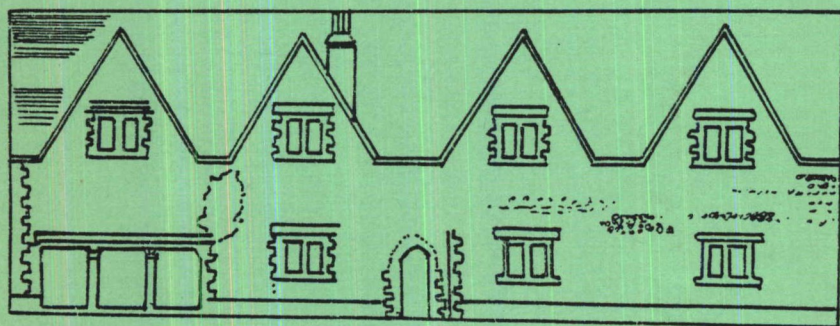
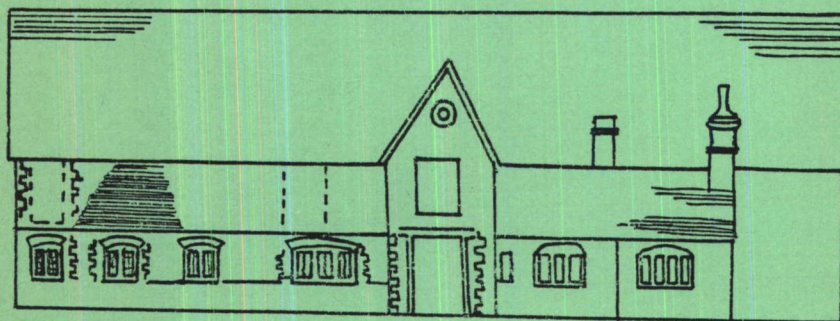


SOUTH MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY

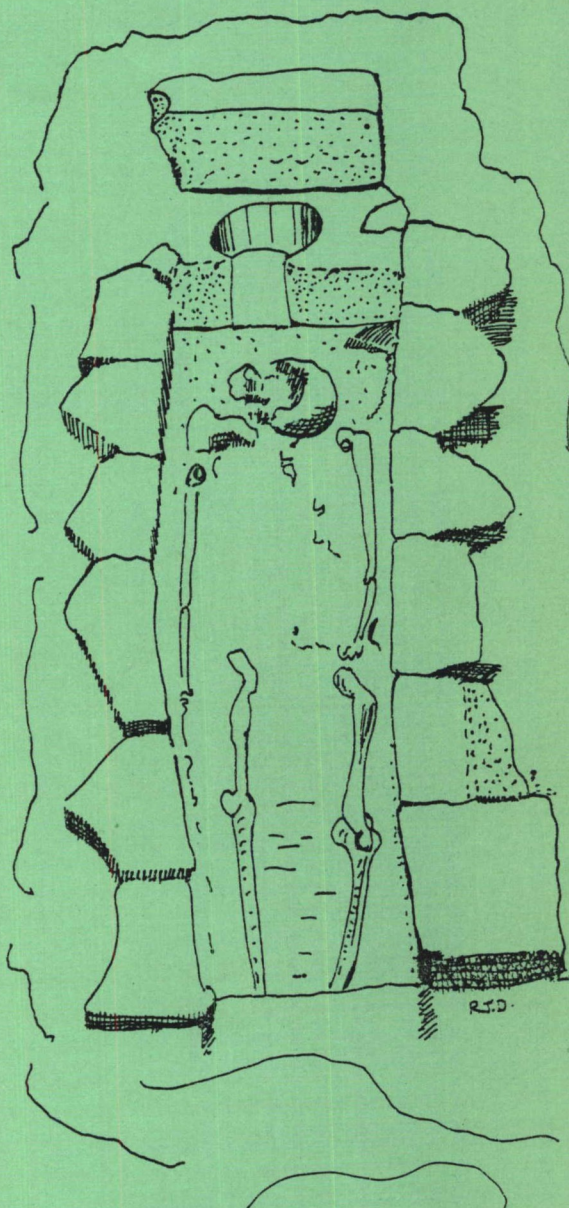
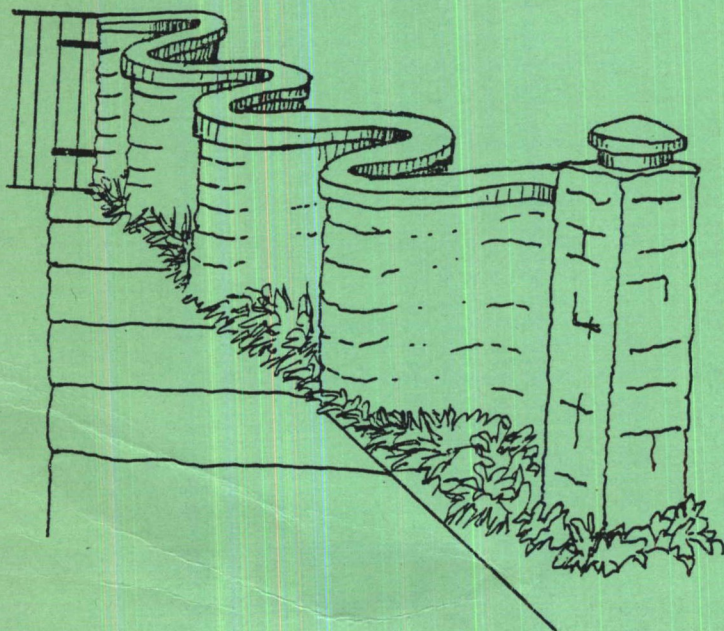
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West face



East face



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9

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SOUTH MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY

The Newsletter of the Council for British Archaeology
Regional Group 9 (Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northampton-
shire, Oxfordshire)

NUMBER 14, 1984

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EDITORIAL

This volume of SOUTH MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY has suffered even more delays than usual. The reason for this is that the Sword of Damocles still hangs over the publication. At the beginning of the year the group simply did not have the funds to produce another issue and it is only because of the generous help of the Council for British Archaeology in giving us a substantial grant that it has appeared at all. This grant will not be available next year, so please do your very best to improve sales and buy more copies.

Obviously your Committee will be seeking other ways of raising funds and will be glad of suggestions. It is possible that some form of advertising could be carried by future issues. We do not envisage having games like most of the daily papers these days, so readers of SOUTH MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY are unlikely to become overnight millionaires.

The arrangement of this volume is much as previous issues, except that the reports from Units have been put with their respective counties instead of being placed separately.

The future of SOUTH MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY is in your hands. Go forth and multiply!

Andrew Pike
October 1984

BEDFORDSHIRE

I Bedford Archaeological Society

TILWICK, A DESERTED HAMLET IN RAVENSDEN, BEDS.

I.P. Freeman for the Bedford Archaeological Society

Tilwick is one of the several scattered hamlets which make up the parish of Ravensden. It is situated at TL 072567 in the northernmost tip of the parish and is bounded by Bolnhurst to the north and Thurleigh to the north west. It lies on boulder clay at 250 feet above OD, the highest point in Ravensden, and is some 5 miles north of Bedford.

The site today consists of a derelict farmhouse, a wood of approximately 10 acres and an area of rough grassland of about 15 acres which includes the earthworks that are all that remains of the hamlet.

The earthworks have been surveyed and the adjoining arable fields walked by the Fieldwork Group of the Bedford Archaeological Society with the assistance of Robert White and Stephen Coleman of Bedfordshire County Council. The group was organised by Ian Freeman who also carried out the documentary research.

The Earthworks

The recorded earthworks (Fig. 1) include a well defined group of low platforms to the west linked to a lower lying area of irregular earthworks to the east by a distinct curving holloway running roughly east-west. Ridge and furrow runs north east from the holloway and can also be detected in the grassy area between the settlement earthworks and the farmhouse.

The Wood

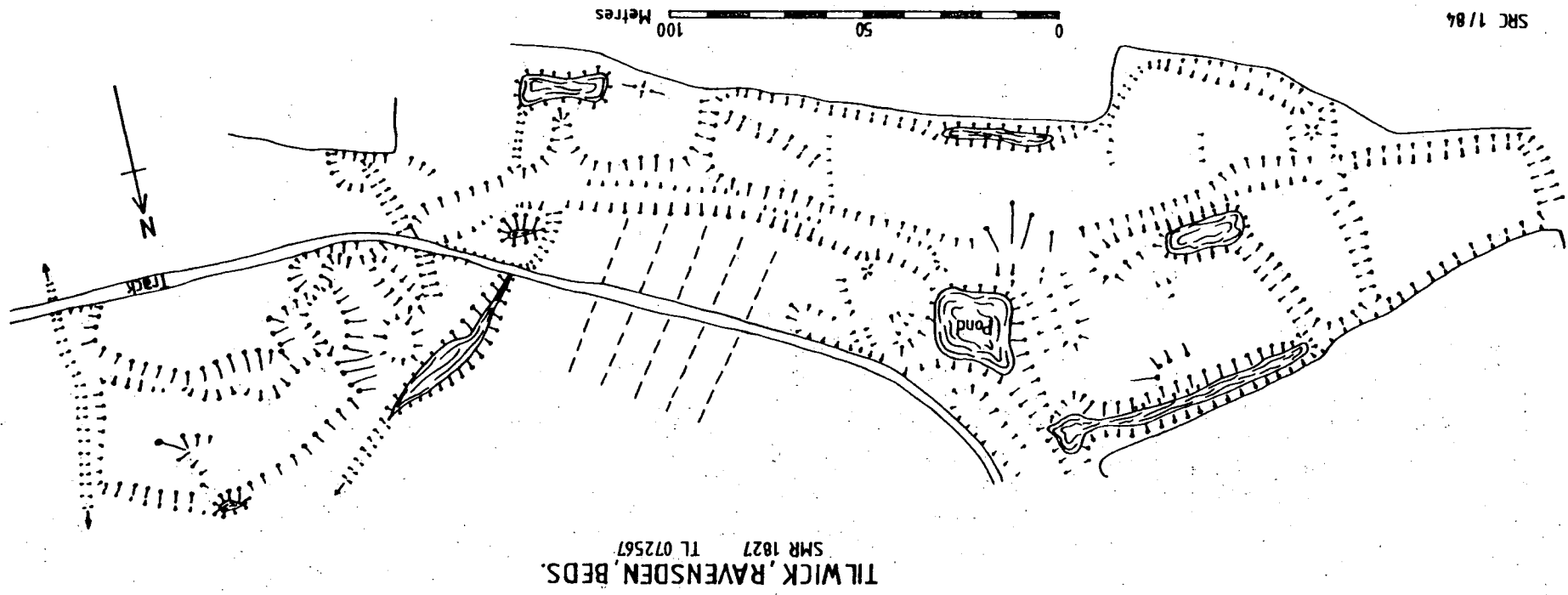
No earthworks were visible in the wood apart from the continuation of the holloway along the eastern side and well-defined ditches along the northern and western sides. The latter ditch at TL 069567 is particularly wide and deep. The trees in the wood show evidence of coppicing.

The Farmhouse

The now derelict farmhouse has been examined by John Bailey of the Beds., Bucks. and Cambs. Historic Buildings Research Group. It has a T-shaped plan and is of 17th century date.

Fieldwalking

The ploughed fields around the site were systematically walked and potsherds collected (Fig. 2). No pottery was found in fields A-C; a moderate scatter was found in fields H and I; field G provided a denser scatter and the two small fields carved out of the wood



SRC 1/84

(E and F) had a moderate scatter with some concentration in F. By far the heaviest concentration was in a small triangular area at the south western tip of D. More pottery was found in this spot adjoining the earthworks than in all the other fields put together.

The pottery was examined by Penny Spencer of Bedford Museum and was found to be predominantly Romano-British (some 1st century but mostly 2nd-4th century coarse wares with one possible small fragment of Samian ware) and Medieval (some 11th century but chiefly 12th-14th century) in date. One small fragment was identified as Saxon. No evidence of Roman building materials (i.e. tiles etc.) was found.

Documentary Background

The earliest specific reference to Tilwick yet found is in 1258 when Robert Picot was paying rent to the Abbot of Warden "for the free tenement he holds of him in Tolewyk". (1)

In 1290, Richard Picot established his claim to Tilwick under Warden as heir to his father, Robert. The property was then described as "a messuage, 60 acres of land and a grove containing 10 acres". The grove can be identified with the present Tilwick Wood as later documents refer to "Tilwick Wood alias Pigots Grove."²

By 1529, Tilwick was leased by Warden to Robert Bulkely of Hants. who in turn leased it to Richard Frankelyn of Bedford. The agreement stipulated that the tenant will keep in repair "al manner of housys now bylded upon the seyd farm . . . and cause one soficient tenant being an honest man to enhabite and dwell upon the sayde farme".³

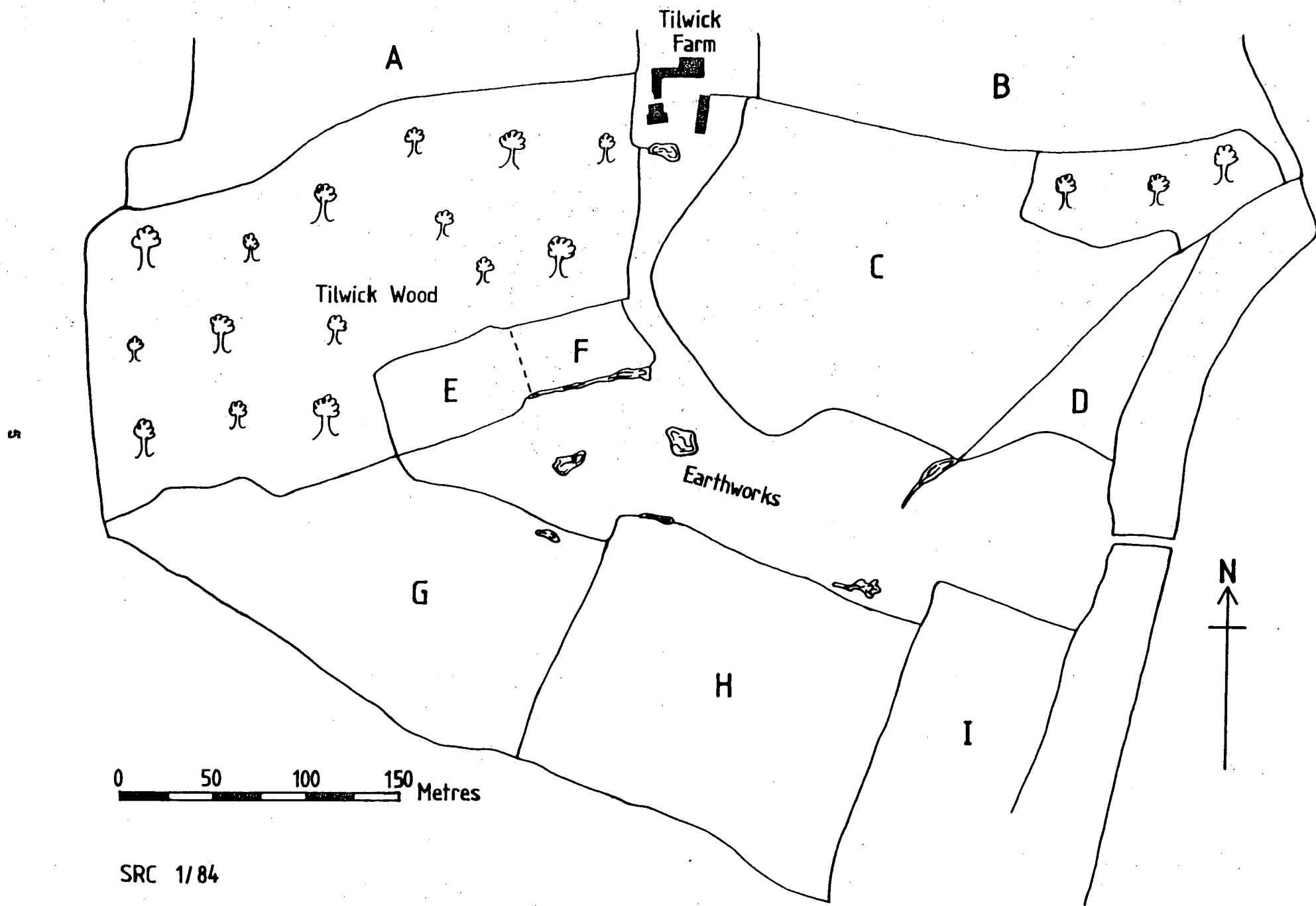
By 1539, after the dissolution of Warden Abbey, Tilwick had been acquired by Bulkely but passed by an exchange agreement to John Gostwicke. Under the agreement Gostwicke covenanted that "Richard Frankelyn shall have and enjoy . . . the sayd lands and tenements in Tulwyck".⁴

A lease of 1576, (Gostwick to Russell) describes the property as "the saide Farme or Messuage called Tylwicke alias Tullwycke Grove barns stables houses orchards gardens lands meadows pastures leasures feedings woods underwoods hedgerows commons . . ."⁵

In 1589, Gostwicke agreed to sell to George Franklyn "Tylwick Farm, Ravensden, . . . lying in the hamlet called Tylwick".⁶

In 1632, a grant concerning a neighbouring piece of land mentions "the grounds of . . . Edmund Franklin called Tillwicke grounds"⁷ while the marriage settlement between Edmund Franklin and Elizabeth Chernock in 1634 includes various references to "Tilwick Grounds" with no mention of any buildings thereon.⁸

A house was there in 1694 (lease, Franklin to Williamson)⁹, and this and its associated fields continued as part of the Franklin estate until that was broken up in 1948¹⁰ and Tilwick sold to the present owners. The house was finally abandoned as a dwelling in the 1960's.¹¹



SRC 1/84

Discussion

The ridge and furrow abutting on the holloway indicates a limit on the occupied area to the north east. According to Mr Holt, the present farmer, the ridge and furrow can be detected well into the present ploughed field (C) through the varying resistance of the earth to the plough. The wood, which can be dated at least to the 13th century (op cit) must have restricted the extent of the settlement to the north whilst on the southern side the relatively thin scatter of potsherds suggests that habitation could not have extended far in that direction. It seems probable that the earthworks as recorded represent the full extent of the hamlet, at least in its later states.

The pottery indicates that the site may have been more or less continuously occupied from at least early Roman times. The fact that only one small piece of Saxon pottery has been found is not surprising in view of the fragmentary nature of such ware.

In view of the absence of much pottery later than the 14th century, it is tempting to deduce that a classic 14th century depopulation took place. However, there is no evidence of this in the documentary record, which indicates that some occupation continued during the 16th century and until recent times. Shrinkage, however, must have occurred and this may have been related to a possible change of land use suggested in the documents by the end of the 16th century. Earlier documents indicate a mixed economy of pasture and arable but the 17th century documents refer only to "grounds", a term used for predominantly pasture land, often formerly arable and in many cases fairly remote from the settlement.¹² Thrupp Grounds in Northants. was described in 1532 as "sometimes was a Town and in tillage and now converted into pasture".¹³

With regard to the surviving farmhouse, this would be too late to have been included among the houses mentioned in 1529, and the first reference to this house is almost certainly in the lease of 1694.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Mr J.H. Pell, the landowner, and Mr A. Holt, the farmer, for permitting the work to take place and to John Bailey and Penny Spencer of Bedford Museum for their contributions.

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II Bedfordshire County Planning Department

1. Staff and Organisation

There were no major changes during 1983, despite all the uncertainties of project-funding and MSC schemes. A new MSC Community Programme scheme was started in April, approved mainly to continue work on Grove Priory and on various post-excavation tasks. The MSC supervisors, Andrew Pinder and Joe Prentice, were carried on to the new scheme; as part of it, Georgie Brine joined as Pottery Assistant.

2. Survey

The progress of the Rapid Parish Survey Programme, covering archaeological sites and the historic landscape, has been reported several times in previous issues. By the end of 1983 all but the last 17 parishes in Bedfordshire had received coverage to a basic standard, but selected areas continue to be dealt with in more depth. Work was done on Barton, Cardington, Chalgrave, Dunstable, Eastcotts, Houghton Regis, Hyde, Luton, Millbrook, Riseley, Stotfold, Sundon and Toddington.

1983 saw the publication of Hockliffe by Stephen Coleman, the first in a new series entitled Bedfordshire Historic Landscape and Archaeology, designed to bring selected parish survey results to a wider audience. This booklet costs £1.50 plus 50p postage and is obtainable from the County Planning Department, County Hall, Bedford MK42 9AP.

John Wood has analysed a written survey of Bletsoe Manor made in the 1620s for the St John family by Evans Mouse. He has been able to produce a reconstructed map of the parish shortly after enclosure in the early 17th century. Many details of the earlier landscape have emerged, including the outline of Bletsoe Park, in the area now covered by RAE Thurleigh.

John Wood has also created a documentary archive for Warden Abbey as part of parish survey research, the whole designed to place this major, but only partly excavated, Cistercian site in its historical and topographical context. The scheduled area has also been extended by DOE to embrace the whole monastic precinct. Occasional fieldwalking by Evelyn Baker is continuing to produce important tile fragments in ploughsoil and some more evidence for the monastic plan was located in service trenches.

Bedfordshire Mills, written by Hugh Howes, was published at the end of 1983. It outlines the early development of milling in the county, the great changes of the Victorian period, and its ultimate decline. This is followed by a description of the miller at work and the way in which mills operated. A chapter is devoted to individual windmills, and a further chapter describes the watermills on the county's various

rivers, the Ouzel, the Flit, the Ivel, the Great Ouse, and the Lea. Finally, a gazetteer lists the sites of 241 local mills. The book costs £3.50 plus 45p postage and is obtainable from the County Planning Department, County Hall, Bedford MK42 9AP.

Settlement earthworks at Edworth were surveyed in June 1983 by Stephen Coleman and John Wood, assisted by Trevor Ball of the Potton History Society, in advance of destruction. Several former roadways, two long-demolished cottages, open-field strips and a moat were represented. An enigmatic mound, measuring 12.5m north-south, 7m east-west, and with an average height of 40cm, was sectioned by Stephen Coleman and Angela Simco. It was clearly post-medieval in date, but no obvious indication of purpose was found. Several timber-framed buildings in the parish have been examined by John Bailey. Fieldwork by David Hall has reconstructed the former open-field system.

The accelerated resurvey of listed buildings, begun in Bedfordshire in October 1982, has continued steadily. North Bedfordshire Borough has now been completed and work proceeds on Mid Bedfordshire District.

3. Sites and Monuments Record

The main development during 1983-84 has been towards computerisation, using a Midas 3HD microcomputer with 20 Megabyte hard disk unit. The software, based upon MDBS (Micro Database System) is being developed by Ian Graham and Jonathan Moffatt of the Institute of Archaeology at London University, as part of a wider research programme.

The first task, completed in March 1983, was to input the information contained in the manual optical coincidence retrieval system. This involved entering each keyword (e.g. parish or period name, descriptive category) followed by the Primary Record Numbers relevant to the keyword, read straight from the optical coincidence cards. This raw data was then reconstructed into database form, allowing retrieval by keyword, or by combinations of keywords.

The new stage, now in process, with the aid of a MSC post, is to input the name and grid reference for each Primary Record Number. Once this is completed, it will then be possible to check the computerised information against the original primary record cards, which will ultimately be superceded by computer printed forms.

The main function of the computerised element of the Sites and Monuments Record as at present envisaged is as an index and retrieval system. The large amount of free text which is incorporated in the existing paper record (built up over the years as a result of archaeological and historic buildings survey programmes) will not be stored electronically. It is however intended to build up short digest texts in computer files, fully referenced, which can be incorporated in catalogue print-outs as required.

4. Excavation

Grove Priory

Work has continued throughout the year on the alien priory of Grove, south of Leighton Buzzard, directed by Evelyn Baker with grant-aid

from DOE and MSC. A new area was opened up to the south of the principal buildings, beyond the roadway running east-west and the boundary bank further east. The building complex is far more extensive than envisaged, with the road dividing two areas of medieval buildings and not forming a limit to the main structures as previously thought. Two substantial buildings and fragmentary remains of others have so far been uncovered, but the total area of building has yet to be ascertained. Together with the cemetery, the excavation has stripped about 4,200 square metres. One well-preserved post-pad building with stone footings shows modifications and the features within it appear to be a sequence of hearths and ovens. This leads to a reinterpretation of the building to the north-west of the royal suite which may have been principally a bakehouse; the recently excavated structure being a free standing kitchen range serving the south part of the site.

The second may have been stabling, and was reduced to half its original size by the 15th century when most of the structures appear to have been levelled and incorporated into an open court or farm-yard. At this time, the stone lined well and well house was dismantled and the well itself backfilled. Residual finds of Saxon pottery may indicate underlying activity.

Further south, the rectangular enclosure attached to the Cocklake stream, and close to the 16th century successor manor, was shown to be drainage trenches postdating the stone and puddled clay dam. This dam showed signs of reinforcement, and probably kept the worst flooding from the stream from affecting the main areas of buildings.

A further piece of enamel work, in the form of a shield shaped horse trapping bearing the royal coat of arms, and probably dating to the 14th century, was found on the roadway to the north of the yard.

St Mary's Church, Bletsoe

The excavation of a French drain around the nave was supervised by Bob Mustoe. The St John Chapel, in the position of a north transept, was confirmed to be a later addition to the 13th century nave. Uneven stonework visible at ground level to the west and south of the nave was shown to relate to irregular primary footings construction. The existing 19th century porch probably had a stone-founded predecessor.

Willington Quarry

A series of sites of probable prehistoric date were discovered by aerial photography. Andrew Pinder examined a double ring ditch having an opening in its outer ditch defined by two butt ends. Its location on a knoll or gravel had resulted in its largely being ploughed away with the loss of evidence for burials. Other features located were late Iron Age and Roman.

Radwell Quarry

Andrew Pinder also briefly examined a single ring-ditch in advance of gravel extraction, but any central burial was found to have been

destroyed, presumably by ploughing during the Roman period.

5. Post-excavation

Post-excavation work has continued on a broad front, making large inroads into a substantial backlog. Three Bedford sites are nearing completion, and work has been done on finds and paper records for Grove Priory, Elstow Abbey, Warden Abbey and Thurleigh Castle.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

I Buckinghamshire County Museum

MISSENDEN ABBEY (SP897010)

Sample rescue excavations by P.A. Yeoman for Buckinghamshire County Museum, were executed in four areas in advance of the proposed redevelopment within the northern area of the grounds of the Adult Education College.

The project was designed to answer specific questions concerning: the position, dimensions and structure of the conventual church, and the siting and nature of associated buildings.

Area I was situated immediately to the north of the existing kitchens, and proved to be within the body of the nave of the Abbey church. Two or possibly three phases of main structural work was found, the earliest dating from the mid-12th century within a few decades of the Abbey's foundation in 1133. The nave appears to have been 18m in length, and it is possible that the chancel was added as a secondary phase. Seven successive floor surfaces and make-up layers were examined, and remains of the original decorated tile pavements found, although none of these were in situ. Five graves had been cut through the floor surfaces, ranging in date from the late 12th century to the 14th century. One of these contained a stone coffin. Other finds relating to the fabric and the building; and to the personal belongings of the monks included: lead glazing strips and painted glass, painted stone and wall plaster, finely carved stone blocks, roof tiles, and various bronze objects and two silver pennies.

Area II contained the remains of monastic agricultural buildings, including a late medieval timber barn, 6 metres wide by 18 metres east-west. This had been cut through an extensive area of earlier flint cobbling. To the east of the barn were found a sequence of chalk and flint wall foundations for a late medieval stone building which was replaced by another probably dating from the 17th century. The former of these may have been the Abbey guest range or servants' quarters.

Area III produced evidence of a large building, sited to the north of the church. The complete dimensions are unknown, and this may have been the infirmary or Abbot's lodgings, or else a mason's workshop.

Area IV was excavated with a JCB to examine part of the east end of the pond. Large amounts of modern infilling were removed, proving that the pond was originally larger and may have been an original, medieval fish-pond.

BRILL, TEMPLE STREET (SP655141)

Rescue excavation of late 15th century ceramic production centre by P.A. Yeoman for Buckinghamshire County Museum and Department of Environment, in advance of housing development.

All that remained of kiln 1 were two opposed stoke-pits and a funnel-shaped, brick-built flue, presumably part of an up-draught pedestal clamp. Associated with this were a group of deep pits, which served as storage or else as sand quarries, and a long trench to the west which may have been a pottery drying feature.

The trench was sealed by the fragmentary remains of two fired clay bases, 5m x 2m, which may have been clamps for manufacturing the bricks required to build kiln 2. This consisted of a rectangular firing chamber, 4.5m x 3m, which had been built on top of kiln 1 to utilise the earlier flue as a wicket (loading entrance) affording access to the back of the chamber. This wicket was blocked during firing. The lower, surviving part of the kiln consisted of three brick walls of an irregular bond; the east wall, which probably contained three arched flues, had been destroyed by later activity.

The earliest floor consisted of three sections of laid bricks divided by two recesses, which contained the very fragmentary remains of brick piers or spinal walls which may have supported the raised floor formed by groups of triple arches. There was some evidence for a complete rebuilding and raising of the floor. A group of post holes at the east end may represent an adjacent workshop or store.

The design of the structure is clearly that of a roof tile kiln, which very unusually was subsequently used to fire pottery. In fact, there was approximately three times the quantity of pottery wasters to tile wasters; most of the latter were crested ridge tiles. Large numbers of sagger sherds were found, and these had been used to fire small jugs and Cistercian-type cups. The other predominant forms were large jars, pancheons, jugs and bung-hole pitchers.

During the digging of footing trenches, a large pit packed full of 17th-18th century pottery wasters was found some 10 metres south of the earlier kilns. A magnetometer survey, conducted by the DOE Geophysics Laboratory, did not indicate the presence of any other kilns on the site.

MANTLES GREEN, AMERSHAM (SP947977)

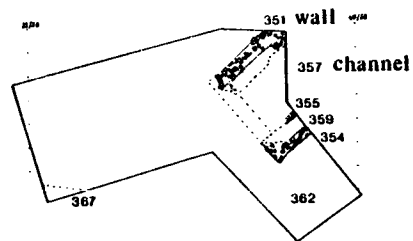
Excavation of Romano-British villa estate site by P.A. Yeoman for Buckinghamshire County Museum and Department of Environment, in advance of road building.

AMERSHAM MANTLES GREEN

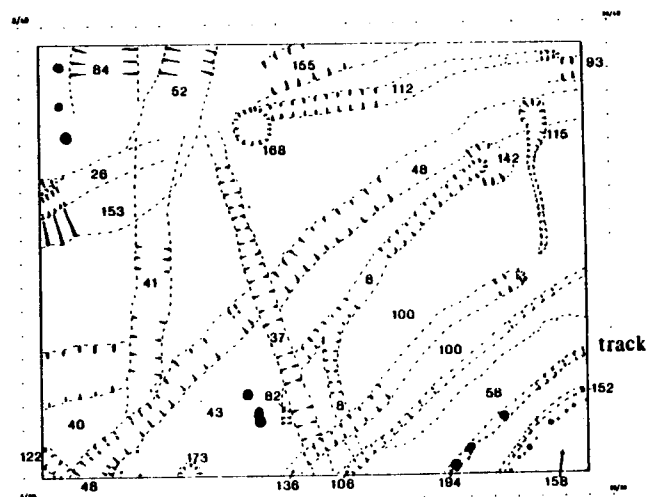
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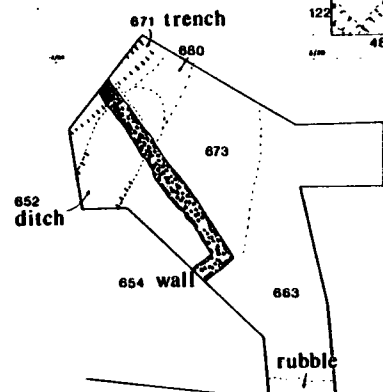
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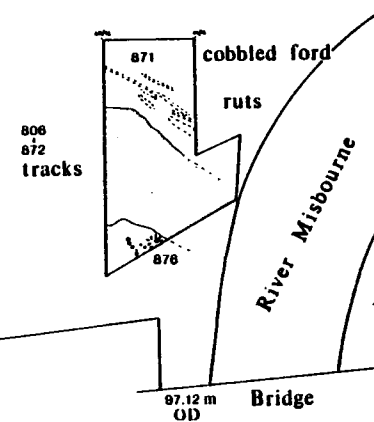
AREA I



AREA VII



AREA II



Two seasons of work in 1983 revealed part of an extensive Romano-British site, a short distance from the probable site of Shardloes Roman villa, a mosaic pavement from which was discovered in the mid 18th century. Occupation appeared to date from the 2nd to the 4th centuries AD. The latest feature was a large courtyard, at least 30 metres square, with buildings on the south and north-east sides. The building to the north-east contained underfloor heating channels, and the walls were built of tile, brick, flint and chalk. The central courtyard was removed to reveal a multiplicity of curving boundary and drainage ditches associated with a metal track complete with wheel-ruts, which sealed an earlier timber building.

Situated some 20 metres west of this was one end of a large building with thick footings of flint nodules. This contained a number of beaten earth and flint floors. The external surfaces consisted of layers of beaten chalk which sealed a very extensive surface comprised of burnt flint, iron smithing slag and charcoal.

A large number of smithing slag 'furnace bottoms' were found, in association with the remains of possible clay hearth linings, and many iron objects including some possible smithing tools. The slag was of good quality, and it is likely that a permanent smithy existed in this area.

A third season will hopefully take place in 1984, to further investigate the industrial area.

II Mr and Mrs Don Miller

BURNHAM ABBEY

Trenches were dug during the installation of a Klargest system at Burnham Abbey and it was hoped evidence of outbuildings might be uncovered.

To the west of the abbey complex little was exposed except the filled-in moat in all the positions expected and a chalk floor, but no wall foundations in the position of a building marked on the 25-inch OS map of 1899.

To the east of the main buildings a trench cut through two medieval walls at right angles to the demolished east wall of the infirmary. The walls were of flint on a base of chalk blocks 4.1 metres apart, with a chalk floor between. It was hoped to trace the outline of the building by probing but the mass of Tudor rubble beneath the surface has so far defeated all efforts. If the walls represent the width of the building the orientation suggests that it could possibly have been a chapel.

The floor of the infirmary was also impacted chalk. In the south-west corner of the site of the infirmary, a gap in the wall footings below present ground level indicated a doorway and beyond were traces of chalk flooring, but except for a short wall stub adjoining the infirmary no walls were exposed, suggesting there was a passage, (protected by a timber structure) to the slype connecting the infirmary with the garth.

When Brakespeare investigated the abbey in 1903 he was restricted

in some areas by farming activities and details of the kitchen were left vague, only an insignificant scrap having survived above ground. The kitchen is believed to have been built to span the moat which, on the north side, lay at an angle of 77° to the abbey buildings. The base of the east wall of the kitchen, now forming the foundation of Victorian farm labourers' cottages conforms to the rectangular plan of the abbey complex but there are the following indications that the north wall was set at the same 77° angle to conform to the alignment of the moat:

- (a) a small patch of medieval wall surviving in the end wall of the cottages is set at this angle
- (b) a Tudor garden wall extending beyond the cottages is at right angles to the surviving patch
- (c) probing in the ground to the west of the cottages indicated a floor with a well defined edge exactly aligned with the surviving patch of wall and at right angles to the Tudor wall. In the floor there were two gaps, one circular (maybe a sluice) and one elongated (possibly where a gully beneath the floor had collapsed. These were central to and followed the line of the moat. The external length of the kitchen was at least 13 metres.

The fact that the reredorter also had to be adjusted to fit over the moat suggests that the moat was dug for a building of some significance which stood on the site before the abbey was founded in 1266. It is ironic that if the E-W alignment of the church had been accurate no modification of the reredorter and kitchen would have been necessary.

MILTON KEYNES DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

ANNUAL REPORT ON ARCHAEOLOGY 1983: D.C. Mynard

This is the last report on archaeology in Milton Keynes presented by Milton Keynes Development Corporation. From April 1, 1984, the Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit is being administered by the Buckinghamshire County Council on an agency basis.

Milton Keynes Development Corporation has devoted considerable resources to archaeology since they first established the Unit in 1971 and will continue to be the sole paymaster for the five-year duration of the agency.

Our excavation programme in 1983 concentrated on the Bancroft villa; the discovery of its mausoleum emphasizes that it is not a run-of-the-mill building, but had, at least toward the end of its life, some rich or distinguished owner.

1983 also saw the opening of the Unit's exhibition - A Dig into a New City's Past - a major exhibition of its work, in the gallery attached to the City Centre Library. Those who visited the exhibition were impressed with the volume and quality of information built up about an area they had previously thought of as being purely modern. In fact, 6,000 people were interested enough to visit the exhibition, the largest number of visitors the gallery has ever had for any single exhibition. Parties, ranging in size from 17 to 170 children came from 25 local schools and learned a lot about the past of their city, and enjoyed the experience as well. An essay competition for schools also attracted a large entry. The exhibition has been placed on loan with Bradwell Abbey Field Centre Trust and can now be seen in the Cruck Barn at Bradwell Abbey Field Centre.

Liaison with local schools continues and our mobile exhibition, illustrating the 1983 excavations, is fully booked. This summer a large number of local schools also visited the villa site at Bancroft to see archaeology in action. We look forward to good relations with schools continuing.

But perhaps most of our effort during 1983 was directed toward publication. The monograph on Roman excavations 1971-82 is now complete; other volumes will follow it into print.

Other articles by or about the Unit's work published in 1983 were: R. Loveday and M.R. Petchey: Oblong ditches: a discussion and some new evidence, Aerial Archaeol. 8, 1982, 17-24 (contains a discussion of the Caldecotte oblong ditch).

Anon: Milton Keynes, Current Archaeol. No. 90, (vol.8 no.7) January 1984, 198-208.

A report on Martin Petchey's excavation of Caldecotte Mill will appear in Post-Medieval Archaeology during 1984, and a short guide to the medieval landscape of Milton Keynes by Dennis Mynard and Bob Croft will be published by the Unit in the same year.

The publication of the Milton Keynes Heritage Map and wall poster coincided with the 1983 archaeology exhibition. The map at 1:25,000 scale was edited by Bob Croft and Brian Giggins; the cartography was by Dave Ramm of L. Fryer and Co. The map lists over 400 sites and buildings of archaeological and historical interest. Copies are available flat or folded.

BANCROFT VILLA

R. J. Zeepvat

This site, first identified as a Roman villa in 1971, was the subject of limited excavation conducted by the Unit between 1973 and 1978 (see CBA 9 Newsletter 9, 1979, for a summary of this work). As a result of these excavations, it was possible to define the limits of the site, the positions of major structures, and to gain some idea of its history.

As the Villa falls within the linear park area which follows the line of Bradwell Brook, it has been decided that the site should form a major feature within the park, suitably laid out for public display. With this in mind, an intensive programme of excavation was initiated in 1983 to examine the site as fully as possible. The first season of excavation, described below, concentrated on the house and its immediate surroundings; future seasons will allow excavation of the outbuildings and garden areas.

The 1983 season commenced in May with the stripping of an area some 55 metres square, adjacent to the redway crossing Bancroft grid square, centred on the site of the house identified in previous excavations. Much of the area opened had been exposed before, though the eastern edge of the site broke new ground in front of the house. This task was carried out by a large 360° tracked excavator and a fleet of dumpers (of somewhat variable quality!) final 'tidying up' being undertaken with a Massey Ferguson MF50B and two smaller dumpers. The final obstacle to excavation, the 240 odd paving slabs put down in 1978 to protect the mosaic pavements, were laboriously removed by hand. About 75% had broken, due to the weight of soil covering and the bulldozer used for backfilling.

Excavations continued to mid-December, with a work-force averaging about 10. During this period two notable events took place on site. The first of these was an Open Day, held at the end of July, which attracted about 2,000 visitors to the villa and mausoleum excavations. The second was the removal of the mosaic pavements, originally scheduled to take place in August, but unfortunately delayed to October/November. This task was undertaken by specialists from Carter Contracting Limited, London, in far from ideal conditions using temporary shelters constructed over each mosaic.

Turning to the excavations themselves, 1983 has been perhaps the most productive season at Bancroft in terms of hard archaeological evidence relating to the development of the site. Occupation can now be seen to fall into five distinct phases, covering the whole of the Roman period, involving not one but two houses on the same location, and linked to an adjacent site, the mausoleum.

Apart from a scatter of Belgic pottery not connected to any

particular features on site, the earliest signs of human activity at Bancroft are the complex of ditches and gullies in the north-west corner of the site. These contained large quantities of 1st/2nd century pottery, and seem to have been field boundary or drainage ditches. The lack of any associated structural evidence coupled with the presence of large quantities of domestic refuse suggest that the villa area was close to, but not part of, an occupation site in the years following the conquest. It is possible that the Belgic hilltop site adjacent to the mausoleum was the predecessor of the villa. More work on the area containing these early ditches will be undertaken in 1984.

The earliest structure so far identified at Bancroft was a large aisled building 30m x 11m, aligned east-west, following the slope of the ground. This peculiar location required the floor of the eastern half of the building to be made up to a level, as the west end had not been terraced into the slope. Walls were of limestone laid without mortar on deep packed rubble footings, probably supporting a timber-framed superstructure. The weight of the roof was carried on ten substantial posts, each 300mm in diameter set on large flat stones in stone-packed post pits, at 5m-5.5m spacings in two rows each 2m from the side walls of the structure. None of the external features excavated can be related to this structure, which dates from the late 1st/early 2nd century.

At some point after its construction, several additions were made to this aisled house. Internally, two rooms, each about 4.3m x 3.5m were partitioned off at the west end, separated by a passage 2m wide, perhaps leading to an outside door. Each of these rooms centred on an aisle post. On the north side of the structure a corridor was partitioned off, the new wall following the northern line of aisle posts. This corridor, 2m in width, presumably served to screen from the rest of the house the access to a bath suite, which was constructed against the north side of the house.

This bath suite was L-shaped, 17m in length, with an enclosed stokeroom at its west end, and a rectangular plunge bath projecting from its north-east corner. It was substantially constructed, and sufficient pilae remained in situ to enable the pattern of floor supports in the heated rooms to be determined. The floor of the frigidarium was of opus signinum, apparently laid directly on clay subsoil. The cold plunge bath was well preserved, surviving to the floor level of the frigidarium, though the wall separating the two had been completely robbed away, and the tile covering of its floor - inverted tegulae - had been removed. A lead pipe drained the bath from its north-west corner into an external gully. The opus signinum bath lining and quarter moulding had been painted red. The fill of the cold plunge bath consisted of large quantities of tile, from which several complete imbrices were recovered, and wall plaster, some of which was found to be decorated with marine creatures. This material presumably came from the demolition of the bath-house and aisled dwelling, following a fire in the west end of the latter in the late 2nd century.

After the demolition of the first house, a second dwelling was built on the site, partly overlying the site of the first. The

relationship of the two structures suggests a hitherto unsuspected break in the continuity of occupation at Bancroft, if only for the duration of the demolition and construction operations. The second house was somewhat smaller than the first, measuring 28.8m x 8.5m, aligned north-south, its north end overlying the east end of the latter. It was, however, more soundly constructed, the surviving external walls being 0.8m in thickness, of mortared limestone, with correspondingly deep footings, except at the south end where much of the structure either rests on or is cut into the Cornbrash bedrock. Two wing rooms projected from the north-east and south-east corners. From the arrangement of cobbled surfaces to the east of the house, the main entrance appears to have been in the centre of that side.

The internal arrangement of this building, like the house it replaced, was still fairly simple. Working from the north end, there were three large rooms, spanning the width of the building, and measuring 4.5m, 10m and 6m in length respectively. All had mortar floors, while the southernmost was heated by a composite-type hypocaust fed from a stokehole in the front of the building, south of the entrance.

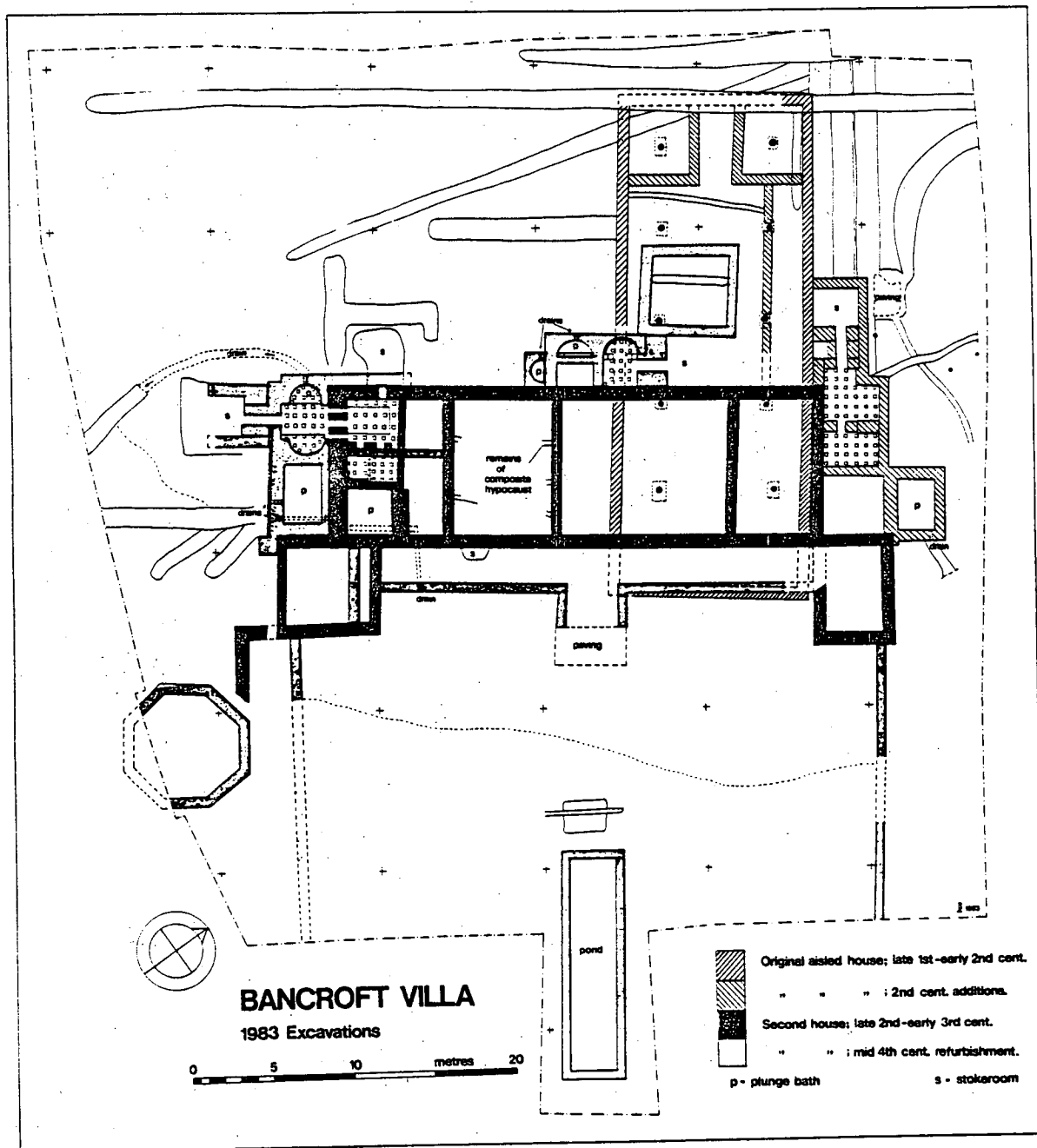
The south end of the house was occupied by a bath suite. This consisted of a narrow, corridor-like frigidarium spanning the width of the structure, adjacent to the heated room described above, to the south of which were, moving from east to west, a cold plunge bath, tepidarium, and caldarium, the stokehole being to the west of the latter. The plunge bath was roughly square, limed with opus signinum painted black below the water-line, red above, with a tiled floor and a drain constructed of imbrices leading southwards into a ditch. In the tepidarium, surviving pilae showed signs of heavy usage. Caldarium and tepidarium were separated by a wall supported on arches constructed of tegulae. Much of the base structure of the heated rooms and the stokehole had been cut out of the bedrock.

The two wing rooms were of less substantial construction than the rest of the house. The northern one measured 5.3m x 3.5m, while the other was slightly larger, at 3m square. Neither room contained evidence of a distinct floor surface.

Occupation of the house in this form continued through the 3rd into the 4th century. Many of the mortar floors show evidence of repairs, and this and the heavily burnt pilae in the bath suite suggest that the structure was becoming somewhat well-worn, even dilapidated, by the mid 4th century.

The next major change in the occupation of Bancroft appears to have come in the middle years of the 4th century, around AD340. It is marked by a complete refurbishment of the house, and changes in its immediate surroundings which lifted it from the 'working farm' image conveyed by the 3rd century structures, to something suggesting an increase in the status of the occupants. Indeed, so great are the changes that it is tempting to suggest that this phase marks a change of ownership.

The major change to the external appearance of the house was perhaps



the addition of a corridor along the front of the building between the wings, with a central porch fronted by an area paved with rectangular limestone slabs. Internally, mosaics were laid in all rooms except the wings. These pavements are described elsewhere in detail (Neal D.C., Roman Mosaics in Britain, (Britannia Monograph Series 1), 1981). The hypocaust in the heated room fell out of use, but the largest room in the house was given a large limestone open hearth, placed off-centre. The bath suite was totally remodelled and enlarged. The hypocausts in both heated rooms were dismantled, probably because the pilae were no longer safe, and the tepidarium and cold plunge were filled in with debris from the renovation works. These two rooms, along with part of the old frigidarium, were partitioned off to form a new frigidarium measuring 5m x 6m. In the old caldarium, the stokehole was blocked, the floor of the chamber raised and the new pilae constructed supporting a floor some 250mm higher than previously. A new caldarium and stokehole, and cold plunge were constructed against the south wall of the house, behind the south wing. The new caldarium was double-apsed, with a hot plunge bath in its west apse, flues being inserted in the south wall of the house to link it to the tepidarium. The cold plunge was lined with red-painted opus signinum, with a floor of inverted tegulae, and a lead drain in the south wall, leading into the ditch which had drained the earlier bath suite. A second drain, constructed of tile and limestones, ran beneath the floor of the frigidarium adjacent to the east wall, passing beneath the corridor to the front of the building.

Two new structures also appeared to the west of the building. One a bath suite, was constructed to the east of the largest room. This was very small, consisting of a frigidarium with two semi-circular cold plunge baths, and a caldarium with a single apse, the stokehole being to the north. To the west of the stokehole was the second structure, a substantial building roughly 4.5m square, terraced into the hillside. The interior of this structure was roughly floored with gravelly mortar, and was heavily burnt in places.

It is at the front of the house that the change in status of this period is most marked. Where before had been only a series of cobbled areas, suggesting a farmyard, a formal garden was laid out, bounded to the north and south by stone walls running from the front of each wing, enclosing an area 35m wide. The centrepiece of this garden was a large rectangular fishpond, 13.2m x 2.8m, aligned with, and 14m from the porch. The walls of this structure were, of course, dry stone walling, and the floor of large limestone slabs, the whole backed by a clay lining. The height of the surviving walls suggests that the pond may have been up to 1m deep. A number of mid 4th century coins were recovered from the floor of the pond, as well as quantities of wall plaster, including some with marine designs, presumably from the destruction of one of the bath suites. The absence of an organic silt in the bottom of the pond suggests that it was kept clear during its period of use, perhaps by a continuous supply of running water. Further evidence for the latter comes from the finding of a narrow trench to the west of the pond, containing one complete and one fragmentary iron pipe collar. The location of the water source for the villa, however, remains a mystery, though one must presume from the location of the site that it lies to the west.

The one other structure on the site that can be attributed to this period is the octagonal building to the south-east of the house, outside the garden area. This was presumably a shrine or summer-house. The mausoleum, four hundred metres to the north-west of the villa, also belongs to this period.

That the house in its final form remained occupied for a long time is suggested by the degree of burning in the hypocaust chambers of both suites, and the coin sequences from the site, which extend to the early 5th century. Beyond this point, evidence is simply not available for secure dating of the continuation of occupation. There is similarly no concrete dating evidence for the destruction and robbing of the house and associated structures, though from the absence of any large stone buildings nearby until the medieval period, it is reasonable to suggest that robbing was carried out by the builders of Bradwell Abbey, one kilometre south of Bancroft, in the 12th century.

On conclusion of the excavations, the house, octagonal building and the pond were backfilled to protect them until work begins on laying the site out for public viewing. Next season's excavations will concentrate on the outbuildings, to the north of the house, and on the garden area to the east of the pond.

BANCROFT MAUSOLEUM

Bob Williams

Fieldwalking in 1982 revealed a scatter of Roman finds and building rubble (SP82524058) 300m north-west of the Bancroft villa at the end of a low spur overlooking the Bradwell Brook to the east.

The type of finds, the elevated position and the apparent relationship to the nearby villa suggested the presence of a substantial Roman shrine/mausoleum. A geophysical survey undertaken by Bradford University confirmed the location of the main elements of the site. Threatened by a housing development in 1984 a 5-month excavation commencing in March was undertaken. The exceptionally wet spring and dry summer made work on the clay subsoil very difficult but over 3,500m² were stripped and excavated.

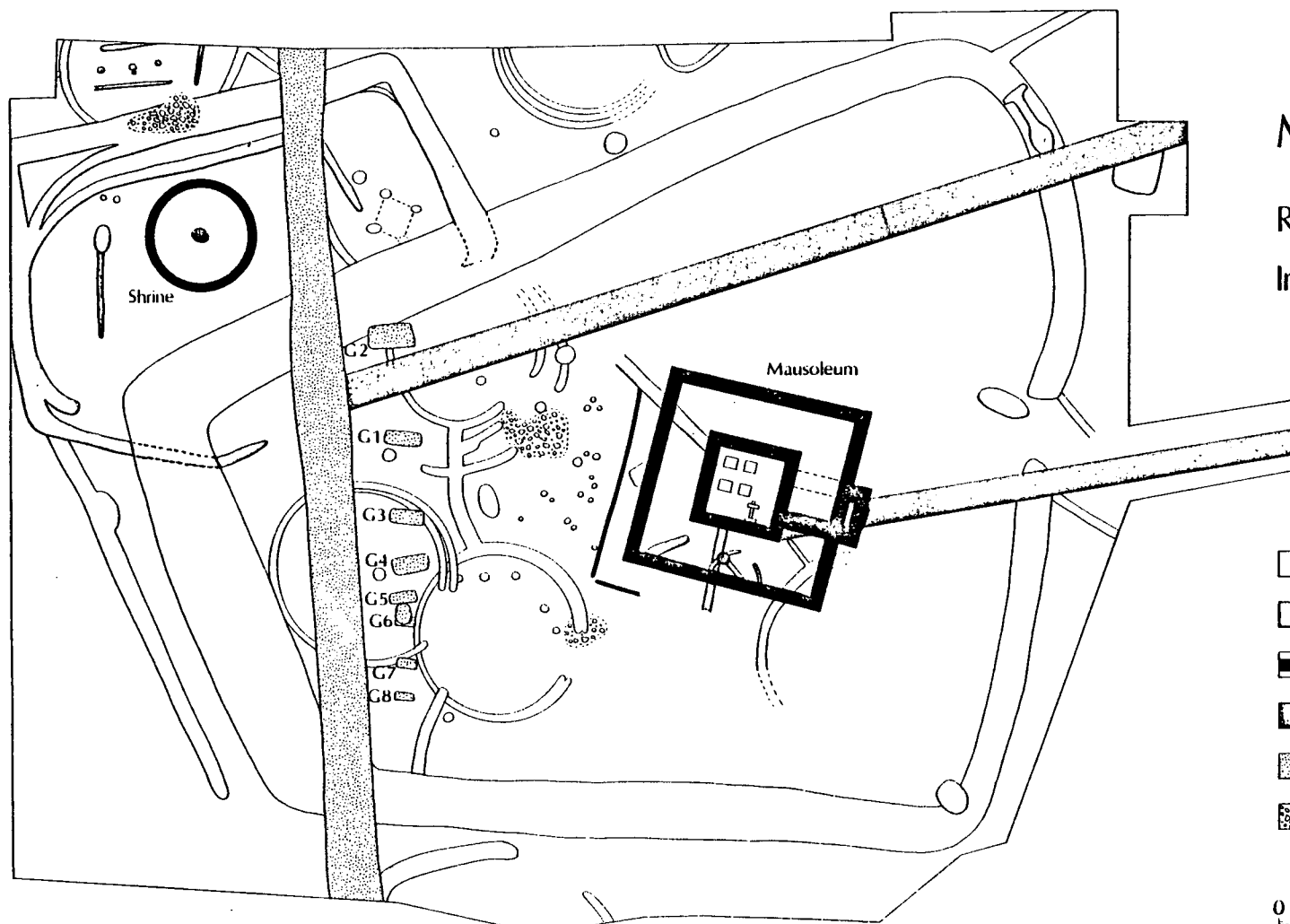
The existence of a substantial stone built mausoleum and a more ephemeral circular shrine were confirmed along with a later cemetery and an underlying Iron Age settlement.

In plan the mausoleum conformed to the ubiquitous Romano-Celtic temple pattern, being square in plan and aligned N-S/E-W. The ambulatory, with a small portico on the east side overlooking the valley, enclosed a central tower 6m square raised above a substantial burial vault. Traces of a possible robbed stylobate were located along the outer lines of the south and west walls.

The building was 12.20m square but in place of the more normal cella was a central underground vault 4m square and surviving to a depth of 1.5m below the stripped level. The vault must originally have been 2m+ deep from contemporary ground level; severe erosion having removed all trace of the upper floor levels. The vault contained a well preserved op-sig floor with a surrounding quarter-round moulding along the line of the walls. Traces of the positions of

BANCROFT ~ MILTON KEYNES

Roman Mausoleum &
Iron Age Settlement



-  Middle-Late Iron Age
-  1st - 2nd cent. AD
-  Early 4th cent. Buildings
-  Early 4th cent. Features
-  5th cent.
-  Cobbled Areas

0 10 20 m.

two lead/stone sarcophagi were still visible on the floor, as was the impression of the base of a timber staircase laid on the op-sig whilst still moist.

Robbing of the building stone and roofing materials had been extensive and only in a few places did the footings survive even to a depth of one course. The foundations of the central tower/vault walls had been almost totally removed. The stratigraphy of the fill of the vault suggested a late Roman or 5th century demolition of the building including the removal of the sarcophagi and grave goods, aided by the excavation and construction of a ramp down to the base of the vault in the north-east corner.

No floor was found in the ambulatory although the numerous excavated tesserae are thought to have come from a pavement around the vault. A small amount of human bones was found in the fill of the burial chamber but no trace of the grave goods was found.

The most unexpected discoveries were two huge stone-lined culverts constructed in 1.5m deep narrow cuttings and backfilled with clay. One was found to have connected with the base of the tower wall below the opus-signinum floor level and would have kept the vault dry both during and after construction. The second drain running parallel 15m to the north on the up slope side would have reduced the ground water pressure on the vault. Both drains contained fragments of broken opus-signinum floor and tile and more importantly a number of fragments of moulded stone thought to have derived as rubble from the nearby villa.

The extensive robbing and erosion of the building with no contemporary levels having survived makes dating difficult. A 4th century Oxford-ware sherd found sealed in the drain beneath the eastern wall and a single coin of Constantius 330-35 would seem to confirm a 4th century date for its construction. A date in the second quarter of the 4th century may be the most likely, reflecting a period of considerable wealth of the nearby villa seen in the addition of fine mosaic floors, bath suite extensions and a large ornamental fishpond.

A shallow cremation within the ambulatory on the north side of the buried vault was undateable but may represent a foundation deposit.

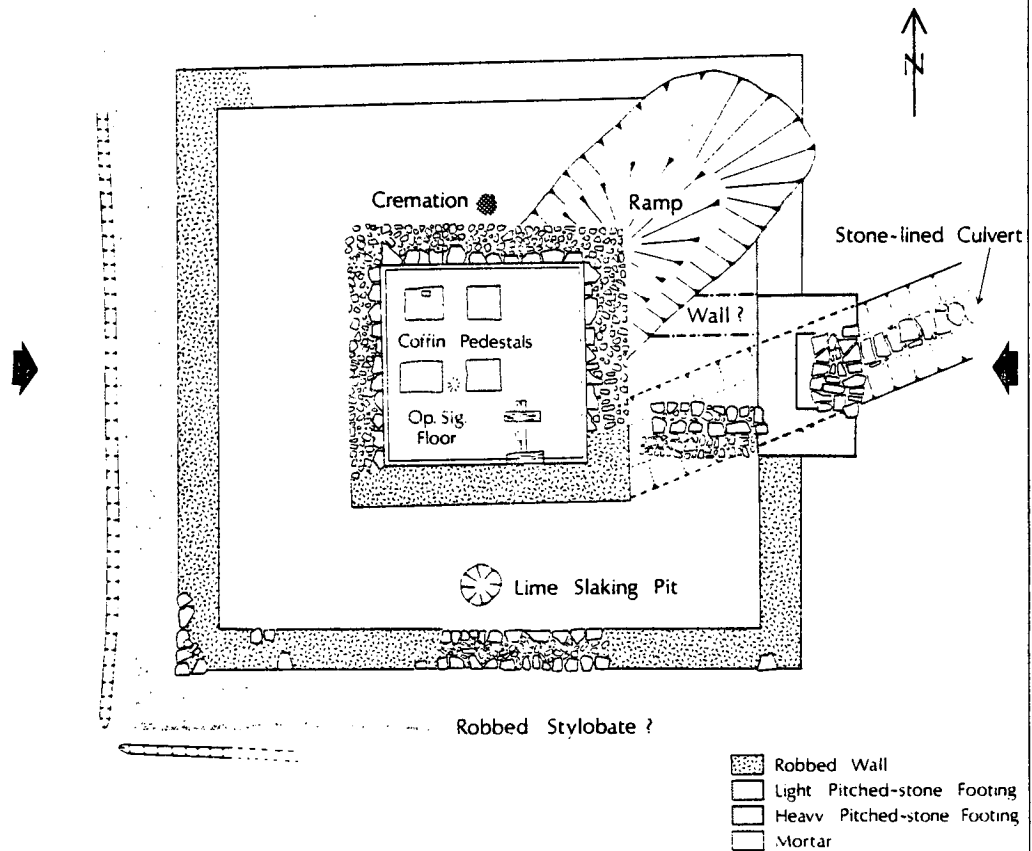
Roman monumental mausolea are very rare in Britain, the only similar published example being at Lullingstone (Kent) where the burial chamber had originally contained two decorated lead coffins and an array of fine grave furnishings.

A small circular stone building 6.8m diameter of pitched stone construction was found 30m to the north west of the mausoleum. Again no contemporary floor levels survived but a shallow pit in the centre contained a semi-articulated burial of a young pig and a group of mid-to-late 4th century coins. This building also produced a group of 8 small 'votive' iron spearheads on the field surface, presumably ploughed off the floor.

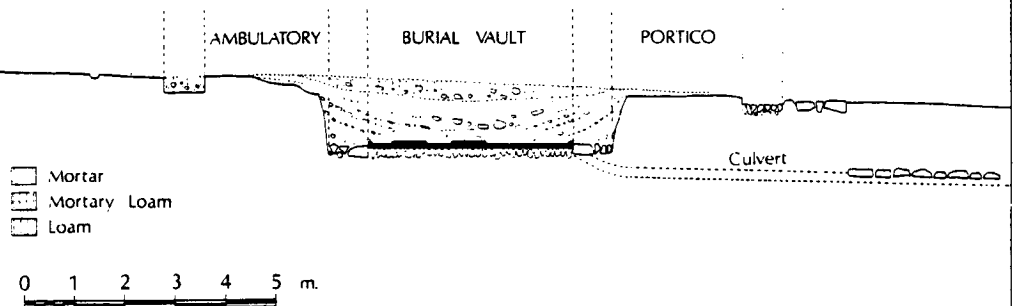
The objects found in this small building and its close association with the larger but contemporary mausoleum are consistent with its interpretation as a shrine. Indeed, many Roman-Celtic temples are

BANCROFT MAUSOLEUM ~ MILTON KEYNES

PLAN



SECTION



R.I.W. Dec 83

accompanied by a small circular or polygonal shrine.

Eight human burials, four adults and four children, were found buried in a north-south line between the two buildings. They lay in a straight line along the eastern lip of a large ditch also running on a north-south alignment between the mausoleum and shrine. All the skeletons lay east-west in a supine position, with the heads at the west end and no associated grave goods.

Preliminary identification indicates the presence of three males aged 30-50, one pregnant female aged 18-24 and four children under the age of 4 years old.

The burials are thought to have been in wooden coffins surrounded to varying degrees by fragments of limestone. The two most northerly burials were the most unusual. G.2 (see plan) consisted of a very large grave pit with a skeleton completely surrounded by large blocks of limestone, including a section of turned column shaft and a large bulbous capital (?). G.1 contained two large smoothed fragments of stone thought to have been coping stones between colonnades and a fragment of stone roof finial which was found to fit a similar fragment from Grave 6. A circular pit (160) found to have cut an infant's grave contained four fragments of intricately turned stone capitals.

The date of the burials must remain in question until C14 dates are forthcoming, but are thought to be late 4th or 5th century, the associated length of ditch which may be a boundary to the mausoleum unfortunately produced no dateable material. The architectural fragments re-used in the graves must have been removed from the mausoleum after it became derelict. The worked stone so rarely found in rural contexts will be very important in reconstructing the original appearance and form of the mausoleum.

The excavations also revealed a large Iron Age ditched enclosure, trapezoid in form, c.50m long and 42m wide at the east end narrowing to 23m at the west end. An entrance 3m wide lay in the centre of the east side overlooking the valley. The ditch varied in depth from c.2m+ deep on the west side to only 1m deep on the east side. The discrepancy in depth and width may be partially accounted for by differential erosion. The western side had been extra strengthened by the addition of a smaller ditch along the outer line of the ditch.

The Enclosure ditch contained in its primary silt, hand-made plain pottery of mid-to-late Iron Age date, but contained in its upper fill wheel-turned 1st century AD pottery and a coin of Vespian. At least three penannular house ditches were found within the enclosure, and a further two outside. One ditch had been cut by the enclosure ditch and the other two inside had been recut and were not contemporary. All contained plain hand-made Iron Age pottery. One gully contained a number of internal post holes and a small central paved area. A number of clay-lined pits and a four post structure were found both within and outside the enclosure. The layout of the circular buildings and associated domestic features in relation to the enclosure suggests the enclosure may relate to a later phase of occupation.

A series of smaller recut ditches were found in the north-west

corner of the excavation and are thought to be later extensions to the enclosure using the northern enclosure ditch as a boundary, thereby roughly enclosing an area 10m x 25m. A number of post holes and a length of pallisade trench were found running parallel to the northern side of the later enclosure, but their proximity to the edge of the excavation makes interpretation impossible. These ditches are thought to date from the 1st century AD but were completely silted up by the end of the 2nd century. A 'T'-shaped corn drier found constructed in the north-east angle of the Iron Age enclosure ditch and presumably making use of the hollow, may also date from this phase.

The remains of a human burial lying on the subsoil with the feet at the west end were found 10m to the east of the later enclosure. The date and significance of this burial are in doubt and it may be either Iron Age or Roman.

This early period of Roman agricultural activity may relate to the occupation of the first Bancroft Villa.

The intervening period between the 2nd century and the construction of the stone buildings in the 4th century is only recorded on the site by the accumulation of a thick layer of brown loamy plough-soil sealing the earlier features.

Excavation will continue in 1984, the main objectives being to define the Iron Age settlement and to discover whether the mausoleum was contained within a boundary wall/ditch.

FIELDWORK

Bob Williams

Early in 1983 during the lowering of the level of the churchyard and the digging of soak-aways and new drains at All Saints' Church, Milton Keynes Village (SP88783916) a number of Roman sherds including fine wares and Samian were discovered. The number of sherds was too large, in relation to the volume of earth moved, for them to have been midden material. Indeed, more Roman sherds were found than medieval sherds. Fragments of Roman roof tile would appear to indicate the presence of a relatively substantial building nearby.

Two small early Roman sites were reported by Jack Stephenson, one near Linford Wood (SP40308433) and the other between Downs Barn and Downhead Park (SP40138650). Both produced quantities of early pottery from ditches and pits.

A small service trench dug from Old Wolverton manor house to Old Wolverton Road following the existing trackway was watched for any signs of medieval buildings. No buildings were located but a significant amount of Roman pottery including Samian and a fragment of keyed flue-tile was found at SP41488076. The trench cut along the line of a stone wall but it could not be established whether this was Roman or medieval. However, it is possible that this site is another stone-built Roman farmstead.

Both the Milton Keynes and Old Wolverton sites fill in large gaps in the Romano-British distribution map of Milton Keynes. Their discoveries also underline the fact that many Roman sites may lie

undetected beneath later sites, and medieval earthworks in particular.

The work at Milton Keynes Church also turned up, most unexpectedly, a late Saxon bar-lip lug in a St Neots-type fabric. This is only the third such find in North Bucks although its relevance in this context is uncertain.

A late-Saxon copper alloy strap end was purchased by Bucks County Museum during 1983. It was found in Wood Lane, Great Linford, during building work and may have derived from the area of excavation of Pearsons' Close. The tag is 36.5mm long and was used to terminate a small leather belt. The decoration is of animal design and is executed with silver inlay. A similar silver example was found last year at Fenny Stratford.

During extensive topsoil stripping on the south-western side of Milton Keynes Village (SP88653905) in advance of gravel extraction, a large area (10,000²m) of irregular village earthworks were destroyed. Investigation of the site by R.A. Croft and R.J. Williams for MKDC revealed that the earthworks were mainly of medieval closes and ditches which formed roughly rectangular close boundaries.

Two phases were distinguished. The earliest had ditches of average 2m width, the later phase ditches of 5m wide or more. It is suggested that the later ditches were connected with the earthworks of the moated site and fishpond 100m to the north. The earliest pottery from the site suggested a 12th century date for the first phase of ditches.

LANDSCAPE SURVEY

R.A. Croft

Detailed synthesis of the documentary, aerial and photographic survey of Milton Keynes continues. In particular revision and re-drawing of the medieval field systems of fifteen parishes. See plan of Great Linford field system, fig.

Village Survey - Documentary

During 1983 the main emphasis of the documentary survey was directed toward the parishes of Tattenhoe, Shenley and Little Woolstone. The bulk of the documentary and cartographic survey for most of the villages in the city has now been sorted and arranged in a chronological order for each parish. A number of new maps have been traced and added to the map archive. A 1792 map of the Thomas Harrison estate at Shenley recorded the field name of Windmill Hill in Shenley Brook End at SP83153510 which may indicate the position of the medieval windmill at Shenley first noted in the Snelshall Cartulary c.1250.

Aerial Photographs

A thorough revised check of all known aerial photographs of the Milton Keynes area was carried out to plot and clarify earlier work on the medieval earthworks and ridge and furrow. A simplified plot of the ridge and furrow in the parishes of Broughton and Moulsoe was carried out from vertical aerial photographs, particularly the 1946 RAF

collection at Bucks County Museum. The 1946 aerial cover also provided evidence of village shrinkage at Willen (SP880413) on the eastern side of the village, an area not previously noted for any earthworks.

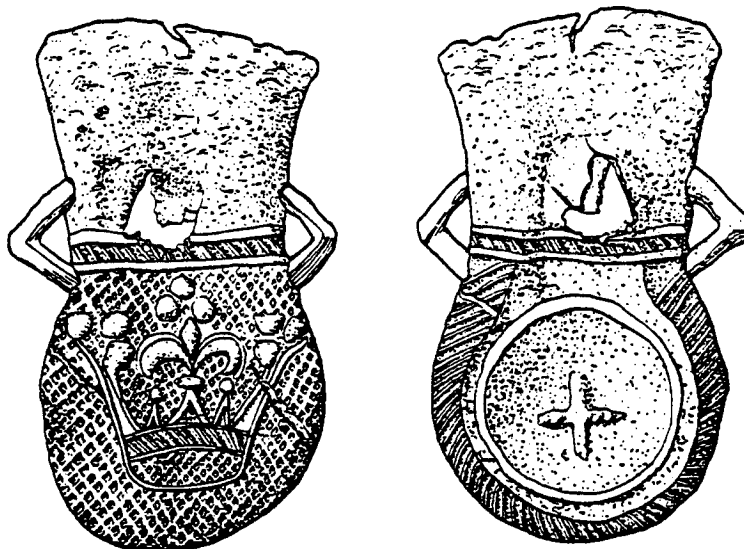
BRADWELL ABBEY EXCAVATIONS

R.A. Croft

The planned programme of excavations at Bradwell Abbey did not take place in 1983 due to the reorganisation of the excavation programme. Landscaping and backfilling of the 1982 excavation has resulted in a neat and tidy area around the chapel. The north wall of the church has been partly rebuilt and repointed to preserve it from weathering. Mowing of the site and the use of weedkillers has been very successful in marking out the assumed lines of the church and cloister as described in the 1524 survey. Further excavation is not planned in the near future and the results of all the archaeological investigations on the site are being assessed and prepared for publication.

An unusual and important find from Bradwell Bury Moat House of a 14th century lead pilgrims' bottle may in some way be associated with the pilgrimage shrine at Bradwell Abbey. We would like to thank Mrs Groves for bringing this object to our attention as it is only the second example of a pilgrim's bottle from Milton Keynes. A detailed report on both it and the earlier pilgrim's bottle have been prepared by Brian Spencer of the London Museum. A drawing of the bottle by June Burbidge is shown in Fig.

Conservation and recording of the 14th century lead window from Bradwell Priory Church was continued by Sue Marshall (Unit conservator), in 1983. Almost all the glass has now been removed from the lead for conservation and drawing. The window was painted with a basic design of vegetation with oak leaves and branches interspersed with occasional birds. A detailed report on the art historical value of the window is being prepared by Jill Kerr of Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi. It is hoped that some form of permanent display of the excavated and reconstructed window will be assembled during 1984.



Medieval pilgrims' bottle from Bradwell Bury,
Milton Keynes. Length 115 mm.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

I Northamptonshire County Council Archaeology Unit

RAUNDS - FURNELLS (SP.999733)

Archaeological rescue excavations in advance of housing and warehouse development came to an end on the main site off Brick Kiln Road, Raunds, Northants. (known as Raunds - Furnells) during the summer of 1982 after five seasons' work. Post-excavation work on this site is now well advanced with a final report expected during the late 1980s.

During 1983 some limited archaeological investigation was carried out in the areas adjacent to the main excavation ahead of continuing development and in an effort to 'tie-up loose ends' from the Raunds - Furnells site.

The following summary of the chronological sequence revealed during the Raunds - Furnells excavation is based upon the results of the first full year of post excavation analysis. This is a refined version of earlier summaries but because of the large amount of data still to be processed the sequence and the dating should be regarded as tentative and thus may be subject to considerable revision.

The excavations have been conducted by Northamptonshire County Council, with the aid of grants provided by the Department of the Environment and Manpower Services Commission. The County Council is grateful to Comben Homes Ltd. for allowing access to the site during the course of excavation, and to East Northamptonshire District Council for assistance in the conduct of the excavation.

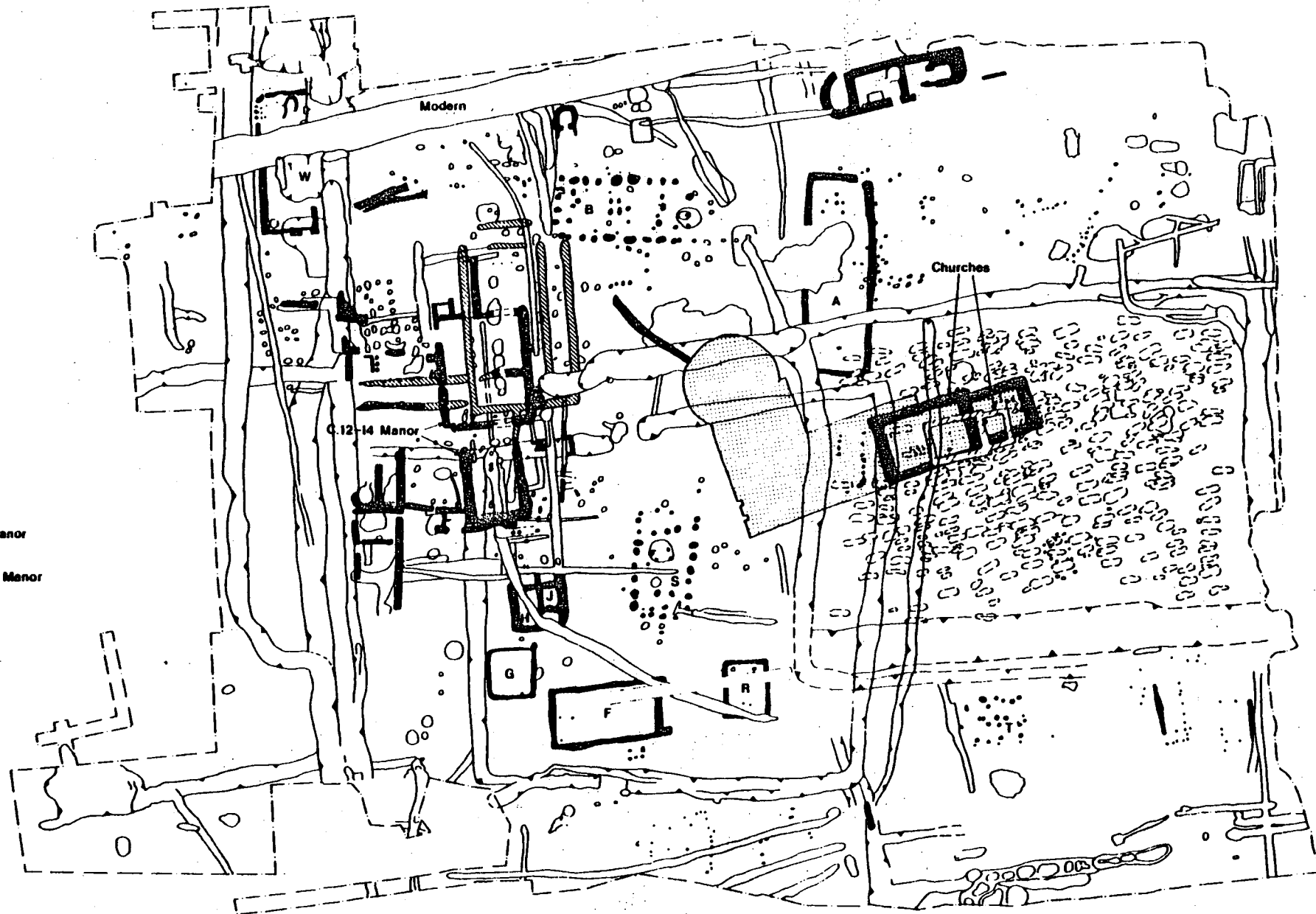
For any further information about the project, contact the Archaeology Unit, County Hall, Northampton. Tel.:34833, ext.5241.

SUMMARY OF REVISED CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

N.B. It should be borne in mind that the periods as defined tend to overlap. As such each should be viewed as a general statement rather than a fixed event.

Period/ Phase	Provis. Date	Main Structural Additions	Comments - Pottery
10A	Iron Age/Roman	No features identified	Roman pottery is c.C3rd.
1i	500-550	No features identified	Scatter of Early Saxon Pottery unstrat. and residual
1ii	550-600	One possible structure	Pottery including stamped sherd of c.550-600.
1iii	600-650	Timber structure and 'Grubenhau'	Pottery assemblage from pit and timber structure paralleled at Peterborough c.600-650.
2i	late C7th-early C8th	Buildings 'A' and 'B'	Pottery from 'A' and 'B' showing change in manufacture and debasement of form in fine wares.
2ii	C8th	Building 'S' + ?. Interrupted ditched enclosure.	Absence of the fine wares of 2i. Mainly coarser fabric types related to 2iii
2iii	late C8th	Second enclosure created	Pottery types related to 2ii but with elements of types in 3i.
3i	late C8th - early C9th	Buildings F, G, H and R	Pottery Types: coarse vessels, large jars. Introduction of hand-made, thick, shell tempered.
3ii/iii	850/900-950	Early phase of 'aisled' hall Church and cemetery	St Neots Type ware; hand-made small jars, same tradition as Middle Saxon
4i	950-1050/1100	Aisled hall. Church re-built and cemetery enlarged. Building 'P'	St Neots Type ware, various forms. Stamford Ware c.950-1050. Thetford Ware. Northampton Ware
4ii	1050-1150/1200	Aisled hall complex extended. Church converted?	St Neots Type Ware; jugs. Absence of developed Stamford Ware.
5i/ii	1150-1200-1275/1325	New manor house	Stanion/Lyvedon. Jugs, bowls, jars and aquamanile. Brill and Oxford products.

Period/ Phase	Provis. Date	Main Structural Additions	Comments - Pottery
6i	1325-1450/1500	Eastern manor house	Late Medieval Reduced Ware and Oxidised Ware. C14th Potterspury Type Ware
7i	c.1450/1500	Temporary re-use of manor house as a smithy	Late Medieval Reduced and Oxidised Wares. Provisional date late 14th-15thC.

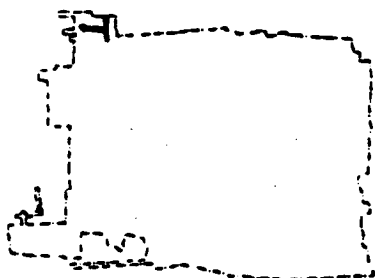


RAUNDS : General Site Plan

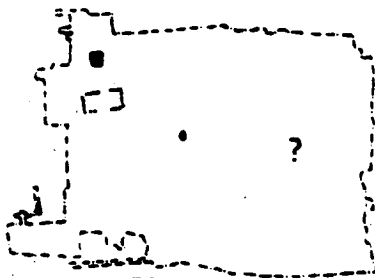


RAUNDS : Chronology

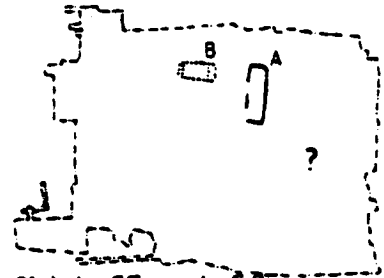
N.B. 10a and 1i not illustrated.



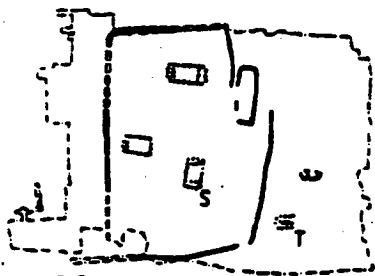
1ii 550-600



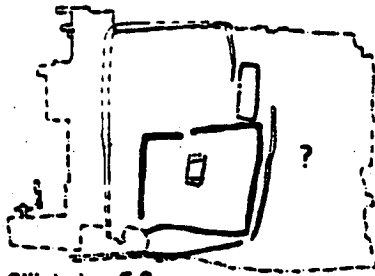
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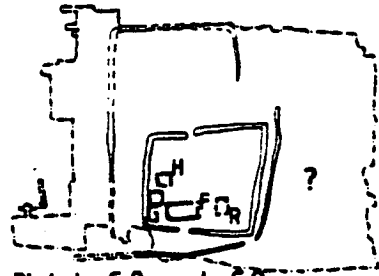
2i late C7-early C8



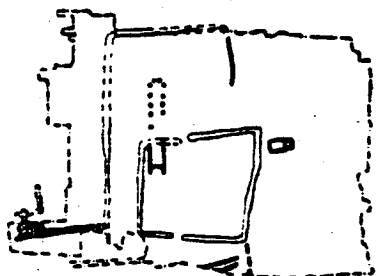
2ii C.8



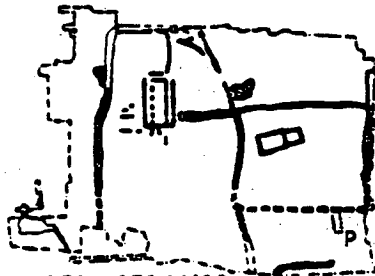
2iii late C.8



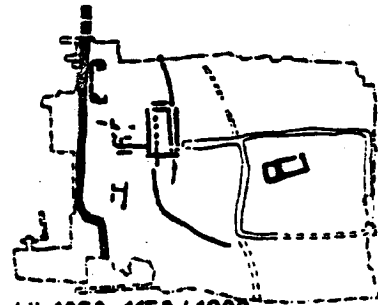
3i late C.8-early C.9



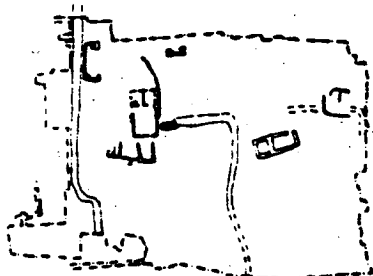
3ii/3iii 850-950



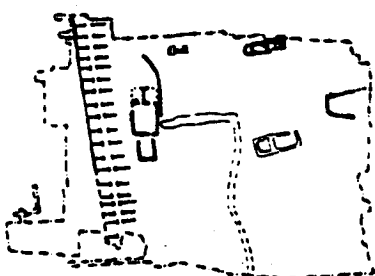
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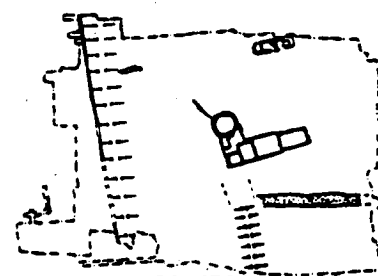
4ii 1050-1150/1200



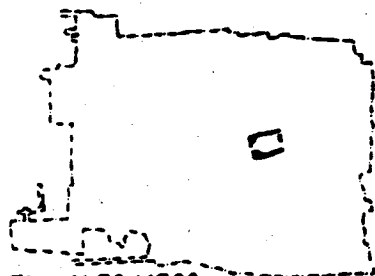
5i 1150/1200-1275/1325



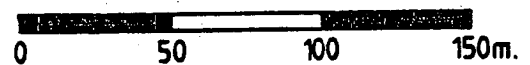
5ii 1150/1200-1275/1325



6i 1325-1450/1500



7i c.1450/1500



ASHTON, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Continued excavation in advance of roadworks revealed further evidence of the development of the Roman town. The earliest occupation can be dated to the mid-first century AD when a system of ditched enclosures and connecting droveways was laid out. In one area these routes had been formalised into roads by the close of the century and the street-surfaces were repaired and renewed on a number of later occasions. During the second century and afterwards some of the earlier boundary-ditches were replaced by fences or walls and a series of stone-built workshops and other structures were erected at the street-frontage of several properties. Fewer buildings were located towards the margins of the settlement where a series of mainly agricultural enclosures had been established. In the fourth century, and possibly continuing later, part of that area was used for an inhumation cemetery containing over 100 graves arranged in regular rows and all oriented. Grave-goods were almost entirely absent but had been included with other seemingly contemporary interments made elsewhere within individual properties.

See also Britannia 14 (1983), pp.305-6 with plan.

THE GREEN, NORTHAMPTON (SP75036032)

Excavations, directed by Michael Shaw, were carried out over a period of 25 weeks, from March-August 1983, by a team of about 20 people, for Northampton Development Corporation's Archaeological Unit. An area of around 1100 square metres was investigated with the aid of a grant from the Department of the Environment. The site lies within the SW quarter of the Saxon and Medieval town of Northampton and its excavation was undertaken as part of the Unit's research programme into the origins and development of the town.

Evidence for pre-Saxon occupation was limited to a small quantity of worked flint, a few sherds of Romano-British pottery and some undated features but the earliest major feature was a ditch which ran across the NW corner of the site. This was probably associated with the Middle Saxon palace complex excavated in the area to the N between 1973-82 (NDC Ref No M115). Partial plans of post-hole buildings of Late Saxon and Early Medieval date were recovered. During the Medieval period the site lay chiefly in the yard area between two medieval streets, St Peter's Street and The Green, and most of the features of this date are rubbish pits. Two Late Medieval drying ovens of unusual design were, however, also discovered. In the 16th century large areas of the site were given over to tanning and forty-six tanning pits, generally clay-lined, were excavated. Other features of the tanning complex were quantities of lime, used in the initial preparation of the hides for tanning, and a large number of horn cores, presumably trimmed off the hides brought from the butcher. The tanning features

were groups into two/three different areas similar to that excavated just to the north in 1973/4. They may represent individual small tanneries rather than a single large one.

II Northamptonshire Survey - D. Hall and P. Martin

Work has concentrated on two types of parish: those with complete terriers of all the open-field holdings, and those threatened by development. Of the first category Bradden and Mears Ashby have been completed, and Towcester begun. A strip of many parishes is threatened by the proposed A1-M1 link. The Department of Transport has created a post to deal with the specific threat of the road corridor (see report of R. Barcham, Northants Archaeology Unit), and we have dealt with several of the complete parishes that will be affected.

The area west of Kettering has been badly damaged by ironstone quarrying - more damaged than it looks superficially, because a lot of extraction was done 1870-1900 by hand and hedges replanted in their original position. In spite of this quite a few prehistoric sites survive on the edges of the old workings. The medieval fields cannot be reconstructed completely in some cases, as the damage is too great. Intensity of settlement decreases as the headwaters of the river Ise are reached.

Continued historical studies of townships already surveyed reveals surprises in the fieldsystem structure. Watford, Mears Ashby and Higham Ferrers have undispersed demesnes next to the manor houses, and more than three great fields (in the case of the first two places). Earls Barton, Doddington, and Mears Ashby had a regular tenurial arrangement of strips, as has been discovered before with other central Nene valley settlements. It is hoped to produce a substantial volume detailing these studies.

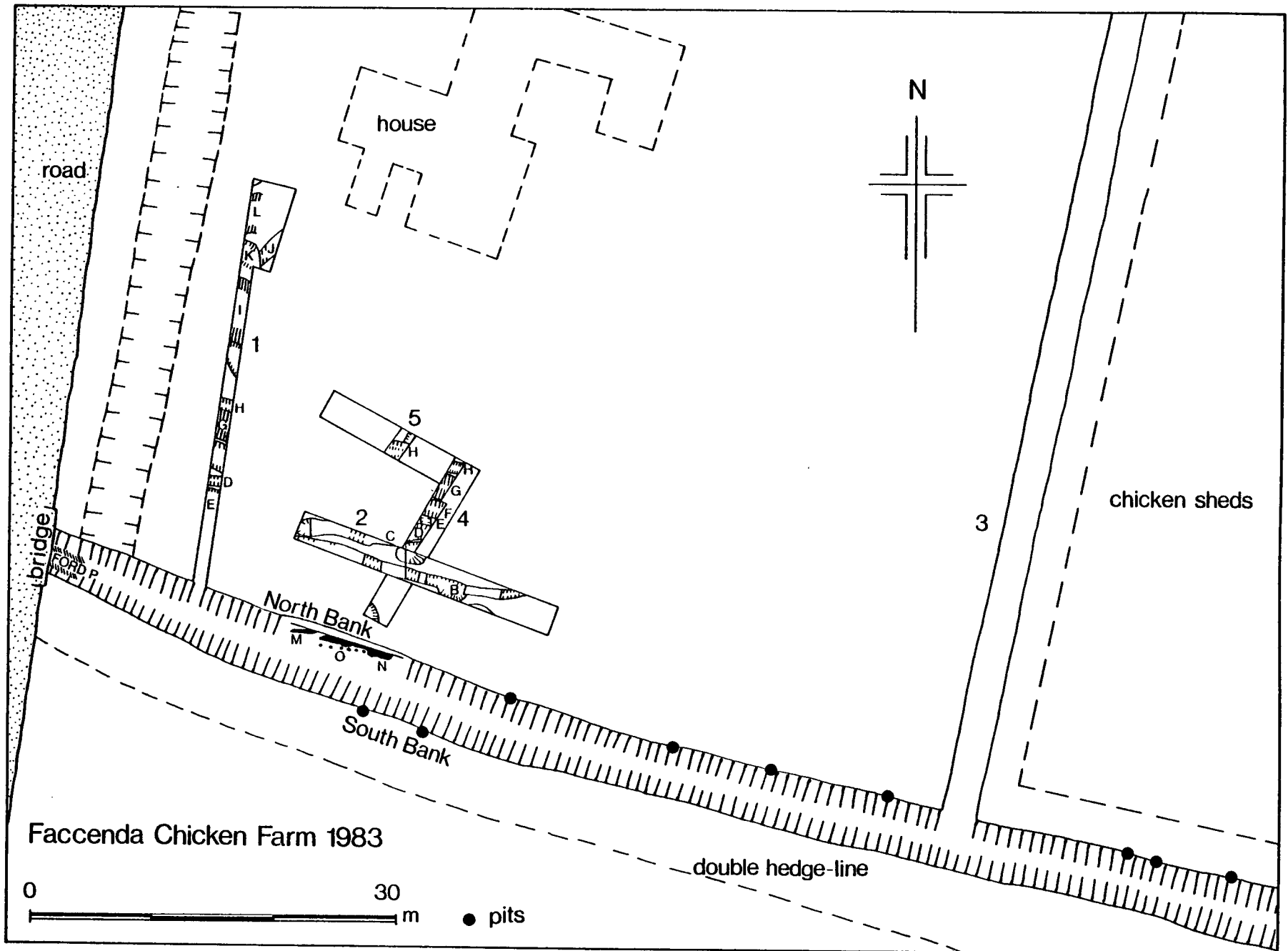
OXFORDSHIRE

I Oxford University Department of External Studies

FACCENDA CHICKEN FARM, WENDLEBURY 1983

Introduction

A small excavation took place in July and August 1983 approximately quarter of a mile north of the Roman town of Alchester, Oxon. (grid ref. 20855725), on land being developed by Faccenda Chicken Farm for working sheds and supervisors accommodation. The Archaeological interest of the site was noted by Trevor Rowley and R.A. Chambers, and investigation was undertaken under the supervision of the former for the Oxford University Department of External Studies. The work lasted for five weeks, with the assistance of Melanie Steiner, Sebastian Rahtz and



Christine Jones (the latter from the Archaeology In-service training scheme). A small team under Pete Rooke from the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit provided welcome assistance for a week and a number of local volunteers, notably Louise Armstrong and Jim Dudfield, also took part. We would like to acknowledge the help and assistance of Dennis Bristow (Faccenda Chicken Farm) and Grahame Clarke (contracting firm), particularly for the loan of a machine to dig trenches.

Purpose of excavation

The site is located near the junction of Akeman Street and the road from Alchester to Towcester, and it was hoped to trace one or both routes, as well as recover general information about the extent of occupation at this distance from the Roman town. In the event, neither road was seen in the excavation, which was occupied exclusively with the ramifications of Roman ditches/streams.

Method

There were three types of investigation: firstly, the modern stream (see plan) was substantially deepened and widened by the contractors and this revealed features in both banks, especially the north side which was partially excavated back into the 45° slope. This revealed structures M and N, and wooden stakes O. Nearer the bridge to the west, cleaning showed the line of the medieval/post-medieval road or ford (P). Secondly, trenches 1 and 3 had already been dug by the contractors to a certain depth for drainage, and trench 1 was completed by hand. Trenches 2, 4 and 5 were excavated by machine on the request of the excavators, in an attempt to answer questions, and these were again finished by hand.

Results of excavation

The majority of the excavated area was occupied by a remarkable series of parallel ditches, some cutting earlier ones slightly, running east-west (Ditches A, C, D, F, G, H, I, L). An examination of the silt and the snails in the fill of Ditch A (by Mark Robinson, University Museum) showed that the ditch had contained flowing water. Similar silts filled ditches G, C, I and L. The ditches did not have consistent profiles but ranged from wide and shallow (I) to V-shaped Ditch A, which was a wide substantial stream. The last Roman 'phase' on the site was the filling of this ditch with a massive buildup of clayey silt, over 1m thick in places, which covered the whole area investigated, and which we can tentatively correlate with the end or abandonment of a drainage scheme of some complexity or difficulty.

On the south side of Ditch A was a bank of gravel (created by dredging ?), and this was reveted on the outside by a series of stone structures, and associated wooden piles (M, N, O). One of the piles was removed for examination. Though the precise sequence is not yet clear, it seems that successive revetments held back silt which had overwhelmed earlier versions. Wooden stakes were also seen in the south bank section by the bridge, but these

were not demonstrated to be Roman, and the road surface visible in either bank immediately east of the bridge (P, see plan), had clay-pipe on its surface, and there can be little doubt that this is the post-medieval ford over the stream, now replaced by the C19th bridge.

Cut by Ditch A was an oval pit (Pit B) which was filled by a greasy black clay and contained near the bottom a Roman plank. This was lying flat, and had a thin strake nailed to the top. The main plank, from near the centre of a pedunculate oak, measured c.1.5m x 0.25m x 0.10m, and was in good water-logged condition. There were a number of nails in it, and on one side a channel had been chiselled. No specific functional interpretation has yet been accepted for the object. It was examined by Dr J. Fletcher of the Archaeology Research Laboratory, but was not suitable for dendrochronological dating.

A considerable number of black-filled pits and ditches were observed along both sides of the stream, in trench 3, and in another trench parallel to it east of the chicken sheds, but were not excavated or securely correlated with the ditches seen in trenches 1, 2, 4 and 5.

Some 22 kilos of Roman pottery was recovered, from a relatively small amount of hand excavation, including some half-complete vessels, of predominantly 1st-2nd century date. The only other finds were a single copper-alloy brooch, animal bone, some iron and flint.

Conclusions and future work

The site seems to belong to the second century; the excavated area covers work done repeatedly to drain land, and canalize and contain the predecessor of the modern stream. We do not as yet understand the reason for this work, or how this area of 'occupation' relates to Alchester. One must assume that Akeman Street, seen by Harden further west on the road to Chesterton in 1937, runs here between the double hedgerows on the south side of the stream, and that the road to Towcester is probably echoed by the modern road and lies beneath it.

The excavation report is currently in preparation; the pottery has been examined by Justin Hughes and the excavation report is being completed by Martin Foreman (both In-Service Archaeology students at Department of External Studies). The report will provide an opportunity to re-examine the Roman archaeology of the area, particularly in relation to the roads, and add, with the water-logged wood and large quantity of pottery, something to the archaeology of Roman Oxfordshire.

Sebastian P.Q.Rahtz and
Trevor Rowley

II South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group

THE ODD AND UNUSUAL IN THE SOAG AREA

Introduction

Most of the artefacts about which notes are written, fall

comfortably into classifications such as tools, graves, buildings and so on, but there are things which are one-off, and do not fit into any category. Whilst Parish-Surveying and generally poking about, I noticed a number of rather strange artefacts around the District, and I have, therefore, recorded some of the more interesting whilst they are still with us.

The numbers apply to the appropriate drawings.

(1) The Reade Memorial, Ipsden

Sited in a boggy patch of scrub which hides it from the Lane, is a memorial marking the spot where John Reade's ghost was seen.

It is a substantial stone edifice, about 6ft high, with an iron railing encircling it, and posts, linked with chains which have long since disappeared, inside the railing, and it is sited on a slight mound by what was a pond.

The inscription, on the west side, reads as follows:

John Thurloe Reade

Esquire

Schaarunpore

November 25th 1827

"Alas my brother"

The Reade family (John's brother was Charles Reade the novelist), still live in Ipsden. The memorial was erected by Edward Anderton Reade, when he returned from India in 1860, and his Mother was still alive; to mark, as near as possible, the spot where John appeared.

The story is true, and has been handed down, and the youngest Reade of that generation remembered the monument being erected.

John was the cleverest of the family of eleven. He was Head Boy at Rugby at the age of 15. On leaving school he entered the service of the East India Company and sailed for India in 1817.

John's Mother would walk down to the Wallingford road to collect the mail, which was scanty in those days, and one evening on this journey she saw the ghost of her son coming towards her in great distress. So strong was this vision that she was convinced he had died without Christian burial; and she arranged with the Vicar to hold a service next day. Both she and the Vicar were down-to-earth, and not superstitious, but they both were completely convinced that the message was real - indeed, the next mail to arrive informed her that John had died of dysentery, near Schaarunpore, and had been buried by his servants in the jungle.

The memorial is now in a disgraceful state: we tidied it up on one occasion, but now the cap has been broken, the stones and top nearly pulled down, (young grave-robbers?) and the railings bent. A little help and some cement would go a long way . . .



Fig ①

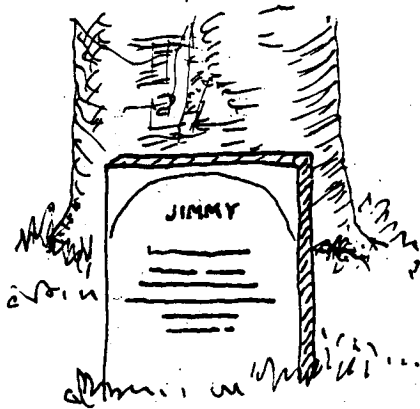


Fig ②



Fig ③

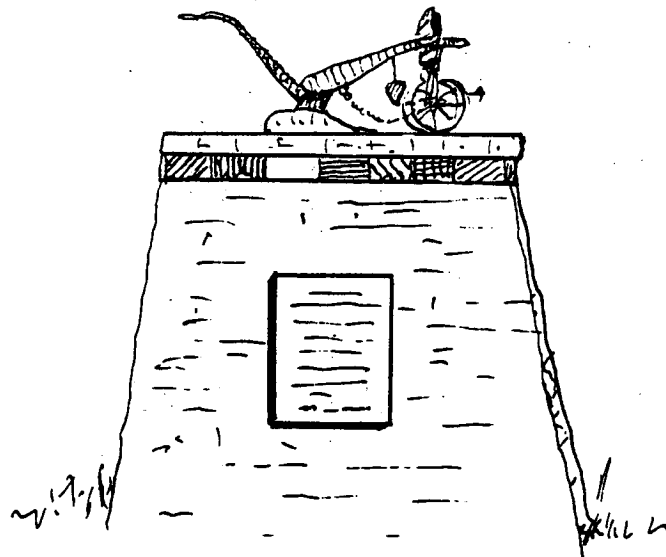


Fig ④

(2) The Monkey's Grave, Henley

This is situated very oddly under a large tree on the main road into Henley; a small grave-stone neatly carved with this inscription:

J I M M Y

A tiny marmot*

Aug 16th 1937

There isn't enough
darkness in the world
to quench the light
of one small candle

It stands, about 39 inches high, 33 inches across and 7 inches thick, beneath a special kind of oak-tree, *Quercus Borealis*, the Red Oak. This tree, bigger and different to its fellows, may well have been chosen especially, but no one seems to know why the marmot was buried there, or to whom he belonged.

* Marmot - ? marmosette

(3) A letterbox in the garden, Whitchurch.

People do have strange things in their gardens, but a letterbox, sitting on the step of a summerhouse, is quite riveting.

Especially as it is a Victorian one, and not let into a wall, but standing by itself, its red paint peeling, and door firmly locked.

The owner, a great character, told me she saw the Post Office men pulling it out, near her house, some ten years ago, and asked them what they were doing. They replied that they were fixing a new one and that it would be thrown away. "Well, you can throw it in my garden", she said promptly, which they did and there it remains, a monument to Post Office extravagance.

(4) The Plough Cairn, Warborough

As one turns off at the roundabout to Warborough, the road bends sharply left. Fields lie on the right of the road, and tucked in the outer angle of the bend, between hedges, is a column, 2.5m x 1.5m, in neat limestone, surmounted by an excellent pale blue model of a plough - there is still some gold on it in places.

It is the Trophy for the World Ploughing Contest, and around the top, in different coloured stones are carved the names of the competing countries. Round the left side are Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, in the centre: Canada, Denmark, Gt. Britain, France, Finland; North Ireland, and Belgium; and on the right New Zealand, U.S.A. and Norway. A slate plaque affixed to the centre gives this information:

World Ploughing
Organisation
This
CAIRN
of Local and Overseas Stones
and

GOLDEN PLOUGH
(Model given by Canada)
commemorates
THE 4TH
WORLD PLOUGHING CONTEST
HELD HERE
OCT.11th & 12th 1950
UNVEILED BY H.R.H. THE
DUKE OF GLOUCESTER
PAX ARVA COLAT

(5) The Crinkle-Crankle Wall, Pangbourne

On one side of the little carpark behind the International Stores, is a Crinkle-Crankle wall, so-called to describe its peculiar waviness.

This bordered the fruit and vegetable garden of the Beedon family, who owned quite a large area of land adjoining the River Pang in the village. An old photo shows the house to have been a thatched cottage, and the little side-road known as The Moors, running up beside the house, was still gated when the photo was taken. The curved wall was to accommodate fruit trees, so that they would get the full benefit of sun and warmth. Now the shop has taken over it is tarmac one side, and a path to peoples' back gardens, the other; and the wall alone remains.

(6) The Druids' Circle, Ipsden

This lies on a rise of about 3 ft on the path between New Town and the village street. The circle is about 20ft across and consists now of seven stones, one in the centre (with three bits) - see plan.

Again, it was Edward Anderton Reade (then aged 20) who was responsible for this ersatz circle, when he was on leave from India in 1827.

There are many 'Loose' sarsen stones in this area, and young Edward thought a Druid's Temple would be fun to construct. He and brother Compton set to, and, borrowing nine of Farmer Wears' horses, managed to move to the site the "King" stone, on a sledge which fell to pieces on arrival!

In his diary it says there were, originally, 27 stones, but it is so overgrown only 7 large ones could be found.

The young men had no intention of forging an antique, as is shown from extracts from Edward's diary - they just spent several days enjoying its construction, and say it "received general approbation"!

(7) The American's Castle, Highmoor

The Highmoor road is lined for about 1½ miles with rough woodland before emerging at Nettlebed, so it is quite difficult to spot this curious little castle, half-hidden by brambles at the roadside.

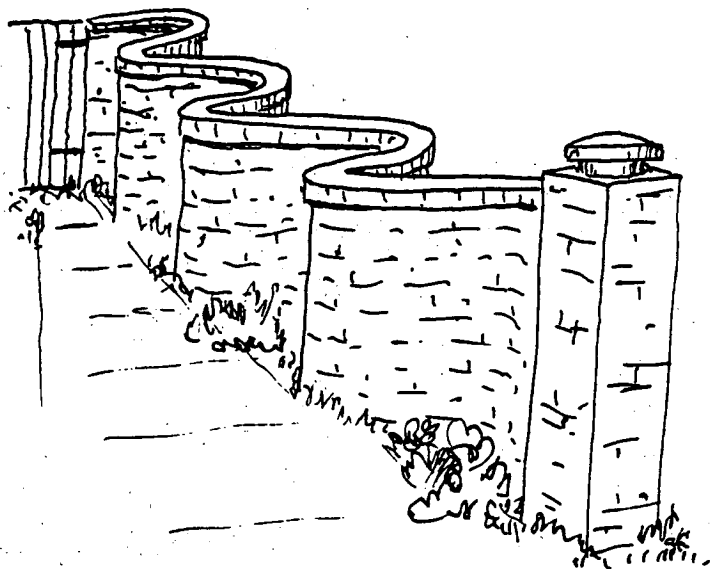
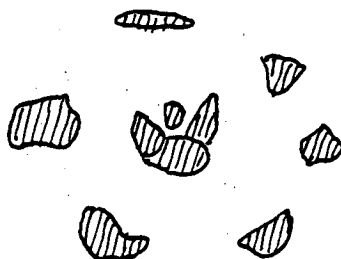


Fig ⑤



Fig ⑥



PLAN

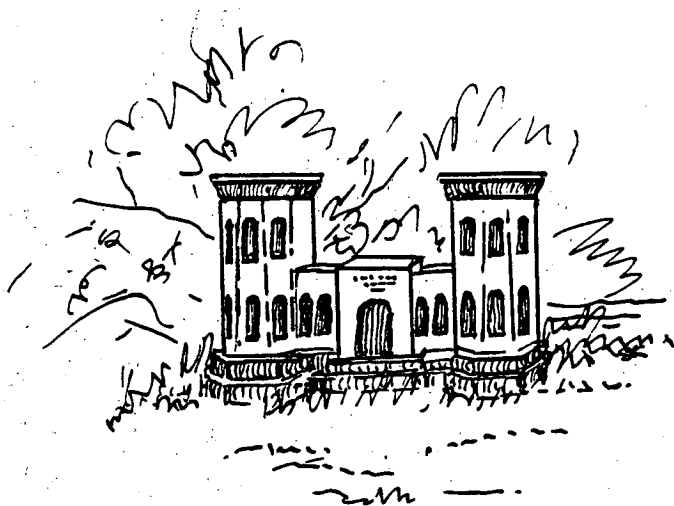


Fig ⑦

It stands around 2ft high, brightly painted in white with scarlet 'windows' and base, built solidly in concrete, by the 343rd Regiment of the U.S. Army Engineers. Their encampment was on either side of the road and I have been in contact with someone who remembers it being built.

A closer look will show that it is E-shaped; a representation both of E for Engineers, and their regimental lapel-badge, a symbolic castle gatehouse flanked with towers.

(8) A Church Bell on the Porch, Whitchurch Hill

The Church of St John's, Whitchurch Hill, was built by the "munificence", as the Victorians expressed it, of Squire C.L. Gardener, and the Rector of Whitchurch; to relieve the people of the journey up and down the mile-long hill between the villages. It was consecrated in 1883 by the Bishop of Oxford.

The Porch was not added until after the Great War, when Mr and Mrs Palmer of Bozedown House (and Humbley & Palmer) erected it as a thank-offering for the safe return of their sons. The plaque recording this, in the porch, is also a War Memorial for the village.

There was, originally, quite a small bell, rung by hand by the Father (long dead) of the inhabitant living opposite the church. The pulley remains, and the rope is in a drawer in the Vestry; - also a muffler, as the present bell is exceedingly loud and wears a leather muffler; - even so, the deafened parishioners have to dart in, between strokes. This bell works by electricity and was installed by another nearby villager. It occasionally goes wrong and has been known to "go off" in the middle of the night - to everyone's alarm!

Round the centre of the bell, which is bronze, is (Beatrice Forbes me dedit AD 1951'; and at the top '1952 + John Taylor + Founders +'. There is a tablet inside the door to Beatrice and Patrick W. Forbes who were also "munificent" to the Village.

(9) The Elephant Well, Binfield Heath

Situated in a wood after crossing a long field, this astonishing construction has no apparent connection with anything. The Well itself is large and shallow, overflowing under the paving in a muddy stream which goes on down the Wood.

The Elephant, roughly sculpted in a rectangle of concrete, with the sun drawn with trowel-slashes, surmounts a 6ft brick wall, off centre, with 16 bricks to the left and 20 to the right. It is faintly reminiscent of the Maharajah's Well elephants at Stoke Row, but no one knows its history. It looks, by the brickwork (nicely restored in places) to be of the 17-1800s. There is an iron-bar gate (bolted) and small worn brick step to the well-brim. Outside at the back the well is domed over in brickwork and earth, looking like an icehouse. The wall, about 6ft high and a foot thick, hides the dome protecting the well. The arch over the gate is 13 bricks wide, and over it, under the Elephant, is a slab reading:

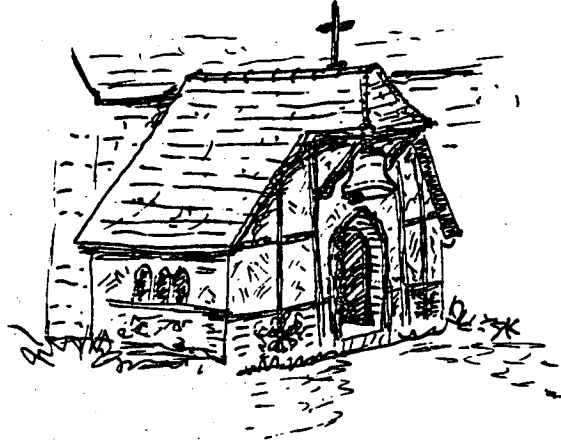


Fig ⑧

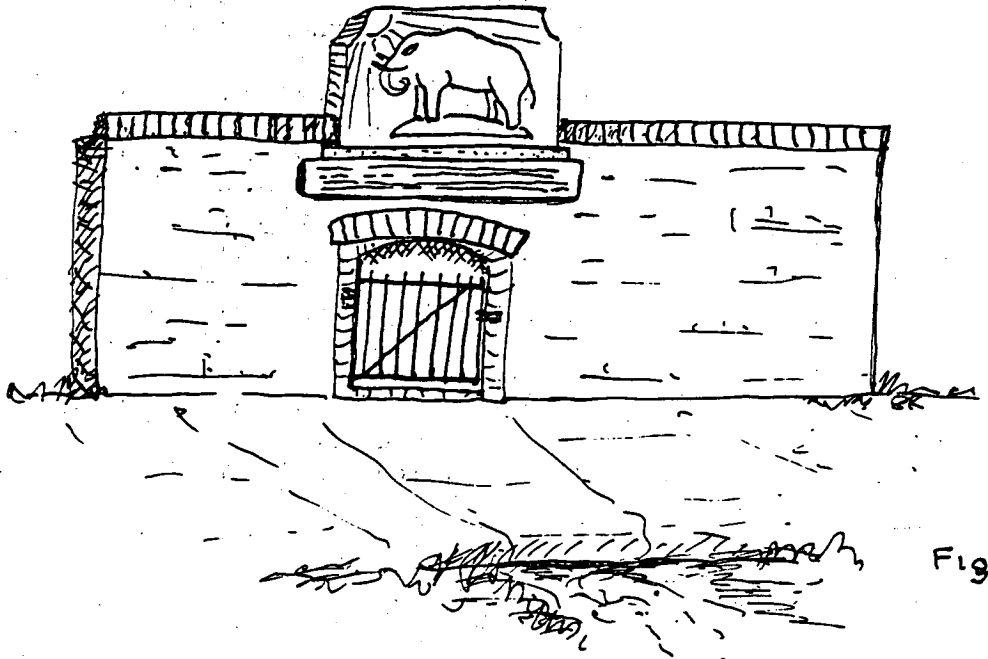


Fig ⑨

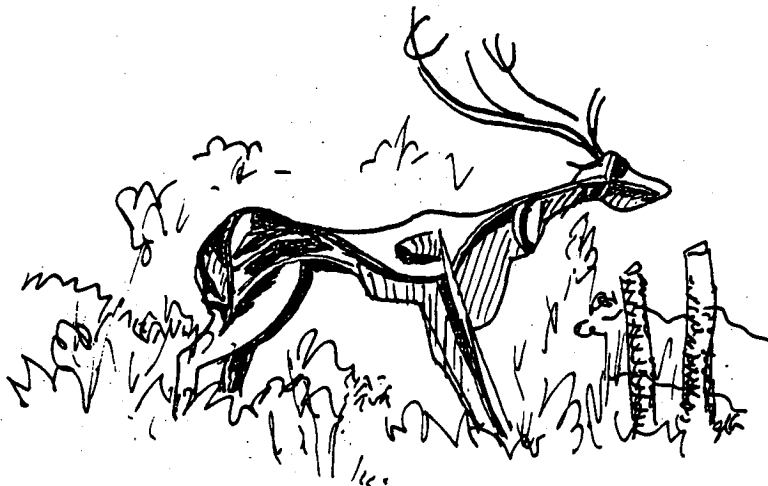


Fig ⑩

Whosoever drinketh of this water
shall thirst again, but whosoever
drinketh of the water I shall
give him shall never thirst.

(10) The Iron Stag, Whitchurch Turn

This fantastic and beautifully sculpted iron stag peers over the hedge as one rounds Whitchurch Turn at Ladygrove.

At Christmas it does indeed give one a turn, as the local family deck him with holly and garlands, and, one year, a Father Xmas sat astride him! He was one of a pair of stags made by a London firm, and some friends of a man from Nettlebed offered it to him, but he refused it, being superstitious. He did, however, mention it to the family, for whom he worked, and they at once accepted it and placed it at the Turn for all to enjoy.

The drawing cannot do him justice as, in spite of being highly stylised, he seems extraordinarily real, standing in the undergrowth, and is a splendid example of the blacksmith's work.

C.A. Graham Kerr

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL DEPARTMENT OF MUSEUM SERVICES

(1) FIELD SECTION - John M. Steane and James Bond.

STAFFING

We continue to be indebted to Mrs Elizabeth Leggatt for her valuable contribution to the maintenance and extension of the record. We have welcomed Andrew Mudd, Paul Gilman and Martin Foreman who have each spent several months in the Museum as part of their training under the O.U.D.E.S. Archaeological In-Service Scheme

SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

New information continues to accumulate within the Sites and Monuments Record despite the increasingly limited opportunities for planned field survey. Several areas of the Record have been comprehensively revised and updated by James Bond, and Ival Hornbrook has continued to work on the backlog of aerial photographs and on the collation of data from revised Ordnance Survey cards received through the National Monuments Record with material already housed in the Record. Other acquisitions have included records on Roman Dorchester donated by Professor Frere and two volumes of notes on Cholsey and Moulshford deposited by Mr J. Souster, a number of maps, record cards and finds from Benson deposited by Mr G. Miles. The number of archaeological sites and buildings now indexed within the Record currently stands at 13,500.

The Oxfordshire Field-Name Survey project has had another very productive and satisfactory year. Surveys have been deposited and transcribed for a number of parishes not previously covered, including East and West Adderbury, Alvescot, Black Bourton, Culham, Drayton (by Banbury), Filkins and Broughton Poggs, Gosford, Merton, Shilton, Wroxton and part of Ipsden; also considerable additions have been made to the names already collected from the parishes of Enstone, Milton-under-Wychwood, Sandford St. Martin, Shipton-under-Wychwood, Spelsbury, Steeple Barton, Tackley and Westcott Barton. We would like to record our gratitude to the many members of local societies and Womens' Institutes and other individual volunteers who have contributed so much hard work to this increasingly valuable collection.

Another potentially important series of overlays to the basic record maps has been initiated following the receipt of detailed botanical surveys of the hedges in Shipton and Milton carried out by the Wychwoods Local History Society.

There has been a reversal in the unprecedented downward trend of visitors to the Sites and Monuments Record experienced in 1982-3; this year over 450 enquirers have consulted the records at Woodstock, while a further estimated 1900 queries have been handled by post and telephone.

PLANNING MATTERS

The keeper has continued to meet fortnightly with the Director of the Oxford Archaeological Unit to monitor all planning applications involving archaeological Sites and Historic buildings. Advice and information to County and District Council planning committees has been given throughout the year.

(2) PREHISTORIC SITES AND FINDS

Round Barrows of the Oxfordshire Cotswolds by Andrew Mudd

This survey was undertaken to investigate the current condition of the round barrows in over 100 parishes in the Oxfordshire Cotswolds. The barrows and ring-ditches, derived from the S.M.R. in the County Museum, Woodstock, are shown on Map 1 and are listed in Appendix 1. (It should be noted that the modern parishes upon which the survey is based do not always correspond to the ecclesiastical parishes shown on the map).

Altogether there are 61 known or probable barrows or barrow sites and a further 21 'possibles'. Only two have been the subject of recent archaeological investigation, 25 (Chesterton) and 34 (New Yatt).

The distribution of barrows shows a noticeable concentration in the Wychwood Forest, not only in the modern forest and park, but also within the old extra-parochial territory of Wychwood (shown on Map 1). In addition there are four barrows (viz. 4, 29, 33 and 41) bordering the Wychwood territory of the late 19th century which appears to have been within woodland in 1815. This argues that the present distribution has much to do with factors affecting survival, particularly the large block of the Wychwood Forest that remained intact until deforestation in the mid-19th century. It is noticeable that many of the barrows in the present forest are among the smallest in the study area (less than 15m. in diameter), have no trace of a ditch, and would be the most vulnerable to destruction.

Scheduled barrows (1-32)

These are all extant mounds ranging between 0.2m. and 4m. in height. Most were scheduled in the late 1940s (exceptions being 12, 14, 31 and 32 in the early 1970s) but were assessed and measured 1940-2.

Non-scheduled barrows (33-43)

There are at least nine and possibly 11 non-scheduled barrows still existing as mounds. (42 Stoke Lyne and 43, Mixbury were not visited).

Probable known sites (44-61)

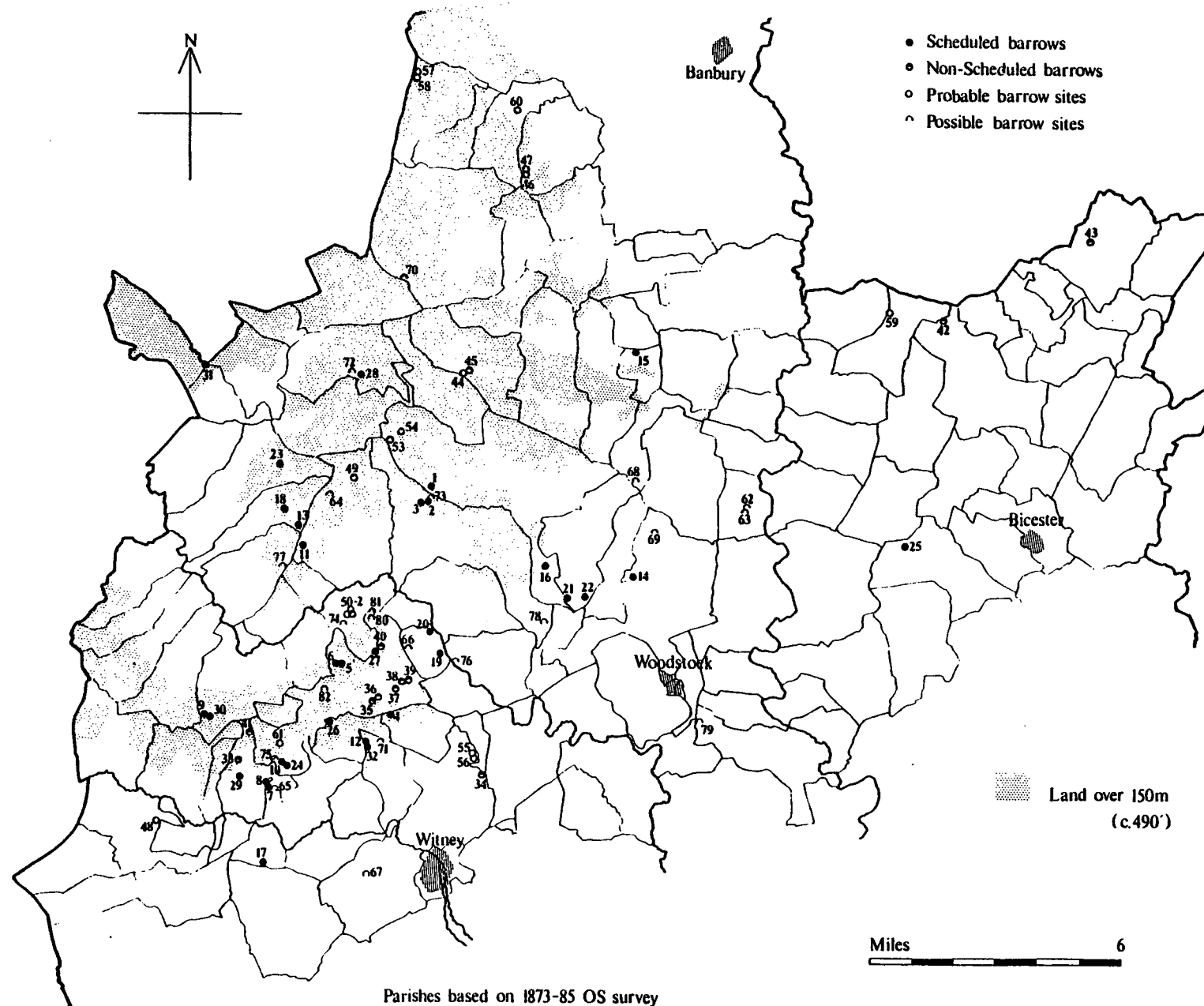
These sites are known from a combination of sources including air-photographs, field evidence, field names, early O.S. maps and the Victoria County History of Oxfordshire.

Possible barrow sites (62-82)

These are derived principally from air-photographs and unsubstantiated reports.

47 of the 61 known and probable barrows and barrow sites were visited. Information on the others comes from the 1961 Fairey Air Survey's county

ROUND BARROWS OF THE OXFORDSHIRE COTSWOLDS



coverage, the report on 31 Chastleton barrow (D. Benson and P. Fasham 1972), and from Louise Armstrong, Scheduled Monuments Warden.

The current condition of these barrows can be summarized as follows:

- (1) Of the scheduled barrows, 1-11 are under the plough and have suffered variable reductions in height since c. 1940 (see Appendix 1 for details).
- (2) A further four barrows (14, 17, 24 and 30) survive as islands in arable fields, but only 14 seems to have suffered any encroachment from the plough.
- (3) Ten of the scheduled barrows have clumps of trees growing on them (15-20, 22-24 and 26), three are in woodland (13, 21 and 25) and three in hedgerows (12, 31 and 32) and this has obvious implications of root disturbance. A further four are scrub-covered (27-30).
- (4) Of the 11 non-scheduled barrows, eight survive as clear mounds (33-40) and six of these being in the Wychwood Forest, are likely to remain unchanged for the foreseeable future. 33 (Nutoaks Copse) is the only mound which seems vulnerable to destruction though the situation with regard to 42 (Stoke Lyne) may be similar. 34 has been extensively disturbed already, 41 is virtually flat and 43 may be so.
- (5) 44-61 have been ploughed out.

Conclusion

On the face of it the situation regarding the scheduled barrows is fairly stable. Only the barrows which were under the plough in the 1940s have been reduced in height, though 14 and 29 have been encroached upon. However, whether any of the ploughed barrows still contain archaeological deposits under their mounds is unknown. In this connection it is worth referring to the report on Swell 8 Round Barrow, Cow Common, in the Gloucestershire Cotswolds (A. Saville 1980). This was 0.3m. high in 1974, but excavation showed that the "barrow" only existed as the formerly protected and therefore elevated Bronze Age subsoil remains, the mound and all deposits having been removed by the plough. It seems that the ploughed sites in this survey are approaching this condition, if they have not already reached it.

Indeed of the 43 extant barrows in the survey area perhaps only one (14, Copping Knoll) is in a state such that it may contain the full range of information about its structure and the sealed deposits under the mound. Others, particularly 26-30, are likely to contain some undisturbed deposits.

Thus when these barrows as a whole are viewed as an archaeological resource the situation is not encouraging. It is suggested that it is important to assess, by trial excavation, whether there are any barrows on the verge of destruction which still contain evidence of occupation levels and will be able to yield information on Bronze Age cultures, land use and environment which is so badly lacking in this part of Oxfordshire.

This is a summary of a survey carried out for the County Museum, Woodstock, as part of the In-Service Training Course. The full report is housed in the Museum.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Louise Armstrong (Scheduled Monuments Warden) for information on the scheduled barrows, and John Steane (County Museum, Woodstock) for comments on this report.

Reference

A. Saville (1980) "Archaeology and Ploughing in the Cotswolds: a CRAAGS response?" in J. Hinchliffe and T. Schadla-Hall eds. "The Past under the Plough".

Appendix 1 - List of Round Barrows in survey

This list follows a standard format consisting of; Number (as shown on Map 1); Name; Modern Parish; Scheduled Monuments County Number (where applicable); Primary Record Number of the County Museum's Sites and Monuments Record; Grid Reference.

There then follows comments on the condition of the barrow, its previous history, and bibliographic references.

1. Lidstone, Enstone. County No. 51; PRN 1563 SP35302415.
Mound c. 30m. diameter and c. 0.5m. high on W. side, lowered by c. 0.1m. since 1940. E. side flattened since ?1940.
Refs: VCH ii 346.
2. Spelsbury Down, Spelsbury. County No. 50; PRN 1564 SP35152365
Stoney mound c. 20m. diameter and c. 0.5m. high, lowered by c. 0.1m. since 1940. This one, or No. 3 was excavated by Harold Dillon who discovered an area of "burnt earth, 30' in diameter, containing stones".
Refs. VCH i 243; VCH ii 347
3. Spelsbury Down, Spelsbury. County No. 49 PRN 2292 SP34952360 Stoney mound c. 20m. diameter and c. 0.5m. high, lowered by c. 0.1m. since 1940. May have been excavated by Harold Dillon (see 2 above).
Refs. VCH i 243; VCH ii 347
4. Brize's Lodge, Ramsden. County No. 67; PRN 1539 SP 33861571
Mound c. 22m. diameter and c. 0.5m. high, lowered by c. 0.4m. since 1940. Was within Rowborough Coppice in 1815.
Refs. Plan of Wychwood Forest and Blandford Park 1815.
(Photocopy in County Museum); VCH ii 346.
5. High Lodge (E.), Cornbury and Wychwood. County No. 66; PRN 2295 SP 31951758.
Stoney mound c. 18m. diameter and 0.6m. high, lowered by 0.1m. since 1942. R-B sherds found (report on Monuments Card).
Refs. VCH ii 347.
6. High Lodge (W.), Cornbury and Wychwood. County No. 66; PRN 2295 SP 1378 1758.
Stoney mound c. 20m. diameter and 0.8m. high lowered by c. 0.4m. since 1942. R-B sherds found (Report on Monuments Card).
Refs. VCH ii 347.

7. Leigh Hale (E.), Asthall, County No. 70; PRN 2297 SP 29121303
Stoney mound c. 20m. diameter and 0.5m. high, lowered by
c. 0.5m. since 1940.
Refs. VCH ii 345.
8. Leigh Hale (W), Asthall. County No. 70; PRN 2297 SP 29101304.
Stoney mound c. 10m. diameter and c. 0.2m. high, lowered
by c. 0.3m. since 1940.
Refs. VCH ii 345.
9. Shipton bowl barrow, Shipton-under-Wychwood. County No. 61; PRN 2235
SP 26851558.
Mound c. 18m. diameter and c. 0.5m. high. No earlier record.
10. Roustage (NW), Leafield. County No. 69; PRN 2245 SP 29831382
Stoney mound c. 10m. diameter and c. 0.2m. high, lowered
by c. 0.3m. since 1940. Dense concentration of R-B pottery
on surface (PRN 11843).
Excavated by Henry Dryden in 1858, Roman and Iron-Age coins
found (now in Ashmolean Museum). Was within Rowstidge Wood
in 1815.
Refs. VCH i 243, 326; VCH ii 346; Plan of Wychwood Forest
and Blandford Park 1815 (photocopy in County Museum)
11. Barter's Hill, Chadlington. County No. 45; PRN 2290 SP 30472195
Stoney mound c. 28m. diameter and c. 0.7m. high, unchanged
since 1940. A narrow trench appears to have been cut across
S. end of the barrow (report on Monuments Card).
Refs. VCH ii 345.
12. Blindwell Wood 'A', Crawley. County No. 124; PRN 1553 SP 32981464
Stoney mound c. 20m. diameter and c. 2m. high. Mostly
situated in hedgerow, but some ploughing on W side. Appears
to have been quarried on N side.
Refs. VCH ii 346.
13. Skew Plantation, Sarsden. County No. 44; PRN 2289 SP 30312273
Overgrown mound c. 35m. diameter N-S, c. 25m. E-W and
c. 1.5m. high (c. 1.0m. on W side in arable field)
Refs. VCH ii 346.
14. Copping Knoll, Wootton. County No. 149; PRN 1728 SP 43052098
Grassy mound c 25m. diameter N-S and c. 22m. E-W diameter
reduced by 5-8m. since 1972. Height C. 1.5m.
Refs. VCH ii 347.
15. Over Worton, Worton. County No. 42; PRN 2287 SP 43022922.
c. 20m. diameter and 2m. high "possibly the small mound
of a motte and bailey castle" (M. Aston 1972 Field
Investigation).
Refs. VCH ii 346.
16. Ditchley Park Clump, Enstone. County No. 55 PRN 1579 SP 39552124
c. 30m. diameter and 1m. high with a very prominent ditch.
May have been landscaped and re-dug. Not marked as an
antiquity on OS map (cf No. 79).
Refs. VCH ii 346.

17. Asthall Barrow, Asthall. County No. 15; PRN 1492 SP 28991010
 c. 17m. diameter and 2m. high with drystone revetment up to 1.5m.
 Excavated by G.S. Bowles 1923, Saxon pottery and a cremation found.
 Refs. VCH ii 345.
 E.T. Leeds, Antiq. Journal Vol. IV 1924.
18. Squires Clump, Sarsden. County No. 31; PRN 2282 SP 29792336
 c. 22m. diameter and 1.8m. high with "ditch recently re-dug and retaining wall built" (report on Monument Card)
 Tradition has it that "Lord Ducie excavated the barrow and found skeletons each in a little chamber in a sitting posture" (VCH).
 Refs. VCH i 244; VCH ii 346.
19. Cornbury Park (Park Farm), Cornbury and Wychwood. County No. 64
 PRN 1291. SP 35691805
 c. 20m. diameter and 1.5m. high.
 Refs. VCH ii 345
20. Cornbury Park (N. Lodge), Cornbury and Wychwood. County No. 52.
 PRN 2293 SP 35311875.
 c. 13m. diameter and 0.8m. high. Had a "trench dug across it E-W" (reported on Monuments Card).
 Refs. VCH ii 345.
21. Arthur's Lodge, Kiddington with Asterleigh. County No. 24. PRN 2281
 SP 40442008
 c. 19m. diameter and c. 1m. high.
 Refs. VCH ii 346.
22. Wood Farm, Kiddington with Asterleigh. County No. 59; PRN 1729
 SP 40912006
 c. 30m. diameter and 1.2m. high. "Much disturbed in centre" and a possible trench on N side" (reported on Monuments Card)
 Refs. VCH ii 346.
23. Besbury Lane, Churchill. County No. 47; PRN 2291 SP 29552503.
 c. 25m. E-W and 20m. N-S diameter, and c. 2.4m. high, with probably modern drystone wall.
 Refs. VCH ii 345.
24. Roustage (SE), Leafield. County No. 69; PRN 2236 SP 29841381
 Stoney, overgrown mound c. 14m. diameter and 0.6m. lower than reported in 1940. Badly mutilated with a large hole in centre. Excavated by Henry Dryden in 1858. Roman and Iron Age coins found, (now in Ashmolean Museum). Within Rowstidge Wood in 1815.
 Refs. VCH i 243, 326; VCH ii 346; Plan of Wychwood Forest and Blandford Park 1815 (photocopy in County Museum).
25. Oxford Lodge, Chesterton. County No. 145; PRN 5125 SP 53352215.
 c. 20m. diameter N-S and c. 12m. E-W, and c. 2m. high. Partly excavated 1974, abraded R-B sherds found. Recently damaged on NE and SE sides by bulldozer.
 Refs. VCH i 263; V. Gregory and R.T. Rowley 1974. CBA Group 9 Newsletter 4.

26. Leaffield. County No. 21; PRN 2278 SP 31611540.
 c. 25m. diameter and 4m. high. Damaged on E side by water reservoir.
 Refs. VCH ii 346.
27. Waterman's Lodge (S), Cornbury and Wychwood. County No. 68; PRN 2296 SP 33241808.
 c. 20m. diameter and 2m. high.
 Refs. VCH ii 347.
28. "Druids Barrow", Over Norton. County No. 39; PRN 1279 SP 32602835
 c. 17m. diameter and c. 1.2m. high. Has been enclosed within Water Authority Land since mid-1960s.
 Refs. VCH ii 346.
29. Pain's Farm, Swinbrook and Widford. County No. 71; PRN 2298 SP 28081332
 c. 16m. diameter smaller by c. 5m. since 1940 (due to cattle trample?), and c. 2m. high. Was within Faws Grove, Wychwood Forest in 1815.
 Refs. VCH ii 347; Plan of Wychwood Forest and Blandford Park 1815 (photocopy in County Museum).
30. Shipton Barrow, Shipton-under-Wychwood. County No. 61; PRN 1451 SP 26891556.
 In 2 tiers, 30m. (base) and 17m. diameter, height 1.5m. (1st stage) and 1.3m. Within rectangular enclosure with bank c. 1m. high on 3 sides (OS survey 1977).
 Refs. VCH ii 346-7; OS survey in Detailed Record File, County Museum.
31. Cairn, Chastleton. County No. 158. PRN 2626 SP 26662867.
 c. 15m. diameter, much disturbed, but "there can be no doubt that the site is that of a barrow" (D. Benson and P. Fasham 1972).
 Refs. D. Benson and P. Fasham 1972, Oxoniensia Vol. XXXVII 1-9.
32. Blindwell Wood 'B', Crawley. County No. 124; PRN 1553 SP 32981460
 c. 25m. diameter (mound and ditch) and c. 0.5m. high. Ditch on E and S sides only, looks excessively large and would, if projected round N side, more or less touch the mound of No. 12.
 Refs. VCH ii 346.
33. Nutoaks Copse, Swinbrook and Widford. PRN 11746 SP 28121392.
 Tree covered stoney mound c. 16m. diameter and c. 1m. high. Within Nuttox Wood in 1815.
 Refs. Plan of Wychwood Forest and Blandford Park 1815. (photocopy in County Museum).
34. New Yatt, Hailey. PRN 12106 SP 37391360.
 Large mound c. 30m. diameter and c. 1m. high. Robbed, with a "disturbed cremation" found in centre.
 Refs. ACC Brodribb, AR Hands and DR Walker 1974, CBA Group Newsletter 4 p.9.
35. Maple Hill, Cornbury and Wychwood. PRN 1335 SP 33161621.
 c. 9m. diameter and 1.8m. high.

36. Maple Hill, Cornbury and Wychwood. PRN 1336 SP 33161622.
c. 10m. diameter and c. 1.5m. high.
37. Hawksnest Copse, Cornbury and Wychwood. PRN 13408 SP 339166
c. 13m. diameter and c. 1m. high.
- 50 38. Hawksnest Copse, Cornbury and Wychwood. PRN 13409 SP 342169.
c. 10m. diameter and 1m. high.
39. Hawksnest Copse, Cornbury and Wychwood. PRN 13410 SP 342169.
c. 11m. diameter and c. 1m. high.
40. Waterman's Lodge (N), Cornbury and Wychwood. PRN 3389 SP 33341813.
c. 14m. diameter and c. 2m. high.
- 48 50 41. Southlawn Cottages, Swinbrook and Widford. PRN 4047 SP 28541499
c. 25m. diameter and 0.2m. high. "Can be seen as a vague
rise but not surveyable" (OS survey 1976). Possibly one of
2 barrows excavated by Rolleston 1872. Roman coins found
(in a secondary context?) with a central ?Beaker pit.
Within Farrington Copse 1815.
Refs. VCH i 243-4; OS Survey 1976 in Detailed Record File,
County Museum; Plan of Wychwood Forest and Blandford Park
1815 (photocopy in County Museum).
- 50 42. Round Hill Barrow, Stoke Lyne. PRN 5020 SP 54753073.
Present condition not known. "Planted and well preserved"
(VCH).
Refs. VCH ii 347.
- 50 43. Barrow Hill, Mixbury. PRN 4844 SP 60283378.
Present condition not known "Much reduced by the plough"
(VCH).
Refs. VCH ii 346.
44. Magpie Farm 'A', Little Tew. PRN 13262 SP 36722819
S ring-ditch of a group of 3. A very low stoney mound c. 20m.
diameter. Flint-scatter noticed in the area.
Refs. Astral Air Survey 1981. T.18 P.608.
45. Magpie Farm 'B', Little Tew. PRN 13262 SP 36 752821
Ring-ditch similar to 'A', slightly to NW. Metalled farm-
track recently built over it.
Refs. Astral Air Survey 1981 T.18 P.608.
46. Tadmarton Camp (S), Tadmarton. PRN 4205 SP 38553602
Visible as a ring-ditch. "Totally destroyed" (VCH).
On 6" OS map (1955)
Refs. Fairey Air Survey 1961. 21.025; VCH ii 347.
47. Tadmarton Camp (N), Tadmarton. PRN 4205 SP 38553604.
"Totally destroyed" (VCH). On 6" OS map 1955.
Refs. VCH ii 347.
48. Bury Barns, Burford. PRN 2587, SP 24831147.
Very clear on Major Allen's air photograph 1938. Now no
surface evidence.
Refs. Air Photo 2411/A (Allen ? 1938) in County Museum
Collection.

49. Bury Hill, Chadlington. PRN 4145 SP 32352450
Marked on 1955 6" OS map; no mound now visible, but a concentration of stones c. 20m. diameter may mark the location.
- 50-52. 3 Barrows, Chilson. PRN 3219 SP 321192.
3 conjoining circular negative cropmarks, may mark the location of 3 disc barrows. They form a broad, nebulous mound in a field called 'Burrow Ash Furlong'.
Ref. Fairey Air Survey 1961 SP 3118/A., in County Museum Collection.
53. Old Chalford, Enstone. PRN 1273 SP 33752590.
Field name "Lower Distins" or "Ditchlings". c. 1857
2 barrows (one 8' high) levelled in a field called Little Disslings, Chalford. Contained black and red ashes, charred metal" (VCH).
Refs. VCH i 243.
54. "Round Hill", Enstone. PRN 5595 SP 3425 2612.
Ring-ditch on Washpool Hill (next to Round Hill) may be the barrow referred to in a 19th century excavation of Round Hill barrow, Chalford (VCH).
Refs. VCH i 243; Fairey Air Survey 1961 13.170.
55. Shakenoak Farm (N), Hailey. PRN 10 513 SP 37111428.
One pf a pair of very clear small ring-ditches. No surface trace.
Refs. Fairey Air Survey 1961 6.098.
56. Shakenoak Farm (S), Hailey. PRN 10514 SP 37081426
One of a pair of very clear small ring-ditches. No surface trace.
Refs. Fairey Air Survey 1961 6098.
57. Heath Farm (N), Sibford Gower. PRN 1582 SP 3449 3964.
On the first edition of 1" OS map and possibly visible on 1961 air-photo, though at a slightly different Grid Reference
May be one referred to by Beesley (1841) - "a single barrow and a pair of twin barrows on the crest of the hill on the road to Brailes". Now no surface trace.
Refs. VCH ii 348; Fairey Air Survey 1961 18.031.
58. Heath Farm (S), Sibford Gower. PRN 1581 SP 34473952.
On first edition 1" OS Map, and possibly visible on 1961 air photo. Some large sandstone blocks (up to c. 0.4m. long) in vicinity of barrow site and 4 or 5 others found removed to hedgerow. May be one referred to by Beesley (1841) - see 57 above.
59. Ploughly Hill, Fritwell. PRN 4829 SP 52653112.
Situated at a Hundred Meeting Place. Reported by Stukeley 1724 as "small" and "High", and levelled in 1845 when human bones were found (VCH).
Refs. VCH iv 135 (with further references).
60. Row Barrow, Swalcliffe. PRN 1584 SP 38633842.
"Now practically destroyed" (VCH). Excavated for 2nd time in c. 1854 when it was 300' in circumference and 12-14' high.

Contained bones, sand and burnt wood. (Roman?)
Refs. VCH ii 347; Trans N. Oxon Arch. Soc. 1853-5 p.55

61. Wastidge Green, Leafield. PRN 13267 SP 29711455.
No surface trace, but may appear on air-photo (possibly a double barrow). Reported as excavated in 1858 when Roman coins were found nearby or during excavation (cf nos. 10 and 24 above).
Refs. VCH i 326 Footnote 9; Fairey Air Survey 1961 6,086.
62. Ring-ditch (N), Rousham. PRN 12 711 SP 47292353.
Small ring-ditch on valley bottom site. No surface evidence.
Refs. Fairey Air Survey 1961 13.034
63. Ring-ditch (S), Rousham. PRN 12, 711 SP 47312348.
Small ring-ditch (possibly incomplete), on valley bottom site.
No surface evidence.
Refs. Fairey Air Survey 1961 13.034
64. Lowlands Barn, Chadlington. PRN 3401 SP 31422396
Information from Mrs Wickham Steed. No other evidence.
65. Stockley Copse, Asthall. PRN 3406 SP 29221290
Stoney patch, with possible ditch, visible on air-photo.
No surface evidence.
Refs. Fairey Air Survey 1961 6.053.
66. Cornbury Park, Cornbury and Wychwood. PRN 3393 c. SP 346184.
Ring-ditch reported by Mrs Wickham Steed. No other evidence.
67. Ring-ditch, Curbridge. PRN 8204 SP 33050965.
Ring-ditch, but possibly too large for a barrow 50m. + diameter.
Refs. Benson and Miles 1974. "The Upper Thames Valley" p. 41 map 15.
68. Ring-ditch, Westcot Barton, PRN 12615 SP 43002447.
Ring-ditch on a spur of high land.
Refs. Fairey Air Survey 1961 13.096.
69. Ludwell Farm, Wooton. PRN 11638 SP 44072228.
Ring-ditch on a spur of high land near an enclosure. No surface evidence.
Refs. Fairey Air Survey 1961 12.093.
70. Lower Berryfields, Hook Norton. PRN 13420 SP 33753234.
Oval enclosure crop-mark. Beesley in "History of Banbury" 1841, notes the destruction of a pair of twin barrows at Berryfields Farm.
Refs. VCH ii 348.
71. Blindwell Wood 'C' Crawley. PRN 1552 SP 33311456.
On 6" OS map 1922, and possibly visible on air-photo, though no surface trace. One of 5 barrows reported from this field, though 2 others (PRNs 1550 and 1551) have been discounted by excavation.
Refs. VCH ii 346.

72. Small barrow, Over Norton. PRN 1274 SP 32172847.
"A small round barrow with stonework at E. end". (Archive 25" map, OGS Crawford). No surface trace.
73. Spelsbury Down, Spelsbury. PRN 13390. SP 35102389.
Ploughed stoney patch and possible ditch visible on air-photo.
No surface trace.
Refs. Fairey Air Survey. 1961 13.050.
74. 'Barrow', Chilson. PRN 4009 SP 32031910.
Marked on 1" OS map 1962 in corner of "Burrow Ash Furlong"
(see aksi 50-52). No other evidence.
75. Roustage, Leafield. PRN 13264 SP 29121400.
Reported as a ring-ditch c. 20m. overall diameter. No other evidence.
Refs. OS Field Investigation (1976), in Detailed Record file, County Museum.
76. 'Barrow', Fawler. PRN 1291 SP 35951823.
"Remains of mound" reported on OS Card No. SP 31 NE 6.
N other evidence.
77. 'Barrow', Lyneham. PRN 13327 c. SP 298212
Between Lyneham Long Barrow and Lyneham Camp, a group of
"5 or 6 circular mounds, possibly barrows" reported by
E. Condor 1893-5. Extensive low mound in field, possibly a
large round barrow, but may be the long mound (PRN 4856)
noted in the margin of the 1966 OS Arch. Division 6" Record
Map.
Refs. E. Condor, PSA 2nd Series 15, 1893-5, 404.
78. Sheers Copse, Spelsbury. PRN 3400 P 39701930
Barrow reported by Mrs Wickham Steed. Field Investigation .
1973 failed to locate it.
79. Campsfield Wood, Kidlington. PRN 1304 SP 45551576.
Clear "disc barrow" c. 30m. diameter and c. 1m. high, but not
marked as an antiquity on 1872 25" OS map, and may be an
ornamental feature.
80. Barrow, Cornbury and Wychwood. PRN 3390 SP 33001940.
Within Forest. Reported by Mrs Wickham Steed. Not
investigated.
81. Barrow, Cornbury and Wychwood. PRN 3391 SP 33031956.
Under wall if Wychwood Forest, reported by Mrs Wyckham Steed.
Or possibly in nearby 'Barrow Field'. Not investigated.
82. Kingswood Clump, Leafield. PRN 1538 SP 31351667.
"Certainly a barrow and probably a round barrow with a pit
dug in the top". (Note by Mrs Wyckham Steed). Within
Kingswood Coppice in 1815. Not investigated.
Refs. Plan of Wychwood Forest and Blandford Park 1815
(photocopy in County Museum).

(3) FIELD-WALKING

Stonesfield Roman Villa (PRN 1232 SP 399170) - Paul Gilman

Little now remains to indicate the site of the villa, where elaborate mosaics were discovered in the 18th century (an account of their discovery can be found in Oxoniensia VI pp. 1-8). A field-walking exercise was carried out to try and assess the extent of the site, and to assess the possibility of an adjacent development affecting remains of the villa. In the event no likely threat is envisaged but it does seem that the villa site extends outside the scheduled area. The landowner and farmer of the immediately adjacent fields, Mr Roger Evins, has a fine collection of Roman and later artifacts. They include: a late Roman buckle (Hawkes and Dunning Class IB), other Roman metalwork and pottery, over 50 Roman coins, mostly of the mid-third to late fourth centuries and a late Saxon cut penny of the reign of Aethelred II.

I would like to thank Mr Evins for permission to walk the site and to examine his finds, Richard Hingley and Andrew Mudd for assistance with field-walking.

Cogges (PRNs 5717-8, 7532; SP 363094 & SP 364091)

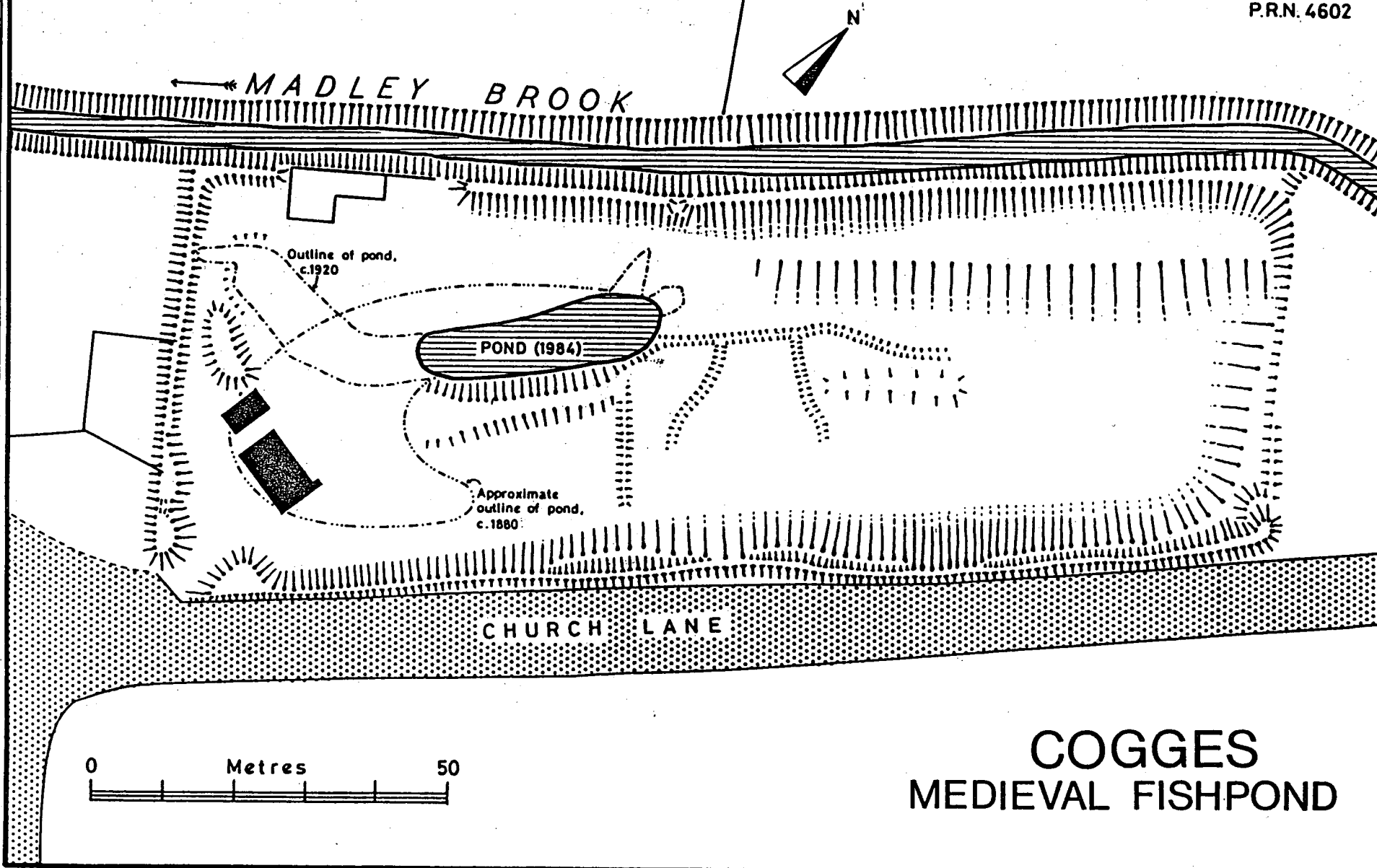
Two small rectangular enclosures, possibly Saxon timber buildings, have been recorded from the air in the field called Home Ground immediately south of the deserted medieval village of Cogges. In Long Ground, the next field to the south, a more recent aerial photograph taken by John Blair in 1982 has further elucidated the somewhat ill-defined cropmarks previously recorded, revealing one single and two conjoined ring-ditches, possibly of Bronze Age date, with a group of up to eight large rectangular pits resembling Saxon sunken-featured buildings. Field-walking on both sites by James Bond and Chris Page revealed a few indeterminate and unworked flints and a sparse and unconcentrated scatter of pottery of various dates, including a few early medieval sherds; but this produced insufficient evidence to confirm the provisional identification of the crop marks.

(4) EARTHWORKS

Water Eaton (PRN 1109; SP 512123)

The deserted medieval village of Water Eaton was surveyed by James Bond, Eleanor Chance, Janet Cooper and Chris Day for Oxfordshire Museums Services and the Victoria County History, by kind permission of the owner, Mr Robert Sawyer and the tenant, Mr I.C. Kerwood. The village site covers some 11 hectares on flat alluvial land in the Cherwell Valley. Much of its area has been reduced by ploughing and encroached over by farm buildings and other post-medieval disturbances, but two fields at the western and south-eastern extremities survived under permanent pasture. Medieval pottery from a small ploughed area south of the lane (see plan) was dated to the thirteenth/fourteenth centuries by Maureen Mellor of the Oxford Archaeological Unit; fifteenth-century material, plentiful at the neighbouring ploughed site of Cutteslowe (PRN 1094; SP 506116), was absent from this part of the Water Eaton site, but subsequent reoccupation was suggested by large quantities of eighteenth-century wares. Aerial photographs taken in 1961 (Cambridge

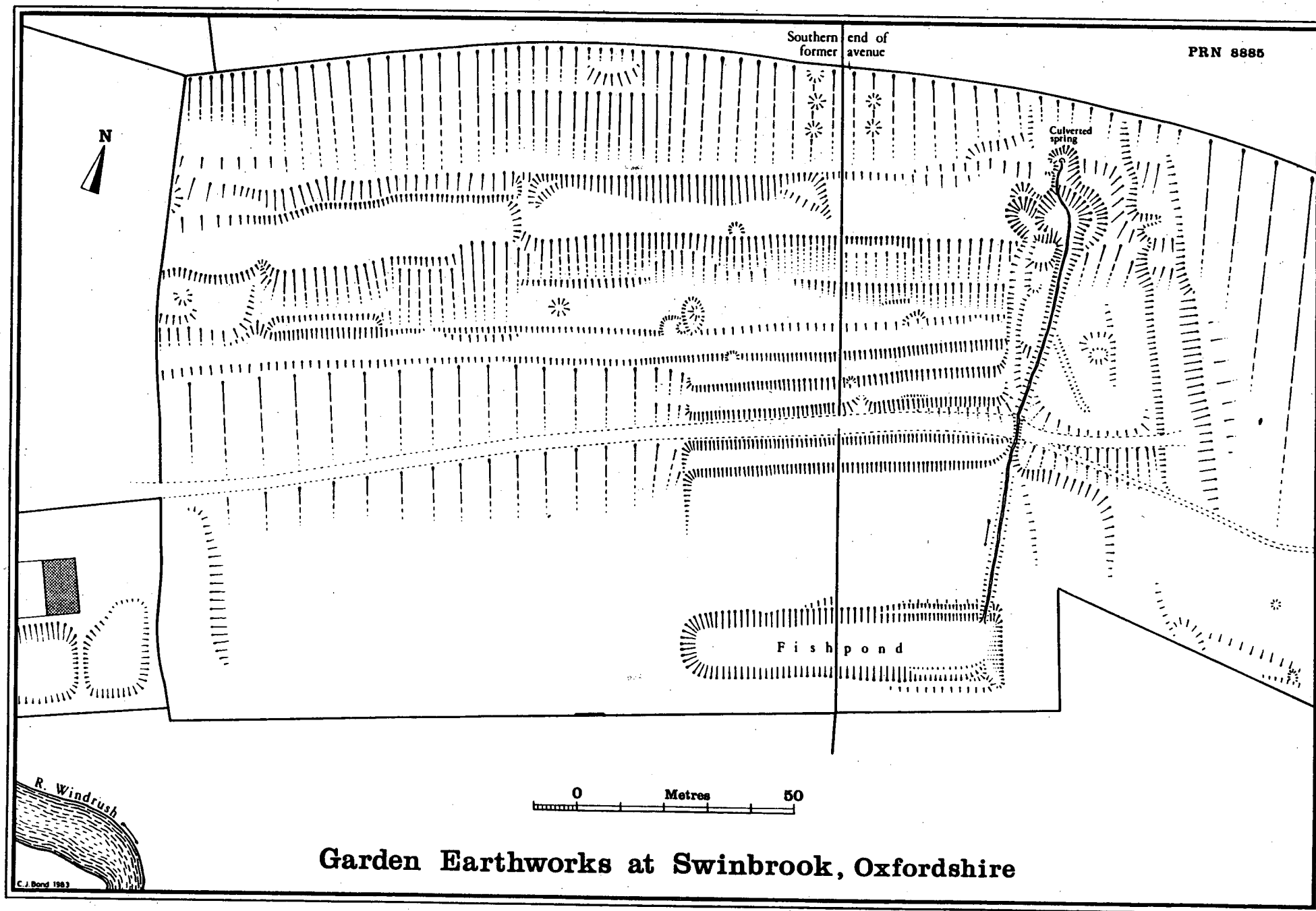
P.R.N. 4602

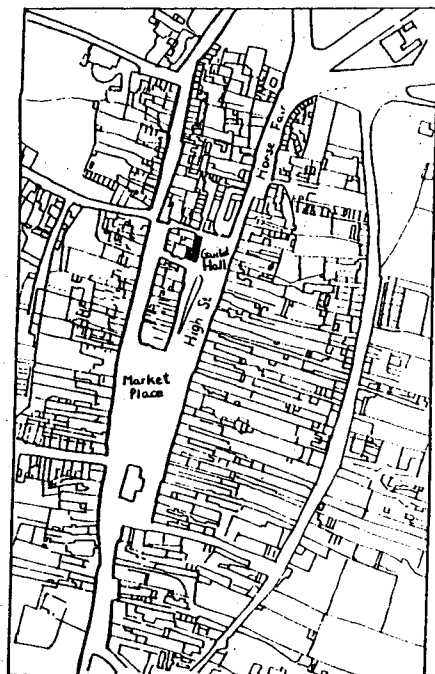


University Collection ACR2, 3; Fairey Aviation Surveys 6122/5.114-5) were used to plot peripheral areas of the settlement in fields which were inaccessible for field-walking and survey because of growing crops. The documentary evidence examined by Janet Cooper indicates a sizeable and moderately prosperous settlement during the Middle Ages (33 tenants in 1086; at least 35 tenants in 1320-1; subsidy assessments of 52s 8d. in 1306, 72s 6d. in 1316, 73s 6d. in 1327 and £2 11s 6d. in 1334; 128 contributors to 1377 Poll Tax; 32 men assessed for subsidy in 1523, and 25 in 1524). Despite extensive enclosures during the sixteenth century by Oseney Abbey and William Frere, 42 houses and cottages remained in 1565, and witnesses in 1598 stated that Frere's enclosures had not reduced their number. Enclosure permitted the village to spread southwards over former arable; the survey shows regular croft-like features apparently overlying ridge and furrow, and in 1586 William Frere built the present manor-house (some 500m. south-east of Middle Farm) on the site of an earlier cottage on the enclosed land. Subsequently the population seems to have declined (21 customary tenants in 1631; 17-20 houses in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries), but the few available maps suggest a small hamlet of 8-10 houses surviving into the early nineteenth century. The final disintegration of the village nucleus had occurred before 1876.

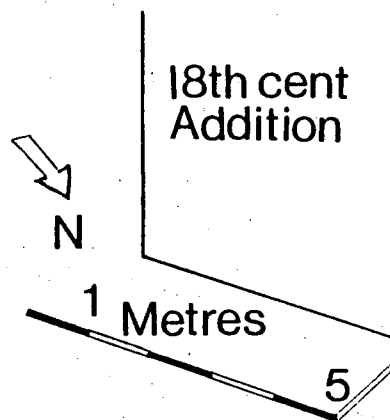
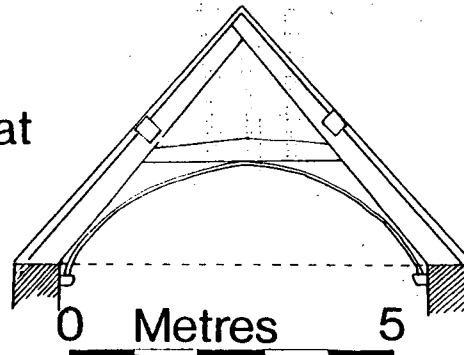
Cogges Fishpond (PRN 4602; SP 363098)

A survey of the earthworks of the medieval fishpond at Cogges was carried out by James Bond, Paul Gilman and John Steane prior to the public hearing to determine the current appeal against refusal of planning consent for development on the site. The outline of the pond is a regular rectangle occupying an area some 40-60m. wide by 150m. long between Church Lane and the canalised Madley Brook, the latter clearly having been diverted out of its original course in the valley bottom some time in the early Middle Ages. The first known documentary record of the pond appears to be a passing reference in a dispute over common pasture and the blocking of a road in 1228 (Cal. Pat. R. 1225-32, p.217). In 1242 Walter de Grey, Archbishop of York, acquired the manor and purchased from Thomas de la Haye and Alexandra Arsic 'all their right to the fishpond of Cogges or any part of it, which fishpond lies between the road running from the monks' mill in Cogges to the court of the archbishop on the west, and the bridge of Masherg (over the Madley Brook) on the east, and between the tillage called Borhull on the north and the street running from the archbishop's court to the wood on the south' (Cal. Chart. R. 1226-57, p.265) - a description which leaves no doubt that the pond there described is identical with the site surveyed. The Harcourt Estate vouchers in the Bodleian include a bill dated 1782 from Thomas Bordseye, carpenter, for work including the making of a gate at the fishpond, and the 1787 enclosure award includes a field called 'Pond Close' - presumably it was by then more or less dry. The Harcourt Estate Plan of 1870 shows it merely as a small rectangular close, still called 'Fish Pond', but apparently then containing no water. The first edition of the Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 in 1876 clearly marks the outline of the medieval pond as a large rectangular depression, and suggests that within it there was a central ridge-like island along its long axis, vestiges of which may still be seen; but a smaller crescent-shaped pond had now been dug out within the western half of the medieval pond bed. Subsequent editions show that considerable changes have occurred in the outline and extent of this smaller water area within the last century, but only slight evidence for these changes could be detected on the ground. There are also slight indications that there may originally have been a second, rather smaller pond immediately below the main one, but this area has been greatly disturbed by the construction of the school playground and other alterations, and the suspicion cannot be confirmed.



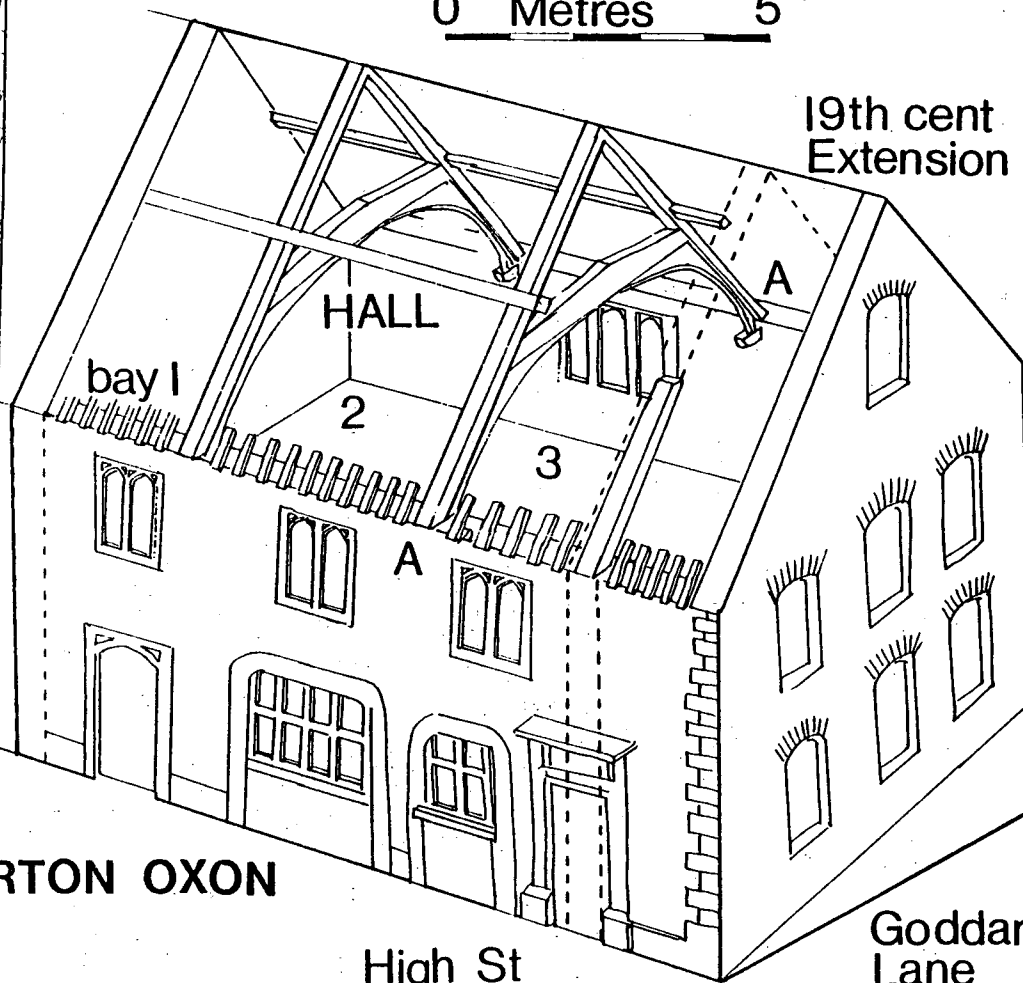


Truss at
A A



18th cent
Addition

19th cent
Extension



**CHIPPING NORTON OXON
GUILDHALL**

High St

Goddards
Lane

JMS

Swinbrook and Widford, Post-Medieval Gardens (PRN 8885; SP 275121)

This site was surveyed by members of a weekend school arranged by Oxford University Department for External Studies and directed by James Bond and Richard Chambers of the Oxford Archaeological Unit. The site lies within the former park belonging to the vanished mansion of the Fettiplace family. Jeffery's map of 1768 shows the park with a long avenue aligned roughly north-south across its centre, and Davis's map of 1797 shows a similar arrangement, with further rows of trees to the west of the main avenue. At the southern end of the park, the plateau falls away steeply into the Windrush valley, and the whole of the south-facing slope is scarped into a series of terraces which appear to represent a complex arrangement of formal gardens. Across the middle part of the slope the terraces are of somewhat variable width and character, and it is possible that here they have been modified from earlier strip lynchets. The end of the now-vanished avenue is marked by five tree-pits at the top of the slope, and its alignment is continued downwards by a stone wall which bisects a further flight of four narrower and more cleanly-cut terraces, each only 75m. long, below the main series. Beneath the lowest of the short terraces is a flat, level area some 70m. c 30m. in extent, on the far side of which is a rectangular fishpond measuring 70m. x 12m. with evidence of stepped banks at its eastern end. The pond is fed by a spring rising higher up the slope above its north-eastern corner, and beyond the streamlet connecting the two are a further couple of west-facing terraces, aligned almost at right-angles to the main flight. East of this point no further terracing is visible before Swinbrook church is reached.

(5) BUILDINGS - MEDIEVAL

Chipping Norton

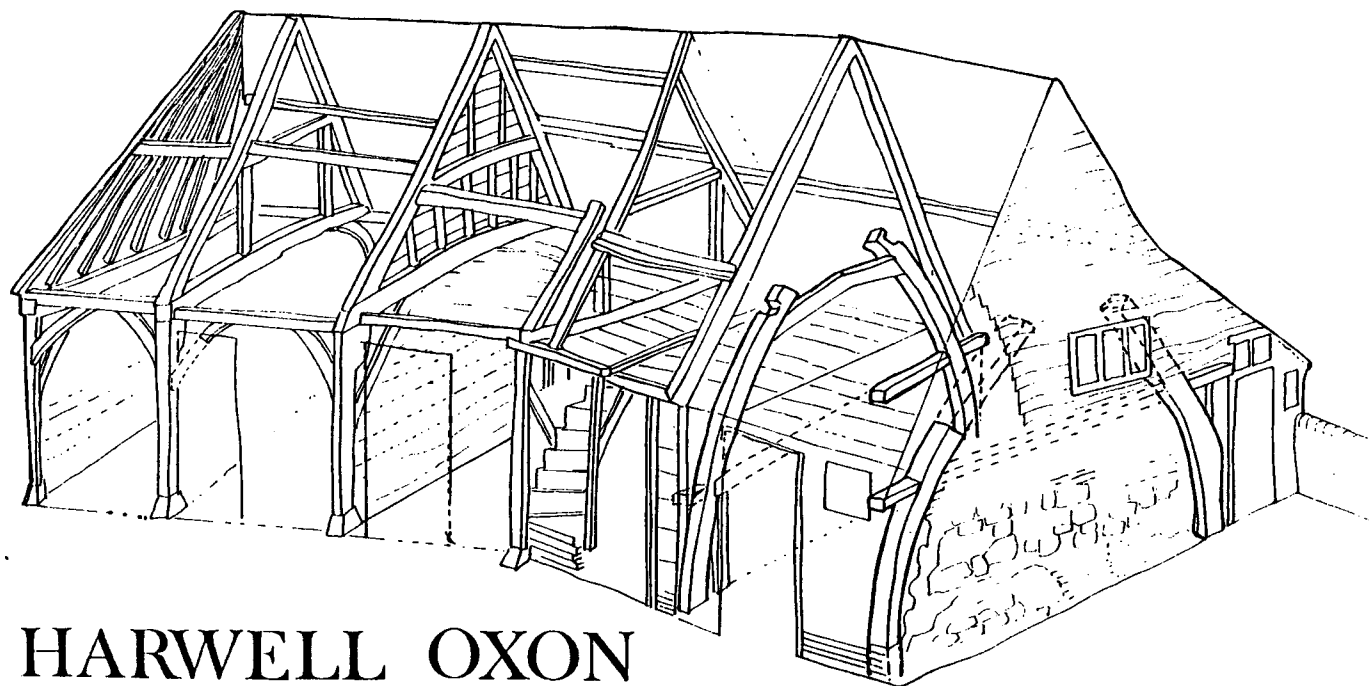
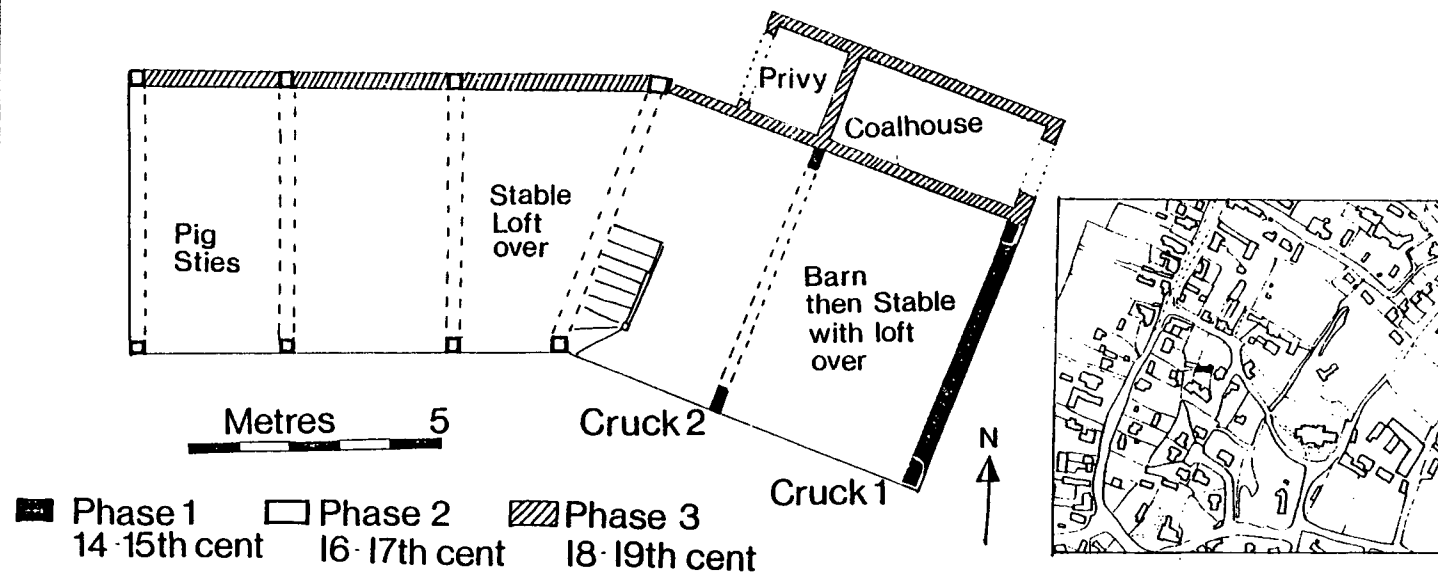
The Guildhall PRN 4191 SP 31382723 - John Steane, Daphne Aylwin

A field survey was made of the Guildhall in April 1984 as a result of a request for information by the West Oxon. District Council.

The Guildhall is now situated at the north-east corner of the wedge-shaped marked place. If one accepts the theory that the market place was once much bigger and that the buildings (including the Blue Boar) to the north of the Guildhall are all "infill" then the original site of the Guildhall would have been almost central in the market place.

The building has evidently gone through three main phases of building:-

(1) Late Medieval: The central block of the building is the oldest portion. It has been enlarged by lengthening at either end. The original structure consisted of ground storey with a principal entrance at the south end a square framed doorway with a four centred head. The other openings are later. The principal room was at first floor level and consisted of a hall open to the roof of possibly three bays. The two trusses supporting the roof spring from projecting stone corbels and consist of principal rafters, held together with cambered collars. They support two pairs of purlins which are treenailed into their upper surface and which in turn support the roughly smoothed common rafters. The hall is lit by a range of 3, 2 light windows on the east front, each consisting of two 4 centred lights within



HARWELL OXON LOCKTONS FARM

PRN 9341

square frames: the mullions have projecting square heads with cavetto architraves. The masonry of this phase of the building is best studied on the west and consists of roughly coursed limestone rubble with bigger squared blocks at the quoins. The original end to the building is seen about 2 metres to the south of the present and on the western side. It appears to have been heavily buttressed at the north western corner. There is no evidence for the original staircase for this building but it may well have been opposite the principal entrance. A date of c. 1500-1530 may be suggested.

(2) The second structural phase added in the 18th or 19th century when the building was extended to the south and a hipped roof was added. One 18th century window with narrow glazing bars is at first floor level but the doorways and other windows are nondescript 20th century in date. Judging from patches which have been removed (April 1984) from the rendering the masonry again is coursed limestone rubble. There is a feature which may be either a door or window which has been blocked with red brick at the south eastern end.

(3) Phase 3 to be dated c. 1880 saw the extension of the Guildhall some 2 metres to the north thus absorbing the buttress mentioned when a more impressive gable end was added with projecting quoins and two ranges of 3 windows, each elliptical headed and sashed and a further single light in the gable end. The masonry is of coursed and squared limestone. At the same time it may be suggested an archway 209 cms. wide and a lesser one 96 cms. wide were built into the east facade. These have been subsequently blocked and windows inserted in them. The stucco rendering was added in the 20th century. Further minor buildings were also added on the western side.

Inside at first floor level there are visible three phases of building. First the hall open to the roof. Then a ceiling was put in and the arch braces added to make an assembly room probably in the mid 19th century. Finally a second ceiling was suspended beneath this at the level of the corbels and the hall was partitioned to make offices.

It seems likely that the Guildhall originally served the merchant Gild of Holy Trinity founded by rich wool merchants in the town such as John Yonge, John Stokes and John Huchyns. The gild was licensed to acquire land for the support of two chaplains and a grammar teacher. Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535 records the gild in Chipping Norton, presumably the same foundation supported 6 aged members in an almshouse and supported 2 priests. The gild seems to have survived in some form up till the new borough charter of 1607.

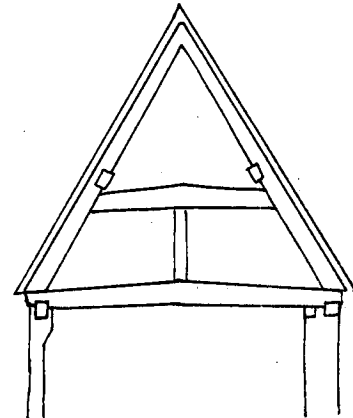
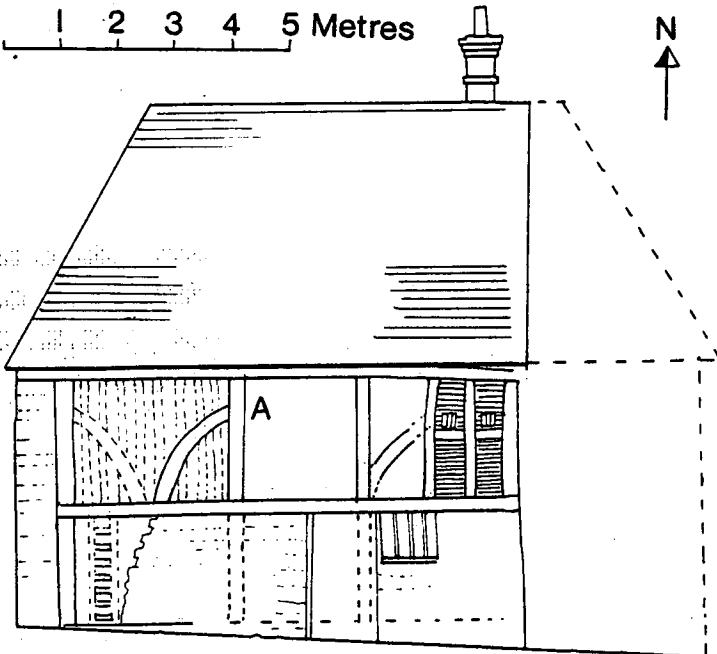
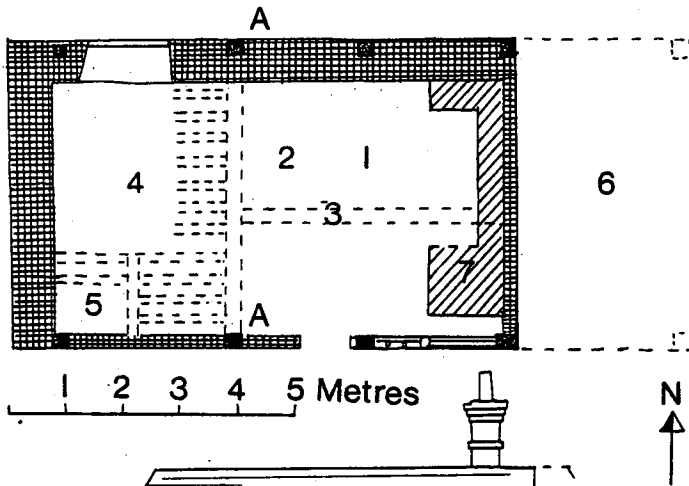
Harwell

Lockton's Farmhouse. Cruck-framed barn PRN 9341 SU 49158907

Following a request for information from the Vale of the White Horse District Council a field investigation was made of this farm by John Steane in August 1983. The nucleus of Harwell is made up of a number of large farms dating back to the middle ages irregularly disposed around the village. One of these is Lockton's which is situated to the north-west of the church. The barn which lies to the east of the farmhouse is the most interesting of the complex of buildings, and is apparently the result of three bays of building. The easternmost two bays are late medieval in date and consist of two cruck trusses together with a gable end wall facing the house, of rough

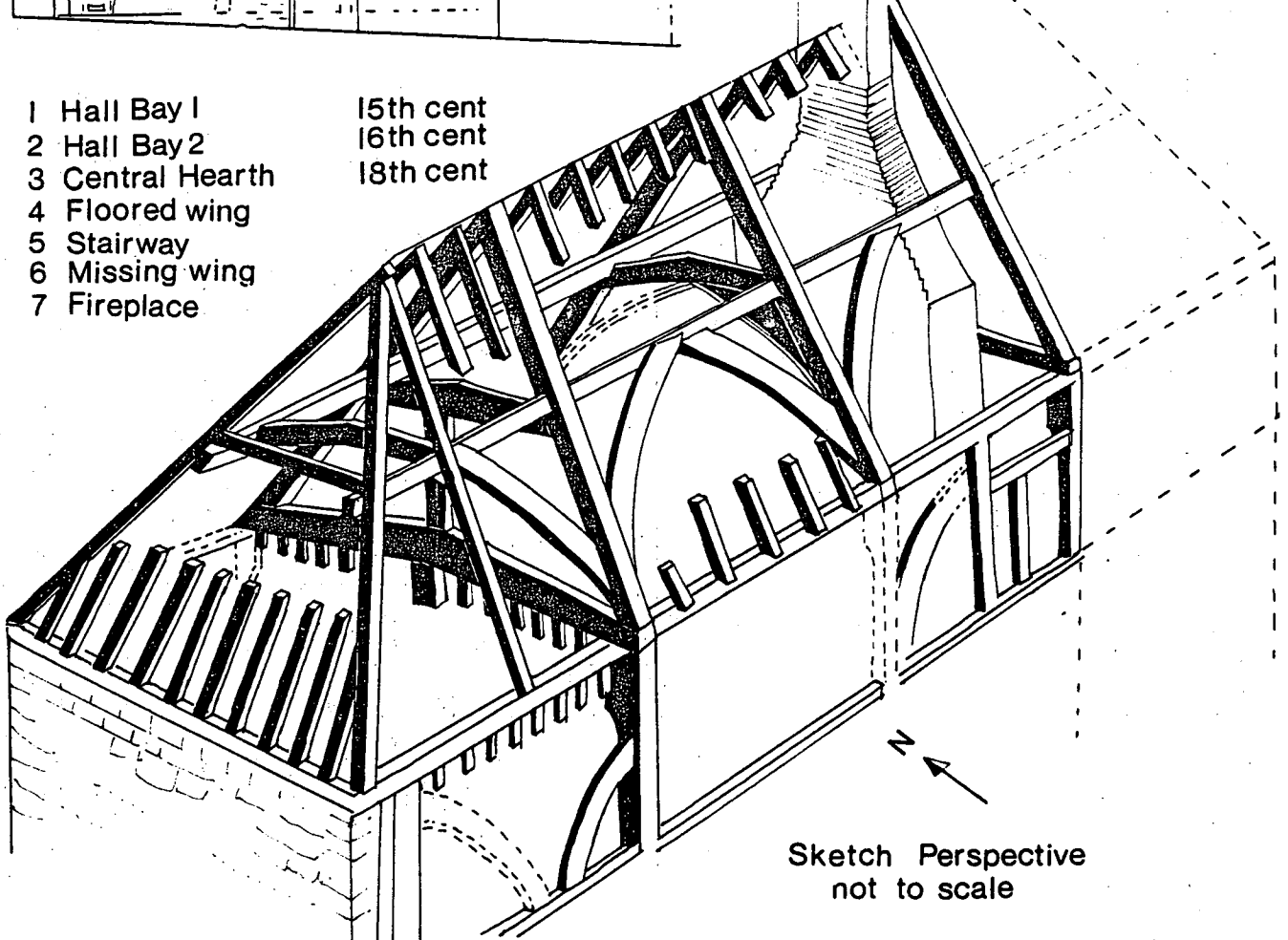
LITTLE MILTON OXON

MANOR HOUSE DAIRY
PRN 13226



Section at AA

- | | |
|------------------|-----------|
| 1 Hall Bay 1 | 15th cent |
| 2 Hall Bay 2 | 16th cent |
| 3 Central Hearth | 18th cent |
| 4 Floored wing | |
| 5 Stairway | |
| 6 Missing wing | |
| 7 Fireplace | |



Sketch Perspective
not to scale

JMS 1983

construction and made of chalk blocks and greensand rubble patched with brick. It is apparently contemporary with the crucks. The tie beam in both cruck trusses has been cut away but the slots for it are visible in the cruck blades. The cambered collar remains intact in the second of the two cruck trusses and here also the trenches to take a purlin are also visible above the joint with the collar. The dimensions are as follows; width of east end 5.75m. Height from floor to tie beam 1.7 m. width of collar 2.2m. Dimensions of timber in cruck no. 2, 23cms. x 9cms. It seems likely that this example is a base cruck which consisted of cruck blades which did not reach the apex of the roof but ended at a stout collar above which there was a separate roof construction (cf. Brunskill R.W. Traditional Farm Buildings of Britain, London, 1982, 125). The date of the building has been established by radio carbon analysis 1325±50 (Fletcher J.M. Oxoniensia XXXIII 1968, pp. 82, 85). The second phase of the building occurred in the 16th or 17th century when it is likely that the third cruck truss was removed and the orientation of the new building slightly altered to point more closely to the west. Three bays remain of this date but it is likely that the building, formerly extended to the east by one more bay. This extension was of excellent carpentry, principal posts standing on staddle stones: they are jowled to receive the tie beams and principal rafters: curved braces are jointed in from the posts to the wall plate. Similar braces joint from the tie beams to the posts. The upper roof construction consists of principal rafters, collars and one set of purlins per bay. In the 18th-19th century a red brick outshut was added on the north side to form a privy and a coal house. Brick was also introduced into repairs in the eastern gable wall and was also tucked in under the crucks on the south-eastern corner. The last three bays to the east were lofted over. The central bay was planked to insulate it as a stable and animal feeding racks were placed at the rear of the stable and on the inside of the eastern gable wall. The roof is of corrugated iron. Thanks to owner, Mr Cudlipp for encouraging the survey.

Little Milton

Manor House dairy - PRN 13226 SP 61956073

At the rear and to the north of the Manor House at Little Milton is a stone and half timbered outbuilding until recently used as a dairy. During alterations by the present owners, Mr and Mrs Hugh Buchanan, it was realised that there were extensive remains of a late medieval timber framed house. At the suggestion of Dr. Malcolm Airs, Conservation Officer for South Oxfordshire, a field investigation was made by John Steane and Nicholas Doggett in March 1983.

The building had been largely encased in stone and most of the ground floor features had either been replaced or hidden. The roof structure however was relatively intact and indicated that the building had originally been a three bay ground floor hall with a storied service wing projecting from the west end. The hall had been truncated and now was only two bays long but had evidently extended for a least one more bay and there had been possibly another wing at the eastern end which had been removed. The roof timbers consisted of three trusses of principal rafters with cambered tie beams and collars at both ends of the hall. There were single pairs of purlins clasped between collars and principal rafters and stiffened by curving wind braces. The central bay lacked a tie-beam but was supported by arch-braced collars. The arch bracing was missing on the north side. The timbers of these two central bays were heavily smoke-blackened indicating an open hearth. The western bay had evidently been floored from the start and the joists

appeared original: there were traces of a space for a ladder or a staircase in the south western corner. The roof was hipped and there was an extra cambered collar fitted half way between the hall truss and the sloping timbers of the end of the roof. The only other surviving timbers were two concave jowled posts on the south side of the building and two curving braces with slots for a third.

Two main alterations had been made to this building. A large chimney stack taking up nearly the whole eastern wall had been inserted; it has a timber lintel and dates probably from c. 1600. This was accompanied by the insertion of a floor. Finally the half timbering was encased in masonry probably in the 18th century.

Rotherfield Greys

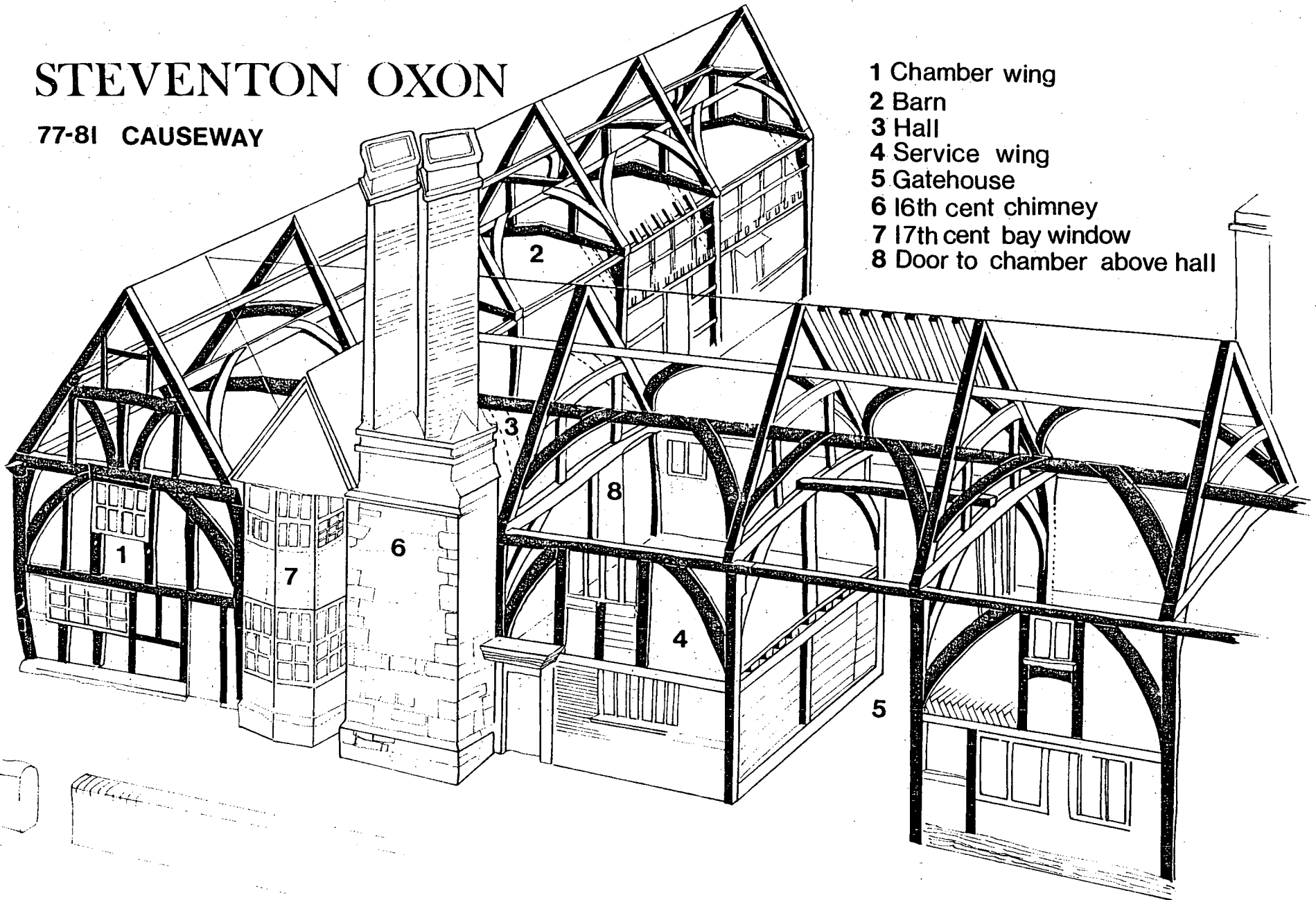
Greys Court, PRN 2170 SU 725834

The National Trust, in process of reinterpreting this important late medieval manor house, asked the Museum to carry out field investigations during 1983. A photographic survey was made of the surviving walls and towers of the medieval enceinte. The University of Bradford School of Archaeological Sciences was asked to carry out a resistivity survey of the central courtyard in an attempt to locate early buildings. This was carried out in May 1983 by Mark Chamberlain and Brendan Grimley. Five areas were surveyed. Area 1 consists of the whole of the central lawn: area 2 the space from the drive up to the "Cromwellian building" and tower 'B': areas 3 and 4 provide sections up the slope and on to the north lawn: area 5 is a small patch behind the main house. The data were processed at Bradford University using computer drawn contour plans produced on the University Cyber 170-720 main frame computer from a programme written by Mark Chamberlain. The final displays of data shown in the figures are 'dot density' plans produced on a Hewlett Packard minicomputer. The density of dots in any given area is proportional to the value of the electrical resistance encountered in that area while conducting the survey. There can be little doubt that features a and b represent masonry structures, either walls or buildings. Feature a is coincident with scorchmarks recorded in the summers of 1955 and 1956 and is aligned to suggest association with the baulk to the north of the Cromwellian building and the bricked-up doorway of the main house. The feature and the scorchmarks are 9-10 metres wide and from the details of internal structure appear to represent a wing or suite of rooms. Feature b probably represents the south cross wall shown in the Bodleian library drawing (MS. Top. Oxon. d.480 p.181c). Feature c may represent a trackway running north-south through the enclosure. The Bodleian drawing shows a gate in each cross wall through which such a track would run. On the other hand the magnitude of the readings comprising feature c, together with the fact that in these areas the metre probes encountered obstructions a few centimetres into the soil, suggest a substantial structure, perhaps a well which may belong to an early small enclosure, previous to the enclosure composed of features a and b. Feature d cannot be interpreted with any certainty. It perhaps represents buildings associated with feature c. Feature e, on the other hand is probably not structural. It may be a false effect produced by the existence of the slope. It has to be admitted however that it runs out from the ruins by tower B. Further work would almost certainly require modification of the interpretation of this survey. Thanks are due to Lady Brunner for encouraging the project in the first place and for her hospitality during the survey, Miss Dunning and the staff of Greys Court for their help and to Mr Christopher Wall of the National Trust for defraying the costs of the operation.

STEVENTON OXON

77-81 CAUSEWAY

- 1 Chamber wing
- 2 Barn
- 3 Hall
- 4 Service wing
- 5 Gatehouse
- 6 16th cent chimney
- 7 17th cent bay window
- 8 Door to chamber above hall



Steventon

Nos. 77-81 The Causeway. PRN 13,531 SU 46729172

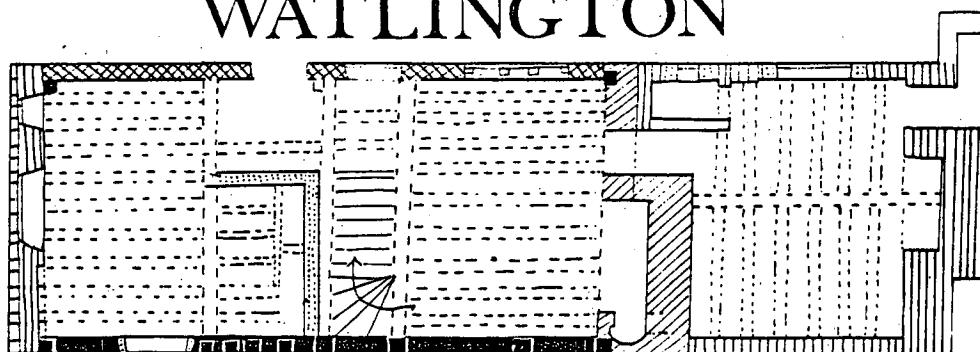
The Museum was informed of the impending sale of Nos. 77-79 which had been vacant for some years, by the owner, Mrs Godfrey, and at her invitation a field investigation was made during May 1984 by J.M. Steane. They face onto the raised causeway or 'flood path' nearly a mile long, tree lined and paved on the top. As early as 1419 it was stated that by ancient custom it was repaired by tenants of the Manor (V.C.H. Berks. IV 366) and subsequently maintenance was partly met by charitable donations. Nos. 77-81 include a long range parallel with the Causeway flanked by two wings at right angles. Although recently divided into three separate dwellings the buildings themselves suggest that dating from the early 16th century there was a substantial farmhouse with the elements of a late medieval plan with a chamber (east) wing, hall, cross passage and buttery. The central part of the street range is a gatehouse open to the roof. Further building of the same date to the west may belong to another house which was largely rebuilt in brick in the 18th and 19th centuries. A number of useful comments on the house are made by Currie C.R. in 'Smaller Domestic architecture and Society in north Berkshire c. 1300- c. 1650 with special reference to Steventon'. (Thesis submitted for degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Oxford 1976).

The chamber wing on the east is of two stories, timber framed on a dwarf rubble wall. The front facing onto the Causeway has concave jowled principal posts. The tie beam is supported by curved arch braces from the posts to the centre of the beam. The gable truss has a central stud and raking struts between tie and collar. The windows have been renewed but the auger holes for the sill beam can be seen six inches below the present sill of the upper window. The lower window has possibly been enlarged because at present the bridging beam reaches the front wall unsupported by a post which has probably been cut out when the window has been enlarged. The timbering along the east front is well preserved and the first floor room at the rear of the chimney was lit by one small two-light window with a solid sill. A horizontal baulk, set in the first bay suggest the sill of a blocked window. The front ground floor room of the chamber has a lateral beam 30 x 32 cms. with a very wide chamfer and massive square joists 15 x 16 cms. In one area the joists have been cut back to make room for a grand father clock! The chimney occupies the first half of the second bay and the base is constructed of greensand and corallian limestone rubble with some brick. The upper part is tapered and built of brick 22 x 6 x 10.5 cms. in size. The original fireplace has been blocked by a 19th century coal grate. There is a shelved cupboard in the space occupied by it and a smaller salt cupboard to the left. Access to the upstairs rooms is by a small planked staircase tucked into the space between the chimney and the side of the building. Owing to the presence of the chimney the chambers are of different sizes. The roof structure is revealed as being cambered tie beams, collars, clasped purlins and curved windbraces. The smaller chamber behind the chimney lit by a single window, a two-light casement has a carpentry mark on the jowl of the post behind the chimney. The second element of the building is what Currie claims as the hall (Currie p.312-314). Access is by a doorway which leads into a cross passage. The ground floor chamber has the remains of a fine stone fireplace in the north wall hidden in a cupboard to the left of the present much smaller brick infilled modern fireplace. It had a four centred head, hollow chamfer moulded surround and traceried spandrels. The chimney has a massive limestone base to the stack and twin lozenge shaped shafts with offsets of brick. There is a fireplace with moulded jambs in the chamber upstairs. As Currie points out "it is apparently not original, as

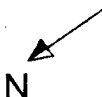
THE OLD BARLEY MOW WATLINGTON

PRN 13382

High
Street

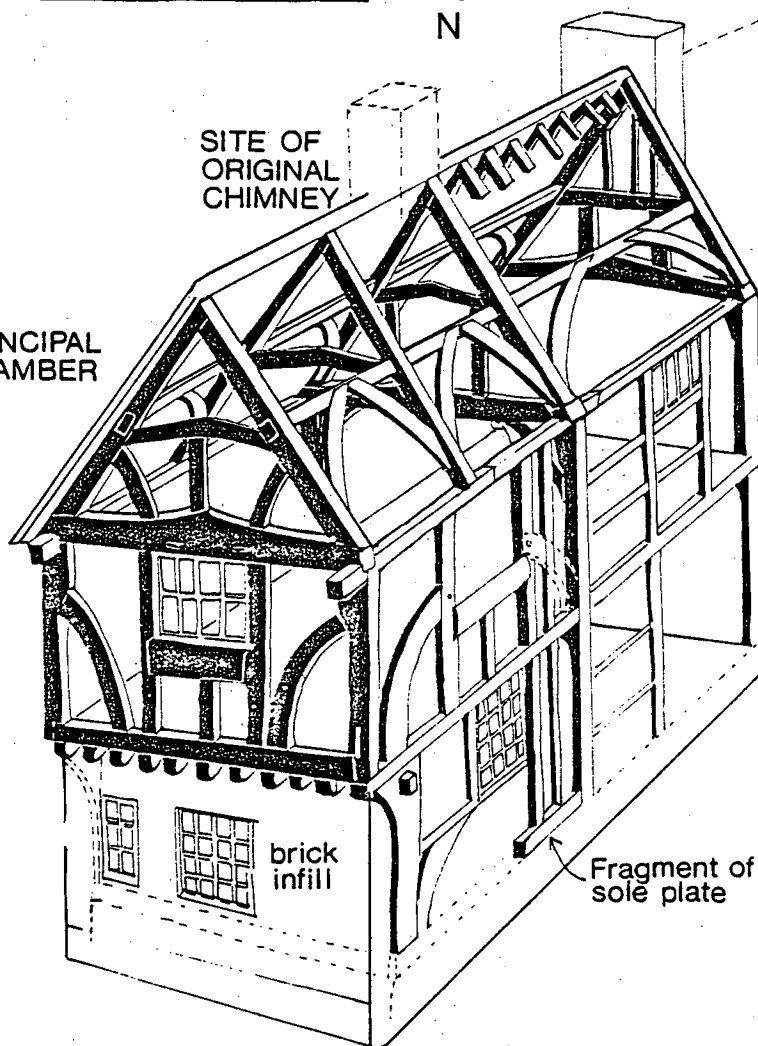


Metres 5

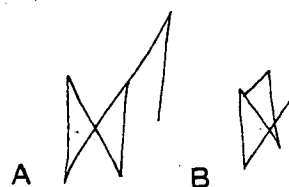


SITE OF
ORIGINAL
CHIMNEY

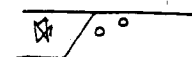
PRINCIPAL
CHAMBER



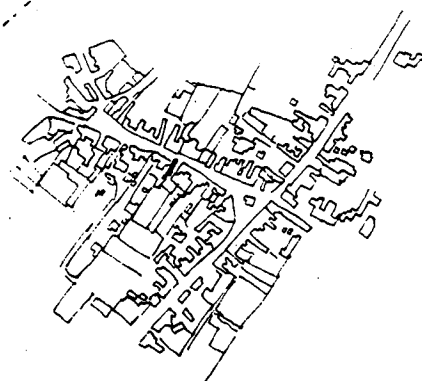
- 15th cent
- 18th cent
- 18th cent
- 19th cent
- Modern



CARPENTERS MARKS



SCARF JOINT



~JMS-83

the post adjoining the upstairs fireplace has a mortise for a rail. Moreover the hall has a longitudinal ceiling beam evidently later than the joists over the screens". The fact that there is no smoke blackening suggests to Currie that the present chimney may have replaced a timber-framed one. The two-storied bay window must have been added in the seventeenth century. It has moulded transoms and formerly had ovolo moulded mullions. Carpenters' marks (circle with two intersecting lines) can be seen in the upper chamber on the post and curving brace which supports the tie beam. The door frame to the upper chamber is at the south end of the partition. The plain chamfered surround is carried up the wall post and along the soffit of the tie beam. The small room opening off the cross passage was probably the buttery. There is another chamber above. The roof structure of all four bays of this range is tie beams, queen posts, collars, clasped single pairs of purlins, curved windbraces. Similar roof structures are found (Currie p.333) at the hall and east wing of the Old Vicarage, and 71-75 The Causeway, Steventon. The framing of the floors of the range can be studied from the gateway bay. They had a transverse binding joist in each bay into which the common joists were tenoned, their ends being lodged on a rail at the partitions (Currie p.341). The western bay and a half has similar timber framing to the rest of the range. Currie suggests that there may have been a blocked door at ground floor level, only visible from a chamfer in the rail and that there may have been a hall to the west. The roof of the fragmentary western bay is heavily smoke blackened (not seen) and is separated by a sooted partition from the eastern bay.

At the rear of the eastern chambered wing is a three-bay so called "barn". This has jowled posts, cambered tie beams, clasped purlins and Queen posts and curved wind braces. There are slots for additional bracing between the posts and the tie beams. The central bay was formerly partitioned: the slots remain in the collars of the two centre trusses, and the roof is heavily smoke blackened. It may be suggested that here was a brew-house or malt-house. The flooring and the present walling appears to be 18th or 19th century in date. This is suggested by the slender scantling with wooden framing, the brick size 22 x 6.3 x 11, and the fact that the floor joists are on end.

Watlington

The Old Barley Mow, 15 High Street. (PRN 13,382 SU 68909450)

Following a planning application to strip rendering and expose timbers a field investigation was made by John Steane in October 1983.

The House occupies the northern end of a long narrow 'burgage' plot facing on to High Street. It consists of a medieval timber-framed element 4.3m. x 9.5m. Behind this are two phases of extensions. Access was by a side passage to the east.

The late medieval timber framing, c.1500 AD, has survived well above first floor level on the gable end facing the street end on the west side but has largely been replaced on the eastern side. Originally it was of two storeys throughout. The joists are particularly massive, 0.2m. x 0.15m. each, and close together. Originally they were jettied out over the street. A bracket survives on the west side but the front has been built up from the ground floor flush with brick. The gable end has tie-beam and jowled posts at the corners which extend up to the eaves. These are braced with curving

timbers into the wall plate. A window is situated centrally with a sill 31 cms. wide. The tie beam is cambered and the principal rafters have a collar supported centrally by a crown post and queen struts. The principal chamber is at first floor level (now the master bedroom) and is of two bays and three trusses. The central truss has a cambered collar beam but no tie beam. The single purlins are butt jointed into the principal rafters and supported by wind braces. This large room (4.6m. x 3.9m.) was lit by windows from the front and from the side (now blocked) the sill again is particularly massive. There are two carpenters marks, one in the front ground floor room and one in the front first floor room. The central chimney, which must have heated the house at ground and first floor, has been removed but the fact that the joists end about 2 feet from the inner wall of the front room marks its place. The rear and third bay of the roof is similarly well preserved and the gable end (now embedded in the middle of the house owing to its extension) has Queen posts. It is noteworthy that the timbers are weathered at first floor level indicating that this was the outside of the house for a long time. An original window with timber mullions tucked under the eaves survives on the west side. The house was reconstructed in the eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries when the timber framing was either removed or encased on the east side and the walling replaced with flint, ragstone and brick. The ground floor may have had a shop front which was replaced with a brick wall and two windows. A large brick chimney was added to the rear of the house. The fireplace occupied most of the lower part of the original rear wall of the house but the main beam at first floor level remains. Probably in the late eighteenth century a rear extension was built of brick. It may have been stables since there are elliptical-headed blocked doorways with later windows pierced in them. There used to be a cellar but this has been blocked up. These alterations may have been connected with the fact that the 'Barley Mow' begins to figure as an inn from 1823 onwards (Victoria County History Oxon. VIII, 233). Our thanks to the owners, Mr and Mrs C.L. Mackenzie for allowing access to the building.

Watlington

No. 17 High Street (PRN 13,422 SU 68879453)

Following a request from Mrs Birley, the owner, and at the suggestion of Dr. Malcolm Airs of South Oxon. District Council a field investigation was made by John Steane in November 1983.

The house is set back slightly from the High Street front and was built parallel with the High Street. It is an unusually complete example of a late medieval town house. In c. 1600 a single bay wing was added to the rear.

The late medieval timber framing has survived particularly well above the first floor level but some features on the ground floor are also ancient. The gable facing the Barley Mow and largely concealed by it consists of principal rafters resting on a slightly cambered tie beam. There is a cambered collar with a single crown post. The collar is supported by Queen posts. Between these and the tie beam are curving arched braces. The composition resembles the neighbouring northern gable of the old Barley Mow except that it is also strengthened with Queen posts. The fact that the decorative front cannot now be seen suggests that it may pre-date the old Barley Mow. The building at this end appears to have been floored from the start. The joists which are laid flat and close together project under the wall plate along the street front. They cross a narrow passage which spans

the whole of the building at this end. One bracket survives, a simple curving piece of timber projecting at the top to meet the wall-plate. The second and third trusses are built on jowled posts, thick, slightly cambered tie-beams, principal rafters, massive cambered collars, purlins clasped between principal rafters and collars. Curved wind braces provide longitudinal stiffening. On the street front each first floor bay originally had curving arched braces springing from the principal posts. These both survive in the western bay but only one has remained in each of the other two bays. The others have been removed to make way for larger windows.

The most interesting feature of the house is the central bay. Investigation of the roof space revealed that there was smoke blackening on all timbers and on the wattle and daub partitions. This suggests that there was formerly a hall open to the roof timbers in this bay, possibly extending under the third bay. Heating was by means of a central open-hearth. Access to the upper storeys at both ends was probably by a ladder. The third bay ended in a gable wall with two Queen posts and a crown post. Judging from the lack of smoke blackening in the roof timbers it had been floored from the start but the jettying had been removed possibly when a chimney was inserted in the street frontage corner.

In c. 1600 a wing was added to the rear giving two extra rooms. The work was timber-framed and the walling was an infill of brick nogging. One or two of the awkward shapes in the gable were filled with wattle and plaster. It is possible that the centre bay was floored at this period and a staircase with a timber four-centre headed door fitted. A brick chimney was also inserted at the rear of bay 1 possibly to replace an earlier one. This has now been blocked and the fireplaces removed but there were probably fire places in the centre downstairs room (in the old hall) and in the chamber above

Yelford Manor (PRN 11977 SP 35950480) - Paul Gilman

A measured survey of this fine timber-framed manor house was undertaken in Spring 1984 in advance of a change of ownership. Mr and Mrs Babington-Smith, who acquired the house in 1952, restored the building to its present excellent condition, removing the plaster rendering that had been added c. 1800.

The house is on a moated site within the earthworks of the shrunken medieval village of Yelford. It is close studded almost throughout, resting on a limestone plinth. The building consists of a central hall with cross-wings to north and south. The three elements are not tied together structurally. Probably built in the late fifteenth/early sixteenth century, the house is on the site of an earlier building, remains of which were revealed under the hall during renovations in the 1950's.

The Hall: Originally this consisted of a two bay hall, open to the roof, with a screens passage at the north end. The roof is of arch-braced tie-beam construction with double butt-purlins and two sets of curved wind braces. The central truss over the hall proper, however, is arch-braced to collar level. Later additions include: the insertion of a floor and fireplaces at ground and first floor levels; a wing including a staircase and an extension to the passage, the staircase originally opening into the hall; two-storeyed hexagonal bay window at the south end; a projecting window with heavily moulded, solid bracket at the north end, at first floor level. The additions are all, probably, of the sixteenth century.

Cross-wings: The roofs are, again, of arch-braced tie-beam construction. They were two-storied from the beginning, the ends jettied out to the west. The service wing has parts of three mullions from the original windows. The solar wing has been shortened by the removal of the eastern bay c. 1800, when the south wall and part of the east elevation of the house were built up in stone. The parlour contains early seventeenth century panelling, including a fine carved overmantel. Mortice slots in the sole plate on the west front probably indicate the former presence of a projecting window, while brackets from another one remain at first floor level - this window is shown in a drawing of 1824 by J.C. Buckler.

For most of its history Yelford Manor has been in the hands of only two families - the Hastings' of Dalesford until 1652 and, following the sale to William Lenthall, Speaker of the House of Commons, the Lenthalls of Besselsleigh owned the house until 1949. The house is extensively documented and Mr and Mrs Babington-Smith have a fine archive, containing photographs taken by themselves and Peter Spokes of the house prior to restorations. Their extensive collection of finds from the house and village have been donated to the museum and are now being worked through.

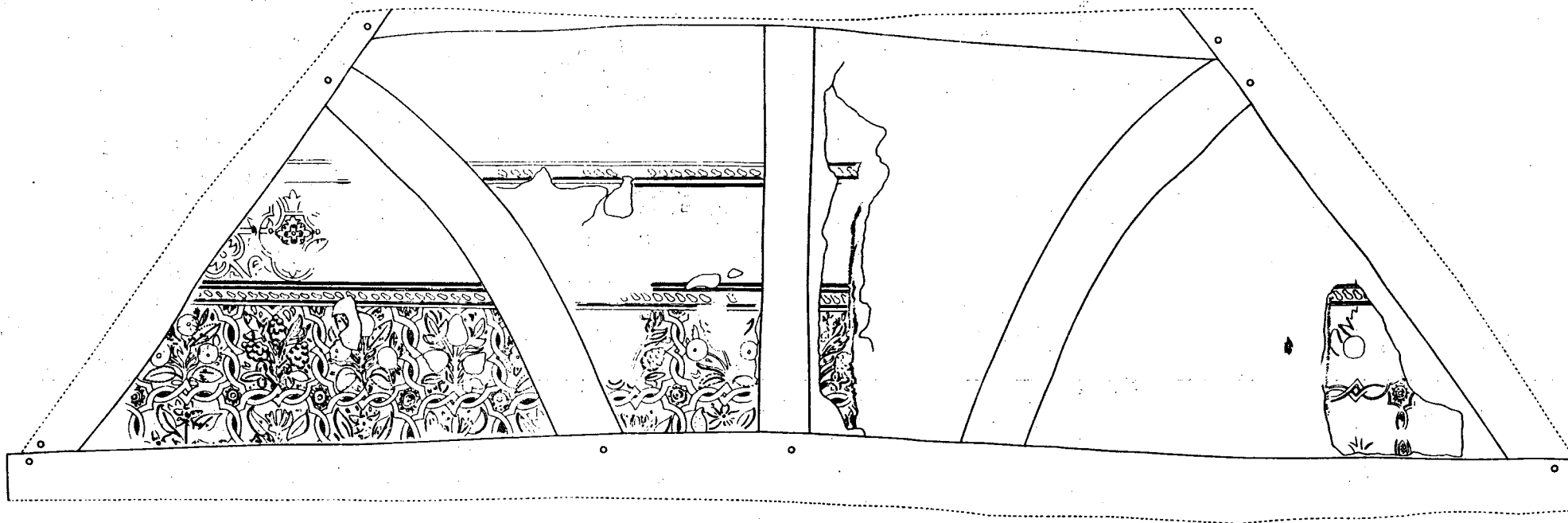
Acknowledgements: I am particularly grateful to Mr and Mrs Babington-Smith for their most generous help and hospitality. Elizabeth Leggatt, John Steane, Cynthia Bradford, James Bond and Ival Hornbrook provided welcome assistance.

(6) BUILDINGS - POST MEDIEVAL

Blewbury

Turnpike House. PRN 13,385 SU 53185560

Following a request for information by the Vale of the White House District Council a field investigation was made by J.M. Steane in October 1983. The house and farm buildings behind stand on a corner site overlooking the site of the village pond to the east. The house is a timber framed building, two storeys and attics, L shaped in plan. The original walling was wattle and daub panels and this survives in the north wall. The ground floor was originally oversailed by the upper storey and the bracket and bressumer can be seen on the north front. The south front has been built up at ground floor to eaves with brick. The wattle and daub has been replaced by brick panels in decorative patterns including V shaped, cress, diaper and pointillé, in which the various designs are picked out in vitrified headers. The double gable at roof level has probably been added later since the bricks are of different kind; there is no attempt at decoration: the timbers are flimsier. The roof timbers were inspected and were seen to consist of principal rafters, butt purlins and one set of windbraces per bay, straight not curved. The chimney is made of chalk blocks with a brick top with vertical and head offsets and is centrally placed on the last front. There is a small plank staircase on the west side of this which is probably original. The south front of the house has a tile-hung gable and there are at least two building phases in this front. What seems to have happened is that an extra one or two cottages have been added to the house in similar style but with rather inferior workmanship.



Wall painting at Bull Hotel, Nettlebed, Oxon.

Nettlebed

Bull Hotel (PRN 13,227; SU 70058677) - James Bond & John Rhodes

The Bull Hotel is a Grade II Listed Building on the southern side of the A.423 Oxford-Henley road in the centre of Nettlebed village. The exterior street facade is eighteenth-century, of two storeys with attics, predominantly of grey brick with the quoins and window surrounds picked out in red brick. The front is in three planes, with a central pediment enclosing a lunette, and a moulded brick cornice. The centre is pierced by a coach entrance. The rear of the building is more irregular, and indicates that the early Georgian facade masks an older structure of sixteenth or seventeenth-century date. Timber-framing is visible in the interior.

In February 1983 alterations to one of the upper rooms revealed a previously unknown wall-painting occupying the lower part of the space between the principal rafters and tie-beam of a truss exposed in a west-facing interior wall. The entire width of the truss is included within the present room, but the modern ceiling obscures its apex above collar-beam level. Immediately beneath the collar there are extremely fragmentary traces of a second painting with a crimson banded design, now visible only at one point, which covers plaster of a demonstrably later date than the main painting; this was clearly executed after the ceiling was raised to its present level.

The earlier painting survives much more extensively and is of far greater interest. Its design spanned the entire width of the truss, but terminated some 85-90 cms. above the collar-beam in a clear horizontal line, below the point where the curved braces meet the rafters. This suggests that both floor and ceiling levels were lower at the time this painting was made. The painting must originally have continued below the tie-beam, but there it has been destroyed by complete replastering at a later date.

Above the tie-beam the left (northern) side of the painting is remarkably well-preserved in its lower sections; the upper part, though still discernible, is rather more damaged. The painting stops in an abrupt vertical line some 15cms. to the right of the central strut, reappearing equally abruptly in an odd triangular patch in the far right-hand corner. The intervening rectangular gap presumably represents the outline of some cumbersome piece of furniture. It is likely that the painting was originally continued directly over the timbers, since these were clearly never plastered over, but their subsequent blackening has destroyed all traces.

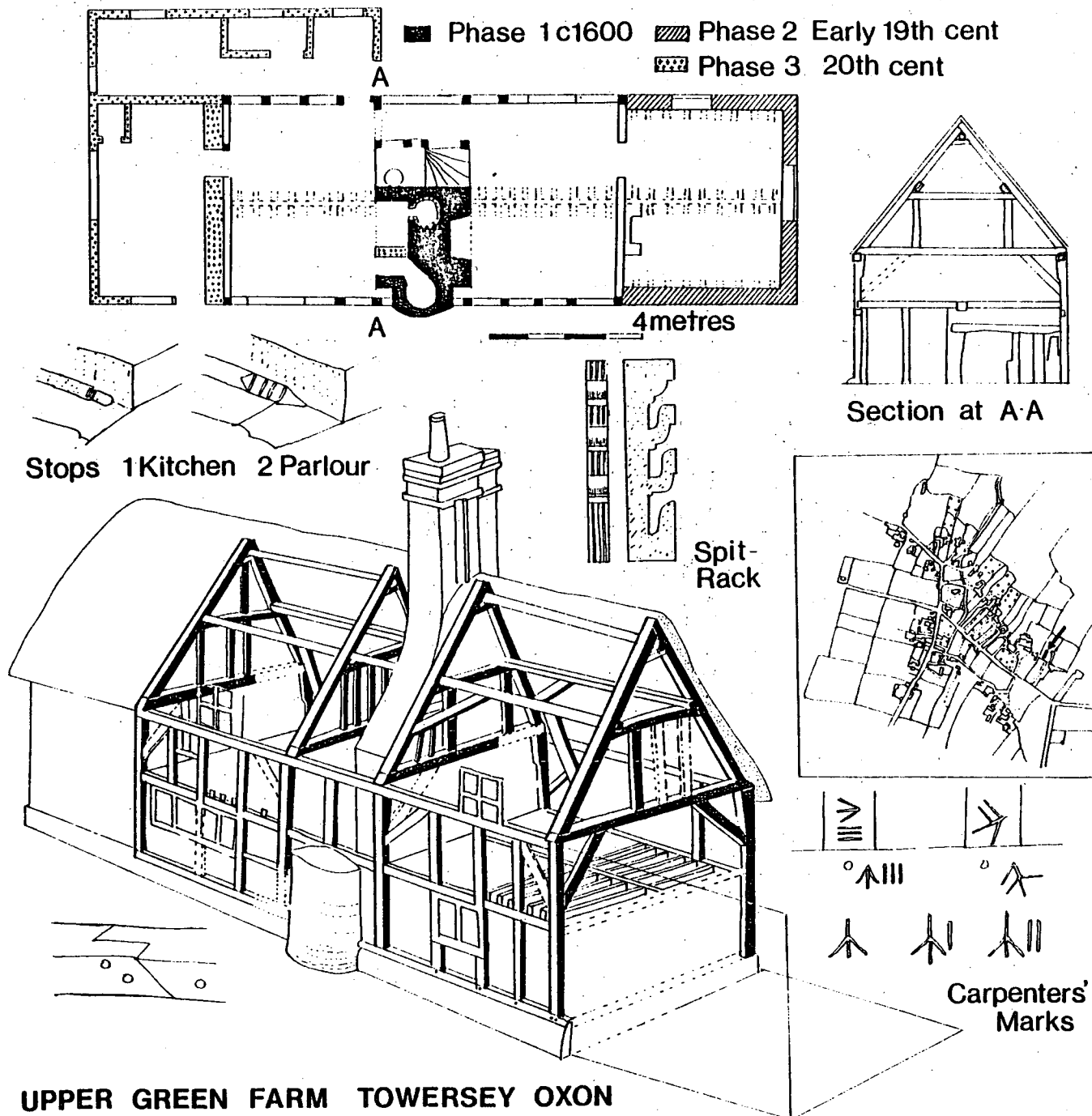
The design of the earlier painting is comprised of two components, a broad upper frieze and an overall interlaced mesh design with posies of flowers and bunches of grapes. The upper and lower edge of the frieze is defined by two horizontal straight grey bands c. 8cms. wide. These are both overpainted, the centre of each band with oblique white dashes simulating a cable pattern, bordered on either side by a narrow inner and broader outer white line. The bottom of the upper band and the top of the lower band is further emphasized by a straight horizontal line of charcoal black. Between the two black bands is a broad horizontal band some 30cms. deep, the ground colour dark beige, overpainted in white with an elaborate pierced strapwork decoration which includes repeated geometrical designs and highly stylised foliage and quatrefoil flowers.

The ground colour of the remaining area, between the frieze and tie-beam, is

a muted dark bottle-green. This is divided into a series of regular compartments, of which $1\frac{1}{2}$ tiers are accommodated above the tie-beam, by a pattern of interlaced octofoil arabesques. The curved interlocking bands defining the margins of each panel are dark brown-red, overpainted along one edge with a broad white border with a parallel white line just inside it, with the opposite border picked out in pale orange or peach. The relative positions of the orange and white borders changes on opposing sides of each panel, apparently an attempt to simulate relief highlit from one side. Along each side of the main panels the interlocking arabesques enclose two almond-shaped spaces which are filled by fine cross-hatching in buff over the dark green base. The somewhat larger concave-sided octagonal spaces left within the intersecting bands at each corner of the main panels are filled by two similar but subtly different types of stylised single flower (i) a corolla indicated by a solid pale grey circle, with a bright orange centre and tiny white dots around the perimeter of the petals, beyond which a further ring of radiating narrow buff strokes punctuated by about half-a-dozen larger dots suggests the tips of a calyx, and (ii) similar in all respects except that a continuous double white ring is painted over the pale grey corolla instead of the marginal white dots. These two types occur alternately in the one complete horizontal row of panel intersections to survive. The corresponding half-octagons immediately below the frieze contain a semicircle of radiating buff lines and broader strokes resembling the depiction of the calyx of the complete flowers in the row below.

The uppermost row of main panels is occupied by an alternation of two designs: (i) a posy of three white flowers, probably roses, shown as large white circles with small bright orange centres, carried on one upright and two obliquely branching stems, between which there are four large leaves and many smaller bracts. Leaves and stems are painted dull green-grey, but relief and texture is suggested by fine touches of vivid light green and white; fine white pecking along the edges of the leaves conveys the impression of small serrations. (ii) Three bunches of fruit on a similar arrangement of stems, with four sets of pointed tripartite leaves and a mass of smaller bracts. The fruits, depicted by globules of grey-blue paint, about nine to each bunch, highlit by arcs of grey and white paint, are clearly intended to represent grapes, but the leaves do not resemble those of the vine. Vineyard cultivation was almost extinct in southern England by the Elizabethan period, and although the artist would have been familiar with imported fruit, he had probably never seen them growing. The leaves are not shown with serrated edges, but the artist has managed to suggest the point of each leaf slightly curling over.

The lower row of panels is bisected by the tie-beam, but enough is visible to show that there was a similar arrangement of alternating patterns of three flowers between four main leaves. The two different types of flower represented on this row are (i) an unidentified species depicted full-face with five sharply-pointed petals outlined in light cream-buff paint; the glossy texture of each petal is suggested by fine strokes of the same colour. The centre is bright orange, outlined by a continuous cream-buff ring, beyond which is a circle of anthers depicted by tiny bright orange spots. The large dock-like leaves and stems are painted on a brownish-grey base, the main ribs and edges of the leaves being picked out in white, with curling tips but no serrations. (ii) A plant with a similar leaf pattern, but with the flower seen side-on, with petals, stigmas and stamens picked out in light grey, edged and ribbed with white, radiating upwards from a receptacle at the top of the stem; this is probably intended to represent honeysuckle.



At least 37 examples of Elizabethan or Jacobean domestic wall, panel or ceiling paintings are now known in Oxfordshire, the greatest concentration being within Oxford itself. The Nettlebed example ranks with the best of them in terms of its technical accomplishment. Dating on stylistic grounds is difficult: although the frieze and lower panels clearly make up a single integrated design, the pierced ornamental strapwork of the frieze suggests a date around 1620, while the interlaced mesh and floral pattern below is characteristic of a period of up to sixty years earlier. The latter has a close parallel in the 'Painted Room' at No. 3 Cornmarket, Oxford (PRN 8736), which has a slightly simpler pattern of interlaced figures enclosing triple posies of Canterbury bells, windflowers, passion-flowers and roses, alternating with bunches of grapes. The Cornmarket example can be dated with some confidence to the period 1570-81, and although its colour-scheme is completely different, the style of the Nettlebed example is remarkably similar, and it is tempting to see the hand of the same artist in both.

Towersey

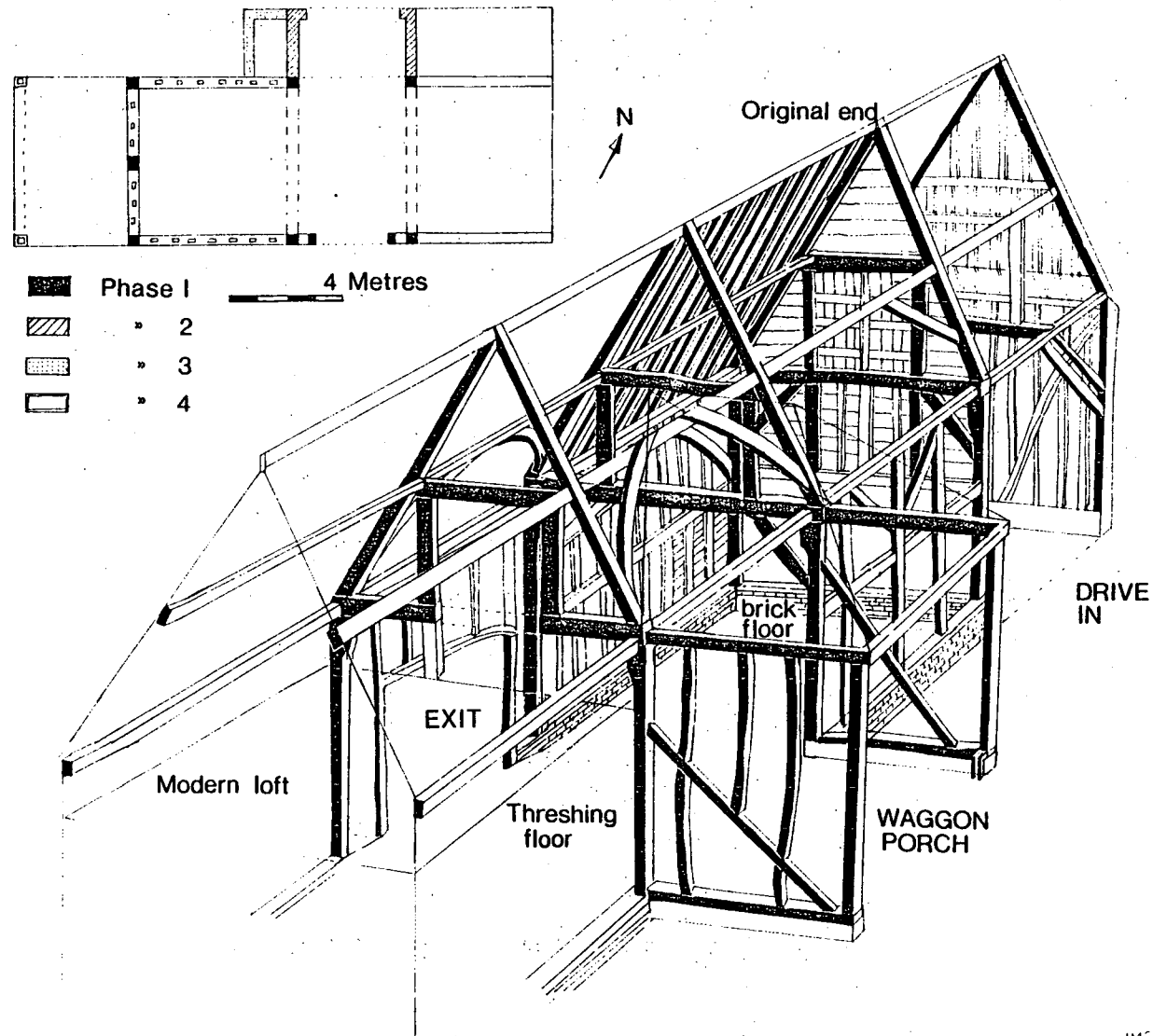
Upper Green Farmhouse (PRN 13559 SP73850509)

Following a suggestion from Mr Hammett of the Brick Research Association, who stated that there was interesting early brickwork to be seen, a field investigation was made of the farmhouse. It lies in the middle of a long rectangular plot to the east of the village which shows evidence of a regular layout: the trapezoidal village green is now subdivided into gardens (PRN 10,516). The house consists of four elements. The central portion is a two storeyed three celled building with an axial chimney, a typical lobby entrance plan. This was extended to the south by one bay in the late eighteenth century and by another to the north in 1982/3. An outshut was also added in the twentieth century on the north-east side.

The three celled house was timber framed, roofed in thatch and its foundations included dwarf walls of greensand rubble. Access was originally through a door, now blocked, facing onto the chimney and staircase. The present entrance has been shifted norwards and is through the outshut. The ground floor consisted of parlour and kitchen, each heated by fire places in the central stack. The kitchen had originally a wide timber-lintelled fireplace with a bread oven which projects on the outside wall. This has been diminished in size by the insertion of a brick pillar and an oven has been cut into the rear of the fireplace. There is a triple spit rack over the fireplace. The central beam is chamfered with simple gouged stops. The parlour also retains its original brick lined fireplace and has a central beam with a more elaborate moulded stop. The roof timbers have been cut about to introduce a corridor but consist of principal rafters, tie beams, clasped purlins, collars and numerous vertical struts including queen posts. There is a ridgepole. A number of the straight struts remain supporting the purlins and the principal posts also have straight braces. All the windows have been renewed. The walling consists of brick in stretcher bond. There are also patches of herringbone and two panes with double lozenge patterns outlined in blue headers.

The house is a well preserved example of the lobby entrance plan which "by the beginning of the seventeenth century ... had proliferated in south-eastern England and an almost standard farmhouse had been evolved there" (Mercer E. English Vernacular Houses London, 1975. 62-3).

BARN AT TURNPIKE HOUSE BLEWBURY OXON



(7) AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS

Asthal

Field Assarts. Home Farm (PRN 13,383 SP 31631382).

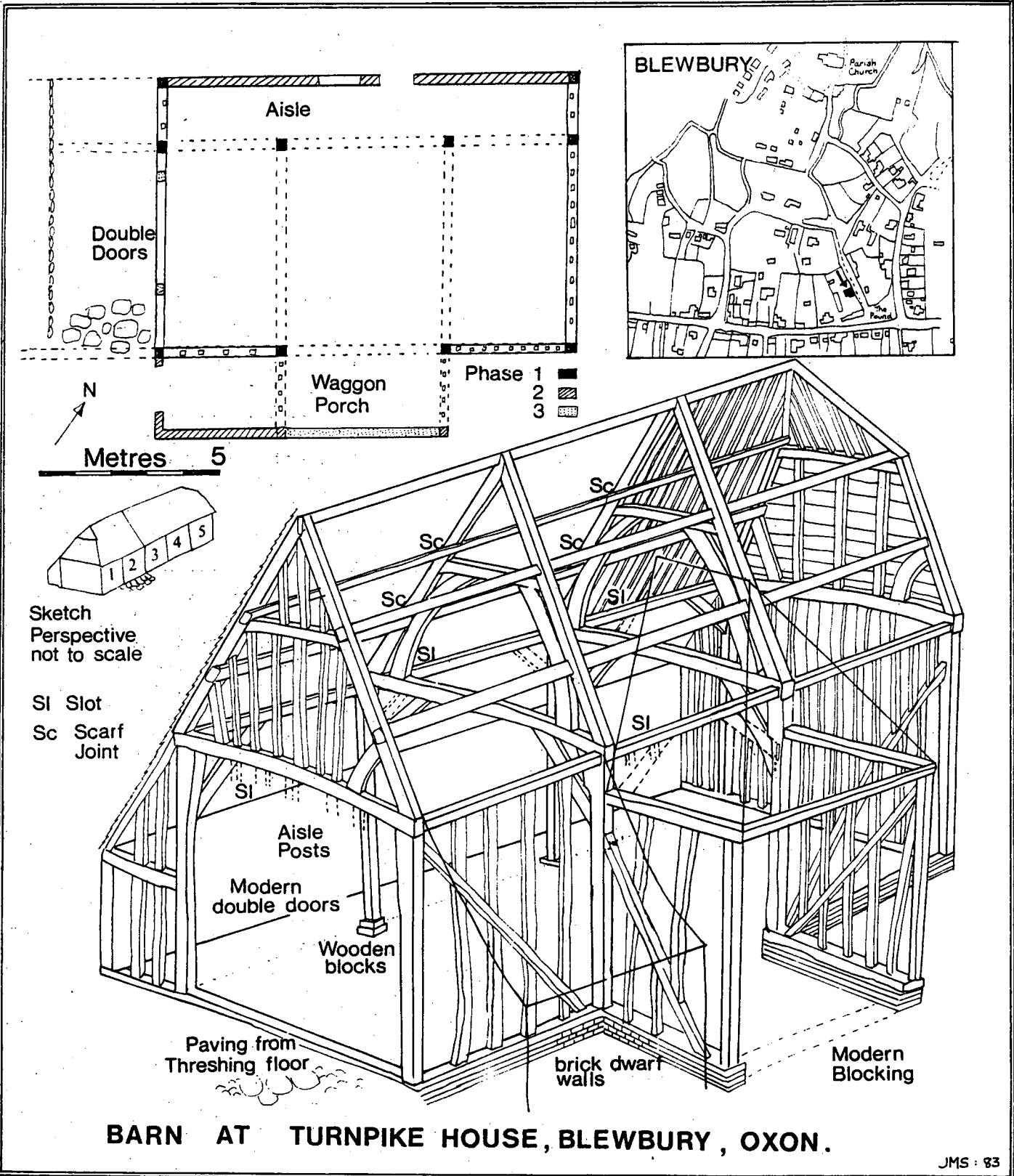
Following a planning application for a change-of-use a field investigation was made by J.M. Steane and A. Mudd in October 1983. The farm complex was not in existence in 1797 when Davies published his map of Oxfordshire but already a wedge-shaped peice of land later to be occupied by the farm had been cleared from Wychwood.

The farm buildings lie back from the road and form a good example of a post-inclosure layout centred among the fields which they serve. The farmhouse itself started as a two bay 1½ storied building with walls of coursed-limestone rubble and brick chimneys at the gable ends. There was originally a single-storey outhouse to the east which had been enlarged by the addition of a barn enveloping it. The barn had opposed doorways and a single window. The roof consisted of two simple trusses of tie beam, principal rafters and two sets of butt purlins. There was a doorway for access on top of the stored crop at the gable end and a ventilation slit under. The second main building stands in the north-western corner of the yard: it is of coursed limestone ashlar and was originally a lofted stable. The quoins are of fine jointed masonry and the windows which look onto the yard have stone lintels and sills. The fact that the horses have a finer building than the farmer or labourers housed in the farm-house is a point worth noticing. The roof structure consists of principal rafters held together with collars bolted not jointed and one set of butt purlins per bay. Access is through a central door with niches (for medicines) on either side. There were originally racks sufficient for six sets of horses: only two remain intact. The upper part is divided into two. The east end is a hay loft with slots for pushing hay down. Below is a piece of timber with holes for dowels, the bottom part of a long feeding rack. The west end had been probably adopted as a granary. The walls are bricked up internally and there is a floor of small, closely fitting planks. This corner of the building is under surveillance from the house. Recently the stable has been adapted as a cowhouse. The third main building is a single storey open sided animal shelter shed; divided into two parts, one (three bays) of which faces onto the yard and one (two bays) faces outside the farm to the east. The walling is of drystone limestone rubble. The roofing consists of a series of tie beams extending from the near wall to posts at the front. Heaped on these is a pyramidal deposit of hedge clippings. The thatch is pinned straight into this (for other examples see Manor Farm, Stanton St. John (PRN 12,926), Cogges Farm Museum (PRN 4601), Glebe Farm, Watlington (PRN 12,287). It is a primitive form of roof construction, archaeological evidence for which has been claimed at Hound Tor deserted medieval settlement (Med. Arch. XXIII 1979 128-9).

Blewbury

Turnpike House. (PRN 13,385. West Barn SU 53185560)

This barn lies to the south-west of the complex and is attached to the southern wing of the house. It lies parallel to the road and is on an east-west axis. It is four bays in length and is a timber framed building which appears to have gone through four main phases of construction.



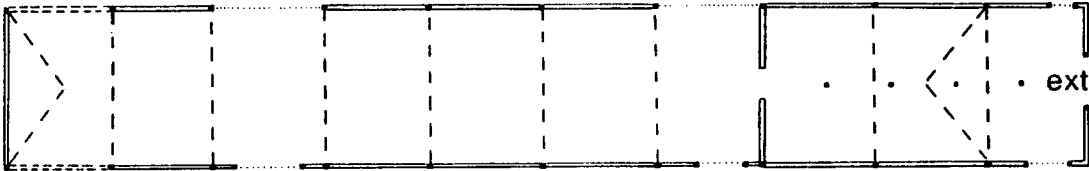
In the mid eighteenth century a three bay barn was attached to the house. It is supported on three trusses with the principal jowled posts resting on sole plates on low brick walls. They are linked by tie-beams and braced by substantial Queen posts supporting the collars. Longitudinal members include one pair of purlins per bay, clasped between the principal rafters and the collars. The central bay is strengthened by wind braces. The walling is timber framed with weatherboarding. Entry was from the north through a double door originally reaching to the eaves. Exit was to the south through a door 2.1m. high. There is a further double door at tie beam height in the western gable to enable unloading to take place in the drive-in. In phase 2 a waggon porch was added on the north side opposite the central bay. The timbers of this were of rather slender scantling. In phase 3 a wood or coal store was added in the angle between the porch and the barn. In phase 4 an additional bay was added as a drive-in to the farm. Within the last twenty years a loft was constructed in the easternmost bay with a garage under. The floor of the barn is brick. Other features of interest include the timber rebates for transverse planks to be placed across the foot of the entrance. These were intended to keep the flying grains of corn in the barn when the crop was being threshed and to keep hens and chickens outside. There is also a window at ground floor level at the west end with a grill of simple blacksmiths work-bars with splayed ends hammered flat. Thirdly there is a cat-hole cut in the planking at the south-west corner. Our thanks are due to Mr and Mrs Dotteridge for allowing access to the barn for recording.

Turnpike House. North Barn (PRN 13,385 SU 53185560)

Following a request for information from the Vale of the White Horse District Council a field investigation was made of this barn which lies to the north of the house.

It is now a three bay timber-framed structure and has lost two or perhaps three bays to the west including the original entrance bays. It is likely that the entrance was immediately to the west of the present end wall and there are a number of stone slabs and areas of cobbled paving which may well be the remains of the waggon drive-in and the threshing floor. The present building consists of three bays and four trusses. The roof structure is upheld on principal posts with jowled heads jointed to the tie beams and wall-plates. The tie beams are braced to the posts and also receive the principal rafters which are slightly tapered. The collar beams are supported by curving inner principals and each bay is given longitudinal stiffening by two pairs of purlins, the upper range of which are clasped between the collar and the principal rafters: the lower are clasped between the curving principal and the principal rafters. There is a single aisle to the north which appears to have been part of the barn in its original state because the sole plates at the east (unaltered end) run through, and there are no slots for studding on the soffits of the wall plates to the north of the building. The walling of the aisle is brick and may be a replacement. The arcade posts are raised on blocks of timber, one well worn and worm eaten. The walling to the south-east and west consists of studs, weatherboarded, set into sole plates resting on dwarf brick walls. The barn has seen two main alterations. When the westernmost bays were taken down a small waggon porch was added, timber framed, weatherboarded, and on low brick walls with a hipped roof. When this was blocked a two door entrance was opened up to the west. The barn was probably half hipped at both ends and the roofing material is tiles. Farm buildings with this form of curving inner principals are common in south Oxfordshire and the Vale of

MANOR FARM, EAST HENDRED

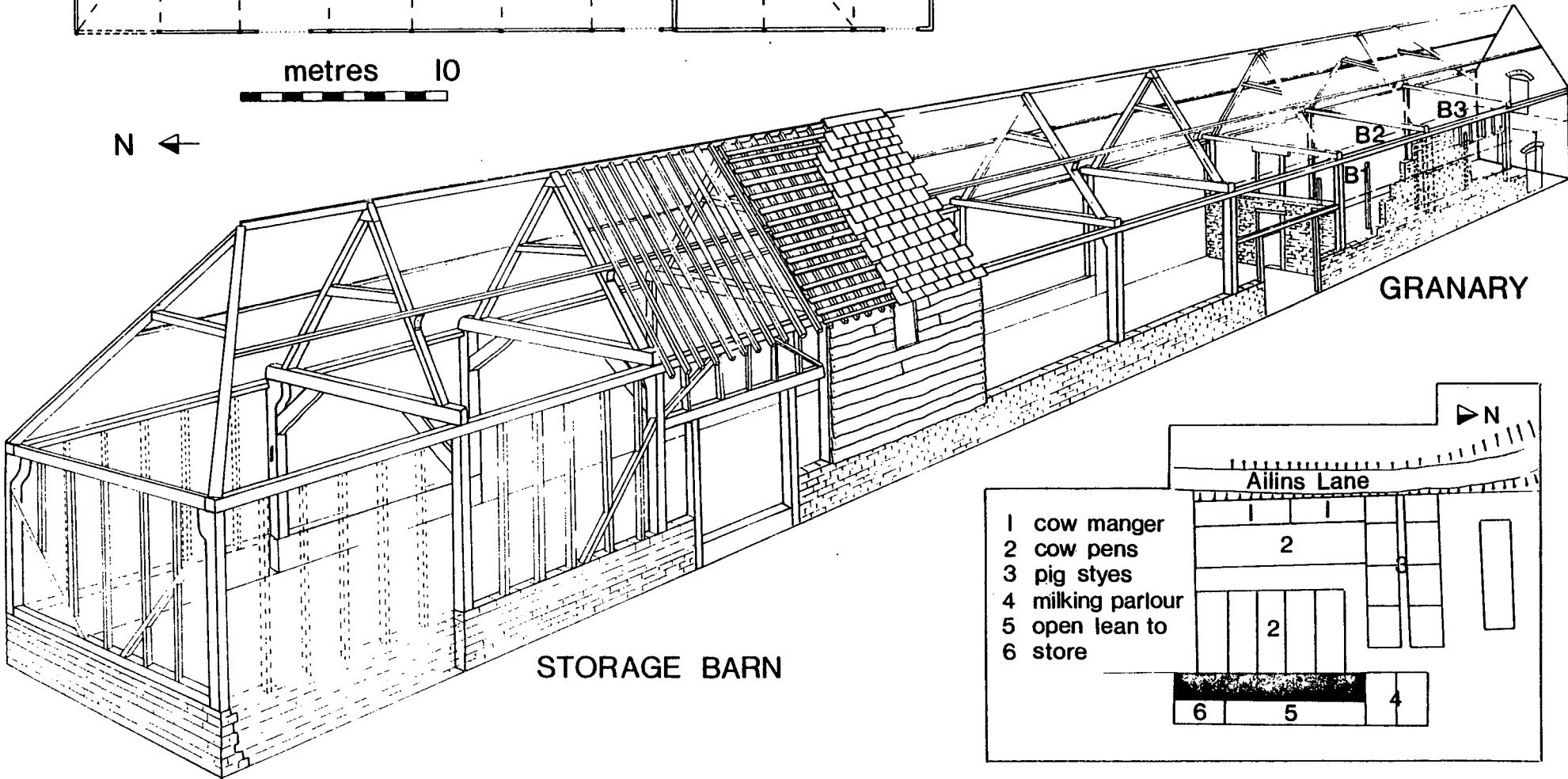


extension

B grain bins (upper floor)

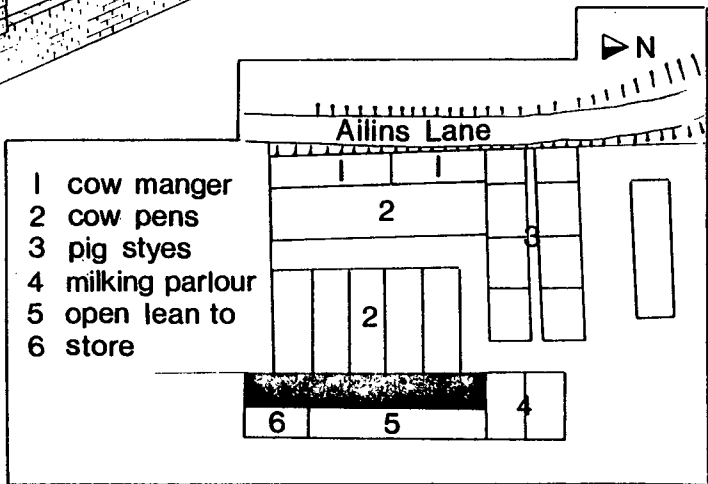
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GRANARY

STORAGE BARN



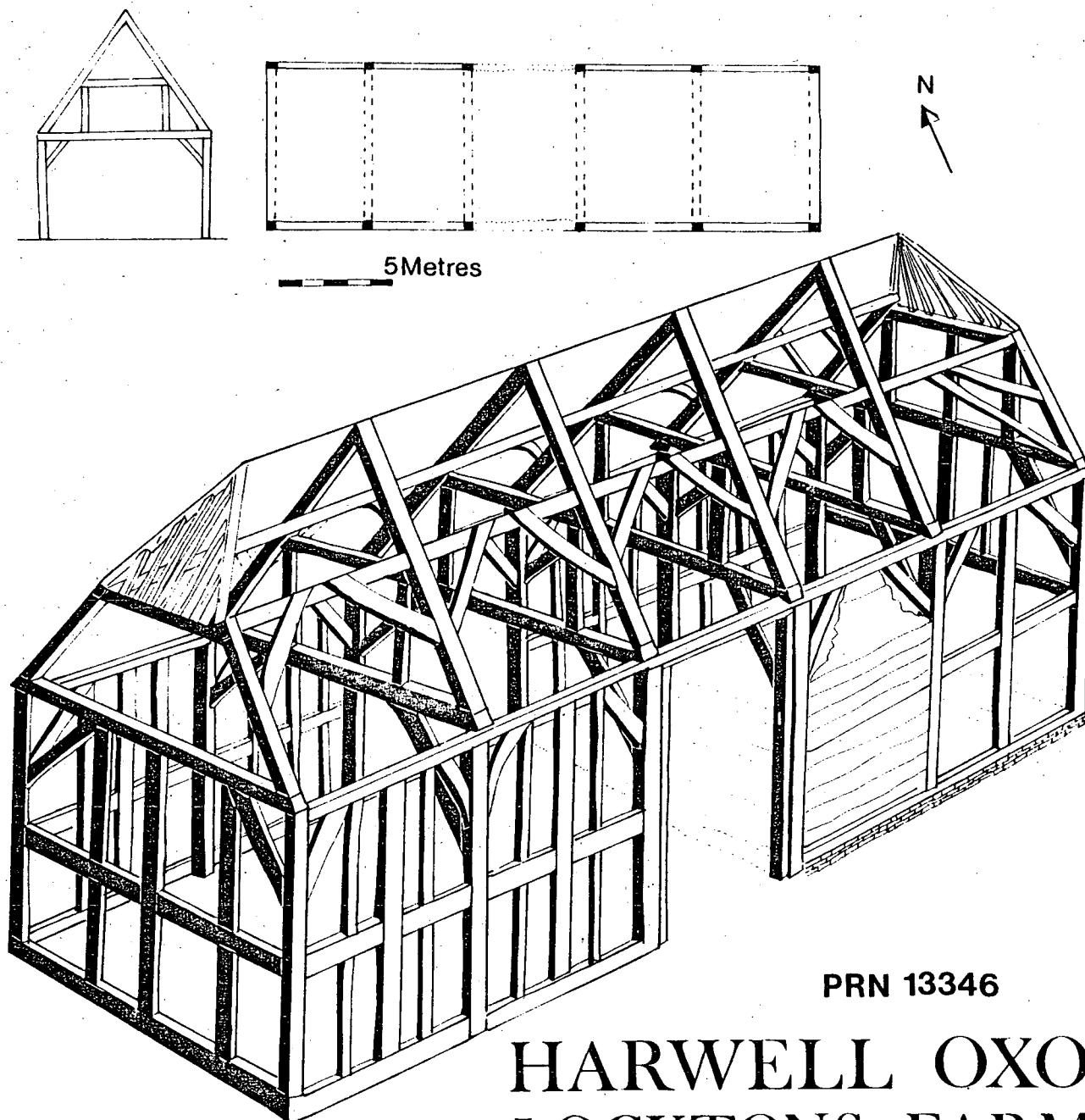
the White Horse District in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Dated examples are found at Warborough (1779), Harpsden; Lower Bolney Farm (1750), Manor Farm, Cholsey (1815), Rush Court, Shillingford (1824), Fyfield Manor Farm (1824), Warborough Green (1806) (information from Dr. Malcolm Airs). This type of roofing provides a sensible alternative to Queen Posts which tend to restrict movement above tie beam level, a consideration when loading sheaves of hay.

East Hendred

Barn at Manor Farm, PRN 13,379 SU 45838905.

At the request of the Vale of the White Horse District Council a field investigation was made by J.M. Steane and A. Mudd in October 1983. The barn is part of a complex of farm buildings lying to the north of Manor Farm, East Hendred. It is ten bays in length and was evidently constructed in two building phases but has been considerably altered in attempts to adopt it to new uses. The northern nine bays make up a fairly typical large Berkshire barn of timber frame construction. The roof trusses are all intact and consist of principal rafters, tie beams and collars. The tie beams are braced to the principal posts. The roof covering is supported on common rafters lying on single pairs of midway purlins which in turn lie on the principal rafters, supported from below by wedge shaped pieces of wood. Both ends of the barn are hipped but the phase 2 extension to the South masks the hipping at this end. The original roof covering is likely to have been of thatch as the hipping suggests and the original roof profile would have been correspondingly steeper. The present roof covering is Welsh slate and this is likely to date from the second half of the nineteenth century. Access was by way of two opposed doors in the third and seventh bays from the north end. Evidently entry was from the east since here the doors go up to the eaves and a fully loaded waggon could have entered. Exit was through the lower doors to the west. One pair of doors which may be original survives at the north-west corner. Those on the east side have been removed but the pivots and slots to take the retaining bars remain. The walling is of red brick up to fifteen courses; the upper part of the walling is of timber framing resting on a sole plate and clad in weather boarding which is more or less intact on the east side, the grain of the wood standing out and indicating that the building stood for a long time before the long outshut was added. The date of the building on grounds of carpentry does not conflict with the 1793 inscribed on the tie beam which is second from the north. The second phase of the building involved the construction of a further and tenth bay to the south. The carpentry here is of a flimsier character. Red brick walling was at the same time added to the last three bays. The effect was to enclose the hipped end of the eighteenth century barn. This work was done to turn this end of the barn into a granary. A floor was inserted supported on four wooden pillars and three rectangular timber grain storage bins were installed on the first floor. Long windows under the eaves gave light onto the scene. There are signs in the concrete floor of bedding for machinery. The date of the addition was the late nineteenth century and the re-roofing in Welsh slate was probably done at the same time.

The future of the barn is uncertain and is at present subject to an appeal. The Department of the Environment has decided against listing it.



PRN 13346

HARWELL OXON
LOCKTONS FARM

Harwell

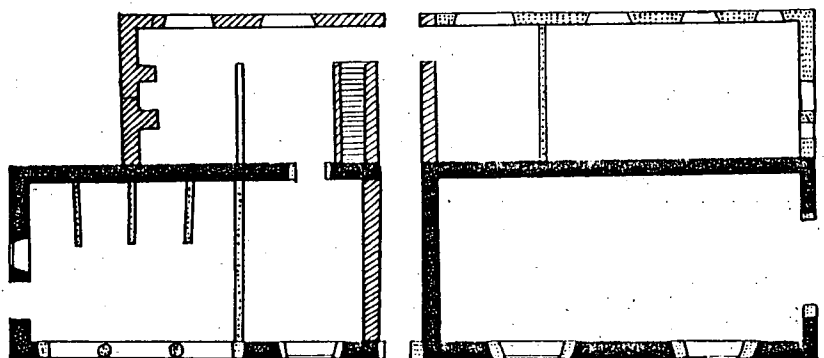
Locktons Farmhouse. PRN 13,346 SU 49128903

This barn lies to the south of the farmhouse and is of one date - the eighteenth century. It is a good example of a Berkshire timber-framed and weather boarded barn and was originally (up to twenty years ago) thatched. It consists of five bays with opposed doors. The timber framing rises from dwarf walls of red brick and each truss consists of principal posts and rafters, the tie beams, collars, single range of purlins. The principal posts are jowled and there are straight angle braces and in each bay wind braces from the purlins to the principal rafters. The walls are also timber-framed and covered with weather-boarding. The dimensions are as follows: width of barn 6.45m. length 20.21m., height to tie beam level 4.05m. From tie to collar 1.85m. From collar to apex 2.40m.

Stonor Park

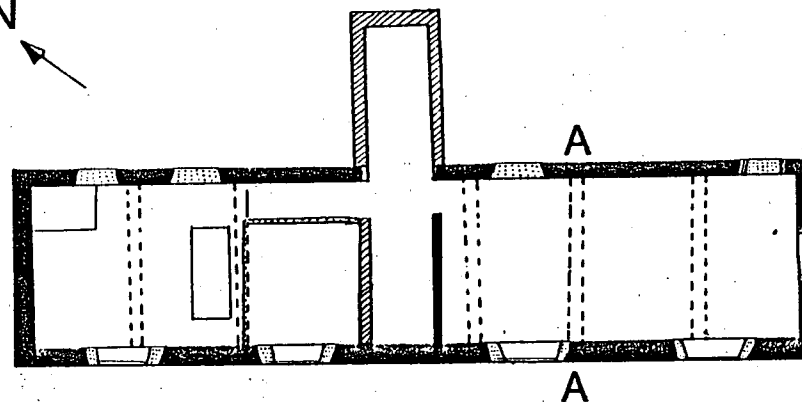
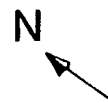
Farm building. PRN 2095 SU74388913

A field investigation of the most westerly of a group of three farm buildings lying 300 metres to the south-east of Stonor House was made at the request of the Hon. Georgina Stonor by J.M. Steane in May, 1983. A sketch plan, elevations and sections were drawn. The building is constructed of coursed and knapped flint with brick quoins and its four gables present a picturesque front facing west towards the house and the main entrance to the park. It is clear that the building has gone through four building phases, each connected with changing functions. Phase one: black in plan. Late seventeenth century. The main carcass of the building consisted of a long rectangular block 27.95m. north-south and 6.7m. east-west. The original arrangement of the ground floor is unknown since there have been so many recent alterations but it is likely to have been divided into two at ground level from the start. The seven bayed roof timbers are original and are a fine feature worthy of retention and even display. They consist of principal rafters mortised into tie beams, traced by cambered collars. Longitudinal stiffening is provided by two sets of butt purlins. Further bracing from the principal rafters is provided by Queen post struts. The floors also seem to be original but are not in such good condition as the roof timbers. The function of the building at this phase may have been stabling and possibly storage for wool. Evidently the old name for the building is "Woolhouse" (ex. inf. Miss Stonor). Phase two (hatched on plan). In the mid to late eighteenth century it was decided to add ancillary buildings at the rear, including a two storeyed narrow wing with a staircase up one side to provide improved access to the upper storey. Also a two bay rectangular single storeyed building was added on the north-east side. It is possible that the southern end of the upper part was converted to a granary in this phase - a door was cut through the wall at the south-east corner. This would have provided direct access to the granary which took up the first bay. The walls were thickly plastered at this point. Phase 3 (dotted on plan), late nineteenth century. The granary door mentioned was blocked and a single storeyed outshut was added to complete the additions at the rear. The granary was moved to the other end. The floor was strengthened by an iron tie and two timber planked bins were constructed. During this phase the lower part of the building probably continued to be used as stables. A doorway was cut through the centre of the building to

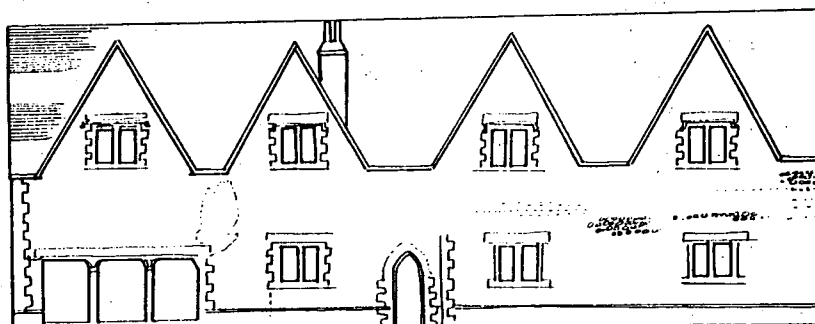


Ground Floor

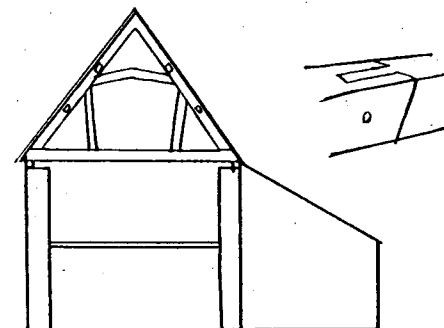
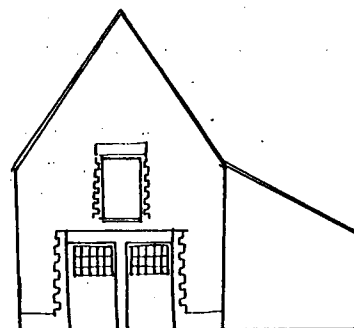
Metres 10



First Floor



West face



Section at A-A



East face

STONOR PARK OXON
WOOLHOUSE GRANARY COACHHOUSE
 PRN 2095

give access to a passage which ran right through to the yard at the rear. Phase 4 (dotted on diagram). The southern ground floor space was converted into a coachhouse and subsequently into a garage for the late Lord Camoys' Bentleys and Rolls Royces. A flat of two rooms was made in the centre of the building for the chauffeur: a chimney was inserted. An arcade was constructed by Lady Camoys in connection with watching tennis. There were hard courts at both front and rear. The fenestration along the front of the building was renewed, and consists of three, two-light square windows with brick jambs and timber lintels at ground floor level and four two-light similar windows at first floor level.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT, 1983

Gloucestershire

FAIRFORD/LECHLADE: Claydon Pike - David Miles and Simon Palmer

The 1983 excavations at Claydon Pike began in April and continued until mid October. A trench of about 1.2 ha was opened in the nucleus of the Romano-British settlement using a JCB IIIC, loading shovels and lorries provided by the Coln Gravel Ltd. Smaller trenches were placed around the periphery of the site to test features visible on aerial photographs. Finally an area of c. 6ha was stripped with a box scraper prior to gravel extraction.

In the early spring the labour force was provided by the Manpower Services Commission's Community Enterprise Programme and in the summer by a volunteer programme funded by DOE and the Amey Roadstone Corporation. We are grateful to all those who worked on the site and to the supervisors: Phil Carstairs, Tim Copeland, Pete Rooke, Judith Russen, Jonathan Sharpe, Valerie Tomlin and Gerry Waite. Geoff Mees continued the programme of phosphate analysis.

Environmental sampling was carried out by Anne Perry (carbonised plants), Mark Robinson (waterlogged samples) and Bob Wilson (animal bones and shells). Mark Maillard organised metal detecting, Phil Page the computing and Marylee Parrott of Corinium Museum the conservation of finds. Cleaning and identification of coins were carried out in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

The development of this area of Claydon Pike can be divided into three major phases dating between the first and fifth centuries AD. The topography of the area was important to the layout of all three phases of settlement. Three gravel platforms were separated by a linear hollow. In all phases a trackway followed this hollow (through the centre of the excavation). To the east of the hollow was the largest and most pronounced of the platforms, on which stood the main buildings at all phases.

PHASE 1: LATE IRON AGE (Fig. 1)

A dense group of ditched oval enclosures clustered on the eastern platform. Concentrations of postholes and occupation debris in the central and northern part of this complex suggest limited areas of occupation, possibly bounded by a rectilinear ditched enclosure. The other enclosures are of two types:

- 1) Oval enclosures 10-20m in diameter with recut ditches about 1m deep and with little associated domestic debris.
- 2) Small oval enclosures 2-7m in diameter bounded by narrow, shallow gullies.

Both of this type of gully may be associated with the storage of animal fodder and the penning of animals. A Dobunnic Class M coin was found unstratified in this area.

The eastern platform was bounded by a trackway whose side ditches were visible only where they were not destroyed by the later Roman road.

Beyond the main excavation area, to the south, linear ditches formed a series of rectangular paddocks.

PHASE 2: EARLY ROMANO-BRITISH (Fig. 2)

In the late first century (more precise dating awaits the analysis of stratified pottery groups) the native settlement and the surrounding area were replanned on a major scale. A new road, metalled where it crossed marshy areas was laid out, linking a number of settlements on the gravel terrace. At the same time ditched fields were established over at least 15 ha, covering the Middle Iron Age settlements and fields excavated in 1979-81.

The road formed the main axis of the Phase 2 settlements. The principal occupation area was on the eastern platform, also the nucleus of the Phase 1 settlement. A rectangular ditched enclosure (75 x 60m) stood on this platform. Inside it were three buildings. Building 1 was an aisled structure (18m x 11m) with fourteen post-holes (stone packed when not robbed) up to 1.5m deep. A short length of stone footing on the west side was the only surviving fragment of the wall base.

Building 1 stood just inside the southern boundary ditch of the platform, close by an entrance through the ditch, off a partly metalled side street.

Building 2 lay at right angles to Building 1, to the west. This was a two-roomed structure 6m wide and at least 8.5m long. The squared-flat-bottomed foundation slots suggest that the building had a sleeper beam construction. It is uncertain whether Building 2 stood independently or was an annexe of Building 1. Building 2 lay over a large elongated pit producing pottery of c. AD 100.

Building 3 stood on the eastern side of the platform and was excavated in 1981-82. This aisled building (17m x 10m) had eight stone-packed postholes and a central entrance on the southern side.

Other structures on this platform included circular gullies c. 7m in diameter thought to indicate stacking areas for animal fodder. A stone lined wall and a water hole were also found.

There was an entrance into the eastern platform on the south side, close by Building 1. This led into a side street which had a succession of metalled surfaces where it crossed Iron Age ditches. In the later 2nd century the eastern end of this street went out of use: the end was blocked first by a ditch and then by a fence line. At the western end of this side street was a complex gateway providing access into the main open space at the nucleus of the settlement. The gateway had several phases including large stone packed post-holes and stone foundations for curtain walls running north and east.

To the west and north of the main street was a second, low platform. Amid a complicated series of linear drainage gullies stood a rectangular building (Building 4) (7m x 3m) delineated by parallel slots and a setting of stone slabs over which was a black occupation layer and domestic debris.

Parallel slots, south-east of Building 4 probably indicated another building 5 and possibly another (Building 6) lay south-west of Building 5, of which only two short lengths of rectilinear gully survived.

In the western part of this platform were several small circular enclosures (3-5m diameter) of the kind seen on the eastern platform and thought to indicate fodder stacks. The parallel drainage ditches which form the western boundary of this platform are probably demarcated on earthen bank and hedge rather than a trackway.

In the centre of the settlement the cross-roads forms a central open-space. South of this, and fronting onto it, stood a double-ditched rectangular enclosure which in plan resembles a Romano-Celtic shrine.

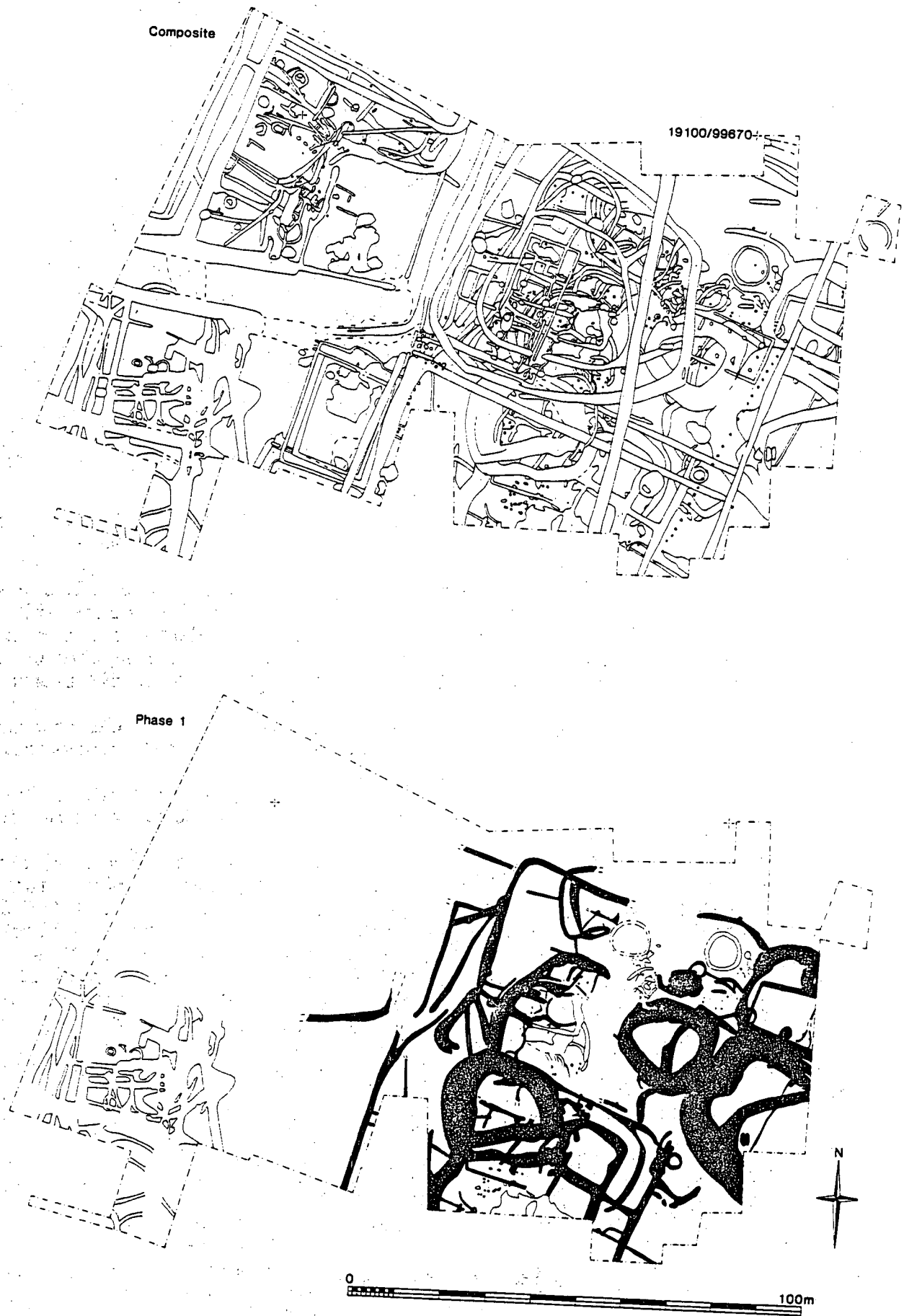


Fig. 1 Claydon Pike, Phase 1 - Late Iron Age

Immediately outside, to the north was a cobbled surface, laid over the infilled Iron Age road ditch. The rectangular 'shrine' area itself was bounded by shallow gullies with a very clean fill. A rectangular cobbled surface was found in the south-east corner and in the centre was a series of shallow flat-bottomed pits containing charcoal and coal, dating to the third century AD. From pits around the perimeter of this feature were dumps of stone including 4 fragments of limestone column, two column bases and a large block of carefully dressed ashlar stone.

Linear Iron Age ditches seem to define this area suggesting that it was reserved in some way before the construction of the early Roman structure.

In this early Roman phase of occupation there seems to have been a military presence on the site. Six bronze military items have now been found and also two intaglios which might have had military owners one depicting an eagle with an orb and thunderbolt, the other with clasped right hands, cornucopiae and an altar.

PHASE 3 - LATER ROMANO-BRITISH

In the 3rd and 4th centuries the settlement changed its character; the settlement appears to have contracted. The focal point became a series of stone-based buildings overlaying Buildings 1 and 2 (Fig. 2). The earliest of these was a small square structure Building 7 (c. 10m x 10m) of which only robber trenches survived. This was replaced by a larger structure, Building 8, which itself showed a sequence of development. At its maximum extent Building 8 consisted of a block of eight rooms and two sunken chambers which were dug up to 1m below the water table. A similar chamber outside the building to the north produced basketry, vegetation deposits, including box leaves, and large quantities of animal bone.

Two curtain walls projected to the north and south of Building 8 separated the yards in front and behind the building.

South of Building 8 was another structure, Building 9, which was in part contemporary but went out of use at an earlier stage. This had three rooms forming an L shape, the westernmost of which had a hypocaust system. Building 9 was attached at the south-east corner to a small gatehouse which had an internal, triangular shaped buttress. This guarded the access into the main yard area. The platform at this stage was encircled by a double-ditched enclosure. A low dry-stone wall ran just inside the outer ditch. This went on in use when the inner one had been infilled.

The metal detector survey located a concentration of coins about 35m east of the late Romano-British enclosure. These proved to have been deposited inside a circular stone based shrine (8m in diameter) which was masked by deposits of alluvium. The shrine was constructed in a marshy area and used throughout the 4th century. A stone and gravel causeway ran from the west side of the shrine northwards towards the Roman road.

Over 300 coins were found inside the shrine as well as a small votive bronze axe, a votive bronze leaf and a complete colour-coated beaker.

Trial trenching 30m west of the main trench located a small later Romano-British cemetery. The earliest burial orientated east-west lay inside a small square ditched enclosure. The second burial, also within a square enclosure was placed to the west. A group of burials were then placed around these, the later ones orientated north-south, one a decapitated burial with the head by the feet.

A second small group of burials, about 6 in number, post-dated Building 8. These were inserted into the demolished and partially robbed foundations of the buildings. Post-Roman activity on the site included a small quarry

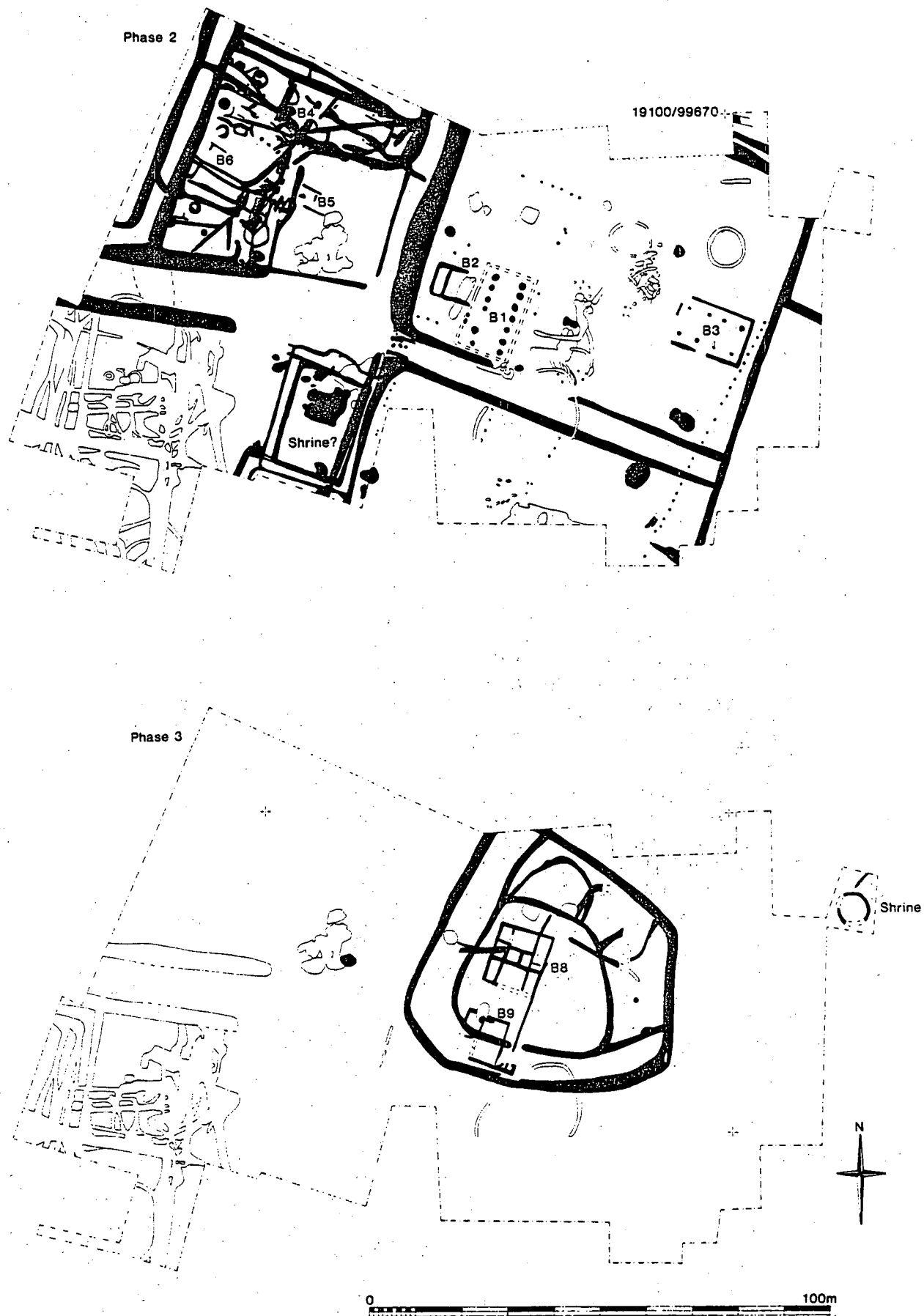


Fig. 2 Claydon Pike, Phase 2 - Early Romano-British
Phase 3 - Later Romano-British

dug through Building 8 with two late Saxon coins, and a 15th century well.

Post-Roman flooding deposited alluvium over all but the higher parts of the settlement area.

Oxfordshire

ABINGDON: Former MG Car Factory - Claire Halpin
(PRN 13,016-7; SU 484973)

Excavations and watching briefs in advance of the redevelopment of the former MG car factory have been conducted since 1981. The primary objective of this work is to augment the archaeological material derived from excavations in the mid 70's at the site of the Ashville Trading Estate, which adjoins the current project. Early and middle Iron Age occupation material, and lengths of Late Iron Age and Roman enclosure ditches were recorded at Ashville. On the south side of the MG factory eleven Roman inhumations were excavated in advance of building work which took place in the mid 1970s.

The aims of the current work is to record the extent of archaeological material. In 1981 a narrow trench immediately south of Ashville permitted some assessment of the early and middle Iron Age features, and in the following year an excavation in advance of a new road (Blacklands Furlong) took place.

Two large areas (94m x 135m, and 43m x 84m) lying south of the newly constructed road (Blacklands Furlong) are to be affected by tarmac and soil stripping. 13 archaeological trial trenches (1m x 20m) were excavated during the last week of January 1983.

Contrary to expectations little archaeological material was revealed. Though within 10m of the road corridor no continuation of the dense scatters of Iron Age and Roman features (predominantly pits), located within the corridor, were seen. It appears that these features were bounded by enclosure ditches and hence they did not extend southwards. Similarly, though within 4m of the 11 Roman inhumations recorded on the south side of the site, only a single child burial was revealed. Further lengths of enclosure ditches dating to the late Iron Age or Roman period were recorded. Two 1m sections were excavated but these produced very few finds.

The trial trenches demonstrated that the proposed site stripping in advance of warehouse construction will expose the upper surface of the natural gravel, and therefore archaeological features. No useful area which warranted excavation was defined and therefore future work within this phase will be confined to a selected watching brief (estimated to occur in late April). Due to extensive modern disturbance around the area of the Roman Cemetery the information from the watching brief is likely to be confined to infilling the pattern of enclosure ditches.

Finally this year's work indicated the importance of the area to the north of Blacklands Furlong. It is across this area that archaeological material recorded within the road corridor extends. In addition the south-eastern boundaries of the early and middle Iron Age settlements sites recorded at Ashville are located here.

BICESTER: Bicester House, Queens Avenue - R A Chambers
(PRN 11,876; SP 58202252)

An earthwork survey and two trial trenches to investigate the nature and extent of medieval settlement to the north of Bicester House were completed in 1983.

The site (Fig. 3) is bounded to the south-west by the present grounds of Bicester House, to the south-east by Lower Home Close, to the north-west by Queens Avenue and to the north-east by the River Bure which is now little more than a stream. There is a narrow flood-plain which extends up to 60m from the present river channel providing a band of wetter, willow covered ground along the north-east edge of the site. Several former river channels G are traceable within the flood plain.

Although much of the site was tree covered and well-sheltered it was possible to complete an earthworks survey during September after the undergrowth had been mown.

The survey showed that the earthwork remains were more extensive than previously thought. A series of platforms and low mounds indicated former buildings. On several platforms surface spreads of limestone suggested building rubble. Two trial trenches excavated in the early summer showed that many of these mounds and platforms may have been due to building rubble overlying floors and foundations. However the outlines of two single-cell buildings A and B were clearly visible as earthworks and not obscured by rubble. These two buildings may only have possessed low stone cill walls with timber superstructures.

Traces of ridge and furrow ran down to the river and the building remains appeared to represent an expansion of the medieval settlement over arable land.

A hollow way D which ran down towards the river along the north-west edge of the site suggested a former river crossing point. A causeway F of unknown date cut across the hollow way.

To the east a modern causeway C led off the site to the embankment carrying Mansfield Road. Beneath the road the River Bure is piped. The land for some 60m to the north-east and south-east of Bicester House Cottage was seen to be heavily cultivated post-medieval garden soil.

In May two trial trenches were excavated by hand with assistance from Jeff Perry, an in-service trainee. The first trench was located some 70m north-west of Lower Home Close where extensive medieval settlement remains were uncovered by building contractors in 1980.

Trench 1 crossed a low platform some 18m wide and revealed medieval building foundations covered with rubble. Part of one foundation was cleared of rubble. The 0.7m wide foundation comprised unmortared coursed limestone rubble which survived several courses high. A second wall or bench foundation 0.5m wide had been built against the wall. The foundations cut obliquely across the existing earthwork platform suggesting the present platform shape was the result of stone robbing. A quantity of medieval pottery and domestic refuse was recovered.

The second trial trench lay further to the north-west, some 150m from Lower Home Close. This trench also revealed medieval occupation levels resting directly on the natural limestone bedrock. A substantial north-south medieval boundary ditch 1m deep contained limestone rubble in its upper filling. This may have been building rubble and was associated with medieval pottery.

There is a local tradition that the present Bicester House marks the site of the medieval manor house owned until the Reformation by the Nuns of

Markyates in Bedfordshire. The foundations uncovered in Trench 1 were similar in build to those of the 12th century manor house at Chesterton. It is possible that the first trial trench has revealed a part of the Nuns of Markyates manor house or an associated structure.

CHARLBURY: The North Oxon Grim's Ditch - Tim Copeland
(Area centred SP 3900 2000)

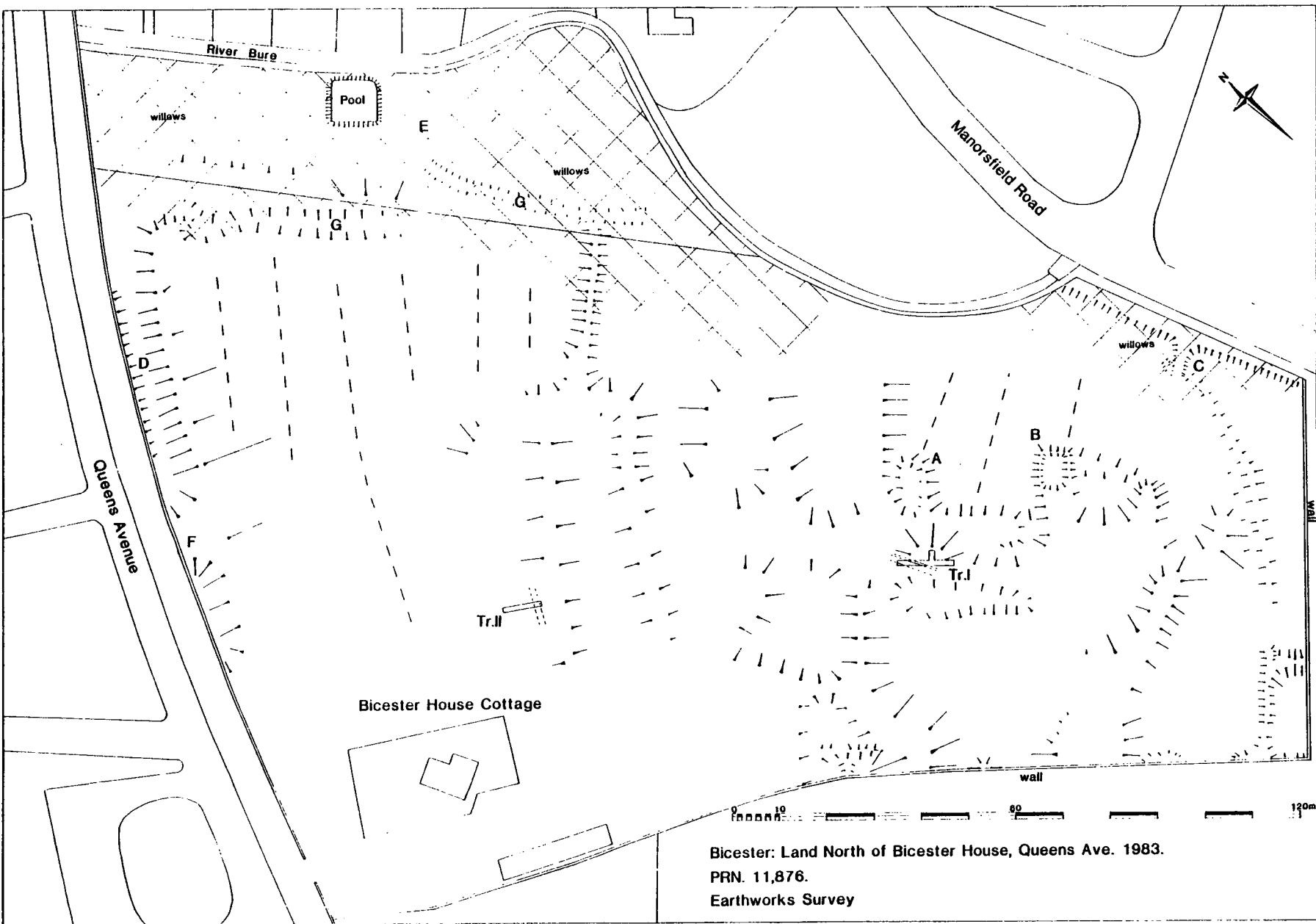
Research using documentary and aerial photographic evidence, and intensive fieldwork has identified several new stretches of the Grim's Ditch (Figs. 4 & 5). South of the Evenlode evidence indicates the earthwork west of Walcot, nr. Charlbury running south-westerly into Wychwood, and from Cornbury Park Lakes south to Mount Skippett, Ramsden. It has also been possible to identify elements of its course from North Leigh, through Freeland to Long Hanborough where it again meets the Evenlode.

North of the Evenlode the situation is more complex. 1) Evidence for the earliest phase of the monument has been seen in section near Charlbury Quarry and aerial photographs suggest this line continues westwards into Bottom Wood and Rushey Bottom, Ditchley. 2) The next phase of the system has been seen to be virtually continuous, except for small access points, from Charlbury, through Ditchley House to Grim's Dyke Farm, Kiddington. It then turned south and a completely ploughed out element ran down to Pool Bottom just west of Glympton Assarts Farm. The line crosses the tributary stream of the Glyme and continues as Thomas' Dyke C. (Oxoniensia 1957). West of Kingswood it runs north of Callow Farm and Hill Barn Farm, Stonesfield, to Baywell, Charlbury, via Lee's Rest. This phase appears to delimit the highground of the catchment area of the tributary of the Glyme south of Ditchley House. Probably part of this phase also is Thomas' Dyke B at Callow Hill, and a newly discovered earthwork on the northern side of the valley, but further westward than Callow Hill, running uphill from Kingswood Brake to the western edge of Outwood. 3) The phase from Stratford Bridge on the Glyme, is upstanding in Blenheim Park and continues to Outwood, Kiddington, cuts (2) just east of Outwood. This phase may be contemporary with the known "outlier" at Shilcott Wood, Spelsbury, that has now been seen to extend to a tributary of the Coldron Brook just south of Taston, where parallel banks have been identified, and which in turn may be contemporary with the sweep south of the Evenlode. The excavated evidence for Phase Two, (Thomas at Callow Hill, and Harden at Model Farm and Kiddington, Oxoniensia 1937) indicated that the Ditch was backfilled shortly after construction, possibly due to the extension of the system by (3). A late Iron Age date is probable at least for (2).

Three new sites have also been located within the area defined by the Grim's Ditch: a "banjo" enclosure complex east of Shilcott Wood at SP 383220, and Roman sites at Norman's Grove, Spelsbury (SP 37662118) and 300m north-east of Ditchley Villa (centred on SP 40252015).

CHALGROVE: Manor Farm - Phillip Page
(PRN 1115; SU 6306 9703)

During the year a watching brief was carried out at the late 15th century manor house, at Mill Lane, Chalgrove. The hall has been opened up to its original ground plan by the removal of a victorian corridor on its west side. The remains of the original timber screen separating the hall from the



Bicester: Land North of Bicester House, Queens Ave. 1983.
 PRN. 11,876.
 Earthworks Survey

Fig. 3

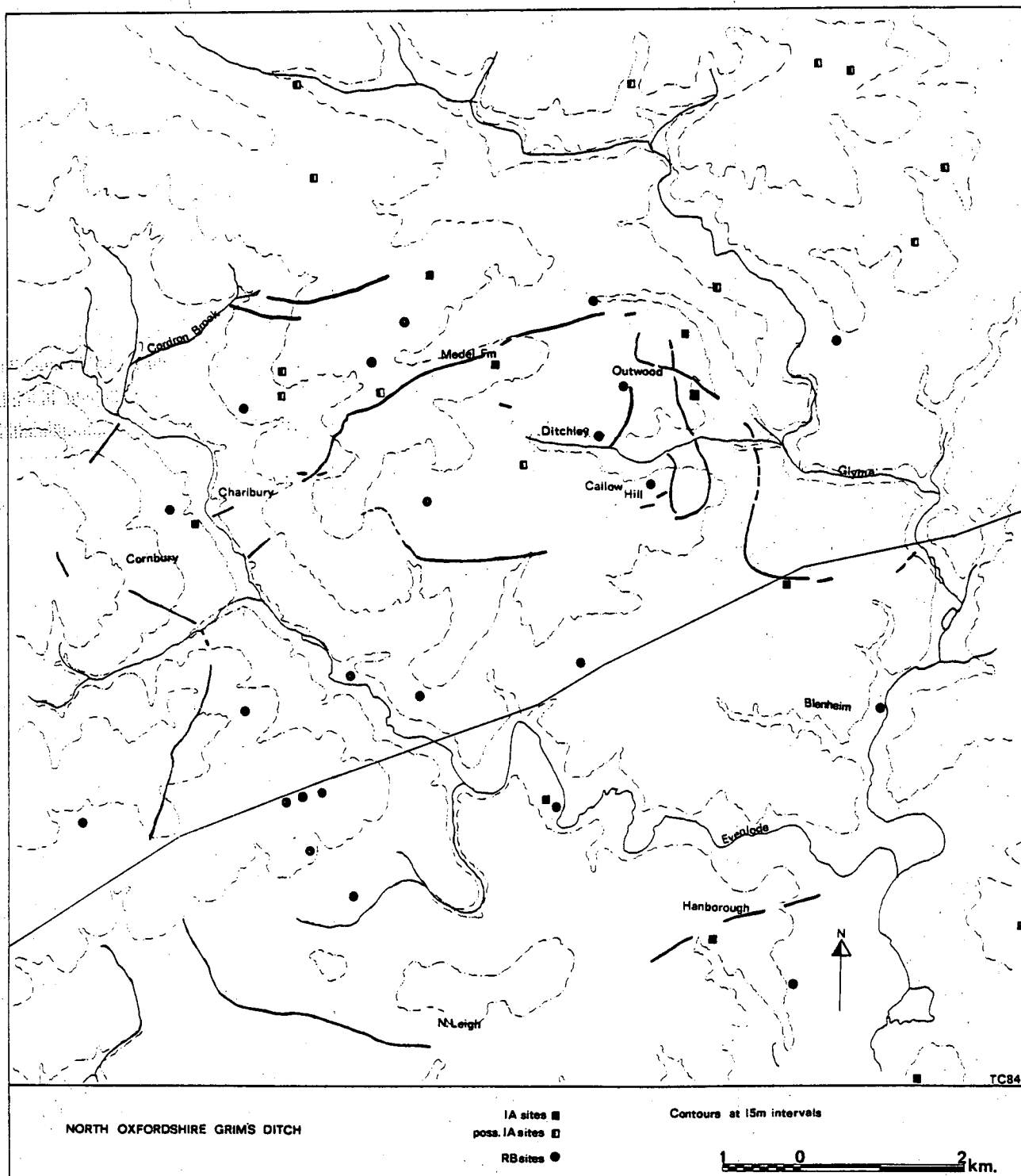


Fig. 4

THE NORTH OXFORDSHIRE GRIM'S DITCH: Conjectured phasing

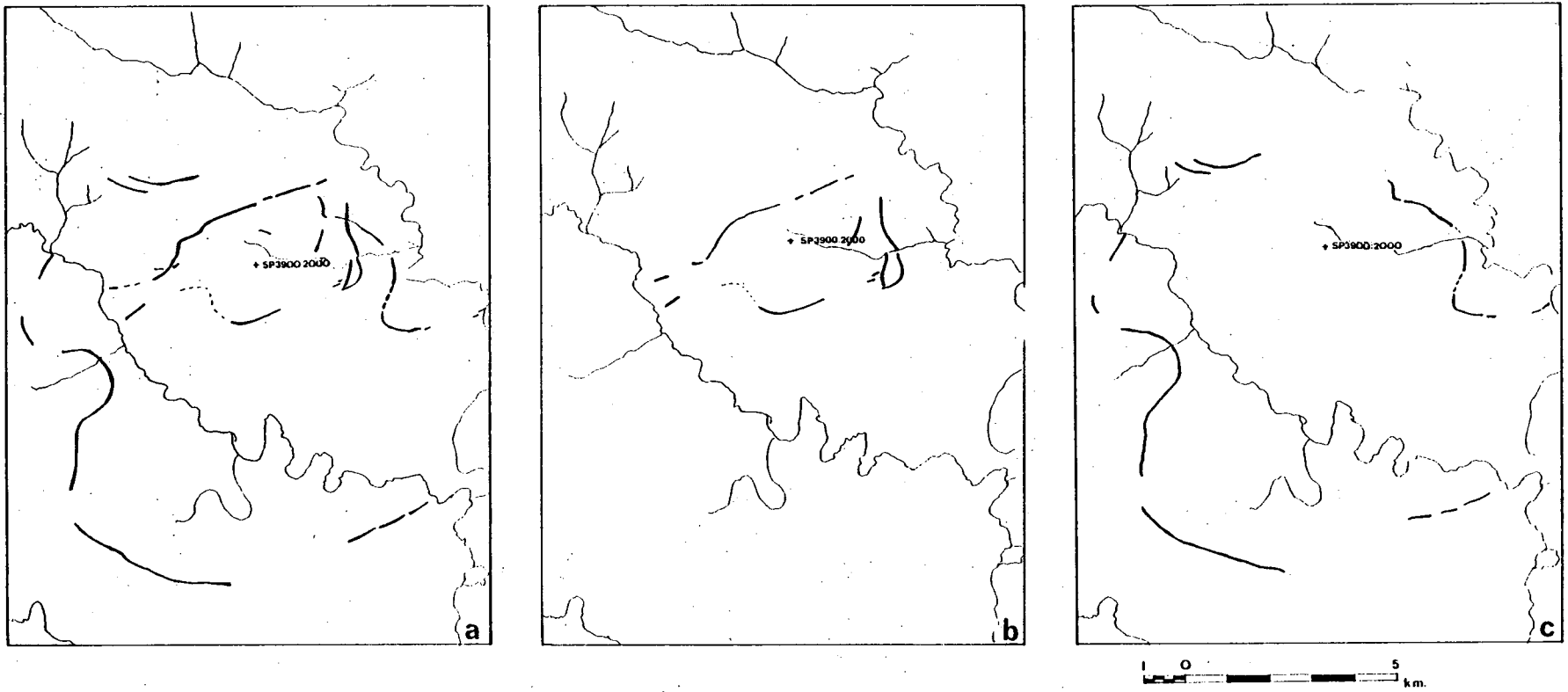


Fig. 5

screen's passage has been revealed beneath later plaster. There was originally one doorway into the hall at the western end of the screen's passage.

With the removal of the timber floor in the hall it was hoped that some remains of the original central hearth might have been discovered. Unfortunately in order to lay the timber floor up to 25cms of the underlying stratigraphy had been removed. The stratigraphy had remained intact within the confines of the corridor in the hall, and a trench here revealed a sequence similar to that which was found in the buttery to the north. It provided further evidence for a late 15th century date for the construction of the house. Within the debris in the hall one piece of decorated floor tile has been found. This rather tantalising fragment could be of comparable date with the initial construction, it certainly was not earlier, and was nothing like the decorated medieval floor tiles from the excavated site at Hardings Field, Chalgrove.

Several trenches for drains were dug in the grounds of the late 15th century moated manor house and were part of the restoration of both the house and the gardens that is currently being carried out by the present owners. It was hoped that these trenches might have revealed some evidence of the medieval buildings which preceded the present structure and were mentioned in a survey of 1336. No evidence of medieval occupation was revealed, only post-medieval occupation debris was recovered and there was no evidence of the earlier buildings.

CLANFIELD: Burroway - George Lambrick
(PRN 2426; SP 308004)

As part of the Floodplain Survey, in August, two small sample trenches were excavated on the site of the Iron Age fort at Burroway Brook. The fort survives as a low broad bank standing to a maximum of c. 1m with a possible hornwork entrance on its north east side. Auguring along a transect across the bank and ditch and a little way into the interior revealed some of the stratigraphy and showed the ditch to be over 1.5m deep. Waterlogged material was not encountered in auguring, but this may be because the deepest part of the ditch was not examined.

One trench on the crest of the bank showed it to consist largely of burnt clay and gravelly soil, in places with signs of burnt clay in situ, though no definite traces of an internal timber framework were found. A pit had been cut into the bank at the point excavated. At the base of the bank resting on the old ground surface was a series of charred planks or logs laid across the line of the bank. As the old ground surface was not burnt the charring of the planks must have been caused by the burning of the material above, probably again implying a rampart consisting of a timber framework infilled with soil.

The trench in the interior located an occupation layer about 10 to 15cm thick sealing a post hole which produced Iron Age pottery. Over these was a further 15 to 20cm of clay alluvium effectively acting as a buffer between these well preserved deposits and the modern ploughsoil above. Both beneath the occupation layer and beneath the bank the old ground surface was a non-calcareous silty clay whereas the alluvium above contained a few aquatic mollusc shells. This is consistent with evidence elsewhere that the pre-Iron Age floodplain was drier, with much of the alluviation occurring only from

the later part of the Iron Age onwards.

This well preserved and obviously important site is not scheduled as an ancient monument and is under arable. As it happened it was about to be subsoiled for the first time. This was predicted by the Unit two and a half years ago when it was suggested that the site should be scheduled to protect it from such damage. Fortunately the excavation was done just in time to stir the DOE into action and there is now a good chance thanks to the owner's cooperation that the site will not suffer the worst effects of modern cultivation.

HENLEY: Henley Rectory - Brian Durham
(PRN 13,494-7; SU 763 826)

The rectory occupies two-thirds of an acre of riverside just upstream of Henley Bridge, with a frontage on the main street (Hart Street) opposite the church. The Oxford Diocesan Parsonages Board are building a new house for the rector in the garden of the existing 18th century building, and the Unit has joined with the Henley Archaeological and Historical Group to investigate this focal area in the medieval town.

A plan of c. 1830 shows the layout of the complex, indicating the newly demolished rectory and a large tithe barn. Given the need to avoid damage to the many protected trees, a series of trenches was planned to investigate both buildings. The barn may be dismissed briefly; no more than an area of stone-metalling could be traced and it must be assumed that it was of timber with no substantial foundations. The site of the old rectory was much more productive, with stone and flint walls and an outside cess pit, but an absence of internal floors. By following the building plan to the west, away from the river, part of a medieval building of two phases was located, and the structural succession suggests that this was a continuously occupied range being extended progressively towards the river.

Henley is first mentioned in 1179, when Henry II bought land to make houses. By 1199 it was a 'town' in a grant of John. There is at present no way of dating the earliest levels of the rectory site, but it is possible that when the pottery has been studied it may prove to be within the first 50 years of Henley's existence. The earliest structure was a shallow burnt pit, possibly within a building but none could be defined. It was built over by a strong foundation of flint and clunch which was subsequently realigned. The 5m south frontage of this building makes it rather smaller than the 15th century Old Rectory at Winford, Somerset, which was the smallest such building identified by Pantin 'Medieval Priests' Houses', Medieval Archaeology i (1957), Fig. 26. It might in fact be the gable end of a house aligned north-south, or it may have been the stone-founded portion of a larger timber dwelling. To the east was a large shallow depression which drained through a ditch towards the river, and it was over this area that the house was to extend, probably in the later medieval period.

The rectory which survived to the 1820's is illustrated in a pencil drawing in the manner of J C Buckler. The medieval end had by then disappeared, leaving a twin roofed rear wing behind the hall wing facing the river. Extensive foundations of the rear wing were exposed, showing it to have a 6.5m span with a 2m span added in the 18th century. This is rather different from Buckler's depiction of two fairly equal roofs, and it must be assumed that some internal reorganisation had taken place.

The third objective of the excavation was to look at the Hart Street frontage, which should have been commercially valuable on the approach to

the bridge. No buildings were found, only a 'roadside' ditch. Perhaps the rectory was so well endowed that it did not need to rent this frontage, but alternatively there may have been buildings further forward, ousted when the road was moved to allow the church to enlarge. The latter would explain the presence of a pit producing 14th-15th century pottery. Amongst other finds from this feature were ten amber beads of two sizes, perhaps from a rosary, and a gold charm brooch inscribed IESUS NAZARENUS. Such talismanic brooches are not uncommon in bronze and silver, but John Cherry writes that he knows of only one other English example in gold with this inscription. Subject to treasure trove inquest, it is hoped it will be deposited with the Oxfordshire Department of Museum Services.

MERTON: West End Farm - R A Chambers and Jeff Perry
(PRN 13,195); SP 577180)

At Merton a set of fishponds centred 250m to the north of the parish church have been surveyed during the course of their destruction. Although the destruction of these well preserved ponds is to be regretted the work did provide some useful information on the pond construction and management. In its final form the fishery appears to have comprised five ponds on marshy ground between a spring line and a stream. Three ponds were arranged in line parallel to the stream. A further two linear ponds, one to the east and one to the west of the three centre ponds were both arranged at right angles to the stream and hill slope.

Mechanically cut sections through the dams separating the centre ponds followed by the bulldozing of the banks showed that all except the westernmost pond were filled with spring water. In the case of the centre three ponds, spring water was derived from the pond bottoms. None of the ponds were connected by deep sluice channels although shallow spilt-ways to accommodate overflow must have been present originally.

The ponds lay on land which formerly belonged to Manor Farm. The present farm house still retains parts of the Elizabethan building. A detailed estate map drawn sometime after 1763 only illustrates the easternmost of the five ponds, suggesting that the fishery began as a single pond with further ponds added during the next century. The 1st edition 25 inches to the mile Ordnance Survey map of 1881 shows all five ponds in existence. Earthworks suggest the eastern of the three central ponds had been extended twice, the final extension possibly being made after 1881 as it is not included on the O.S. map.

This fishery appears to have continued to grow in size for about one hundred years. It is not known when the ponds fell into disuse.

NORTHMOOR: Watkins Farm - Tim Allen
(PRN 13,360, 13,361; SP 426036)

Gravel stripping at the ARC pit at Northmoor uncovered a new Middle Iron Age and Romano-British settlement. This had not shown on aerial photographs because it is situated on the first gravel terrace close to the floodplain, and the watertable is permanently high. The south and east parts of the site were salvaged in July, and a further strip across the north-east of the settlement was stripped by JCB under archaeological supervision and excavated in September and October (see dotted outline Fig. 6). The area north of this was salvaged in January 1984. Stripping by ARC had removed the

WATKINS FARM, NORTHMOOR

1983-4

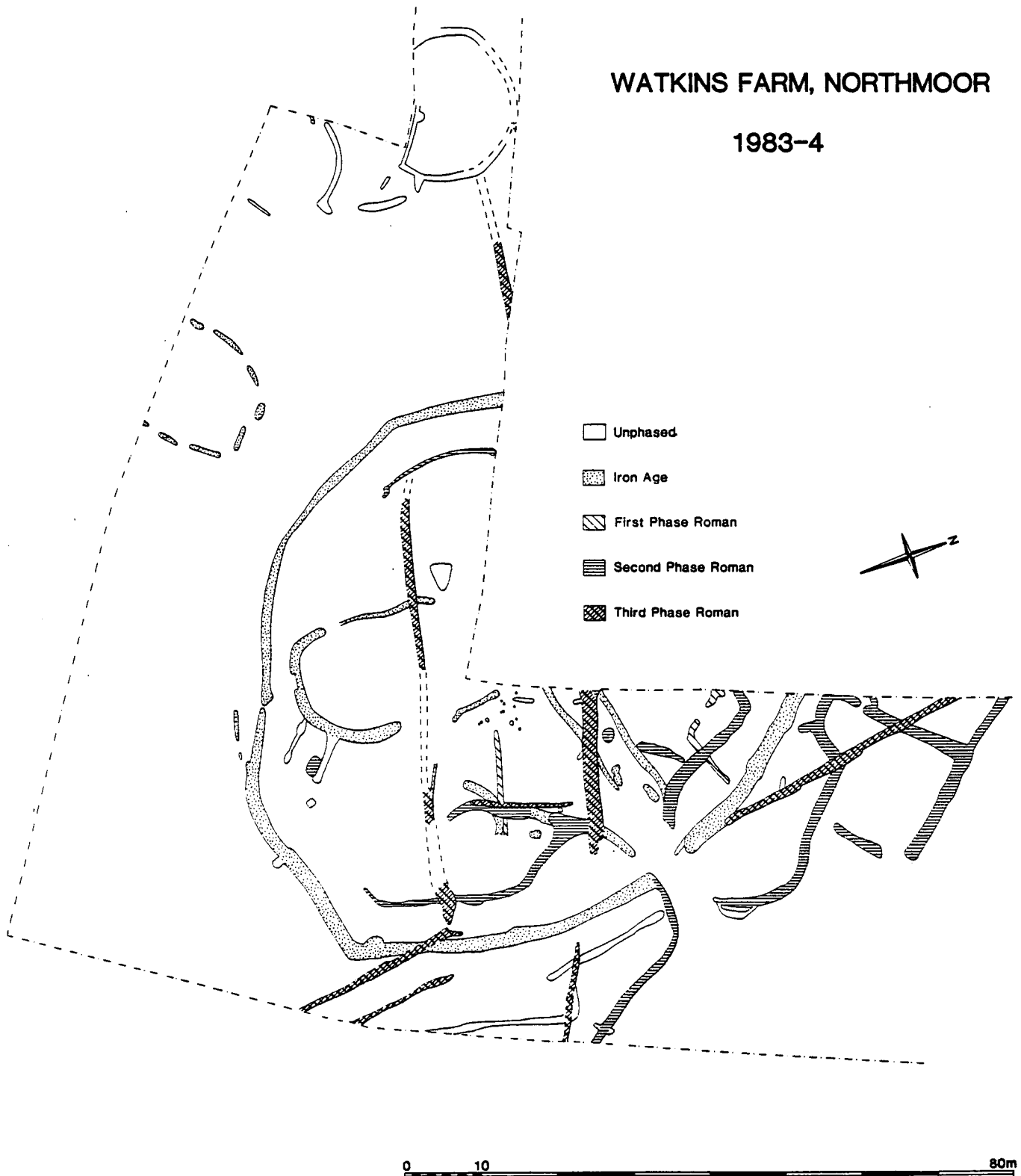


Fig. 6

top 0.3-0.35m of the gravel, so only the deeper features survived over this area, and there were no postholes. Postholes and other slight features did survive in the JCB stripped area.

Occupation was of several periods:

Middle Iron Age

A large oval enclosure c. 70m across was dug on a slightly raised gravel island with entrance to the east. There was probably also a subsidiary entrance on the south west, with a small ditch running off west from this just outside. Inside the enclosure at this point was a smaller enclosure open on the north side and with a small gap on the south for access to the main enclosure entrance adjacent. The south-west entrance and the corresponding gap in the small enclosure were both subsequently dug through. The smaller enclosure ditch had large quantities of occupation debris in its north-east terminal, and may well have surrounded a house; such accumulations of rubbish are common in the right hand terminal of house gullies in the Upper Thames. North and north-east of this small enclosure were a series of short lengths of ditch and a number of pits. Another possible house gully lay on the very edge of the JCB stripped area, but its interior had unfortunately been stripped previously much deeper. A few of the surviving postholes contained Middle Iron Age pottery, but no pattern could be recognised among these. However, the concentration of occupation debris in the ditches at the very west edge of the posthole area suggests that there may be a building just outside the excavated area.

There may have been a division between a southern domestic and northern open area within the enclosure, divided by the east-west ditches which run across to the entrance. No Middle Iron Age features have yet been found north of these. South of the main enclosure was a smaller one bounded by a discontinuous ditch. This produced a very little Middle Iron Age pottery, and was possibly contemporary.

Most of the Iron Age features were completely excavated, and preliminary assessment of the pottery suggest a 3rd - 1st century BC date.

Romano-British

There were several phases of occupation in the 1st to 3rd centuries AD. The main enclosure ditch was still largely open and two gullies seem to have formed a small enclosure inside it on the north. An east-west gully in the south-east of the enclosure may also belong to this phase.

In the second phase the small enclosure was cut by an inner ditch concentric to the main enclosure on the north side of the entrance. This was late 1st century AD. South of the entrance there was also an inner ditch along the east side of the main enclosure, and another opposite on the west. Neither of these had Romano-British pottery in their primary fills but they were probably contemporary, parts of a new ditch circuit perhaps respecting a hedge inside the main enclosure ditch. There was possibly a small enclosure in the south-east of the interior and a number of deep pits probably belong to this phase. These were possibly dug for water. It is not clear to which phase the postholes belonged.

Outside the main entrance were 'antennae' ditches. The northern one of these was found to have been the south side of a small enclosure, and a second linked enclosure disappears north-west under the crop. The ditches of these enclosures had no finds in the primary fill, but they contained no Iron Age pottery at all, and a dupondius of Trajan, dated 116-117AD, came from the top of the 'antenna', so they may belong with this late 1st century AD ditch circuit, not with the Iron Age occupation.

The use of an oval enclosure with adjacent subsidiary ones was completely superseded in phase 3 by a system of long linear ditches. These consisted of a south-north trackway and several long narrow fields running west-north-west on the west side. The trackway cut into the top of the original main enclosure ditch which had completely filled up by this stage, and the field ditches ran across pits and ditches of the previous phase. The most northerly of these is probably the ditch that appears west of the main enclosure, which may run up to a series of linked small enclosures further west. However these produced very few finds and may be earlier.

It is possible that domestic occupation continued on the same site, as the ditches of this period had very dark charcoally fills with large quantities of finds within the former enclosure area, and this is not all likely to be residual. A brief inspection suggested that there was not any later Roman pottery, and occupation therefore probably ended by the early 3rd century AD.

Some 250m north-east of the main site a series of Romano-British ditches and several large deep pits were uncovered by topsoil stripping, and were salvaged in September. A number of north-west - south-east linear boundary ditches were overlaid by the north-west end of a large sub-rectangular enclosure. Within this enclosure were 3 deep pits probably dug as wells. Their relationship to the linear ditches and the enclosure will hopefully be elucidated by the pottery. Large quantities of pottery found in one ditch within the enclosure suggests that it had had domestic occupation though no postholes or other traces of structures were found. Occupation seems to be 2nd century AD and this settlement may be contemporary with the regular ditch system on the main site.

Both sites produced a number of waterlogged samples. From the salvaged Romano-British site came also a pair of waterlogged leather shoes and part of a wooden bowl, and a well on the main site produced 0.5m of a dressed plank.

OXFORD: Blackfriars - George Lambrick
(PRN 6002; SP 512 058)

Excavations prior to redevelopment by the British Legion Housing Association have revealed part of the Nave of the church and the north walk of the cloister and the cloister garth. The position of the walls is as expected from previous excavations, but the excavation has revealed details of construction, such as divisions between sections of footings which would have been necessary in overcoming problems of groundwater. Numerous burials were found in the South Aisle, fewer in the body of the Nave and the cloister walk. The cloister garth is free of burials. A step from the cloister walk gave access to a path obliquely crossing the cloister to the east, perhaps heading for the Chapter House in the east range. North of the church a single trench located no trace of the suspected 'North Nave', but revealed part of the graveyard with densely packed burials. When the priory was built (1236-1261) the ground level was raised, by dumping the clay dug out of the foundation trenches, and soil containing domestic rubbish.

Further observations were made during the contractors' excavations. A complex mass of masonry attached to the North Aisle had been intended to shore up the building which from this and previous observations was clearly suffering severe subsidence round the west end and north side of the Nave. As in the preceding trial excavation no sign of a 'North Nave' (or transept) was seen. Other walls of the Nave, South Aisle and cloister were recorded. No more detail of the path across the cloister garth or its entrance to the

cloister walk was seen but a possible buttress just east of this was noted.

Only scanty remains of pre-priory activity, a horizon of rough stones embedded in the upper layers of alluvium, have been found. The alluvial deposits themselves are being examined as part of the sequence of alluvial deposits on the Thames Floodplain in connection with the Floodplain Survey.

There is little evidence of the later history of the priory other than the many burials: floor layers and the upper parts of walls were thoroughly destroyed and disturbed after the Dissolution. From the sequence of post Dissolution deposits it is apparent that after initial gutting the buildings or at least the church was left as a standing ruin for some time while the land was turned over to gardens divided up by drainage gullies. The walls were not finally removed until after these gullies had become backfilled, but this may have been by the end of the 16th century, and gardening certainly continued in the 18th century until the area was developed for housing in the 1840's.

OXFORD: 52 Cornmarket Street, former Woolworths - Brian Durham
(PRN 6198; SP 513 663)

The former Woolworths shop has been remodelled as the first stage in an operation which will end up with a new arcade through to Queen Street. The site was excavated by Jope, Pantin *et al* in the mid 1950's when the Clarendon Hotel was demolished, with immensely important results from the Late Saxon levels (see *Oxoniensia* 1958). David Sturdy was involved as an undergraduate at that time, and the Unit is very grateful for his help in identifying particular objectives in a hastily organised investigation.

The most important new trenches lay between C1 and C2. The former cut through the 12th century vault previously surveyed in 1955, and a good section was recorded showing its relationship to the surrounding layers. There were some major differences from the previous observations. There was no sign of any stonework of the smaller early vault found by Jope, but the construction trench suggested that the wall was built in two phases, the earlier perhaps before 1100, with the existing vault added around 12th - 13th century. In the intervening period the ground level outside had risen 1.60m with layer upon layer of floors of the adjoining building. This is perhaps therefore an example of the type of half-sunken vault which in time becomes a fully-sunken cellar with the rise in ground level, but here the speed of accumulation was dramatic. If it reflects the general situation in Cornmarket Street, it means that two-thirds of the build-up happened in the 12th and 13th centuries, with levels rising only 0.65m since then. The situation was exemplified in Jope's Figure 23, which showed gravel metalling of a 'forecourt' abutting medieval laminated floors. The second new trench this year, called C1a, showed what must have been the rear continuation of these floors but, as with Jope's experience, it proved impossible to recover any pottery with which to establish a chronology.

It has been a reminder that good stratigraphy can survive in the frontage areas, and also an opportunity to see the complexity which confronted the excavators 28 years ago, and to confirm the general findings with respect to the Clarendon Hotel vault.

OXFORD: Oseney Abbey - Brian Durham
PRN 3569; SP 505058)

The 1982 investigation of the south edge of the abbey precinct has been followed by salvage recording of two building contracts. The north-east end of a crescent of flats being built by Cherwell Housing Association came close to the waterfront exposed last year, and showed stone footings more massive than any seen in our excavations. Their alignment suggests a building 15m long extending back 13m from the declining 13th century river channel. As this channel became blocked the building was presumably dismantled so that its footings survived the Dissolution stone robbing.

The second area of observation this year was further upstream on the same declining riverfront. There were large foundations here also, in this case aligned on the cloister and therefore oblique to the channel. A small area of tile pavement included several alphabet tiles which had not been used to create words, but simply laid in their unbroken quadrants. The pottery confirms the 13th century infilling at the edge of the channel, but the levels further out were still being topped-up after the mid 13th century. By this time a small drain had been cut through the infill, perhaps a water supply for buildings isolated by the blocking.

There is likely now to be a break in the series of redevelopments of the abbey area. Our limited fieldwork and Jonathan Sharpe's post-excavation work have shown that the south side of the abbey had shrunk by the Reformation. There seems every reason to connect this with a westward expansion which resulted in the blocking of an original river channel and the establishment of a new waterfront on the modern mill stream.

RADLEY: Barrow Hills
(PRN 8380-99, 8721, 8402, 8403, 2903
SU 515 983)

Introduction

This site lies one mile north-east of Abingdon, Oxfordshire (centred SU 5135 9815, PRN 13,400). The excavations are being undertaken in advance of a new housing scheme.

The site lies immediately south of the Abingdon Neolithic causewayed enclosure and at the south-east end of a Bronze Age cemetery from which the name Barrow Hills was derived in antiquity. Four periods are represented on this famous cropmark site with Neolithic monuments, Bronze Age Barrows, a Romano-British cemetery and an extensive early Anglo-Saxon settlement.

The excavation is being conducted by the Oxford Archaeological Unit with labour provided by the Manpower Services Commission. In addition to this, the Abingdon and Area Archaeological and Historical Society working under the direction of Claire Halpin has undertaken to excavate the Bronze Age monuments. In September three presumed Neolithic monuments were excavated by students from Reading University Department of Archaeology under the direction of Richard Bradley. Excavation on the present site will continue for another year during which it is also hoped to begin excavations in a field immediately to the north that has also been allocated for house building.

The Oxford Archaeological Unit would like to thank the owner, Mr W P Docker-Drysdale for permission to excavate and for his help and that of his

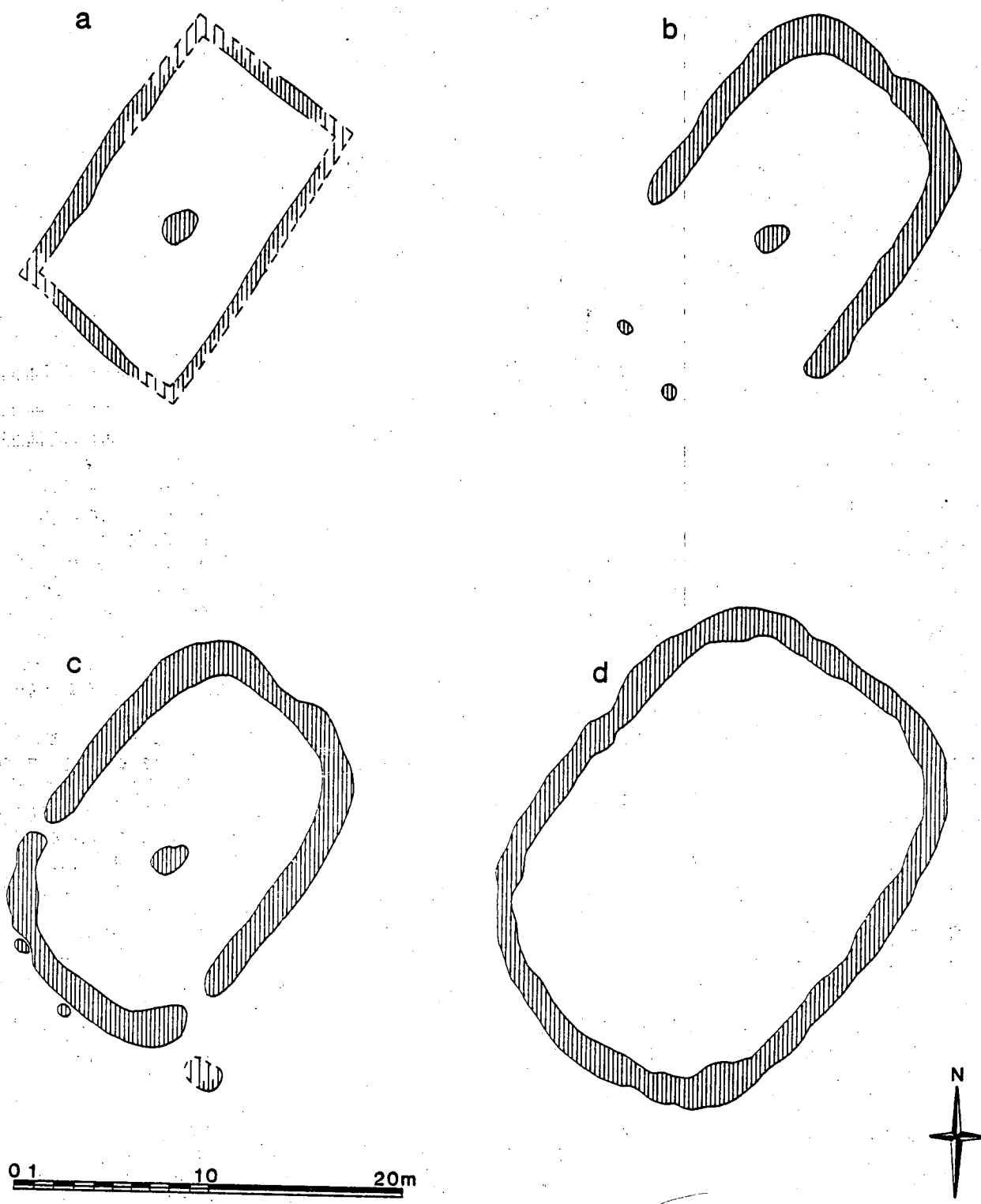


Fig. 7 Radley, Barrow Hills - The Long Barrow

wife, particularly in providing a camp site and much hospitality. The Unit would also like to thank Mr B Ford, the tenant, for his assistance on numerous occasions over the past year.

The Neolithic Monuments - Richard Bradley

Excavation took place on three components of the Barrow Hills cropmark complex during September and October 1983: a small long barrow, a segmented ring ditch and a complex pit circle previously interpreted as a henge monument. Work was carried out under the general direction of the writer on behalf of the Oxford Archaeological Unit, with additional resources made available by the Department of Archaeology, Reading University. The excavation was undertaken mainly by students from the Reading Department. Work on the long barrow was supervised by Mark Edmunds and Barry Mead, and Martin Cook supervised the excavation of the ring ditch. Barry Mead undertook the excavation of the pit circle. Julian Thomas was in charge of recording the human remains and Helen Robinson organised the processing of the finds.

The Long Barrow

This component of the Barrow Hills complex is situated close to the edge of the shallow valley which separates the site from the Abingdon causewayed enclosure, and because of this link it has long been thought that the two monuments might have been in use at the same time. Before excavation the long barrow showed as a rectangular cropmark enclosure, made up of two parallel ditches separated by an interval of about a metre. Towards the centre there were signs of a large pit. This monument was excavated completely, the majority of the ploughsoil being removed mechanically after surface finds had been collected in field walking by the Abingdon Society. A single baulk running along the main axis of the monument was excavated by hand and proved to cover the burial deposit.

It seems likely that this monument was built in four stages, although the lack of deep stratigraphy means that the position of the grave in this scheme can be established only approximately (Fig. 7). In its first phase this site consisted of a narrow flat-bottomed trench enclosing a rectangular area 16m long and almost 10m wide. Although large parts of this feature had been removed in later phases, there was no sign of an entrance. It is difficult to interpret this feature with complete confidence, but at present it is regarded as a fenced enclosure, the posts of which were later removed. It is not known whether this feature had revetted any mound, although the slight proportions of the trench itself mean that any barrow would most probably have been constructed of turf. It is uncertain whether the one grave belonged to this phase.

In the second phase the original enclosure was replaced by a ditch which cut it away on three sides. This ditch was of rather greater proportions than the original trench and enclosed an area about 17m long and 11m wide, which was left open at the south-west end, where there were two large post holes, one of which may have held a split log or tree trunk. Analogy with sites in other parts of the country suggests that this ditch was most probably the quarry for building a gravel mound. It seems likely that the grave belonged to this phase. Alternatively, the plan of the monument was dictated by the position of an existing group of burials. The grave was situated close to the south-west end of the enclosed area, in between the terminals of the quarry ditch. The two large post holes 8m to the south-west seem to flank the approach to the burial area.

The grave itself was extremely shallow and had been cut by a Saxon grubenhause - the one internal feature to show from the air. The grave contained two crouched burials laid out along the main axis of the site. The heads were at opposite ends of the grave, whilst the legs of the two skeletons were laid across one another. It is hard to envisage any interval between these two deposits. The end of the grave had been disturbed, but the missing parts of one skull were found in the filling of the grubenhause. Preliminary examination of the bones by Julian Thomas suggests that both individuals were adult males. One body had been accompanied by a bifacially polished flint blade, whilst an unusually small jet or shale bolt slider was found at the hip of the other skeleton. Part of a large leaf shaped arrowhead, found in the grubenhause, had probably accompanied the same individual.

In its third phase, the open end of the monument was closed off by a further length of ditch, which skirted one of the large posts mentioned earlier. This ditch respected the terminals of the existing quarry ditch and the builders had left two narrow causeways, towards the corners of the enclosed area and roughly opposite the burials. Otherwise this extension of the monument seems to have closed off all access to the mound, although the irregular line of the quarry ditch at its north-east end might suggest that another causeway had once existed there. It is possible that a large oval pit was dug just outside the surviving causeway at the southern corner of the mound. The barrow ditch filled up fairly rapidly with runs of gravel from the interior.

The final phase of construction seems to be represented by the outer ditch, which was probably intended as a replacement for the inner quarry ditch, now silted up. The outer ditch cut through the filling of the pit mentioned earlier and took no account of the positions of the two causeways in the inner ditch. It had been dug in a series of segments between 2m and 5m long and enclosed an oval area measuring 25m by 15.5m. This ditch had filled up naturally, but like the inner ditch it did contain a number of deliberate deposits.

These deposits were found in both ditches, where they had sharply confined distributions focussed on the position of one of the two causeways. Deposits of pottery and flint scrapers were concentrated towards the causeway at the southern end of the mound but hardly overlapped one another. Pottery also occurred in the pit cut by the outer ditch, whilst there was a flint implement in the filling of both the large post holes at the south-east end of the monument. The opposite causeway was the focus for four deliberate deposits of antler, three unused and the fourth an antler pick. At either end of these deposits there were fragments of human skull. The distribution of flint debitage shows less structure, whilst the animal bones from the ditches are probably a mixture of Neolithic material and intrusive Saxon finds. The stratification of these deposits is of some interest. The four groups of antler occurred at different levels in either ditch, suggesting that they were deposited at intervals throughout the use of the site, even though they were confined to one small area. The finds of pottery and flint scrapers were nearly all in the upper filling of the two ditches, where they sometimes occurred together with Saxon pottery. This suggests that these items were originally placed in the 'forecourt' of the long barrow and entered the ditch only later, perhaps as residual material.

In the Saxon period the area around the long barrow was reused. The central area was cut by a grubenhause and the surviving hollow left by the Neolithic outer ditch was used as a midden, particularly towards the northern end of the monument. A few post holes in this area may also belong to the

Saxon period.

Three features of the Neolithic monument are worth emphasising in this preliminary account. First, there can be little doubt that this had been a mound in most, if not all of its phases of building. There is no reason to describe the site as a 'mortuary enclosure'. Sieving of the ploughsoil across the long axis of the monument revealed a steady increase in the density of gravel towards the interior of the site, interrupted only over the position of the grubenhause. This may suggest that the ploughsoil retained the soil mark of a low mound, or preserved traces of a protected surface where the mound had been. This question needs further investigation, but work in Wessex has already shown the remarkable persistence of soil marks on sites where subsoil features have disappeared entirely. This interpretation is strengthened when the grubenhause is considered. Unlike the other examples excavated at Barrow Hills, this was a remarkably insubstantial feature and preliminary analysis indicates that it was 40 or 50cm shallower than other examples of the same floor area. This may give an idea of the height of the Barrow in the Saxon period. A very similar barrow at Maxey in the Welland Valley had been built out of turf, and part of the mound had been preserved in situ beneath a medieval headland.

Secondly, there can be little doubt that this monument had been in use at the same time as the Abingdon causewayed enclosure, which has radiocarbon dates spanning the first half of the third millennium bc. Apart from one sherd of Mortlake Ware from a high level in the barrow ditch, all the identifiable prehistoric pottery consists of Abingdon Ware. Like the leaf shaped arrowhead, this might suggest a date earlier than about 2500 bc. At the same time the polished blade and the belt slider are types better known in northern England where a date of 2500 bc or later might be expected. Economy of hypothesis therefore favours a date for the Barrow Hills mound around the middle of the third millennium bc. This would correspond to the later use of the causewayed enclosure. The same impression is given by the burial rite which has a transitional aspect. Despite the fairly traditional form of the mound, the burial of articulate males with grave goods marks a new departure which continues into the later third millennium bc. Such burials so far seem to postdate c. 2750 bc.

Lastly, the identification of this rather unusual cropmark enclosure as a late long barrow may have implications for our understanding of the Neolithic burial rite in other parts of the country. There are two aspects to this question. First, the Barrow Hills sequence closely resembles that at Wor Barrow in Cranborne Chase, just as the U ditched mound with its two large post holes is very similar to the Thickthorn long barrow in the same area. This evidence emphasises that the distinctive 'Cranborne Chase' type of long barrow may not be limited to that area. Secondly, the recognition that oval crop mark enclosures may sometimes have been late long barrows may help to fill a gap in the distribution of Neolithic burial monuments on the river gravels and in other lowland areas. There is similar evidence coming to light in other regions.

The Ring Ditch

This crop mark showed as four segments of a circular enclosure 9m in internal diameter, impinging on another feature interpreted as a frost crack. Analogy with similar crop marks at Dorchester-on-Thames suggested the possibility of a Late Neolithic date, thus allowing us to follow the sequence of burial monuments from the long barrow into the following period.

Again the site was excavated completely, a north-south baulk from the ditch to the centre being removed by hand, whilst the remaining ploughsoil

was cleared mechanically. During the latter process a chisel ended transverse arrowhead was found inside the enclosure. Subsequently, the ditch was completely excavated.

The four ditch segments varied considerably in their proportions and filling. The two shallowest lengths were to the west of the site, towards the position of the frost crack. The latter feature was filled with conglomerate and the builders of the ring ditch had abandoned their efforts when the south-west length of the earthwork encountered this material. By contrast, the two eastern lengths of ditch - those farthest removed from the position of the frost crack - were appreciably deeper and these were the only parts of the monument where there was evidence for the collapse of an internal bank or mound. The ring ditch had a wide causeway on the south-east - a feature known on other Neolithic and later sites - whilst the wide gap to the west was perhaps left because the builders were so reluctant to dig into the harder filling of the frost wedge.

Three additional features were found on this site. Just inside the ring ditch was a shallow pit, containing no archaeological material. The extremely shallow terminal of the southern ditch contained a few infant bones against the south-east entrance, but these were not well stratified, whilst a small pit just outside the same entrance contained an unaccompanied cremation. The longest ditch segment revealed a discontinuous layer of charcoal overlying its primary filling. This should provide material for radio-carbon dating. The same segment produced a number of flint scrapers and a sherd of Late Beaker pottery in its highest levels, and these provide a terminus ante quem for the construction of this monument.

Analogy with other sites still favours a Later Neolithic date for this monument, but little more can be said until the radiocarbon samples have been analysed. On the other hand, this excavation already sheds light on the form of some monuments of this type. Normally, they are interpreted as embanked enclosures, ancestral to henge monuments and possibly used as cremation cemeteries. Barrow Hills provides some evidence for a different reconstruction. First, sieving of the ploughsoil over this monument showed a steady increase in the proportion of gravel to topsoil from the exterior of the ring ditch to its centre. However this is explained, it seems to be consistent with the presence of a round barrow rather than an embanked enclosure. The same is suggested by the unusual layout of this site. Clearly the builders avoided digging into the conglomerate and preferred to compensate by digging a deeper ditch on the opposite side of the monument. This hardly suggests that they intended to achieve a uniform distribution of spoil around the edge of the site. Rather, the evidence for collapsed gravel in the two deeper segments of the ditch implies that the centre of gravity of the excavated material was offset in order to facilitate construction. Again this implies the existence of an internal mound, rather than a continuous enclosure. Analogy with the few undamaged Neolithic round barrows in southern England suggests that any central burial might have been at ground level. If so, it would have been removed by the plough, and only those secondary burials set in pits or dug into the ditch filling could be expected to survive. This may be what happened on some of the excavated sites at Dorchester-on-Thames.

The Pit Circle

This feature showed as a ring of pits about 15m in diameter enclosing an array of similar features with a less obvious ground plan. This site was stripped mechanically, apart from an east west baulk crossing the diameter of the pit circle, which was excavated by hand. The site has normally been

interpreted on the basis of air photographs as either a pit circle comparable to the early henges at Dorchester-on-Thames or as a multiple post circle rather like Woodhenge.

Despite the presence of Later Neolithic flintwork in the ploughsoil and even on the surface of these features, only one pit is certainly of prehistoric date. This contained a flint scraper, an unpolished flint axe, flint debitage, animal bones, a large fragment of antler and sherds of Abingdon Ware. It had been cut by a Saxon grubenhaus. Several other pits in this area contained much smaller quantities of prehistoric material, but could be of later date.

The pit circle itself dates from the late 19th century and was dug through the filling of the grubenhaus. The pits were shallow and flat bottomed and contained a rather ashy filling distinct from the overlying ploughsoil. This is interpreted as plant bedding and contained pieces of brick, tile, slate and wire, as well as pottery dating from the 1880's or 1890's. It is known that a large number of trees were planted near to Wick Hall in about 1890 and several circular plantations still exist in the surrounding area today. The simplest interpretation is that these features were also the result of late Victorian landscaping and that either the trees failed to take or this particular plantation was abandoned at an early stage. Whilst this excavation does not advance our understanding of the Neolithic sequence in the Thames valley, it may still have wider implications for our interpretation of air photographs.

The Bronze Age Barrows - Claire Halpin

In 1983 a long season (from April to December) of week-end digging was undertaken by Jeff Wallis and members of the Abingdon Archaeological Society, assisted by local volunteers. A prominent feature of the Barrow Hills cropmark complex is the Bronze Age barrow cemetery which consists of 17 barrows (now levelled) aligned in two rows, plus outliers. Three barrows (Nos. 1, 12 and 13) and adjacent small ring ditches are to be affected by the new housing scheme and the first season of excavation was concentrated on these monuments.

No trace of the original mounds or Bronze Age ground surface have survived due to ploughing and the plough soil itself is remarkably shallow (c. 30cm). Topsoil clearance over the centres of the barrows has produced a sparse scatter of worked flint, including three barbed and tanged arrowheads over the area of Barrow 1, which may have originally been deposited in the mound (ie. comparable to those found in the mound of Barrow 4a, Oxoniensia, xii (1948, 6).

The central grave of Barrow 1 contained cremated bones and wood ash, the two clearly separated. Three items accompanied the cremation: a much corroded bronze knife dagger, a bone pin and bone tweezers. Fragments of leather with punched and geometric design may indicate a bag in which the grave goods were placed. From the south-east quadrant of the ditch of Barrow 1 c. 20 sherds of decorated Saxon pottery of 5th/early 6th century date and fragments of cremated bone were found, and may represent a Saxon secondary burial. Despite extensive ditch digging no finds were made within the primary fill.

Pre-dating the small ring-ditch adjacent to Barrow 1 a flat grave was discovered. It consisted of a fragmentary burial (two leg bones) accompanied by an all-over-corded beaker. The central burial of this small ring-ditch was remarkably fine. It contained a crouched burial, an adult male. Close

by the head was a long necked beaker with lozenge decoration. Against the right pelvis lay a flint scraper, a bone leather working tool and antler spatula. These items were probably held in a pouch which hung from the waist. Also against the waist was a lump of iron pyrites, probably used as a strike-a-light. Against the right foot were five, finely flaked barbed and tanged arrowheads, the remains of a quiver of arrows. Beyond the lower leg bones was a scatter of c. 10 flint flakes and a bronze awl. Traces of wood have been found adhering to the latter. On lifting the skeleton a barbed and tanged arrowhead was found lying against the spine. This example was distinct from those described above, being short, squat, and with broken barbs and an impact fracture. It fits the case well for being the cause of death or injury.

Limited excavation within Barrow 12 has already revealed seven burials. It is a double-ditched barrow, comparable with others in the cemetery, and of two phases of construction. Four burials were recovered from the centre and they are described in order of deposition. The primary burial consisted of an adult crouched burial with a bronze awl lying against the left foot. It is likely to be contemporary with that from the centre of the small ring-ditch adjacent to Barrow 1. An unaccompanied cremation and a fragmentary inhumation were found in a pit overlying the central burial. The latter consisted of the articulated upper half of a child. The bones were laid with care and a biconical urn accompanied this burial. Overlying these graves was an unaccompanied cremation. About two metres south-east of these central burials an unaccompanied infant inhumation in the crouched position was excavated. The pit was shallow (c. 20cm) and the lower leg bones and skull were plough damaged. Further evidence of plough damage was seen in the discovery of a pot base in situ in the south-east quadrant of this barrow. It is likely that the pot originally contained a cremation. On the east side of the outer ditch, above the primary silts, a small collared urn containing cremated bone was excavated. A miniature pot lay inverted over this deposit.

The central burial of Barrow 13 appears to have been lost to the plough, however, the crop marks suggest the possibility of secondary burials. Further work on Barrows 12 and 13 is anticipated to take place in early 1984.

The excavation of the prehistoric features at Barrow Hills have a significance beyond the recovery of 'splendid' burials. Eleven barrows of the cemetery were excavated in the 1930's and 40's in advance of gravel extraction. The present excavations will bring this total to fourteen making this one of the most complete Bronze Age cemetery excavations. Large scale mechanical stripping at this western end of the cemetery enables us to recover satellite burials and secondary features. Limited excavation to date has revealed a line of five cremations, one with a collared urn, to the north of Barrow 12. Further there is the evidence of the flat grave pre-dating the small ring-ditch adjacent to Barrow 1.

Pits containing occupation debris have been excavated adjacent to the Neolithic long barrow and close by the causewayed ring ditch a pit containing c. 100 fragments of animal bone, many flint flakes and c. 30 sherds of grooved ware pottery was recorded. Fieldwalking on an intensive and extensive scale by members of the Abingdon Archaeological Society and Robin Holgate of the Institute of Archaeology, Oxford, augment the prehistoric studies. Finally appropriate excavated material will be submitted for radiocarbon dating, and possibly integrated with the British Museum's Research Laboratory work on Bronze Age chronologies.

The Roman Cemetery - R A Chambers

The presence of a cemetery on this site had been known for some time through crop mark evidence. Prior to excavation it was believed that the cemetery belonged to the surrounding extensive Anglo-Saxon settlement.

Excavation revealed the cemetery to date to the Roman period and to contain both inhumations and cremations. Burial may have been begun in the 1st century AD with a series of cremations, an unknown number of which have been partially or completely ploughed out during the medieval period or later. The earliest cremation which can be confidently dated is a greyware urn containing a small 2nd century AD Oxford product greyware beaker. This cremation appears to have been the only burial to receive its own, private small enclosure. Several late Roman period cremations were also discovered, some accompanied by an Oxford product colour coat pottery beaker. The earliest colour coat beaker may have been manufactured in the late 3rd century although the majority of the beakers belonged to the 4th century and all were well worn. Each of the later cremations had been buried in plain domestic pots, some of which were made in a coarsely gritten shelly fabric dateable to the 4th and early 5th centuries AD. None of the intact cremations appear to have had retaining lids. All of the vessels were buried in an upright position (mouth upwards). Several cremation burial pits did not penetrate the gravel. The survival of such shallow features was due almost entirely to the protection they were afforded by the ridges of the medieval open field system.

The cemetery also contained 47 inhumation graves each grave containing a single skeleton. Thirty six of the inhumation graves were arranged in a broad north-south line. These graves may have been aligned on a major topographical feature such as a trackway or hedgerow for which no other archaeological evidence has survived. In each of the thirty six north-south graves the body had been laid head northwards. These graves reflected many of the customs prevalent at the time including decapitation and prone burial. Several graves contained evidence of coffins and several graves each contained a 4th century Oxford product colour coated pottery beaker. A child's grave included hobnail boots, bracelets and glass beads.

A further eleven inhumations grouped at the southern end of the cemetery were orientated west-east. None of these graves produced any grave goods.

This small cemetery displayed several important features which suggest that it is of a different character to the usual small rural Roman period cemetery of the Upper Thames Valley. The cremation and inhumation graves all respected each other, none cut each other. This is unusual in small cemeteries spanning the whole or major part of the Roman period and indicates that the graves had been carefully marked, including at least some of the cremations. The dated 2nd century cremation, several of the adult north-south inhumations and the late Roman period cremations all had a common feature, a small pottery beaker suggesting a continuous local burial tradition spanning the 2nd to 4th or early 5th centuries AD.

Other features of the cemetery were that almost all of the inhumations faced east, and that three of the four decapitations displayed similar but unusual postures for this ritual.

Until the specialist reports have been completed no detailed analysis of this cemetery is possible. However the burial customs exhibited in this small discrete cemetery suggest a burial ground serving a small, closed social group with strong, long lived traditions, possibly a locally important

land owning family.

There is no direct evidence to link this cemetery with the villa excavated in the 1970's close by at Barton Court. The whole area is known to have been heavily occupied during the Roman period. A second, small discrete inhumation cemetery excavated 30 years ago some 200m to the north-east displayed similar qualities to the Barrow Hills cemetery.

The Anglo-Saxon Settlement - Christopher Scull

Sunken-featured buildings (grubenhauser) and very large numbers of post and stake holes, some representing post built timber structures, were revealed by topsoil stripping during the summer.

The majority of the grubenhauser exposed in July had been excavated by September. They varied in size from features 1m deep and 4.5m square to a shallow 3m x 2.5m scraping. All had a central gable-post at either end, and several had internal post and stake holes. In some cases the two principal posts appear to have been replaced during the life of the building, indicating that these structures were well maintained and may have been in use for a considerable time. No working or occupation surfaces have been found associated with any of the sunken features, and no erosion of the sides and bases of the features has been observed. These factors suggest that all of the grubenhauser so far excavated had boarded floors above the sunken area. Items of domestic refuse, including burnt limestone, animal bones, broken bone combs, pins and pottery fragments, some bearing incised or stamped decoration, have been recovered from all the sunken features, and some partly worked animal bones and sawn-off horn cores provide evidence of bone working on the site. However, nearly all such material has come from residual contexts within what may be deliberate backfill of the pit of each abandoned and dismantled grubenhause. There is no evidence to suggest that debris from occupation or craftwork accumulated in the pit of any grubenhause while the building was in use.

The post-built timber structures were rectangular and approximately 7m long x 3.5m wide. The relative depths of the post-holes indicate that the walls, rather than the gable-ends, bore the weight of the roof. Other complexes of post and stake holes may represent flimsier timber structures and fence lines.

Anglo-Saxon settlement on the site was established during the first half of the 5th century. How long it lasted has not yet been determined, but there is evidence to suggest that the site was not occupied after the end of the 6th century. However, further finds may force a revision of this preliminary assessment.

The summer excavation has shown that topsoil stripping must continue on a large scale if the relationships between post-built structures and grubenhauser are to be established. It is not possible to identify living units from the cropmark evidence.

ROLLRIGHT: The Rollright Stones - George Lambrick

(PRN 2249, 2252, 2253, 2257, 5025, 5026, 8854, 8860, 12251, 12252, 12253, 12772; SP 295 310)

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This year's excavations continued the assessment of the Rollright complex of monuments commissioned by the DOE. Three areas were examined, the

barrow with megalithic remains known from antiquarian sources to have stood in the field west of the King Stone; the Whispering Knights; and the stone cairn discovered last year immediately next to the King Stone.

The barrow with large stones west of the King Stone field was well illustrated at the end of the 18th century, and a plan of it in relationship to the Stones themselves which is preserved in the Bodleian is clearly very accurate as it gives the correct dimensions between the three main monuments. The excavation could thus be accurately sited and it demonstrated that no trace of a barrow or of a buried ground surface survives. There was no trace of a burial at the centre of the mound as shown on the plan, but since it is unclear whether it was a long barrow or a round one, and there is no need for burials to be cut into bedrock, this is not significant. No sign of quarries was found, but again without evidence for the shape of the mound their position was not predictable. The barrow may well have been removed soon after it was illustrated (perhaps in the process of quarrying for enclosure walls and road metalling) as it was described then as "a fallen stone on a mound undermined".

Trenches round the Whispering Knights designed to locate traces of a mound and/or quarries associated with a possible long barrow also showed that no substantial features remain. Immediately next to the railings of the Whispering Knights beyond the extent of ploughing the undisturbed soil beneath the monument was covered by a thin layer of small rubble. Larger stones over this may be stones placed round the railings to prevent the path getting too muddy. Except on the east side no trace of the original soil survived: steam ploughing earlier this century had cut into the top of bedrock well below the modern level of ploughing. On the east side the undisturbed soil contained Neolithic, Iron Age and Roman sherds. The occurrence of the latter very close to the Whispering Knights suggests that if there ever was much of a mound it may have been removed by the end of the prehistoric period. The west side of the trackway leading to the Iron Age settlement on the other side of the road to the north, which was examined last year, was found again.

The small scale trial work on the site of the cairn found last year by the King Stone, was intended simply to define its shape, examine the central area for signs of a chamber and further assess its preservation. Only the topsoil and other disturbances were excavated. The cairn is circular and has what appears to be an intact chamber or cist though its form was unclear without further removal of superficial cairn material. Some disturbance had occurred on the east side as a result of the construction of the Royal Observer Corps bunker, but this does not seem to be too serious.

Examination of carbonised material from last year's work has just begun. One of the cremations by the cairn includes tubers of onion couch, familiar from Bronze Age cremations at the Ashville Trading Estate, Abingdon and Mount Farm, Berinsfield. The Iron Age sample includes spelt wheat and a variety of weed seeds. One sample from a pit includes fragments of degraded bone, a coprolite and some small pebble-like objects which may be tapeworm cists. These suggest that the pit may have been used as a cess pit when it was being back filled.

SHRIVENHAM BY-PASS - See Watchfield

STANTON HARCOURT: Gravelly Guy - George Lambrick
(PRN 8281 8286; SP 403 054)

Excavations on this extensive Iron Age and Roman site were carried out from mid-September until Christmas 1983. The layout of the Iron Age settlement is particularly clear cut. A dense linear spread of pits is delimited by notably straight rectilinear edges on one side and it clearly respects two areas enclosed by roughly penanular gullies or ditches on the other. The pits range from early to mid Iron Age, though most have rather little domestic refuse, and the latest ones encroach on the penanular gullies, though not on the areas they surround. One of these areas contains numerous post holes possibly, though not clearly, representing a house. Two other houses, evident from circles of post holes lie adjacent to the main pit cluster, and seem to have been encroached upon by the pits after demolition. Three 4 post structures (?granaries) form a row adjacent to a gap or path through the pit cluster. One of these structures is clearly cut by the pits, another was cut by one of the post built houses. The pits vary in size, some are large classic storage pits, others are much smaller. The density of the pits and the absence of much intercutting, particularly between the large storage pits, suggests that they were dug fairly systematically. Some were left open long enough for their sides to start slumping in, others were back-filled before this could occur.

The Iron Age settlement is bounded by a shallow heavily recut ditch, the latest parts of which seem to be early Roman. The boundary marks a remarkably clear-cut division between the south-east side of the site where only Iron Age material has been found and the north-west side which is almost exclusively Roman. The main features here are some very large holes, one very deep one surrounded by heavily recut ditches (which respect the main boundary) was a well c. 3.5m deep. This had a ramp with shallow steps leading down to it. A very shallow wide pit with a ditch round the bottom and a slight ramp from a gap in the ditch may be the beginnings of a gravel pit. A third large pit of similar form but deeper was cut through a concentric complex of recut ditches whose outline at least at one stage was hexagonal. The function of this feature remains a mystery at present. A large rectangular enclosure laid out from the line of the main boundary across the site is also Roman, but its north-west side may have originated as an Iron Age boundary. A number of irregular scoops adjacent to this are interpreted as casual gravel digging. There was also a Roman cremation in this area.

A few earlier prehistoric features are suspected but not excavated as yet, though one possible tree clearance pit has produced ?Beaker pottery. There is a general scatter of worked flint on the site, including a few pieces of Mesolithic date, but otherwise mainly late Neolithic and Bronze Age.

WATCHFIELD: Shrivenham By-pass - R A Chambers and Christopher Scull
(PRN 13,455; SU 2325/8925)

Much material of archaeological importance has been discovered during the initial stages of the construction of the Shrivenham by-pass.

Mr J. Simpson, assisted by other members of the Shrivenham Local History Society, has recorded extensive remains of a Roman period settlement west of the Highworth Road. Pits, ditches, cobbled areas and areas of dark soil have all yielded much pottery. An extensive spread of large limestone

rubble indicated the presence of a substantial stone building on, or just beyond the edge of, the by-pass. Several Roman coins have been recovered for the OAU by members of the Wyvern Metal Detector Club.

An important 5th-6th century Anglo-Saxon cemetery has been discovered at the northern end of the by-pass in Watchfield parish (NGR centred SU2490/9075 PRN 13,196). The site has also provided a collection of Neolithic-Bronze Age flintwork and early Iron Age settlement features.

The cemetery was discovered when the mechanical excavation of a roadside drainage ditch revealed the remains of four human skeletons. The excavation team working at Barrow Hills, Radley was transferred to the by-pass for six days to excavate and record the remains within the area affected by the by-pass. The County Council and the contractors kindly made this time available.

The conditions under which the graves were excavated were far from ideal. Previous to the discovery of the cemetery heavy machinery had removed the top soil. The immense weight of the machinery had cracked and crushed the underlying skeletal material although metal objects survived remarkably intact.

The existence of Iron Age and possibly earlier features in the subsoil made the identification of graves in the heavy and clayey loam a difficult and time-consuming task.

A total of twenty-seven inhumations of early Anglo-Saxon date, aligned west-east and north-south, were excavated. Unstratified finds indicate that this was not the original number of burials in the area, and it is possible that a considerable number of graves were destroyed before the nature of the site was recognised.

The earliest burial excavated may date from the first half of the 5th century AD, but most are of the later 5th or 6th century. These include the grave of a woman buried with a pair of gilt-bronze saucer brooches, and iron cloak-pin, a pair of bronze tweezers and a string of amber beads, and that of a warrior buried with his sword, spear, shield, knife and a bronze cauldron which may have been made in the Rhineland. Another male burial contained an iron knife and iron shield-boss, an elaborate bronze belt buckle and fittings, and a balance inside the remains of a leather and bronze case which also contained weights and Roman coins.

Other finds include a wooden bucket with bronze and iron bindings and an iron handle, and a second bronze cauldron. The quality and quantity of the grave goods appear to indicate that this was the burying ground of a wealthy and important community. Unfortunately, we do not know what proportion of the original cemetery is represented by the excavated burials, and this places severe constraints upon the interpretation of the site.

The OAU would like to thank Oxfordshire County Council, the engineers and contractors for allowing excavation to take place and for providing machinery.

The OAU would also like to thank the local volunteers who helped with the excavation and those who maintained a watch over the site whilst the road cutting was machined. The OAU is also grateful to Guy Grainger and to Kevin Harvey, Sally Jones and Gwen Pedder of the Unit's Manpower Services Scheme for working until after dark to complete the excavation.