and photographed by John Steane. Eric Maclagan, Portcullis Pursuivant, identified the insignia as being those of the Deincourt, Poynings, Holland and Lovell families. This suggests a date of c.1450-1486. The timbers may have been brought from Minster Lovell hall on its dismantling by the Coke family in the 1740s. They are being carefully preserved.

CALTHORPE MANOR, Banbury (PRN 10,957) - John Steane

A site investigation was carried out following a planning application to demolish the manor for industrial development. This five-bay building in the middle of Banbury had substantial remains of a late C15th house embedded in it. The earliest part is the two bays on the north side and here the first floor room is lit by a six-light oriel window divided by stone mullions and transoms, and is capped by a castellated parapet. In the C17th a further bay was added to the left of the medieval house and extensive alterations were made in the Gothic revival style in the early C19th. At the rear, hidden by Calthorpe Manor, is an interesting late medieval building which has now been extensively altered for industrial uses. It has ironstone walls and was lit at both floor levels by two or three light square headed windows now all blocked to strengthen the walls which carry machinery. The date seems to be 1520 AD. In the event Cherwell District refused planning permission to demolish this building.

ROSE COTTAGE, Horton-cum-Studley (PRN 10,997) - John Steane

Rose cottage was listed as the result of an investigation by John Steane which found it to be a two-bay, half-timbered, post-and-truss construction resting on a dwarf stone base wall. The infill is partly wattle and daub on the N side of the house and brick-nogging on the principal elevation. The basic structure dates from c1650 - 1700 but the windows and fittings were renewed in the C19th. In the late C18th, a third bay was added at the S end in brick and an additional chimney with a stack base in stone.

OCK STREET, Abingdon - John Steane and Lisa Brown

An investigation was made of the houses 14, 16, 18 - 20, Ock Street following a suggestion that this area should be included in a conservation area.

14, Ock Street is a two-bay three-storey building with shops on the ground floor, and the rear elevation shows that an earlier timber-framed structure of two storeys has been incorporated in the later three-storey development. This timber framing is not visible from the front which is completely stucco-covered. The third storey on the street front was probably added to the C17th building in the early C18th.

16, Ock Street similarly began as a C17th half-timbered house with walls of lath and plaster and in other places, brick infilling between the timbers. The C19th alterations included heightening to the attic storey and rebuilding of the front in orange brick with vitrified headers. Nos. 18 - 20 were built in the mid-C18th but the structure was refronted in the Victorian period. The drive leads to a long yard lined on one side by late C18th or early C19th warehousing. The Conservation Area was extended to include this range of buildings and it seems that the street frontage is to stay as it is but the shops may well be converted back into houses.

8-10 LONDON ROAD, Bicester - Ival Hornbrook and John Steane

A Public Inquiry held in the Summer of 1977 resulted in a decision by the Secretary of State for the Environment to demolish Nos. 8-10 London Road, Bicester. An investigation to record these listed buildings was carried out by RCHM (England) and by Ival Hornbrook and John Steane. No. 8 was a two-bay house of mid-C17th date jettied at first floor level with carved motifs on the ends of the projecting beam ends. The upper storey was timber-framed behind modern stucco. The ground floor front room which had been adapted in the C19th to enable a shop front to be inserted still retained the stubs of the bressumer that carried the original jettying. The ground floor rear room, no doubt formerly the kitchen, had clear indications of two former fireplaces lying behind the most recent one. During the C18th the upper floor had been converted into an assembly room with two free-standing pillars of timber and plaster with Corinthian capitals and other pieces of plaster decoration. Also, an L-shaped extension with a datestone KGE 1770, with windows of the sliding casement type, was added with a frontage facing onto London Road. A magnificent staircase with mahogany handrail, Ionic fluted columns and carved bannisters had been inserted. This was taken out by the County Highways Department and has been deposited in the County Museum at Woodstock. During the Victorian period the house was divided into two, and a small staircase with servant's room at the head of it was inserted in the assembly room.

OLD VICARAGE, Ardington (PRN 11,146) - Ival Hornbrook and John Steane

Extensive alterations proposed to modernise the listed building called the Old Vicarage led to a record being made of the house while the floors and ceilings were exposed. Three phases of construction were noticed: In c.1750 a four-bay house in chequered brickwork (now stucco-covered) was built facing the parish church of Holy Trinity. The fine door with case of panelled pilasters and dentilled cornice hood supported on carved scroll brackets is set assymmetrically in the front elevation. The original staircase appears to have been immediately behind the door. In phase 2, c.1775, a capacious wing was added to take a splendid staircase with sugar-stick balusters and an arched frame leading to the first floor landing. The partitions between the lower rooms of studding, lath and plaster fixed into cill beams, perhaps unexpected in what is otherwise a solid brick-built house, apart from the gable-ends which are half-timbered and hung with overlapping scale tiles. Phase 3, c.1850, saw an additional bay added to the rear. Interesting information can be collected about constructional details of Oxfordshire houses if the Museum is informed about drastic restorations such as this house experienced. The best time for such survey work to take place is while the builders are engaged in the preliminary stages of the reconstruction.

HIGH STREET, Upper Heyford (PRN 10,991) - John Steane

Following planning application to carry out alterations at Rectory Farm, High Street this C17th farmhouse was recorded. It consisted of a three-bay farmhouse with central cross-passage with a living room/parlour and kitchen on the ground floor. A bake oven is in the lower part of the room adjoining the kitchen - all these are in the main range which fronts on to the High Street and are dated 1650-1700. A barn to the W of the farmhouse bears a date stone MCW 1833. A stable block attached to the house under the same build is of two storeys with animal stabling under and a hay loft over.

(ii) Industrial and Agricultural Buildings

EAST HENDRED (PRN 7421) - John Steane

A blacksmith's shop at East Hendred has been recorded by John Steane. It consisted of a family concern run for three generations by the Harrison family, two brothers, their father and a great-uncle. Shoeing, tiring, farm ironwork (such as the preparation of bands for cooper's barrels, and the repair of harrows, chains and pumps) were carried on. The tools were listed and photographed; they included tyre stretchers, wheelbarrow and wagon 'travellers', branding irons and mandrills.

The buildings of the water-mill at Charney Bassett (PRN 7078) have been measured to supplement the drawings of the machinery made by Wilf Foreman in 1974.

MANOR FARM, Minster Lovell - James Bond

At Manor Farm a measure survey has been carried out of the dovecote and of a large barn nearby. The dovecote (PRN 3175), Fig. 21, is built of oolitic rubble and has an internal diameter of 6.2 m. with walls 1.2 m. thick and about 5.5 m. high. There are 18 tiers of nestholes, with a perching-ledge to every row. With about 36 nestholes on one complete circuit, allowing for the interruption of the doorway, in the lower 5 tiers, and the blocking of every nesthole in the lowest tier, the dovecote therefore contains a total of about 600 serviceable nestholes. The conical, stone-slatted roof and three-pillared wooden lantern are a modern reconstruction. The plain, flat-lintelled doorway is 0.9 m. wide and 1.5 m. high. The dovecote appears to be of late medieval date, and is associated either with Minster Lovell Hall, largely rebuilt in the 1430s by William, Lord Lovell, or with the alien Benedictine priory whose remains are incorporated within the Manor farmhouse. The barn (PRN 4185) is also stone-built, with a relatively modern roof, over 26 m. long by 7.4 m. wide internally, with a cart porch towards the southern end of its western side. Its chief feature of interest is a row of buttresses along its eastern side, which seem to be a survival from a C13th barn. There are some indications that the barn has been shortened on its southern side.

DUNS TEW MANOR (PRN 5036) - James Bond

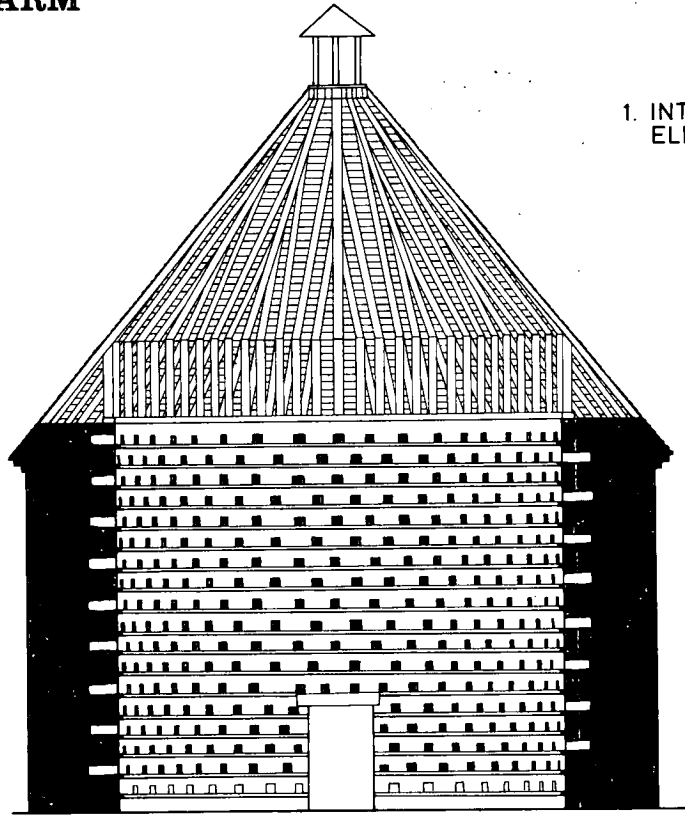
The dovecote at Duns Tew Manor has been measured and drawn (Fig. 22). This is also circular, of coursed oolitic rubble with 3 evenly-spaced bands

MINSTER LOVELL, Oxon.

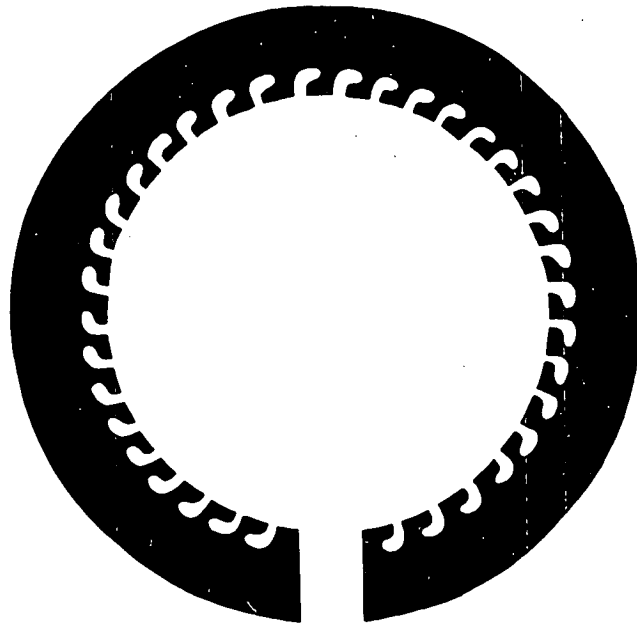
DOVECOTE AT
MANOR FARM

P.R.N. 3175

1. INTERIOR
ELEVATION



2. PLAN

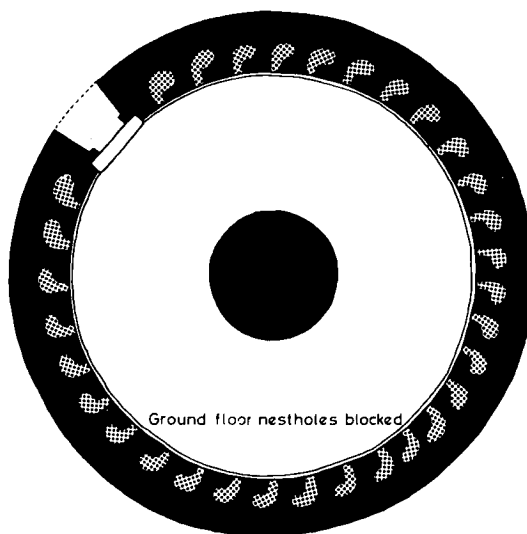


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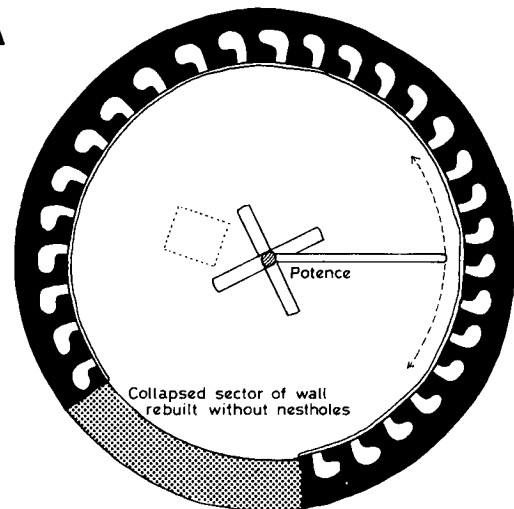
Figure 21

DOVECOTE AT DUNS TEW MANOR OXFORDSHIRE

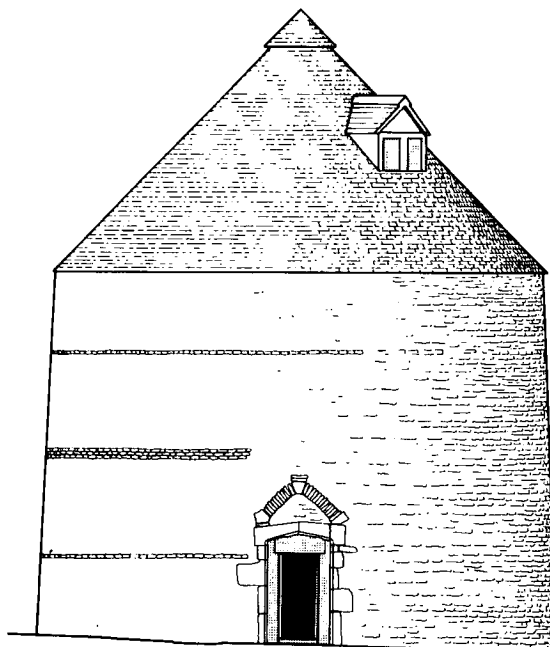
P.R.N. 5036



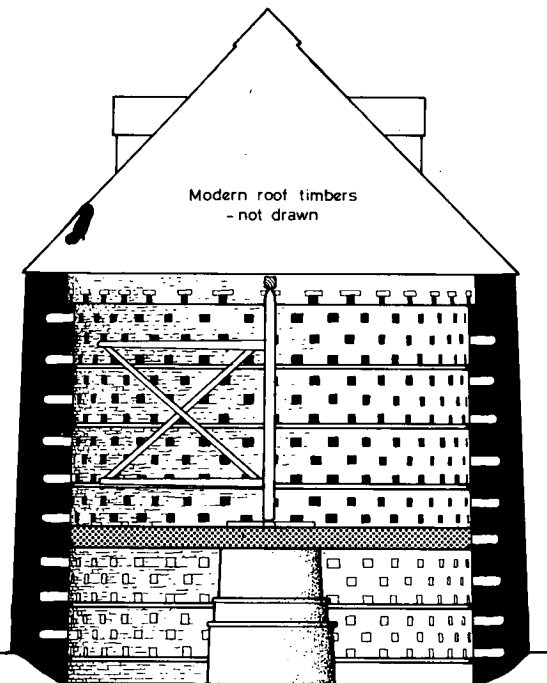
1. GROUND FLOOR PLAN



2. FIRST FLOOR PLAN



3. EXTERIOR ELEVATION (N.W.)



4. INTERIOR ELEVATION

0 Metres 5

C. J. BOND : 1977

Figure 22

of ironstone formerly covered with rendering. Its internal diameter is 6.1 m. with walls 0.9 m. thick and just over 6 m. high. It has a conical roof of red tiles, replaced in the present century without the original lantern. The entrance is by a flat four-centre arched doorway with chamfered jambs. The bottom jamb stone on the left-hand side of the doorway has a rather more elaborate moulding, and seems to have been brought in from elsewhere and re-used. Above the door lintel is a blank relieving arch. The interior of the building is divided by a later inserted floor, the upper level being reached by ladder and trap-door. In the centre of the ground floor stands a massive cylindrical stone pillar, built in three stages, tapering towards the top, the purpose of which is unclear. There is evidence of a total of 19 tiers of nestholes, of which the bottom 6 tiers are now almost entirely blocked and the row immediately above concealed by the inserted floor. There are perching-ledges between every three tiers of nestholes. At some stage part of the SW wall has collapsed and been rebuilt without nestholes. Estimating the number of nestholes which would have occupied the collapsed sector, a total of 400-420 may be counted for the upper floor, or 640-660 to include the blocked examples on the lower floor. At first floor level are the remains of a somewhat flimsy potence, which clearly post-dates the insertion of the floor. The Duns Tew dovecote appears to be later than the Minster Lovell example, and could well be of C17th date.

OXFORDSHIRE FIELD-NAMES SURVEY

The Oxfordshire Federation of Womens Institutes have continued to collect and map the field names of Oxfordshire parishes from local enquiry and from documentary sources on behalf of the Museum. The completed surveys are plotted on to transparent overlays to the basic Record Maps of the Sites and Monuments Record. During the year surveys have been deposited from Cropredy, Prescote, Shipton-under-Wychwood, Kelmscott, Bucknell, Brightwell Baldwin, Britwell and Rotherfield Greys. The Bucknell survey was of particular interest in yielding a field-name 'Bolliers' to the NE of the village near Nettle Copse; this may represent the site of the deserted village of Saxinton (PRN 5491) long known from documentary evidence but previously unlocated, where Kennett in 1695 spoke of 'foundations of building' remaining 'in a ground called the Ballyards'. Complete surveys have now been deposited for 55 parishes, partial surveys for a further 20, and work is known to be in progress in another 18 parishes.

MUSEUM STUDY GROUP

The Study Group continued to meet on Tuesday evenings through the early part of the year, but through the summer and autumn a variety of external factors has necessitated a considerably curtailed programme of meetings. However, several sites were visited during the summer, including Caswell, where a preliminary investigation was made of the complex of moated sites (PRN 1118, 3210 and 5052), deserted medieval village (PRN 5485) and house (PRN 11,073). The Study Group has also made measured drawings of the granary at Burwell Farm, Witney (PRN 11,225), a timber-framed, weatherboarded structure with a hipped roof, standing on 9 square-topped staddles. Particular thanks are due to Keith Lawrence for organising access to the sites visited.

A summary of Keith Lawrence's work on Oxfordshire turnpike roads, toll-houses, milestones and drove roads is being published this year in the form of an Information Sheet available from the Museum. Work is in progress on the editing of the notes of the late Mr. Frank Woodward on Oxfordshire parks for publication.

OXFORDSHIRE VILLAGE SURVEYS

Sponsored jointly by the Oxfordshire County Council Department of Museum Services and the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit, it is proposed to initiate a rolling programme of village surveys spread over a number of years. There is no intention of mounting a rapid blanket survey coverage, but to choose a number of villages and survey them in some detail. Planning matters will guide the selection, which will include villages likely to be subject to the most intense pressures for development in the next decade. Availability of documentation and different village plan types will also be used as criteria for selection. Two pilot studies for Stanton St. John and Charney Bassett have so far been completed, and are appended.

STANTON ST. JOHN, OXFORDSHIRE: VILLAGE SURVEY - C.J. Bond

Village: Stanton St. John
 Civil Parish: Stanton St. John
 District: South Oxfordshire
 Former District: Bullingdon Rural
 Hundred: Bullingdon (Northern Division)
 O.S. 1:10,000: SP 50 NE
 O.S. 1:2500: SP 56095709
 SP 58095909
 SP 56085708

PHYSICAL SETTING

Geology: Mostly Calcareous Grit of the Corallian series. The stream rising in the village and flowing NE has cut into Oxford Clay just below the mill.

Soils: Brown earths, which may be gleyed in the stream valley bottoms.

Water Supply: Several springs rise in the village, e.g. N of Manor Farm and N of the Star Inn.

Relief: The village straddles the NE side of a small dissected plateau, at a height of c.300-330 ft. (90-100 m.) O.D. The highest point in the village is around the church and Rectory Farm. Northwestwards the land continues to rise gently towards Beckley. Northeastwards one of the village streets descends into the small valley which contains the mill. Southeastwards the land drops into another valley-head, rising again beyond towards Stanton Great Wood. Southwestwards the B.4027, which skirts the edge of the village, follows the top of the plateau.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SETTING

There is no evidence at present of any prehistoric settlement within the vicinity of the village, or, indeed within the parish.

The major Roman road from Dorchester to Alchester passes less than one mile to the W of the village, but the only Romano-British occupation sites

known within the parish at present lie $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the SW at Stowford and $\frac{3}{4}$ mile N at Woodperry. No evidence of Roman settlement closer to the present village is known.

There is at present no evidence of early Saxon settlement within the parish.

The early medieval parish was larger than the present civil parish, parts having been transferred to Forest Hill on at least two occasions. Apart from Stanton St. John itself, the medieval parish contained two other nucleated hamlets, both now depopulated. Stowford (PRN 1075), in the SW, was apparently deserted by the end of C14th, its site now occupied by a farm of the same name near the Crematorium. Woodperry (PRN 1205), to the N, may have been partly abandoned in the C15th, but some occupation seems to have continued into the C16th or even C17th. Earthworks mark the site of the village near the present Woodperry House. Excavations here in 1838, notable as probably the first recorded archaeological excavation on a deserted medieval village site, uncovered remains of the church. In addition to the nucleated hamlets, there is also some evidence for isolated farmstead sites associated with medieval assarting in the parish. Breach Farm, to the SE towards Forest Hill, certainly existed by 1778, and is perhaps related to 'le Brech' recorded in the 1279 Hundred Rolls, a name indicating woodland clearance. Menmarsh Farm, in the NE of the parish, has a small moated site (PRN 5295), probably of medieval date, close by. Minchincourt Farm, transferred from Stanton to Forest Hill in 1949, was in medieval times the site of a capital messuage of the prioress of Littlemore.

DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

The place-name is derived from the O.E. *stān-tūn*, interpreted as 'the farmstead on stony ground'. The St. John family held the manor from the 1140s to 1354.

The first documentary record of Stanton is in the Domesday Book, which records a population of 8 serfs on the demesne, 16 villeins and 8 bordars. Robert de Lacy held two estates there from Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, one of 10 hides, the other of 2 hides.

Later medieval tax returns record the following minimum populations:

- 1279 -
- 1306 - 35 taxpayers at Stanton, of whom 16 were at Woodperry
- 1316 - Recorded in Nomina Villarum, linked with Stowford and Woodperry
- 1327 - 43 taxpayers in Stanton, of whom 17 were at Woodperry
- 1377 - 91 persons over the age of 14; no separate receipts identifiable for Woodperry

Robert de Lacy forfeited his Stanton estate in 1100 when he was exiled by Henry I. From the 1140s for the next two centuries the manor was held by the St. John family. During the later Middle Ages the descent of the manor was confused and complicated by a number of disputes; but in 1526 it was granted to the Warden and Scholars of New College, Oxford, in whose hands it has subsequently remained.

During the C16th and C17th the village held associations with several important historical figures. It was the birthplace in 1575 of John White, subsequently Fellow of New College and chief founder of Massachusetts. It also has connections with the family of John Milton, and with Henry Ireton, an important figure in the Civil War, and the son-in-law of Oliver Cromwell.

A disastrous fire on June 27th 1793 entirely destroyed 21 dwelling-houses, 5 barns and many outbuildings in the village. A broadsheet appealing for relief has survived (Bodl. Gough Oxon. 90 (20)). The survival of a number of buildings earlier than this date shows, however, that destruction was not total.

The Compton Census of 1676 lists 66 conformists in the parish. The rector's return of 1738 stated that there were 70 houses, tenements and cottages. The census returns of C19th indicates a fairly steady rise in population from 349 in 1801 to 555 in 1851, thereafter an overall decline into the present century.

VILLAGE ECONOMY AND FIELD SYSTEM

Today a high proportion of the population of Stanton St. John finds its employment elsewhere - the outer fringes of Oxford are less than two miles away. Until the present century, however, the economic base of the village remained essentially agricultural.

The historical development of the agricultural pattern of the parish is of considerable interest and variety. Evidence for its reconstruction can be traced from the Domesday survey onwards, although it is not until the early C18th that a reasonably accurate picture of the entire parish's topography can be drawn. The agricultural topography of the parish cannot be followed in detail here, except to note the presence of the following elements:-

Open-Field Arable:

The Domesday survey records at Stanton land for a total of 13½ plough-teams, with 10 ploughs actually working - a ratio sometimes taken to indicate under-cultivation in the C11th. The practices of open-field cultivation can be traced from various later sources, such as the terrier of 1472; but open fields never seem to have covered much more than about a third of the parish area. Evidence for it in the landscape is now scanty, the survival of ridge and furrow being very fragmentary - the only small area near the village is in the extreme eastern corner of the large field east of the church, beyond the stream. Four common fields survive on the higher ground in the western part of the parish in 1706. A further field, Woodperry Field, to the N of the village, still retained its furlongs in 1766, but by that date comprised a consolidated block of holdings attached to the Woodperry House estate. The remaining common fields were enclosed by an award dated 1778.

Pasture and Meadow:

The Domesday survey records 60 acres of meadow and 60 acres of pasture. Much of this appears to have been enclosed already by 1472. The largest extent, Madcroft and Broad Meadow, comprises a broad swathe across the parish to E of its centre, but there are also a number of smaller blocks. The total acreage of meadow and permanent pasture is now around 600 acres.

Assarts and Enclosures:

Around Woodperry House, Stowford and Minchincourt there is evidence for early enclosures taken out of open field. Manor Farm in the village had consolidated its scattered holdings into three large enclosed fields and a

number of smaller closes by 1620. In addition to early enclosures from open field there were assarts along the N fringe of the parish taken out of the woods and wastes towards Beckley, and further assarts to the E of Breach Farm.

Commons:

The largest common, Menmarsh, comprising some 300 acres of sheep grazing at the eastern extremity of the parish, originally formed part of a great expanse of common extending eastwards as far as Waterperry. It was much reduced by enclosure by the end of the C16th, and totally enclosed by 1780. Smaller blocks of common were scattered through the central and western parts of the parish, all enclosed under the 1778 award.

Woods:

The Domesday survey records woodland 1 league by 4 furlongs in extent. Woodland has always formed an important element in the economy of Stanton St. John, and still forms a discontinuous belt across the centre of the parish from N to S. The southernmost and largest, Stanton Great Wood, still retains its medieval, roughly oval, shape. In the C17th it was divided into a number of coppices. Today it comprises nearly 150 acres. Of the two Horley Woods in the centre of the belt, Holly Wood (60 acres) survives, but Gogmire Wood (70 acres) has been cleared since 1856. In the N, Stanton Little Wood represents the remains of the much more extensive medieval Perry Wood.

Outside agriculture and timber and woodland management, employment within the village has always been restricted to purely local services occupying individual families, e.g. in the small stone quarries, the corn mill, the blacksmith's shop and the public houses.

PLAN ELEMENTS

Both visually and historically the core of the village is the area around the medieval parish church. The plan-form of this area appears to be of 'organic' character, being centred on the junction of three streets, with the church on the higher ground within the western angle. There is no evidence that the centre of gravity of the settlement has migrated at all from its presumed original site.

The central part of the main village street SE of the village hall has a much more regular pattern of property boundaries which could be taken as evidence of more organised development. This area should perhaps be seen as a later planned extension to the S of the original core. The date at which this occurred is unknown. From the evidence of existing buildings, it must have taken place before the C16th-C17th; a possible clue lies in the fabric of the church, where the addition of aisles suggests a need to accommodate an increased congregation in the C14th.

The E end of the village, towards the mill; and the extreme southern end, including the George and Star Inns, are of less regular appearance, and probably represent piecemeal post-medieval expansion along the access roads at the village periphery. As far as can be ascertained from the exterior evidence alone, no buildings in either area are of a date earlier than the C17th.

Two small modern estates, 'Silver Birches' leading off the road to the mill, and the Courtfield estate off the southward road, represent the only

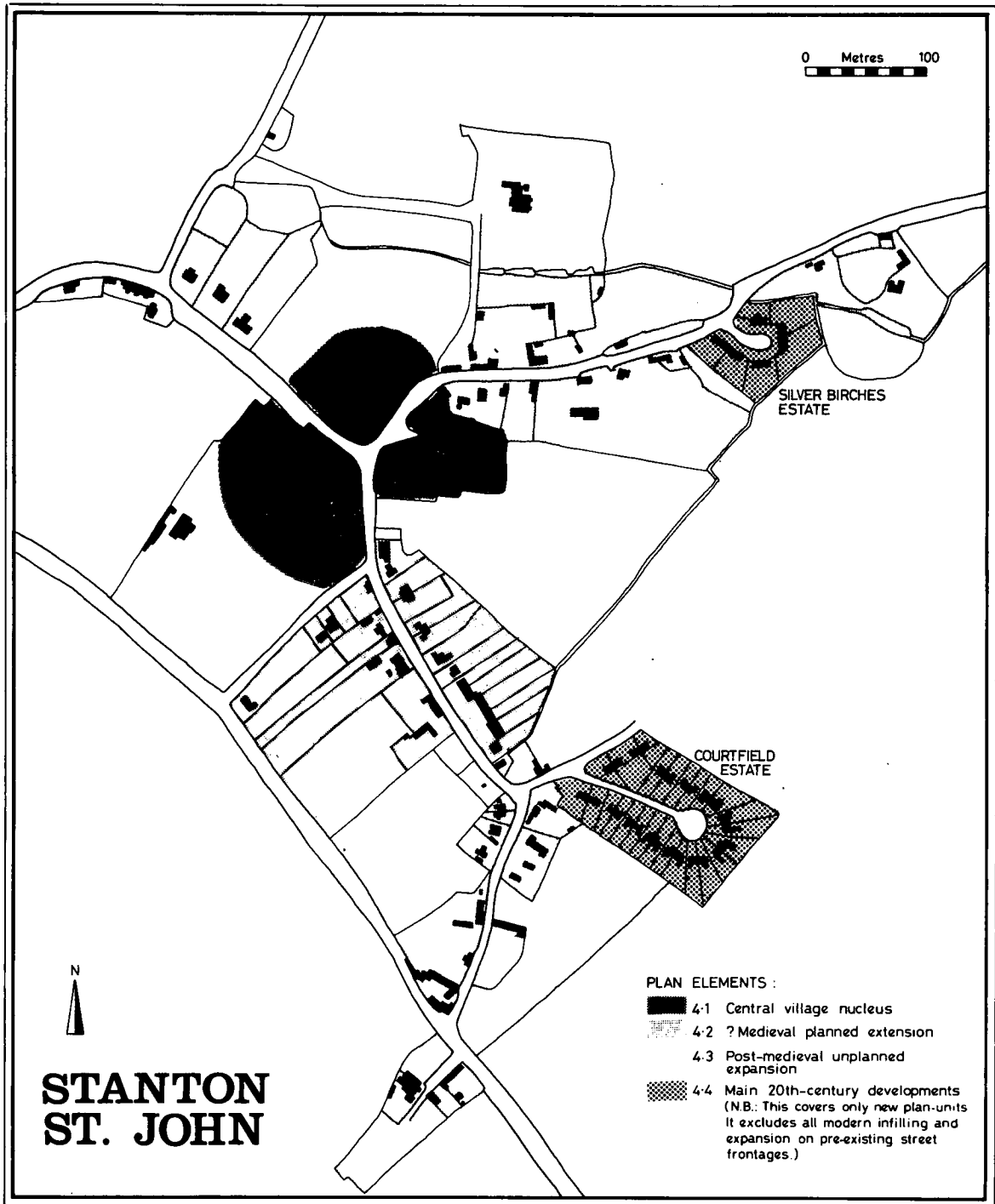


Figure 23

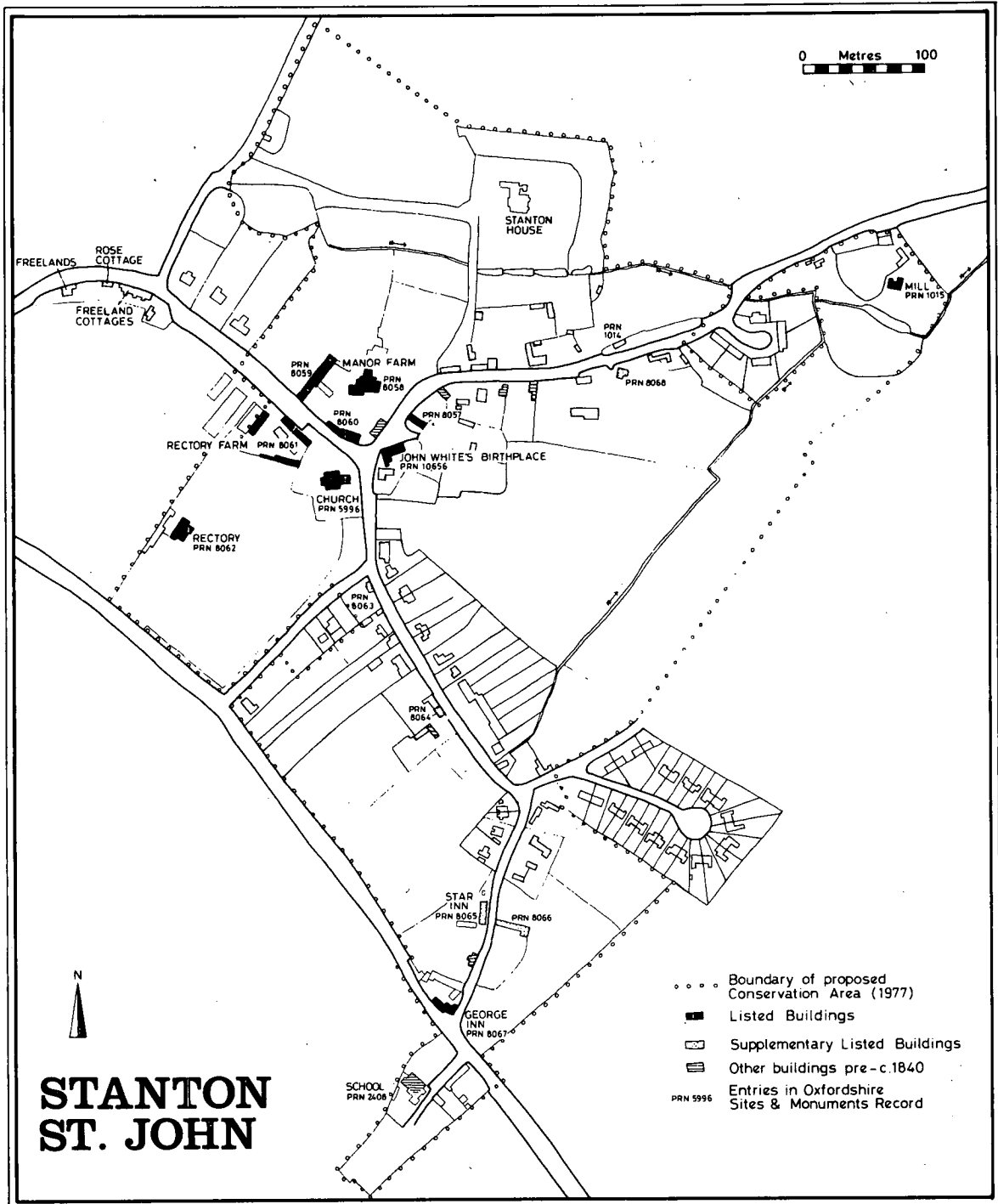


Figure 24

C20th additions to the street-plan. Other modern development has been mostly in the nature of infilling along pre-existing street alignments.

BUILDINGS

The oldest surviving building is the parish church of St. John Baptist (PRN 5996), in the centre of the village. It is of local, probably Headington or Wheatley, stone, and consists of nave, chancel, N and S aisles and W tower. The floor area of the nave is 63.5 sq.m., the N aisle 52 sq.m. and the S aisle 28 sq.m. Documentary evidence suggests that the church was in existence at least as early as c.1090, and there is every reason to suppose that a Saxon church stood on the site. The oldest surviving part of the structure, the N arcade, indicates that the church already had at least one aisle by c.1200. The chancel, rebuilt c.1300, is the most noteworthy part of the church, being regarded as one of the finest examples in Oxfordshire of the Early English - Decorated Transitional style. The N aisle was rebuilt and the S aisle added or rebuilt later in the C14th. There is a tradition that the N aisle was rebuilt by the inhabitants of Woodperry for their own use after Woodperry church was destroyed by fire. The W tower, the latest major part of the structure, was added in the C15th.

The churchyard is a little over $\frac{1}{2}$ acre (0.2 ha.) in extent, of rectilinear shape with a re-entrant angle on the SW, which indicates an extension in the past. Many gravestones remain in situ, mostly C18th and later. It remains unenclosed on the NE side towards the street verge.

The central village nucleus around the church contains the finest individual group of buildings, all of local stone rubble or ashlar. North of the church is a thatched stone barn with large buttresses, which appears to be medieval (PRN 8060). Behind this is Manor Farmhouse (PRN 8058), which despite its mainly C16th-C17th appearance, contains a medieval core. The main E-W range comprises a four-bay first-floor hall with an exterior stack at the W end of the N wall and a blocked C14th window in the W gable. This is joined at the W end by a S wing which includes a first-floor solar of three bays with arch-braced collar-beam roof. Part of the solar wing was rebuilt and extended westwards, and an attic inserted in the late C16th or C17th, and documentary evidence records extensive repairs by John White in 1660. Further alterations took place in the early C18th, commemorated by a date-stone '1742', while new doors and windows were put in a further modernisation around 1800. Another rubble-and-tiled barn W of Manor Farmhouse (PRN 8059), originally of 10 bays, has been partly demolished. The buildings of Rectory Farm (PRN 8061), to the NW of the church, are less important, but still of some value. Immediately E of the church, John White's birthplace (PRN 10,656) is a fine C16th house of squared rubble with an old tiled roof and stone-mullioned windows, a building of great interest.

Outside this central nucleus there are several further pre-C19th domestic buildings, mostly of locally-quarried Corallian limestone rubble with roofs of thatch or tile. They are scattered through the remainder of the settlement, and lack the group value of above, although individually they are still of intrinsic interest. Amongst the older examples, probably C16th-C17th, are No.27 on the road to the mill (PRN 8068) and the first cottage S of the church on the W side of the road (PRN 8063). Somewhat later, perhaps C17th-C18th, is the house opposite the Star Inn (PRN 8066). PRN 8064, an C18th stone cottage, bears a fine oval firemark depicting a phoenix and spear, inscribed 'PROTECTION'.

The two surviving pubs in the village are both at its southern end. The George Inn (PRN 8067), facing onto the B.4027 Islip-Wheatley road, formerly part of the main London-Worcester road, is a picturesque two-storey building of colourwashed rubble with a tiled roof and a single-storey thatched extension, probably C17th. The Star Inn (PRN 8065), just to the N is dated 1723. A third inn, the Chequers, listed in Gardner's 1852 Directory, stood between the Star and the Church; it was demolished around 1890.

The village school (PRN 2408) is at the southernmost extremity of the settlement, and is the only important element of the village to lie on the opposite side of the B.4027. It has its origins in a bequest by Dame Elizabeth Holford in 1717., but it was not until 1767 that a school and master's house was built on a site given by New College. In 1874 £400 which had accumulated from the original charity was spent on building a new school. The original schoolhouse of 1767 was, however, allowed to remain: a stone house with hipped tiled roof and large brick chimneys at either end still forms the nucleus of the later school buildings, the whole being enclosed by a high stone garden wall running up to the main road.

The mill stands at the E end of the village. Two watermills in the parish are documented in 1279 and 1316, but only one survived by the end of the C15th. A terrier of 1629 lists the water-mill, mill-house, dwelling-house, cottage, two closes and four acres in the open fields then in the tenure of George Hobbes. The actual corn-mill is now demolished, its site represented by low stone walls, but the mill house remains (PRN 1015), a two-storey building of C16th-C17th date, the ground floor stone, the upper storey timber-framed, the roof stone-tiled, with a central stone chimney.

There are two large detached houses in the village standing in their own grounds. The Rectory (PRN 8062) stands to the W of the church. The present building is a large two-storey ashlar building with a slate roof, its front of four bays, with a two-storey angular bay to one side. This replaced an earlier parsonage-house described in a terrier of 1685 and illustrated by Skelton - a large, irregular, jettied and gabled house, with oriel and bay windows with stone mullions, that survived until c.1842. Stanton House, on the N side of the village, still retains the remains of water-gardens. The house itself dates from the late C19th, and is of no special interest.

Brick does not appear in Stanton St. John before the C19th, and then only in limited quantity. Rose Cottage, which bears the date 1843, is still entirely of stone, now whitened. Freeland's, the next house to the NW, is also of stone, but has brick quoins and dressings. The most interesting element at this N end of the village is, however, the terrace called Freeland Cottages. This is a row of six cottages in red brick with a continuous band of yellow brick running the length of the terrace, and window lintels in the same contrasting material. The roof is of Welsh slate. A stone plaque in the centre of the terrace gives the date 1872. The front doors are paired under porches with wooden brackets and valancing. Most of the houses retain their original windows, but the recent refenestration of the easternmost house is an example of the 'improvements' which can insidiously lead to a slow erosion of character. Located as it is, in the convex curve of the northern approach road, this terrace provides an interesting visual introduction to the village centre.

The only other C19th houses of any particular interest are the pair of semi-detached stone estate cottages of two storeys with Welsh slate roofs on the E side of the southward street, which bear the arms of New College.

A number of high stone boundary walls make a minor, but significant contribution to the character of the village centre.

OPEN SPACE

There is no green, common or public open space of any historical significance within the village perimeter. A small recreation ground to the E of the church lies within what was originally a small close.

Within the curve of the village streets running E to the mill and S towards the George and Star Inns lies an expanse of grass fields crossed by one of the small streams rising in the village and feeding the mill stream. These fields are visually important in creating an attractive open view from the churchyard. Historically this gap in the present settlement nucleus could be important: while there is no direct evidence in that part of the field closest to the present village to suggest that it has been occupied by buildings in recent times, there is a possibility that the vacant part of the street frontage could produce archaeological evidence of medieval or Saxon occupation.

EARTHWORKS

There are no areas of clear croft earthworks or house platforms to suggest that the village has contracted at all within its medieval perimeter.

There is some evidence, both from general topography and from slight earthworks on the ground, to suggest that an abandoned road formerly crossed the fields SE of the church, between the dog-leg in the road E of the mill and the cul-de-sac near the Courtfield council estate. Its general course is fossilised by a footpath shown on the O.S. 1:10,000 map, although this now appears to be little used. Estate maps suggest that this road had ceased to exist by the C18th.

Traces of ridge and furrow, which probably represent the remains of part of the medieval field system of Stanton St. John, can be identified in part of one field beyond the stream to the SE of the village. Apart from this, no ridge and furrow survives at any point around the immediate village perimeter.

The courses of the two small streams rising in the village both show signs of modification. That crossing the field to the SE appears to have been straightened, and has two sharp angles to the S of the Silver Birches estate above the mill. The date and purpose of this alteration is not clear - there is no evidence for a fishpond or earlier mill site. The other stream to the N of the village centre has been landscaped through a series of small ponds and waterfalls S of Stanton House.

A depression in the close NW of the Star Inn adjacent to the B.4027, now partly infilled, appears to be a former stonepit.

INDUSTRIAL FEATURES

Water-mill: see above.

Smithy (PRN 11,111) in one of the long closes between the main B.4027 and village street S of the church, shown on the 1923 O.S. 1:10,560 ? now demolished.

Stone-quarry (PRN 1021) and limekiln (PRN 1022), both shown on the 1881 edition of the O.S. 1:2500, beside the B.4027 just beyond the southern end of the village. A larger stone-quarry immediately S of the village school was, perhaps, the principal source of building material for most of the village.

A milestone (PRN 11,112) formerly stood on the W side of the B.4027, which was turnpiked in 1718. This is shown on the 1923 O.S. 1:10,560, but is omitted from the later Provisional Edition, and does not survive.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

There is no evidence at present of any prehistoric, Romano-British or early Saxon occupation in or near the village centre.

The modern village appears to lie on top of the medieval settlement, and has not contracted within the medieval bounds. There is, however, no extensive area of abandoned medieval crofts or house sites available for study. There may be some archaeological potential within individual gardens and other small open spaces within the village, but (a) such plots are rarely likely to be available for excavation, (b) even when availability occurs, this may be difficult to forecast far enough in advance to organise any action, and (c) all such areas may be expected to contain considerable post-medieval disturbance.

LEGISLATIVE PROTECTION

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the parish.

All of the most important buildings in the village are now Listed as being of Architectural or Historic Importance under Section 54 of the 1971 Town and Country Planning Act. The church is Grade A. The important group of buildings around the church, comprising PRN 8057 to 8061 inclusive and PRN 10,656 are all Grade II buildings, as are the Rectory (PRN 8062), the George Inn (PRN 8067) and the Mill Farmhouse (PRN 1015). In addition several buildings are on the Supplementary List - PRN 8063-8066 inclusive and PRN 8068.

The village centre was proposed early in 1977 for designation as a Conservation Area under the 1967 Civic Amenities Act (now incorporated into the 1971 Town and Country Planning Act). This designation is not finalised at the time of writing, but is likely to be brought into effect shortly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Stanton St. John has considerable architectural and historical interest, and is still visually attractive. Its proximity to Oxford must presumably put it under some pressure, and there has been some modern building both within the village perimeter and beyond its margins. So far this has been fairly modest in scale and not particularly damaging but the designation of the village as a Conservation Area is to be welcomed as a means of ensuring that any future development is of a sufficiently high quality not to detract from the present amenities of the village. The boundary proposed does not bisect or exclude any areas of major archaeological or historical significance, and is regarded as generally satisfactory. Of two minor amendments suggested on historical grounds, one has been accepted.

No archaeological sites within the village are considered worthy of scheduling as Ancient Monuments.

The grading of Listed Buildings in the village is thought to be generally satisfactory. Probably none of the unlisted buildings in the village are worthy of Grade II status. Several examples in the Supplementary List might ultimately warrant upgrading, but this is not regarded as a matter of high priority.

From the point of view of archaeological excavation, Stanton St. John does not warrant high priority treatment: as detailed above, the archaeological potential is comparatively limited. However, two problems would be worth investigation, should opportunity arise at a time when resources are available:

(a) Any opportunity to examine the central nucleus around the church, e.g. the Rectory grounds to the immediate SW of the churchyard, could be expected to produce some evidence of the late Saxon and early medieval settlement.

(b) Any opportunity to examine the apparently planned area to the S might provide some evidence for the date of the laying-out of this area.

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CHARNEY BASSETT, OXFORDSHIRE: VILLAGE SURVEY - J.M. Steane

District: Vale of the White Horse

Former District: Faringdon Rural District

Hundred: Ganfield

O.S. 1 = 10,000 SU 39 SE, SU 39 NE

O.S. 1 = 2,500 SU 36943794
SU 38943994

PHYSICAL SETTING

Geology: Situated on sands, clays and limestones of Corallian beds in the N half of parish. To the S of the parish are low-lying Kimmeridge clays covered in places by alluvium of the valley of the River Ock.

Soils: Charney itself is on brown calcareous soil, a fine loamy or clayey material over limestone. On the N of the parish are patches of gleyed, brown earths and Cherbury Camp is surrounded by silty alluvium over peat. South in the flood plain of the Ock is clayey alluvium.

Water Supply: A number of small streams including the Cern with wide marshy banks flow from the NW to SE towards the River Ock. This bisects the parish as it flows in an easterly direction towards the Thames at Abingdon. The parish is in fact surrounded by streams.

Relief: The site of the village is low lying about 215ft. above sea level and only 10 to 15ft. above the banks of the River Ock. The ground drops slightly to the N on the edge of the built up settlement and this would be enough to explain the place name (island O.E. 'ey'), by the Cern. This riverside site is in contrast to the prehistoric focus of settlement in the area which was a mile to the N on gently rising ground in and around the valley fort of Cherbury.

DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

The Place Name. The first element is 'Cern'; probably of pre-English origin and may mean 'rock' or 'stones'. Charney means 'Cern Island'. Bassett probably derives from a family which held land here in the C15th. Charney Wick means 'Dairy farm' and supplied Abingdon abbey during the middle ages with cheeses.

There is an early description of the bounds of Charney in a document purporting to be a list of lands granted to Abbot Rethune of Abingdon by Coenwulf, King of Mercia in 811 AD. The bounds follow the present parish boundaries and include references to streams, drainage channels and a stone bridge (probably over the Cern in the NW corner of the parish).

At the time of the Domesday Survey Charney, assessed at 2 virgates and valued at £6, formed part of the possessions of Abingdon Abbey. There was also half a hide held by Warin.

Later Manorial history. Charney continued in the possession of the monks of Abingdon. The manor of Basses, later corrupted into Basset, was in origin a copyhold tenement of the Abbey's manor of Charney. It belonged in the C15th to a family called Rokys. At the Dissolution of the Monasteries the abbey's estate here was worth £54 3s. 2d. per annum. It was held by the Corfen family of Reading, then successively by the Paulet, Dunch and Keck families. During the early C19th it went through a series of sales but in 1833 became the property of the Pusey family of Pusey. The Berks County Council purchased it for small holdings in 1909 and in 1974 it became the property of the new Oxfordshire.

PLAN ELEMENTS

There were two focal points of settlement in the early history of the village, distinguished by the two place-names Charney Basset and Charney Wick. Of the two the nucleus to the N centred on the village green is likely to be the earlier. Its plan is 'organic' and the property boundaries shown on the 1765 pre-enclosure map (which have now been largely built over) show an untidy group of irregularly shaped plots with houses on them, sprawling round the two lengths of lane which converge on the present High Street at the village cross. Those to the N are served by a back-lane which becomes a field path. There is some suggestion of a regular layout of those to the S of the present White House.

Charney Wick, 'the dairy farm', comprised three elements, St. Peter's Church, the manorial grange of Abingdon Abbey (now the Manor House) and the Mill; they are all grouped by the crossing of the River Ock shown as a ford on the 1765 map and as a bridge on the 1804 enclosure map. It is apparent that the course now (1977) followed by the mill leat was the main stream of the River Ock in the C18th.

Sometime probably in the C17th or early C18th an increase of population was housed by a linear spread of very narrow holdings on the long tongue of Cow Common which spread from the Cern to the village in the N, dividing the N from the E field.

The one obviously planned element within the village was the New Road driven through earlier property boundaries in the mid-C19th by the Pusey family completing the triangle of roads in the village centre. Along this on the N side were laid out pairs of estate cottages and a school was attached on the S side.

Modern infilling has occurred along the ends of the crofts originally butting on to the back lane to the N. A second group of modern houses has been built on the W side in the area between the field path leading westwards to Goosey through the Ock meadows and the New Road. Also a small estate on both sides of Orchard Close has been inserted in the low lying land between the village centre and Charney Wick.

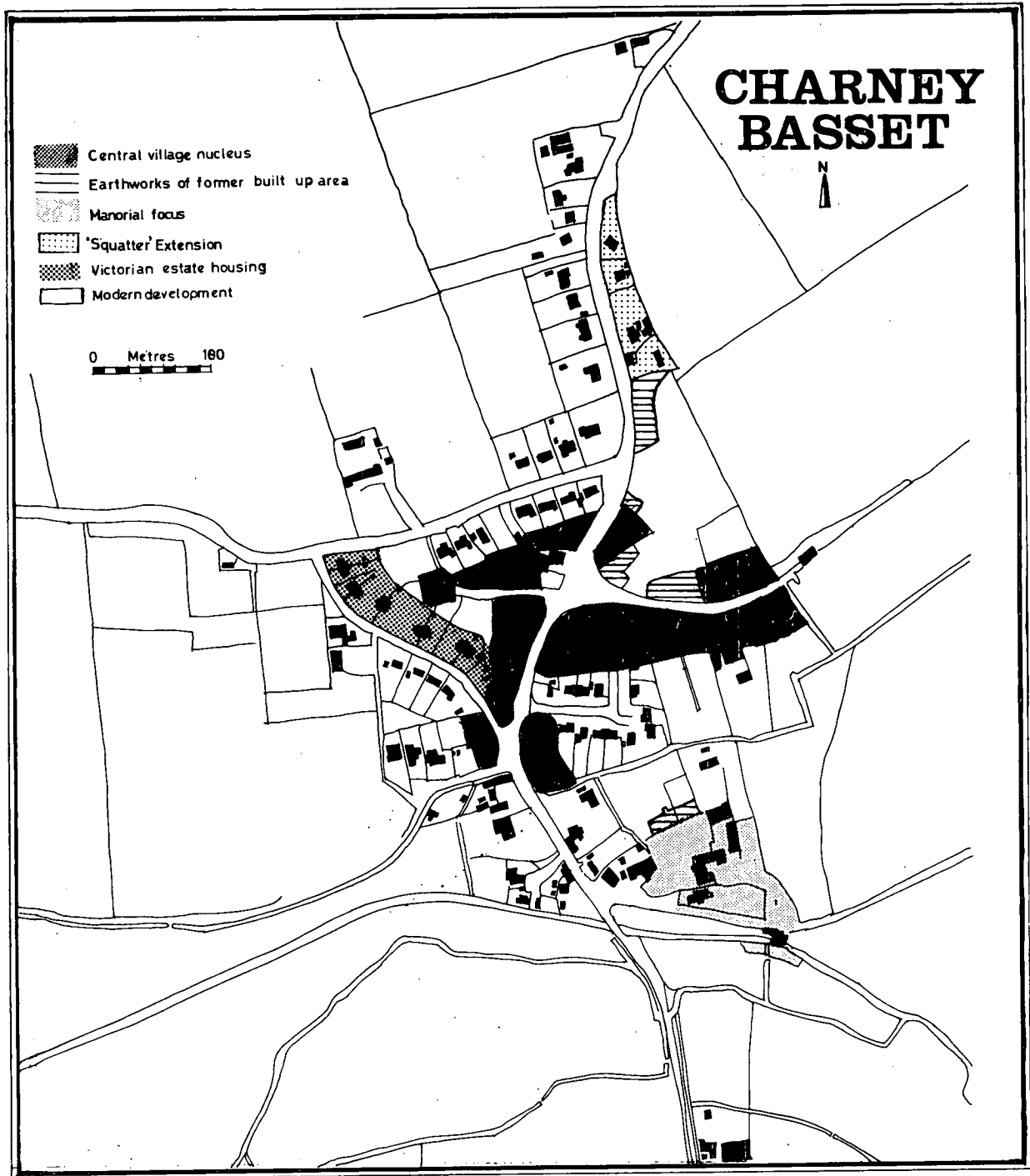


Figure 25

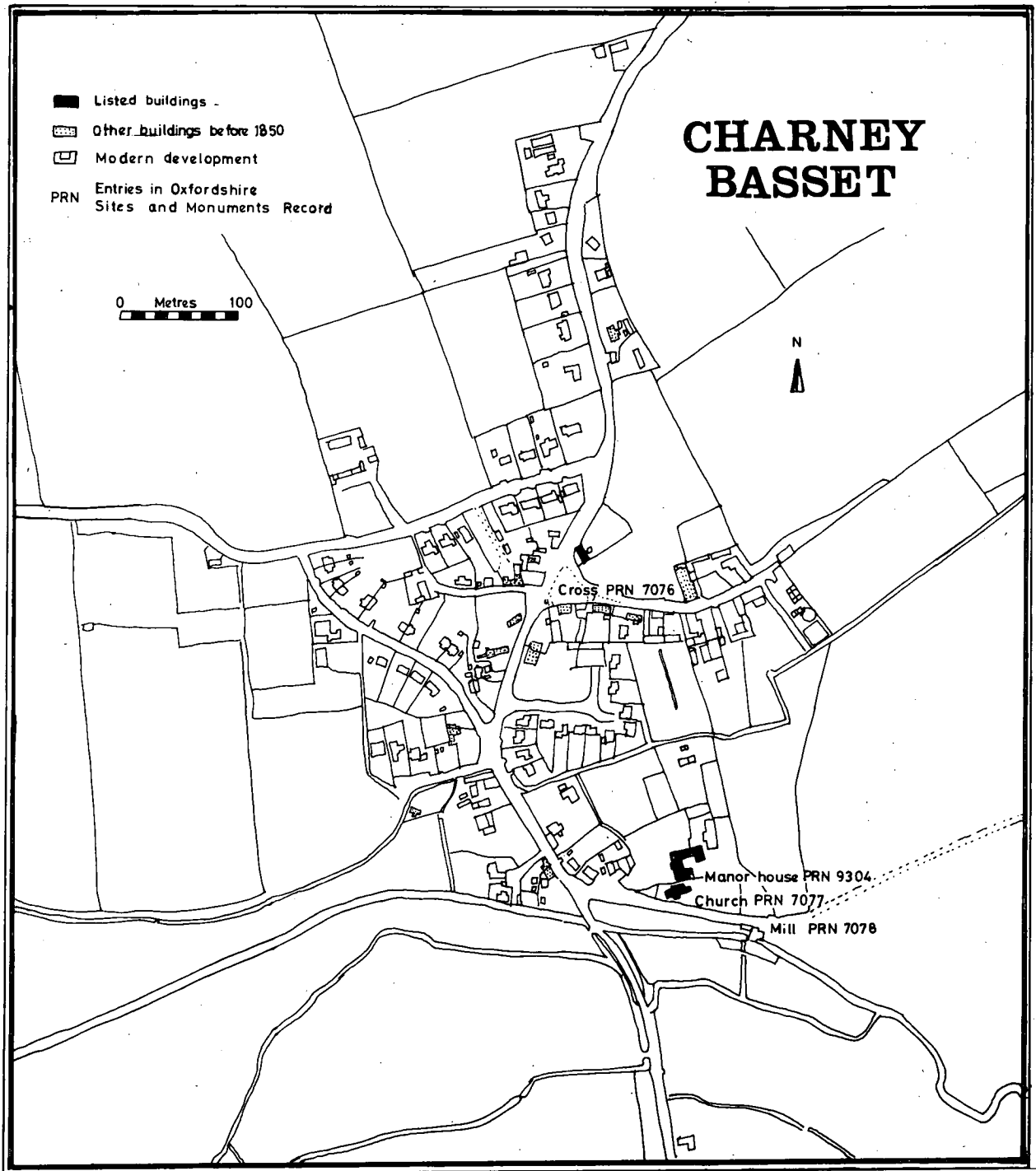


Figure 26

BUILDINGS

The oldest surviving building is the parish church of St. Peter, formerly a chapel of Longworth (PRN 7077). It is of corallian limestone, rough-cast, with stone quoins and stone slated roof. It consists of nave, chancel, N aisle and a rectangular, early C17th bellcote turret over the W end. The nave has portions of Norman work including the S doorway and the tympanum which has been re-set in the N Chancel wall. There is an Early English style window in the S chancel wall, an Early English font; one decorated window in the S nave wall. A short, two-bay arcade and N aisle was added in the late C15th and the church was reroofed and embattled. The screen and pulpit are also C15th work. The church fits into the narrow sliver of land between the monastic grange and the course of the River Ock.

The abbots of Abingdon had a grange at Charney. The S wing of the present Manor is the late C13th solar wing of their hall-house (PRN 9304). It is a two-storied rectangular stone structure with a rectangular projection to the E. The ground floor has small slit windows, a pointed doorway leading to the former house and a fireplace with shouldered lintel. The upper floor contained the solar and chapel and both are lit by two light windows. Roof with tie beams, crown posts and four way struts. A grade 1 listed building.

The remains of the village cross consisting of cap, shaft and base are probably medieval (PRN 7076). Now the War memorial, and the base has been renewed (Grade II listed building).

Home Farm, four bays and T-shaped in plan; central two bays are half-timbered work of c.1600-1650 with stone chimney stack and staircase wing. It was extended one bay each way in the late C17th or early C18th. Stone was used and the windows were mostly renewed.

The central village nucleus around the green contains some of the older and more interesting buildings, most of them built of limestone rubble and thatch. They include the C17th two-storey, five-bay house (No. 7) with projecting two-storey gabled central porch. Behind is a single storey and attic, thatched cottage. The cottage adjoining the White House to the E is C17th/18th, two storeys, stone-tiled roof. That opposite the Chequers Inn is of the same date, two-storeys, rubble stone, thatched roof swept down between the upper windows (Grade II listed building). The farmhouse nearly opposite No.7 is of the late C18th-early C19th, of two storeys, rubble stone and brick dressings, toothed brick eaves and has a six-bay W front. The White House is late C18th/early C19th of two storeys, four-bay front with upper windows, casements, and ground floor sashes. Next to it is an C18th, three-bay barn, weather boarding on brick base, half-hipped thatch roof and central entrance acting as a foil for the cross. Manor Farm has been through many alterations and additions but has basically an early C19th farmhouse of limestone with a low pitched slate roof. One barn to the S is probably C17th in date. The barn to the N with a steep pitched roof might have been the original dwelling. Opposite the Chequers Inn is a terrace of cottages in limestone rubble, two-storey with dormer windows cut into the thatch, C17th in date. The Chequers Inn is c.1850 with coursed limestone walls and brick quoins, roofed in Welsh slate.

The group near the church includes two cottages to the W of the C18th, single-storey and attic, colour washed rubble, thatched roof; and a further L-shaped cottage of two storeys, rubble and brick, thatched, about 100 yds. to W of the last. Bridle Cottage along the path to Goosey was probably

originally a pair of 'one up, one down'; roof of Stonesfield slate, colour washed limestone rubble.

The row of Pusey estate cottages is probably the group with most architectural distinction in the village. With their steep pitched gables lit by pairs of narrow pointed windows, triple groups in the ground floors, tiled roofs capped by triangular serrated ridge tiles, coursed sandstone rubble-walls and open-work timber porches. The strange little lavatories with cross-shaped ventilation slits and hipped gables and the charming gothic castellated and trefoil headed louvres on the outhouses, presumably chimneys for boilers, are particularly noteworthy. The school is in similar style, dates from c.1850 in coursed limestone/sandstone; three-light square-headed mullioned windows and plate tracery in the S end of the hall. The tiled roof has an identical gothic louvre to the one already noticed.

Chalet styled four-bedroomed houses have been recently built on the N side but fortunately as yet the view stretches unbroken across large fields to the wood surrounding Cherbury Camp to the N. Here the village has been mercifully contained.

OPEN SPACE

There is a small triangular-shaped green with the village cross on it.

EARTHWORKS

The field on the E side of the green contains 'humps and bumps' indicating the remains of former houses and walls. These are indicated as still existing on the 1765 and 1803 maps.

There is a major field monument of the pre-Roman Iron Age, Cherbury Valley fort, a mile to the N of the village which the parish boundary makes a remarkable diversion to include. Ancillary earthworks have been noticed on air photographys lying to the E of the fort.

A linear mound which seems to be the boundary between E field and the long tongue of Cow Common, can be seen behind the long dribble of squatters houses to the N of the village (see above).

The mill leat has two by-pass sluices one above the bridge, and one below, now blocked.

INDUSTRIAL FEATURES

There is a walled sheep dip immediately in front of the church.

The water mill site, mentioned in Domesday was unoccupied by structures in 1765 and 1803. The present building (PRN 7078) is timber framed with weather boarded cladding and tiled, hipped roof. The interior has machinery typical of a small country mill, complete except for the breast, short water-wheel itself. Mid-C19th in date.

Smithy (PRN 7075) is shown on 6" OS Map 1960 at SU 37929460.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

Cherbury Valley fort has had its entrance examined on the E side. The

interior has suffered badly from ploughing but the monument has recently been laid down to grass.

No evidence of Roman or early Saxon settlement is known in the parish at present.

The modern village appears to lie on top of the medieval settlements. It has only contracted in the triangle of land to the N of the village green. The earthworks here may well be post-medieval in date since houses show on the 1765 and 1803 maps.

LEGISLATIVE PROTECTION

The more important buildings in the village are now listed as being of Architectural or Historic importance under Section 54 of the 1971 Town and Country Planning Act.

The village centre is at present under discussion for designation under the 1967 Civic Amenities Act.

Cherbury Fort is a scheduled ancient monument.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The village has considerable architectural and historic interest. It is likely to attract elements of the public interested in visiting the mill which the O.C.C. D.M.S. plan to open eventually and the Manor House, pleasantly situated near the River Ock. The fort at Cherbury also deserves to be better known but the footpaths connecting it to the village are largely overgrown or ploughed. These could perhaps be opened up if sufficient local interest is shown.

The proposed designation of the village as a conservation area is to be welcomed but it is hoped that future developments will preserve the present long and open view to the N where the woods round Cherbury can be seen..

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OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT 1977

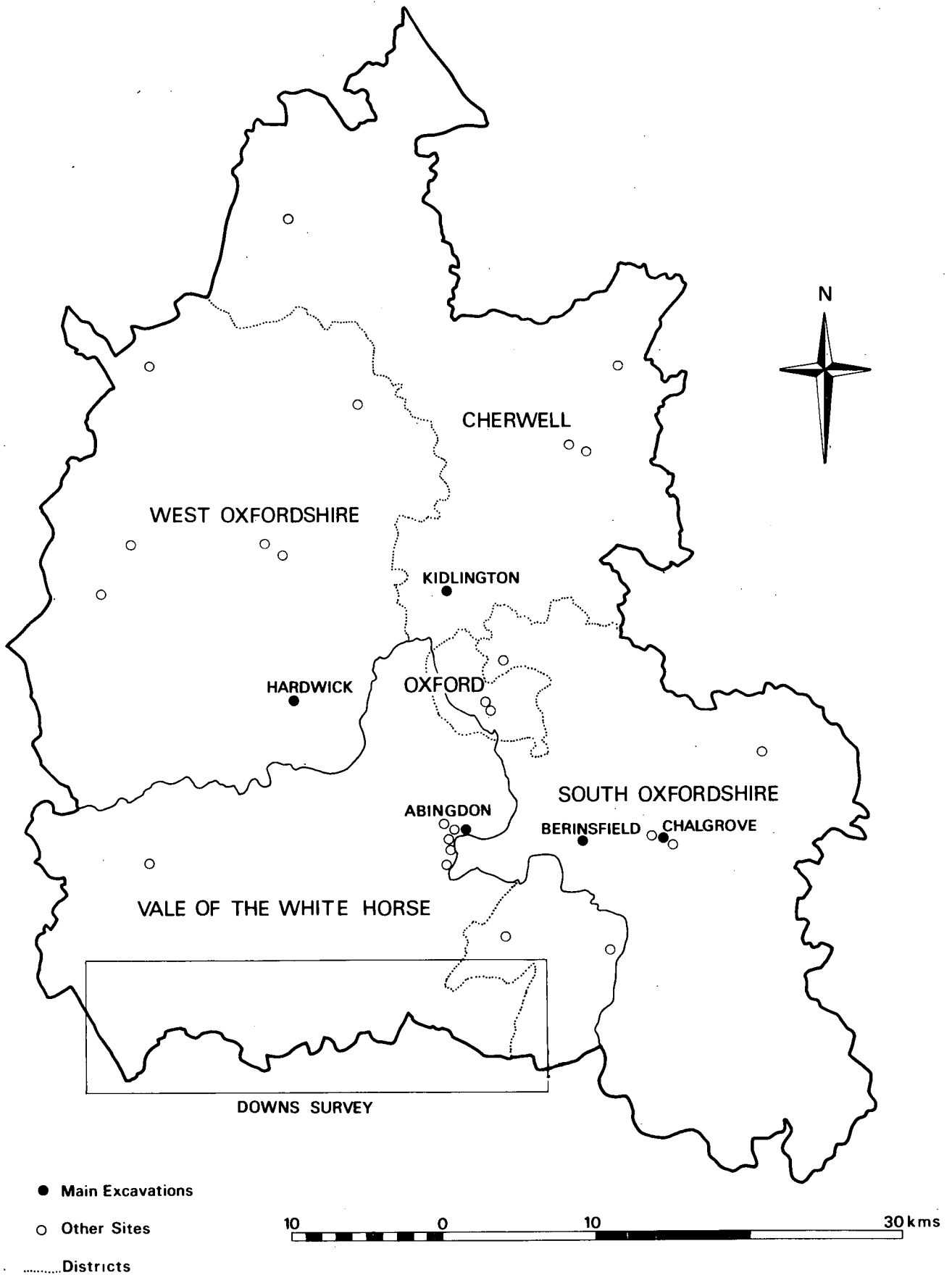


Figure 27

THE OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT 1977 - Tom Hassall, *Director*.

1977 has been a very difficult year for the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit, the executive arm of the Oxfordshire Archaeological Committee. While the Unit's workload of rescue excavation projects (Fig. 27) shows no sign of abating the financial resources available have been dwindling rapidly, largely through the effects of inflation. In 1976 the problem had been partially solved by 'contracting out' an excavation in Northamptonshire. However, in 1977 no such opportunities presented themselves. The Unit therefore faced a major financial crisis with an estimated deficit of £13,000 at the start of the financial year in April. The Committee therefore had to take the unpalatable decision to be prepared to make up to four members of staff redundant, in addition to two who left through natural wastage, and to cut back severely on excavation. The Unit's many friends offered what support they could while the press, both locally and nationally, gave space and commented sympathetically on the problems. In the event it was possible to avert the redundancies. The additional funds which prevented the disaster came principally from the Amey Roadstone Corporation which both substantially increased its grant to the Unit for the year and also donated a crew bus and provided assistance with plant. The DoE also provided an additional grant for pre-1973 post-excavation projects. In addition a grant from the Manpower Services Commission's Job Creation Programme enabled the Unit to employ 10 unemployed persons from September onwards and thus continue the excavation programme almost as planned. But the crisis was only narrowly averted and the Department of the Environment's two papers on Rescue Archaeology: the Next Phase which were published during the year do not appear to hold out any clear cut solution to the problem, at least in the short-term. In 1978 the Unit will have to continue to show as much flexibility and ingenuity as possible if it is to continue to survive at its present strength.

While the economic difficulties provided a constant backcloth to the Unit's activities during the year, nevertheless the Unit has continued to function as smoothly as circumstances would allow. Indeed after four years of operation the Unit is operating more effectively than ever before, particularly in the choice of excavation priorities. However, priorities cannot be chosen without the necessary information on the location of sites and in this respect the Unit has continued to work closely with the Oxfordshire Department of Museum Services. The regular fortnightly meetings to process the lists of planning applications are the main feature of this liaison. About fifty planning applications were noted as likely to have an effect on a buried site. The first set of Development Control Sheets has been deposited with South Oxfordshire District Council. These sheets were prepared in their final form by James Bond of the Department. It is hoped that they will provide an early warning system for planning applications in areas outside the village and town centres. They should provide a useful tool in the attempt to make the conservation of selected key sites the primary aim of archaeological policies in the County. In this respect it should be recorded that the Secretary of State has not allowed gravel extraction to proceed at the multi-period site at Northfield Farm, Long Wittenham.

The Oxfordshire Parish Survey has continued to function through the year as a joint enterprise between the Unit, the Oxfordshire Department of Museum Services and the Oxford University Department for External Studies. Richard Chambers coordinates the survey for the Unit's involvement and his report is given below.

With the publication of Archaeology and Agriculture by George Lambrick,

the Unit's publication programme of major surveys has come to an end for the time being at least. Archaeology and Agriculture was a joint publication with CPA. In future the Unit hopes to contribute to the survey of Oxfordshire villages for which the Oxfordshire Department of Museum Services has produced two pilot studies. Philip Page of the Unit, while on the Oxford University Department for External Studies in-service training scheme, has produced a gazetteer of moated sites in Oxfordshire during a secondment to the Oxfordshire Department of Museum Services. Duplicated copies of this survey are available from the Department. Two other trainees, Annie Upson and Anne Davis carried out their own survey of Archaeological sites on the Berkshire Downs in Oxfordshire. A summary of this survey is printed below. Richard Chambers also carried out a detailed survey of Topples, Deserted Medieval Village in Finstock because of tree felling.

The need for excavations continues in spite of the national slow down in development projects. Only the major urban sites scheduled for renewal in the County such as the large sites in Wallingford and St. Aldates, Oxford have not shown any appreciable signs of imminent redevelopment. It was hoped to carry out an excavation at the latter site, however the negotiations fell through at the last moment. In the other towns of the County such as Abingdon and Bicester small scale developments continue while in the countryside the demand for gravel continues to have an effect on the archaeology of the Dorchester and Stanton Harcourt areas. Agriculture also continues to take its toll of sites but in spite of the Unit's interest in plough damaged sites the DoE has shown itself reluctant to fund excavations of such sites in Oxfordshire.

The actual excavations fall into two clear categories; main excavations for which DoE grants are available because of their regional significance and other projects which are not eligible for Department funding. Amongst the main excavations are David Miles' excavation at Barton Court Farm, Abingdon/Radley which has now been completed. The Department's main excavation grant this year was put into Mark Robinson's excavation at Hardwick, a new site which continues the Unit's examination of Iron Age sites of different types. Further Departmental cash was put into the multi-period site at Mount Farm, Berinsfield. However, this site, examined by Dr. J.N.L. Myres before the War, could only have been excavated with the substantial financial backing of the Amey Roadstone Corporation and the Manpower Services Commission. A new moated site at Chalgrove whose discovery was noted in last year's report has also been partially excavated by Richard Chambers with the use of local resources and a small Departmental grant. Richard Chambers has also completed a series of trial excavations at Moat Cottage, Kidlington again using local resources of money and manpower.

Apart from the main excavations the Unit continues to try to provide a rescue excavation 'service' to the county. Richard Chambers has the main responsibility for this service although other members of the Unit staff are concerned such as Bob Wilson's activities in Abingdon. It is clear that it is in this area of small scale projects of crucial local importance that the many local archaeological societies have a vital role to play. It will be seen from the description of these projects how many local groups are already involved in small excavations and watching briefs either under direct Unit supervision or on their own. This area of operations is likely to require an increasing in-put of part-time effort as the DoE intends to support only those sites of regional and national importance. Yet unless these small-scale projects are undertaken much valuable information will be lost. A vital element is however training and the Unit ran a training weekend during the year on a typical small-scale rescue site at Sutton Courtenay.

Although excavations form the most obvious aspect of the Unit's work

nevertheless, when the financial crisis struck, the Unit took the only possible decision to concentrate full-time staff on the completion of reports on previous excavations. Major progress has been made in this area during the year. Brian Durham's report on 79-80 St. Aldates, Oxford has been submitted to Oxoniensia and this report will be published in 1978 as will Michael Parrington's report on Barrow Hills, Radley. The same volume will also contain smaller reports by Richard Chambers on excavations at Cassington and Summertown, by Maureen Mellor on pottery from Christ Church, Oxford and by Michael Parrington on Iron Age finds from Benson. Michael Parrington has completed the report on the Ashville Trading Estate, Abingdon. This report will form the first of a proposed series of joint CBA and Unit excavation reports. The second in the series will be George Lambrick's and Mark Robinson's report on Farmoor which has also been completed. Both reports should be printed in 1978. David Miles is pressing on with the report on Barton Court Farm, Abingdon/Radley. Bob Wilson is working on the skeletal data from the same site while work also continues on the Oxford backlog of sites. Brian Durham has compiled a report on the Littlegate sites to form part of the report on the Greyfriars, the archive of which has been placed in order by Michael Wilcox. Maureen Mellor is continuing her study of Oxford Medieval pottery. The basic processing of the pottery from the Hamel has been completed and work has begun on the massive task of analysing the pottery from 31-34 Church Street. The general supervision of finds in the Unit is still under the control of Diane Hofdahl and Wendy Lee remains the Unit's full-time draughtsperson.

The Unit continues to communicate its activities through its monthly Newsletter, exhibitions and press reports. The opening of the new ground-floor gallery at the Oxfordshire Department of Museum Services, Fletcher's House, Woodstock means that material from excavations at Abingdon, Berinsfield, Farmoor and Oxford is now on permanent display. Temporary exhibitions were staged at Abingdon, Farmoor and Hardwick and a small temporary exhibition area is maintained at 46 Hythe Bridge Street. An excavation open-day was held at Hardwick. Members of the Unit staff continue to lecture on the activities of the Unit. The Director gave single lectures to 12 local groups, 2 groups outside the County, 4 conferences and 3 seminars organised by Oxford University Department for External Studies, 3 weekend schools organised by other Extra-Mural Departments and a conference on Archaeological priorities.

There have been a number of staff changes during the year. Michael Parrington has left the Unit to work in the United States. He hopes to get an archaeological job there eventually. Michael Wilcox has left to take up an Archivist Course. Neither of these posts can be replaced. Annie Lipson left in August and her place as the Unit's secretary has been taken by Paola Lawrence. During the year Philip Page took part in the in-service training scheme organised by the Oxford University Department for External Studies and the DoE.

As always the Unit continues to be grateful to all those who make its work possible. The Committee under the Chairmanship of Trevor Rowley and Secretaryship of David Brown continue to give the staff every possible support which has been particularly valuable this year. The County Treasurer and his staff particularly Lloyd Adams, Peter Gosling and Russell Worsley have provided their usual invaluable help. Michael Maclagan as Chairman of the Oxford Archaeological Excavation Committee and Constance Preston as the Hon. Secretary have continued to keep control over the Unit's activities in Oxford. The Unit continues to rely on the help of its professional and part-time colleagues. In particular the close relationship has been maintained with the Ashmolean Museum and the Oxfordshire Department of Museum Services where regular contact is maintained with John Steane, John Rhodes and Ahmed Shishtawi. Contacts with

the University continue to grow notably through the Oxford University Department for External Studies and St. Cross College. In the County itself the many local fieldworkers and groups continue to provide essential intelligence and fieldwork. The Unit is particularly grateful to the Aingdon Society which actually raised funds for the Unit.

Finally the Unit would like to offer its heart-felt thanks to its financial supporters notably from Central Government: the DoE and the Manpower Services Commission, from Local Government: Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council, the Vale of White Horse District Council, the Oxfordshire District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council and from outside local and central government particularly the Amey Roadstone Corporation, whose generosity in some senses 'saved' the Unit in 1977, and the British Academy. City Motors gave a free service to the ARC crew bus before the Unit took delivery of it.

SURVEYS

THE OXFORDSHIRE PARISH SURVEY - Richard Chambers

During the last year the number of groups and individuals participating in the parish survey increased again over the previous year's total of 35 (Fig.28). New interest has arisen mainly in W and N Oxfordshire where there has always been a paucity of fieldworkers. However the maintenance and instruction of these groups has become a problem reflected in the amount of basic information that the majority of groups are able to feed into the Oxfordshire Department of Museum Services Sites and Monuments Record. At present the solution to this problem can only be seen in the longer term as field workers gain more experience. At the autumn progress meeting held at the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit on the 27th November 1977 it became clear from the reports given by group representatives, from discussion and from selected examples of material that were brought along, that the effort put into the survey by the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit, the Oxfordshire County Council Department of Museum Services and the Oxford University Department for External Studies is being justified in the gradual increase of confidence and activity of fieldworkers. The majority of the most successful groups remain those who have been formed through archaeological and local history evening classes. It is pleasing to see that as well as the basic field-walking, more groups are tackling graveyards and various building surveys, including farms. A little industrial archaeology continues to be recorded, the largest task being the recording of a deserted C19th pottery workshop and kiln in a converted farm at Fowler. In spite of all this activity sites are still being lost, earthworks and ancient pastures being ploughed up without sufficient record being made or indeed, any notice being taken in the more remote areas of the county.

Three days schools were held to assist those active in the field, two of which, Place Names and Charter Boundaries by Margaret Gelling and Trees and Woodlands by Oliver Rackham were organised by the Oxford University Department for External Studies. The third on Oral History Recording was organised jointly by the Unit and John Rhodes of the Oxfordshire County Council Department of Museum Services with several contributors. All were extremely successful.

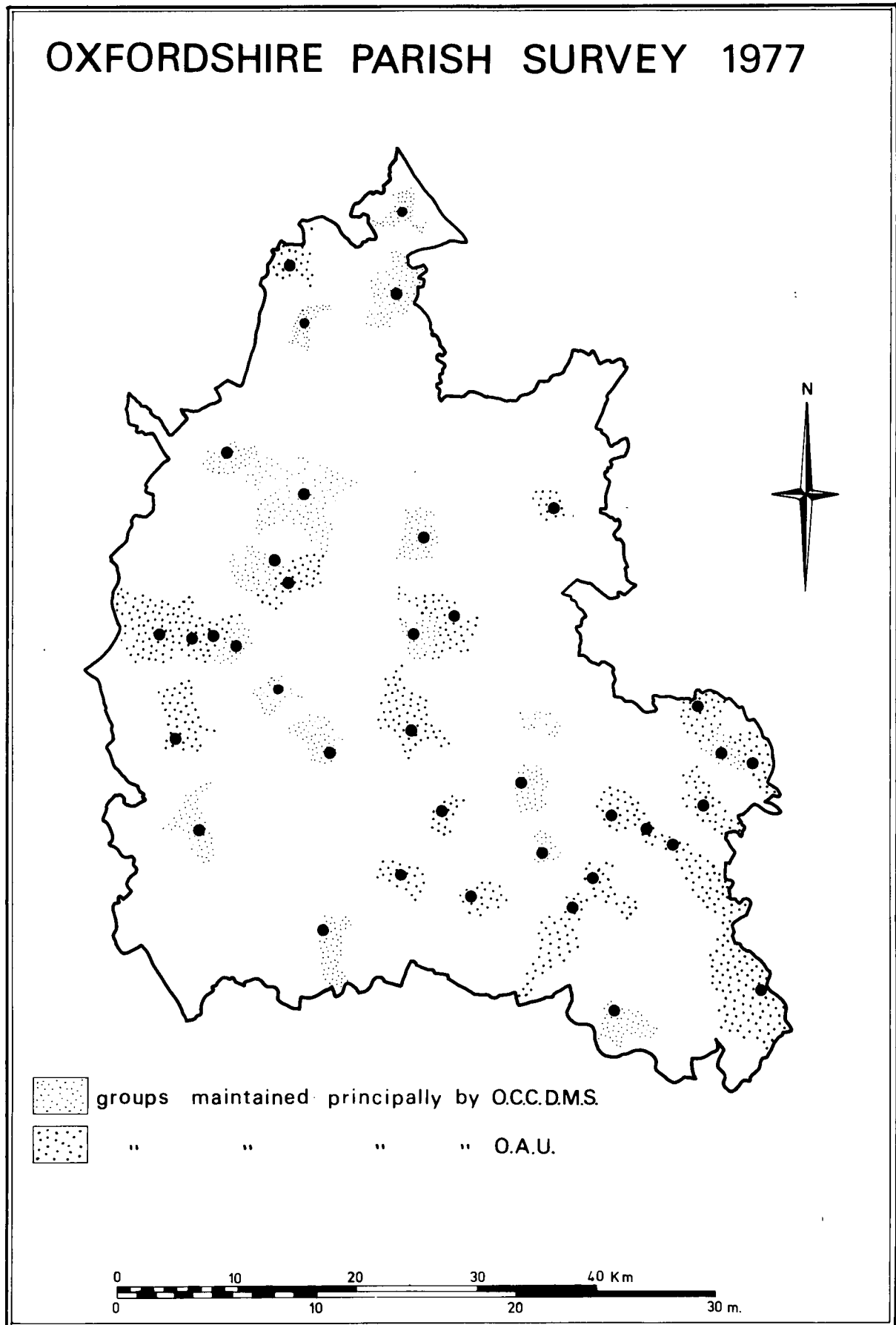


Figure 28

NEW ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES ON THE BERKSHIRE DOWNS IN OXFORDSHIRE - Anne Davis
and Annie Upson

The DoE has commissioned Julian Richard of the Berkshire Archaeological Unit to undertake an archaeological survey of the Downs. However, this survey as originally envisaged, was to stop at the 1974 County boundary and would therefore have excluded the parishes situated on the scarp of the Downs. Accordingly the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit offered to carry out a rapid survey of the Downs in the new County.

The initial identifications of new sites and the compilation of the Gazetteer were carried out by Annie Upson, one of the in-service trainees of the Oxford University Department for External Studies. The work was finally completed by Anne Davis, another in-service trainee.

The main sources of information that were searched, were the collections of aerial photographs housed by the bodies described below. Julian Richards kindly advised on the use of these photographs which were made available for study by the relevant bodies. The study of the photographs was backed up by fieldwork during which several new sites were revealed.

During the survey new information was gained on previously known sites and a total of sixty new sites were identified with varying degrees of certainty. The majority of these new sites were examined on the ground.

The full survey of the Downs will be published by the Berkshire Archaeological Unit with whom copies of the work in Oxfordshire have been deposited. The notes, record maps and card indexes of the sites in Oxfordshire have been deposited with the Field Department, Oxfordshire County Council Department of Museum Services. Primary Record Numbers have been allocated to all the sites and only the new sites are listed here.

Gazetteer of New Sites (Fig. 29)

The numbered black circles on the map represent new sites identified by Annie Upson. The description of each site is followed by the air photograph source where appropriate, abbreviated as shown below. PRN numbers refer to the Sites and Monuments Record of the Oxfordshire County Department of Museum Services in Woodstock, from which further information can be obtained both on these sites and on the previously known ones which have not been included here.

Sources of aerial photographs are as follows:

Allen: Ashmolean Museum

CUCAP: Cambridge University Committee for Aerial Photography

NMR: National Monuments Record

RAF 1967: Cover held by Berkshire County Council Planning
Department

Fairey 1963, 1969 and 1976: refers to covers held by
Berkshire County Council Planning Department, Reading

1. Shrivenham (SU 256897). 3 ring ditches, one with linear feature running northwards. NRM 1935. PRN 11019
2. Shrivenham (SU 252888). Rectangular enclosure with large pit-like mark. Fairey 1963. PRN 11015
3. Ashbury (SU 264833) ? Barrow, plundered or ploughed out. RAF 1967. PRN 11006

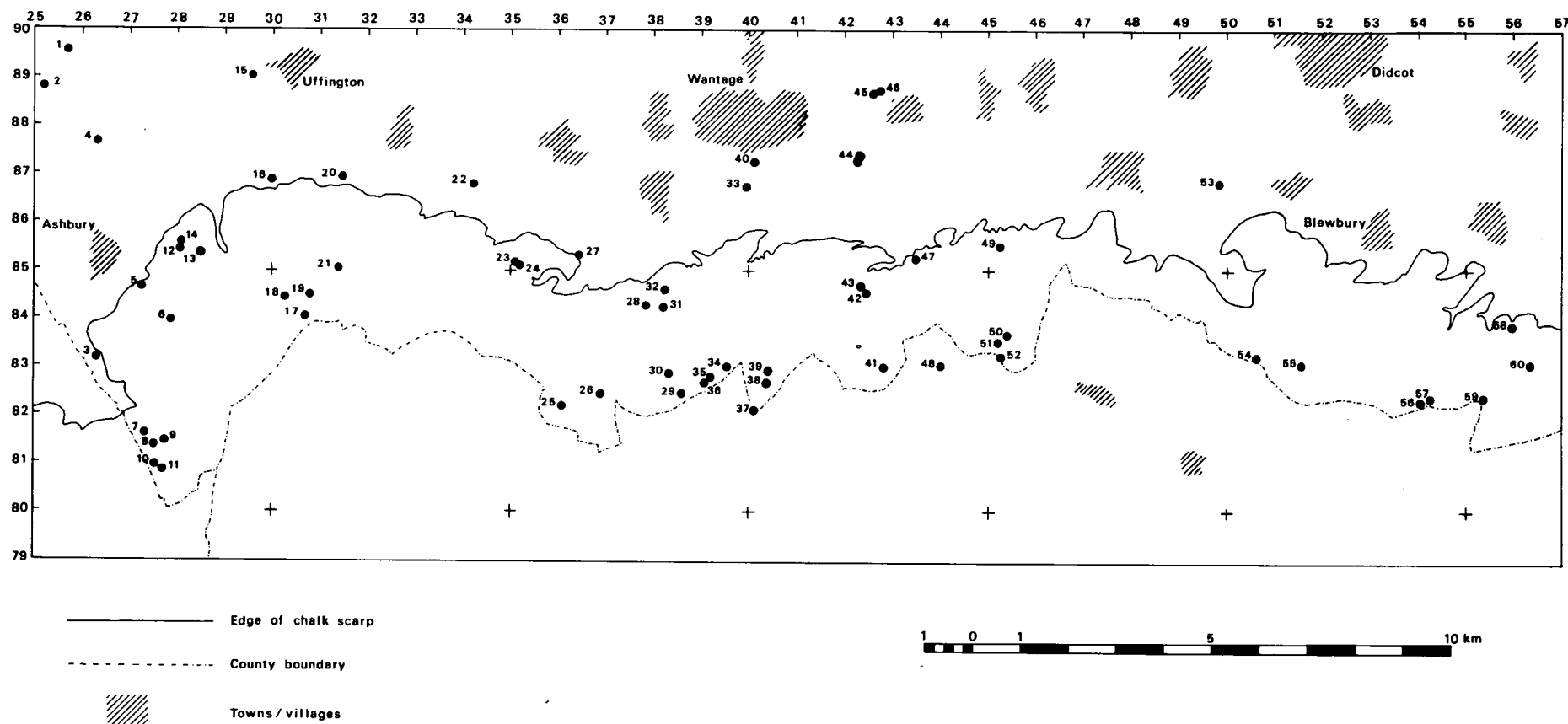


Figure 29

4. Shrivenham (SU 263877) ? Field System. Fairey 1963. PRN 11017
5. Ashbury (SU 273846). Linear and pit-like marks. Allen 1933. PRN 11001
6. Ashbury (SU 278839) ? Barrow, badly ploughed. Fairey 1963, 1969.
PRN 11003
7. Ashbury (SU 273816). Iron Age/Romano-British pot among scatter of large foreign stones. PRN 11012
8. Ashbury (SU 275815). Linear scatter of large stones, also slight earthwork. PRN 11014
9. Ashbury (SU 277816) ? Barrow. Fairey 1963. PRN 11002
10. Ashbury (SU 276809). Small ring ditch in corner of 'celtic' field. CUCAP 1969. PRN 11000
11. Ashbury (SU 277809). Barrow circle. CUCAP 1969. PRN 11004
12. Ashbury (SU 281856). Linear feature. Fairey 1963, 1969. PRN 11022
13. Compton Beauchamp (SU 285854). ? Enclosure. CUCAP 1973. PRN 11023
14. Ashbury (SU 281857) Ring ditch. CUCAP 1965. PRN 11021
15. Uffington (SU 296891). Cropmarks. Fairey 1963. PRN 11016
16. Uffington (SU 300869). Lynchets. CUCAP 1969. PRN 11024
17. Uffington (SU 307841). ? Barrow circle. Fairey 1969. PRN 11072
18. Woolstone (SU 303845). Barrow, slight earthworks visible. Allen 1948, Fairey 1969. PRN 11043
19. Uffington (SU 308845). ? Two barrows. Allen 1948, Fairey 1969.
PRN 11042
20. Uffington (SU 314869). Strip Lynchets. PRN 11046
21. Woolstone/Kingston Lisle (SU 314851). Enclosure CUCAP 1972. PRN 11044
22. Sparsholt (SU 342868). ? Field System. Fairey 1969. PRN 11045
23. Childrey (SU 351852). ? Barrow. Fairey 1963, NMR 1973. PRN 11034
24. Childrey (SU 352852). Ring ditch. NMR 1973. PRN 11037
25. Letcombe Rasset (SU 361823). Barrow mound. Fairey 1963. PRN 11025
26. Letcombe Rasset (SU 369825). Ring ditch. Fairey 1969. PRN 11026
27. Childrey (SU 364854). ? Square enclosure. NMR 1973. PRN 11038
28. Letcombe Regis (SU 383846). Orange clay soilmark, with 32 may be remains of linear feature. PRN 11032
29. Letcombe Regis (SU 386825). Field system and coppice boundary earthworks.
PRN 11033
30. Letcombe Regis (SU 383829). 'Celtic' lynchets. PRN 11009
31. Letcombe Regis (CU 382843). ? Pit alignment forming rounded cornered enclosure. NMR 1971. PRN 11027
32. Letcombe Regis (SU 378843). See No. 28
33. Wantage (SU 399868). ? Enclosure. CUCAP 1975. PRN 11039
34. Letcombe Regis (SU 395830). Cropmark complex. NMR 1973, 1975. PRN 11030
35. Letcombe Regis (SU 392828). Circular cropmark with internal feature.
NMR 1973, 1975. PRN 11028

36. Letcombe Regis (SU 391827). Oval cropmark, ? long barrow. NMR 1973, 1975
37. Letcombe Regis (SU 401822). Double ring ditch. Fairey 1963, 1969. PRN 11050
38. Letcombe Regis (SU 404827). Two superimposed field systems. Fairey 1963. PRN 11052
39. Letcombe Regis (SU 404829). Ring ditch, ? ploughed barrow. Fairey 1963. PRN 11051
40. Wantage (SU 401873). ? Field system. Fairey 1963, 1969. PRN 11075
41. Lockinge (SU 428830). Field system. Fairey 1969. PRN 11055
42. Lockinge (SU 425846). Earthwork almost at right angles to Grim's ditch. Fairey 1963, 1969. PRN 11053
43. Lockinge (SU 423847). ? Field system. Fairey 1969. PRN 11054
44. Lockinge (SU 423874). ? Two very small ploughed out barrows. Fairey 1963. PRN 11076
45. Lockinge (SU 425887). ? Enclosure. Allen 1934. PRN 11058
46. Lockinge (SU 427888). Double ring ditch. Allen 1934, Fairey 1963. PRN 11057
47. Lockinge/W. Hendred (SU 445835). Field system. Fairey 1963, RAF 1967
48. Ardington/W. Hendred (SU 445835). Extensive field system. PRN 11056
49. West Hendred (SU 453856). ? Mound on course of Grim's ditch. Fairey 1963, 1976. PRN 11062
50. West Hendred (SU 454836). Lynchets. Fairey 1963. PRN 11047
51. West Hendred (SU 452836). Field system. PRN 11048
52. West Hendred (SU 452834). Sunken way. PRN 11049
53. West Hagbourne (SU 498868). Cropmarks, ? field system or enclosure group. Fairey 1963, 1969. PRN 11061
54. Blewbury (SU 506833). ? Lynchets. Fairey 1963. PRN 11068
55. Blewbury (SU 515831). Ring ditch. NMR 1969. PRN 11071
56. Aston Upthorpe (SU 541824). Ring ditch. CUCAP 1965, RAF 1967. PRN 11070
57. Aston Upthorpe (SU 543824). ? Lynchets visible on all photographs. PRN 11069
58. Aston Tirrold (SU 560839). ? Ring ditch with enclosure. Fairey 1963, RAF 1967. PRN 11010
59. Aston Tirrold (SU 554825). Distinct earthworks, ? lynchets. Fairey 1963, 1969. PRN 11066
60. Cholsey (SU 563831). Field systems. Fairey 1963, 1969. PRN 11067

FINSTOCK, Topples - Richard Chambers

The deserted medieval village of Topples (PRN 1208, Centred SP 371165), alias Tapwell, lies in the NW corner of Topples Wood in Finstock parish (Fig.30). It was held in the early C14th by Eynsham Abbey and 8 tenants were recorded there at that time. There were still two houses there in the time of Elizabeth I although nothing remains today. The name survives in Topples Lane and Wood (K.J.A. Allison, M.W. Beresford, J.G. Hurst, The Deserted Medieval Villages of Oxfordshire (1965)). The village is twice mentioned in Lay tax returns, in 1306 and again in 1316. The most detailed tax assessment for Oxfordshire at this period was in 1327 by which time Topples appears to have declined beyond mention.

Part of the site of this village is clearly shown by a group of well pronounced earthworks. The earthworks represent tumbled, stone walled buildings with two clearly defined yard areas A & B, which have yielded surface finds of medieval pottery. There are several deep hollows probably small quarries for the underlying limestone. A boundary ditch on the NE side also appears to have been used as a quarry.

To the E of this complex the woodland floor suggests several low building platforms. These proved impossible to plot in the thick, overgrown coppice wood and woodland clearance machinery preceding re-planting has obliterated low platforms entirely.

Topples Lane appears to owe its shape to the village around which it skirts. 0.5km. to the W the lane meets a short section of terraced trackway leading uphill in the direction of Topples Wood. To the E, Topples Lane branched NE to the river where it ends as a hollow way under the railway line. At this junction with Topples Lane are the remains of two rectangular enclosures (O.S. 6" map) and a recently demolished building. The lane to the NE has now been ploughed revealing much C19th and C20th domestic refuse.

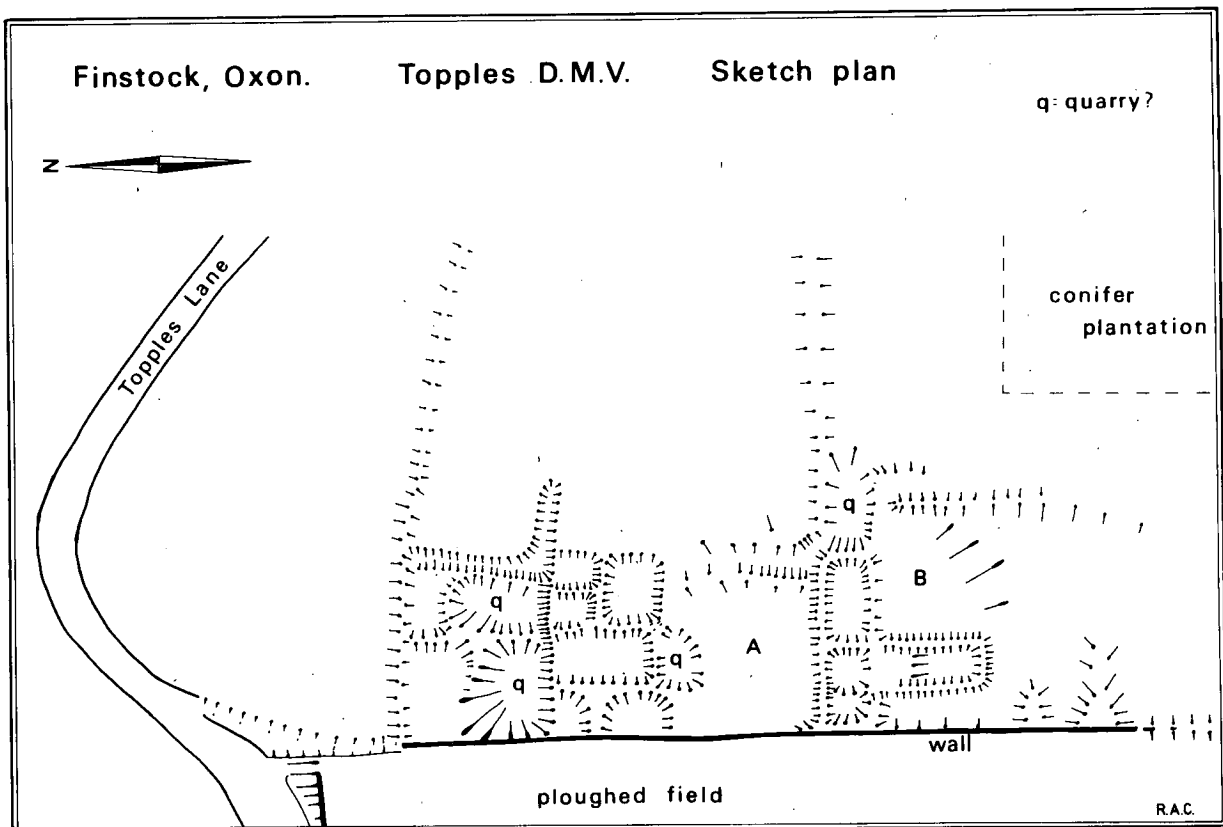


Figure 30

MAIN EXCAVATIONS

ABINGDON/RADLEY, Barton Court Farm, 1972-6 - David Miles

The excavations on this site were completed in 1976. Work is now progressing on the preparation of the report. The phasing of the site is now clear (Fig. 31) and the major phases of occupation can be summarised as follows:

1. Neolithic: Six small pits ran in an arc along the S and E edge of a tongue of dry, sandy Sutton soil, itself at the edge of the second (Summertown/Radley) terrace. Fresh flint flakes were found in quantity, also animal bone and a red deer antler (radiocarbon dates awaited). The pottery (studied by Dr. A. Whittle) is mainly Grooved Ware and probably indicates a date in the late 3rd mill. - early 2nd mill.B.C. One sherd of Abingdon-type ware, similar to the pottery from the nearby Causewayed Camp, may be residual.
2. Late Iron Age: In the late C1st BC or early C1st AD a farmstead appeared on the site. The principal feature was a trapezoid ditched enclosure (c. 64 x 78m.). The NW corner had a subsidiary enclosure within which was a circular post-hole structure (diameter c. 7m.) with a SE entrance and associated storage pit. An arc of ditches may indicate a larger circular structure in the unexcavated extreme NW corner.

Within the larger enclosure was a cluster of pits and a rectangular ditched feature (12 x 21m.) with an entrance on the W side. The only internal feature was a cremation (undated). Outside the larger enclosure on the SE side was a further hut circle (undated, diameter c. 6m.) and a recut, possibly circular late Iron Age gully.

3. Early Romano-British: In the second half of the C1st AD a new farmstead was laid out, overlying the first but on a slightly different alignment. Again trapezoid (c. 60 x 90m.) with a S entrance, the ditched enclosure was bounded on its E side by a trackway. Like its Iron Age predecessor this enclosure was divided into a smaller 'occupation' area and a larger 'yard' (mostly unexcavated). The S part contained a large rectangular post hole structure (c. 8 x 730m.), probably the main farmhouse. Aligned on the S entrance of the enclosure were two six-post structures, conventionally interpreted as granaries. A pit associated with this phase contained large quantities of white wall-plaster and suggested the building had plastered walls.
4. Mid Romano-British: c. AD 270-330 (not illustrated). Stratigraphic and numismatic evidence suggests that the small 'cottage villa' was constructed in the late C3rd-early C4th, but without its later enclosures. A corn-drying oven and water-hole belonged to this phase.
5. Late Romano-British: c. AD 330-400. The villa complex was further developed in the mid to late C4th. The farmhouse, containing six rooms, corridor, paved cellar and a timber annexe sat inside an enclosure (probably fenced) c. 35 x 43m., with a central entrance on the W side (the back of the farmhouse). As



Figure 31
 ABINGDON/RADLEY, BARTON COURT FARM, 1972-6
 The major phases of occupation.

in the two earlier farmsteads there was a division between occupation/storage and working/paddock areas. The villa nucleus lay within a ditched enclosure c. 130m. sq. (1.7 hectare) including a chequer-board of subsidiary enclosures. As in the earlier Romano-British farmstead a trackway ran along the E side. The trackway provided access to the farmyards at the SE and NE corners and at the latter branched eastward running across the field towards Barrow Hills.

The excavated yards and paddocks contained a subsidiary building with two rooms and a nearby well, an area reserved for infant burials, a corn-drying oven and a well-house.

6. Latest Romano-British/Saxon: In the early C5th more irregular enclosures were added on the S side of the villa complex. The largest, to the SE, contained a water-hole with trampled sides, sheep burials and two sets of wool shears.

In the C5th the farmhouse was systematically demolished, the stone removed and the cellar infilled. The upper fill of several of the villa ditches contained Saxon material; a sherd of a faceted, carinated vessel occurred well down in one of them. The latest Romano-British paddock ditch at the SE of the complex contained a wicker (hazel) lined Saxon well. There is evidence for 3 and possibly 4 rectangular Saxon structures, areas defined by fences and 7 sunken huts. Most of the last produced evidence for textile manufacture, including a set of lead loom weights on the floor of one of them.

Two Saxon burials were inserted into the rubble of the villa (one adult male, one female with neonatal infant) and two into the subsidiary Romano-British building (2 adult females, one with neonatal infant). The metalwork with these burials points to a C6th date.

7. Middle Saxon/Medieval: There is no evidence of occupation from the C7th onwards. This land around Barton Court Farm may have been part of the demesne of Abingdon Abbey from the earliest period of the Abbey's existence, it certainly was by 1086.
8. Post-Medieval: The first enclosure ditches on the site, incorporating parcels of ridge and furrow date to about the time of the Dissolution of Abingdon Abbey.

BERINSFIELD, Mount Farm - George Lambrick

Excavations have begun on a moderately extensive cropmark site (SU 583968) near Dorchester in advance of gravel extraction. It is intended to conduct a thorough overall excavation to add to the work conducted by Dr. J.N.L. Myres in the 1930s (*Oxoniensia* 1937). The excavation has been financed by the Amey Roadstone Corporation, The Manpower Services Commission and DoE.

One possible neolithic pit has been discovered, but the main periods represented are a Bronze Age or Beaker ring-ditch, and an Iron Age to Romano-British rural settlement, which from initial work (confirming the 1930s results) shows a marked degree of continuity in the layout of paddocks etc. This is in contrast to some other sites such as Ashville (Abingdon). It is hoped to recover another good sequence of Iron Age pottery, and a sampling system is under way to record the distribution around the site of three important types of domestic refuse, pottery, animal bone and charred plant remains. The site

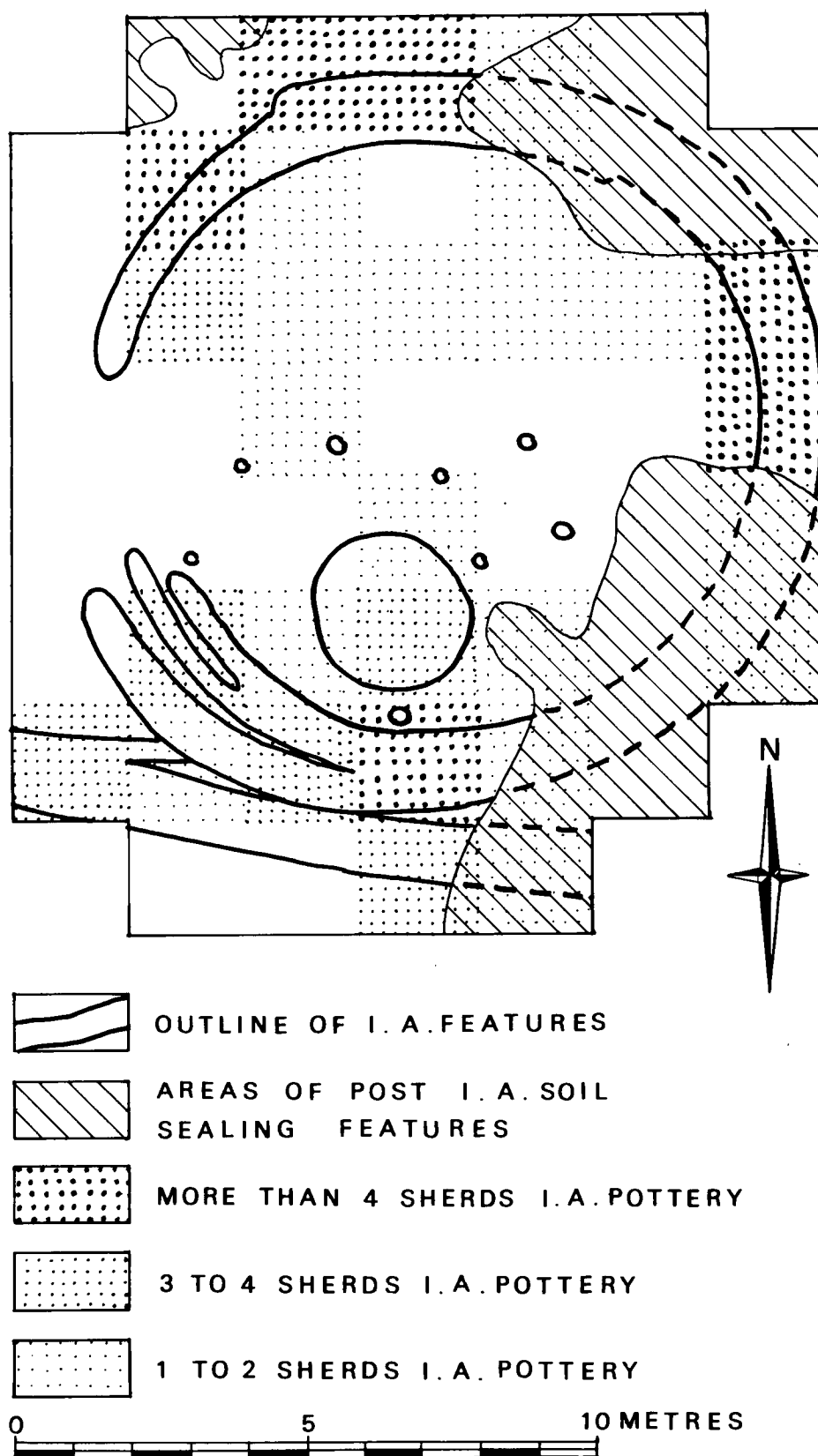


Figure 32

BERINSFIELD, MOUNT FARM

The distribution (per 2m. square) of Iron Age pottery in the modern plough soil over an Iron Age house site.

is being used to try out various sampling methods in order to try to improve the efficiency of retrieving information on gravel sites, and also to record the quantity and distribution of finds within the topsoil. For example a marked correlation between the occurrence of pottery in the topsoil and the position of an Iron Age penannular gully beneath has been shown (Fig. 32). Apart from this house site, an Iron Age occupation layer possibly the position of another house has survived sealing the Bronze Age ring ditch. The stripping of this area by hand has enabled this to be excavated fully and has also shown the varying destructiveness of ridge-and-furrow and of modern ploughing.

In a separate area of the site salvage work has located a large Saxon pit and a timber-lined well constructed of horizontally laid planks bent round to form a circle and pinned at the overlapping joint. Very vigorous stripping of much of the site by contractors has clearly led to the loss of many shallow features, and the rate of loss from this method as against careful JCB work or hand stripping is being assessed.

CHALGROVE, Hardings Field, Moated Site - Richard Chambers (PRN 4486; SU 63509682)

Following the discovery of this moated site from the air in 1976 and the mapping of the earthworks followed by some brief trial trenching in the late autumn, the County Council was able to defer earthmoving on the site long enough for further excavations to take place in the summer of 1977.

Initially work was concentrated on enlarging the existing trial trench (Fig. 33 Tr.I.) both to provide firm dating evidence and to provide an understanding of the complex stratigraphy in the section. Labour and machinery was provided entirely by local people. The low platforms through which Tr. I. cut was shown to cover the remains of a substantial building. This building must be one of the three medieval manor-houses of Chalgrove but as yet it has not been possible to show which manor this site represents.

The building shown in outline in Tr. I belongs to the 1st half of the C14th. Its rubble walls were made of mortared, coursed limestone approximately 1m. thick, footed on clay bonded foundations 1m. deep and more in places. There have been several internal rearrangements and external additions to this house although these are not indicated on the plan. Although only earth floors have been uncovered so far, quantities of medieval floor tile have been found in surface rubble on the N side of this trench. Metal work, lime washed wall plaster, some still in situ, and fragments of painted window-glass have also been recovered. So far, the earliest kitchen to this house appears to have been a separate building at the E end of Tr. I, but in the C15th the kitchen appears to have been re-arranged as a timber building butted up against the E wall of the house. At this time the kitchen was equipped with a 2m. sq. pitched red clay roof tile open hearth and a pre-existing oven was rebuilt, the oven floor being raised some 15cm. Beneath this great house-complex lie clay floors to an earlier building as yet not clearly defined or dated.

Later in the summer of 1977 contractors stripped the topsoil and filled in the moats although the Oxfordshire County Council Agricultural and Historical Education Department has kindly agreed to allow the total excavation of the building either side of Tr. I in 1978. However topsoil stripping allowed the recovery of a partial plan of the outbuildings in the S half of the island. These buildings comprised a large aisled barn (A) built on cill walls. The cobble floor of this barn had been laid directly onto clean, apparently undisturbed subsoil and the barn was probably one of the first, and the longest surviving structure on the site.

Cill walls to a further, long, narrow out-building (B) also survived, with some pitched limestone paving on the N side.

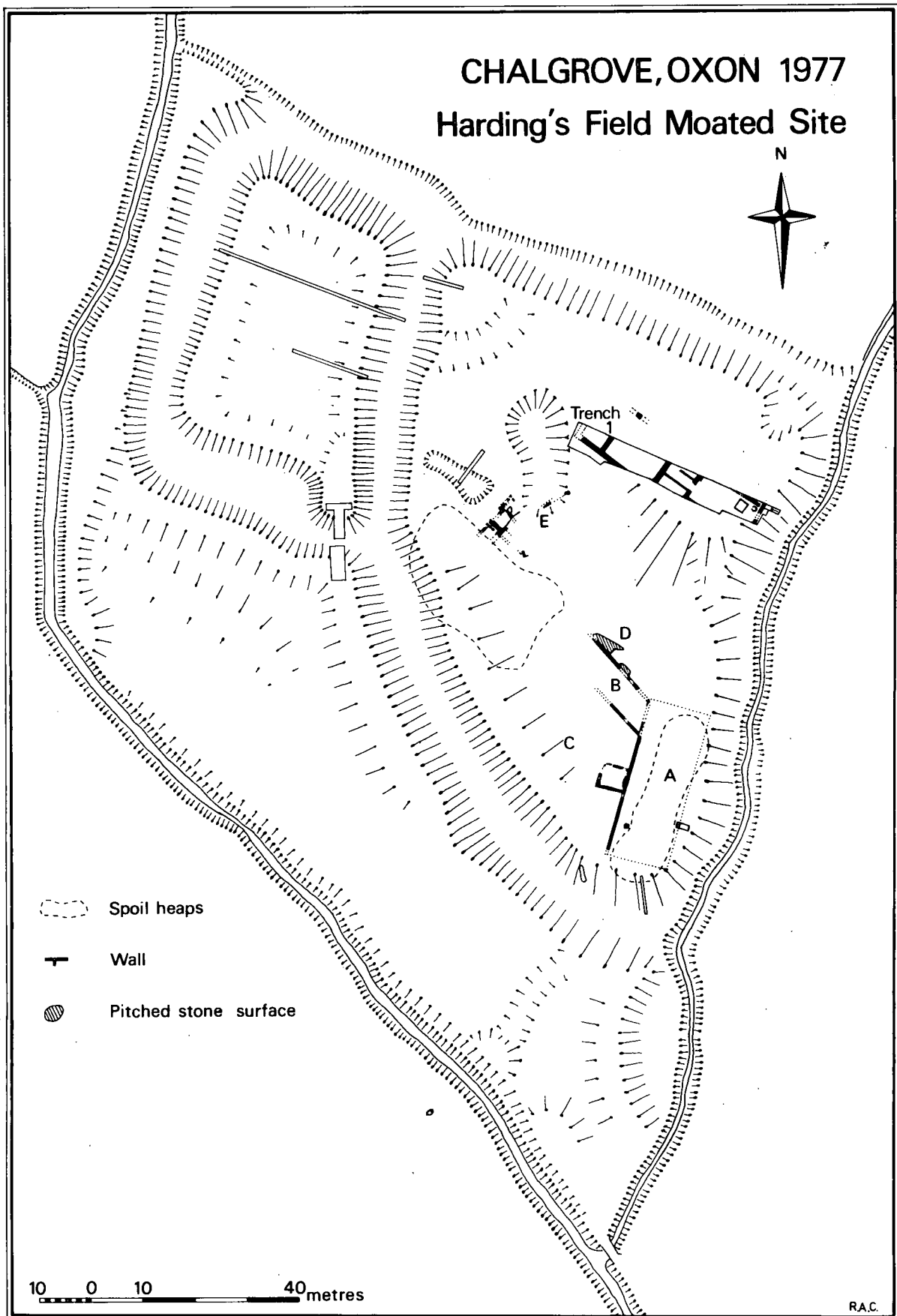


Figure 33

Two yard areas heavily made up with flint and building debris appear to have developed at C & D.

A further building complex, E, is mainly beneath a spoil heap.

All traces of any light timber buildings or buildings not founded on cill walls have been eradicated by the soil stripping machinery.

Red clay roof-tile is present over the whole of the site suggesting that all of the buildings were tile roofed with the exception of a few limestone peg tiles. In Tr. I. tiles were found in C14th levels.

HARDWICK with Yelford, Mingie's Ditch - Mark Robinson and Tim Allen

An eight week excavation was carried out with the Oxford University Archaeological Society on an Iron Age settlement at Mingie's Ditch (SP 391059) on the floodplain between the two courses of the River Windrush. The excavation was carried out in advance of gravel extraction.

The site (Fig.34), as shown on aerial photographs, consists of a circular double-ditched enclosure with an entrance to the SE and two sides of a rectangular compound attached to its S side. It straddles two fields, of which only the S is ever known to have been ploughed. Distinct hollows follow the lines of the enclosure ditches in the N field and traces of the ditches can just be detected on the surface in the other field.

Following trial excavations in April 1977, the entrance way and interior of the inner enclosure in the S field and a strip from the centre of the enclosure to outside the outer ditch in the N field were excavated between the end of June and mid August. As a control, one quarter of the area in the N field was excavated entirely by hand; a machine was used to remove the topsoil from the rest of the site.

Preservation of remains on the site proved to be extremely good. As a result of a thin covering of alluvium and little ploughing, occupation spreads, a road surface and gravel banks to the ditches survived. The proximity of the water table to the surface caused several wooden structural posts to survive and peat was present in the ditches.

In the interior of the inner enclosure four definite and two possible huts were found. Hut No.1 was an oval structure of small posts with two large posts at its SE facing doorway. It was surrounded by a v-shaped drainage gully with gaps for the doorway and a possible small back entrance opposite. The hut had a gravel floor surviving in places and a hearth offset from the centre.

Hut No.2 seems to have been building of similar shape, but with no surrounding gully. A depth of up to 20cm. of occupation material was present in this area. The bottom of one of the hut's oak doorposts was preserved in its post hole. The hut had a large central hearth with an ash pit to one side. The hearth had been replaced, suggesting a long period of life for this hut. Hut No.4 had a gully surrounding it but its shape is unclear.

Hut No.3 was a circular structure surrounded by lengths of gully of varying size and depth. It was built of a number of large posts with a wattle wall. The wall first showed up as a continuous line no more than 5cm. wide surrounding the post holes which, on excavation, resolved itself into a series of stake holes. The line possibly represented the lowest of the horizontal wattles around the stake uprights. The entrance of the hut was again to the SE and cobbling had been laid just outside it. At some point a central post seems to have been replaced by a stone hearth. Perhaps the two large internal post-holes represent the new supports for the centre of the roof.

HARDWICK with YELFORD
MINGE'S DITCH 1977

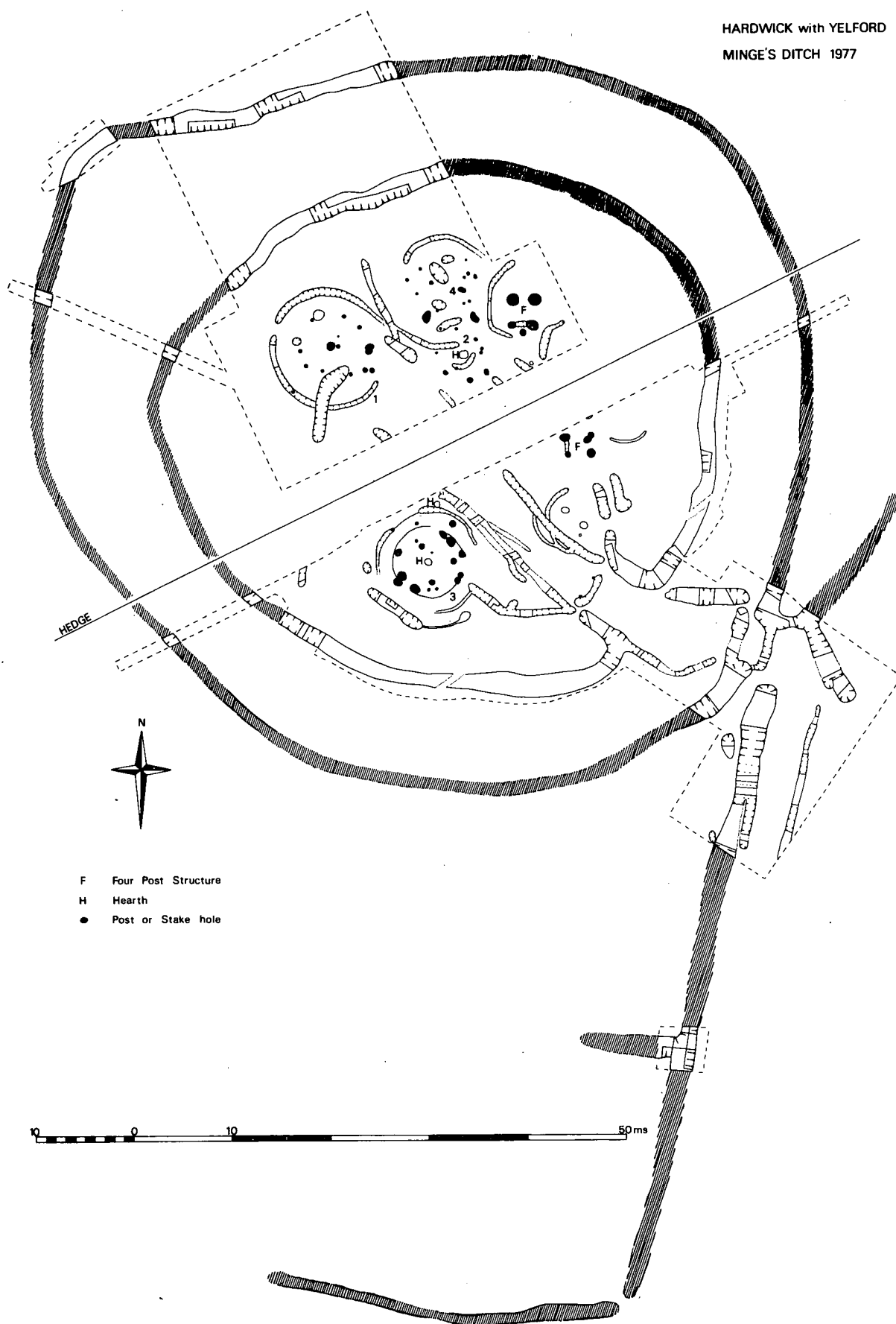


Figure 34

Two 4-post structures were found in the E half of the site. Both had pits for massive posts and one was enclosed by lengths of gully possibly due to the proximity of hut No.3.

Also present within the inner enclosure were a number of "bath shaped features" of uncertain use. There were no archaeological features in the area between the inner and outer ditches apart from the gravel banks around the ditches. Perhaps this space was used for keeping animals in overnight.

The SE entrance to the enclosure seems originally to have consisted of a break in the ditches, with the terminals of the inner ditch inturned. Two post holes near the terminals of the inner ditch may have been for a gateway. Running from the outer entrance were two "antennae ditches" about 17m. long. The rectangular compound to the S was a later addition which replaced the "antennae ditches" and a trackway ran along the outside of this compound. The trackway turned to enter the enclosure, and its flanking ditches continuing to the centre of the enclosure. A N entrance to the enclosure was created by filling in the enclosure ditches with gravel causeways. In the final phase of the site a metalled surface was put on the trackway covering the roadside ditches in some places and a gravel causeway across the compound ditch linked the compound and the roadway.

Running across the entrance through the outer enclosure ditch were two blocking ditches and the inner entrance had been blocked by a single ditch. After a period of slow silting these ditches had been deliberately filled and the metalled road surface ran over the top of them. The site can perhaps be seen as a pastoral summer encampment on the floodplain and these blocking ditches represent periods when the site was unoccupied. So far there is molluscan evidence that the site suffered flooding before the enclosure was constructed and after it was abandoned, but there is no evidence yet as to whether it was inundated during the period of use. The enclosure ditches were only about a metre deep and the gravel from them had been upcast on both sides so the site does not seem to have had a defensive function.

Examination of a peat sample from one of the ditches for seeds and insects has shown that grassland and mixed scrub were present. The woody species included field maple (Acer campestre) which normally only occurs in long established woodland or scrub. Seeds were also found from purging buckthorn (Rhamus catharticus) guelder rose (Viburnum opulus) hazel (Corylus avellana) blackthorn (Prunus spinosa), elder (Sambucus nigra) and hawthorn (Crataegus sp).

There are few seeds of grassland plants but the beetles include many specimens of Phyllopertha horticola, which has larvae that live on roots in grassland, and many dung beetles of the genus Aphodius. Perhaps the site was in an area of grassland in a woodland clearing. The finding of two beaver's teeth in the ditches adds to the impression that the site was in a wet and wooded area.

A pilot study by Bob Wilson of more controlled sampling was undertaken to ascertain the distribution of bones over the whole site to compare recovery with normally collected bone samples. For various reasons it was not possible to intensively sieve sample the site but the results show that bone densities, while variable, are concentrated in the central occupation area and to some extent around the main trackway entrance to the enclosure.

In 1978 it is hoped to finish the excavation of the interior of the inner enclosure and investigate the compound to the S.

KIDLINGTON, Moat Cottage - Richard Chambers

At Moat Cottage, Kidlington (PRN 9219; centred on SP 488137) trial excavations by the local historical society under the direction of R.A. Chambers

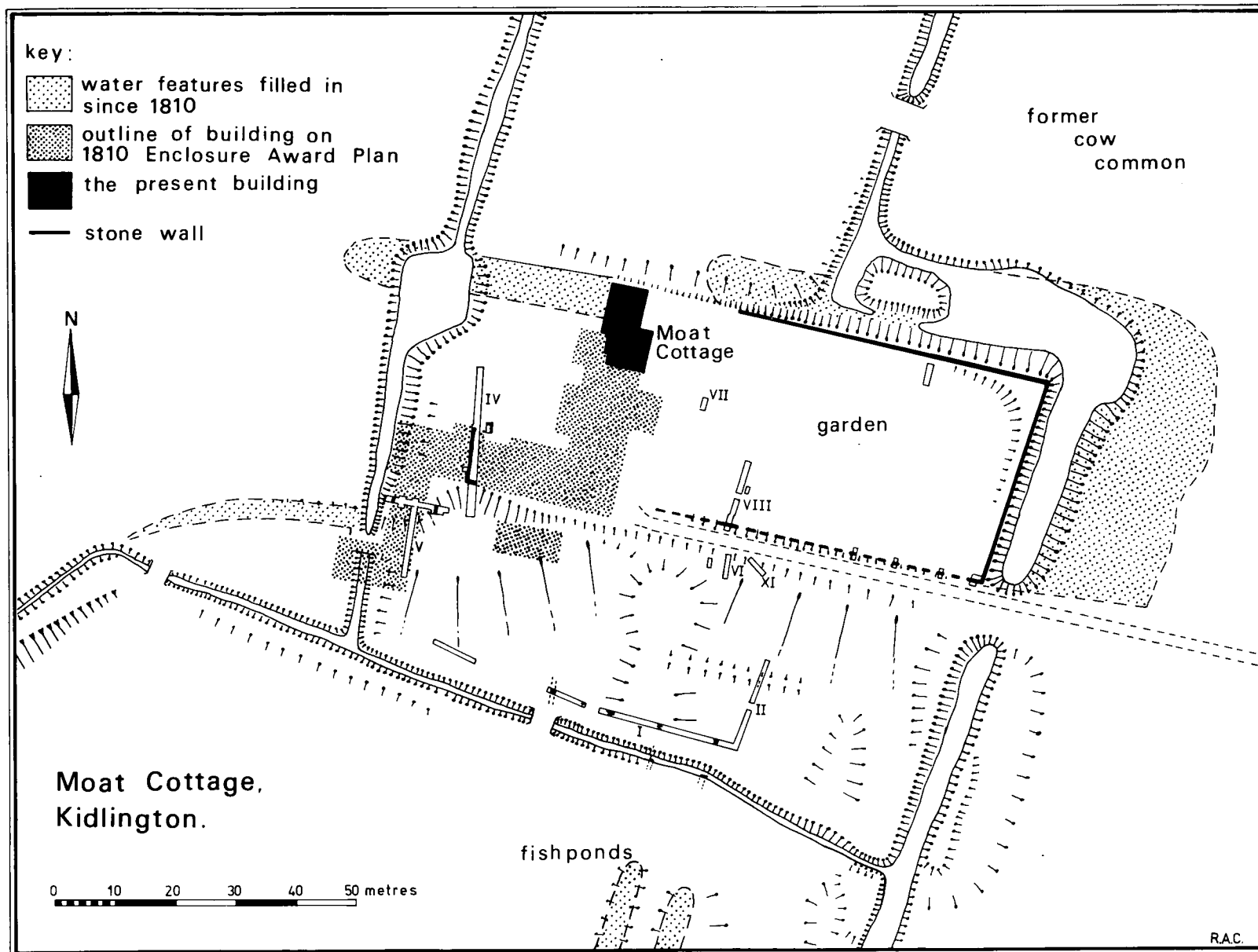


Figure 35

have shed more information on the earlier occupation of this moated site. (Moated Sites Research Group Report no.3 (1976), 13-14). The site was described in last year's report, but a more detailed account is given here (CBA 9 Newsletter No.7 Fig. 10, p.50 and pp 69-70). Nineteen trenches were put down (Fig. 35), of which two located walls of the former house in the position shown on the 1810 Enclosure Award map. There was no evidence that the main body of the house was any earlier than the post-medieval period. Water in the W arm of the moat was shown to have come up to the W wall of the house itself in former times (Tr.V).

In the S half of the central enclosure, undated post pits, rubble wall footings (Tr.I) and an undulating post-medieval cobbled surface was revealed (Tr.II). Immediately S of this the ditch accompanying the C19th hedged field-boundary was found to have sectioned a stone revetted pond at the head of the two parallel fishponds.

Trenches along the N edge of the present drive to Moat Cottage showed that the post-medieval stone wall bounding the N and E sides of the garden originally extended along the S side of this garden as well.

Tr.VII revealed a central gravel path leading from the house down the garden to a large pond apparently an C18th encroachment onto the adjacent common.

The present drive and the garden wall were shown to overlie a range of earlier stone buildings. Within the garden (Tr.VIII) a building once floored with flagstones and associated with later medieval pottery was uncovered 1m. below the present ground surface. Trench VI revealed another substantial stone wall footing and Tr.XI uncovered a portion of pitched stone pavement butting against a kerb.

The results from this trial trenching do not preclude the existence of even earlier medieval occupation on this site as the documentary record suggests. However, all medieval buildings within the present central enclosure had been demolished and sealed by up to 1m. of soil sometime in the post medieval period, probably the mid C18th, to raise the ground level in this low lying area E and S of the great house of which Moat Cottage is now all that remains. It is clear that the C19th hedged-and-ditched S boundary to the present central enclosure is not a reflection of any earlier boundary at this point, and further that the trial excavations have shown that the present pattern of enclosure and land use bear little relationship to the medieval layout.

OTHER SITES RECORDED DURING 1977

Unless otherwise stated these sites were recorded by Richard Chambers.

ABINGDON, Spring Road, The Vineyard and West St. Helen's Street

Bob Wilson recorded part of the corner of a previously unknown cemetery which is probably of medieval date in Spring Road (SU 489975) and of a large site in The Vineyard (SU 499974). At the latter salvage work by the Abingdon Archaeological Society uncovered a late medieval kiln, a nearly complete early Romano-British flagon, as well as a skeleton which is believed to be of Iron Age or Romano-British period.

An excavation was carried out with the Abingdon Society at a former factory site in West St. Helen's Street (SU 496966) in order to obtain some idea of how this land was related to the Roman settlement, the development of

St. Helen's Church and the adjacent almshouses. A 10 x 3½m. trench was dug next to the cemetery, on its completion a larger excavation was attempted. However concrete and brick levels finally thwarted digging.

The site was shown to have a considerable build up of 1.5m. of post-medieval debris over 0.5m. of medieval and prior accumulation of soil. A scatter of Romano-British pot lay over river alluvium and not first terrace gravel. All definite features were post-medieval although a C16th ditch may have been redug from medieval times. From the early C17th buildings and gardens occupied the site. In the C19th and C20th the property was possibly enlarged, and certainly reorganised several times to the establishment of massive foundations, a fire place and stokehole and a complex of drains of the clothing factory.

ABINGDON, Wilsham Road

A small excavation was carried out on the site of two circular cropmarks which will be affected by proposed housing developments (PRN 4536 and 8471; SU 49459585). Although no dating evidence was recovered the ditches are thought to belong to two round barrows. The excavation was treated as a training excavation and students came from Didcot, Thame and Lewknor.

BICESTER, Kings End Farm

An extensive Romano-British settlement has been located 1-5km. W of Bicester during the construction of part of the Kings End Farm housing estate (PRN 11,204; Centred on SP 573227). Dated features have already shown that a settlement existed here throughout the Romano-British period. Apart from pits and ditches cutting into the underlying limestone the remains of a stone cill wall and a scatter of probably later Romano-British period inhumations, one accompanied by hobnails, have been recorded. The full extent of this site is not yet known. The archaeological recording is being undertaken by Peter Biebrach and other local volunteers.

BICESTER, 37-39 and 49-57 Sheep Street

The demolition of buildings nos. 37-39 and 49-57 Sheep Street (SP 584225) allowed mechanical trial trenching in an area of the town known to have been occupied during the medieval period. On both sides little stratification remained beneath the post-medieval buildings that had fronted on to Sheep Street. The natural limestone bedrock, cut by three small undated pits, lay close to the surface. To the rear of these buildings lay deeper, post medieval garden soils. No recognisable medieval material was found.

CHALGROVE

Cropmarks from rectangular enclosures (PRN 4490 SU 629970) and pottery from features encountered (PRN 11133) whilst enlarging part of a moat (PRN 1115) for a new trout pond, belong to a newly discovered Romano-British settlement occupying several acres at the W end of Chalgrove village (PRN 4490 and 1133; SU 629970).

A large fragment of handmade Saxon pottery and Romano-British ware have been found on recently disturbed ground just S of the parish church (PRN's 11,143, 11,144). This material comes from an area in which until 1976 Romano-British settlement was unknown. However, it is now obvious that from the above and the results of the Southern Feeder Gas pipeline in 1976 that this area was as settled in the Romano-British period as elsewhere in the Upper Thames Valley.

CHALGROVE

Four sides of a moat are shown on the 1882 estate map (Magdalen College) and 1881 Ordnance Survey map (PRN 1115 SU 63009702), this moat is open on the fifth side to Manor Farm (C15th) and its walled side garden. All but one arm of this moat has now been filled in with the remaining arm enlarged for a trout pond. Silts from dredging this arm of the moat were examined but no dating material was found.

DIDCOT

Prior to the redevelopment of the Blagrove Caravan Site, three trial trenches were excavated with assistance from the Didcot Society to test the extent of the Romano-British settlement discovered 100m. to the W (PRN 8035; SU 52159051). Two trenches showed gross C20th disturbance but the third provided a few stratified pottery sherds indicating that the Romano-British settlement covers a greater area than was previously thought.

FARINGDON, 4 Market Place

Prior to building work a small area at the rear of No.4 has been excavated revealing little stratification. The site is on Oolitic Limestone and appears to have been cleared down to the bedrock with each successive stage of building. A beam slot and a small quantity of C12th-13th pottery was recovered.

FRINGFORD

C12th and C13th pottery from a buried occupation level was discovered during the excavation of a swimming pool on the NW edge of the present large, sub-rectangular green 0-4km. SW of the Norman parish church (PRN 10,974; SP 60252889).

FULBROOK

Holes for planting commemorative jubilee trees within the graveyard on the W side of the parish church revealed a stone wall foundation (PRN 8053; SP 25811308). This belonged to a deserted area of the medieval village absorbed into the churchyard by a W extension of the burial ground. Substantial earthworks survive to the N of the church.

MARSTON

Foundation work for a new vestry on the N side of the parish church of St. Nicholas provided floor tile, a fragment of glazed medieval ridge-tile and medieval pottery, coming chiefly from a debris layer belonging to the Victorian church restoration (PRN 11,211; SP 52720888). The printed, late medieval floor tile matches several fragments remaining in the chancel. Below the Victorian rubble the subsoil had been disturbed by earlier grave digging.

OXFORD, Paradise Street

Trial excavations supervised by Jane Fox of the Oxford University Archaeological Society in advance of the proposed housing development showed that the occupation of the street frontage may have taken place at the end of the C11th or C12th. The excavations also uncovered the medieval revetment to the Castle Mill Stream.

OXFORD, St. Mary's College, New Inn Hall Street

Excavations by Kevin Flude and John Blair of the Oxford University Archaeological Society identified the SE corner of the chapel of St. Mary's College whose roof survives in Brasenose (CBA Group 9 Newsletter 6 1977, p21).

SALFORD

Topsoil stripping in preparation for laying a farm road to Greathouse Barn and which passes between the parish church and the remains of the Tudor or Jacobean terraced garden earthworks (for plan - CBA Group 9, Newsletter 4 (1974 p.18) has revealed enclosure walls, building debris and a cobbled yard surface accompanied by C16th to C18th pottery and glass (PRN 5760; SP 285281).

SHIPTON UNDER WYCHWOOD

House building is presently destroying house enclosures on the deserted SE edge of the medieval village (PRN 4525; SP 281176). When surveyed in 1973 by R.A. Chambers the site was found to contain ridge-and-furrow running up against toft boundaries. Partial topsoil stripping has so far revealed one building which from the presence of both medieval and post-medieval pottery, may have been deserted more recently than originally thought. It is hoped to locate the positions of buildings in the surrounding tofts as building work progresses.

SUTTON COURTENARY, Peep-o-Day Lane

Michael Parrington conducted salvage excavations in advance of gravel extraction and located a linear ditch which may be a continuation of the Drayton Cursus. A ring ditch which cut the linear ditch was also recorded (PRN 5382, 8468; SU 491947).

SWALCLIFFE

Excavation for a new fishpond in the valley bottom 200m. SE of Lower Lea Farm and approximately 100m. below known Romano-British buildings, the dragline sectioned a timber lined well (PRN 10,986, SP 391383). The well was examined by John Steane and John Rhodes of the Oxfordshire Department of Museum Services and Richard Chambers of the Unit. The well was 2m deep and drew its water from a band of peat; both the well and the peat stopping at the underlying hard natural clay. In plan the well was approximately 0.8m. sq., with a stake driven into the natural clay at each corner to retain sawn plant shuttering. The shuttering had been drilled with a pattern of 20cm. diameter holes to allow a free flow of water. In sectioning the well the dragline had removed almost the entire fill of the well and no dating material remained.

Several sawn and jointed pieces of building timber and a wooden water channel came from the nearby surface of the peat about 1m. below the present surface of the overlying alluvium. A sample of the timber has been submitted by the Museum to AERE Harwell for Carbon 14 dating.

Two fragments of Romano-British pottery came from the alluvium immediately above the peat.

TETSWORTH, Attington

Attington deserted medieval village lies in the Parish of Tetsworth (PRN 855, centred on SP 701018). The village was first mentioned in Domesday and was still surviving in the mid C15th when a terrier shows the consolidation

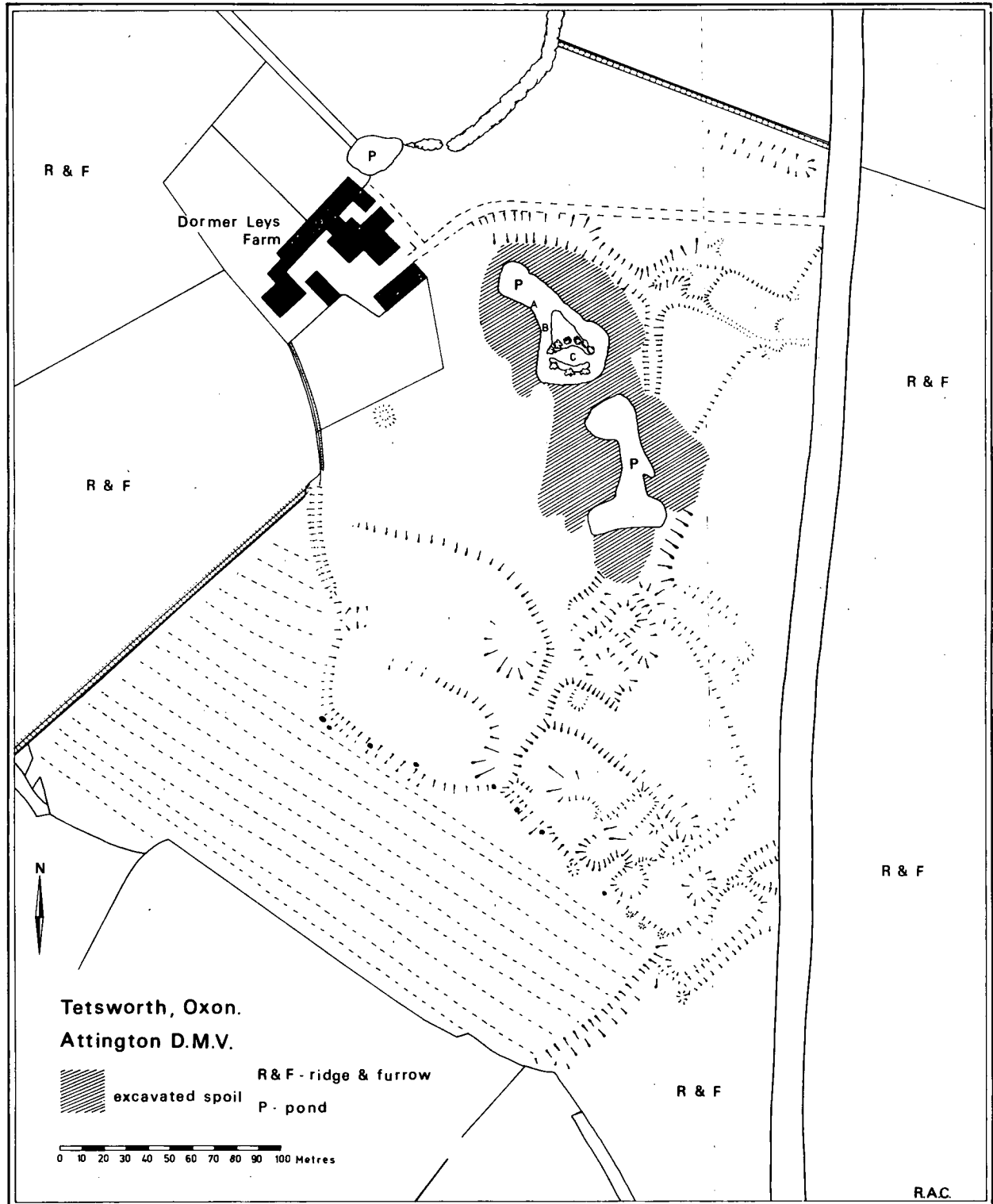


Figure 36

of some arable land (V.C.H. Oxon VII (1962), 188). Attington passed into the ownership of the Dormer family of Thame who were wealthy wool merchants and by 1481 Geoffrey Dormer's "Manor at Attington" had three times as much pasture as arable and by the C16th was commonly called "Attington Pasture", (V.C.H. Oxon VII (1962), 190). Now only one farm survives, no part of which is earlier than the second half of the C17th.

Today the site of the village is clearly indicated by extensive earthworks extending down from the top of the hill to the S of the present farm. Excavations to create modern fishponds along the springline showed building remains at A and B (Fig. 36) where, in modern times the ground had become marshy with a pond at C. A large amount of mainly C15th pottery was retrieved from the spoil.

WALLINGFORD, 5 Market Place

A trench dug by the Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society with R.A. Chambers has provided information on the depth of soil build-up inside the town during the medieval and post-medieval periods (PRN 10,976 and 10,980; SU 60758935). Beneath approximately 1m. of post-medieval soil lay deeper post-medieval pit-bottoms and also several medieval pits inserted into the natural underlying sands and gravels. One of these pits provided a good selection of mid-medieval pottery, animal bone and horn cores.

WESTCOTE BARTON

At the parish church of St. Edward the Confessor reflooring of the nave and S aisle provided an opportunity for limited archaeological investigation of an earlier nave that pre-dated the mid C12th Norman aisle arcade (PRN 10,975; SP 43102565). Beneath the present floor of Victorian date a mortar floor was discovered belonging to a stone built nave of the same width as the present nave but 4m. shorter. The W end of this nave, which could not be precisely dated, was extended at least once by 2-1m. before attaining its present length either before or during the mid C12th Norman rebuilding.

WILCOTE

Ploughing up old pasture in the field known as Butcher's Close has revealed another part of the deserted medieval village (PRN 4946; centred SP 371153). These remains lie in the field to the N of the earthworks recorded and preserved in 1976 (for Plan see CBA Group 9, Newsletter no. 6 (1976) p.38, Fig. 7). Occupation areas were clearly indicated by darker soil, building rubble and quantities of mainly C12th pottery. Maureen Mellor has commented that the majority of the coarse pottery was badly leached but it was similar to Oxford's Early Medieval Ware (fabric AC) and similar pottery has also been recovered at Hanwell and from field walking at Tackley. At Wilcote there were three predominant C12th coarse ware rim types (1) clubbed rim, probably from straight sided cooking pots (2) flaring rims (3) expanding and developed "T" shaped rims. In addition to the C12th wares a few sherds of Oxford Medieval Ware (fabric Y) and an equally small number of Oxford Late Medieval Ware (fabric AM) the latter chiefly with a mottled green glaze. These wares appear to belong to the C13th and C14th.

PUBLICATIONS

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM CBA HEADQUARTERS

Newsletter and Calendar of Excavations: March to September, plus November with summaries in the following January. Available only on annual subscription: UK & Europe £2.50; USA & Canada surface mail \$5.00; USA & Canada air mail \$8.00; Other countries surface mail £2.50; Other countries air mail £3.50.

Archaeological Bibliography for Great Britain and Ireland 1974 £5.00
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British Archaeological Abstracts: issues half-yearly on annual subscription
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Archaeology in Britain 1975-76 (and CBA Annual Report) £2.00
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Bulletin of the CBA Churches Committee (per copy) £0.30

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Romano-British coarse pottery: a student's guide ed Graham Webster (Res Rep 6; 3rd ed, 1976) £1.25

The Iron Age in the Irish Sea province ed Charles Thomas (Res Rep 9 1972) £1.50

The effect of man on the landscape: the Highland Zone ed J.G. Evans, Susan Limbrey and Henry Cleere (Res Rep 11: 1975) £7.50

Aerial reconnaissance for archaeology ed D.R. Wilson (Res Rep 12: 1976) £8.00

The archaeological study of churches ed P.V. Addyman and R.K. Morris (Res Rep 13: 1976) £4.50

The plans and topography of medieval towns in England and Wales ed M.W. Barley (Res Rep 14: 1976) £4.50

Excavations at St. Mary's Church, Deerhurst, 1971-73 by P.A. Rahtz (Res Rep 15: 1976) £4.00

Iron Age sites in central southern England by B.W. Cunliffe (Res Rep 16: 1976) £3.50

The Saxon Shore ed D.E. Johnston (Res Rep 18: 1977) £6.00

Historic churches - a wasting asset by Warwick Rodwell with Kirsty Rodwell (Res Rep 19: 1977) £5.00

How to record graveyards by Jeremy Jones (1976) £0.75

British Archaeology: an introductory booklist (1976) £0.75

Signposts to archaeological publication (1976) £1.50

Archaeology and agriculture by George Lambrick (1977) £1.65

<i>Opportunities for archaeologists</i> (published by RESCUE, 1976)	£1.05
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Note: Basic and Consolidated Subscribers are entitled to purchase many of the above publications at a substantial discount. For details apply to CBA.

PUBLICATION IN THE REGION

BEDFORDSHIRE

Bedfordshire Archaeological Journal is published annually by the Bedfordshire Archaeological Council, price £3.50 plus postage; available from the Hon. Treasurer, 63 Ampthill Road, Maulden, Bedford. Volume 11 appeared in summer 1977; Volume 12, 1977, in February 1978. Volume 13, 1978, the publication of 'Bedford Excavations, 1965-1977' is in the press and due out in November 1978. Editor: David H. Kennett, 497 Hitchin Road, Stopsley, Luton, Bedfordshire LU2 7TT (telephone 0582-24654)

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Northampton Archaeology 12 (1977) was published in the autumn. Editor: A.E. Brown, Department of Adult Education, The University of Leicester (price to members of Northamptonshire Archaeological Society £3; non-members £7.50)

Wollaston Portrait of a Village by David Hall. This is a detailed village history attempting to put the historical and archaeological evidence in a countrywide perspective. (Price £5.95)

See also under Northampton Development Corporation, p.39 and Bedfordshire p.35.

This section has been under-subscribed - would contributors please give notice of their publications - Editor.

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM OXFORD UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT FOR EXTERNAL STUDIES

CBA Group 9 Newsletters	No. 2	£0.40
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