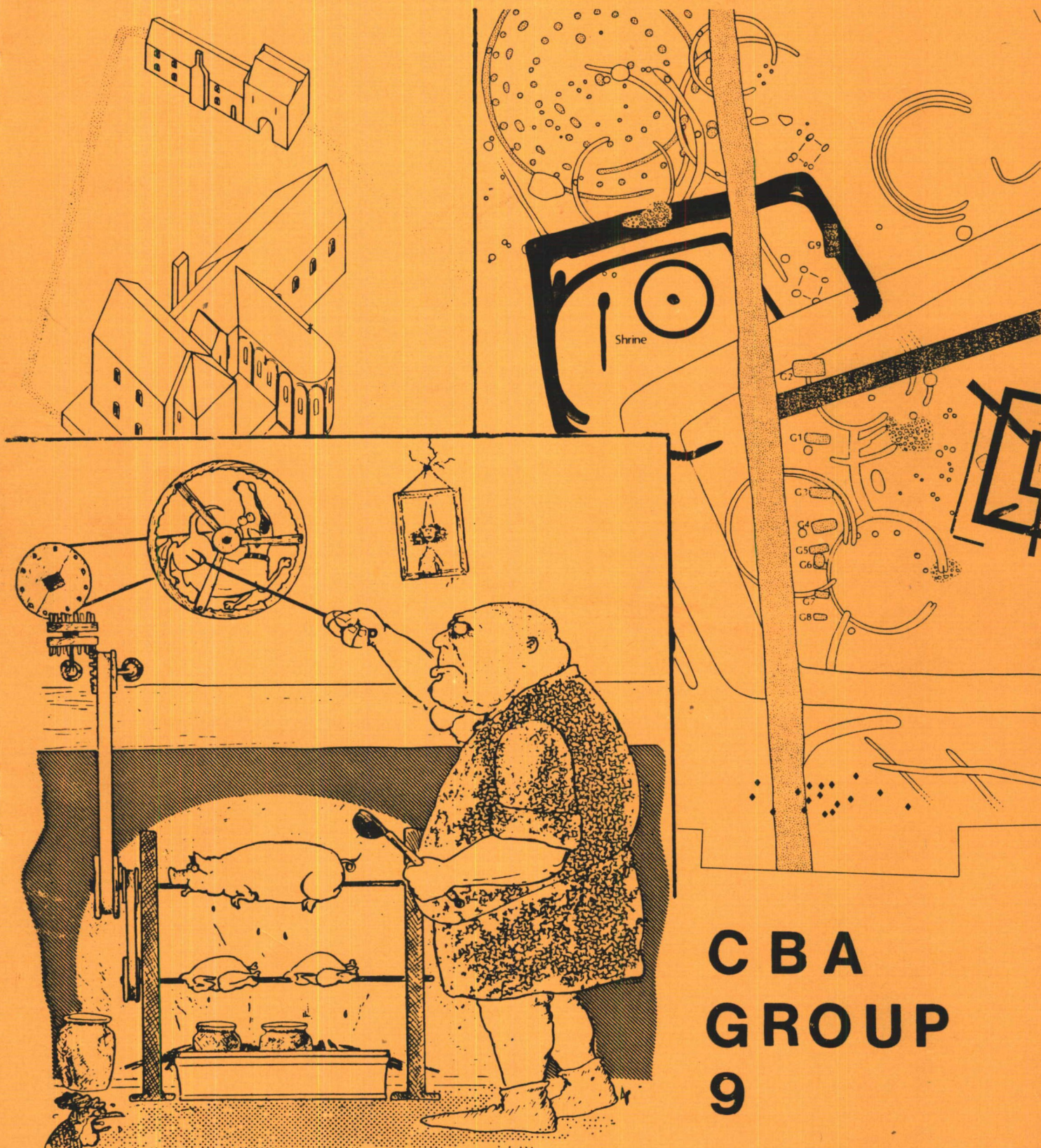


SOUTH MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY

**15
1985**



**CBA
GROUP
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 15, 1985

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EDITORIAL

So far we have weathered the storms mentioned last year; at least we are still afloat and have the cash to produce this volume of SOUTH MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY.

We still need more sales though, so please continue to seek out new subscriptions. SOUTH MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY is the only publication covering this part of England and acts as a forum both for the larger organisations and units and also for the smaller societies. Indeed we would welcome more contributions from the latter.

The arrangement of this volume is the same as last year - that is by county.

There have been suggestions that last Years' 'deadline' did not allow enough time for contributors to produce their material. Our aim this year is to get Number 16 for 1986 out in time for the March conference. Consequently please might I have all contributions with accompanying illustrations etc. by 31 JANUARY 1986?

Andrew Pike

June 1985

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Group IX's year since March 1984 has focussed around the two annual 'public' events - the AGM and the Conference - and three Executive Meetings held at Milton Keynes.

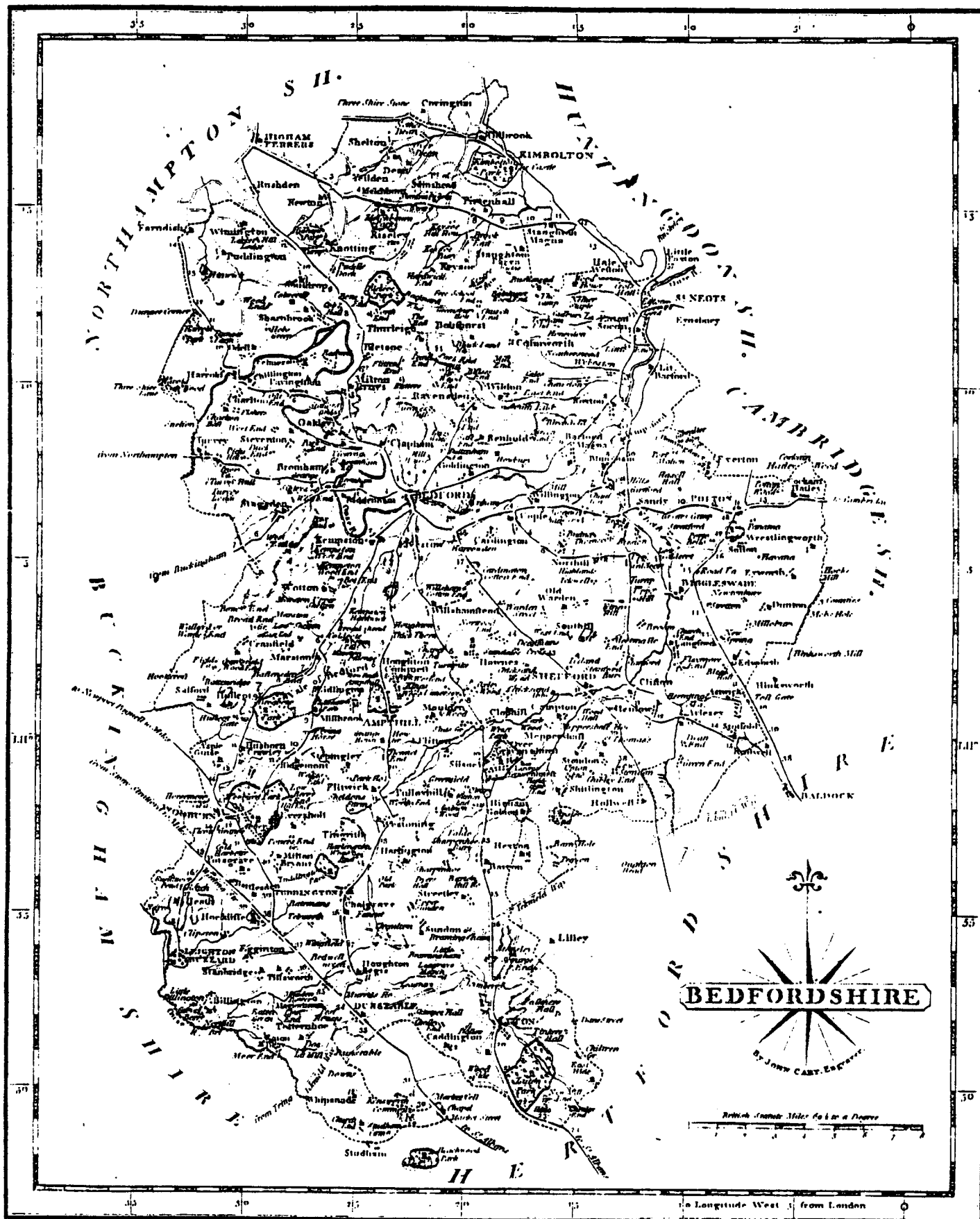
The AGM was held at Abingdon in Oxfordshire on 20th October, 1984. The Abingdon Society organised tours of the historic core of the town before lunch. The AGM itself took place in the intricately decorated Roysse Room of the Guildhall. The meeting was followed by a lecture on, and a visit to, the Oxford Archaeological Unit's site at Barrow Hills, led by Richard Chambers. The cold, but sunny day, was marred only by the lack of participation of CBA IX's member societies. Twenty-five individuals attended the meeting, but only six were not connected with the host society or the Executive. Details of the meeting had been deliberately despatched early - possibly too early, but it is difficult to see this as the major reason for the poor attendance. The Executive Committee is grateful to those who organised and contributed to the day.

The Annual Conference in Oxford was held at St. Cross Building on 16th March, 1985. It was attended by eighty individuals many of whom were neither individual members of CBA IX or belonged to affiliated groups. We explored another thematic programme, 'The Archaeology of Death', hoping to repeat the success of the previous year's theme of Crafts, Industry and Archaeology. Prof. Martin Biddle opened the proceedings with an overview of the theme, identifying many of the issues that were to recur in the following contributions - the limitations of the evidence, excavation techniques, continuity of burial practise and the future of the study of the Archaeology of Death. Each of the ten following contributions, ranging from the Neolithic to the Medieval, explored these issues and illustrated the importance, and constraints, of the study of skeletal material and burial contexts, in our understanding of historic societies. We were lucky to finish the day with John Hedges' thought provoking exploration of the Neolithic tomb at Ibster in Orkney, which added a further perspective to work in our own area. The Conference was a success, but it had proven extremely difficult to get contributions from our own member societies, possibly because of the focus of the proceedings. The use of a theme to give continuity to the contributions and to highlight a particular section of archaeological studies has obviously attracted a large audience, but it may be at the expense of limiting participation from groups working in Group IX's area.

Both these events highlight the issues and concerns that have surfaced continually in the Executive Meetings. How do we involve the membership in our activities? What is our role in the region? Does the membership want the Executive to provide services other than the publication of South Midlands Archaeology and a Conference? During the next year we hope to try to answer some of these questions by initiating a dialogue with the membership in

order to make Group IX's existence more appropriate to the needs of members, and more meaningful in the pattern of archaeological provision in the area. Such an initiative will only be successful if enquiries originating with Group IX's Executive Committee reach individual members of our affiliated societies and are discussed by them. The next year promises to be an important one for the Group, but if development is to be more than cosmetic it must involve as many individual archaeologists, both full and part-time, as possible.

Tim Copeland
Secretary



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BEDFORDSHIRE

I Bedfordshire County Planning Department 1984

General

The work of the Conservation Section and Archaeological Field Team continued on a broad front during 1984. Overall, pressures for changes to historic buildings and sites continue to increase, in parallel with the growth of public interest in such matters. The level of support from local and national sources generally held up during the year. The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission continued to grant-aid the accelerated resurvey of listed buildings, and the rescue archaeology programme mainly through the Grove Priory project. The Manpower Services Commission provided Community Programme schemes for Grove Priory as well as for post-excavation and some work on the Sites and Monuments Record.

During the year, John Wood left us for Humberside County Council, where he will be applying his expertise to the development of their Sites and Monuments Record: his imaginative and scholarly contribution to the parish survey programme will be missed. Andrew Pinder and Joe Prentice were replaced as MSC supervisors at the end of their term of eligibility by Grace Scrimgeour and Philip Bethel, the latter in turn being replaced by Amanda Ellerby when he left to join DUA. Andrew Pinder joined the Field Team as an Archaeological Assistant, and Georgie Brine as Pottery Assistant. Sue Degnan left us to join the Bradwell Abbey Field Centre team, whilst Pat Walsh, our Finds Assistant, went on maternity leave at the end of the year.

Historic Buildings

The usual steady flow of casework consultations on listed buildings as part of the specialist advisory service to District Councils (by David Baker and Liz Marten) contained some items of particular interest. Demolition consent was refused for an ornate late 19th century Keeper's Lodge in woods at Old Warden (SMR 12815): it has now been boarded up while its future is considered. It was also refused for a fine late 16th century aisled barn at Tensford (SMR 5974), close to the A1: the result of a Public Inquiry is awaited. A second application to demolish Toddington Town Hall (SMR 2435) has been called in by the Secretary of State for his determination after a Public Inquiry: the first application was refused in 1972 after an Inquiry. Demolition consent was granted in two cases where the condition of the building was too serious for realistic and economic retention: these were a mid 19th century miller's house in Clophill (SMR 1510) and a much altered shop of 17th century origins in St. Cuthbert's Street Bedford (SMR 4063). A repairs notice was successfully served on the owner of the Old Vicarage at Hockliffe (SMR 6414), a large building with work of several periods going back at least to the 17th century. Earlier in the year, compulsory emergency repairs were completed on Haynes Grange (SMR 304), an imposing isolated timber-framed farmhouse of 17th century origins.

The listed building resurvey programme undertaken by Maxine Partridge and funded by DOE continued its westward progress across Mid Bedfordshire District. Architectural highlights included Wrest Park with its garden buildings and monuments, the De Grey mausoleum at Flitton, and the fine Georgian town of Woburn. Work in 1984 brought the survey face to face with the problem of Bedford Estate cottages, a series of distinctive building types, of national importance in terms of the history of housing development, yet often architecturally rather plain. Most of the early examples are likely to be listed together with some estate cottages in the main villages around Woburn Park. Because of their austere appearance, these cottages are extremely vulnerable to the effects of replacement windows and doors and new extensions, much of which cannot be controlled without the protection of listing.

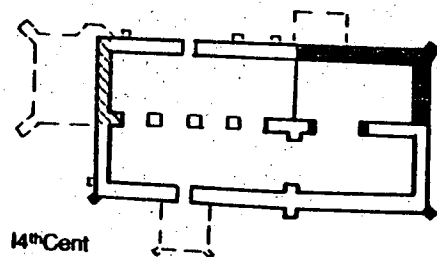
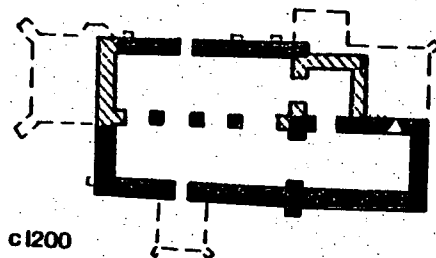
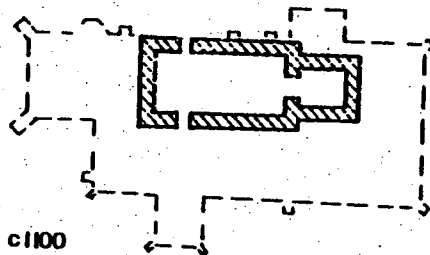
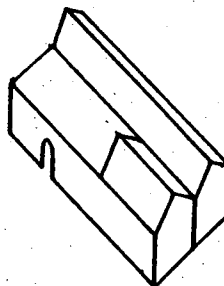
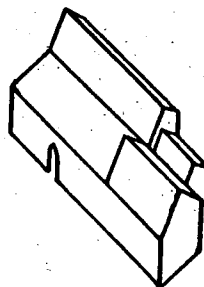
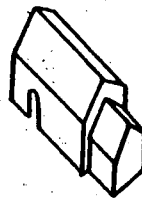
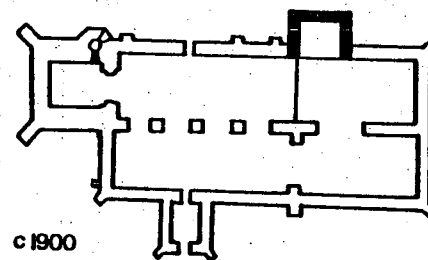
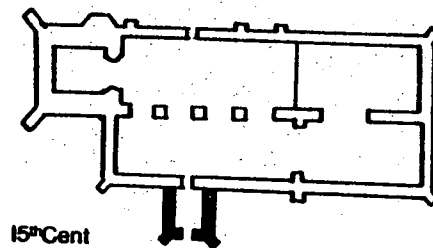
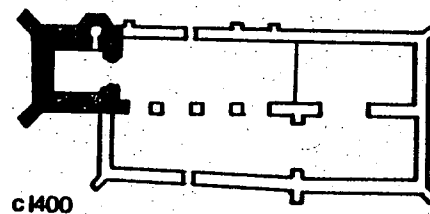
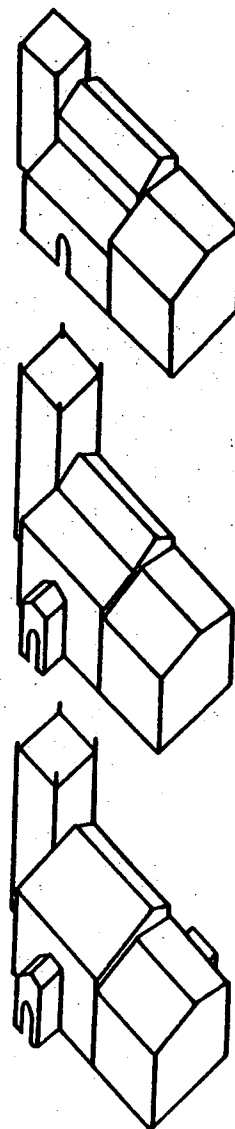
The County Council has continued to give grants for the repair of historic buildings under the 1962 Act, with some £27,000 available during 1984. Pressure of applications has resulted in a fairly tight series of guidelines, limiting grant-aid to the lesser of £1,500 or 15% of eligible works. Most people notice that this covers VAT only. Repair bills faced by parish churches are so enormous that the County Council has decided to concentrate its support mostly on those churches not grant-aided by English Heritage, and with only a small parish population to help finance repair of the fabric. A Town Scheme for Ampthill, involving grants from the County Council, Mid Bedfordshire District Council and English Heritage, got under way in 1984.

David Baker completed a full survey of All Saints Church Riseley (SMR 1167) and a draft for a new guidebook. This turned out to be a surprisingly complex process due to the difficulties of interpreting the church. Invaluable advice was provided by Hugh Richmond of RCHM(E) and Christopher Pickford of Bedfordshire County Record Office. The main difficulty was a detailed and plausible account published in the Victoria County History at the turn of the century. It argued that the present south aisle and chapel were in fact the original nave and chancel, losing this status when the present ones were built in the 15th century. The existence of an apparent chancel arch between aisle and chapel, and the lack of one between nave and chancel, were adduced as evidence. In fact, a careful study of the existing fabric showed that the present south aisle and chapel were secondary to a predecessor of the present nave and chancel, almost all the evidence for which had been removed by subsequent alterations. The matter was further complicated by clear documentary evidence that for an unknown period up to the early 19th century the south aisle and chapel had in fact been used as nave and chancel. Though uncertainties remain, this explanation leaves far fewer difficulties unresolved than that of the original VCH description. The whole exercise was a salutary example of the need to consider documentary and historical factors alongside analysis of the surviving fabric: below-ground archaeological evidence would have been even more valuable (Figs.1-2)

David Baker.

Fig. 1

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, RISELEY, BEDFORDSHIRE: Proposed building sequence



 Uncertain

 New work this date

Fig. 2

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, RISELEY, BEDFORDSHIRE

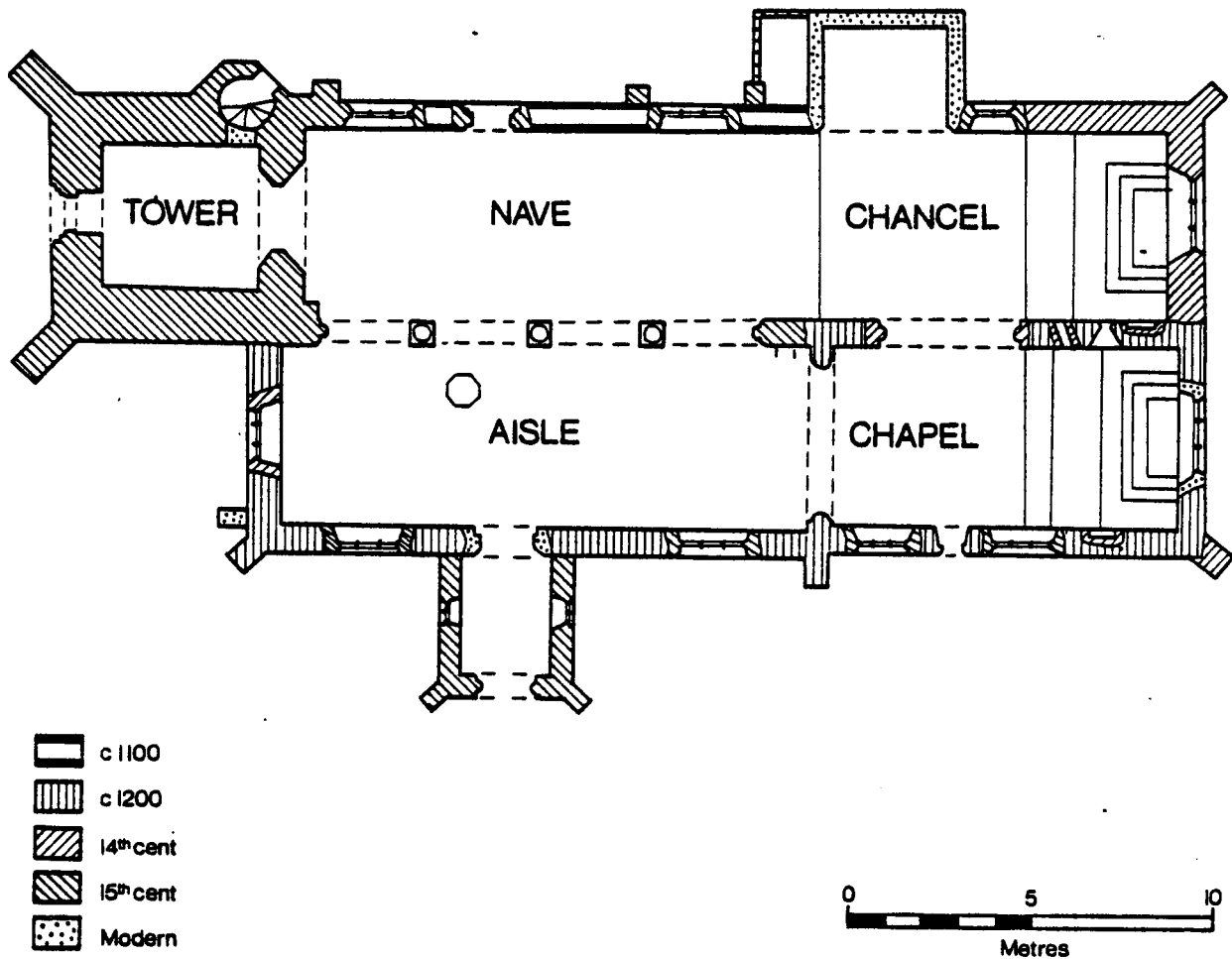
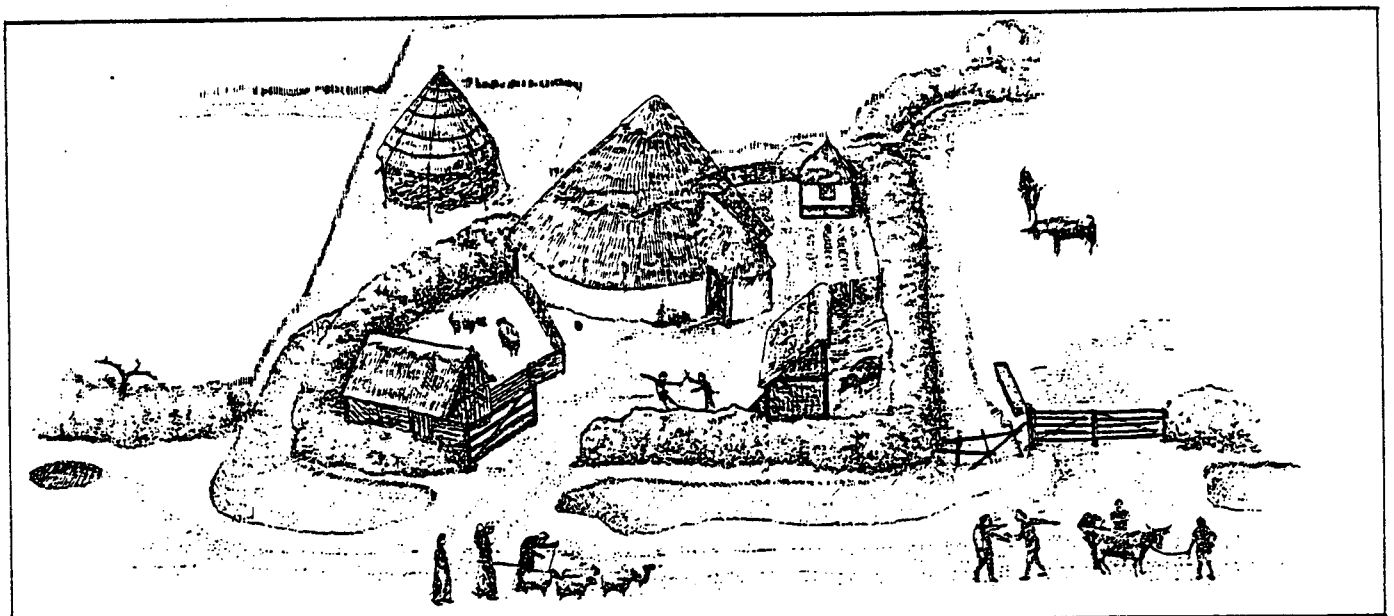


Fig. 3

RECONSTRUCTION OF IRON AGE FARMSTEAD AT WILLINGTON, BEDFORDSHIRE

(Andrew Pinder)



Survey, Sites and Monuments Record, and Preservation

Parish Survey

During 1984, the major part of the parish survey programme was concluded, with detailed work on the parishes of Caddington, Kensworth, Northill, Southill, Old Warden, Renhold, Lidlington and Farndish. It was carried out by John Wood, Stephen Coleman and students on attachment from the Oxford In-Service Training Scheme. October saw a change of emphasis towards publication in the Bedfordshire Historic Landscape and Archaeology series, which was launched at the end of 1983 with the successful appearance of Hockliffe by Stephen Coleman. Kempston by John Wood was published in September 1984, and is available from the County Planning Department, County Hall, Bedford MK42 9AP, at £3.75 plus 98p postage. Cardington & Eastcotts by John Wood will be available in the spring of 1985.

Caddington & Kensworth parish survey by Stephen Coleman will be published in the early summer of 1985. These adjoining parishes lie on the north eastern end of the Chiltern Hills. A major phase in the development of their landscape occurred during the 12th and 13th centuries with widespread assarting. This followed a considerable increase in population and the development of Dunstable (founded c. 1119) immediately to the north, with which they were both closely involved. This resulted in the clearance of much of the extensive woodland and the considerable expansion of the common arable fields. These fields were cultivated in a manner more akin to the Midlands system than to the typical Chilterns system, and occupied most of both parishes with the exception of open downland grazing to the north, and tracts of wood or common in the south. Settlement was also greatly expanded and a dispersed pattern developed with the establishment of several isolated farmsteads and hamlets. Several of the latter began as assarting or squatter settlements at the edges of woods, greens or commons. These are still the basis of today's settlement pattern.

From the 15th century onwards engrossment and extensive piecemeal enclosure of the common fields occurred, particularly in Caddington, though this was for arable and not for laying down to pasture. The common fields became very fragmented and by the time of parliamentary enclosure at the beginning of the 19th century the landscape of both parishes was dominated by numerous small, irregular hedged closes. Although parliamentary enclosure initially had little significant impact on the landscape, the changes it brought to the pattern of landholding led to the laying together of many of the small closes and resulted in the large scale removal of field boundaries during the 19th century.

Other parishes scheduled for publication during 1985/6 include Cranfield, Chalgrave, Streatley, Colmworth and Leighton Buzzard with its hamlets. General essays on most other parishes are available for consultation in the County Record Office.

A supplementary publication, due to appear in April 1985 is a Glossary of Terms. This was initially prepared as a working document by Stephen Coleman and John Wood, to assist with parish

survey work, particularly the documentary side, but it may be of interest to others working in the same field in the region.

In the Survey of Bedfordshire series, published jointly with the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, The Roman Period by Angela Simco appeared in May 1984, available for £4.50 plus 65p postage. This publication stimulated a local resident to bring into Bedford Museum a collection of important Roman and Saxon pots from the major cemeteries discovered in the parish during 19th century gravel digging.

An earthwork survey was carried out in the spring on a medieval fishery complex at Colmworth Manor (SMR 712) (see fig. 4). The most substantial feature is a dam across the small valley south of Colmworth village, which would have held back a large body of water. A small mound probably served as a nesting island. Downstream a group of interconnecting ponds survives, though probably much eroded from their original form. The manor house itself stands on a substantial mound overlooking the valley. Some associated earthworks survive, and there is evidence of many more attached enclosures, appearing as soilmarks.

At Bradger's Hill, Luton, (SMR 209) the preparation of engineer's topographical drawings for the Luton East Circular bypass (northern section) provided the opportunity for a detailed record of a fine series of strip lynchets which are to be affected by the road construction (see fig. 5).

Sites and Monuments Record

1984 saw major progress on computerisation of the retrieval index. All the site names and national grid references were entered, with the aid of an MSC post, and transferred to the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, for incorporation in the database devised by Jonathan Moffat. The final stage of printing out each Primary Record Number, and checking back against the original manual system, is due to take place from spring 1985.

The holdings of historic buildings records in the SMR have continued to be enhanced as a result of the accelerated resurvey of listed buildings. Photographs taken by the DOE funded surveyor have been added to the Record with the aid of an MSC post; during 1984 this mainly related to Mid Bedfordshire parishes.

The summer of 1984 proved to be a good season for cropmarks, and much new information was recorded on the boulder clay uplands of north Bedfordshire, both by the Cambridge University Committee for Aerial Photography, and by Glenn Foard of Northamptonshire County Council. Cropmarks were recorded for the first time on some Iron Age/Roman settlement sites previously identified by David Hall through field-walking.

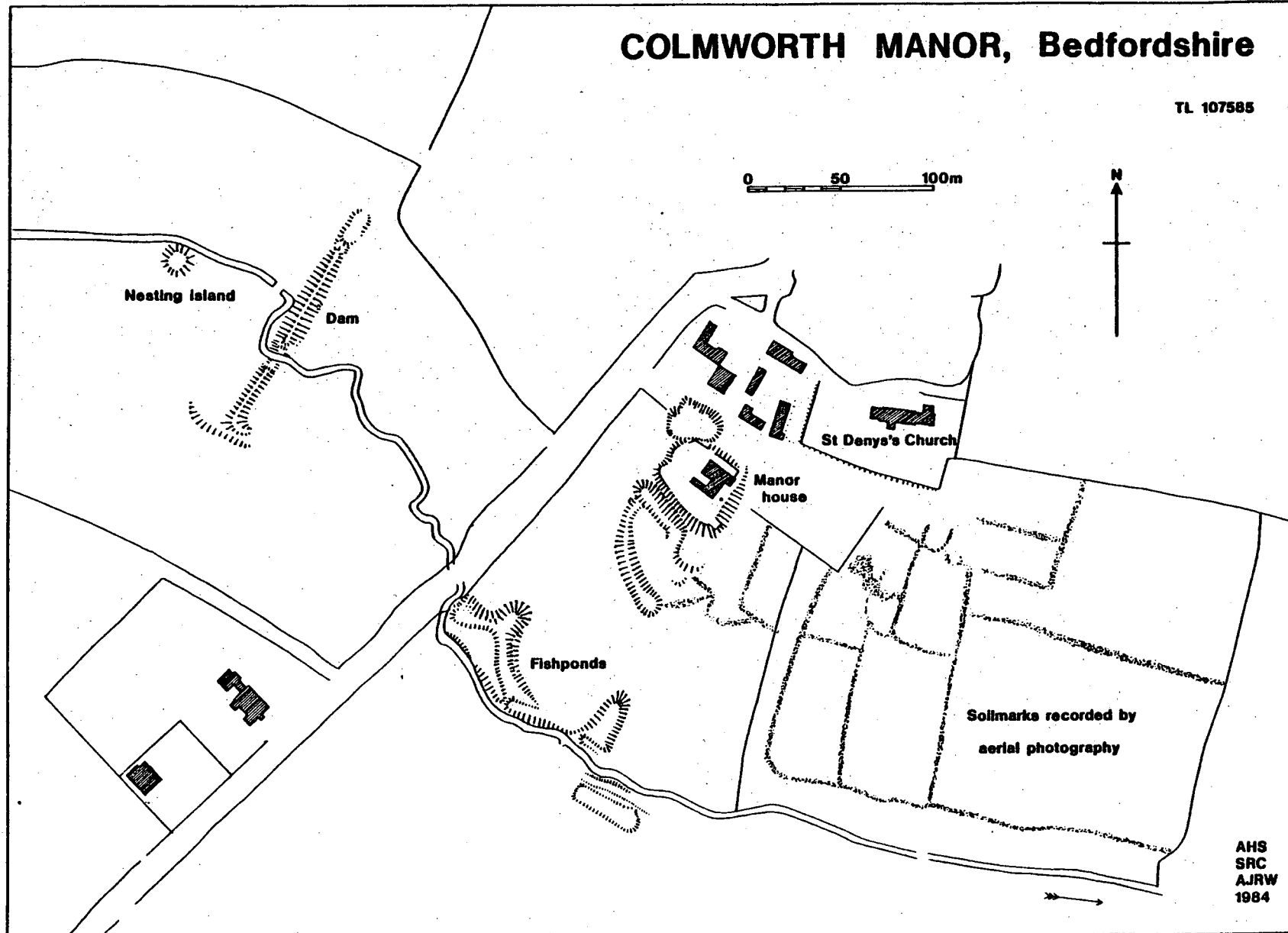
Churchyard Surveys

Assistance from MSC has also enabled the processing of churchyard surveys carried out by Women's Institutes in a county-wide programme which began in 1978. The surveys made use of the CBA graveyard memorial recording forms, which are comprehensive but cumbersome to use by those interested merely in genealogical

COLMWORTH MANOR, Bedfordshire

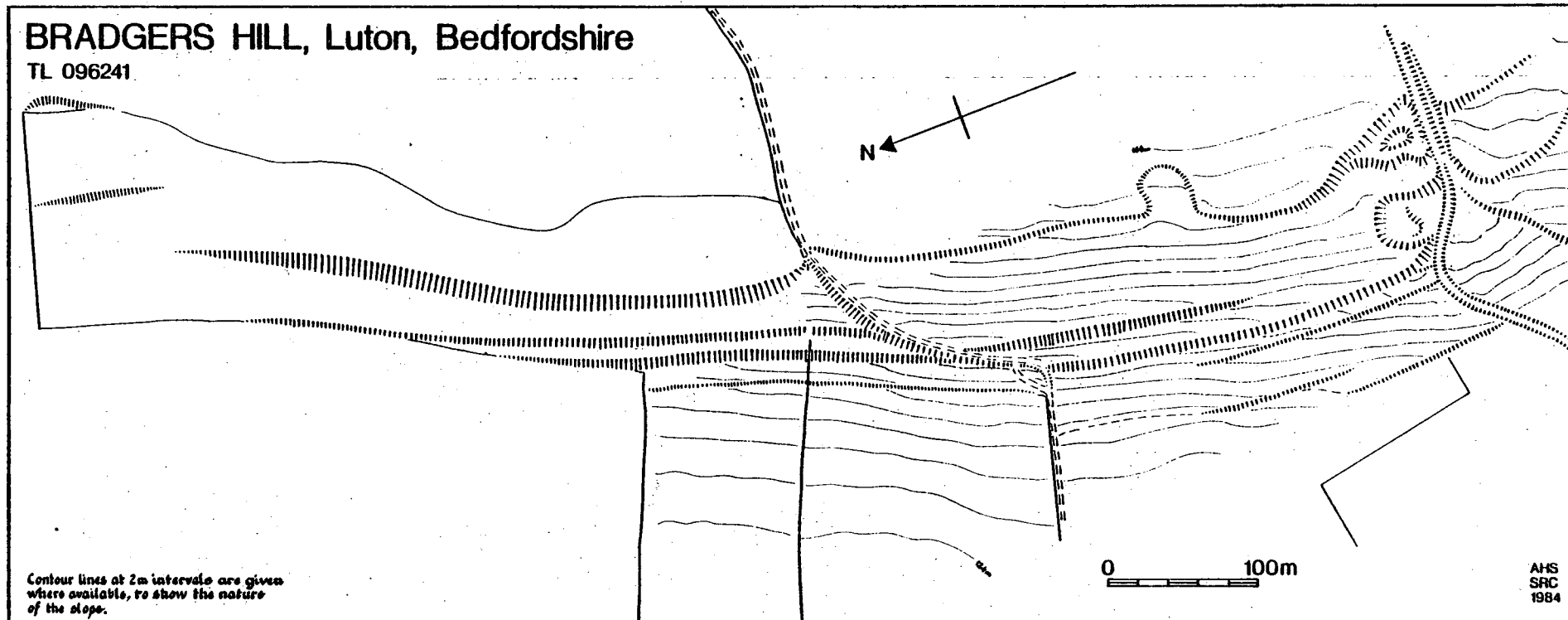
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Fig. 4



information. Lists of inscriptions have therefore been prepared, as well as fair copies of the churchyard plans, so that the results of the survey can be made more easily available through local libraries and the Bedfordshire County Record Office.

Scheduled Monuments

Helen Paterson, the HBMC Field Warden who covers Bedfordshire, completed her initial visits to all 85 Bedfordshire monuments in the autumn. This revealed certain anomalies and idiosyncracies in the scheduling coverage, but the up-to-date information on the condition of monuments provides a useful datum line for assessing future scheduling needs.

As part of a comprehensive programme of maintenance on the county's historic bridges, the County Surveyor has commissioned several photogrammetric surveys. Those completed in 1984 were of Bromham Bridge (SMR 998), a 26-arch limestone structure substantially rebuilt in the 19th century, and of a late 18th century brick bridge at Cardington, designed by John Smeaton (SMR 5633). The surveys are enabling a detailed record of repairs and will provide a basis for all future maintenance work.

Angela Simco

Excavation and Post-Excavation

The main changes in the personnel of the Field Team are detailed above. Two MSC projects have made work possible during the year, and we are very grateful to the Manpower Services Commission for their continuing support. The administrative burden has now almost entirely been taken over by our own County Council Agency. Since 1976 we have provided over 200 jobs for unemployed people. The present scheme has 28 places, 26 of whom are working on excavation and post-excavation. In recognition of the acute pressures for completing the complex and extensive Grove Priory excavation before destruction by the quarry, HBMC made a special grant to stiffen the excavation force with an infusion of expert help. Six professional diggers joined us on temporary contracts. These are Stephen Tucker, William Wall, Nicholas Elsdon, Anthony Maull, Charles Morris, and Keith Emeric. They have made a marked contribution, speeding up progress considerably, and also improving the training element (and therefore the output) of the MSC force. They have brought the excavation and post-excavation team to a temporary high total of 37 people.

Excavation

As previously reported briefly, Andrew Pinder excavated a double ring-ditch at Willington Plantation (SMR 1478) between November 1983 and January 1984 in advance of gravel extraction. With the completion of post-excavation work, a clearer picture has emerged. The Willington quarry includes some of the cropmarks in the densely occupied part of the Ouse valley east of Bedford. The barrow had been constructed on a raised bank of sand, and would have been a

prominent feature in the prehistoric landscape. Unfortunately the whole area appears to have been under the plough since medieval times, and this caused extensive damage to the central mound. No evidence of burials was found, and the two features located within the circumference of the ditches were heavily disturbed by roots. The site was a poplar plantation laid down in the 1960s. The two ditches were about 14m and 28m in diameter, with a narrow causeway across the inner one. They contained a few sherds of Bronze Age pottery and some utilised flints.

A second cropmark site was dug at Willington in June 1984 by Andrew Pinder assisted by Teresa Jackman, with mainly volunteer labour. It was an early Iron Age farmstead, with the smaller of the double enclosures probably being the living area. 135 features were recognised among many natural discolourations; these produced a number of possible hut sequences, gullies and pits. The surrounding ditches were recut twice and most of the finds came from them. There was an opening and gateway into the compound. Lack of time and resources limited work on the larger enclosure to a watching brief combined with selective excavation. Although probably a stockyard, it nevertheless contained a number of pits and postholes. Fig. 3 shows a reconstruction of the whole site during its active life. Two other notable features excavated were a Roman boundary ditch and a square enclosure producing quantities of early Roman pottery. A Roman cremation was found in a ditch running parallel to an Iron Age enclosure ditch.

A chance discovery at East End Flitwick resulted in a major advance for local pottery studies. Two Flitwick householders collected a significantly uniform large assemblage of pottery from amidst their winter broccoli. When encouraged to look for more, they took the suggestion literally by digging a neat trench which produced very large quantities of pot sherds. This turned out to be a potter's waster dump, and Andrew Pinder conducted a brief excavation to obtain a large enough sample to give an indication of the ware and range of forms and decoration. The pottery was compacted into a linear feature which may have been a clay pit. The capacity of the excavated portion was 1.05 cubic metres, while the volume of the pottery it held was nearly the same, 1.03 cubic metres. Three tea chests were filled with sherds, most of them large, and separated from each other only by remnants of blackened fuel. Several complete vessels have been reconstructed.

Georgie Brine is carrying out the analysis, and with volunteer help all the material has been washed and marked ready for quantification. A full report will be produced in due course. Archaeologists with an interest in medieval pottery may like to know that the sandy ware is 15th century and has some affinities with the other Flitwick assemblage recently published by D. C. Mynard, M. R. Petchey and P. G. Tilson (A Medieval Pottery at Church End Flitwick, Bedfordshire, Bedfordshire Archaeology 16 1983 p. 75-84). The forms are different, however, being mainly jugs, cisterns and bowls (fig.6A).

The main thrust of work has continued to be at Grove Priory (SMR 1870). Bob Mustoe has just completed seven years service mostly on this one site. It was intended that this long-term excavation should finish early in 1985, but the site has increased both in scale and in importance. The sand quarry is now due to take most of the site between June and September 1985, and the excavation team will be working there up to the time the site finally disappears. Several magnetometer and resistivity surveys over the years, including one in 1984 by the AM Lab., failed to indicate the presence of very large areas of cobbled courtyard, cob buildings and stone foundations. We now know this is due to subsoil conditions and the presence of ironstone. Well over 7,500 sq. m of buildings involving complex stratigraphy have already been excavated in the main buildings area alone. The current excavation covers, 6,250 sq. m and to date a total of 78 structures have been unearthed, with more to come.

The main find this year has been a long range of aligned agricultural buildings with a total length of over 65 m. They contain drainage features, a kiln, a furnace, a possible threshing hearth, and what appears to be storage bin emplacements. Two of the buildings are at least partially constructed of pitched carstone, an early construction technique on this site. As with most Grove structures they are indicating a complex history of alteration and repair. They mostly run along the eastern tip of a long established ditch which still shows up as a well defined earthwork running down to the Cocklake stream. This separated them from the main courtyard area. They occupy a thin raised spur long thought to be upthrow from the quarry that marks their other side.

Further south, near the river Ousel, the kitchen has been excavated only to reveal signs of an earlier building underneath. Two superimposed buildings, possibly stables, with heavy duty cobbling along one side have been found, partially overlapping the kitchens. The kitchens are themselves in an area prone to flooding. One of the ovens within it was constructed within the fishpond which had a gravel path laid in it. This part of the fishpond must have had the water diverted from it, because in order to feed fuel and food into the oven it was necessary to do it from within the fishpond itself.

Further indications of flood problems were seen with the deliberate blocking off of a large water filled hollow interpreted as a cattle wallow. This was done by building substantial carstone walls across it. A drain fed into this from the stables.

Various paved roadways and gravel paths cross the courtyard area, which also produced three possible cob buildings. These appeared as rectangular voids in the cobbling, and survived as degraded clay layers.

The Saxon element in the story is taking more form. The ditch mentioned above is Saxon in date although open and functioning for many centuries. It seems to form a rectangular enclosure cutting off the sandy bottom corner of the field which is bounded by the Cocklake and the Ousel. Already there are signs that the occupation is potentially both dense and relatively undamaged, being

concealed beneath courtyard surfaces. Quantities of handmade pottery are being recovered from residual contexts, together with beads, whetstone and loomweight. Perhaps the most significant single find is the long cross brooch (fig.6B) drawn by Nicola Simpson, one of the MSC team. Dated to the mid 6th century, it is of the type usually associated with female inhumations. A cemetery site with associated occupational deposits could go a long way to achieving a better context for the important Saxon material from the Leighton Buzzard area. Grove is situated only a quarter of a mile away from where the Theedway crosses the Ouzel at Yttingaford. The site is in a very good position to be an early administrative centre, possibly straddling the county boundary. This hypothesis and the question of continuity into the late Saxon/early medieval period will be investigated in the last months of the excavation.

A number of salvage excavations and watching briefs were conducted during the year, mainly by Andrew Pinder.

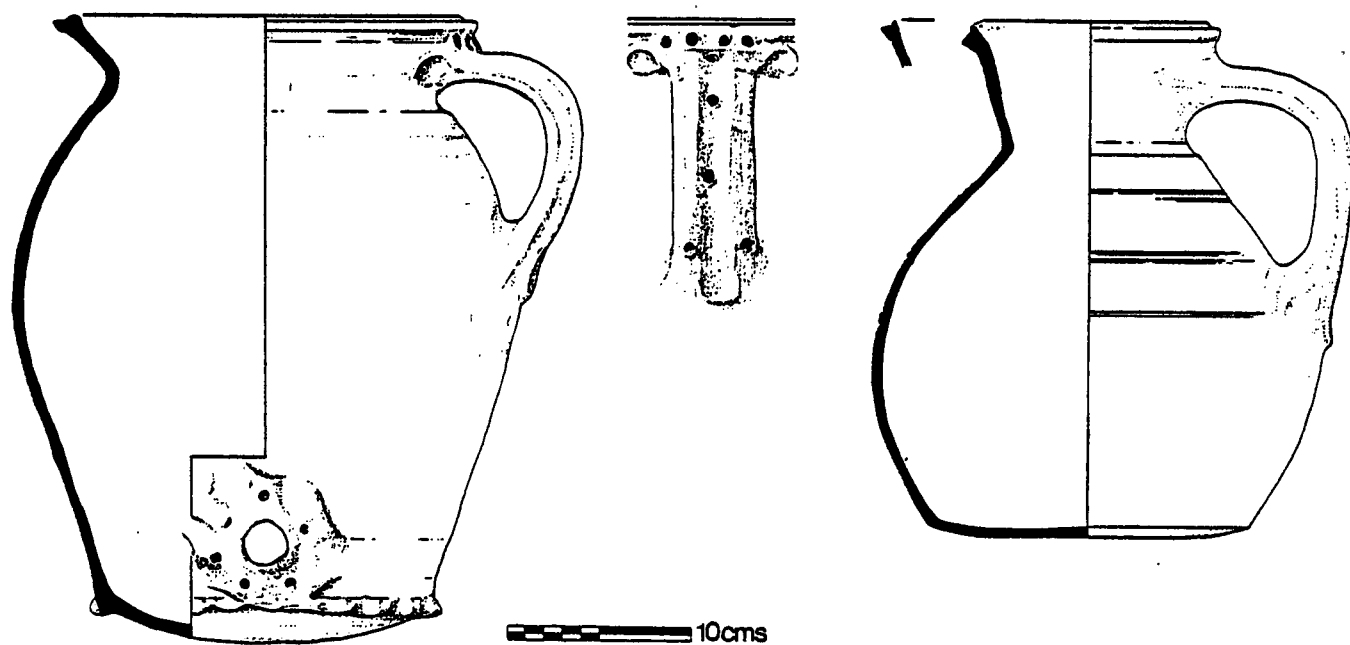
Duck Mill Lane Bedford (SMR 10530) was brought to our attention by the property owner, who found bones and pot when digging a sump for his new surface car park. Andrew Pinder and Richard Compton completed the excavation within a part of the late Saxon southern burh not examined archaeologically before. Part of a stone structure dating to the 13th century was seen, overlying a silt filled feature producing 11th and 12th century pottery. There was no indication of any earlier activity, but since the trench was so small no assumptions about this should be made. The trench measured about 1 m by 1 m and was extremely productive, a prime example of a keyhole excavation in the right place answering useful questions, Mark Robinson's work on the soil samples showed that some of the waterlogged levels represented a cesspit, and that the occupants of the site ate, amongst other things, coarse bread with an unusually high proportion weed seeds in it. The proneness of the area to flooding in the medieval period was confirmed by environmental evidence suggesting it had once been water meadow.

Silver Street Bedford (SMR 10530) was the scene of major roadworks preceding hard landscaping for environmental improvements. It is in the heart of the northern town, being an axial road off the main spine leading from the bridge. The works covered the site of the medieval gaol and market cross. Only recent levels were disturbed, the deeper excavating being within areas already occupied by redundant service trenches. It was possible to trace the line of shop fronts continuing the frontage as defined by extant older properties.

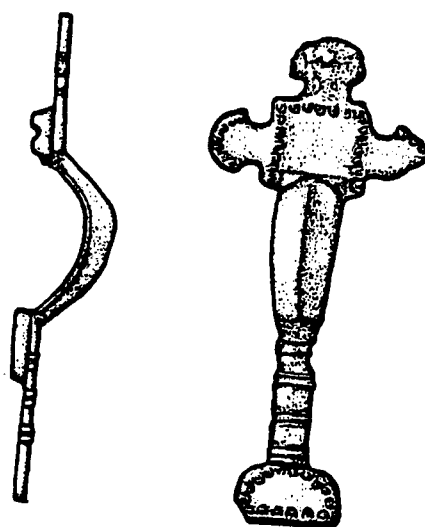
A large area just south of Telephone House in St. John's Street Bedford was (SMR 10530) machine stripped for nearly 1 m down on to a natural brick-earth service, and the Field Team was able to examine it briefly in advance of hardcore laying. The surface was cut by numerous features including the outline of the 19th century shop that had once occupied the plot. Several ancient boundaries in the form of recut ditches and posthole alignments were seen. Some produced Saxo-Norman pottery; brick walls finally replaced two of these. Stanchion holes for the impending building cut into

Fig. 6

(A) CISTERN AND JUG FROM FLITWICK, BEDFORDSHIRE



(B) SIXTH CENTURY BROOCH FROM GROVE PRIORY, BEDFORDSHIRE



Scale 1:1

a post medieval pit, producing a shepherd's crook and a copper alloy candlestick in extremely fine condition. The indications are that this pattern of possible occupation layers and features was similar to the sequence of late Saxon and medieval activity found in the St. John's Street excavation carried out by Jane Hassall further south. (see David Baker et al, Excavations in Bedford 1967 - 1977, Beds Archae J 13, 1979, 97-126).

At St. Giles Church Totternhoe (SMR 1143) a watching brief in conjunction with a small amount of clarificatory excavation took place when a French drain was dug around the 14th century chancel. The flint and clunch footings were exposed, together with a large disturbed masonry feature which could have been either an extended footing for a buttress, or the remains of an earlier and shorter chancel.

Landscaping at Leighton Buzzard Middle School (SMR 4551) destroyed any evidence of activity here relating to an earlier settlement centre. Subsequent examination of further earth moving at a greater distance from the church revealed nothing. The area was of importance because of the possibility of it being the site for a predecessor manor for the Royal Manor of Leighton, Grove Priory.

Service trenches dug across the putative line of the King's Ditch Bedford (SMR 1198), presumed to have been laid down by Edward the Elder in 915-916, failed to detect any signs of it. 19th century disturbance may have obliterated it here, there could have been a break at this point, or the real line is at variance with the assumed line.

Post-Excavation

Progress has been made with liquidating the Bedfordshire backlog, with a number of sites completed and others in the pipeline. Andrew Pinder has been working on the Radwell Ring Ditch, the Willington Ring Ditch and the Willington Iron Age farmstead site. Evelyn Baker has written up two Bedford sites, incorporating a small salvage excavation.

The MSC post-excavation team, assisted by the digging team in bad weather, has also made good progress on basic work for a number of sites, but with the main emphasis on Grove Priory. All except the most recent finds from that site have been washed, marked, given an initial sort and catalogued on assemblage sheets. Photographs have been stuck on cards with sketches for context location. A start has been made on inking in the drawings. Hundreds of contexts have been fed into the computer ready for sorting by means of programmes devised by Jonathan Moffett of the London Institute of Archaeology. Some categories of finds such as roof tiles and iron nails have been quantified, using the finds reports in the Bedford Monograph as the core of a set of basic types series. A number of the hundreds of small finds have been drawn to publication standard, mostly by MSC personnel trained by our own staff.

Pat Walsh has completed the huge task of drawing the 500 tiles in the Warden Abbey type series. These are drawn and reconstructed to a standard formula which demonstrates the manufacturing technique,

the surviving evidence and the complete design in a single drawing, based on a draft methodology for the Medieval Pottery Group's Glossary of Terms. Most of the plans have been drawn for the Warden report, which will probably take the form of a monograph.

Georgie Brine is building on the Bedfordshire method of processing pottery as published by Hassall and Baker in the Bedford Monograph (Beds Archaeol J 13 1979). This type series is now being expanded to include work done by others on Roman, Saxon and prehistoric groups. They, and the post-medieval wares, have all been codified for computer processing. Several small sites have been analysed very successfully using programmes created by Dr. Paul Tyers. With the aid of an MSC assistant, Richard Compton, the bulk of the Grove pottery is being entered, using the refined system. The Manshead Society of Dunstable are working with us on this, using the same coding and program, expanding the system as the need arises.

Exhibitions

Two travelling exhibitions have been a means of providing some direct value for our paymasters, the general public. Both were part of our contribution to "Community Benefit" as required by MSC, which proved to be a good stimulus, though the pressures of project funding made finding official work time for their preparation nearly impossible.

"Recent Discoveries at Grove Priory" had a successful tour around Bedfordshire schools, museums and libraries. A deliberately popular format was used, with an emphasis on photogenic finds, accompanied by cartoons and reconstructions. Public reaction suggests this is the right kind of formula.

The second exhibition was more ambitious. The original idea was a travelling exhibition on medieval pottery, but this was felt to be too specialised and probably rather too dull to attract the layman. A better way would be to present the pottery through its major uses. "Medieval Cookery" was designed to present as much local archaeological information as possible in an interesting and intelligible way. Georgie Brine did the pot research, Evelyn Baker devised the framework and did the research on cookery and food. (We are very grateful to Steve Moorhouse for the loan of several useful books.) Andrew Pinder with Pat Walsh did the reconstructions and the cartoons; these were sufficiently bloodthirsty, disgusting or just straight funny to appeal to children of all ages. MSC staff also helped. The County Council Photographic Unit produced a superb set of colour prints of assemblages of pots, food and utensils in use, following a weekend of buying and cooking strange ingredients. The commitment of the photographers was such that they managed to take the "cooking fish" picture while the cod's head was becoming positively incandescent in the warm atmosphere. The whole creation was then given a professional finish by the Planning Department's Drawing Office who also helped to design a popular free booklet that went with it (fig. 7). The exhibition has strayed outside the county to Buckinghamshire, is to go on loan to the Oxfordshire Museums Services and the HBMC at their newly opened monument of Bushmead Priory near St. Neots.

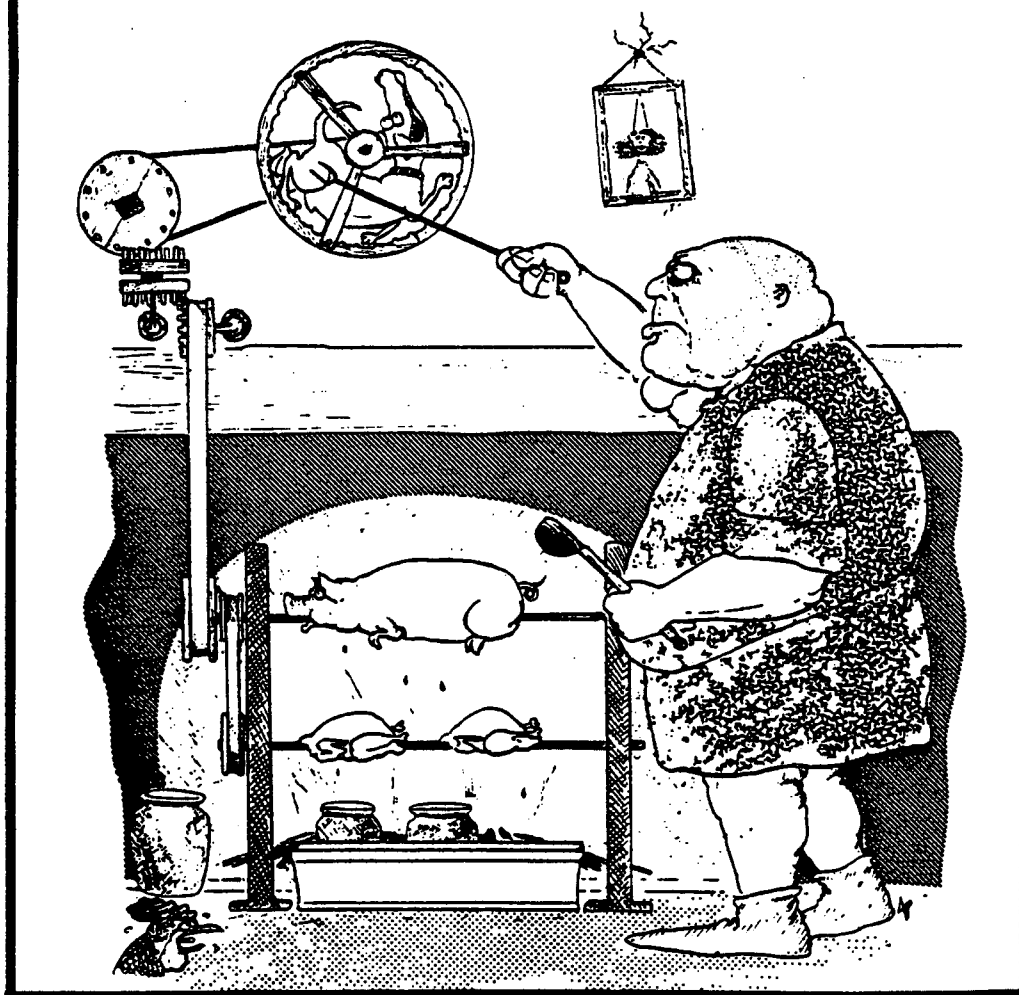
Evelyn Baker.

Bedfordshire

EXHIBITION

on

Medieval Cookery 1050~1500



II Beds, Bucks & Cambs Historic Building Research Group

Surveying of standing buildings continues with many historically interesting discoveries being made. In Bedfordshire perhaps the most important find was at Bromham Hall. This was examined in detail and measured drawings prepared. It was found that hidden within the later additions there were the remains of a substantial portion of the medieval Hall. This was originally an aisled Hall with, most interestingly, a central Hall truss of base cruck construction. The surviving elements included the spere truss. (Fig.8).

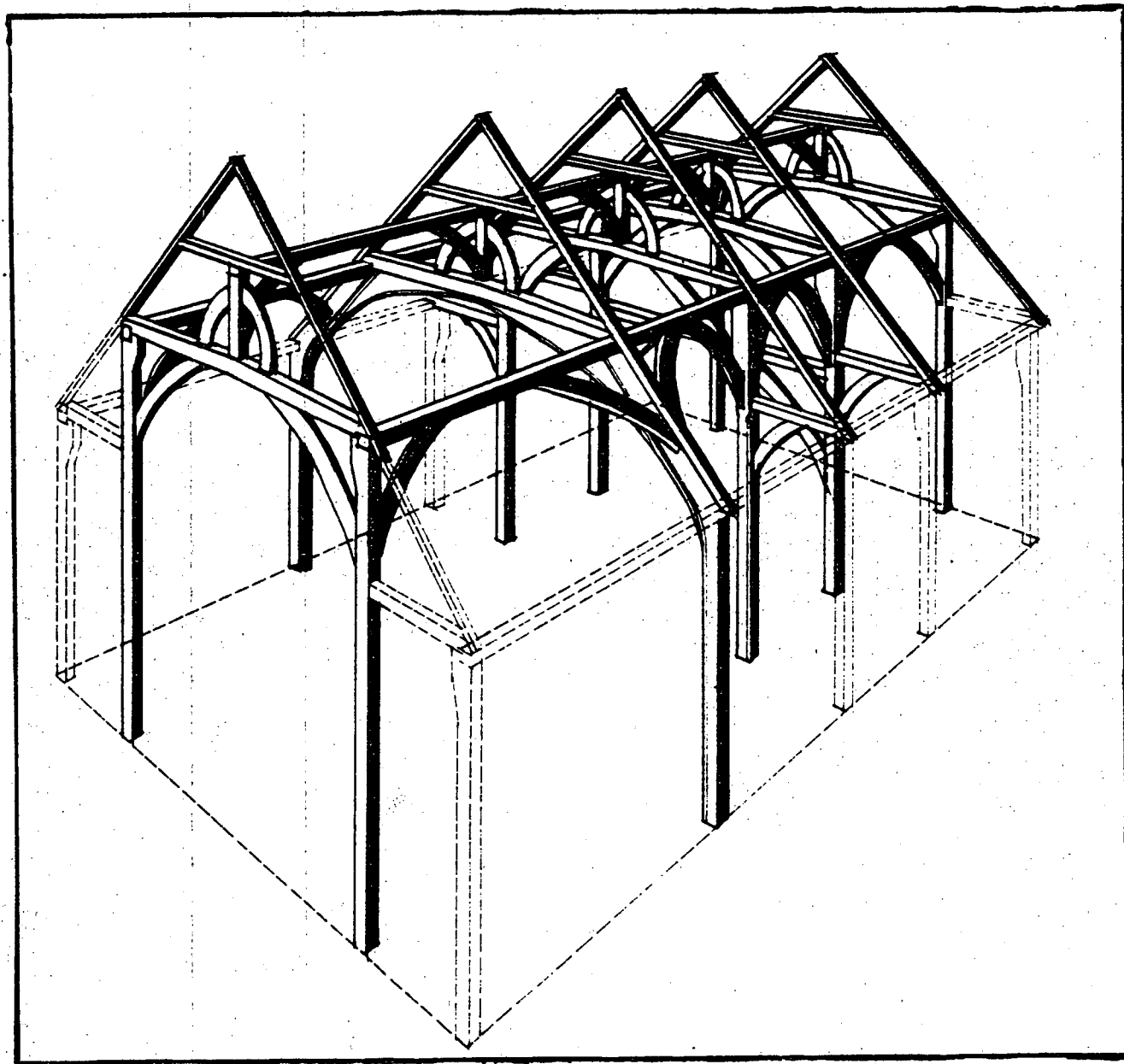
The Group has carried out extensive work in Hertfordshire. In particular with the redevelopment of Royston Town Centre. In Royston a group of buildings in King Street have been surveyed together with buildings off the main High Street. A further group of buildings in King Street is in the process of being surveyed. Research work continues analysing the store of information gained from the general building survey work and related documentary research.

Several publications are being prepared including one on early aisled Halls in the region. An extensive programme of research and survey work is planned for 1985.

John Bailey.
February 1985

Fig. 8

BROMHAM HALL, BEDFORDSHIRE: A BASE CRUCK BUILDING



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

I Buckinghamshire County Museum

A third season of work took place on the Romano-British settlement at Mantles Green Farm, Amersham, and a full account appears at the end of this report, as does a report on the watching brief carried out at Missenden Abbey following the main excavation. Monastic houses were very much to the forefront during the year. At Ravenstone traces of the Priory came to light near the church during the conversion of outbuildings to residential use. Although the general location of the Priory has long been known it now appears, from an in-situ column case exposed as well as the considerable quantity of stone mouldings discovered, that much of the Priory lies outside the scheduled area. At Notley Abbey a single grave to the east of the site of the church, was sectioned by a trial JCB cut, in advance of pipelaying.

Apart from flints, prehistoric finds rarely survive in the well-ploughed lands north of the Chiltern's scarp, so pipeline-watching is of considerable importance. At Long Crendon the full extent of a middle-late Iron Age site, seen partially in a previous pipetrench, was recorded. A substantial occupation horizon was observed including a hearth and cylindrical storage pit. A weaving comb had been found nearby a year or so previously. A report on the site, by P. Carstairs, will be published in Records of Bucks for 1984

Observation by P. Yeoman of a substantial defensive ditch in a JCB cut, adjacent to St. Mary's Church, has led to renewed speculations about Aylesbury's town defence, and it is hoped to arrange an excavation before the site is developed in June.

The Post-excavation programme has progressed well on a number of fronts, including the latest Brill kiln, the Misbourne Viaduct/Gerrards Cross Mesolithic Site, and the Denham medieval kilns. The process of attempting to protect known sites however continues to be arduous and hard fought. The protection of new sites by scheduling proceeds at a dismally slow pace and the County have come to expect an average of at least three years between a proposal being made and completion of the scheduling process. This seriously discourages sensible structured proposals for new scheduling which is badly needed in Buckinghamshire as elsewhere. It is to be hoped the HBMC will feel able to tackle this problem as a matter of urgency.

The Sites and Monuments Record continues to be effectively refined both by the input of new sites, particularly from air photographs, also by improvement of the existing record. A decision to transfer the data onto the County's mainframe computer has now been made, although the process to transfer is likely to take several years given available resources.

Finally it is always a great pleasure to record the substantial contribution made by members of the County Museum's Archaeological Group to Buckinghamshire Archaeology. Fieldwalking, Field Names, Finds Processing, Drawing, Documentary searches, excavation name it and the Group seems able to cope!

Mantles Green Farm, Amersham July-August 1984

Summary Report

The third and final phase of rescue excavation on this Romano-British villa estate site directed by P.A.St.J. Yeoman for Bucks County Museum and HBMC. A large area was stripped around the previously uncovered rectangular flint building, to investigate this and any other farm buildings, and especially to reveal any iron production features already indicated by the quantity of smelting slag found on the site.

A substantial rectangular timber building was found at the S. end of the area, built on a natural gravel platform to obviate flooding from the adjacent R. Misbourne. This barn or byre was built in the primary phase of occupation, probably during the early 2nd century AD and was associated with a flint track, or drove-way, and a rough flint farmyard surface. The short-lived, main phase of iron production was also of this date and was represented by concentrated dumps of smelting tap slag and furnace bottoms, along with fuel ash cinder found in the NW part of the site. No in-situ furnaces were found, and may have been destroyed by the construction of the adjacent main road (A413), although some very large slabs of refractory clay furnace lining (shaft furnaces?) were uncovered.

These deposits of industrial residues were purposefully sealed at a slightly later date in the 2nd century by the first of a succession of regular, flint-cobbled farmyard surfaces, associated with a very large timber structure in the area previously used for iron production. There is evidence of fairly large scale smithing from all phases, although mainly from the earliest period.

The large (9m x 18m) flint-walled building, mentioned above, was of 3rd century date, and was probably one of a number of ancillary buildings sited around the farmyard. The walls were probably of flint right up to the tiled roof, which was presumably supported by posts on post pads, as no axial post pits were found. Some evidence for the function and internal lay-out of the building, came from the NE end, where a room partition and a collapsed painted wall plaster panel were revealed. This suggests that it was a fairly high-grade residential structure, and may have been occupied by the farm manager or bailiff. There were no later structures in this area, and this building may have become derelict in the late 4th century, possibly aggravated by the imminent collapse of the S. wall which had been built over the slumping back-fill or a large, early ditch.

A twin flued malting-oven, which had been located by a magnetometer survey, was discovered 75m. E. of this building.

Approximately 1000 iron objects were recovered in the 1984 season as well as a few hundred nails. Apart from the iron slag (smithing and smelting) and furnace lining, considerable quantities of ore and unworked iron bars were also found. In total about 1 tonne of industrial residues have been examined and recorded. The interesting question of the iron ore source still remains unanswered.

A further opportunity to investigate the vicinity of this extensive site, by a watching brief, will be presented when the Amersham by-pass is started, probably within '85-'86.

Missenden Abbey (SP897010)

P. A. Yeoman for Buckinghamshire County Museum undertook a watching brief during new building work and alterations to the existing building. Excavation had already taken place within the area of part of the conventual church, to the N. of the house (cf. Medieval Archaeol. XXVIII (1984) 209). The existence of a 15th century roof within the E. range of the present house has previously suggested that the claustral range lies within the standing building. A survey of this roof, which was probably over the dormer, has been executed by J. Bailey, who has recorded the roof to be of a Butt Purlin Arch Brace Collar Truss form. The S. roof was unexpectedly found also to be of largely 15th century work, with some smoke blackened timbers. The W. roof is of 17th or 18th century date.

A pipe trench with two large manholes was observed, starting at the N. side of the existing service wing, and running N. over a length of 11m. The trench was dug 4m. to the E. of the previously excavated church wall, interpreted as E. tower base and/or pulpitum base. The S. manhole partially destroyed a wall corner consisting of a thick wall running N-S, and turning to the E. This wall ran N. for 1.2m. before an angled, single, dressed limestone clunch block displaced the wall face 300mm to the E. of the original line, on an alignment slightly E. of N. This secondary wall face was observed in a 700mm length before it was cut by a 19th century brick culvert. The S. corner, first observed, was mirrored 1.3m. to the W. on the other side of the passageway by a similar corner with a simple rolled moulding, which probably joined the pulpitum wall to the W. The passageway between contained a well-worn pavement of 14th century Penn floor tiles bedded in a mortar base. This floor level, and others, with a total thickness greater than 500mm, were observed running uninterrupted along the base of the pipe trench, to the N. beyond the realigned N. wall. The floor levels abutted the faced W. end of an E-W wall, 2m. in width, roughly parallel to the S. wall. It is likely that these formed the back walls of the choirstalls, and formed N. and S. chancel aisles 2.5m. wide.

The S. wall of the church was observed in five areas within the standing building, and in two external areas. It was faced with siliceous sandstone blocks with a mortared flint core. The sandstone is of a type known to have been quarried only 2 miles away at Denner Hill, Prestwood. The existing brick N. wall of the service wing (18th/19th century) was built on top of the ruined lower courses of the S. wall of the church. At the NE corner of the service wing the S. chancel wall also originally ended and returned to the N. although a manhole destroyed the evidence at this point. The return wall may have been removed during the life of the church and the S. wall continued to the E. with different stonework and mortar. This presumably represents a later medieval lengthening of the choir, or the addition of a retro-quire or Lady Chapel.

It is evident from the line of the S. church wall, and from discoveries within the E. claustral range, that there was no S. transept.

The area of the junction of the E. claustral range with the church was available for partial excavation. Here, the line of the church wall appeared to have been set back over 1m. to the S. and was pierced by a splayed doorway at its W. end. Another splayed doorway was found immediately adjacent to this in the W. wall of the N. room of the E. claustral range, giving access to and from the cloister alley. A single tiled step was found across the width of the alley. The step had been made from building rubble including two, small clunch column fragments. To the N. of the step, and within the alley, were the in-situ remains of a pavement of plain tiles, which ran up to the E. side of another splayed doorway, which led from the alley into the nave. This nave wall fragment was separated from the masonry of the NW corner of the E. range by a straight joint. It is likely that the S. church wall had originally been on a single alignment, and that the setting back, for whatever purpose, necessitated this alteration, thus creating a large space in the S. crossing area and a smaller N. room in the E. claustral range.

A wall partially faced with courses of horizontally laid roof tiles, was found 5m. S. of the set-back wall, and formed the back wall of the N. room of the E. range. It may have been a sacristy, or treasury, or simply a vestibule. The base of the night stair from the dorter would probably have been located in this room.

At present the N. end of the dorter roof is cut off in mid-bay, approximately on the line of the S. wall of the N. room. Each bay is 3m. wide, and an additional 1½ bays would bring the roof to an end on the N. wall of this range, where it may have formed a roof valley, right angled to a small roof projecting from the S. side of the church tower.

The dorter roof span is 7m. reflected in the width of the existing kitchen which has maintained the original width of this range, with surviving medieval footings seen in the E. and W. walls.

During rebuilding work in the SE part of the cloisters, a blocked 19th century servants stairway was opened, and proved to have been built against the external face of the NE part of the S. range. This was exposed at the modern first floor level, where two window mouldings were recorded, looking out from a staircase which had ascended from the E. The mouldings were of 16th century date, and may have been inserted with the stair during the initial period of transition following the dissolution of the Abbey in 1538. This interpretation is supported by the discovery of re-used clunch blocks in the form of quoining keyed into the E. side of the E. window. A corner at this point, at first floor level 2.5m. W. of the W. side of the E. range, clearly suggests a Tudor widening of this range to include the area of the E. cloister alley.

A 19th century wall was inserted in front of the N. face of the S. range, forming spaces for cupboards, and another narrow, servant's stair at the W. end. In the S. wall face, of the N. wall of the S. range, at this end half of a blocked late medieval, rectangular door moulding and lintel, has been uncovered.

The junction of this wall, and the E. wall of the W. range was found, 1.5m. to the W. of this doorway, on the line of the present external W. wall of the existing building, proving conclusively that the monastic W. range had been demolished and is now beneath the main driveway. This interpretation is supported by the evidence of the present W. roof which contains re-used, medieval timber but is itself of 17th or 18th century date. The claustral range, as reconstructed, would have been 36m. wide. It is possible that the immediate post-dissolution Tudor building was L-shaped, with a narrow W. range constructed later within the area of the cloister. The garth was probably not filled in with rooms until the 18th century rebuilding.

Current investigations have established that medieval stonework, quarried from the church, ceased to be reused in alterations by the mid 18th century. All the useful stone may have been removed by this time, after which any upstanding remains were levelled, and in places sealed by up to 1m. of demolition rubble. In all the observations of recent below-ground disturbances, faced church walls survived only to the E. of the area of the crossing. On other comparable sites, it is the E. end of the church which survives longest, possibly because it was the most difficult to demolish. It seems likely that at Missenden the church was systematically broken up from W. to E. This would explain the severe robbing of the W. side of the proposed crossing, and the general lack of remains of the church to the W. of this.

The frater may well have been at first floor level within the S. range in which case the 16th century windows may have replaced earlier windows looking into the garth from a stair up to the frater from the E. cloister alley and the proposed warming house.

II MILTON KEYNES ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT 1984 : D C MYNARD

INTRODUCTION

On May 1 1984, the Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit was transferred from Milton Keynes Development Corporation to Buckinghamshire County Council, under an agency agreement between the two authorities. The objects of the Unit have not changed and apart from the necessity to conform to new administrative procedures it has been business as usual.

Excavation continued on the outbuildings of the Bancroft Roman Villa and the area surrounding its Mausoleum, where an important Late Bronze Age circular building and a 1st century AD cremation cemetery were discovered. With the aid of an MSC scheme excavation has commenced on the village earth-works at Shenley Brook End, an area eventually to be developed as the city expands on to its western flank.

Liaison with local schools continued, and our mobile exhibition, illustrating the 1983 excavations, spent most of the year on tour in schools. A number of schools also visited the excavations at Bancroft to see archaeology in action. The mobile exhibition, in addition, spent a month each in the four major libraries in the Milton Keynes area.

Our publication afford continues apace. The monograph on excavations of Roman sites 1972-1982 is with the editor of Records of Buckinghamshire and expected to appear in the summer of 1985. Reports on the Roman Pottery of Milton

Keynes and the excavation of multi period sites at Caldecotte should be completed during the summer and we anticipate that they will be published early in 1986. It is expected that a report by M R Petchey and R A Adkins on Secklow and other hundred mounds will appear in the Archaeological Journal in 1985.

The following were published during the year:

- M R Petchey & : The excavation of a late-seventeenth-
B Giggins : century water-mill at Caldecotte, Bow
Brickhill, Bucks, Post-Medieval Archaeology
17, 1983, 65-94
- D C Mynard & : A Guide to the Medieval Landscape of
R A Croft : Milton Keynes, Milton Keynes 1984
- R Tyrrell : Bancroft : a popular guide, Milton Keynes
1984.

EXCAVATIONS

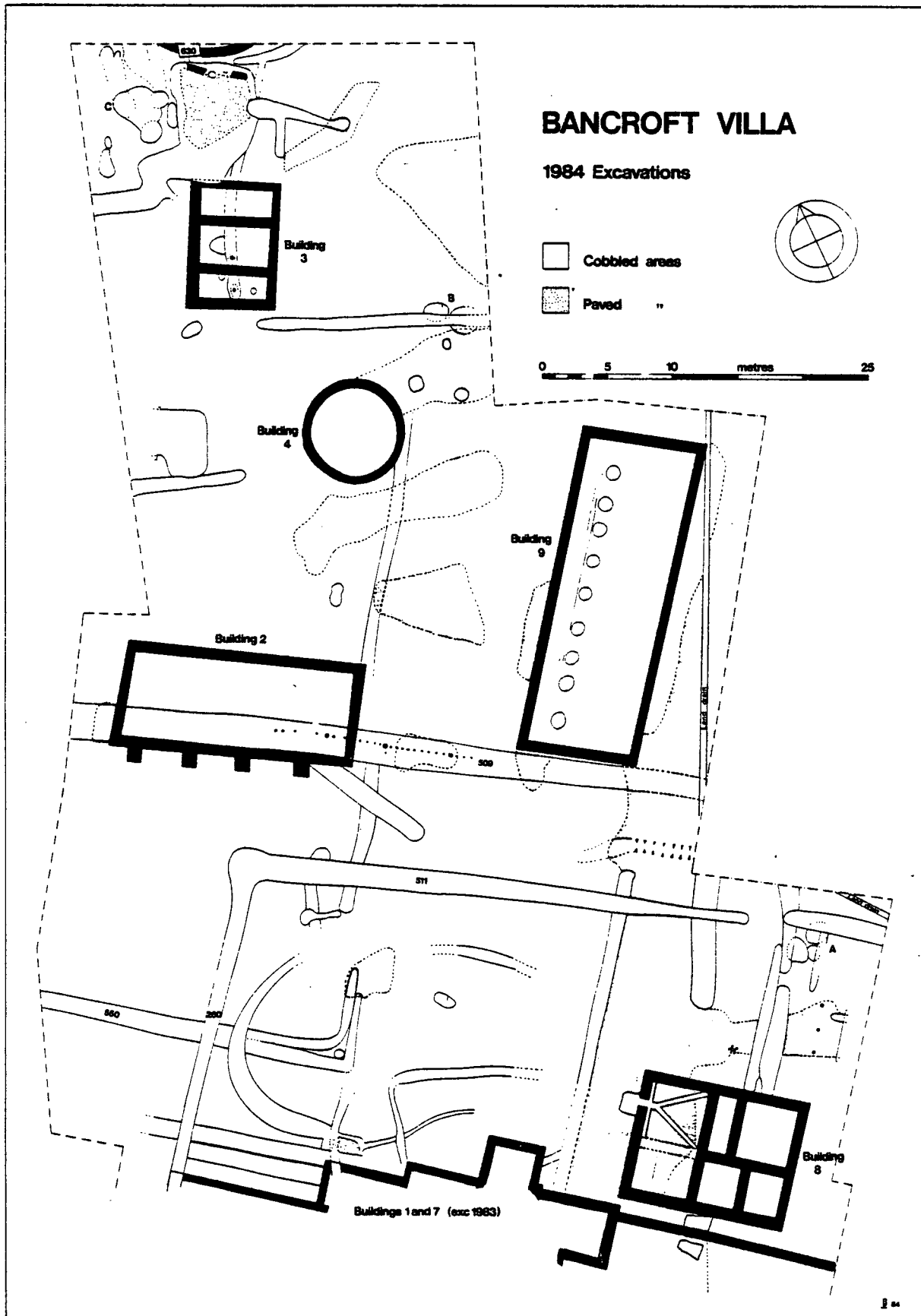
1 : Bancroft, the Villa Outbuildings : R J Zeepvat

Excavations continued from April to September 1984 on the environs of the villa. Attention was concentrated on an area north of the 1983 excavations, including the three outbuildings originally identified in 1976.

Taking the north side of the 1983 site as a starting point,

Fig. 8

Bancroft: plan of the structures north of the villa excavated in 1984.



an area of about 4,000 square metres was stripped across the hill slope in a northerly direction. This task was carried out by a Fiat Allis 360° tracked excavator and two large site tippers.

One of the major problems on this excavation was the dry summer: for the first time since 1976 virtually no time was lost owing to inclement weather, but the site was correspondingly more difficult to excavate, mainly because of the concrete-like conditions, but also because many soil colour differences, slight at the best of times, were totally eliminated as features turned the same colour as the surrounding soil. In some parts of the site the only solution was to take down suspect areas - initially by pick and shovel, latterly by machine - and trowel the damper underlying subsoil to reveal features. A useful aid in this task was the employment of metal detectors, to pinpoint finds before clearance began. For this we are indebted to the West Bletchley Metal Detector Club, who also regularly surveyed the excavation spoil tips, recovering the occasional metal object that had escaped observation by volunteers.

Following the great increase in our knowledge of the site gained in 1983, it is perhaps not surprising that the area surrounding the three known outbuildings was also found to be far more complex than originally suspected. In addition to two new structures found on the site (Building 8 & 9) and the suggestion of a third to the north of Building 3, the complex of farm buildings can now be seen to spread northwards along the valley side, and also down to Bradwell

Brook. Trial trenching 30 metres north of the excavated area, on the site of a circular parch mark shown on aerial photographs produced evidence of a stone structure - apparently rectangular! A second substantial building was also located, in association with other features of Roman date, to the north-east of Building 9, close to the brook, beneath a waterlogged peat deposit. It is hoped that the areas surrounding both these structures will be available for examination in the near future.

As was noted last year, the earliest signs of human activity on the site can be dated to the late first or second centuries, consisting of a sequence of ditches and pits spreading along the western side of the valley. The ditches are mostly fairly widely spaced, and were probably dug for drainage or as field boundaries. One of these ditches (509) seems to have been of particular importance as a boundary, for a fence (represented by a line of post-and stake-holes) was constructed along it when it had partly silted up.

Most of the pits dating from this period seem to fall into three groups (A, B, and C). Each group consists of a number of small circular pits, sometimes interlinked, cut into the cornbrash limestone which underlies the site. Although ash formed part of the fill of one group (B), few finds were recovered from any of the pits, suggesting that they were not intended for domestic rubbish. It has been suggested that these pit-groups mark excavations for obtaining stone for the production of the lime.

Once again, there is little structural evidence for this period. Two stone-lined postholes in a ditch beneath Building 3 appear to be associated with the ditch rather than the later stone structure overlying it, but alone do not provide much evidence for timber buildings.

Most of the structural evidence on this year's excavation seems to be contemporary with the occupation of the aisled house (Building 7) excavated in 1983. The picture that is beginning to emerge is one of a scattered complex of farm buildings linked by areas of limestone cobbling. Access to this complex was provided by a metalled trackway running to the east of the house in a northerly direction, passing to the east of Building 9 and the west of Building 10 (MK343). At least part of the line of this trackway was bounded by ditches, and paths and other tracks led off it, giving access to the cobbled farmyard and other parts of the complex. Heavy wheel ruts in one part of the track attested its frequent use.

As it is evident that we have excavated only a part of the complex of farm buildings, it is really too early to talk in any detail about the functions of the various structures. However, the four buildings so far excavated (Buildings 2, 3, 4 and 9) all appear to date from the second century, as does Building 10 (MK343). Building 2 was the most substantially constructed, with rubble footings some 750mm deep. The buttressing along the south wall was probably constructed to counteract subsidence into the underlying ditch (509): the top of the ditch inside the building was filled

with rubble for the same reason. No internal features were recorded in this structure.

Building 3 was identified on its discovery in 1976 as a granary, from the closely spaced internal walls. However, it could equally be some sort of byre or sty, for the same reasons.

Even less can be said of Building 4. Circular stone structure of this type and size are common in N Bucks/S. Northants, being apparently an adaption of the local timber framed native roundhouses. The lack of internal features makes the identification of function difficult.

Building 9, from its great size (26m x 10m) can fairly safely be seen as a barn. What is of most interest in this building are the details of its construction. The wide roof span was supported by a single row of aisle posts - 9 in all - offset towards the west wall, set in post-pits 1.2m deep, packed with limestone rubble. Whilst similar structures have been recorded at other villa sites, eg. Great Casterton, West Dean and Halstock, nobody has successfully explained how the builders overcame the structural complications inherent in single-aisled buildings.

Whatever the structure above these posts, it is possible that they served also to support partitioning for animal stabling. This is suggested by the presence of a stone-lined drain, running parallel with and to the west of the posts, which would have drained stalls on that side of the building.

The farmyard area seems to have continued in use as described with little alteration through the second, third and early fourth centuries AD. The first hint of change comes in the middle of the fourth century, and is linked to the major rebuilding of the house, including the laying of mosaics, and the creation of a formal garden fronting the house. It is now clear that this latter feature severed the trackway linking house and farmyard. In addition, a new structure was built partly overlying the trackway, to the north of the garden. This new building (8) measured 10m x 13m, aligned east-west, and was constructed of mortared limestone on virtually non-existent footings. It was divided internally into six rooms, two about 4m square, one measuring 3m x 4m, two each at 3m square, and a corridor 2m wide separating the two larger rooms.

The building had been almost totally destroyed, presumably by stone-robbing, and little remained of either walls or floors. However, the large room at the north-west corner was found to contain a channelled hypocaust, fired from a stokehole on its west side. Quantities of tesserae from this room, and painted wall-plaster from the building in general, suggest that this was a small but well-appointed dwelling. Two entrances to the building are likely: one on the north (farmyard) side, leading into the corridor, and the other into the central room on the south side, indicated by a very large limestone slab forming a 'doorstep'. This entrance evidently led through a gate into the garden of the main house, as evidenced by a second slab on the opposite side of the garden wall. Both this building and the house

were separated from the farmyard by substantial ditches (260 and 511), with a single narrow gap at the nearest point to the north exist from Building 8.

From its association with the main house, and its links with the farmyard, it seems probable that Building 8 was constructed as a house for a farm manager or bailiff, the owners of the villa disassociating themselves with the agricultural side of the estate, perhaps because their principal income came from elsewhere.

However, this is not to say that farming ceased at Bancroft. Though the importance of the farm to its owners diminished, it continued to function, and some changes took place. Building 3 ceased to be used in the fourth century, its north wall being partly removed by the excavation of a large sunken area, which was paved with limestone slabs. The function of this area is unclear. It appears to have remained open, the only evidence of structure in it being a rough retaining wall on its north side, incorporating a single post hole.

One pointer to the possible function of this feature was discovered immediately to the north, on the edge of the excavation. This considered of a rectangular stone-lined pit (630) containing large quantities of slag. Hopefully next year's excavations will throw some more light on this very interesting area.

As with the excavation of the house, there is little evidence to tell us of the end of the villa establishment, though we now have at least a good idea of the direction and spread of the buildings associated with it. Next season's excavations will deal with areas to the north and east of this year's site, allowing us to examine most, if not all, of the farmyard complex.

2 : Bancroft, the hill-top adjacent to the mausoleum :

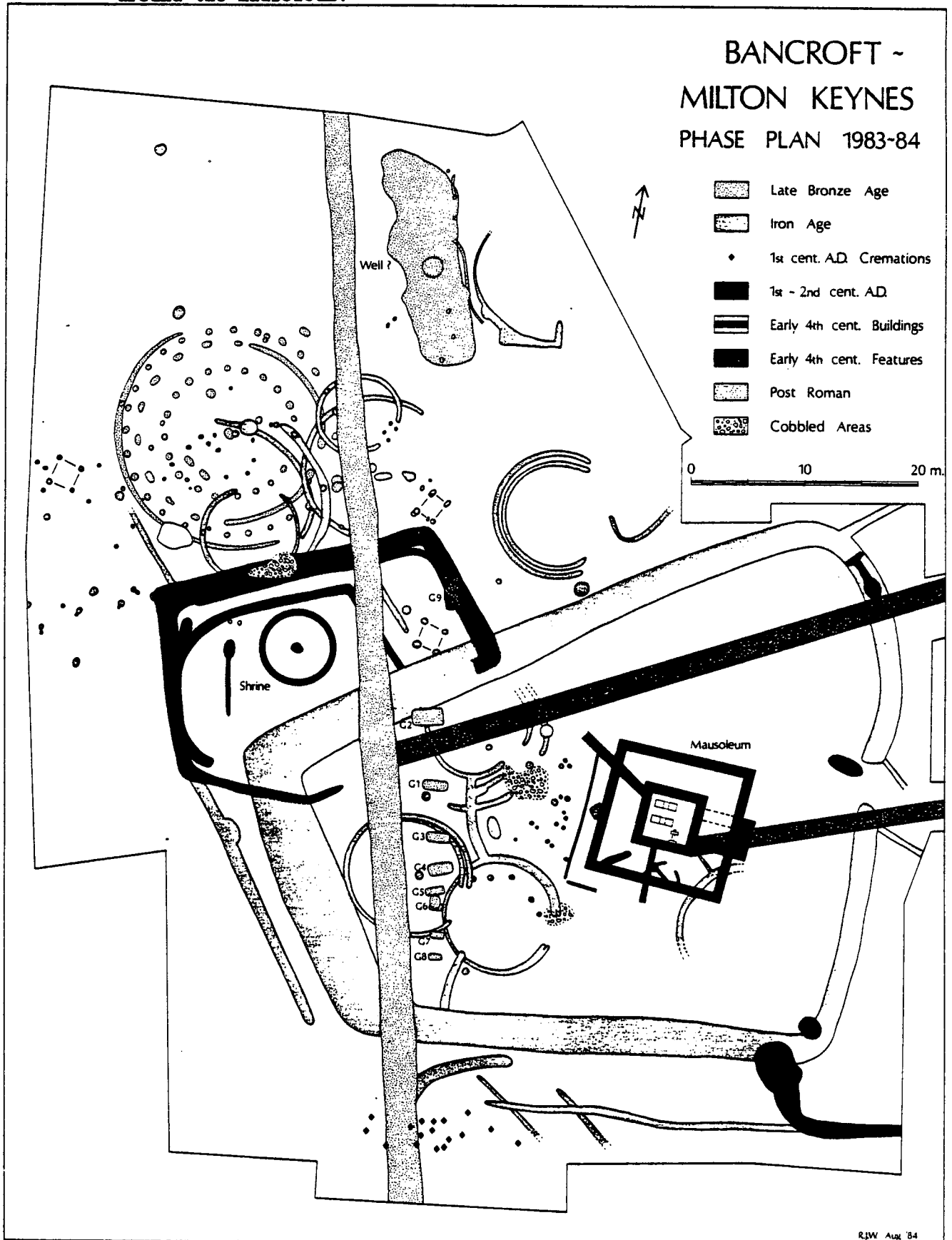
R J Williams

The second season of excavation on the hill-top above the Bancroft villa took place between April and June 1984. An area of 2,800m² was fully excavated and an extensive area to the east, north and west of the site was trial-trenched.

The main focus of excavation was on the area to the NW of the mausoleum (excavated in 1983). However, a small area to the south of the 1983 season was also cleared. This produced a small cremation cemetery of mainly 1st-century AD date, 30 metres SW of the later mausoleum. The cemetery contained seventeen cremations of which two had been badly disturbed by a later 5th-century boundary ditch. The style of cremation varied considerably from a scatter of cremated bone with no associated objects or contained in a single pot to one cremation which contained ten pots. A total of 45 ceramic pots were recovered although the heavy clay soil had crushed some so badly that even reconstruction on paper will be difficult. Eight cremations contained grave goods including iron and bronze fibulae, bronze disc-brooches, faience and glass beads and other personal items. By far

Fig. 9

Bancroft: plan of 1983 and 1984 excavations on the hill-top around the mausoleum.



the richest was cremation 5 which apart from five pottery vessels contained four bronze brooches, a bronze stud and nail cleaner, one iron fibula and key and two melted glass beads.

Most of the pottery vessels were distinctive late Belgic forms, girth beakers, platters and bowls, in a grog tempered fabric. Two cremations contained Samian bowls, a flagon and a Terra Rubra girth beaker. The vessels have only been superficially examined and accurate dating must await the detailed analysis, but they seem to span the 1st half of the 1st century AD. Twelve cremations contained animal bones as offerings, preliminary analysis of which shows a predominance of sheep/goat, but ox and pig were also present.

It is too early to distinguish any burial patterns within the cemetery and no boundary was identified as is often the case with Roman cemeteries.

To the east of the cemetery a large stone-filled pit and a ditch leading away to the east contained a large quantity of Belgic pottery. The pit had been cut through the earlier silted up Iron-Age enclosure ditch. Unfortunately these features were too close to the unexcavated areas to the S. to offer any adequate explanation of function.

Although the excavation of the cemetery proved time-consuming the major focus of work was to the north and west of the previously excavated mausoleum and Iron-Age enclosure.

The 1st-century enclosure ditch attached to the silted up Iron Age enclosure ditch was completely emptied. An unexpected result of this was the discovery of a later Roman burial dug into the western side of the silted-up ditch. The style and N-S orientation of the burial with the head at the south end suggested that it was of different date to the eight inhumations excavated last year.

The well preserved skeleton had been enclosed in a substantial wooden coffin and 22 iron nails were found still in situ, indicating a coffin size of 1.95m x 0.6m and at least 0.32m deep. The iron nails were exceptionally large averaging 120mm long. In several cases wood was still attached to the shafts.

To the north of the 1st-century enclosure a number of post holes and a short length of pallisade found last year proved to be the very extreme southern edge of a very substantial circular timber building.

The building consisted of four major components: an outer semi-circular drainage gully with a projected diameter of 20.5m and three concentric inner rings of posts of 18.5m, 16m and 11.5m diameter. The 2m wide entrance lay on the east side overlooking the valley.

The innermost ring consisted of 20 postholes averaging 0.45m deep and 0.4m diameter. Where the post pipes were visible they indicated a post diameter of at least 0.28m. The middle ring was of totally different character consisting of

two roughly equal lengths of pallisade trench either side of the entrance for approximately half the circumference, which continued on the west side as 9 large elongated post holes. Several post holes were evident indicating that the uprights were larger flattened 'D'-shaped split timber trunks. The pallisade trench contained a continuous narrow post-pipe with large elongated posts at intervals. At the entrance the trench had been deepened and widened to accommodate larger door-posts. The outer ring consisted of 27 large post-holes which were completely concentric to the two inner rings.

In the centre of the building a fire-reddened area, at first thought to be a hearth, turned out to be a pit filled with fire-reddened clay containing a heavily-burnt saddle-quern. No porch structure was located although the adjacent later ditch may have removed the evidence. A number of other post holes including two large elongated examples were found within the building but their contemporaneity or otherwise has yet to be confirmed.

A number of the post-holes contained large quantities of unabraded pottery including fragments of furrowed and carinated bowls, vessels with inturned rims and dimples and heavily carinated/concertina-ed forms. These are all very unusual forms to the area and are considered to be of Late Bronze Age date.

Buildings with three concentric rings are rare and buildings of this extreme size even rarer. Full interpretation must

await further research but there seems no reason to suppose it was any different to the later Iron Age examples as typified by Reynold's reconstructions at Butser.

The only other late-Bronze-Age feature excavated was a large pit 15 metres to the NE. The circular vertical-sided pit 1m deep and 1m diameter was in the centre of a shallow elongated sub-rectangular hollow. This hollow had been roughly metalled with small stones and pebbles. It was soon noted that the pit always contained water so a function as a water hole for both men and animals is most likely. The nature of the silt confirms that the pit had been permanently waterlogged. The shape of the metalled hollow is a little more difficult to explain but it must have been enclosed in some way to have retained such straight sides.

The Bronze Age building had been cut by a number of curving ditches, most notable of which were three pennanular house gullies, two to the east and one to the south. Stratigraphically all three features were later than the large building and are almost certainly of Iron Age date. They varied in preservation and size ranging from 8m to 12m in diameter. One other pennanular ditched structure was excavated 15m east of the entrance to the LBA building. This building consisted of two concentric ditches with a narrow berm of undisturbed subsoil between. Both ditches petered out to the north-east and south-east and although it may be assumed that the entrance was on the east side

its width cannot be accurately measured. One possible explanation for the double ring is that the two vertical-sided ditches were not contemporary, but an alternative explanation is that they each held a timber wall, producing a cavity between them which was filled with turves or cob.

The large ditch found last year running in a N-S direction between the shrine and mausoleum continued northwards across this season's excavation. Trial trenching to the north of the site located a change in direction of the ditch 65° to the east. The continuation of the ditch was also followed by trenching 170m to the East. The exact date and nature of this ditch is still in some doubt and only two sides of the 'enclosure' have yet been located. The ditch had been recut twice and two large fragments of moulded and turned stone which must have originated from the mausoleum were also found in the fill. The absence of other finds and the presence of the stonework supports the theory that it is post-Roman in date.

Trial trenching to the east of the mausoleum picked up the stone culvert draining away from the burial chamber. Approximately 35m east of the porch the drain turned sharply 25° to flow down the slope and then gradually petered out.

The trial trenching also revealed a number of other ditches, post-holes, clay-lined pits and at least one more circular building which it is hoped to excavate next year.

SHENLEY BROOK END : M R Petchey & P Sewter

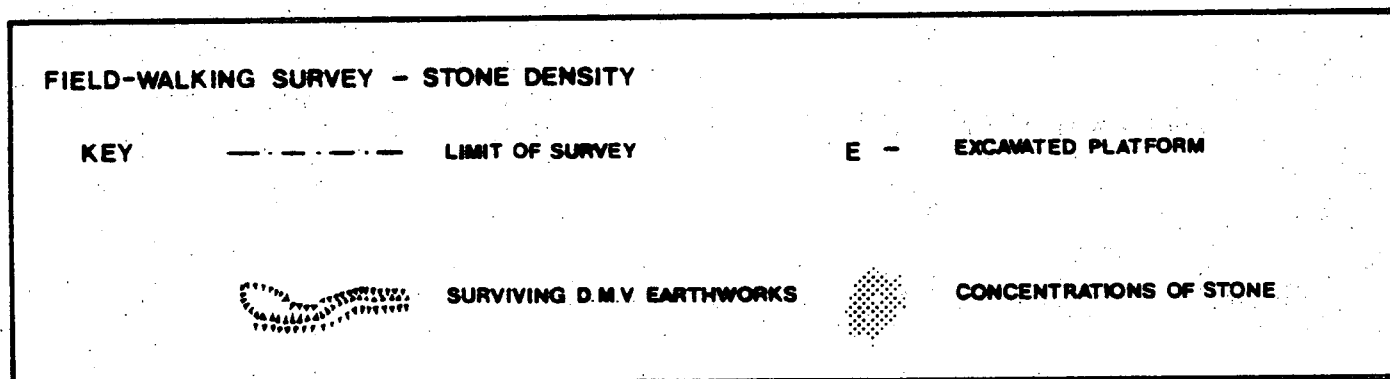
The development of the New City is now moving on to what is termed the western flank: the area west of Watling Street. It is the largest undeveloped area left in the New City, and has more than its share of monuments surviving as earthworks: a castle, three moats, a deserted medieval village and shrunken village earthworks. Most of these will survive. Those that will not require extensive excavation, and to keep ourselves well in advance of development the unit has started work on the deserted medieval village. Within the township of Shenley Brook End, it may represent an earlier location of the settlement nucleus in the township or be a second focus. It runs along a ridge above the existing hamlet up to one of the manorial centres, Westbury. For this reason, we are calling the site Westbury DMV, even though there is no clear indication of what the site was called in the Middle Ages.

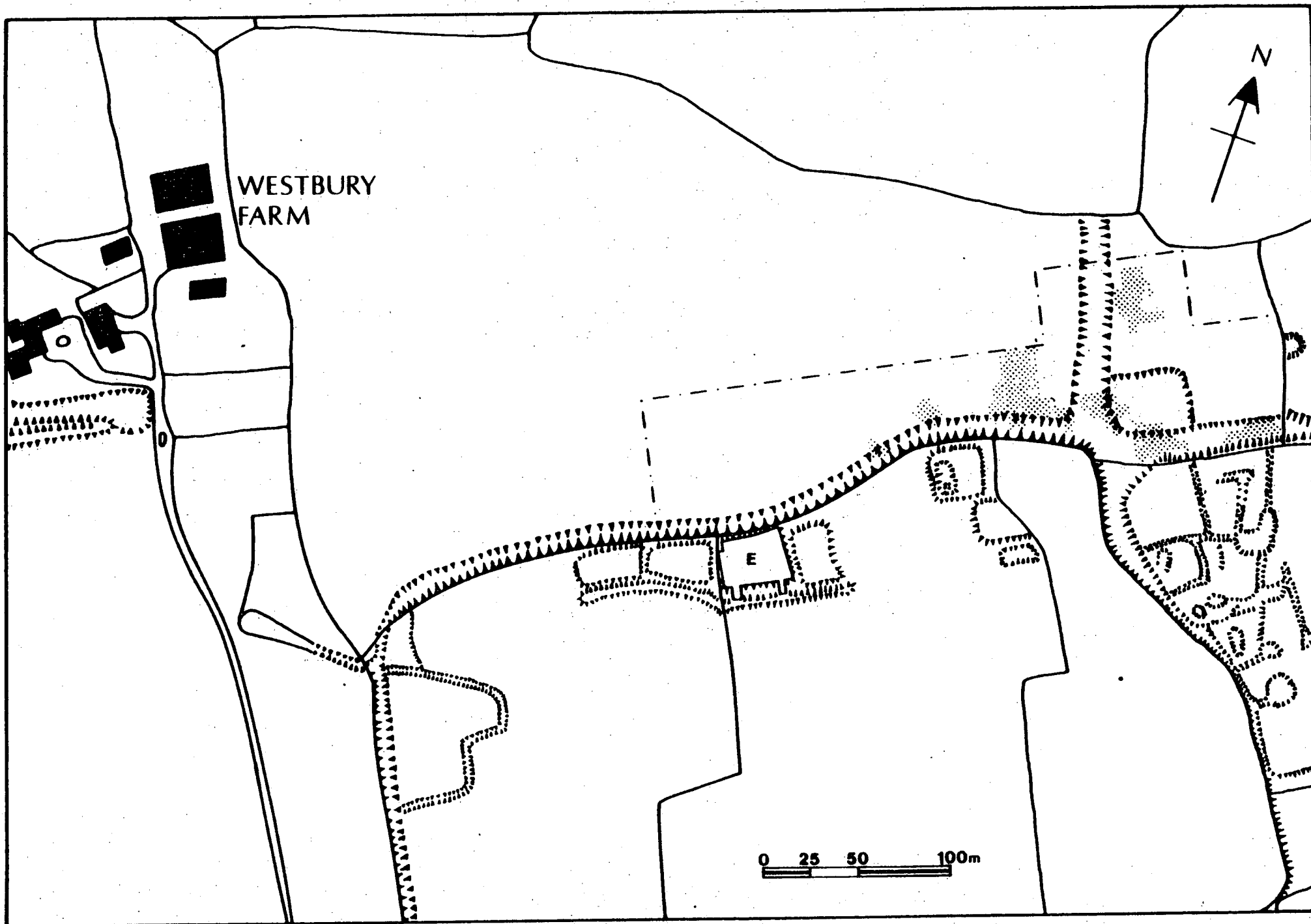
The project is entirely financed by the Manpower Services Commission through its Community Programmes Scheme, which creates jobs for people aged 18 or over who have been out of work for lengthy periods.

The first part of the mSC programme is the total excavation of one of four visible tofts situated towards the SE end of the Westbury earthworks at Shenley. The platforms are aligned on the southern edge of the main E-W holloway, now marked by a major hedgerow, through the D.M.V.

Fig. 10 (opposite)

Shenley Brook End: Map of earthworks of
Westbury Deserted Medieval Village,
showing concentrations of building material
in ploughed area and location of 1984
excavation.





Fieldwalking

Apart from the excavation an intensive fieldwalking programme was undertaken in the ploughed fields on the N. side of the holloway. Quantitative analysis of the spread of building materials, made up of cobbles, flint and limestone blocks, has defined the location of up to six platforms no longer visible as earthworks as a result of ploughing. The pottery collected on this survey has not yet been analysed; hopefully it will reflect the results of the building material survey.

Excavation

The area at present under excavation is 35m x 28m (approximately 1,000m²) including two sections across the southern platform boundary ditch.

Up to 250mm of turf and topsoil was stripped by hand down to archaeological levels. A post-desertion accumulation of a light buff to orange clayey silt covered $\frac{1}{2}$ of the site.

The excavation is at the moment incomplete but two buildings can be identified. Building 1 (Context 26) is defined by eleven padstones. The structure is 10m long x 4m wide with an internal partition at the west end giving two rooms 2.30m and 7.70m long. This building is aligned E-W, parallel to the hollow-way and is defined along its eastern edge by a substantially metalled path or bank, laid between the holloway and the building.

Building 2, (Context 82) is defined on three sides, south, east and west, by irregular and shallow (up to 55mm deep) depressions. These are interpreted either as sill-beam slots recut during demolition of the structure or depressions made by livestock movement around a standing structure. The north side is located 1m from the edge of the main trackway and is marked by an increase in the density of stones. These may be either the residue of a path-way against the building or a foundation for the structure itself. This building, which is also aligned E-W and parallel to the trackway, is 8.40m x 5.50m. There is no evidence of internal divisions. Two postholes 2.0m apart and c.10m forward of the presumed line of the south wall may represent an entrance with porch facing into the toft.

The platform itself is bounded on three sides by ditches. The south ditch is 1.30m wide and 0.50m deep, with shallow sloping sides. The fill is an homogenous clayey silt with no evidence of primary silting suggesting that the ditches were kept clear during use with a deliberate backfilling or abandonment.

The ditch is crossed near the SW corner of the toft by a causeway, not yet fully excavated. From this causeway a heavily metalled path c.2.50m wide, runs approximately N-S for about 18m to end against Building 1. Apart from this association there is no other evidence for an entrance into it. The metalling is made up of water-rounded granite cobble and flint modules densely packed. Laying on this

surface are discrete areas of larger stones and flint. Some may be repairs to the metalling, others appear to represent another building or a later phase of Building 1 partially overlying the metalling. Possible wheel ruts have been noted in this cobble.

Further aims of the excavation are to : examine a complex of earthworks, situated to the SE of the junction of the main E-W and NS holloways, excavate a section of the main E-W holloway, section the E and W boundary ditches of the toft presently being excavated and survey any remaining unrecorded ridge and furrow.

LANDSCAPE SURVEY : R A Croft

Work has continued on the landscape survey of Milton Keynes. A number of new topics were looked at during the year and the help of two Oxford In-Service students, John Giorgi and Beverley Garratt, was gratefully received.

The parishes of Broughton and Moulsoe were examined in detail and the distribution of the ridge and furrow plotted at 1:10560 scale. This information was then compared with earlier maps of the parishes. Several new tracings of old estate and tithe maps were added to the cartographic archive during the year. One map of particular interest was the 1779 survey of the estate of Sarah Backwell (BUCRO D/X/85/1) which showed the development of the post-medieval farms in Broughton.

This survey book has details of the layout and positions of the six farms which were established in Broughton parish after the enclosure. The boundaries of the six farms, (Manor Farm, King's Head Farm, Brook Farm, Middle Farm, Cranfield Farm, White Horse Farm) follow some of the boundaries of the open fields. The most obvious features which influenced the farm boundaries were the positions of roads and trackways and natural features such as rivers and streams. A comparative set of maps and farm descriptions were drawn up in 1837 and it is interesting to note how the boundaries of almost all the farms had changed quite considerably in the fifty or so years between the two surveys.

The parish of Moulsoe (church SP 907 417) enters the north eastern edge of Milton Keynes and stretches eastwards to the borders of Cranfield parish in Bedfordshire. The village lies centrally within the parish and has two distinct ends to it, one focused on the church, the other around a green 0.7km to the north west. Examination of 1946 RAF aerial photographs of the parish revealed an area of village earthworks at SP 914 422 but these have subsequently been ploughed out. These earthworks may have represented an area of shrinkage at the NE end of the village but the area has not yet been field walked to substantiate this with any artefact evidence. Examination and tracing of the 1802 enclosure map of Moulsoe (BUCRO 1R 59) revealed that there was settlement at the northern corner of the green at the end of the eighteenth century.

The site of the manor house is supposed to have been in the field south of the church at SP 906 416 but the field had been largely quarried away for gravel by c.1880. The 1802 map shows a group of six buildings within this field; the name is given as Cripps Close. There are no indications that any of these buildings was the manor house.

The 1802 map was compared with the 1:10560 ridge and furrow map and the field names were transferred on to the open field strips. The area to the north and east of the green appeared to have been an area of former woodland with several irregular-shaped assart-type fields. This part of Buckinghamshire where it borders onto Bedfordshire was heavily wooded in the medieval period and several parishes in this area such as Cranfield (Beds) have evidence of medieval assarting.

The discovery and tracing of the 1837 Tithe map of Walton parish (BUCRO Tithe Map 403) provided valuable clues on the original shape and layout of the village. The earthworks and excavated evidence suggested that the village had once been a good example of a green village with two distinct ends. The 1837 map confirmed this layout. The position of the green boundaries and the lines of several ditches had been partly examined during the 1972 excavations. The analysis of this map in conjunction with the excavated evidence has helped with the understanding of the shrinkage of the village. The detailed results of this research will be published as part of the Medieval Landscape Survey of Milton Keynes.

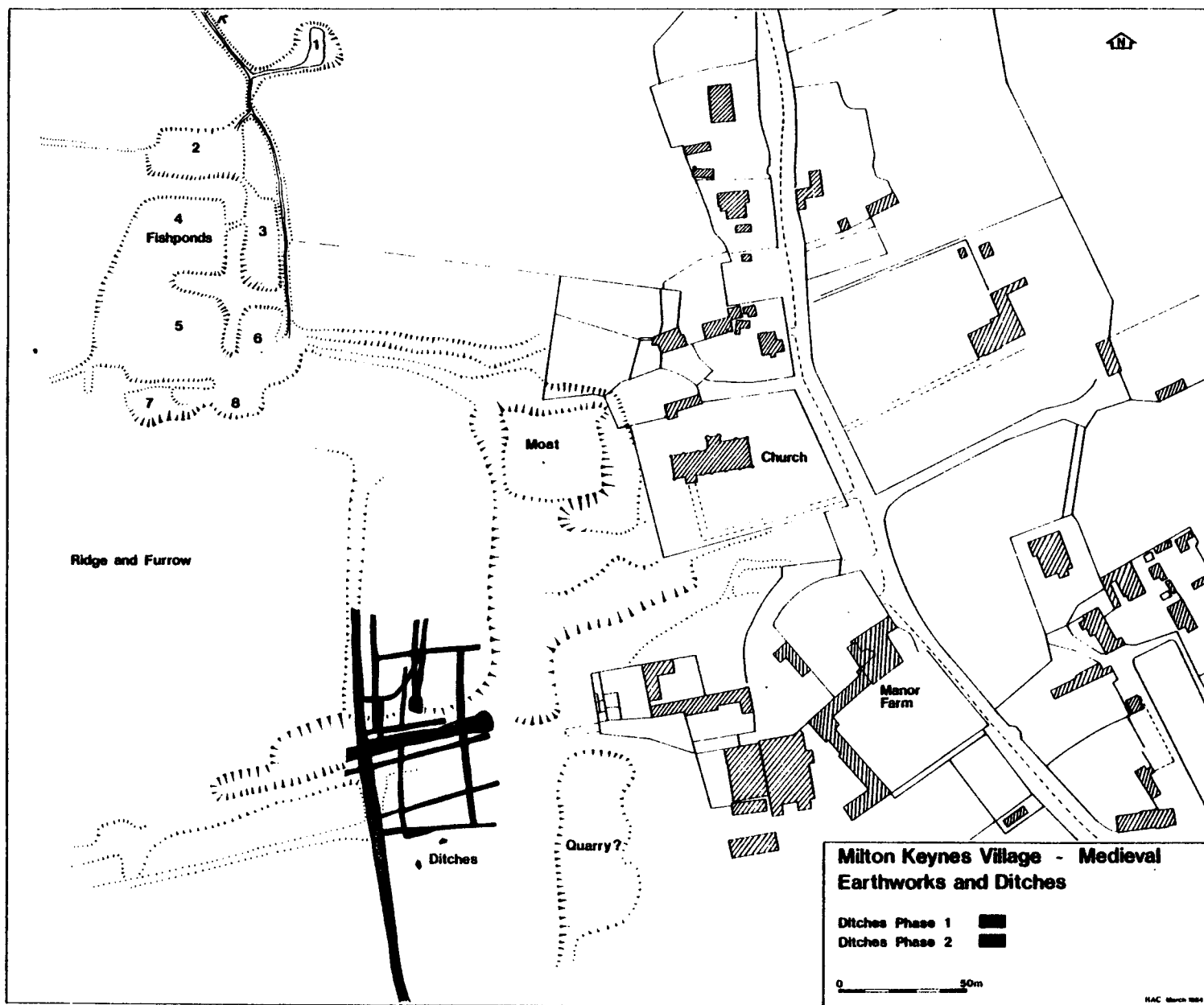
Further work on the parish of Milton Keynes has expanded the information first noted in South Midlands Archaeology 14, 1984, 27, concerning numerous ditches which were discovered during topsoil stripping next to Milton Keynes gravel pit at SP88653905. The interpretation given to these features was of ditches which formed roughly rectangular close boundaries. The plan of these features shows how they were related to the overlying medieval earthworks. The dating evidence for the site was very poor but the pottery would suggest that the earliest phase of ditches were of twelfth century origin, the later phase probably of fifteenth century date. The earthwork group around the church and moated site are thought to have been built by the Keynes family and subsequently enlarged by the Aylesbury family at the end of the thirteenth century. The Stafford family had obtained the whole manor of Milton Keynes and the adjacent manor of Broughton by 1436. The manor was held by the Stafford family until 1632 when it was conveyed to Daniel Finch who became the second Earl of Nottingham. The manor of Milton Keynes remained with various branches of the Finch family well into this century. Two very good estate maps of 1685 and 1782 record the field names and arrangement of the post-medieval farms in the parish. Copies of both these maps are kept in the Unit's archives.

Aerial Photographs

During 1984 Milton Keynes Development Corporation commissioned two new runs of vertical air photographs at 1:10,000 scale.

Fig. 11

Milton Keynes Village: Medieval earthworks and field boundaries.



A black and white run was taken in April; a colour run was flown at the end of July. Examination of the new runs by R A Croft and R J Williams revealed few new sites within the Milton Keynes area, though one site which did show up particularly well was the crop mark enclosure site near Newport Pagnell (SP 853440). Several new vertical air photographs of the deserted medieval village of Tattenhoe (SP 829 338) were added from the National Monuments Record.

FIELDWORK : R J Williams

St Mary's, Bletchley

The major watching brief of the year was at St Mary's Church, Bletchley. For some time the church had been in need of re-ordering and restoration and this began in December 1984. The work entailed removing the fixed pews and laying a new flagstone floor. Since the flooring and furnishing arrangements were to be totally altered, some time was spent carefully recording them. Ros Tyrrell rubbed and recorded all the floor memorials including two brass indents. Several of the memorial slabs were in poor condition; all with the exception of two in the chancel are to be resited in the north chapel.

The floor in the church had been neglected for some time and was a mixture of Victorian and concrete tiles, wood block and concrete. In order that a new underfloor heating system could be laid it was necessary to remove 150mm of deposits on the nave and aisles, and 250mm in the chancel

and north chapel which was one step higher than the nave. The work was completed by the builders in less than two weeks making it possible only to watch the work.

In the nave and aisles apart from occasional glimpses of the medieval earth floor and a small pit containing lead waste at the rear of the S.aisle, little of significance was noted.

In the chancel and north chapel six brick-built vaults were encountered although undoubtedly other, deeper, ones were not located. Three of the vaults were examined and photographed through small holes. One of them was particularly long (over 4 metres) but only 0.90 metres wide. It contained at least three collapsed coffins. A large vault near the centre of the chancel had to have its vaulted roof removed and a new concrete slab cast. The vault was 2.20m x 1.60m and contained but a single coffin (though it had obviously been designed to take at least two). It was covered with cloth ornamented with brassed plaques and studs and contained an inner less substantial coffin. It was not possible to identify the occupants of any of the vaults with certainty but they are all thought to have been buried in the 18th century. The brick base of an early 18th century altar tomb to Browne Willis's wife Catherine was found in the north-east corner of the north chapel where it had been resited about 1916.

On the south side of the chancel one small area of Medieval floor tile impressions survived. A number of unstratified

tiles were found including Little Brickhill, 'Wessex type' stabbed series and inscribed fragments with brown lettering.

Future work at the church will include the construction of toilet and kitchen facilities necessitating the excavation of at least one trench across the graveyard.

Guildhall, Fenny Stratford

Only two kilometres east, at Fenny Stratford, one of the few surviving timber-framed medieval guild houses is currently being converted to offices. The building had for some time been used as the workshops and offices of the sugar refining firm of Valentin, Ord & Nagle. It had however been allowed to decay somewhat and much of the interior had been 'modernised'.

Restoration work has so far entailed the removal of the ceilings and several of the wall linings. Eventually all the later wall linings and partititons will be removed to expose the whole medieval building. Brian Giggins has started recording the newly-exposed information and writes

'Further investigation of the most northerly of the three surviving late fifteenth/early Tudor timber-framed buildings of the Guild of St Margaret & St Katherine in Fenny Stratford has emphasized that the buildings underwent considerable alterations during the 'Jacobethan' period, when they were incorporated into the 'Bull Inn. Initially this building stood apart from the other two

Guild buildings and comprised a building at least three bays jettied on the north side which fronted the High (or Watling) Street. The ground floor of this building was over 3.6 metres high and had large knee-braces running from the sill plates to the main post. At first floor level was a hall/reception room of at least two bays with a heavily cranked and braced tie-beamed roof truss.

During the second phase of this building, circa 1600, the front was completely demolished and rebuilt with the exception of the end bay. The new construction was also timber framed and incorporated a narrow bay to accommodate a stone stack with three brick chimneys and at least two additional bays which had a first floor hall with a hammer beam roof truss. Instead of maintaining the same width as the old building the builders constructed the new work 1.2 metres wider and jettied it on both sides. Probably contemporary with this work was the construction of a south wing of two bays which closed the gap between this building and the five bay central building. By doing this the builders created an enclosed courtyard.

The third discernable stage was when a carriage entrance was chopped through the rebuilt front building to create easier access to the courtyard. The date of this work is not known but it involved framing either side of the chimney stack to create a new east wall for the end room. This gateway survived until the main building of the Bull Inn was rebuilt in 1939'.

Other Sites and Finds

At Woughton-on the-Green a short watching brief by R A Croft was carried out of some fencing work at Lodge Cottage within the scheduled area, and the demolition of the outbuildings of Green Farm on the north side of the green. The fencing revealed evidence of a possible medieval yard surface.

R A Croft and R J Williams also visited a site near Linford Wood (SP40308533) first reported last year. Part of the field had been stripped in preparation for a small factory unit. A number of small curving ditches were noted and several sherds of Roman pottery picked up, but the stripping had almost entirely destroyed the features.

To the north of Milton Keynes at the ARC Wildfowl Sanctuary (in Stantonbury parish) a large protective dyke dug around the northern perimeter between the lakes and the River Ouse was carefully examined. Along most of its length the dyke was less than 100 metres from the south bank of the river and dug through the flood deposits to a depth of 3 metres. A medieval or post-medieval trackway was visible in section and showed on the field as a slight hollow. A narrow trench at SP8304322 dug between a lake and the dyke as a balancing sluice revealed a quantity of stone covering an area 5 metres across at a depth of 2m - 2.5m. A fragment of Roman tegula and a sub-floor tile were also found in the stone layer. A large piece of squared jointed timber 700mm x 200mm x 150mm was found in the spoil from the trench. The possible timber

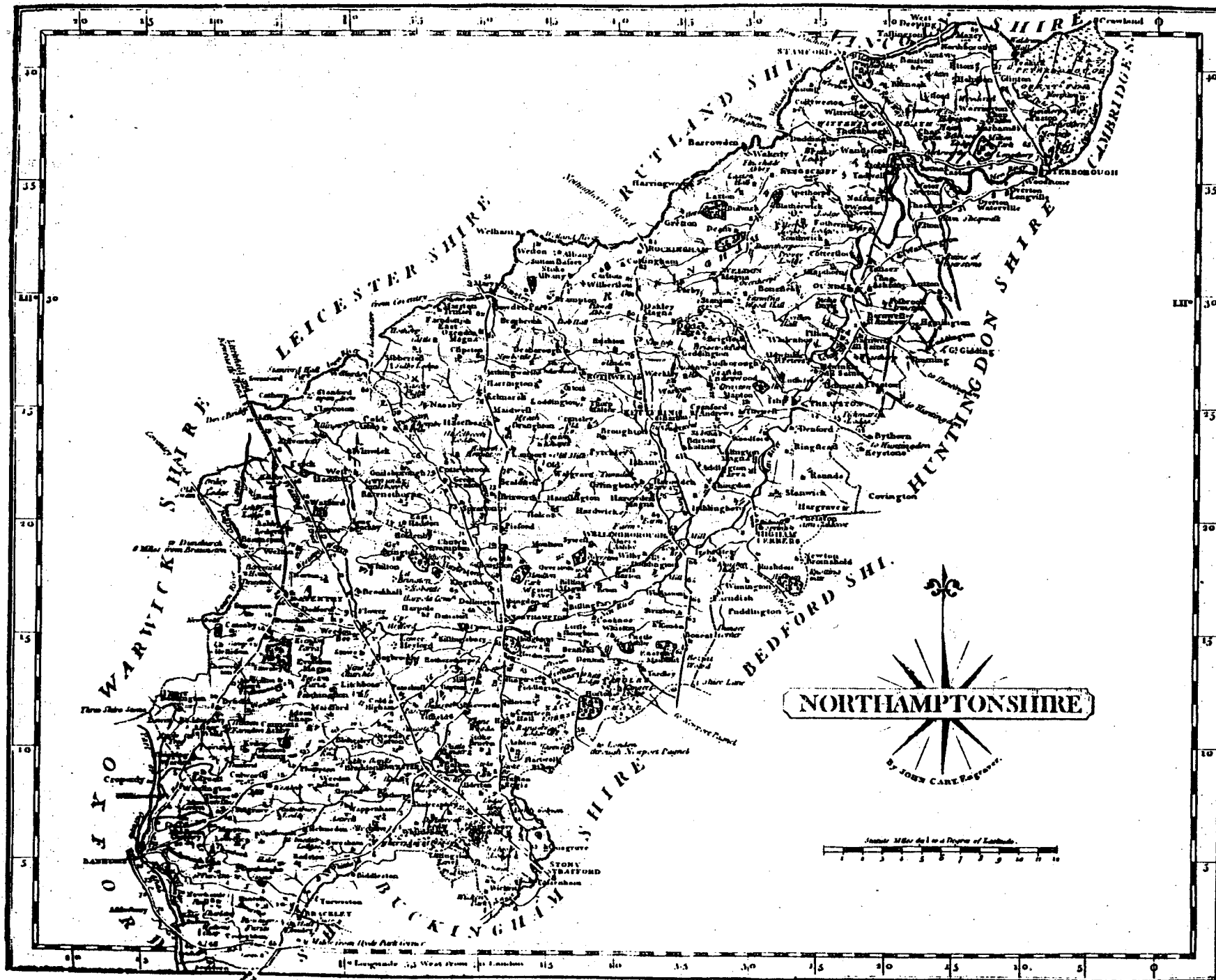
and stone revetment sealed beneath 2 metres of river silt could be the remains of a Roman riverside structure or bridge associated with the nearby Stanton Low Roman settlement. It is hoped to have the timber dated by dendrochronology.

On the eastern side of the Wildfowl Sanctuary, Mr J Coulson found four 2nd-4th century Roman bronze coins, a copper alloy medieval buckle and a bone flute. The bone flute is 144mm long and made from an ovicaprid metapodial with six finger holes and a thumb hole. The fiddle is missing but using a piece of plasticine it is possible to produce a few notes. The flute is unstratified but is of medieval type.

Recent metal detector finds of note are a Saxon brooch and a fragment of Medieval spur found at Old Wolverton and donated to the unit by the finder, Mr Smith of Wolverton. The Saxon brooch had been broken in antiquity and only about one quarter was found. It is of a disc brooch of cast copper alloy, 45mm in diameter, with gilding on the decorative upper side. The brooch would originally have contained four wedge-shaped inlaid garnets alternating with smaller rectangular garnet panels around a central circular inlay. The infill consists of panels of recumbent Salins style 1 animal ornament. This brooch is the first of its type to be found in Milton Keynes and further confirms the existence of Saxon settlement at Wolverton.

Perhaps the two most intriguing finds reported from the New City this year have been a stone axe hammer and a bronze palstave. The Bronze Age palstave was found by Mr Adrian Chiarello in his garden at Shenley Brook End. it is 169mm long and 67mm wide and is of the unlooped low flange type with a central rib below the stop ridge. Unfortunately the garden had had some topsoil spread over it some years ago from an unspecified location and it is thought that the palstave originated from this soil. The palstave has now been acquired by the Buckinghamshire County Museum.

Mr Edward Legg of Bletchley Archaeological Society recently donated a stone axe hammer to Stacey Hill Rural Life collection. The axe hammer was brought to the writer's attention and identified as a Roe type 1 Early Bronze Age axe hammer, 220mm long without an expanded blade. Three others are known from Buckinghamshire but are otherwise very rare in this region. Mr Legg obtained the axe hammer from the late Mr Bernard Kettle some years ago and thinks it was found abroad. Axe hammers are of course of continental origin but Mr Kettle was also a local amateur archaeologist. Until the axe has been petrologically examined there must be some doubt concerning its origin.



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

I Northamptonshire County Council Archaeology Unit

Introduction

Archaeological survey, rescue excavation, and post excavation continued throughout the year and several projects are reported on here. A number of significant developments in Northamptonshire archaeology took place in 1984: the Archaeology Unit of the Northampton Development Corporation ceased operating in Northampton with the demise of the Corporation and there was a gradual transfer of the responsibility for archaeology in the county town to the County Council; the Northamptonshire Archaeological Archive commenced accessioning finds and records; and proposals were made to HBMC for an Area Project at Raunds and in neighbouring parishes.

M1-A1 Link Road-Field Survey

The desire of successive Governments to improve road communications between the Midlands and the East Coast ports has been focused on the construction of a major new road linking the M1 and the A1. The route preferred by the Department of Transport (DTp), which is the subject of a current Public Inquiry, runs from Catthorpe (Leics) across Northamptonshire to Brampton (Cambs) and provides a by-pass for Kettering. Several strategic alternative routes have been proposed by objectors, particularly in favour of bypasses along the A427 and A6.

DTp has supplied the County Council Archaeology Unit with funds for field survey and evaluation and a programme of fieldwork was begun by Richard Barcham in 1983-4. A note on this work was submitted to the Editor for inclusion in South Midlands Archaeology 14 but it was not published. The aim of the first season of fieldwork was to identify new concentrations of artefactual material on the preferred route and to collect more information on those sites already recognised from the air and from earlier fieldwork which might be affected by the construction of the road. The existence of several hitherto unknown areas of high artefact density, represented in the main by scatters of worked flint and of Romano-British pottery, was thus demonstrated. A report on the archaeological characteristics of the preferred and alternative routes was submitted to DTp in May 1984.

A second season of fieldwork is presently being undertaken. This is centred on a study area of c 900 hectares between Naseby and Kelmarsh which incorporates part of the lower Ise valley and exhibits considerable geological and topographic variation. Most of the arable fields in the study area have been walked with the intention of providing a correlative landscape context for known sites which are potentially at risk from the road development. In addition to this spatially confined survey which has extended beyond the limits of the road corridor, fieldwalking is also being carried out in archaeologically sensitive areas at selected points along the course of the preferred route.

An application for the funding of trial excavations at some sites which would be threatened if the preferred route were to be adopted has been made to the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission.

Richard Barcham

Ashton, Nr. Oundle

Further rescue-excavation in advance of road-construction at the site of the Roman 'small town' added a further 64 graves to the total of 114 recorded previously from a late-Roman inhumation cemetery (cf. Britannia XV (1984), p.300 with plan). One burial was accompanied by a composite double-sided bone comb of fourth century type and other material of a contemporary date was present in the earth which filled several graves. The disturbed remains of another 2 burials occurred in a quarry that had extended across part of the cemetery at a later date. Elsewhere the continuation of several known elements of the Roman settlement were traced.

Brian Dix

Roman

Wollaston (SP90276251): salvage excavations were conducted for the County Surveyor, Northamptonshire County Council, on a complex of features uncovered during machine stripping along the course of the Wollaston Bypass. The complex lay across a spur of higher ground on the edge of the River Nene's flood plain, extending 110m N-S along the 40m wide road corridor, and on the western edge of an area of known Romano-British settlement.

A pit alignment and a linear ditch, both undated, had preceded the Romano-British settlement. Two lengths of ditch, in places nearly 2m deep, crossed the road cutting but appeared to define the north-western corner of a rectangular enclosure with dimensions in excess of 80m NW-SE, and 55m SW-NE. Within these limits lay an undated circular gully, a number of subsidiary lengths of ditch contemporary with the main enclosure, a T-shaped corn drying oven and a bath house suite. While a few pits and a small oven were also recognised many other smaller features were probably lost or unrecognised. The ditches produced pottery ranging in date from the 2nd to the 4th centuries, with the final infillings containing quantities of dumped building materials. Only the north-western end of the bath house suite lay within the road corridor and comprised mostly of a sunken floored furnace room and the corner of a hot room. While the walls of the furnace room survived below subsoil level the walls of the hot room had been completely robbed; but an area of opus signinum floor defined the position of a plunge bath. Both rooms were infilled with building debris and the fragments of painted wall plaster suggested a decorative scheme of panels outlined by frameworks of stripes and lines. While dating evidence was sparse a 3rd or 4th century date is likely.

The upper infilling of the Romano-British ditches also contained a scatter of early Anglo Saxon pottery and a sunken-featured building, measuring 5m x 4m, immediately outside the Romano-British enclosure produced a quantity of late 6th - early 7th century pottery. The sunken-featured building lay alongside a shallow linear ditch, possibly of Saxon date, while a nearby scatter of post holes may have been associated with post built structures.

Andrew Chapman and Dennis Jackson

Towcester, Allens Yard (SP69204860)

A watching brief and limited excavation was carried out during the construction of a supermarket and six shops. The area formed part of the south-west quarter of the Roman and Medieval towns.

The Roman road to Alchester was observed on roughly the same alignment as that noted in Part Street and in the Roman suburbs. (For earlier work see Northants Arch 15 (1980), 35ff and 18 (1983), 43ff). Two other Roman roads were also located and associated with the street pattern were a number of structures. The earliest phase of activity was represented by a series of isolated post holes which could not be ascribed a function. These were replaced by late first to second century buildings, some of which contained hearths and other industrial features. A concrete-lined water channel, some 1.4m high and 0.7m wide was found. This structure has been provisionally dated to the late first century AD. A cistern and associated drains were also briefly examined. The cistern was oval in plan and may originally have been stone-lined. The cistern was filled with waterlogged organic material from which it is hoped to determine the original function.

Four ditches, which are provisionally dated to the mid-tenth century, were found. They could relate to the reoccupation of the town by Edward the Elder.

S. Parry and C. Woodfield

Raunds, Furnells and Raunds, Langham Road

Post excavation analysis has continued throughout 1984 on the 6th to 16th century occupation sequence revealed during the 1977-82 excavations. Publication of the main site of Furnells as well as the results of a number of smaller related excavations which have taken place since the close of the main site is envisaged in the late 1980's. The final report will be in three volumes. Volume I will be concerned with the stratigraphic sequence and structures, volume II with the church and cemetery and volume III with the finds. Volume III will be published first.

Excavations were conducted by M. Audouy during 1984 on a site (Raunds, Langham Road) located c 100 metres to the south of the Furnells site. Timber post structures and other features were identified along with a quantity of Ipswich ware pottery. The extent of this occupation and its date range is still being investigated but some at least, of the timber structures would appear contemporary with the 6th and early 7th century structures excavated at Furnells.

The evidence obtained from the Raunds excavation and the realisation that the area contains other exceptionally well preserved sites of Medieval, Saxon and possibly Roman and Prehistoric date has led the NCC Archaeology Unit to propose that a major investigative programme called the Raunds Area Project be mounted using a full range of archaeological and documentary techniques. The Furnells and Langham Road sites along with the forthcoming excavations (by CEU) of the nearby Stanwick Roman villa and (by the NCC) the West Cotton DMV, are regarded as being key sites within a programme that will, it is hoped, chart the evolution of the historic landscape and the associated changing land use over a 400 sq. km. area of the middle Nene Valley. Programmes of professional and amateur excavation, fieldwalking, aerial photography and documentary research will be allied to a comprehensive programme of environmental analysis. The objectives will be the study of the Medieval and Saxon administrative hierarchy as represented by manors, churches, peasant settlements and field systems as well as a study exploring the evidence for environmental change in the valley. In addition attempts will be made to view the pattern of the Saxon and Medieval landscapes against that of the Roman and possibly the later prehistoric period, provided these are sufficiently well preserved. Preservation will be the policy for those sites not currently threatened by development although limited research excavation may be provided for.

G. Cadman, A. Boddington and M. Audouy

Commercial Street, Northampton (SP 75296019)

Excavations were undertaken by a team of four people, employed by the Northamptonshire County Council Archaeological Unit, directed by Simon Hardy, on secondment from the Northampton Development Corporation, between the 13th and 29th of August 1984. The work was financed by the HMBC

The site lies in the southern part of the town, outside the area of known Late Saxon occupation but within the Medieval defences. The intention was to investigate the possibility that the site lay within the precinct of the Augustinian Friary, to evaluate the state of preservation of any surviving structures, and to elucidate the environment of the immediate area during the Saxon period.

A north-south trench, 23m long and 3m wide, was cut to a depth of 1.5m through the Post-Medieval overburden and then reduced to a width of 1m and taken down a further 1.5 - 2m, up to 0.5m beneath the standing watertable - as deep as was consistent with site safety. The trench was heavily shored and continually pumped to allow the section to be examined.

Augering established the presence of a gravel, presumably alluvial, underlying the floor of the trench along its entire length and falling steadily to the south. At the north end this was overlain by a sandy clay, also alluvial in character, up to 1m thick. This was cut by a shallow trench, possibly the foundation trench for a timber building, which in turn was overlain by a redeposited alluvial sandy clay and a layer of metalling. This feature and the overlying deposits are probably of late Saxon or early Medieval date.

From 1.5m south of the north end of the trench the site had been terraced down to a depth of 1m, entirely removing the alluvial sandy clay and any archaeological features cut into or overlying it. A series of dark brown and grey loams containing Medieval pottery was subsequently deposited. Away from the terrace-cut these were flat lying and uniform in character. This series of loams were cut by the foundation trenches of three walls apparently associated with the recently demolished Nonconformist Chapel. Two of these walls formed the north and south edges of the trench. All the foundation trenches held substantial stone foundations and one, in addition to a brick relieving arch, had a surviving brick super-structure.

The excavation suggests the presence of late Saxon activity on the site despite the fact that it lay on the contemporary flood plain. The purpose and extent of the Medieval terracing of the site have not been established, though an examination of the pottery recovered might allow closer dating of the terracing and of the rate of accumulation of the overlaying dark soils. Since it is likely that this terracing was cut beneath the contemporary water table there is the possibility that it represents the construction of a pond. No evidence was found for buildings of the Augustinian Friary or any other Medieval structures.

An understanding of the nature of the Late Saxon activity in this area, the extent and purpose of the large Medieval disturbance recorded on this site and the position and state of preservation of any remains of the Augustinian Friary will only be attained by future investigation on adjacent sites as these become available.

Simon Hardy

Southern Approach Road, Northampton (SP75005960)

Excavations were undertaken by a team of four people, employed by the Northamptonshire County Council Archaeological Unit, directed by Simon Hardy, on secondment from the Northampton Development Corporation, between the 30th of August and 7th of September 1984. The work was financed by the HBMC.

The site lies in the valley of the River Nene, on the south bank, opposite the area of the late Saxon town and to the west of the Medieval bridged crossing of the river. The intention was to look for evidence of a causeway, pre-dating the Medieval crossing, continuing the line of the Towcester Road to a forded crossing and thence to Horseshoe Street and Horsemarket, the main north-south road of the Late Saxon town.

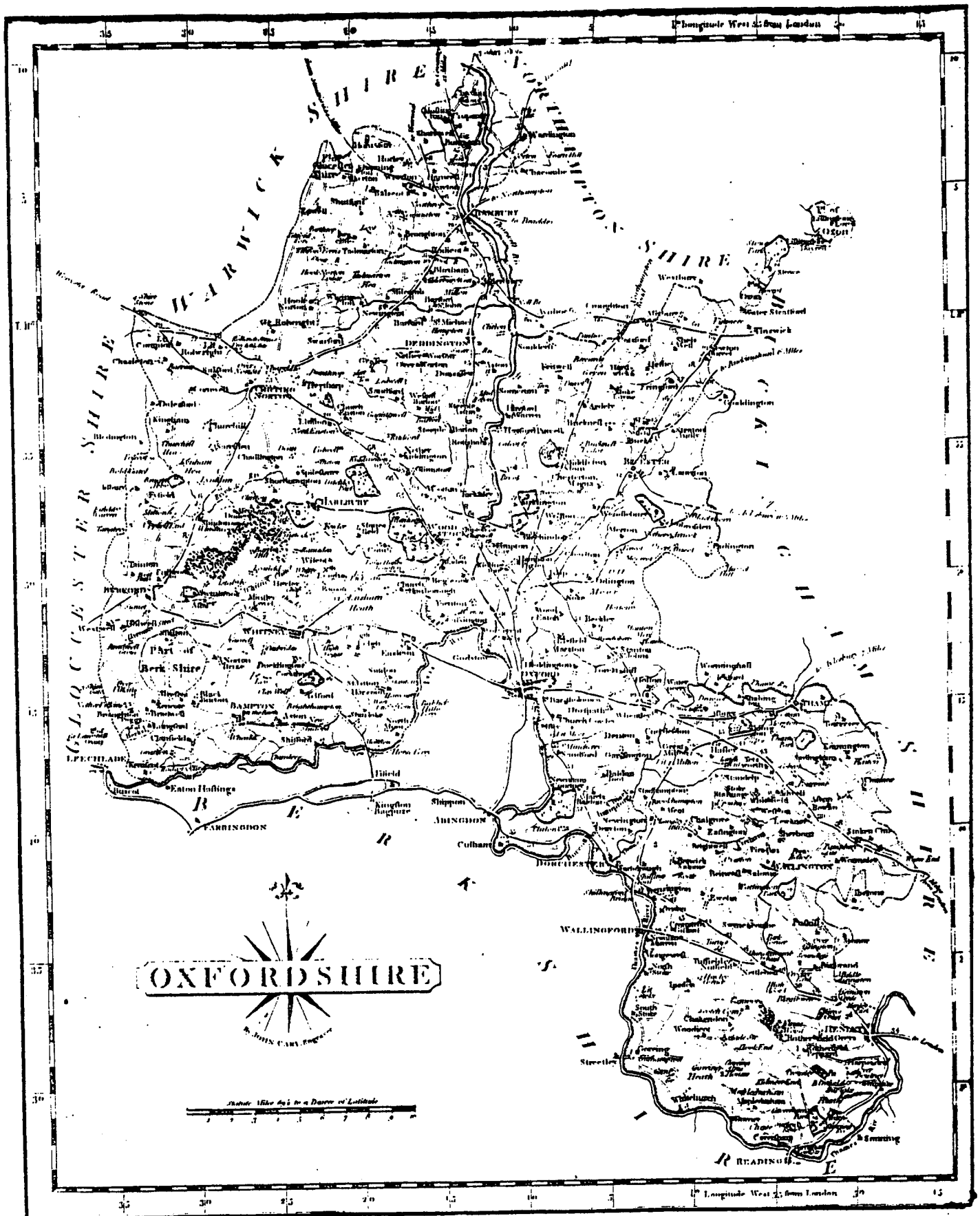
Two parallel lines of overlapping, staggered trenches, 1m wide and up to 2.5mm deep, running east-west, were cut by machine from the eastern most part of the site for a distance of c.250m. Where archaeological features were encountered adjacent areas were stripped of topsoil by machine and then excavated. The extreme instability of the deposits - clays and loams over sand and gravel, with the water-table above the gravel - prevented detailed examination of the machined sections which could only have been made safe by continuous shoring.

No evidence for a causeway, or road surface of any period was discovered. A number of ditches with rounded profiles, running north-south and filled with grey silts, were discovered. These may have been either drainage ditches or field boundaries. The existence of a ditch of this type, re-cut at least twice, beneath a hedge on an extant field boundary, lends support to the latter hypothesis. Pottery, of 12th - 13th century was recovered from one of the ditches.

A rough rubble spread near the postulated line of the causeway was investigated but was found to be too insubstantial and illdefined to constitute a road surface. A large quantity of 14th and 15th century pottery was recovered from within the rubble and from its surface. This assemblage is not typical of contemporary ones from the Medieval town (pers comm. W.W. Denham). Only two sherds of Saxon pottery were recovered from the site and these were both from the top-soil.

In the absence of definite information on the height of the water-table in the Saxon period it is possible that, although on the flood plain of the river, the site was not unduly wet nor the surface soft and that any roadway did not need substantial causeway structures at this point. Less substantial remains of a crossing may not have survived any disturbance of the area during the construction of the adjacent canal and railway.

Simon Hardy



OXFORDSHIRE

I South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group

Park Field, Newington.

The South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group continued to work throughout the year at this medieval site. A new trench was opened on what appears to be a large platform, and a cobbled yard with a rich scatter of 13th - 15th century pottery, bones and a number of nails and pieces of slag, suggesting a working area, were found, together with a medieval horseshoe. Another interesting find was a large key and part of another; and large amounts of limestones and tile point to possible buildings.

The trench was extended 3 times to get a clearer picture of the area and we hope to open up more as soon as the weather permits, so as to follow up interesting features such as a gully which may be a beam-slot and some limestone arranged in a pattern.

We would like to thank our host, SOAG member Chris Maltin of Newington House who has given us every sort of help and facility including a Site Hut.

Great Bowling Field, Newington

Last year a very rich scatter of medieval pot, etc. was noticed by 3 SOAG members in this field, so at the beginning of October when the field was available, we got permission to intensive fieldwalk it.

The field was laid out in 10m. squares, gridded to the O.S., and finds from each square bagged and numbered. By November 10th we had walked 512 squares, with a selection of pot, bones, tiles and brick and metalware (including medieval horse-and ox-shoes), in almost every square. As the weather was now very wet and the corn up, we started pot-washing and processing and have continued every Tuesday throughout the winter. Some members are also doing research on the historical side of both sites.

C.A. Graham Kerr

II. OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL DEPARTMENT OF MUSEUM SERVICES

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

STAFFING

The Section has continued to benefit from the part-time work of Elizabeth Leggatt who has been engaged in cataloguing and indexing recent work in Oxfordshire. During the year we have welcomed Martin Foreman, Leigh Turner, Simon Smithson and Beverley Garrett who have each spent three months in the Museum as part of their training under the O.U.D.E.S. Archaeological In-Service Scheme.

SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

The addition of new information to the County Sites and Monuments Record continues and the number of archaeological sites and buildings indexed within the Record now stands at over 13,650. Among valuable acquisitions and donations are a collection of farm sale catalogues received from Nancy Stebbing, batches of lists and photographs from the Historic Buildings re-survey, S.P.A.B. Barns Survey material from Derek Elliott of Watlington, reports on farm buildings from Henley Archaeological and Historical Group's Vernacular Buildings section, 42 aerial photographs taken by Glenn Ford of Northants C.C. Archaeology Unit which has resulted in the identification of 21 previously unknown sites, and air photographs from the Astral air survey of 1981 for West Oxon and Cherwell District. A large collection of field name surveys has been received and transcribed for the following parishes : Barford St John, Barford St Michael, Horley, Elsfield, Islip, Marston, Noke, Wolvercote, Woodeaton, Aston Upthorpe, Aston Tirrold and parts of East Challow, Letcombe Regis, West Hanney and Yarnton. Our thanks are due to all those who have taken part in this project. A number of meetings have been held to discuss computerisation of the record, visits have been made to Northampton and Bedford to enquire into the progress of computerisation in those counties.

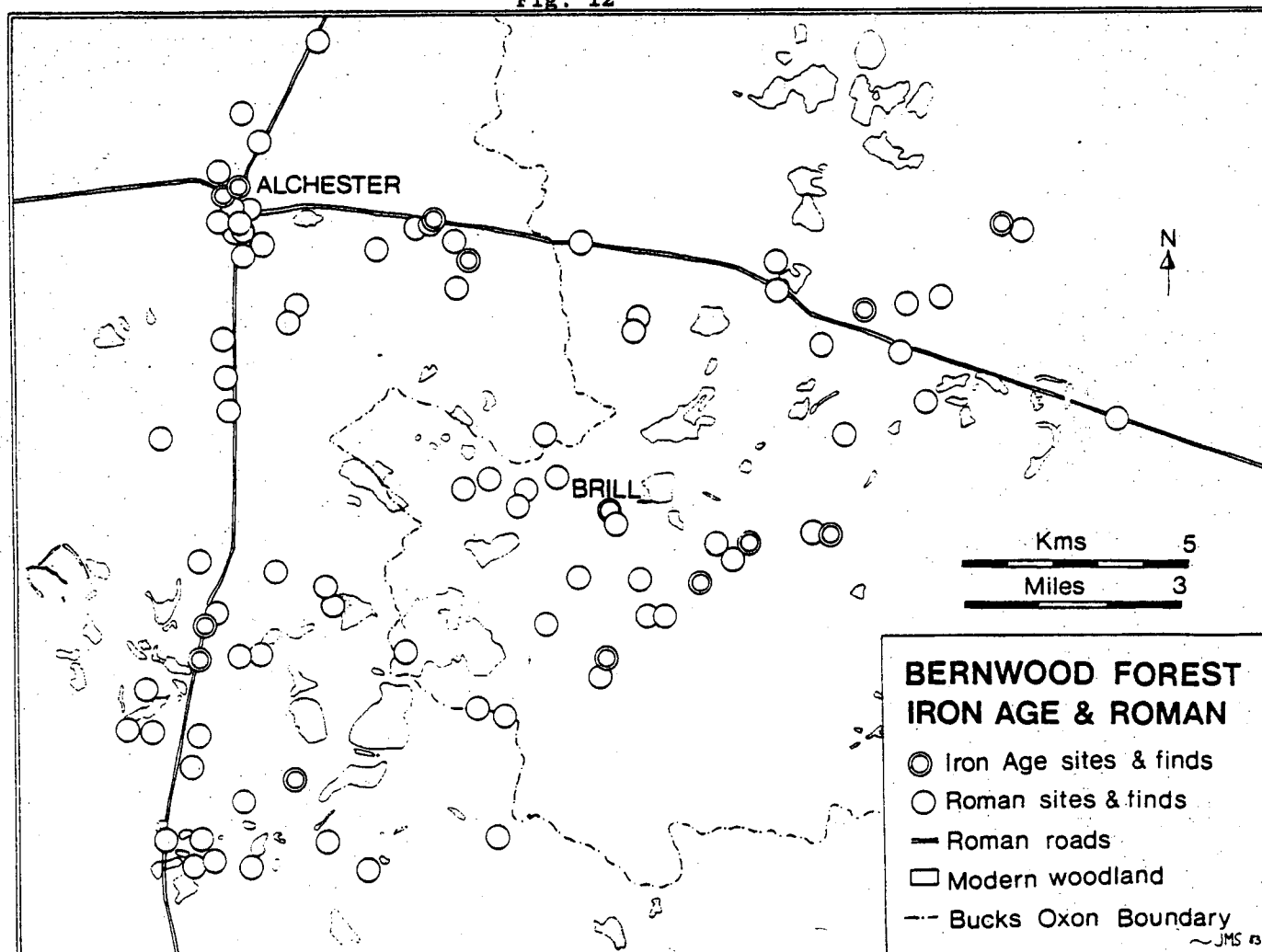
PLANNING MATTERS

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) ROMANO-BRITISH FINDS

A survey of Romano-British sites and finds recorded in the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire county museums was carried out during a study made of "Bernwood Forest, Past, Present and Future" (*Arboricultural Journal*, Vol 9, No 1, Feb 1985, 41). The finds have not as yet been dated accurately so that the map provides an unrealistically static picture with material spread over 400 years. Many of the find spots are simply scatters of Roman pottery and may be no more significant than indicating areas of cultivation. Akeman Street straddled the forest in its northern half and sixteen of the sites mapped are within a mile either side of its course. What the map does indicate is the degree of Romano-British penetration of the Bernwood Forest area. It is possible that the thick density of Roman material in the south represents the activities of the potters in the area to the east and north-east of Oxford seeking coppice underwood to burn in their kilns. It is questionable whether the degree of Roman agricultural exploitation suggested by the finds in Bernwood Forest continued into the Saxon period. It is more likely that there was a substantial regeneration of secondary woodland after the collapse of the Roman economy. This appears to have happened in other areas of the Midlands. In Rockingham Forest, Northamptonshire, for instance, there was a similar pattern of dense Romano-British occupation, with farms every half mile or so but with a subsequent reversion to woodland in the Saxon period so there was a need for a genuine assarting movement in the Early Middle Ages. (Taylor C.C. "Roman Settlements in the Nene Valley : the impact of recent archaeology" in Fowler P.J. (Ed) Recent Work in Rural Archaeology, Bradford-on-Avon 1973).

Fig. 12



3) BUILDINGS-MEDIEVAL

CHALGROVE. Manor Farm House. (PRN 11338) - John Steane, Ahmed Shishtawi.

A survey of 1336 mentioned medieval buildings but although three small scale watching briefs have been carried out on the site so far no evidence of earlier occupation or buildings have been found (Oxford Archaeological Unit Newsletter, vol x, 2, Juner 1983, 3, and vol x, 4 Dec 1983, 3). The present house was built or rebuilt in the 15th century and consisted of a ground floor hall open to the roof with two wings to north and south.

1. The hall has a dwarf wall of limestone rubble with large framing. Here the framing is left as open as possible with only a few subsidiary vertical divisions - decorated or strengthened with braces (E. Mercer English Vernacular Building, London, 1975, 115). There is evidence for a range of windows originally lighting the hall in the upper level : the sill with diamond shaped slots for the mullions can be seen. Traces of former porch or porches can be seen in multiple slots in the part to the left of the entrance. Also there was one large window from ground to eaves level to the south. The original roof was very handsome and remains above ceiling level above the inserted floor. It consists of five bays of principal rafters, cambered moulded collars, arch braced (with concave chamfer), two pairs of moulded purlins per bay and two sets of windbraces, concave and set close together. There are clear traces of the former existence of a louvre. Slots are cut in the rafters of the centre of the five bays to receive the four posts and there are stains on the principal rafters on either side where the superstructure of the louvre went; peg holes are also to be seen. The timbers of the roof are smoke blackened but have also been cleaned.

2. The entrance is through a cross passage. The original screen was uncovered under lathe and plaster during restoration work of 1983. This has a moulded frame with three panels of planks joined by tongue and groove. In between e-ch panel are miniature buttresses with cusped panels, (see Ayres J. The Home in Britain, London 1981, 68-70). There was one doorway into the hall at the west end of the screen's passage. The screen was being expertly restored at the time of our visit.

3. The two wings are probably contemporary with the hall but the left hand (Southern) one has been reconstructed probably when the main chimney stack was inserted. This involved altering the roof which was heightened at the south end of the hall. The southern wing has one earlier and lower truss with a cambered collar embedded in the loftier and later structure. This consists of three bays - principal rafters - two sets of purlins. The timbering is of a slighter scantling than the hall and south wing. There is close studding and a moulded bressumer to the overhanging first floor.

4. The northern wing is largely early 15th century in date. The roof consists of principal rafters - cambered arch braced collars, and two pairs of purlins per bay with pointed concave windbraces. The front gable has a crown post strut and curved braces from the tie beam (c. Watlington, 15 and 17 High Street).

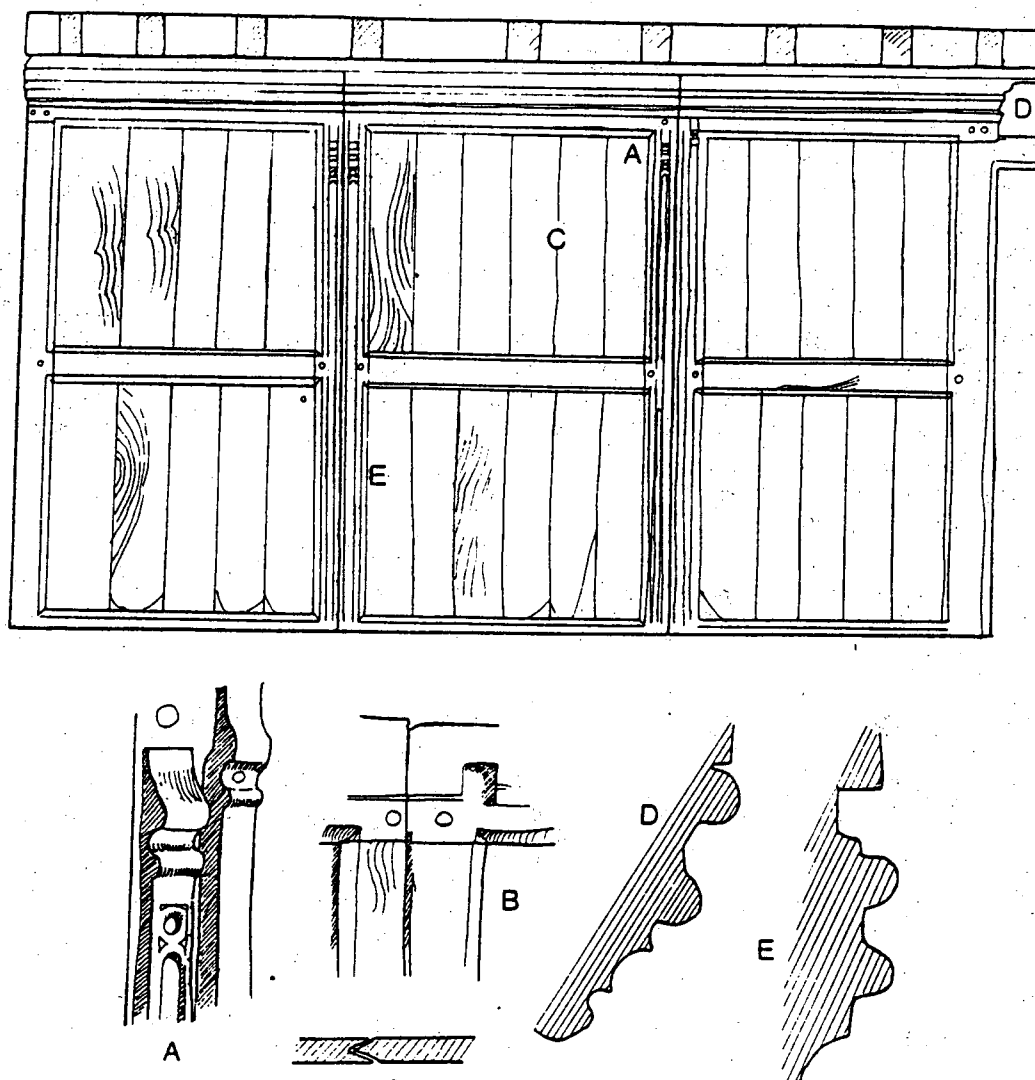
5. The most interesting feature has had a floor inserted in the early 16th century : the principal beam has a very large chamfer with a simple stop. Also the stone chimney stack with fireplace with stone jambs and a timber lintel with four centred arch was inserted. There is a brick back. The timbers in the rooms upstairs have traces of a bluish silver paint applied to the surface.

6. The interior of the south wing has moulded beams and a system of wall decoration which appears to attempt to represent large panels of timber, brown with graining in dark brown paint, surrounded by framing of lighter buff colour. Dr M. Airs considers this to date from c. 1680.

7. The north wing has five moulded beams and rectangular joints laid flat and close together as one would expect for a 15th century building. The joists are trapped by large horizontal beams. There are traces of red ochre on the beams. The floor boards are very large and each is individually carpentered to fit the next. It is hoped to carry out an intensive recording of this building.

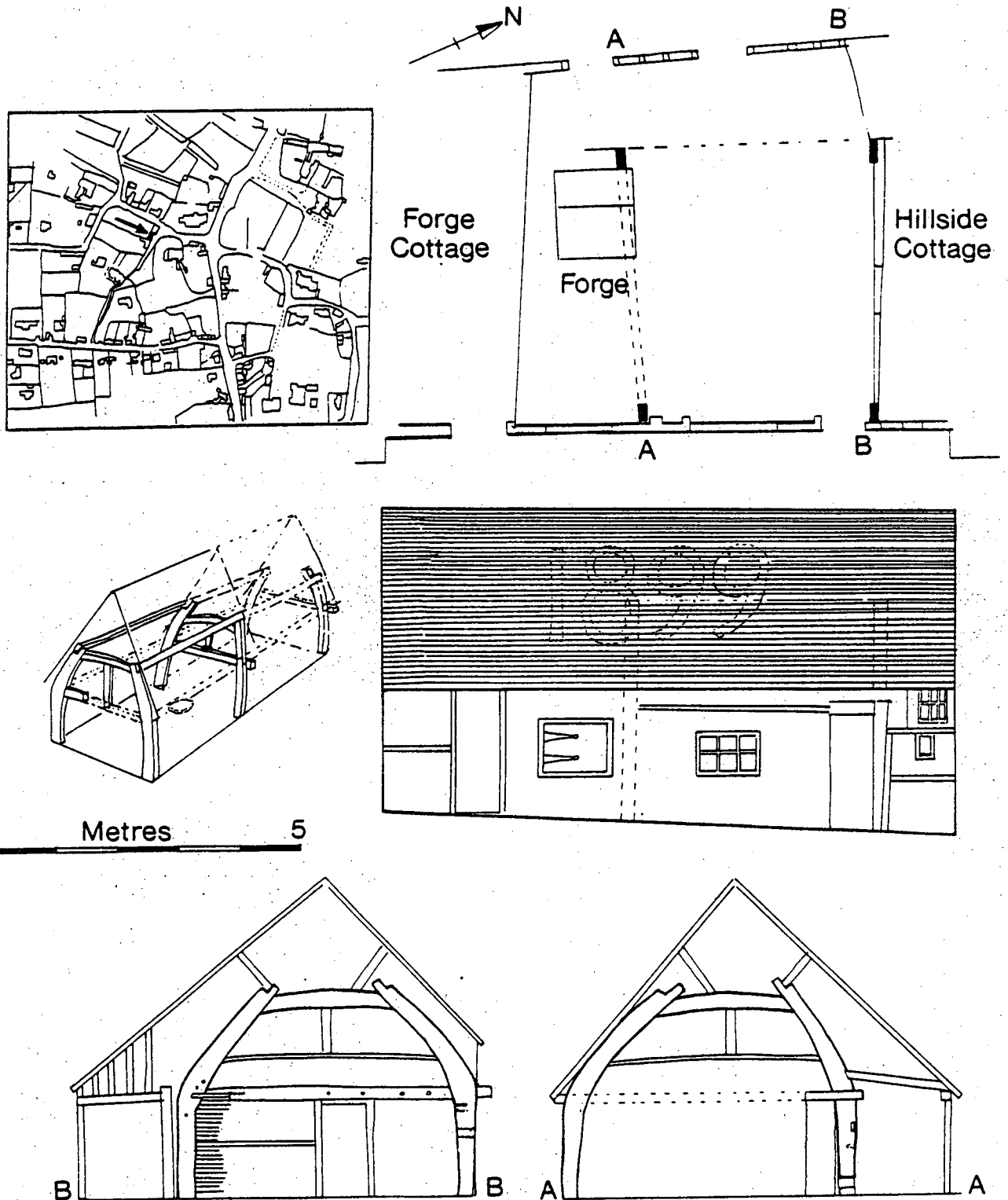
We are indebted to the owners Mr and Mrs Jacques for permission to view the house and to Dr M Airs for drawing our attention to the reconstruction work.

Fig. 13



CHALGROVE. Manor Farm 15th century screen.

Fig. 14



THE OLD FORGE EAST HENDRED OXON PRN 7421

EAST HENDRED. The Old Forge. (PRN 7421 SU 45898859) - John Steane

A field investigation which involved survey and photography was made in August 1984. The Old Forge is a low single storied building standing between two timber framed cottages, both dating to the 16th and 17th centuries named "Hillside" and "Forge Cottages" to the south-west of the church. Externally it could well be dismissed as of 19th century date - the roof tiles bear the date 1899 ingeniously displayed in red tiles on brown. Inside however it is apparent that the basic timber framing is of medieval date. It consists of two cruck trusses, the remains of a medieval house, which terminate above collar level and are notched on the outside top to receive the purlins. They consist of massive curved timbers at their maximum (28 cms x 14 cms). Truss I (the Southernmost) has the remains of a tie beam 13 x 5 cms jointing the two at head level, 160 cms from the ground). This has been cut off to allow the insertion of a brick chimney for the forge. The slot for the other end, 18 x 5 cms, is visible. An interesting feature is a rectangular slot, 12 x 4 cms in the cruck blade below the tie beam which clearly took a horizontal timber or rail, acting as a framework for the walling. The cruck blade at the top tapers to 12 x 14 cms. The collar is cambered and there is one stud in the centre which originally jointed into the tie beam. It would appear that the southern face of this truss was originally the outer surface because the timbers are heavily weathered. The crucks show signs of being pit sawn from either end. Truss II (the northernmost of the two) consists of two similarly massive timbers but they are joined at head level by a complete tie beam which is jointed in with shallow joist mortices. The tie beam projects to form a spur at the south east corner. There are a number of auger holes in the tie beam suggesting that there have been lengths of dowelling inserted perhaps to hang harness on when the building was a forge. The collar beam is cambered and smoke blackened on the northern side suggesting that an open fireplace may have been situated underneath it when the building was serving as a dwelling. The area between the collar and the tie beam is occupied by a piece of wattle and daub which is smoothly plastered on the southern side but left roughly wattled on the northern.

The medieval building may be interpreted as having originally been a house of at least two and possibly three bays (this problem is dealt with by Fletcher J. M. 'Crucks in West Berkshire and Oxford Region' Oxoniensia, xxxl, 1968, p. 83. Such a house would have possibly had a living end open to the roof with the open fire and a lofted bay (the remains of the partition have been noted) where the upper floor would have been used for storage or sleeping. The date, it is suggested, is early to mid 14th century (Fletcher J. M. op cit p. 85-86).

During the 16th to 17th century a good deal of infilling took place at East Hendred as the population of the village increased. Timber framed houses were erected to north and south of 'The Old Forge' and either destroyed the southernmost bays or incorporated them into 'Hillside Cottage'. In the late 19th century 'The Old Forge' was converted into a smithy, being equipped with a chimney and a forge. The brick size is 23 x 12 x 6 cms. The building was enlarged by adding an outshut on the western side and was reroofed in tiled (in 1899). Mr Castle, the present tenant, recalls that Mr Harrison the smith, used to shoe up to sixty horses a day. The firm moved to another smithy a little to the north.

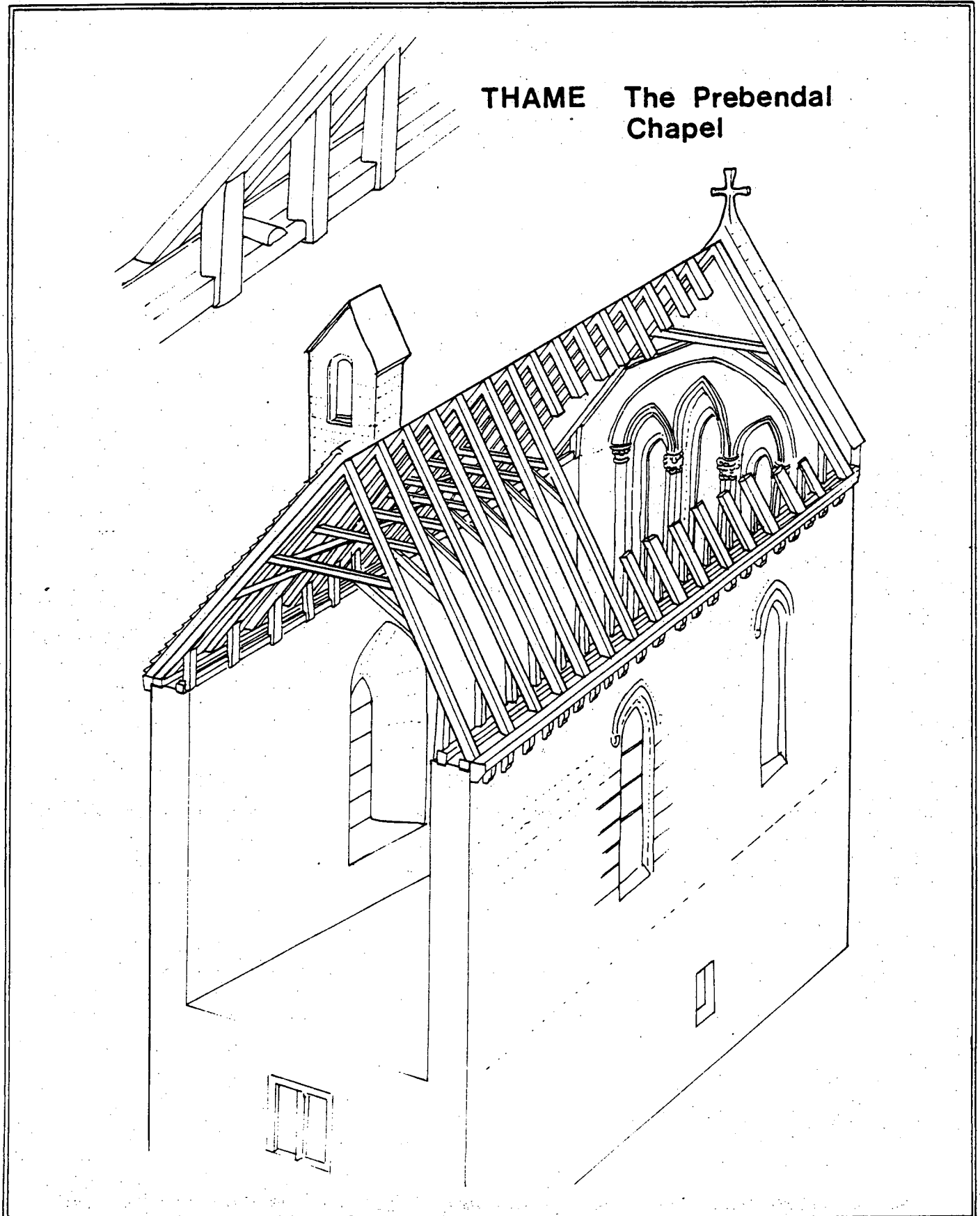
Our thanks to Mr and Mrs Castle for allowing access to us while recording.

During February 1985 development to build a new HQ for Henley Regatta on the site of the old 'Carpenters Arms' at the south-eastern corner of Henley-on-Thames bridge, revealed some interesting remains of the medieval bridge. Access was difficult through an opening only 1.2 metres wide and the standing water had to be pumped out before any recording could take place. It was seen that the present bridge (grade 1 listed building) dating from 1786-9 had been built up against an earlier segmentally shaped arch of limestone ashlar and flint rubble. This consisted of a double ring of limestone voussoirs in two orders on the south side linked by base courses of ashlar and a tunnel vault to a ring of limestone voussoirs on the north side. It was not apparent whether there was a second order on the north side; in any case it was embedded in the structure of the 18th century bridge. The tunnel vault between the arched voussoirs was constructed of large flints set in sandy/gravelly mortar. The width of the vault between the first two rings was 3.38 metres. The second sign of limestone voussoirs was built on the south side with a flint and mortar infill and was an additional 78cms wide. The span of the inner arch was 4.95 metres and the outer ring 5.22 metres. The height from the top of the lower arch to the floor covered in mud and debris was 1.35 metres and from the top of the second and outer arch 1.52 metres.

The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission were notified of the discovery and P. J. Drury identified the structure as being of twelfth century date. An early record of the bridge dates from 1234 (Gelling M. Place Names of Oxfordshire, Cambridge, 1953, i, 75) but it is certainly possible that a bridge was built to accompany the town development taking place in 1179 when it is recorded that Henry II "had bought land in Henley for making buildings (Rodwell K. Historic Towns in Oxfordshire, Oxford, 1974, 125). The earliest representation of Henley bridge which we have found is the painting by Jan Siberechts (1627-1703) a copy of which hangs in Henley town hall - original in V.S. This shows the town in 1698 and the bridge has two semi-circular arches and abutments with cutwaters on the Berkshire side. These are joined to a long timber, vertically piled structure, spanning the river and a single arch on the Oxfordshire side. Judging from the numerous references to timber it seems that the main structure throughout the middle ages was piled in this way like the other major Thames bridges (Rigold S.E. Structural Aspects of Medieval Timber Bridges, Med. Arch. XIX 1975). There seems little doubt that the arch newly discovered is one of the two shown on the Berkshire side.

What is not so certain is whether the arch is as old as Mr Drury claims. He cites the evidence of the shuttering and the diagonal tooling on the stonework as being diagnostic of twelfth century date (personal communication) we know that the bridge was in being by about 1230 when indulgences were granted for its repair (F. Emery, The Oxfordshire Landscape, London 204). Two of the town's most important officials were the Bridgemen and their accounts go back to 1306. There are many references to repairs in Briers P. M. (Ed), Henley Borough Records Assembly Books i-iv, 1395-1543, Oxfordshire Record Society 1960. Of particular interest is the entry of 1498 referring to the making for re-making of two arches of the bridge, 'ad facturam duorum arcium pontis' (p. 121). This of course may refer to the timber bridge rather than the stone arches but the use of 'arcium' does seem to suggest stone rather than timber. Other references to the use of materials such as gravel, sand, limestone in 1531 (p. 199), 1532 (206,210)

Fig. 15



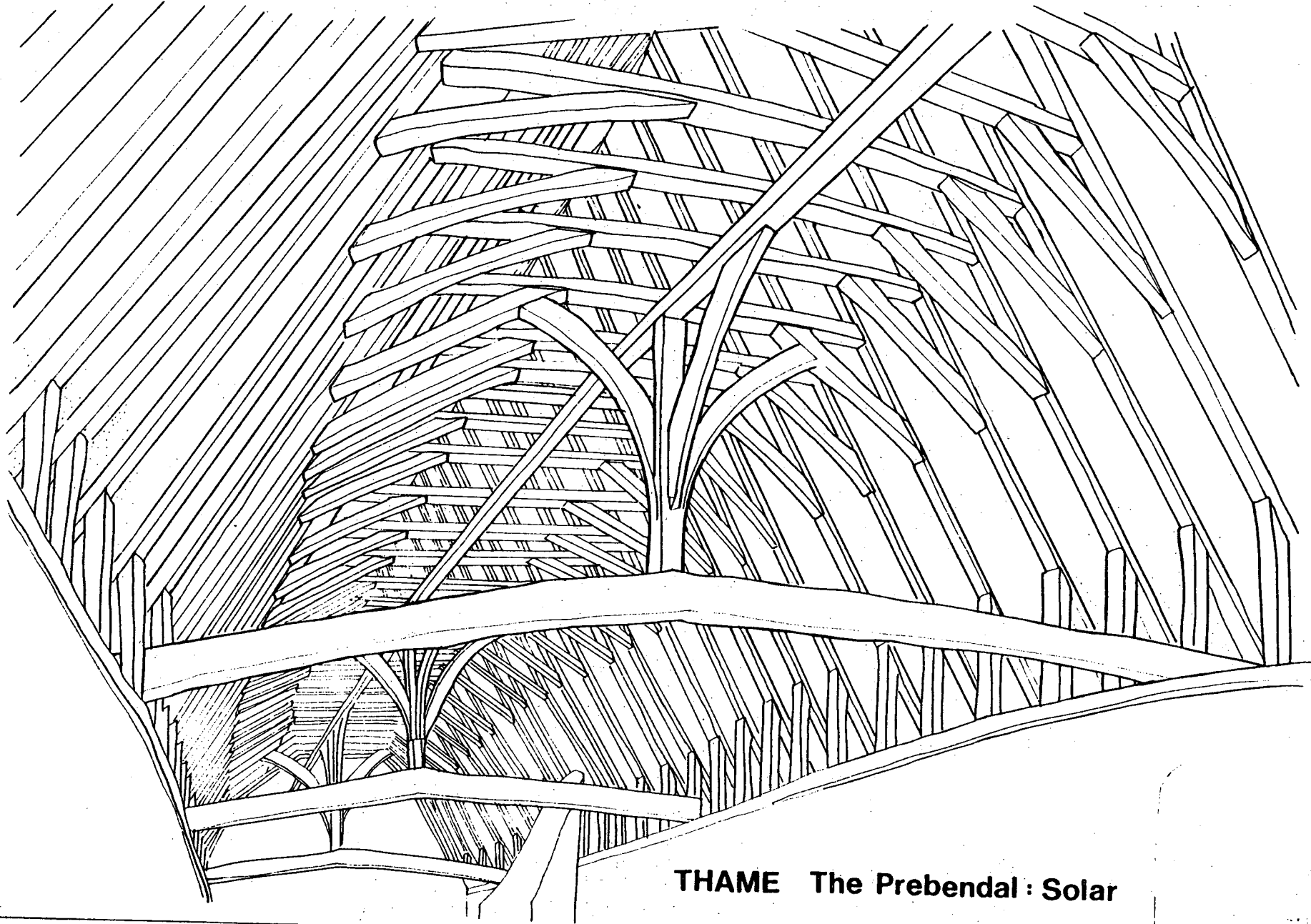
and 1540-1 (p. 226) are not very helpful. B. Durham in Oxford Archaeological Unit Newsletter xii, No 1, March 1985, 2) is also unsure about accepting a twelfth century date uncritically but he puts forward a theory that the bridge was arched along the whole of its length and that the reason why this side arch is segmental is that it was part of a structure whose arches were of a standard radius of curvature. Those in the centre he thinks were fully semicircular; those "on the ramps" were more truncated. It is difficult to accept this when we know from Leland's time onwards that the bridge was basically a wooden structure but it is just possible that the stone foundations on which this wooden bridge was supposed to sit are the remains of a previous completely stone-arched bridge.

Our thanks are due to S. M. Jones Ltd and Henley Regatta for their efforts to preserve the structure.

THAME. The Prebendal (PRN 2808 SP 70200639).

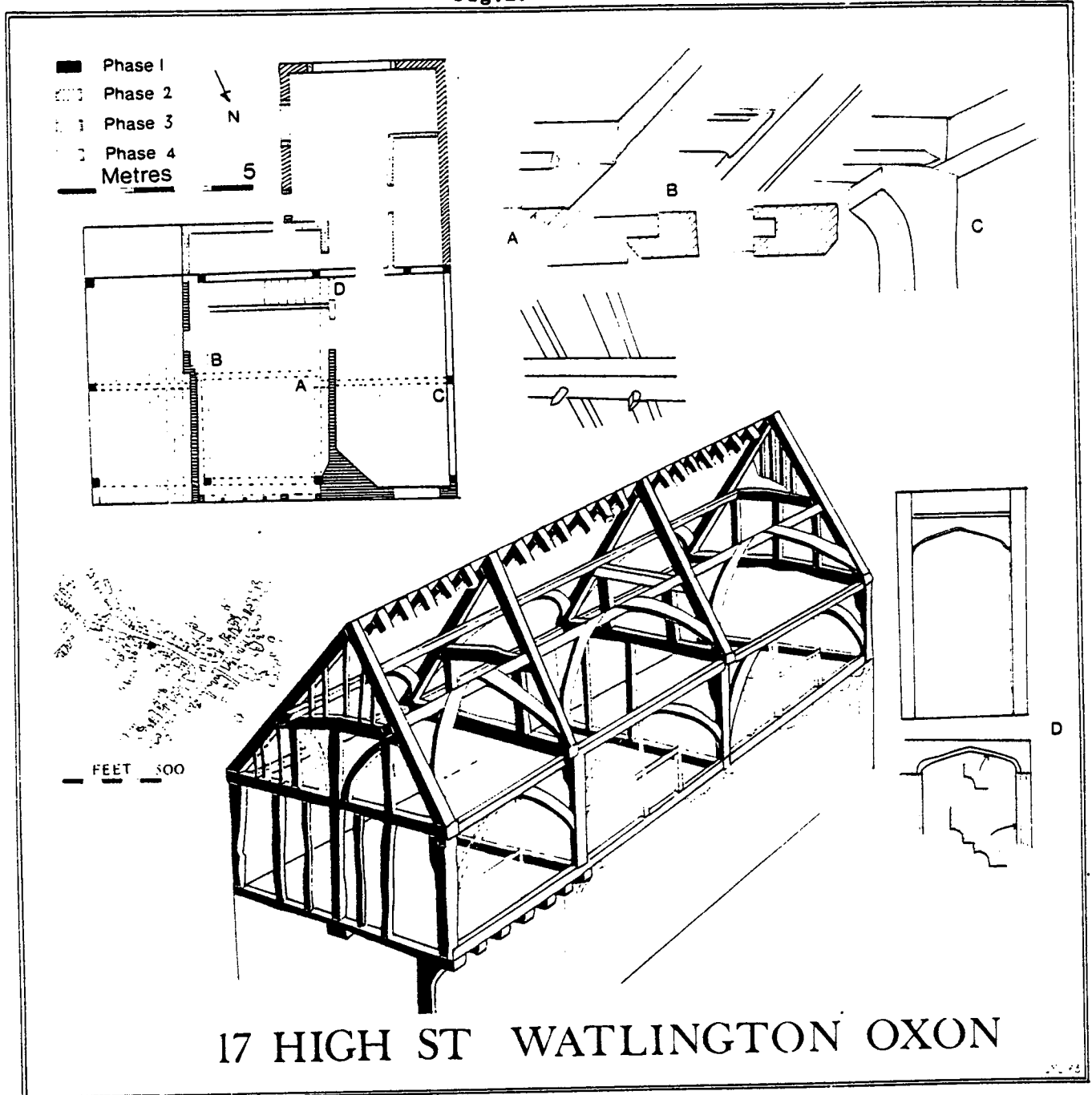
The Prebendal is likely to be the oldest house in the town of Thame and is situated in Priestend at the west end of the High Street. It was probably originally built in about 1140 (Victoria County History of Oxfordshire, vii, 1962, 163) and was moated on three sides with the River Thame on the north. Part of the moat existed until the early 20th century but is now filled in. The 13th century house consisted of hall, solar and chapel, all at first floor level. The earliest reference to the house occurs in 1234 when Ralph de Wareville, canon of Lincoln, received a royal grant of wood for his house at Thame (Cal Cl. R. 1231-4, 490, 492). The hall apparently ran North south with the solar at right angles to it on the west and the chapel projected east from the south-east corner of the hall (Pevsner N. Buildings of England, Oxfordshire, Harmondsworth, 1979, 813). The chapel survives intact. It stands on an undercroft and is lit by one lancet at the west end, two in north and south walls; the east window is more impressive with a triple lancet with moulded rear arches supported by detached shafts and foliated capitals. The whole in Pevsner's words is "one of the most elegant E.E. buildings in the county". The single framed roof of 16 trusses consists of rafters, collars, soulaces and ashlar. A similar roof was noticed at Cogges Priory (Oxoniensia XLVII, 1982) 78. The original hall has disappeared except for its south wall joining the solar and the chapel. In its gable is a large 15th century window. The long south range is the 13th century solar. It was extended most in the 14th century and has a fine 14th century crown post roof. On its south face is a 13th century chimney breast and a window of the same date with two lights divided by an octagonal shaft. A handsome fireplace on the first floor has 14th century jambs of half-quatrefoil section and a modern stone hood. Recording is continuing.

Fig. 16



THAME The Prebendal : Solar

Fig.17



WATLINGTON No 17 High Street. PRN 13,422. A brief account of this interesting medieval town house appeared in South Midlands Archaeology 14, 1984, 75-6.

4) BUILDINGS - POST MEDIEVAL

OXFORD. Magdalen College (PRN 3599 SP 52030615) - John Steane, Stephen Penney

In Summer 1983 the college replaced the hall roof during a programme of restoration and renovation. Thanks to the courtesy and co-operation of the Bursar and the Clerk of Works an investigation was made by J. M. Steane and S. Penney of the present state of the hall and chapel roofs. It appears that there were originally low pitched roofs to both hall and chapel dating to the last quarter of the fifteenth century. Work was in progress in 1474 on the Chapel, Hall and Chambers (Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, City of Oxford, HMSO 1939 69). These roofs figure in an oil painting of the South front of the college dated c. 1650 and also in Loggan's Map of Oxford 'Oxonia Illustrata' 1675. Evidently the roofs were in a bad state by the late 18th century "Feb 3 & 4 - Roof of the Chapel and Hall examined by Piers the carpenter and the timbers (which are of Spanish chestnut) pronounced to be in a more rotten condition than those of New College were. The Chapel and Hall were consequently shut up and it was agreed to use the old Checquer as an oratory for the present and to apply to Wyatt" (Magdalen College Library MS 641 (1). Diary of Richard Paget 1784-94). Wyatt confirmed that the state of the roofs required radical repairs and submitted proposals which involved the total removal of both hall and chapel roofs. He then suggested raising the walls three feet six inches and "put on new oak plates and new roof with oak king post, Fir principles, purloins (sic) and rafters covered with 3/4 Deal boarding and patent slateing, recast and lay the gutters ... to put up 1 1/2 inch Elm bracketing and lath and plaister ceilings and plaister mouldings and flowers as shewn in the model of the chapel ...". The same proposal was made for the hall including elm bracketing and lath and plaster ceiling. The cost including stuccoing the walls came to £3799-5-2. (Particulars of putting on New Roof and Ceiling to Magdalen College, Oxon, Magdalen College library MS 735). Despite considerable opposition to these ideas, they were carried out. J. C. Buckler in 'Observations on the original architecture of St Mary Magdalen College and on the innovations anciently or recently attempted' castigated these improvements of Wyatt. "No individual in modern times has, in pursuance of his own notions of beauty, deformed, defaced and destroyed so many of the stateliest monuments of our national architecture' (p. 103) ... and what has the college to boast of by the change. I answer, the acquisition of a sham stone roof where no architect would dare to rear one of solid materials. The groins answer no substantial purpose whatever and the bosses are as useless as a keystone to a "gothic" arch (p. 104) ... he built more for show than real use. On the present instance he destroyed one timber roof merely to erect another for not so much as an ounce weight depends on the vaulting for support. He proudly declared that he had heightened the room, but what was considered an improvement on the inside, appeared a sad deformity to the outside, where a paltry slate ridge is now elevated above the battlements whose deep embrasures were shortened on all sides and rendered ridiculously small to shelter in part the obtruding roof" (p. 106). The chapel roofs remain largely as Wyatt left them.

The hall roof has been subjected to a series of remodellings during the last two hundred years. A useful source of information is the album presented to the senior common room by R. T. Ganter and now kept in the Old Library. Here there are 72 photographs, some annotated and dated with diagrams and sections relating to the rebuilding of the roof and parts of the college hall at the beginning of the century.

Wyatt's roof to the hall was plaster vaulted with bosses running down the centre. When it was added the walls of the hall had been heightened. The building works of 1903 which involved the removal of Wyatt's work above the hall exposed remains of the fifteenth century roof. Photographs dated 14 July 1903 show part of the west wall after the removal of the plaster and traces of the limit of the original archbrace and the impressions of the cusped tracery and quatrefoils between the arched brace and the tie beam were revealed. Another interesting feature came to light, a perpendicular window, with tracery removed, in the east wall between the hall and chapel. The arched braces of the roof must have met very close to the apex of the east window. Dark blotches on the splay of the window were probably the effect of smoke. Bodley replaced Wyatt's roof with a new oak ceiling with a low pitched roof covered in lead. The college decided to sell the lead and replace it with green mineral felt in 1950. Thirty three years later it was found necessary to replace this steel framing, timber purlins and Cornish slates have been used to reconstruct the latest roof and the idea has been to get the line of the hall and chapel along the same level.

OXFORD MAGDALEN COLLEGE - John Steane, Elizabeth Leggatt

During the dry summer of 1984, a series of parch marks were noted appearing on the surface of the grass north of the New Buildings. Judging from the lines which appeared to represent wall bases and paths there were a series of formal garden layouts in this part of the deer park which is now known as The Grove - These are seen in Loggan's Map of Oxford (Oxonia Illustrata, 1675). In the Old Library there is "a plan of the grounds, the grove, bowling green, meadow and water works, with Holywell Mill drawn in perspective" with a scheme for the New Buildings inset, "almost certainly by Edward Holdsworth, fellow" and presumably dating to the first half of the 18th century. A number of the parch marks appear to link up with features shown on this plan.

STANDLAKE. Lincoln Cottage. (PRN 13706 SP 39830855) - John Steane, Daphne Aylwin

This small house is situated at the north-west end of the village, a hundred metres to the south of the church. It is built parallel to the road and is probably a late medieval piece of infill in a village otherwise of fairly substantial forms.

Phase 1. Late 15th or early 16th century. The present building retains a considerable fragment of a small two bay hall house. The central truss is a raised cruck. The feet of the cruck are embedded in the last metre of the wall tops. The crucks are joined together by a cambered collar and are sawn off near the apex and are yoked by a heavy block of wood flat on the bottom and with a concave curve on either side of the top with a flat centre portion to take the ridge pole. The crucks were formerly additionally attached to the collar by arch-bracing. Slots and peg holes are seen in the lower parts of the cruck feet and in the soffit of the collar. Although such yoked apexes are thought to be a sign of "early" crucks, the archbraces are perhaps more likely to date the carpentry to the late 15th century. The crucks support a pair of clasped purlins which are held between the cruck truss and the collars. They are connected by a pair of windbraces which stiffen the junction. The original thatch - ie. that nearest the crucks was of reed and this is pegged into wide oak riven battens. The crucks, windbraces, purlins, battens, reed thatch and ridgepole are all covered with a thick sooty smoke blackening. This indicates that the

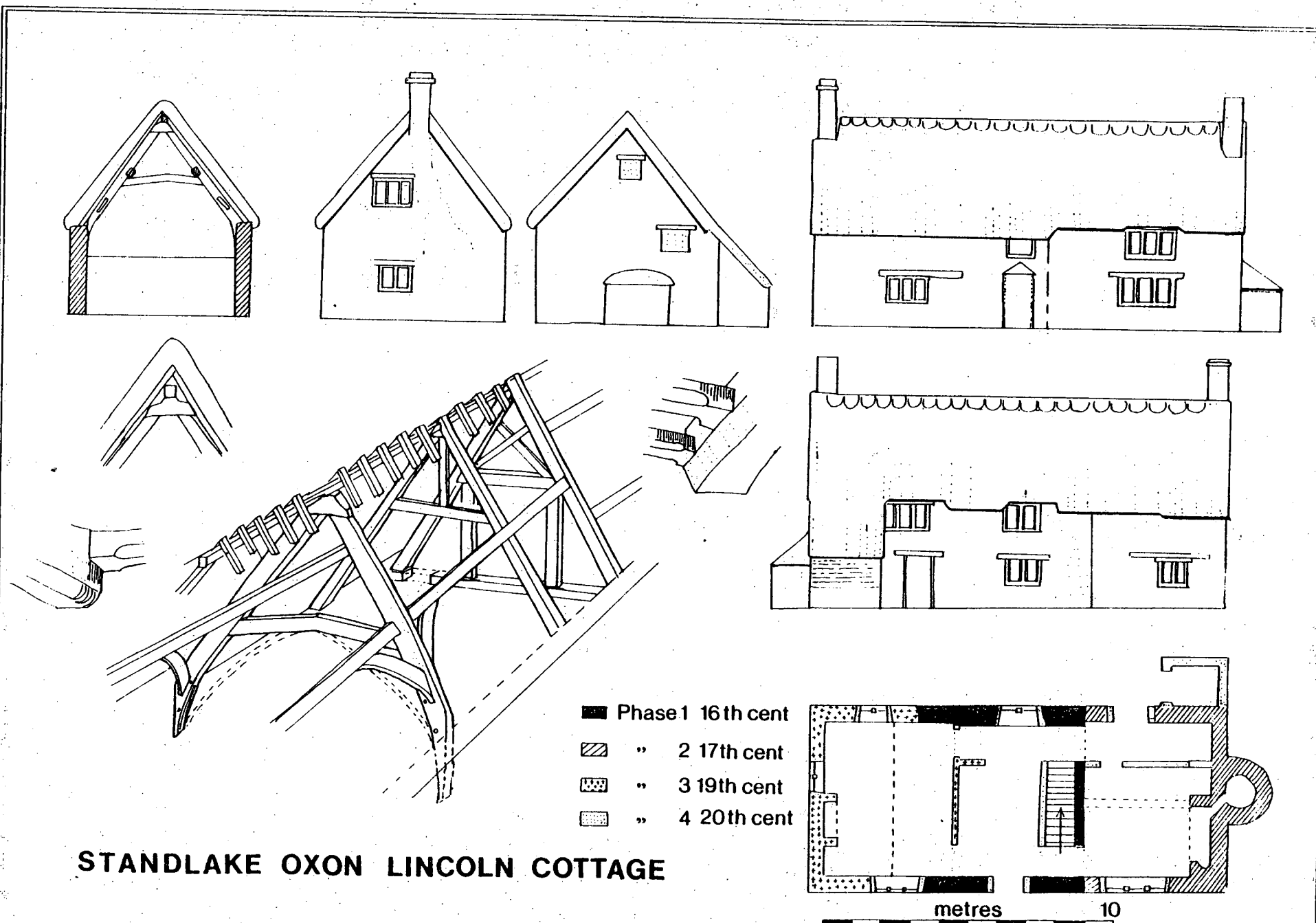


Fig. 18

building was originally at least two bays in length and that it was heated by means of a central open hearth. The original gable end with tie beam and queen posts is now embedded in the centre of the building.

Phase 1a. An improvement in the heating arrangements was inserted probably within 50 years of the building of phase one. A smoke bay, 142 cms long was added at the northern end. This consisted of an A framed truss - with collar pierced with auger holes to take the upper part of a screen. The hearth was probably now situated at the north end where the present staircase is and the open central hearth was dismantled. Some form of temporary wattle and daub, screen attached to the collar, probably plastered over would have acted as a primitive chimney.

Phase 2. The hall was floored over by the insertion of a lateral beam and joists which stops short of the partition and is supported by two vertical posts. Also the northern extension was added with a massive lateral beam decorated with a broad chamfer and stopped at by rather primitive double cut. The floor is supported by the original joists which are more elegantly stopped. There is a window in the upper part of the north east wall with 3 lights divided by ovolo timber mullions. The beam and the window suggest a 17th century date. Doubtless the chimney at this end was added at this time and probably the bakeoven but the fireplace itself has been largely rebuilt. The roof of this extension is of standard A frame construction with purlins embedded in the truss at one end and in the wall at the other.

Phase 3. A small brick built outshut was added to the north west of the house. This was probably a wash-house or a privy. It is thatched and its roof timbers continue the same line as the main roof. Probably 19th century in date.

Phase 4. The southern end of the house has been largely rebuilt when a new brick chimney and fireplace were inserted. The windows are also modern and the roof rafters are quite different from the smoke blackened phase 1 rafters. They are of hazel and of much smaller dimensions. It is suggested that most of these alterations were made in the 20th century but it may well be that the house was lengthened by a bay in this direction in an earlier phase.

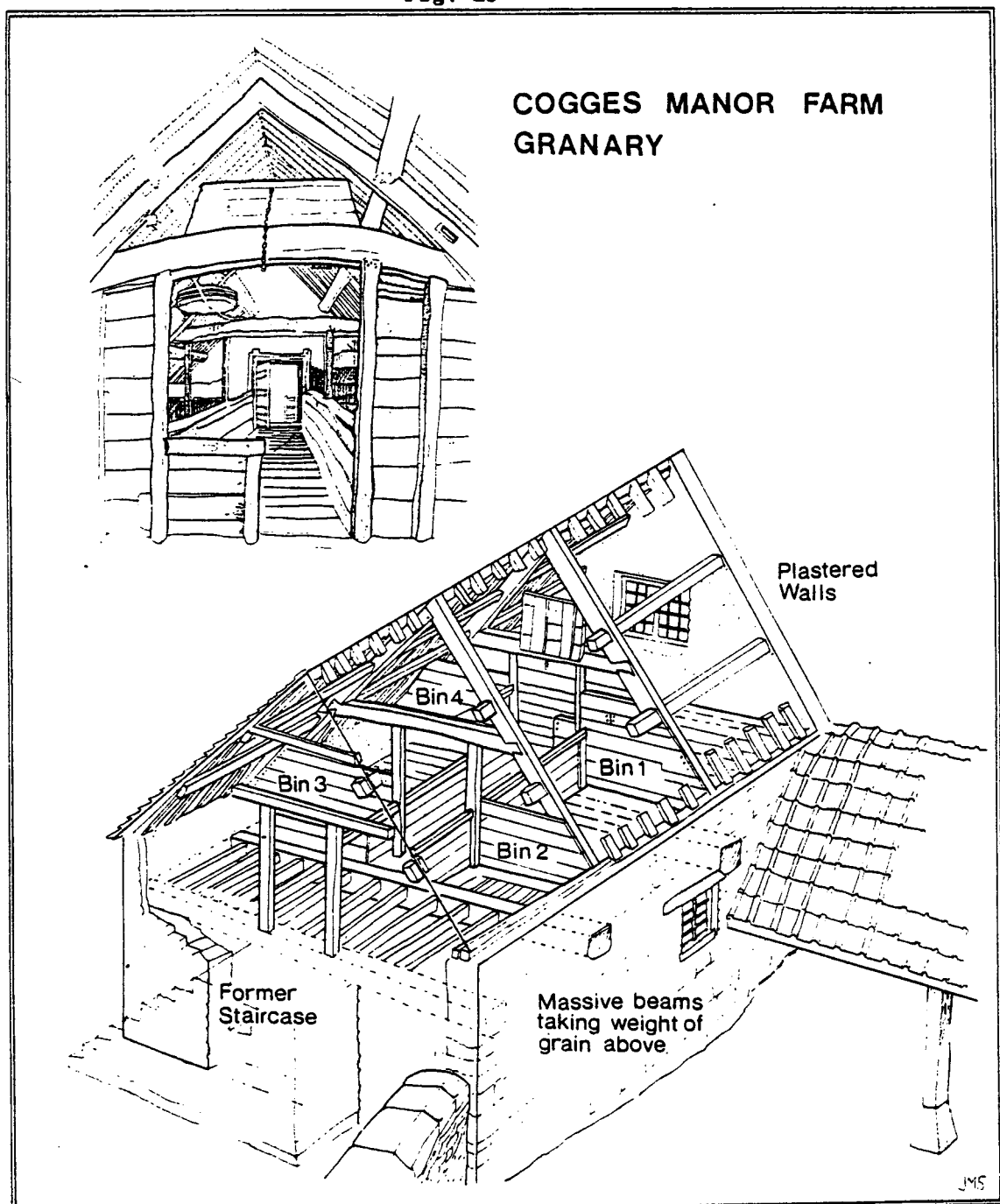
Our thanks to the owner, Mr Moynihan for allowing us to survey the building.

WITNEY. Park Farm. (PRN 4382 Centred SP 341101) - John Steane

At the request of the West Oxfordshire District Council who had received an application to develop the area around Witney Park Farm. A visit was made to see the effect of such a development on the historic environment. The ordnance survey incorrectly surmised that this was the site of the medieval palace of the Bishops of Winchester. In fact it was a park for animals and like other medieval parks had nothing to do with a house. The 1279 Bampton Hundred Rolls mention that the Bishop of Winchester has a free park, by what warrant is not known (Oxford Record Soc, X, LVI, 1968, 71). There are references to Witney Park on Plot's map of 1677 and the 1840 Tithe Map (Bodleian Library) shows various 'Park' field names, west of Park Farm. The exact bounds are unknown but it is thought that traces are still visible in a much eroded and flattened linear mound running for some distance along the southern bounds of the A40. Witney Park Farm is the likely site of a medieval Park Lodge but clearly has been rebuilt and altered in the 17th and 18th centuries. The garden is surrounded by old stone and brick walls. The house itself is of L shaped

plan. The north-south wing dates from the 17th century, is of course limestone rubble and has on the ground floor three and two light square-headed windows with chamfered mullions and dry stones. The roof structure in this part of the building consists of two bays of principal rafters, each bay with two pairs of butt-jointed purlins and collars. The rafters have been renewed. The southern wing lies east-west and was added in the 18th century. It has a symmetrical front built of limestone ashlar, two stories with modern dormers, three bays, three stone headed windows with three lights on first floor and two on the ground floor. The doorway with lunette head has probably been renewed but has a six panel door. The roof structure has three and a half bays of pine. A frame trusses with two sets of butt-jointed purlins per bay. These have been cut to insert the dormers. Our thanks to the tenants Mr and Mrs Gittens for allowing us to view the farmhouse.

Fig. 19



5) AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS

COGGES MANOR FARM. Dairy PRN 4601 - John Steane, Leigh Turner, Simon Smithson, Beverley Garrett.

The dairy is currently the subject of extensive renovation and repairs by the Cogges Farm Museum Heritage Trust. The museum was asked to make detailed records in advance of building works. These have included stone-by-stone surveys of the exterior walls, cross sections, floor board and floor beam surveys and an extensive photographic survey.

The dairy is a detached building and lies to the north-west of the manor farm-house. It consists of a two storied, two bay structure with a pentice attached to the east and a small brick outshut on the south-east side.

Phase 1. Medieval. Examination of the fabric reveals that the building history is complex and that we are dealing with a fragment of the former structure. It is evident that the earliest part consists of the lower part of the north wall which is built of thin slabs of flaggy limestone. Two windows can be related to this structure. That on the north-east is complete, square headed, with a timber lintel, wooden frame with two lights. It has been blocked by nailing laths across it and plastering it. That on the north west has only the western jamb surviving. The eastern jamb was destroyed by the insertion of a larger window. It is possible that the lower part of the south wall is of similar date but this is less easy to examine, because the part which is at present covered by the outshut roof is mostly obscured by a cement skin. The south-western end is damaged by the insertion of a large window and the rear of a curving feature (see discussion phase 1). One last feature which appears to date from this phase is a piece of timber which sits on the top of the wall at the north east corner and appears to be part of a wall plate. It may be that there was a timber-framed upper structure.

Phase 2. Early Post Medieval. It is possible that the phase 1 structure became ruinous. At any rate the walls were heightened using irregular large limestone blocks, a floor was inserted resting on four tie beams and the roof reconstructed. This now consists of two raised cruck trusses with short curved feet (Alcock N. (Ed). Cruck Construction. C.B.A. Research Report, 42, 142). The feet are tapered and slot into the ends of the tie beams. They are tied by means of cambered collars which are mortised and pegged. Longitudinal stiffening is provided by two sets of purlins trenched into the upper part of the tapered cruck blades. Slots for windbracing are visible both in the crucks and on the backs of the upper purlins. Both crucks and collars are chamfered. There are no assembly marks but scratched on the lower part of the cruck blades between the lower purlins and the wall tops are triple lines and criss crosses. The collars are joined by a collar purlin which runs the length of the building. It is evident that the building was larger in each direction at this phase. Foundations were noticed when a pipe trench was dug in 1978, indicating that the building extended one bay to the west. The roof and floor evidence confirms this. The purlins project and have been sawn off. The slots for the windbraces are also visible. The joists too have been sawn off or removed altogether leaving the slots empty in the tie beam. At the eastern end it is not clear whether the building has lost the last couple of feet or whether there was a further full bay as well. Again both the evidence of the walls and the roof structure support the existence of a longer building. From the outside the north-west corner shows the stub of a wall. The central cruck truss has slots to take windbraces in both directions and the purlins to the east show a second slot which can only

have housed a windbrace springing from a third cruck truss to the east. Probably during this phase the square-headed windows were inserted at ground floor level. They have timber lintels made of re-used timber and wooden frames. The mullions in the three light windows in the north wall are ovolo-shaped. The three light windows in the south wall have remains of wooden casement type shutters.

Phase 3. 18th century. The building was truncated at both ends and the lower part was turned into a dairy. Access was through a plank door in a timber frame at the south-east corner. There is a square-headed four-light window with wooden frame which may have come from an earlier phase of the building. A small pentice with a Stonesfield type slated roof on timber uprights standing on staddle stones was added on the east face. Entrance to the upper floor was provided by a door with a timber frame, now blocked, in the north east corner. The straight joint survives in the outside wall on the south side. The corner has been reconstructed and the other straight-joint lost. Inside the timber frame of the doorway is visible under the plaster. Light into the upper room was provided by a splayed two-light window with ovolo-timber mullions which suggest a re-use of earlier material. It is likely that the removal of the western bay also occurred in this phase. The technique of using timber strapping in an attempt to stabilise insecure walls is found at both ends of the building. Also the timber working surfaces supported on beams projecting from the lower parts of the walls run right round the lower part of the building. Further the upper room seems to have been plastered and ceiled in one operation up to collar beam level. The rafters appear to be machine sawn and probably belong to the last hundred years or so. They support a steeply pitched Stonesfield type slate roof with slates which recede in size as they approach the ridge.

Phase 4. 19th century. The small brick outshut was added on the south side. This is the churnhouse and the boiler was built to provide scalding hot water for cleansing the implements in the dairy.

Discussion with such a complicated building history it is likely that the building now known as the dairy served a multiplicity of functions during its long life.

Phase One. Although there is no direct evidence, the siting of the building suggests that in its medieval phase it may have served as a detached kitchen. Manorial complexes consisted of a series of separate buildings known as "the houses" (domus) in the records. Such a kitchen might have had fireplaces in both gable ends and possibly a central hearth. The upper structure might have been timber framed and plastered to produce an airy space for the dispersal of heat and smoke through a louvre opening in the roof. Such a building has survived in toto at Lincoln College, Oxford (C.B.A. IX Newsletter, 1983, pp. 76-77) one further small piece of evidence which might support such an interpretation is a curved plastered surface on the south-western side which may be the back of an oven. Such external ovens are commonplace in medieval contexts. (eg. at Writtle, Rahtz P.A. 'Excavations at King John's Hunting Lodge, Writtle, Essex, 1955-7'. Soc. for Med. Arch. Monograph Series 3, London, 1969, 38-51.)

Phase two. In the manor house itself the hall was replaced by a kitchen with great chamber above by the insertion of a floor and the addition of a fireplace and chimney. This would have rendered such a detached kitchen redundant. The present building was restructured and may have served as a brew-house with storage for grain in the upper part (as at Chastleton).

There is a suggestion that the floor was put in at two different dates. The western part which is characterised by anchor joints is earlier. It is possible that the eastern half was only inserted when the building was converted to a dairy. The presence of massive tie beams and joists suggests that the floor was being used for storage.

Phase three. The building was converted to a dairy with room above which was ceiled and plastered. There is a notice painted with the word 'DAIRY' over the door. This derived from the time of the window tax of such buildings which were exempt. The dairy was well equipped for its task. (See Brunskill R.W. Traditional Farm Buildings of Britain, London, 1982, 121). The building faced north, it was paved with stone slabs. An ample water supply was provided by the well and the cistern in the dairy yard. The wooden shelves were used for supporting pans of milk and cream used in butter making. It is likely that the upper room was now used for the accommodation of dairy maids. Two charred marks seen on the south-east cruck suggest candle burns.

TACKLEY. Malthouse Farm. Stable. (PRN 13668 SP 48082085) - John Steane,
Daphne Aylwin

The complex of farm buildings known as Malthouse Farm lies to the north of the village of Tackley. It consists of a substantial farm-house with walled garden and wash-house - probably 18th century in date. To the south-west is yard 1 with cart shed and dairy. Above it and behind the house is yard 2 with pig styes, a stable (the subject of this note), a shelter shed and a barn. Behind this group and further up the slope is a second barn.

The stable is constructed of limestone rubble and measures 12.6m x 5.3m. It is 4.50m high to the eaves level. It is divided unequally into two by a partition wall. The entry was originally into a single space for accommodating farm horses through two timber-framed doorways each with split doors. Light was provided in the ground floor by two windows, originally fitted with vertical timber shuttering, part of which remains in place on the right hand window. Inside the stable is divided into three by means of boarded partitions. Part of the feeding rack is still attached to the rear wall : this was originally supplied by hay pushed through the slot in the floor above. Four pieces of timber let into the walls serve as racks for storing harness. There are a number of ancient pieces of leather harness still hanging there. A timber lintelled niche for medicines is built into the wall to the east of the door. The hay loft was inaccessible but a view through the trap door showed that the roof timbers consisted of raised cruck construction with collars and two ranges of butt purlins per bay. The hay loft was lit by two windows with timber lintels. The building was thatched but this is in a bad condition and rain is now penetrating the roof in many places and is weakening the walls, washing the mortar out of the joints. The partition wall is probably secondary and was apparently designed to turn the upper part of the eastern end into a granary. This part is plastered and white-washed and there are signs of flooring joists which have been removed. Access was through a gable end doorway in the eastern end of the building. Below was a space which could have been occupied by a single animal, possibly a bull. The whitewash formerly covering the walls has been brushed off at its lower stages. There is a blocked window in the gable end and a partially blocked doorway leading into the rest of the stable. The building is dated to 1737 by a stone let into the wall above the western of the two doors. Also, faintly, there are two initials, C.C.

Discussion. By the end of the eighteenth century the horse had replaced the ox on nearly every farm as the major draught animal. Various implements whether plough or rake, seed drill or harrow as well as every cart and wagon were now drawn by horses. A stable was considered necessary for the comfort, health, safety and security of the horses. Such a stable as that at Malthouse farm provided accommodation that was considerably better than the average cow-house. It was spacious, airy and well lit. It was placed beneath a hay loft whose only disadvantage was the possibility of tainting the fodder with the smells of horses. There was a slot or hatch above the feeding rack whereby hay could be drawn down from the hay loft. The horses were probably provided with individual stalls and it was quite common practice to place horses in double stalls which worked with one another. The partitions were strong and heavily boarded. At the head there was a wooden trough or manger where the oats were poured - only the slots in the walling survive - and above a rack of wood for hay. The design of the floor was important. It had to be impermeable but comfortable and giving a firm grip to feet, sloping very little from front to rear. The fact that the stable is on a slope helps in this matter. The floor is of pitched limestone. The stable was also used to store harness although it was considered harmful to both the metal and leather parts of the harness for it to be hung in the stable. The niche in the stone wall was for a candle, a horn for medicine, or curry combs. It is fairly usual for the upper parts of stables to be used for other purposes such as the housing of a groom or a granary. Despite the apparent lack of massive joists, the plastered walls suggest a granary. There is no sign of a fireplace which might have argued human occupation. Access was by the (now vanished) timber staircase at the east end.

Our thanks are to the tenant who kindly allowed us access to record the building.

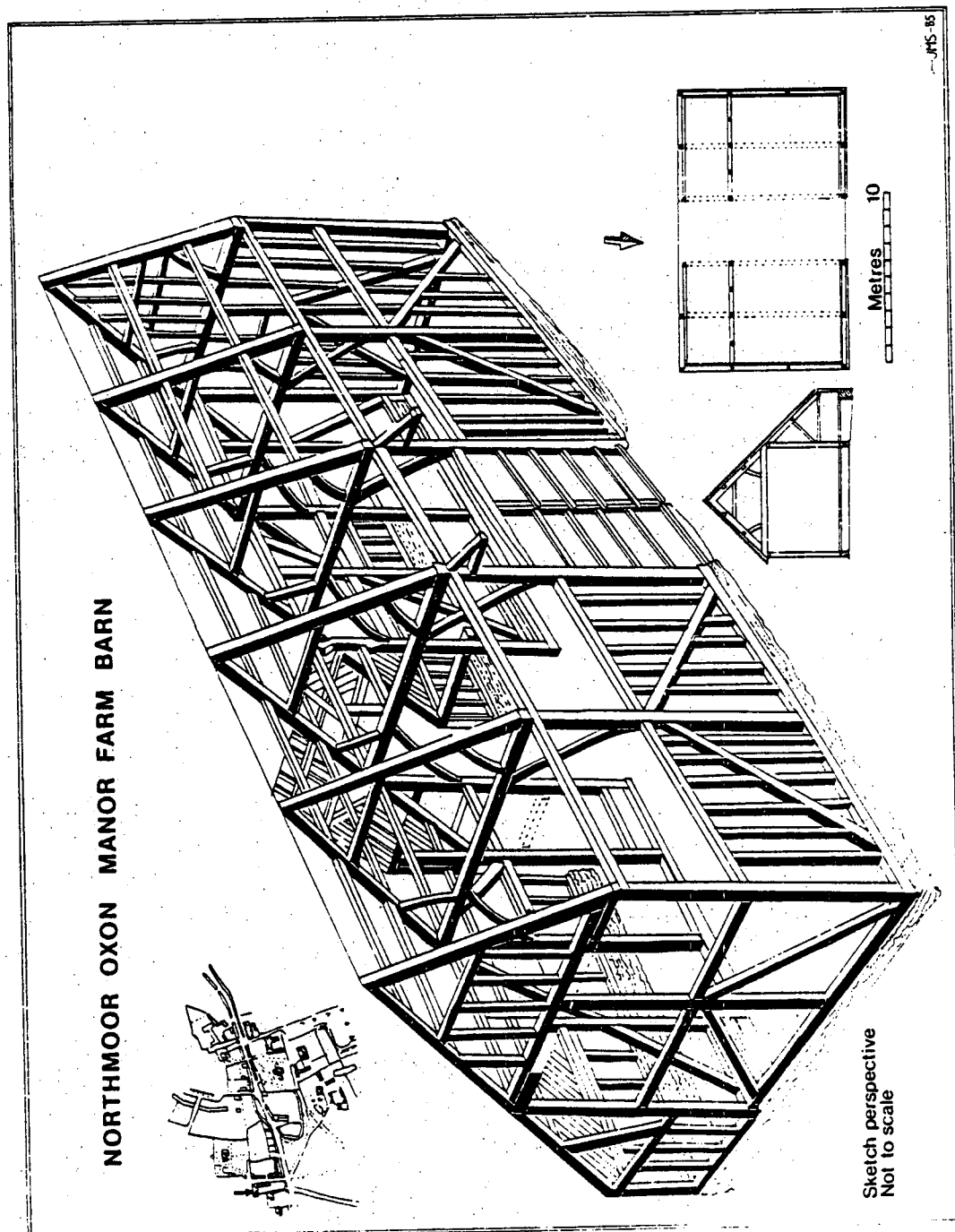
NORTHMOOR MANOR FARM. (PRN 13705 SP 41890290) - John Steane, Daphne Aylwin.

The barn is situated to the west of the village about 100 metres back from the main street. It is aligned east-west and is five bays in length. The structure is timber-framed on a low foundation wall of coursed limestone rubble. On these are placed massive sole-plates and the principal posts are tenoned into these. The building is aisled on the south side and, judging from the fact that there are no visible straight joints in the limestone walling this is an original feature. The main walls are held up by the arcade of main posts which are braced by great diagonal timbers which are also secured in the sole plate. The rest of the wall structure is a series of lesser studs to which are attached weather boarding. The roof structure consists of a series of tie beams bridging the gap between the main posts, principal rafters which are braced to the tie beams by queen struts, collars, and horizontal stiffening is provided by two pairs of purlins trenched into the backs of the principal rafters. There is a wagon porch which occupies the third bay on the south side but which does not project beyond the aisle. Either end the gable walls have diagonal bracing like the bays of the rest of the building. There is an opposed entrance with hinged wooden framed doors on the north side. These were originally pivoted into the lintel and the pivot holes remain. The present roofing is asbestos sheeting and much of the weather boarding on the walls has either been replaced or has been covered over with corrugated iron.

The main interest in the building is the characteristics of the structure. By far the greatest proportion of barns in West Oxfordshire are built of stone. As one approaches the Upper Thames and gets near to the Vale

of the White Horse, perhaps it is to be expected that the vernacular building tradition will reflect a change of materials. The barn at Northmoor is timber framed and a mid 18th century is not out of line. A parallel which is not far away but to the south is at Appleton - with Easton. (PRN 11,489). Another is at Harwell, Lockton's Farm (South Midlands Archaeology 14, 1984, 89-90).

Fig. 20



Oxfordshire

BANBURY: East-West Link Road - Tim Allen
(SP455418 - SP467417; PRN 11,470)

In advance of road construction 3 JCB trenches were cut across the line of the road where it crosses the slight elevation occupied by Grimsbury House. The excavation was funded by the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission. The surrounding fields all show signs of ridge and furrow, the trenches were dug in the landscaped garden of the house. A north-south ditch was found in the central trench, and a small area was opened up to investigate this. Both prehistoric and medieval ditches were found.

When the roadway was stripped further prehistoric ditches were salvaged, including two small penannular enclosures and a pair of parallel ditches, possibly for a trackway. A number of medieval ditches, apparently enclosure and field boundaries, were also recorded. The area of occupation both in the prehistoric and medieval periods seems to have been limited on the east to the top of the elevation, but features continued both north and south beyond the limits of the site.

On the west several ditches were recorded in construction trenches. These lay beneath ridge and furrow in the field west of Grimsbury Green road. Construction trenches further west beyond the railway line were also watched as occasion arose, but revealed nothing of interest.

The prehistoric occupation produced very few finds, and no diagnostic pottery. The flint assemblage suggests use of the local very poor quality pebble flint, with the exception of a few well-made tools, and a Bronze Age date seems likely.

The medieval pottery was predominantly of 12th century date, though late 12th/early 13th century features were also common, and there were some 14th century and 15th century sherds from Pottersbury and elsewhere. A very small assemblage from the ditches beneath the ridge and furrow west of the Grimsbury Green road included St. Neots ware and a few late Saxon fabrics, suggesting that this may have been part of the late Saxon settlement at Grimberie mentioned in Domesday.

The settlement presumably shifted east during the earlier Medieval period, and probably moved again during the 13th century away from the area examined, possibly to the area of Manor Farm some 200m to the south-east.

BLEWBURY: London Road - Claire Halpin
(SU 531856)

In the week before Christmas 1983 a telephone call was made by John and Ivan Beer reporting that they had uncovered two pits during the construction of a new garage for a recently completed house adjacent to Yew Tree Cottage, London Road, Blewbury. Permission was given to excavate these pits, and also for the finds to be deposited in the Ashmolean Museum.

The pits lay c. 32m back from the road line, each was c. 1m in diameter and c. 0.3m deep. Many pieces of antler, bone, flint flakes and split quartzite pebbles lay on the surface. The flint was seen to be in remarkably

fresh condition and on excavation each piece was wrapped separately to avoid damage. The animal bone had evidently been deposited as joints as articulated shaft and knuckle bones were apparent. All the soil was retained for wet sieving and a bucket sample from each pit was recovered for flotation.

Preliminary examination of the material has produced good results and indicates it is potentially a highly interesting assemblage. The fill of each pit was exactly similar and cross joins of flint flakes and pottery from each pit, probably from the same vessel, indicate that the pits are precisely contemporary.

About 300 large pieces of waste flint flakes and many tiny spalls were recovered. It is knapping debris which, given its sharpness and lack of edge damage, was deposited soon after its production. Casual attempts at refitting flakes demonstrate that it is conjoinal and that extensive refitting may be possible. Clearly this material may be expected to produce information about lithic technology and similarly microwear analysis on selected pieces may be appropriate. Recognised tool types include snapped or 'D-shaped' scrapers, long end scrapers, and denticulated and serrated flakes. Until the pottery fragments can be identified or a radiocarbon date produced, a transverse arrowhead (chisel-type) provides the dating evidence (late neolithic) for this assemblage. About six fragments of pottery were recovered. It is buff coloured, flint tempered and one piece has an incised decoration. It is either Peterborough or grooved ware.

The environmental evidence is of the same high interest as the flintwork. About 100 animal bones were recovered and include cattle and pig. Small bones have also been retrieved eg. those of a mouse. Flotation has produced sizeable quantities of material and seeds of cereals and hazelnuts have been recognised. An important aspect of this sealed group is the diversity of material represented and its quantity is sufficient to permit some statistical analysis. A worked bone point was also recovered.

The nature of the material suggests that it is a domestic assemblage. The numerous split pebbles and the fact that some of the flint flakes are burnt suggests that it may be the sweepings from a hearth.

About 2m south of the pits twenty or more medieval sherds dating to the 12th century were recovered from the section of a foundation trench. Their context was unclear.

CUMNOR: Dean Court Farm - Tim Allen
(SP 47600595 -47400615; PRN 10795-7, 12983)

Excavation of parts of a medieval grange was undertaken in advance of housing development. The work was funded partly by the landowners, Oxford University, and partly by the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission.

Medieval settlement has been known in the area of the present farm since 1975, when buildings were found by the Oxford University Archaeological Society during construction of the Cumnor Bypass. Site E, which survived until the 18th century as Busby's Farm, produced evidence of late 13th century origins. Site A part of a masonry building with late 12th and 13th century finds. Later medieval pottery was recovered from inside a building exposed on Site B, Building XI, in a drainage ditch for the Eynsham road. More recently Dr John Blair noticed a pair of two-light late 13th century windows, now blocked, in one wall of the farmhouse Building X. He believes these may be in situ (see site plan below).

Documentary research shows that the settlement, known as 'La Dene',

belonged to Abingdon Abbey until the Dissolution. It is first recorded in the late 12th century, paying tithes for the upkeep of the abbey buildings. By the mid 13th century it was one of 5 granges in Cumnor parish. In the 14th century the settlement included an 'ecclesia' owning land of considerable value, suggesting that this may have been one of a small class of granges with sub-conventual layout. After the Dissolution however the church is not heard of again, and is now lost.

Aerial photographs have not been helpful, and traces of medieval cultivation and other earthworks are very slight. A magnetometer proved unable to detect buried features, but a resistivity survey was completed in time for excavation of Site C (see below). This survey showed areas of greater disturbance, but was not distinct enough to identify individual buildings. Consequently excavation concentrated on the known areas of settlement.

Concrete and modern outbuildings limited work around the farm to small trenches, Site D. Only one was productive. Just behind the east end was a yard wall, probably 16th century, and west of this the east wall of an earlier building, Building IX, with a large drain running north-east from it. Another drain joined this from the south just outside the wall. Both produced early 14th century pottery, which agrees with the date of the windows, and it seems likely that these were contemporary parts of the grange.

At Site A three solidly built masonry buildings were uncovered. The one partly excavated in 1976, Building I, was an L-shaped block 18m x 12m consisting of 4 rooms interpreted as the hall, private chamber, service room and kitchen of a domestic house. Buttresses and substantial foundations indicate stone walls up to the roof, possibly of 2 storeys. Another building, Building II, lay to the south of its' east end. This was slightly wider, 5m internally, and at least 15m long, but had no internal divisions. It may have been a barn, but its walls were bonded with mortar, a more sophisticated construction than the clay-bonded domestic block. Buildings I and II were contemporary; the wall of the passage through Building I continued south alongside Building II, and the area between them was infilled with a rubble platform contemporary with the wall foundations. Of the third building, which lay south of the west end of Building I, only part of one wall was seen.

Building I was originally separated from Building III by a ditch, but this was later infilled and replaced by a cobbled road, in which cart ruts were visible. Outside Building II was a rubble platform, perhaps hard standing for carts and animals.

This group of buildings obviously represents the residence of someone of consequence, and it was most likely the centre of the grange from the late 12th to the late 13th centuries. There were ditches and long narrow slots beneath the stone buildings showing earlier occupation, but very little of this was dug. This area seems to have been abandoned at the end of the 13th century.

Site B was a rectangular house-platform in the south-east corner of the field just west of the farm. Part of this had been destroyed without record by a sewer-main. An east-west building of several rooms and phases of construction was revealed. The west room had a door on the south side and a small outshot with a roughly flagged floor added on the north-west. There were very few internal features, and it may have been a barn. The central room, however, contained a large rectangular hearth and a circular oven in the north-west corner, and this room connected with the east one, which had a partly flagged floor. Large numbers of iron objects were recovered from upon this floor, and two silver coins, one 14th and one early 15th century.

The latter date agrees with the provisional date of the pottery from this building.

North of this was a rectangular stone platform, the floor and ground-sill of a small timber building, VI. This was also late medieval. South of the east-west range was a cobbled yard, at whose south edge was the foundation of a narrow wall and the ground sill of another, later, timber building. Within the ditched enclosure north of these buildings were only one shallow ditch and a single pit.

Beneath the late-medieval features was a horizon of late 12th/13th century occupation. This was represented by cobbling, a large stone hearth, several pits, a buried tripod pitcher and several ditches and gullies. No buildings were found, but it seems likely that these lie nearby.

Site C was dug to investigate anomalies shown by the resistivity survey. Most of the trench showed only ridge and furrow, but at the east end was a late-medieval stone building, with a yard on the west bounded north and south by ditches. The building, probably mid-late 14th century in origin, had one entrance facing onto the yard. Inside the floor was flagged at the north end, and a drain ran across it and out under the south wall. In the yard were circular and rectangular ovens and a small hearth, and along its north side was a paved walkway. There were traces of a similar paved area along the south side of the yard and the building. East of the building there was further masonry extending into the trench edge.

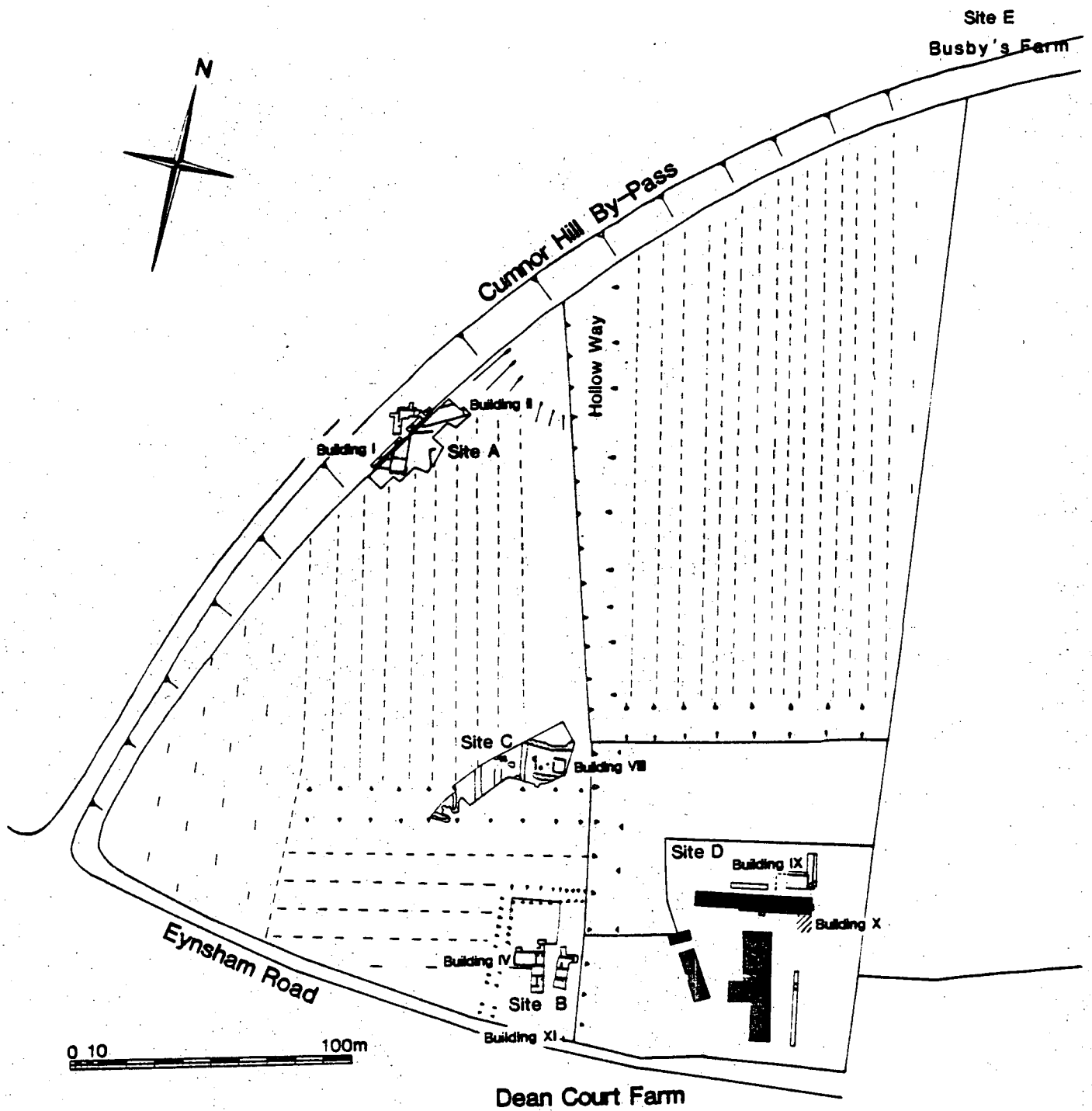
Building VIII overlay the east boundary ditch of the ridge and furrow, which was thus probably contemporary with the buildings in Site A. The apparent abandonment of Site A at the end of the 13th century and the absence of finds earlier than the 14th century from the limited work on Site D may suggest that the centre of the grange shifted at that time. 18th century maps show that there was a track running north through the site, and the evidence from sites A, B and C suggests that the medieval settlement was concentrated along the same line. It is suggested that this was a medieval road from Cumnor north to Wytham and Seacourt.

HENLEY: 12-16 Market Place - Brian Durham
(SU 759 826)

Anne Cottingham and the Henley Group excavated a slot inside the former Co-op shop. There was only one part of the street frontage which was unaffected by existing cellars, and Crest Estates Ltd kindly arranged to remove the concrete slab in an area 7m x 1m. This miniscule patch had everything! At the front was a tunnel-vaulted brick cellar which Georgina Stonor dates to about 1790. Behind this was a fireplace or oven set into the corner of a room, probably of similar date but re-using bricks of the 17th century. This in turn had been cut into a sandwich of earlier earth floors, and the earliest of them had a remarkably extensive hearth. There was a rectangular area of tile-on-edge, with another rectangular area of closely fitted flints to the west. The latter had three small sockets which must have been for a trivet. To the north was further burning and a clunch feature which suggests part of an oven.

Do these features belong to a medieval hall or service range? They may be no earlier than the 16th century, but on this prime market place frontage one would anticipate buildings from the 13th century.

Fig. 21



CUMNOR: Dean Court Farm, 1984. General Site plan.

NEWINGTON: Manorial Site - R A Chambers
(SU 6101 9622)

In conjunction with the trial excavation of medieval remains south of Newington House, the South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group has methodically field walked the arable land to the north-east. Remains of a high status medieval building complex have been recovered including fragments of decorated floor tiles and glazed ridge tiles.

NEWINGTON: Newington House - R A Chambers
(SU 608963)

In the autumn of 1983 medieval pottery was found whilst digging a new well some 100m south of Newington House. Slight earthworks in the vicinity suggested building platforms. A trial trench excavated by members of the South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group has so far revealed a metalled yard surface associated with much medieval and late medieval domestic debris. Traces of one or more building foundations beneath the yard surface remain to be examined.

NORTHMOOR: Watkins Farm - Tim Allen
(SP 410035-427022; PRN 8312-20; 8322-27)

Iron Age.

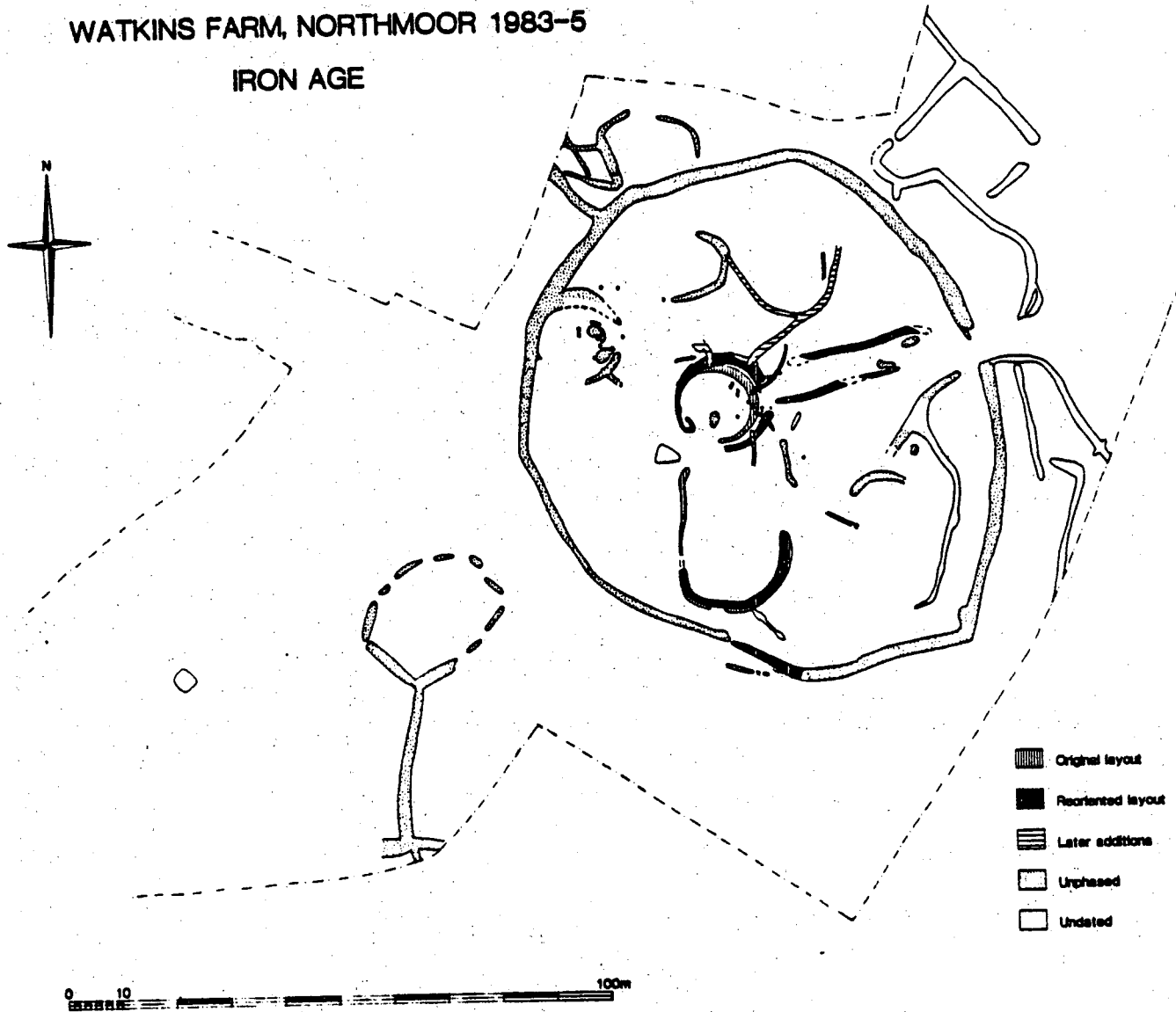
Amey Roadstone Corporation kindly lent us a machine to strip the last part of the main enclosure, excavated in 1983, which was then excavated in December 1984 with the help of the MSC team.

The suspicion that parallel ditches led from the enclosure entrance to a central roundhouse was confirmed. The house enclosure originally had an entrance on the south; unfortunately medieval ditches had obliterated any possible features just inside this, including probably the doorpostholes. The house faced directly onto the possible house enclosure excavated last year. In its first phase this enclosure had a southern entrance adjacent to a gap in the main enclosure ditch, and it seems that the central house was originally oriented towards this entrance into the enclosure, not the north-east entrance. The entrances in both the main enclosure ditch and the smaller enclosure were subsequently blocked, and it was probably at the same time that the central house was rebuilt. The doorpostholes of this house survived cut into the earlier surrounding ditch, and the door faced onto the north-east entrance to the main enclosure. Ditches were dug from this entrance flanking a roadway up to its door. The ditches around the house had an entrance on the south side as in the preceding phase, suggesting that there were still close links with the enclosure to the south. These ditches were recut on several occasions, indicating that the house had a fairly long life. A human skull came from one of the ditches, and at some stage a horse was buried inside the house enclosure.

Another circular enclosure was found on the west edge of the interior, also with an entrance on the north-east. This was badly damaged by later Romano-British ditches, but contained one of the only two circular pits on the site, and a deeper waterlogged feature, possibly a well. An extended human skeleton was found up against the side of this feature, just above a very dense concentration of highly burnt limestone, and at least one wooden object was also recovered from the waterlogged deposits below.

Fig. 22

WATKINS FARM, NORTHMOOR 1983-5
IRON AGE



North of these enclosures were only curving lengths of ditch subdividing the interior. Although the subsoil had been removed by medieval cultivation in this area, the impression is that this part of the interior was less densely occupied.

Abutting the main enclosure outside on the north-west were small sub-rectangular enclosures, which produced Iron Age finds. It seems therefore that the main enclosure was only one element in the settlement, more of which is still to be stripped.

Romano-British

It is clear that the main enclosure ditch was still a significant boundary in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, and various ditch circuits were dug parallel to it during that time. Further ditches were discovered, also waterlogged pits, probably wells, and one or two shallower pits. A series of curving gullies cut into the central roundhouse area may have been pens or chicken runs, but there was no evidence of buildings. If these existed they must have been in the areas truncated by later ploughing or stripping before excavation began.

It is now apparent that the trackway which cuts across the main enclosure is leading to a succession of subrectangular enclosures, overlying the 2nd century AD Romano-British ones. A very little late 3rd/4th century pottery came from its ditches, showing that there was continued use of this area, but bearing out the lack of occupation features.

Medieval

Ridge and furrow covers the northern part of the site. From its boundary ditches and the tops of earlier features came pottery of 11th to 13th century date, presumably mucked out from the village close by at Northmoor.

OXFORD: Churchill Hospital - Brian Durham
(SP546057; PRN 3615)

A large area of Nissen Huts have been cleared to the west of the kiln site excavated by Dr C J Young in 1971-74. Brian Durham found four new kilns to add to the nine already known, and the western limit of the production area was established as roughly the line of the main hospital north-south access road.

Sarah Green has dated the new kilns to the 4th century (Phase 4b). Three of them possibly relate to the known workshop complex D, and the fourth was interesting in that it was the only Churchill kiln to be relined. Peter McKeague has prepared a report on this year's excavation.

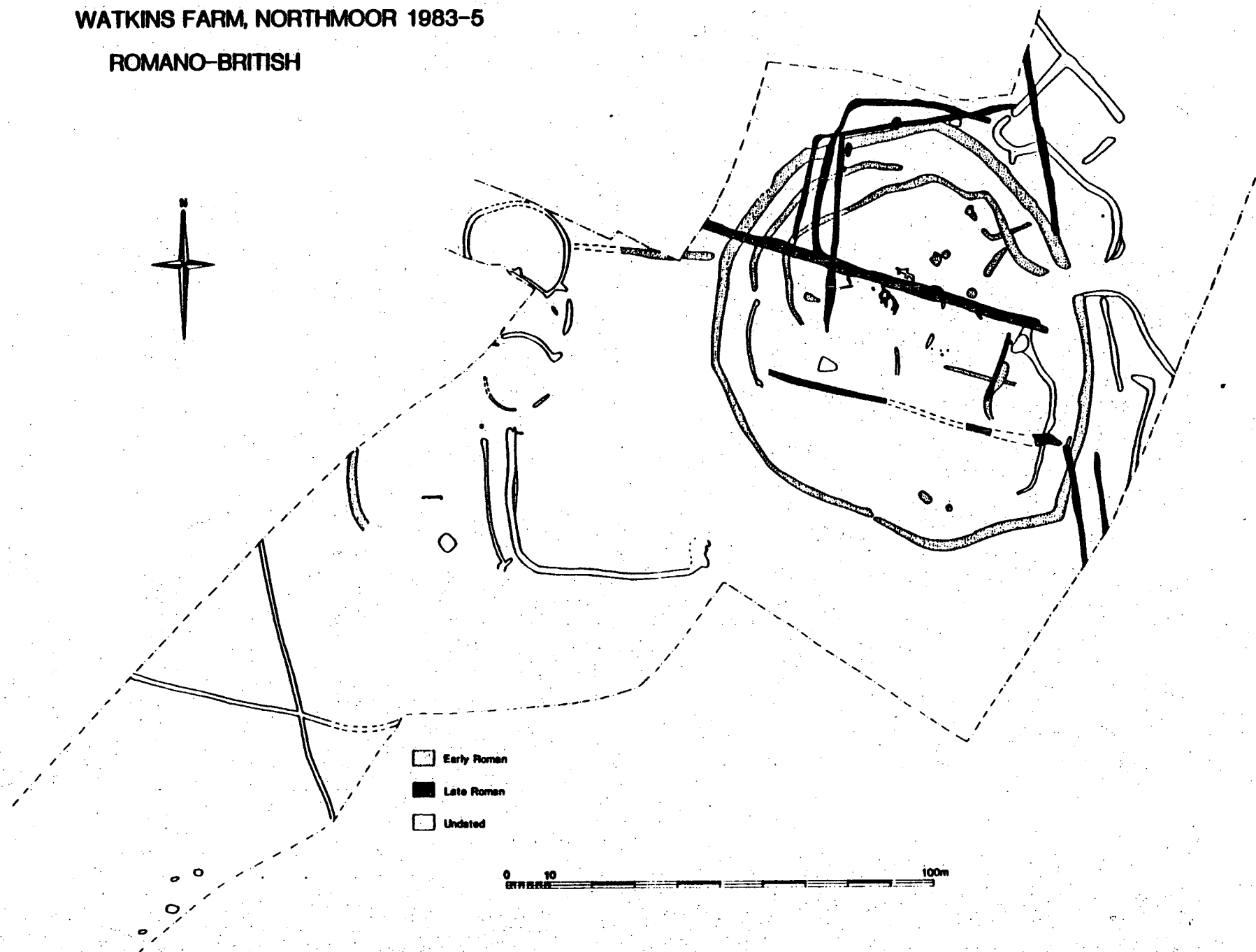
OXFORD: High Street, All Souls College - Brian Durham
(SP516063)

In October 1983, All Souls College was refacing the north side of the chapel when a large number of painted fragments of medieval masonry came tumbling out of a cavity. It transpired that this was an old doorway which had been reopened during internal restorations by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1872. The painted fragments were all attributable to the medieval reredos which had just been rediscovered at that time, and which Scott was restoring. They provide a useful check on the accuracy of the new carving, and show

WATKINS FARM, NORTHMOOR 1983-5

ROMANO-BRITISH

Fig. 23



clearly that all the painted stonework now visible on the reredos is original 15th century work, and the unpainted work and the figures are replacements. Precisely why such a collection of fragments came to be walled up is not clear, but the inclusion of a fragment of 14th century stone cross-head suggests that the builders regarded these as special fragments which should not simply be dumped.

The cross-head fragment includes the lower body of the crucified Christ on one side, and drapery of perhaps the Virgin on the other. The history of this fragment is remarkable. Philip Lancaster of the Council for the Care of Churches prepared a report on it, and found that the identical fragment had been illustrated by J C Buckler in the 19th century. It had apparently then been found built into the east wall of North Hinksey Church 2 miles west of Oxford, and Buckler had drawn it with fragments of a gabled top and the existing cross-base and shaft. The top is no longer tracable, but the remainder will appear as a reconstruction in the 1984 volume of Oxoniensia in an article by Nicholas Doggett discussing all aspects of these discoveries. The remaining mystery is how the crucifixion fragment got to All Souls, and how it came to be built into a wall for the second time.

RADLEY: Barrow Hills - R A Chambers and Claire Halpin
(SU 5135 9815; PRN 13,400)

With the exception of a break in the late summer and early autumn excavations continued on this multiperiod site throughout 1984. The site lies one mile north-east of Abingdon, Oxfordshire. The excavations are being undertaken in advance of a new housing scheme by the Oxford Archaeological Unit with funding from HBMC and labour provided by the Manpower Services Commission. The Oxford Archaeological Unit is extremely grateful to the developers, Kibswell Builders Ltd for providing both earthmoving machinery and direct financial help during the year. The Abingdon and Area Archaeological and Historical Society working under the direction of Claire Halpin has undertaken the further excavation of several Bronze Age features. The Oxford Archaeological Unit would also like to thank the owner, Mr W P Docker-Drysdale for permission to excavate and for his help over the year. The Oxford Archaeological Unit is also grateful to Mr B Ford, the tenant farmer, for his continued assistance over the past year. An interim report was published: Barrow Hills, Radley 1983-4, Excavations: an Interim Report by R Bradley, R A Chambers and C E Halpin which sold very successfully at a site Open Day which was attended by about 2000 people.

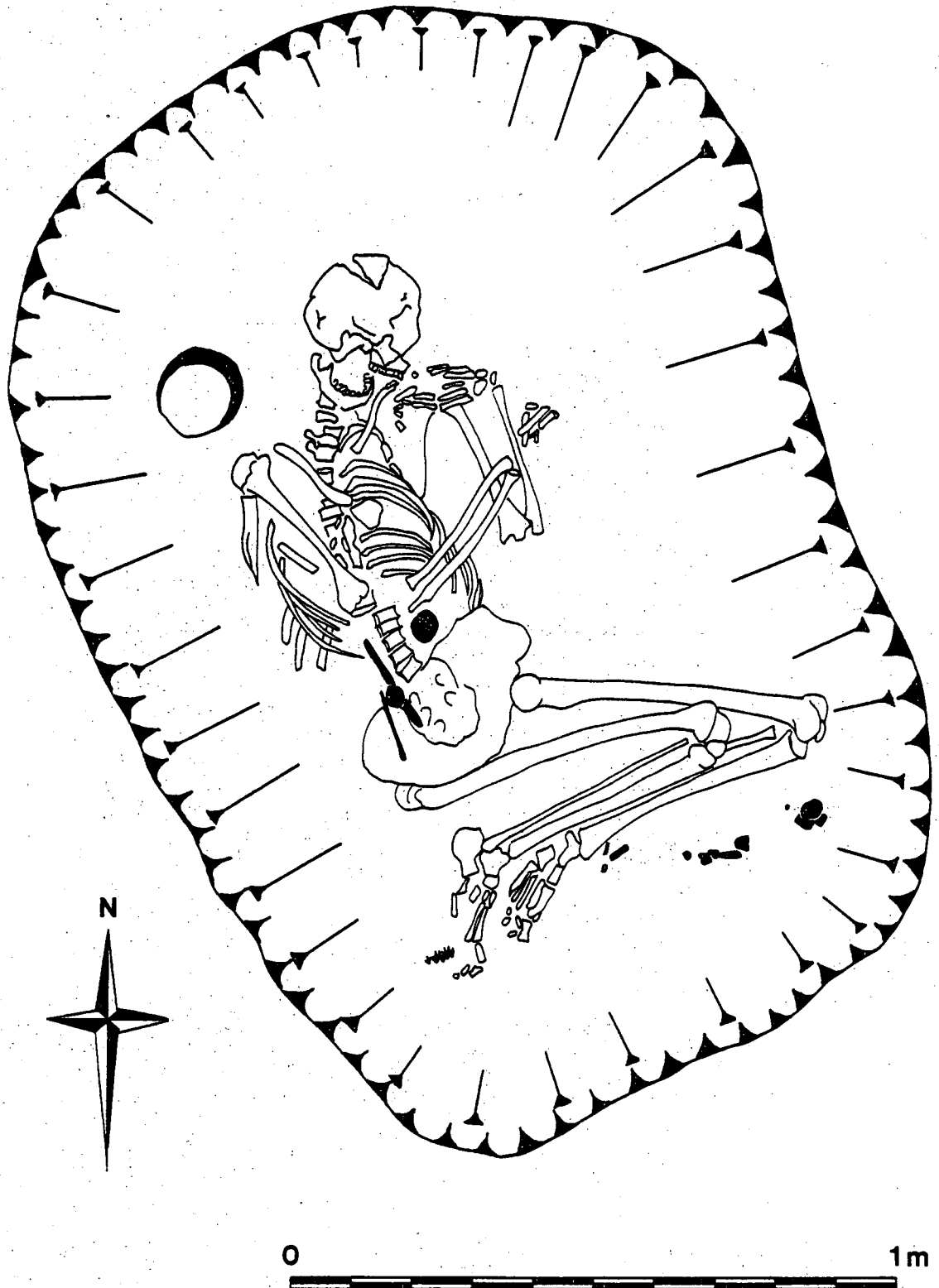
The Neolithic Features - Claire Halpin

In addition to the long barrow and segmented ring ditch excavated by Richard Bradley and students of Reading University, a ring ditch and c. 10 pits have been excavated.

The ring ditch (Feature 611) was cut by the outer ditch of Barrow 12. Although truncated it was possible to see that the ditch had been continuous. The form of the ditch was remarkable; though less than 9m in diameter it was c. 1.8m deep, comparable in depth to the large ring ditch of Barrow 12 which is 25m in diameter. Originally the ditch was steep-sided and flat-bottomed.

Ranged around the floor of the ditch were five large deer antlers and two groups of articulated animal bone. The latter consisted of shoulder blades with upper and lower leg bones and are probably those of an immature cow. These antler and bone finds were deliberate deposits comparable to

Fig. 24



RADLEY: Barrow Hills. The primary burial (Feature 203) of the small Bronze Age ring ditch adjacent to Barrow 1.

those found within the henge at Dorchester. It is anticipated that selected items will be sent for radiocarbon dating.

A relatively prolific number of finds were recovered from the fill of the ditch and include animal bones, waste flint flakes, large plain pot sherds and charcoal deposits. The function of the ditch is uncertain but it may have served as a focus for burial.

In the south-west corner of the field c. 10 pits containing rich deposits of late Neolithic material were found. These finds consisted of fresh flint knapping debris and flint scrapers, grooved ware pottery, animal bone and charcoal. They are most interesting as for example, the flintwork, being derived from sealed contexts, will provide a useful comparison for the material collected during fieldwalking by members of the Abingdon Archaeological Society.

The Bronze Age Barrows - Claire Halpin

In total three Bronze Age barrows (Nos. 1, 12 and 13 of the cemetery), two small ring ditches and numerous secondary burials have been excavated.

The spring and summer season of weekend excavations concentrated on the adjacent barrows (Nos. 12 and 13) which lie at the western end of the cemetery. No central burial was found within Barrow 13, indeed, only nondescript hollows were present. Conversely seven burials were excavated from within Barrow 12.

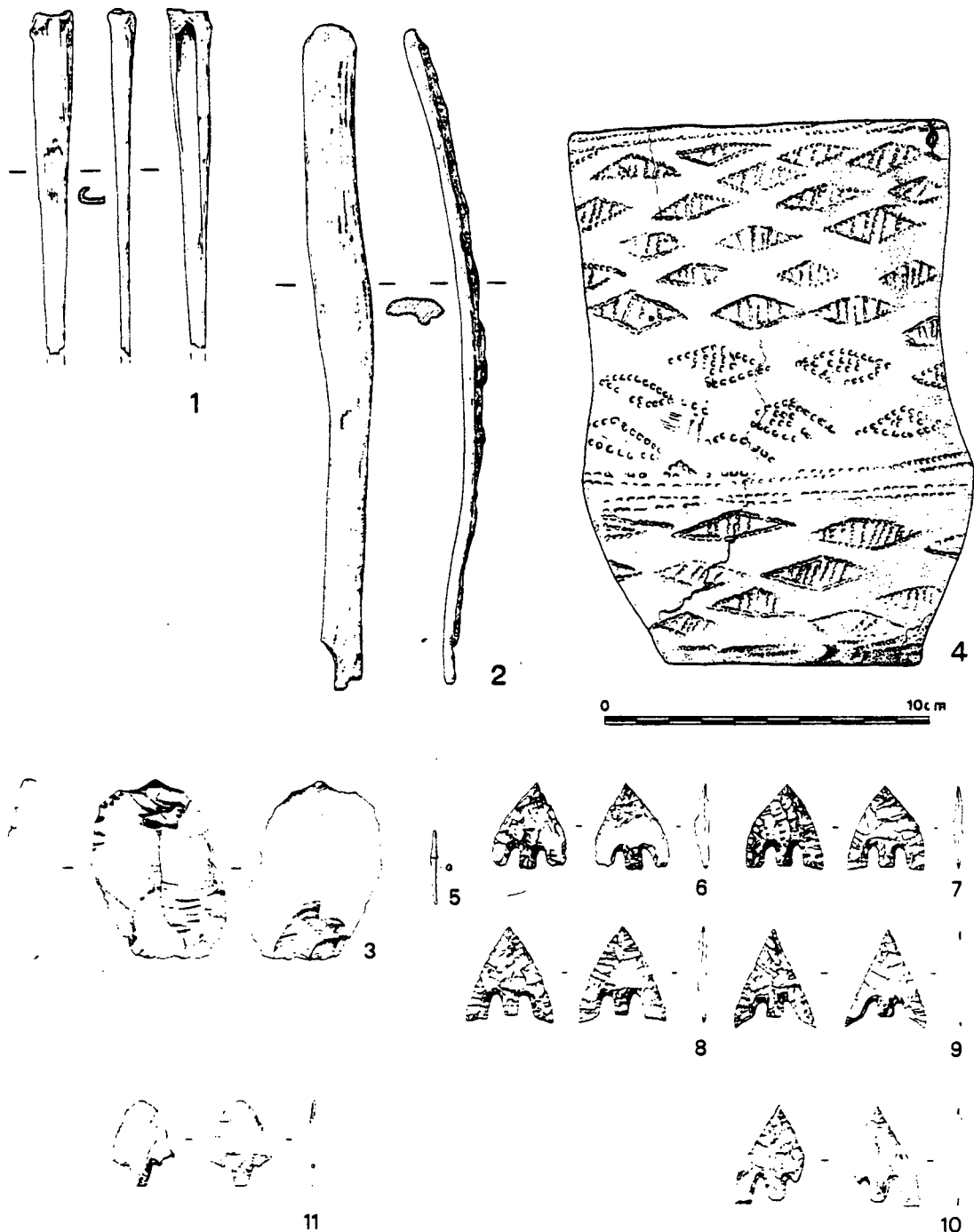
Barrow 12 was a double-ditched barrow, comparable with others in the cemetery, and of at least two phases of construction. Four burials were recovered from the centre. The primary burial consisted of an adult crouched burial with a bronze awl lying against the left foot. It may be contemporary with that from the centre of the small ring-ditch adjacent to Barrow 1. An unaccompanied cremation and a fragmentary inhumation were found in a pit cutting the central burial. The unusual, fragmentary burial consisted of the articulated upper half of a child, laid with care and accompanied by a food vessel. Overlying these graves was a cremation. About 2m south-east of these central burials an infant inhumation in the crouched position was excavated. The burial pit was shallow (c. 0.20m) 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 ditch, above the primary silts, a small urn containing cremated bone was excavated. A miniature pot lay inverted over this deposit. A satellite burial consisting of a plough damaged cremation was excavated on the north-east side of Barrow 12.

During the 1983/84 excavation seasons we have been impressed by the contrast between prestigious burials (laid with care and containing numerous grave goods) and poor or low status burials; disarticulated inhumations which may represent reinternments or exposed burials; and fragmentary inhumations (such as found at the centre of Barrow 12) which were apparently mutilated before burial. One of the high status burials (F203) excavated in 1983 is illustrated in the accompanying 2 figures to illustrate the wealth of material from this site.

The Roman Cemetery and other burials - R A Chambers

The excavations of the mixed inhumation and cremation cemetery at the centre of the present site was reported in detail last year. Top soil stripping has since confirmed that there are no further burials to the east.

Fig. 25



RADLEY: Barrow Hills. The grave goods found with Feature 203:
 1. Bone tool; 2. Antler spatula; 3. Flint end scraper; 4. Long-necked beaker; 5. Bronze awl; 6-10. Five finely flaked barbed and tanged arrowheads; 11. Barbed and tanged arrowhead found lying against the spine.

The Roman period burials on this site now appear to fall into two distinct groups: nine inhumation burials and one cremation burial scattered across the south-western quarter of the site and the small discrete cemetery comprising 47 inhumations and several cremations which was excavated in 1983. Four of the nine scattered inhumation burials each provided evidence for wooden coffins and one of the four inhumations was buried with hobnail boots placed between the lower legs. Although almost certainly Romano-British the remaining burials did not provide any datable artifacts. Some of these outlying burials may belong to a small Romano-British settlement, probably a farmstead some 100m to the south-east of the site.

The Anglo-Saxon Settlement - R A Chambers

Excavation at Barrow Hills, Radley between summer 1983 and August 1984 has uncovered the major part of an early Anglo-Saxon settlement. The excavation has been undertaken for the HBMC by the Oxford Archaeological Unit with labour supplied by the Manpower Services Commission. Work on this scheduled monument will continue into 1985 after which the land will be taken for house building.

Two hectares (5 acres) of this site have now been stripped of topsoil to reveal the major part of a migration period settlement. The settlement appears to have been established sometime during the first quarter of the 5th century AD and deserted during the 7th century.

The settlement lies on the well-drained second gravel terrace between the south-west end of a prehistoric barrow cemetery and a stream to the west. In the medieval period the stream valley was dammed to form a fishpond for Abingdon Abbey. In 1928 early Saxon pottery was found within the area occupied by the pond. This suggests that pond construction destroyed the western edge of the Anglo-Saxon settlement.

The archaeological remains of this settlement take three distinct forms: sunken featured buildings, rectangular post-built structures and domestic rubbish deposits which accumulated within the earthwork remains of Bronze Age and Neolithic barrow ditches.

More than 40 sunken featured buildings have now been excavated. Each building is represented by a generally sub-rectangular pit with a post hole placed centrally at either end. The pits varied in size from 1m deep by 4.5m square to shallow scrapings. In several buildings the end posts had been replaced which suggested rebuilding.

In only one of the sunken featured buildings had the pit bottom been used as a floor surface. In the remaining buildings the pits appear to have been covered with floor boards. The walls of each building lay beyond the pit edges and no archaeological evidence survives for them. Many of these sunken features appear to have been purposely backfilled to avoid the nuisance of open pits close to replacement buildings. However some pits were allowed to fill up gradually as refuse tips for domestic rubbish. In two instances partly backfilled pits were briefly used to protect open fires, possibly for cooking.

Timber post-built structures form the second building category on this site. This category can currently be divided into two distinct building techniques. Firstly, post-built rectangular structures in which the spaces between the uprights would have been filled perhaps with wattle and daub panels. The second technique employed pairs of posts in place of large single posts. Presumably the posts were placed either side of wattle panels. More than ten post-built structures have so far been identified but in many cases only a few of the post-holes had penetrated the topsoil to leave

recognisable traces in the gravel beneath.

This settlement appears to have been finally deserted around the time of the foundation of Abingdon Abbey, itself one of the earliest English monastic foundations. Early charter evidence suggests that Barrow Hills may have been included in the initial 20 hides of land granted to the Abbey in the 670's AD.

ROLLRIGHT - See Warwickshire: Long Compton

SALFORD: Pickwell Close - R A Chambers
(SP 2901 2772; PRN 13,584)

In August 1984 five trial pits and trenches were excavated across earthworks in Pickwell Close, Salford. Substantial stone building remains, glazed roof tiles and 12th - 13th century pottery indicated that the earthworks marked the remains of the manor house of the manor of Pickwell. This manor is first mentioned in the early 13th century. It has been variously spelled Pickel, Pykewell, Pikewell and in 1845 as 'Pickwell Close and Pasture'.

The trial trenching was undertaken by the land owner Mr George Fawdry and members of the Salford Historical Society.

STANTON HARCOURT: Gravelly Guy - George Lambrick
(SP 403054; PRN 8281-6)

Excavations at Gravelly Guy financed by HBMC and MSC continued from July to November 1984. The second halves of almost all the Iron Age features examined last year were excavated. A programme of sieving was undertaken to establish some control on recovery for finds. No spectacular finds were made though two dog burials were recorded. Two large areas not dealt with last year which appeared to have little in them, were fully examined and as expected produced only a scatter of post-holes and the odd pit. One more four-post structure emerged from this together with a possible house site though the only evidence for this is a pair of large post holes suggesting door posts. Further work was also carried out on the complicated series of ditches surrounding the deep Roman well-pit discovered last year.

One piece of salvage work begun last year was also completed. This was the excavation of a series of ploughsoils interstratified with alluvium and sealing the original ground surface on the Windrush floodplain (see section). Since most of the ploughsoil was stratigraphically earlier than the alluvium, any finds within it would indicate the earliest possible date for the alluvium to have started to accumulate. The ploughsoils contained Iron Age pottery and one Roman sherd thus showing that most of the alluvium must be Roman or later. This agrees with the dating of alluvium elsewhere in the Thames valley. On the old ground surface beneath these deposits a transverse flint arrowhead and one or two sherds of possible Neolithic pottery were found. These fit well with the presence of a small henge monument nearby excavated last year, a number of casual finds including a fine greenstone axe, and a couple of small domestic pits found nearby in recent salvage work.

The main effort this year was the excavation of another large area (100 x 60m) adjoining last year's and again kindly stripped for us by the gravel company, Smith and Sons of Bletchington (see General Site Plan). As with the

1983 area the site was sharply divided into an Iron Age half and a Roman half separated by shallow ditches marking what was obviously an important land division in both periods. The Iron Age settlement was tightly confined to a linear strip following the same pattern of dense pits respecting small penannular enclosures which probably mark the positions of houses. In this case there was a ditched boundary to the pits which in one phase turned to cut across the general scatter dividing it into two blocks, similar to the pattern found in last year's area though not so clear-cut. This division was later superceded as the area of pits spread and the undisturbed ground diminished. The very clear division in the blocks of pits found last year was re-emphasised by the discovery of another large post built house (c. 10m in diameter) on the line of the division immediately adjacent to one of last year's houses.

As with last year's excavation the pits on the whole produced only moderate amounts of domestic rubbish. Loom weights and quern stones for grinding corn seem to be common on the site, while bone tools are surprisingly scarce compared with the sites at Ashville, Abingdon or Mount Farm near Dorchester. The site is also exceptional in the area for the number of animal burials, almost all of them dogs. This is particularly true of this year's area where a further ten ritual dog burials have been found, including two double burials. Both long and short tailed breeds are represented. The burials were associated with layers of stones and the presence of other bones possibly suggests the provision of food for the after life. Horse and sheep skulls have also been found, and so has a severed foreleg of a horse. Two adult human burials were found, one with a bone toggle, the other with a fine shale spindle whorl, probably brought to the Thames valley from Kimmeridge in Dorset. Over half a dozen new-born babies have also been found. Among the most interesting finds were two fine brooches, one an early La Tene iron type, the other a middle La Tene bronze penannular brooch similar to one from Maiden Castle.

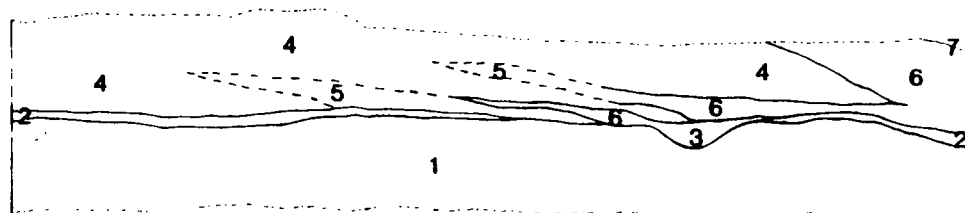
Although the general pattern of the pits respecting small enclosures was maintained, one late development in the Iron Age settlement was the creation of another small enclosure, surrounded by a much deeper ditch than is usual for such features, which overlapped one of the gully enclosures and part of the pit scatter. At its most impressive the surrounding ditch was sharply V-shaped and about six feet deep. At this stage the enclosure had two entrances, one to the east and one facing north-west. The terminals of the ditch on this side contained a concentration of domestic refuse probably from a house enclosure immediately next door which was excavated last year. It is doubtful whether the large enclosure surrounded a house though there were some post holes within it. However, there was not an obvious concentration of domestic rubbish at the eastern entrance as would be expected for a house site. One part of the ditch did contain a concentration of slag, the only instance so far of evidence for metal working being significant.

It still seems likely that this settlement had a predominantly arable agricultural economy whereas the sites at Mingies Ditch, Hardwick (half a mile to the west) and at Watkins Farm, Northmoor (currently under excavation, 1.5 miles to the east) were lower lying, enclosed pastoral farms. Following Humphrey Case's suggestion for Vicarage field (across the road from Gravelly Guy) it seems likely that these dense linear pit scatters mark boundaries between large fields or groups of fields. The dating evidence suggests occupation from around 600-500 BC perhaps till the Roman Conquest, and the layout of the site reveals very strict continuity of functions and layout throughout this period, with settlement features including the numerous pits



GRAVELLY GUY 83-84

SECTION ACROSS PLOUGH-WASH AND ALLUVIUM



INTERPRETATION

Transverse Arrowhead ▼

Flint Flake ▲

? Neolithic Pot ●

Iron Age Pot ■

Roman Pot ◆

Bone ○

Burnt Quartz Pebble ☛

Loam [vertical lines]

Silt [horizontal lines]

Clay [cross-hatch]

Decayed Gravel [dots]

Sand and Gravel [dots and small circles]

Peat [wavy lines]

Charcoal [dots and small circles]

1 : Pleistocene gravel with channel deposits

2 : Pre Iron Age ground surface

3 : ? Natural hollow / tree hole

4 : Ploughwash

5 : Ploughwash and ? alluvium

6 : Alluvium

7 : Modern ground surface

used for storing grain crammed into a narrow strip not encroaching on the fields either side.

In the Roman period one of the adjacent fields was used for paddocks and other features peripheral to an unlocated settlement, while the area of Iron Age occupation was abandoned. This year only part of the Roman area was examined. A fairly neat, largely rectilinear layout of small paddocks was found within the large square enclosure, the corner of which was excavated last year. Another large gravel pit, well or ritual hole, possibly similar to one or other of the somewhat inexplicable features of this type excavated last year, has been uncovered, but there was insufficient time to do more than establish that it is Romano-British. It will require excavation next year. The only probable Roman features within the Iron Age half of the site (none were found last year) were two graves with extended burials, one with coffin nails.

Although no formal open day has been held at the site, several school and college groups were shown round as well as a number of individual visitors. We also had the pleasure of having the assistance of two Rumanian archaeologists, who worked at Gravelly Guy for three weeks, having had a week's archaeological tour round Britain with Tim Allen, who visited Rumania the previous two summers. They seem to have greatly enjoyed their visit and it added much to the success of the exchange.

WALLINGFORD: 68-70 Wood Street - Brian Durham
(SU608 893)

Roger Bettess and TWHAS have dug a small trench to check whether there was early occupation on this back street, which runs parallel to the Market Place and about 35m to the east on the riverward side. The result was about as positive as could be hoped in a trench 2m x 4.5m, with a large pit producing the earliest Late Saxon assemblage known from Wallingford. Provisionally dated by Maureen Mellor to the 10th-early 11th century, the pottery is of the type which was predominant in Oxford in the 9th-10th centuries, and was appearing as far downstream as London in the 10th century.

The significance of this find is twofold: it suggests early activity on Wood Street which may, therefore, have been laid out in the foundation of the town by Alfred: it focuses attention on the many sites of potential redevelopment on this side of the town, which may produce the late Saxon evidence which is inaccessible on the main frontages.

WANTAGE: The Vicarage - Brian Durham
(SU396 879)

It has been the policy of the Unit to look closely at the focal points of the many lesser towns of Oxfordshire, and particularly those with ancient beginnings. Wantage Vicarage occupies the area west of the churchyard with a steep slope down to the Letcombe Brook. It seemed likely that this large area would include evidence of any early settlement in the neighbourhood of the church. A series of four trial trenches were dug in an effort to substantiate this.

The trenches were placed to investigate the south and east frontages of the site, on the premise that these were the most promising areas for early settlement adjoining the churchyard. The vicarage pulled down in the 1840's was in this area, with an access near the corner of the church. Other

GRAVELLY GUY 83-84

GENERAL SITE PLAN

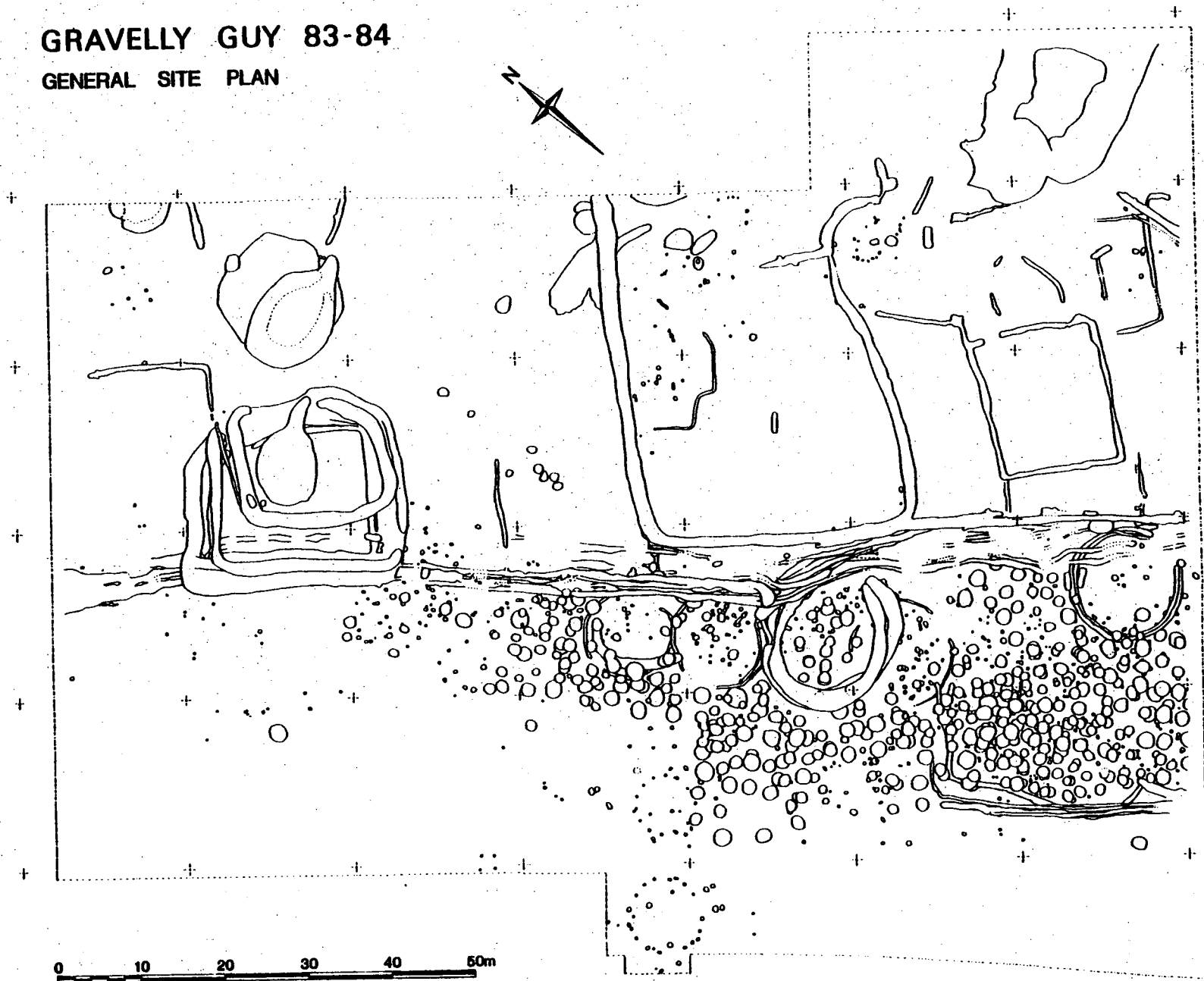


Fig. 27

trenches investigated the terraced site of the proposed replacement vicarage and the north extremity of the lawn west of the existing vicarage. There was evidence of cultivation in all the trenches. In most places this extended down to the surface of the natural Greensand, leaving no early stratigraphy. The only place where a distinctive deposit survived was in the northernmost trench IV. A layer of very smooth dark grey silty loam produced one sandy sherd and one grass-tempered sherd, which suggested an early deposit. Enlargement of this trench failed to produce any more of this material however, and ran into an area of 17th century disturbance. It is possible that the layer was intact in other areas, but would certainly be patchy and there seems little prospect of recovering the sort of sealed deposit which would add anything new to our knowledge of early Wantage.

With this degree of cultivation or other disturbance it can be anticipated that only features dug into the subsoil would be found, and Trench II produced a good ditch of the late 12th-early 13th century. It ran NE-SW at a distance of 8.5m from the existing churchyard boundary, and the length excavated was precisely parallel to it. It seems not to have been the boundary of a larger graveyard, since there was no sign of grave cuts, human bone, or graveyard build-up on the church side. It may, therefore, have defined a lane outside the churchyard, which perhaps at this date led to an original vicarage. The building demolished in the 1840's could well have had medieval origins as shown by a pencil drawing in Wantage Museum. It is not available for excavation since its site was planted with an avenue of lime trees which are to be preserved in the new development.

WITNEY: Cogges Medieval Fishpond - R A Chambers
(PRN 4602; SP 3632 0980)

The first known reference to a fishpond at Cogges dates to 1232 or 1233 when a pond was described as belonging to the Lords of Cogges. Ten years later another document also mentions the pond but this time in greater detail. This has enabled Dr John Blair to define precisely its position as that of a site previously identified as a possible fishpond from earthwork evidence.

In September, the fishpond was sectioned across its width in advance of house building at the request of HBMC. This revealed that a medieval fishpond in this position would not have been rectangular as previously thought, but trapizoidal in plan. The pond was apparently created by constructing two dams across the flood plain of the Madley Brook. Also a bank was constructed along the south-eastern edge of the flood plain to match the height of the north-western edge. The Madley Brook was diverted along a leat which passed to the north of the fish pond. This leat, broadened and deepened in recent times, still carries the brook.

Further survey work has revealed that the dam which presumably formed the head of the pond now lies beneath houses to the NE. The earthworks of what was presumed to be the remains of the demolished NE dam have now been shown to be extensive domestic rubbish dumps deposited during the 19th and early 20th centuries, presumably within the pond.

The positions of the entry and exit sluices which controlled the rate of flow of water through the pond are no longer visible.

The section showed that the base of the pond was level. During this century much earth and building material had been dumped over the whole of the pond area to a depth of several feet in places. This rubble sealed 0.3m - 0.5m of buff, silty clay which covered the bottom of the pond. This bottom

deposit was examined by Dr Mark Robinson who found that only 4% of the molluscs present were aquatic species. The terrestrial molluscs suggested damp, shaded conditions. Such an assemblage might have occurred in a drained and derelict pond overgrown with coarse herbage or scrub. The high percentage of terrestrial molluscs was inconsistent with the deposits accumulating in a water-filled fish pond.

WITNEY: Mount House and Mount Mills: residence of the bishops of Winchester.
(SP35720927)

'The Mount' is a large house in 1.5 acres of garden next to Witney church. It had always been associated with the Witney manor of the bishops of Winchester, but there were no visible signs of ruins to substantiate this and the site was never scheduled. This may explain why there was no archaeological response when a planning application was made to build a complex of retirement homes. The Oxford Unit was, therefore, fortunate that C H Pearce Homes of Bristol permitted trial trenching and then a ten week excavation. The understanding was that the development would proceed immediately thereafter, but the results were so impressive that the District Planning Committee is seeking ways to protect the site.

In broad terms, the garden encloses the east, south and probably west ranges of a large 12th century 'country house', together with the north moat and probably the bridge and gatehouse. The principal private lodgings appear to be a tower solar at the south-east corner, to which was added a full-width latrine block. An antechamber or narrow hall formed the east range and seems to have had a 'chapel' projecting eastwards. The term 'chapel' is applied because of its orientation and exterior roll-moulded pilasters. This complex survives in many places to head-height as a result of having been embanked in the 12th century, and then buried by 18th century landscaping.

The second area of excavation investigated the north range, which was built against the substantial curtain wall. The range had an original wall-fireplace with a roll-moulded surround, but there were also several central hearths within a good accumulation of medieval floor surfaces. A section of the rock-cut moat was excavated, and shown to have been silting steadily since the 13th century.

The documentary background to the site is likely to be as good as any of the manors of the Winchester bishopric. Patricia Hyde used the detailed accounts of the bishops pipe rolls for a B. Litt. thesis on the manorial economy and she has recently transcribed the entries for 1251-52. There are references to the aisle of the hall, the kitchen and the bakehouse, all of which remain to be located by excavation. It will, however, be an enormous task to collate all the references, and this has been deferred until the future of the site is known. If the refusal of planning permission is upheld by the Queen's Bench Division, the site will be purchased by the local authority and will be displayed as an ancient monument. There would logically be some further excavation to assist in display. The remains will never have the grandeur of the Winchester palaces of Wolvesey and Bishops Waltham, but they have the merit of being relatively pure 12th-century work, with little in the way of later rebuilding and modification.

There is no close parallel among excavated sites for a major 12th-century country house built around a court-yard, part of which is embanked as an adulterine castle in the Anarchy. It is the rectilinear terracing of the tower area in both Phases 2 and 3 which promises to be most challenging for both excavation and display. It may be that the site was effectively a

'castle' at this time. For this reason it is difficult to see it as simply a large moated manor, and hence the temptation to follow 18th century antiquarians and refer to it as Witney 'Palace'. An interim report: Witney Palace: Excavations at Mount House, Witney in 1984 by Brian Durham was published and is available from the Oxford Archaeological Unit.

WITNEY: St Mary's Church - R A Chambers
(SP 3562 0923)

Contractors installing new rainwater drains and soak-aways at St Mary's parish church, Witney, have recovered several fragments of decorated floor tile.

The church was extensively rebuilt in the first half of the 13th century when north and south transepts were added. Part of the nave and north porch of the previous Norman church were incorporated in the rebuilding.

The south transept has received extensive alterations since the 13th century, one of which is the blocked arch which formerly led to a chapel on the east side (J. Sherwood and N. Pevsner, Oxfordshire (1974), 845). The excavation of a pipe trench and new soak-away immediately east of the blocked archway revealed several fragmentary, decorated medieval floor tiles. These tiles appeared as a thin layer of rubble over the presumed site of the former chapel floor of which nothing was seen. The chapel floor may have comprised floor tiles laid directly on the raw, natural clay subsoil. No trace of the chapel foundations were seen.

Other Oxfordshire Sites

In addition to the sites described above the Unit was involved in 1984 with a number of other smaller watching briefs and excavations which have been described in the Unit's Newsletter. These included:-

BICESTER, St Edburg's Church: examination of the floor of the north aisle.

CHALGROVE, (SU6360950): watching brief during the laying of drains across an earthwork site.

DIDCOT, site of Vaux Hall (SU5210 9090) excavation by the Didcot and District Historical and Archaeological Society.

DORCHESTER (SU5748 9448): undated inhumation.

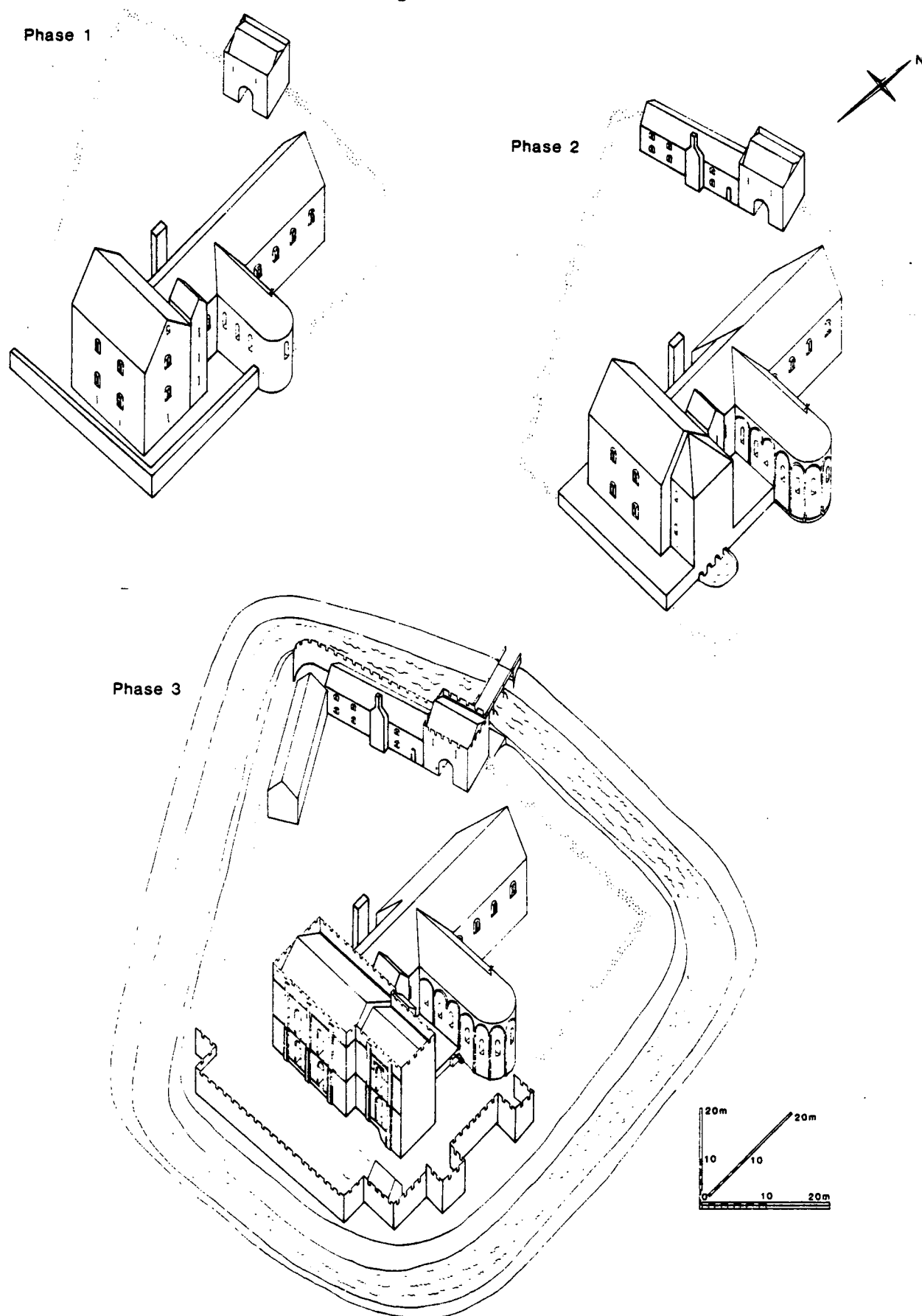
DUCKLINGTON CHURCHYARD (SP 3590 4768): watching brief during trenching adjacent to the 'Manor House'.

KENNINGTON, Old Man's Piece (SP 509 014): fieldwalking on post-medieval kiln site.

KIDLINGTON, Moat Cottage (SP488137; PRN 9219): watching brief on site of partly moated early post-medieval house.

OXFORD, Abingdon Road: survey of Norman arches of the Grandpont.

Fig. 28



WITNEY: Mount House. An exercise in reconstruction of the phases of the development of the palace drawn by Kate Steane. From B. Durham, 'Witney Palace: Excavations at Mount House, Witney in 1984'.

OXFORD, 3 Beaumont Buildings: medieval pottery from gravel quarry or ditch

OXFORD, Broad Street (Exeter College): 17th century pottery from the city ditch.

OXFORD, 9-10 Queen Street: examination of 12th century cellar or pit in watching brief.

OXFORD: 39-41 Queen Street: watching brief.

SOMERTON, the Rectory (SP28754967): watching brief during trenching across a medieval fish pond at Castle Yard.

WALLINGFORD, High Street (SU609 895): observation of street surfaces and central drainage 'kennel'.

Warwickshire

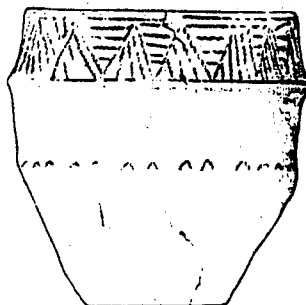
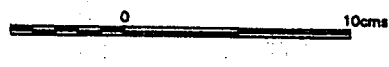
LONG COMPTON: The Rollright Stones - George Lambrick

Excavations with the University Archaeological Society investigating sites round the Rollright Stones for HBMC were brought to completion this year when the remainder of the small barrow west of the King Stone, first examined in 1982, was excavated. A central pit produced burnt bone, but had probably been robbed. However a more peripheral small pit contained a

Fig. 29

LONG COMPTON:

decorated collared urn.



decorated collared urn with cremated bone, providing valuable dating evidence. Immediately adjacent to it was a post hole which had contained a thick plank placed over a further cremation partly occupying a hollowed out void beneath the cremation in the pot.

The excavation also recovered the remainder of the scatter of Mesolithic flint bladelets in the old ground surface beneath what little remained of the barrow mound. With the 1982 material about 180 flints were found, almost all small blades struck from a well prepared core. Almost all had been snapped but show little sign of subsequent working or use. They thus seem to represent a temporary knapping site concerned only with producing bladelets, not primary involving knapping nor final working.

The trench-like feature which produced an assemblage of post glacial woodland snails in 1982 was also further excavated. Its character remains somewhat uncertain but is most likely to be a natural feature rather than being man-made.

In January 1985 a contour survey of the stone circle was carried out by Andrew Mudd and Frances Peters. Preparation of a final report on the project is now well under way.