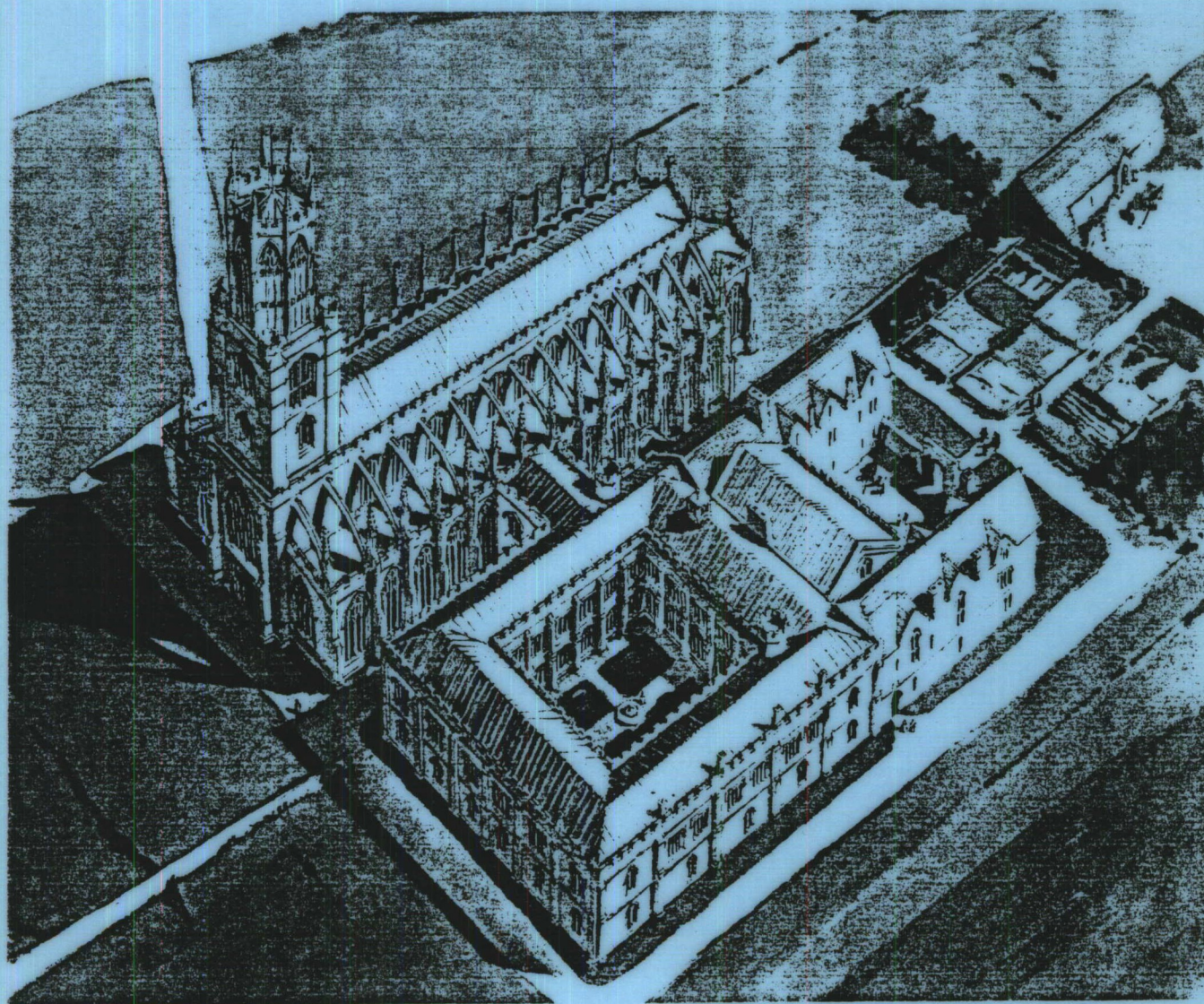

**SOUTH
MIDLANDS
ARCHAEOLOGY**

**22
1992**



**CBA
SOUTH MIDLANDS GROUP
(9)**

SOUTH MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY

The Newsletter of the Council for British Archaeology, South Midlands Group (Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire)

NUMBER 22, 1992

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CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Last year I confused the calendar, financial and SMA years and rather prematurely announced the final fieldwork report from the Milton Keynes Unit. This volume really does include MKAU's very last report.

Over recent years the contents of SMA have been rather dominated by the contributions of the larger archaeological organisations, and it is pleasing to see several papers by individual members in this latest volume. I hope that this is the start of a continuing trend.

The cumulative index (covering the first twenty years of SMA) has now been printed and is available at a very modest price from Barry Horne. The index is an extremely valuable aid to anyone working on the archaeology of this area, so do send in your orders (and cheques please).

It is our intention to continue printing a newsletter, at least for the immediate future. The success of the Newsletter depends to a large extent on the membership submitting notes, news, programmes of forthcoming events and so forth to the editor.

This has been a fairly quiet year for CBA IX or South Midlands as we are now known. The usual annual Spring Conference and AGM were held, in Deddington and Brill. By the time you read this it will be time to start organising the next Spring Conference and ideas for a theme or topic will be very welcome. Otherwise members of the committee commented on a variety of development schemes in the region.

On a more mundane note I am advised by the Treasurer that our finances are still healthy, despite the considerable cost of preparing and printing the Index. Individual membership of the group has continued to increase, slowly but steadily.

The re-organisation of CBA is progressing and with minor changes will follow the pattern and time-table set out in The Report of the Structure and Policy Review Working Party. The majority of the amendments are dictated by the laws controlling charitable status and Incorporation. The major change affecting most members of Regional Groups is the ability to join one or more Regional Groups without joining CBA National. A number of important details such as the cost of membership still remain to be decided. The National body is launching a publicity campaign aimed at increasing both membership and general awareness of the work of CBA, and a range of leaflets and posters are now available.

Finally I would like to thank Stephen Coleman, our retiring Secretary, and all those members of the Committee who are standing down at the end of their three year term of office.

RJI

6th July 1992

REPORT ON SPRING CONFERENCE AT DEDDINGTON, 4 APRIL 1992

by Linda Babb

John Pearman from the Department of Transport's Eastern Regional Office opened the conference by explaining the DoT's current views and procedures in relation to archaeology. Since the white paper *Roads for Prosperity* (1989), there has been an emphasis on expanding existing trunk roads, which includes motorways. The Trunk Road Programme is handled by Regional Offices, of which there are four in CBA South Midland's region. Building a new road can take from two to five years, starting with the investigation of alternative routes, up to the completion of construction.

This initial survey is funded by the DoT, averaging £10,000. English Heritage establish excavation and post-excavation work with DoT grants. In 1991 the figure was £527,000. Separate excavation grants are also considered, as well as re-alignment and raising of roads to preserve an archaeological site. The DoT's Powers of Entry can also be used for an archaeological survey and bore holes, but not for trial trenching. This is a regrettable failure in the law, but the DoT will allow extra time after Land Acquisition for excavation and recording if the previous land owner has refused entry. Groups such as CBA are involved in the early stage of the Public Consultation and, after the Statutory Orders have been published, at the Public Enquiry.

The DoT has to produce a Detailed Assessment of the environmental impact of the road scheme. Archaeologically, this involves English Heritage and the County Archaeologist, with the Sites and Monuments Record providing the initial data base. The quality and quantity of information in the SMR is the critical factor. A Desk-Top Survey and field walking is generally sufficient to identify the preferred corridor. An archaeological consultant is often appointed and English Heritage advise on trial trenching. Unavoidable excavation is also identified.

We were finally reminded that County Councils also build roads, either funded by themselves or the DoT.

Julian Munby described a model Structure of Study resulting from Oxford Archaeological Unit's investigation of the area stretching from King's Cross, London to Cheriton, Kent, which will be affected by the proposed High Speed Rail Link with the Channel Tunnel.

This project highlighted the fact that communication routes, other than roads, threaten archaeological sites and also that the survey must extend beyond the immediate corridor of construction.

Constraints Mapping required the marking of parks, woodlands and gardens. The chronological growth of London was then added and the SMR printed out in kilometre squares. A density of features was thus predicted.

To complete mapping of the cultural heritage, geophysical surveys and field walks were undertaken. Listed buildings and buildings shown on the 1st edition of the 6" OS were included in order to pinpoint farmhouses and village centres. Routes between old villages were marked and features such as cemeteries, quarries, ponds, coal posts (tax points for bringing coal into London) and conservation areas added. The OAU also considered the impact of the Link Scheme on existing inhabitants and were involved in grading land.

Unfortunately, road and rail routes which deliberately avoided archaeological sites in the past, now create problems by forcing new routes onto sites.

Julian ended by briefly describing the OAU's work on the third Blackwall Tunnel in London, which resulted in the discovery of the 1656 dock, and on various sites in Oxfordshire.

Mike Dawson, Bedfordshire County Council, continued the theme of the overall evaluation of an area and emphasised the need for personal contact with land owners and tenants.

Work on the spatial distribution of Iron Age and Romano-British settlement in Bedfordshire has produced a pattern of tight settlement and indications of Iron Age to Romano-British continuity in the countryside.

At Stagsden, kilns comparable with those at Caldecotte, Milton Keynes, have been found; also storage pits, and enclosure ditch, a well and child burial.

Because of the need to work quickly and not hinder expensive machinery, a feature sampling policy is used during excavation.

Mike Farley, Buckinghamshire County Museum, reviewed the variety of sites and problems which road construction has brought to light in Buckinghamshire.

At Thornborough the new road coincided with a Roman road and ford. In 1983 advance work on the M25 revealed a Mesolithic site at Iver and reculverting exposed 2.5 m of alluvial deposit, which permitted environmental sampling from the Late Ice Age to the present.

Field walking along the M25 Misbourne Viaduct found Late Neolithic/Bronze Age flintwork. However, Mesolithic working floors were only revealed by trenching, two days before destruction.

A completely unexpected site, in topographical terms, occurred when the Denham kilns were found on a 100 m square gravel island on a flooded valley bottom site. This would have been missed by large scale sampling. Other unexpected sites include the multi-period site at Wavendon Gate, Milton Keynes; Tickford Field Iron Age site at Newport Pagnell and an Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Tattenhoe. Previously predicted Roman sites nevertheless led to extensive surveys. The Amersham By-Pass cut through a landscape of the type now recognised as

associated with villas and with metal working in the Chilterns. At Magiovinium a linear settlement of small workshops, hostelrys and cemeteries, outside the defended area of the town, has become apparent through accumulative results from separate areas of investigation.

The limitations of the SMR and the importance of advance trial trenching were reiterated. The importance of archaeological interests getting as high up the planning ladder as possible was also stressed.

After lunch and a tour of Deddington, Tim Sharman of the Northamptonshire Unit added another class of 'route' which causes destruction. V-drains have sliced through sites such as a medieval leat and a tile kiln. Ancillary works like contractors' site compounds and car parks permit little time for proper investigation. Returning to roadway construction, the variety of prehistoric to medieval sites excavated along the A605, A45, A508 and the M1-A1 Link Road, were described. Two novel problems were discussed. The (probable) Romano-British cemetery at Wheatley was subjected to the fall-out ash from site bonfires, which ruined the chance of carbon-14 dating on several skeletons and secondly, the historically celebrated site at Naseby presented a strong claim for preservation, but could produce no archaeological evidence.

The official part of the programme concluded with Bob Kings, on behalf of the Midlands Archaeological Research Society, talking about the work of metal detectorists at Middleton Cheney and Naseby. He emphasised the

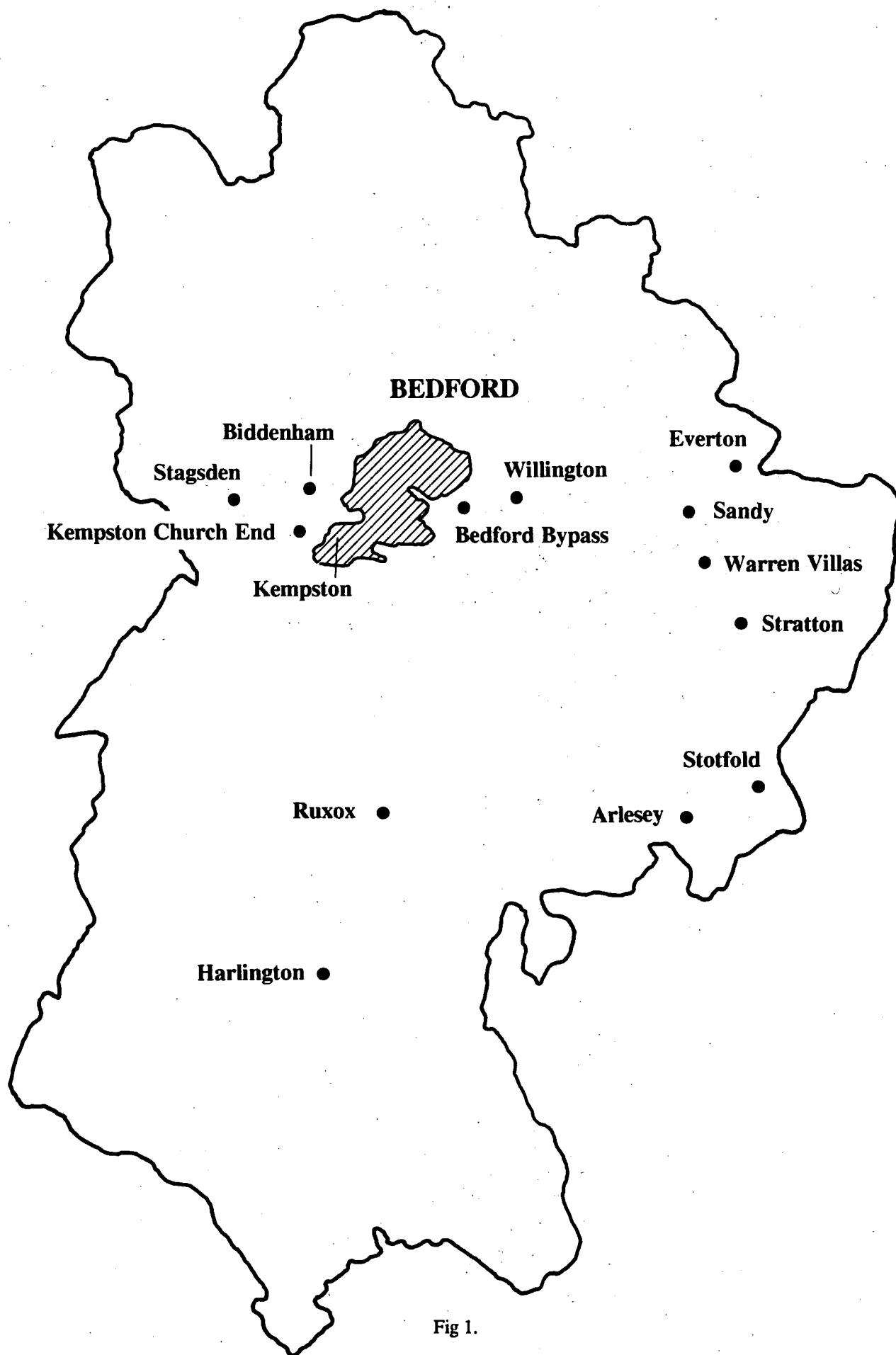
importance of talking to local people, to discover the extent of land moving, establishment of tips and what objects had been found.

Public reports from members came firstly from Renwick Hudspeth of the Manshead Archaeological Society.

Their method of field walking and recording finds was described. Mapping finds chronologically has indicated settlement patterns. For example, Mesolithic flint scatters occur along ridges near streams; Neolithic and Bronze Age flint clusters north of Luton may indicate drifting of agricultural sites; Iron Age/Romano-British sites are regularly distributed regardless of geology indicating land allotment. The distribution of later occupation echoes this same pattern.

The conference ended with Stan Cauvain of the Chess Valley Archaeological & Historical Society explaining his scientific analyses of medieval ceramics from South Buckinghamshire. He uses two methods: neutron activation analysis and atomic absorption spectroscopy. The sites under investigation are Ley Hill, Penn, Tylers Green and Hedgerley. A star diagram of six elements gives a chemical fingerprint for each kiln site. Unfortunately, the method is not yet absolute.

An English Heritage dig at Windsor Castle gave an opportunity to relate Penn tiles there to Tylers Green A & D sites.



BEDFORDSHIRE

COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICE

PLANNING AND PRESERVATION

Angela Simco and Stephen Coleman

Sites Monuments and Buildings Record

Work began on the development of a new SMBR database system, using dBase IV. This is designed to be a bridging stage, with the ultimate aim being to adopt a more powerful relational database package, such as ORACLE which is now in use by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments' National Archaeological Record.

All the records dealing with information on the Roman period have been microfilmed, and a copy deposited with the National Archaeological Record.

Inquiries to the Record, both for academic purposes and for general interest, have almost doubled over the year.

Countryside Strategy

The County Council's countryside enhancement schemes have continued to incorporate an archaeological and historic dimension. Historic landscape analyses have been contributed to a number of farm plans, and interpretative information to leaflets produced by the Leisure Services Department.

Various tree-planting schemes are now being devised as part of the Marston Vale Community Forest. These take account of archaeological constraint areas, and of the opportunity to enhance particular features of historic landscape importance.

Discussion have taken place with other interested parties in connection with the Countryside Commission's Countryside Stewardship Scheme, with a view to incorporating enhancement schemes for archaeological and historic features.

Bridge repairs

A major scheme of stonework repair has been undertaken at Turvey Bridge, on the A428 between Bedford and Northampton. The structural sequence, originating in the medieval period, has been confirmed and clarified. It has been interesting to note that the two arches of turnpike date were in a much more serious structural condition than the medieval parts of the bridge.

Chambers' Bridge in Woburn Park is in the process of being repaired by the Bedford Estate. It was originally constructed in Totternhoe clunch with brick soffits, with signs of some

refacing in Portland stone. Its poor condition has been shown to be due largely to this refacing exercise. The Bedford Estate in the 19th century experimented with the use of cement in building works from a very early period. The Portland stone at Chambers Bridge had been fixed with iron cramps, and grouted from above with neat cement. The iron corrosion, and the differential strengths between the stone and the cement, set up serious structural problems which are now being put right.

EXCAVATION AND POST-EXCAVATION

Dog Farm, Willington (TL 097 499)

Royston H Clark with T A Jackman

Evaluation excavations at Dog Farm, Willington confirmed the presence of a group of ring ditches clearly seen as cropmarks. Remarkably, many of the features were reflected on the ground surface by lush clover growth. These sites were well preserved and contained numerous associated features which included post-holes, pits and larger features interpreted as quarrying pits. One ring ditch had an internal pennanular ditch, although it was not possible to interpret whether this was a later feature. No human burials were found during the excavation, although a geophysical survey indicated further pits that were not investigated.

The geophysical survey also located a large spread of possible occupational material close to the nearby river (the Elstow Brook). This buried soil contained evidence for burning and could be contemporary with the nearby ring ditches. The area close to the river also produced ditches containing neolithic or Bronze Age pottery. Environmental material included charred fragments of *Triticum dicoccum* and spelt wheat.

Ruxox (TL 054 364)

Royston H Clark with T A Jackman

Excavations at Ruxox near the town of Ampthill were conducted in advance of the construction of an Anglian Water Services water main. The area surrounding the excavations is well known for an extensive Roman settlement and had been excavated by local archaeologists, including the Ampthill and District Archaeological Society, over the last 50 years. In the past, waterlogged deposits, a possible Roman temple and further settlement evidence were all recorded. It has been suggested that a Roman villa occupied the present location of a farmhouse (*Fadden pers comm*).

The current excavations produced an extensive range of field ditches, together with industrial activity associated with copper alloy and iron smelting. A complete crucible with traces of copper alloy was found in association with other metal working debris. Also excavated was an extensive cemetery with over 30 Roman inhumations. Cremations were also recorded. Outside the cemetery area a further inhumation contained a group of three small pots,

one of which contained a jet and glass necklace together with other fragments of jewellery. Large quantities of pottery from the 1st to the 4th century, together with animal bone, suggest an extensive settlement close to the route of the pipeline.

South of the main settlement area, an old course of the river Flit was recorded and pollen samples taken suggest a Roman date for the deposits. This area has important potential for understanding the environment and possibly aspects of the Roman economy. Pollen was also preserved in nearby deposits that might relate to the Roman temple. Pipe clay figurine fragments were also found in this deposit. The pipeline also located the edges of old excavation trenches making it possible to relate this work with previous excavations. Initial interpretations would suggest that occupation at Ruxox continued from the late Iron Age to the sixth century.

Bedford Southern Bypass (TL 090 495)
Royston H Clark with A Maull

Further evaluation work was conducted in the area of Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial sites (and reported in the last edition of *SMA*). A geophysical survey (conducted by Geophysical Surveys of Bradford) covered the main area of mortuary enclosures and an adjacent area to the north. It confirmed the presence of the enclosures together with further features not visible from cropmark photographs. New information included additional ring ditches and possibly traces of an internal bank to one of the ring ditches. Ring ditches already recorded revealed central features that might consist of burials. In addition ditches systems of similar alignment to the enclosures were also recorded. One mortuary enclosure also revealed internal "pit" features.

In addition to the geophysical survey, a fieldwalking programme produced flintwork of broadly neolithic and early Bronze Age. Limited transect excavation was also begun and will be completed in the autumn of 1992. One transect did confirm the presence of two internal features within one of the enclosures. These consisted of irregular pits containing very little artefactual material apart from some flint flakes.

Biddenham Loop (centred TL 0248)
Royston H Clark and W Boismier

A major fieldwalking project has been undertaken over the whole of an area enclosed by the river Ouse to the west of Bedford. It is expected that the results, together with that of subsequent stages of fieldwork, will be reported next year.

Sandy (TL 179487)
Michael Dawson with A Maull

The fourth and final season at the Roman settlement of Sandy was completed in the autumn of 1991.

The excavations concentrated on the west side of the previous season's trenches. In chronological order, the earliest evidence for settlement activity came from a silted stream course which had been used as the focus for the deposition of over thirty Iron age coins, including a gold stater of Tasciovanus. This evidence appears to complement the discovery of a large sculptured relief during the 1989 season, and thus indicate the continued use of Sandy as a place of some veneration from the late Iron age on.

Structural evidence showed the continuation of the pattern observed in previous years with houses ranged alongside a gravel trackway. These appeared to originate in wooden framed structures set on cill beams which were later replaced by the use of dwarf foundation walls. Adjacent to the houses were gravelled courtyards. In previous years' excavations, hearths had been more evident. Along the bank of the stream and contributing to its silting up was an extensive dump of ashy material which in this year's work was found to contain metalliferous slags and fragments of clay moulds, one still retaining a fragment of copper alloy.

The high level of finds recovery continued. As the site moves into the post excavation assessment stage economic and structural evidence will be at the forefront of analysis.

Stagsden (TL 490985 centre)
Michael Dawson with S Robinson

The construction of the Stagsden bypass by Bedfordshire County Council led to the excavation of a late pre-Roman Iron Age settlement situated on a south facing slope overlooking a minor tributary of the Ouse. In addition recording of ditches and pits adjacent to a possible Roman farmstead west of Stagsden was undertaken before road building.

The eastern site produced evidence of a settlement which was enclosed within a bank and ditch and comprised two or more round houses which had been rebuilt on the same site at least once. Probably contemporary with the houses were several storage pits cut into a vein of cornbrash which outcropped on the east side of the village. In addition the site produced four kilns of probable 1st century AD date from which came pottery of a type similar to that found at Caldecote, Milton Keynes.

Later ditches and a well indicate some shift of settlement during the Roman period.

Arlesey - Stotfold Bypass (TL 13NE - TL 23 NW)
Michael Dawson with A Maull

Assessment work on the route of the bypass around these two east Bedfordshire towns began in April with geophysical survey and fieldwalking. Following a desk top study of documentary sources three areas of interest were pinpointed. Two were close to sites of Roman and prehistoric date whilst the third was an apparent blank. The

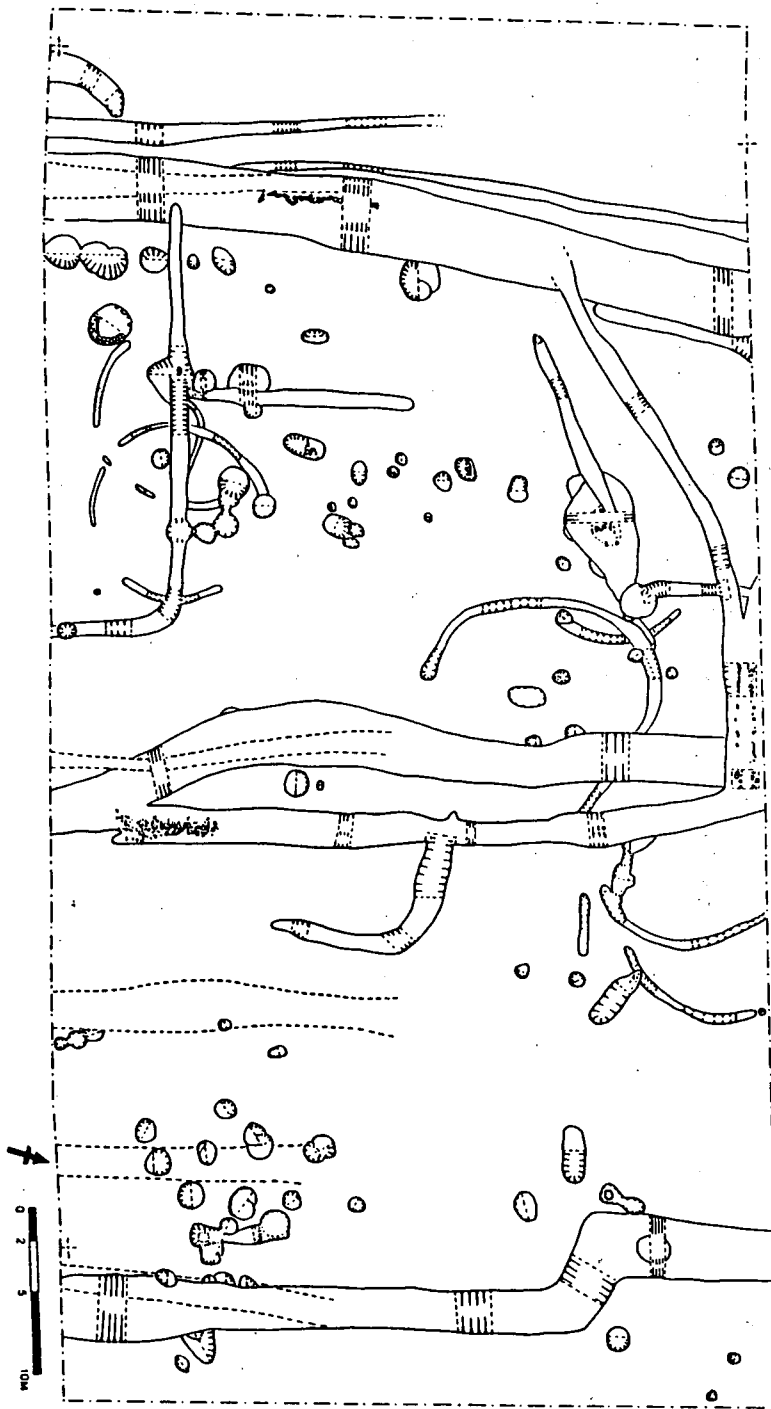


Fig 2. Stagsden.

area from which no previous evidence of past activity had been recovered was intensively fieldwalked: analysis of the evidence continues but one recovered item of particular note was a neolithic polished stone axe found close to the Pix Brook north of Arlesey.

Harlington Quarry (TL 030300)
Michael Dawson with T A Jackman

Two periods of assessment and evaluation work have now been completed at Harlington Quarry after the discovery of a badly damaged 1st century AD cremation. In all 10

cremations have now been recovered along with sufficient information from the assessment work to indicate the extent of the cemetery and possibly some of the surviving structural features from activity close by. The noteworthy feature of this site is the presence of early Claudio-Neronian samian ware from at least two of the cremation groups.

Warren Villas Quarry (TL 180 473 SMBR 3527)

Michael Dawson with A Maull

Continued extraction of gravel at this site (see SMA 1991) revealed the remains of an early Romano-British kiln site adjacent to a settlement identified from salvage work on a quarry access route in 1990. The site is presently being written up for publication in the *Journal of Roman Pottery Studies*.

Everton Kiln (TL 205 512)

Michael Dawson with T A Jackman

A small housing development in the village of Everton on the greensand ridge in east Bedfordshire revealed the remains of a single mediaeval kiln site. The pottery, tentatively dated to the 14th and 15th century, has been noted on excavations on the nearby deserted mediaeval village of Stratton (see note by Shotliffe *infra*).

Kempston (TL 022 473)

Michael Dawson

During the construction of an extension to a house built in the late 1920s the owner (Mr Holly) discovered the remains of a late Roman cemetery. 9 graves were excavated but contained no grave goods apart from some charcoal. All the graves were aligned east west.

Kempston Church End (TL 015482)

Michael Dawson with M Luke

The construction of the western branch of Bedford's southern orbital sewer led first to assessment work along the route in 1989. This identified several areas of archaeological interest and the pipeline route was diverted to avoid some of them. However extensive topsoil stripping still uncovered the remains of a Roman villa in the area of Kempston Church and salvage excavations of the latest phases followed whilst negotiations to rebury the site went ahead.

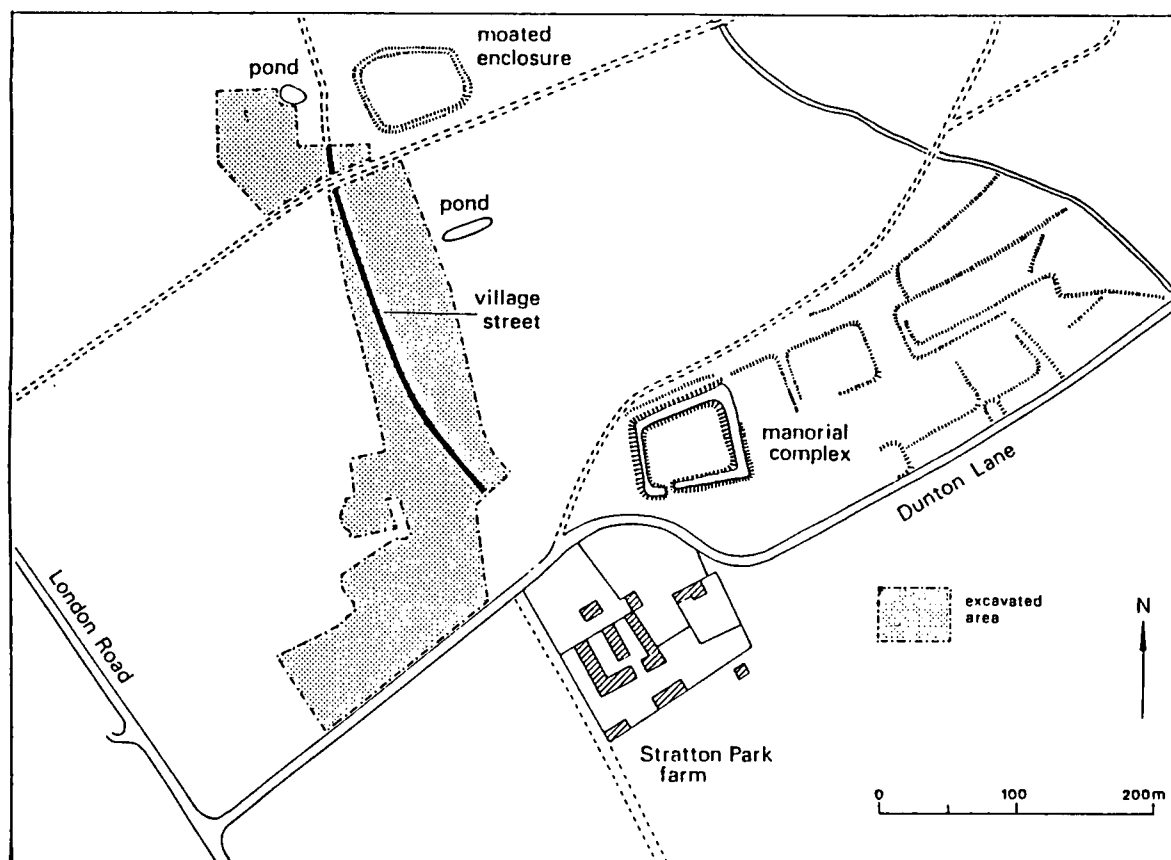


Fig 3. Stratton.

The outcome was four weeks of intense excavation which recovered the remains of probably one wing of a villa, an area of wells, paths and trackways adjacent to the villa and a cemetery. The cemetery appears to have been in use in the Roman period and in the 7th century. Evidence for the latter came from a burial containing as grave goods a necklace comprising amethysts and glass beads joined by silver rings. A small hand made vessel was also found in the grave.

Of the villa building only the latest phases were examined: these included demolition horizons, the remains of a mortar bonded limestone wall and some robber trenches. Post excavation work will start in the summer of 1992.

Stratton Deserted Medieval Village
(TL 205 438, SMR 518)
Drew Shotliffe

The background to this site and the results of the initial archaeological evaluation were described in last year's *SMA*, pp 20-21. Since September 1991 a large scale, open area excavation, jointly funded by English Heritage and Bedfordshire County Council, has been underway in advance of housing development. The results to date are summarised in this note.

Excavation strategy was determined by two main factors. The actual area under threat from the development was very considerable; the evaluation had suggested that between 60% and 70% of the 10 hectare development site contained archaeological deposits. In addition, ploughing had

completely destroyed any village earthworks. Accordingly, it was decided to adopt a broad brush approach to the site, by mechanically stripping topsoil to provide large open areas, which could be planned and selectively excavated, thereby determining the layout, date and function of the various parts of the whole village.

To date, over four hectares of the village have been examined in detail. Initial results indicate a more intensive and complex sequence of occupation than originally anticipated. The bulk of the finds date to the 10th to 14th centuries, with some traces of early and middle Saxon occupation.

Throughout its life the layout of the village was determined by a north-south running, spinal street, flanked by ditches and cobbled in its latest phases. A number of narrower, ditched trackways led off at right angles from this main street.

Rectilinear enclosures, defined by substantial ditches, extended up to 75m from both sides of the main street, delineating individual properties. One such enclosure, currently under excavation, contains three post-built "long-houses", dating to the Saxo-Norman period. These structures measure 15 m x 5 m and feature opposed entrances in the centre of the long axis, together with internal partitions. They are also associated with a number of smaller, ancillary post-built structures. A further four enclosures with similar, though less well preserved, structural remains can be attributed to the same period.

In parts of the site these earlier buildings and enclosures were clearly overlain by later enclosures, which appear to form part of a reorganisation of the village, possibly taking place in the 12th or 13th century. Further evidence for the medieval period comes from a small group of burials (on the northern fringe of the excavated area) which may have pinpointed the location of the documented fourteenth century chapel of St Mary.

At the southern end of the site, approximately 125m west of the manorial complex (probably representing the centre of the 12th- 14th century manor of Stratton) the foundations of a partially stone-built Tudor mansion have been uncovered. This building was surrounded by gravelled courtyards and appears to have had an associated bakehouse and ornamental garden features.

The latest activity on site is represented by extensive gravel quarrying towards the south-western corner of the development area. This appears to date to the 18th and 19th centuries and may be associated with the turnpiking of the A1 (London Road) or the construction of the railway.

LUTON MUSEUM SERVICE

by Robin Holgate

With the recession in the building trade, there has been limited construction work on sites of known archaeological interest in Luton. Over the last few months. However, two small watching briefs were undertaken during late 1990 and 1991 that are worth reporting.

1. Rear of 178, Biscot Road (TL082226)

Human skeletal remains were uncovered when the foundations for an extension to the rear of 178, Biscot Road were dug in September 1991. They occurred at a depth of 1 - 1.2 m on the eastern edge of the garden and could thus continue into the neighbouring garden. As two matching lower left mandible fragments were recovered, they represent the remains of two adults buried together. There were no objects found associated with the burial but the wear patterns on the teeth suggest that the skeletons are at least pre-Victorian in date. Given that the known southern edge of the Argyll Avenue fifth-sixth centuries Saxon cemetery is situated about 200 m to the north, it is possible that the skeletal remains are Saxon in date and associated with the Argyll Avenue/Biscot Mill Saxon cemeteries.

2. Rear of 8, Birdsfoot Lane (TL082253)

Birdsfoot Lane lies on the eastern edge of the Romano-British settlement that developed on the Icknield Way in north Luton during the third and fourth centuries. Archaeological investigations to the north-west of Birdsfoot Lane at Goosebury Hill and Leamington Road (*Manshead Magazine* 30 (1990) 1-28; *Bedfordshire Archaeology* 19 (1991) 82-3) have produced the remains of timber buildings, pits, a road surface and human burials. As foundations for

bungalows were being dug in March 1991 on the land to the rear of 8 Birdsfoot Lane, the opportunity was taken to see if traces of Romano-British settlement continued further to the east. In the event, no archaeological features or objects were found, suggesting that the Romano-British settlement did not continue to the east of Goosebury Hill.

MANSHEAD ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Wellington Terrace

Dave Warren

Not the largest campaign we've ever engaged in, nor in the event the most interesting, but a useful little exercise none the less. Wellington Terrace is a very pleasant little group of six terraced cottages off Britain Street.

Our dig was in the garden of no. 3 courtesy of Mr. Neal Dawson, the owner, who was first contacted by Renny Hudspeth via a slightly involved means in the Arndale. The bottom of the garden has a common boundary with properties on the High Street which were once the Dunstable workhouse. This would have been the place whence Oliver Twist came had Dickens really meant Dunstable.

The first cut revealed traces of several previous boundaries all parallel to the High Street and doubtless there are more closer still. This process of 'boundary wander' which we have observed elsewhere (such as Pond Cottage) is still in evidence today. A new panel fence has been erected nearly a metre east of a rather dilapidated one which evidently belongs to the High Street property.

Cut 1 first revealed the brick foundations of a modern greenhouse which fitted the cut so neatly that the tops of the baulks were brick lined. There was a loose laid tile floor up the middle, sadly not of nice medieval ones, but plain red or blue/black. The top half metre or so of soil was a very black 'ashy' layer, rather granular and loose. Finds, such as they were, included a worn 1916 penny. The whole layer, which covers the entire garden, is 20th century make up. This gave way to a rather browner soil now immortalised by John Hitchcock, using a Dulux colour chart, as The 'Wistfulness' layer. It contained a small amount of later 19th century material and went down to natural chalk: it is obviously the original soil of the area. All the Roman and Medieval pottery from the layer put together would not make a small egg cup; indeed the material of both periods from all three cuts and the spoil heap could be held comfortably in one hand. The lack of Roman may be due to the site being outside their area of occupation. The dearth of Medieval however, is perhaps due to the 'free floating' boundary already mentioned and possibly use of the area as a horse paddock where sharp sherds or pits would not be welcome. The traces of older boundaries at the bottom of cut 1 were not very substantial. The latest, apparently post-medieval, was a thin line of Totternhoe stone and pegtile fragments with indications that this was a wall core which once had dressed stone facings and possibly lean-to buildings on the street side. Below and

slightly to one side was a post-pad of several pegtiles mortared together, also several postholes (one quite deep) of indeterminate date and a possible palisade trench to the west.

In cut 2 only a row of small stake-holes at the south end indicated anything possibly earlier than modern, although Joan Schneider did excavate a rather amorphous hole which contained a coarse 'Roman'? sherd and may have been a posthole but looked rather more in the nature of tree root origin. Cut 3 produced no ancient features at all and only a few Roman and Medieval sherds. All three cuts had several square-cut pits, or, as was certainly the case with most of them, postholes containing the black earth of the upper imported build up layer. The one really interesting feature lay in, and between, cuts 2 & 3 This was a rubbish deposit for which preliminary study of the clay pipes it contained indicates a date early in the 1850s. The Duke, after whom the cottages were named, died in 1852 which suggests they were built about this time. The pipes are mostly of the Churchwarden type, a few are unmarked, five were made by Bishop of Leighton Buzzard but most (at least 10) by someone with the initials B L on the spur. Despite the co-incidence these represent forename and surname not surname and place. No one in Bedfordshire or any of the surrounding counties who is known to have made pipes ever had these initials. The only candidate at all likely was one Benjamin Leech of Whitechapel London who, amongst the hundreds over the centuries who made pipes, was the only one with those initials. His 'known' date range is 1844-47. Churchwardens are a long cool 'Gentleman's' smoke as opposed to the stubbier, more practical working man's pipe. Together with the pottery which included blue transfer and hand painted 'Tea service' wares they indicate a relatively well-to-do household. So do the bones which in many cases appear to represent quite large cuts of meat and include numerous duck skulls. It will be a very instructive exercise to discover just how much can be researched and deduced from this rubbish of a period so near our own time.

Two items are of special interest: a glass bottle once containing 'Nortons Camomile PILLS', (when and where were they made?, and half a tiny ceramic pot. This proclaims itself as 'POOR MANS FRIEND' 'price 1/1 1/2'. A little under 6p today but at the time perhaps a day's wage for a labourer, hardly very friendly. Also did one rub it on ones body or spread it on one's bread? If anyone knows, please let me know!

That the householder at the time was a butcher has been suggested to account for the bones and (being fairly well off therefore,) for the other material as well. Occupation and status of various tenants or owners is another possible line of research. An alternative suggestion (mine) is that since the date of the deposit is apparently so close to that of the construction of the properties, it is the debris from the first and most memorable house warming party!

Fieldwalking 1991

Renny Hudspeth

Chalgrave

Introduction

The Society fieldwalked land at Chalgrave during October 1991. The 2 km² area walked comprises a block of land from Wingfield to Chalgrave church, on the higher clay covered ground to the west; and gently sloping land around Chalgrave Manor farm, forming the drainage basin of the River Flitt, on chalk marl to the east.

The main find site areas are illustrated in Fig 1. A brief note and discussion of finds is given below.

Mesolithic

A concentration of finds, mainly blade fragments and cores, came from along a low ridge to the south of Chalgrave Manor Farm (Fig. 1, 1). Small scatters occurred along the ridge near Chalton (close to an identified mesolithic site, see *Manshead Journal* 31) and on the south facing slope at Lords Hill.

Neolithic and Bronze Age

A late neolithic site appears to overlie the mesolithic site near Chalgrave Manor Farm (Fig. 1, 2). The finds include side scrapers, piercers, cutting pieces and debitage. An ochreous coloured, polished flint axe fragment (reworked for re-hafting) was found nearby. About 500 m to the east of the flintworking site a Beaker period flint dagger (Fig 2) was found, perhaps once part of a funerary deposit.

Iron Age

A large scatter of pottery, with a date range from early to late Iron Age, has been found on the south facing slopes near Wingfield; adjacent to and underlying a Roman site (Fig. 1, 7). Scatters of Belgic pottery suggest an Iron Age site underlying the Roman site near Chalgrave Manor Farm (Fig. 1, 3).

Romano-British

A previously unrecorded Romano-British site was found to the south of Chalgrave Manor Farm, with finds discovered in fields either side of the modern trackway (Fig. 1, 4). The finds included fragments of tegula, imbrex and flue tile; potsherds, quernstone and bone fragments. The pottery suggests a date range of 1st-4th centuries; with samian, colour coated wares, a fragment of a Nene valley ware mortarium and late Roman shellgrit wares.

To the east of the main site a well preserved Roman barrel lock was found. The occasional finds of potsherds and tile continued (probably indicating cultivated areas or outlying buildings) to the known site at Chalton (Fig. 1, 6).

The Roman site at Wingfield, identified last year (*Journal* 31), was seen to extend across the hillslope to the east (Fig 1, 8). The finds suggest a date range of 1st-4th centuries, with decorated samian, local sandy greywares and late Roman shellgrit wares. Other finds included a large

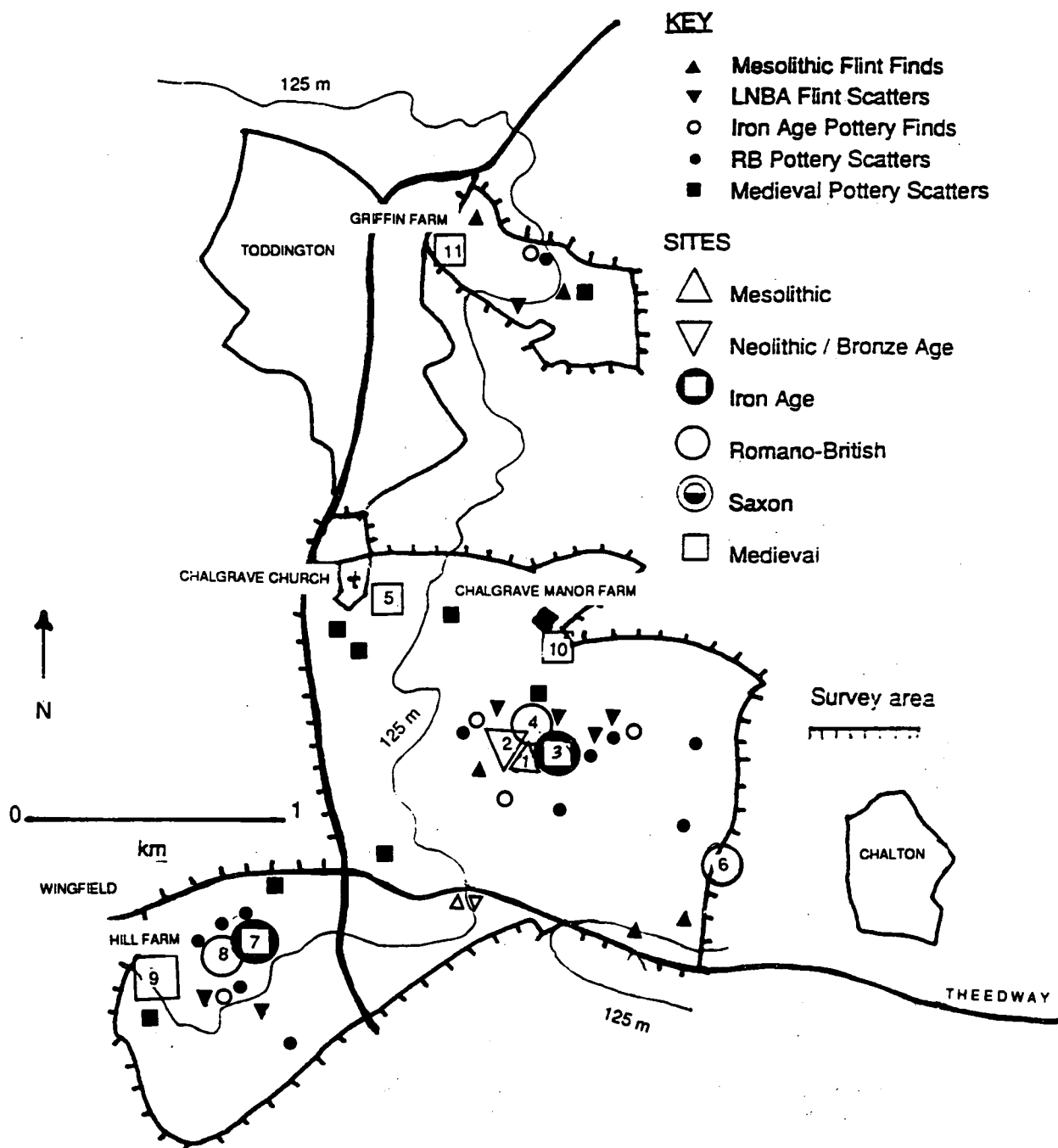


Fig. 1 Gazetteer

1 TL 016267 Mesolithic flint scatters.

2 TL 015268 Late Neolithic-Bronze Age flint scatters, Iron Age and Roman sherds.

3 & 4 TL 016268 Iron Age (late) and Roman sites. Sherds, tile, quernstone fragments and bone. Possible Saxon and scatter of Medieval sherds.

5 TL 008275 Ploughed out Motte and Manorial hamlet, sherd, tile and stone scatters.

6 TL 023264 Chalton Roman Site, sherd, tile, stone scatters, soil and cropmarks.

7 TL 005261 Wingfield Iron Age site. Early-late Iron Age sherds and burnt stones.

8 TL 004261 Wingfield Roman site, overlays Iron Age site. Sherds, tile, quernstone fragments and stone scatters.

9 TL 001259 Hill Farm, Wingfield, Deserted Medieval Settlement site (ploughed out). Sherds, tile and stone scatters.

10 TL 016273 Chalgrave Manor.

11 TL 011289 Conger Hill Motte.

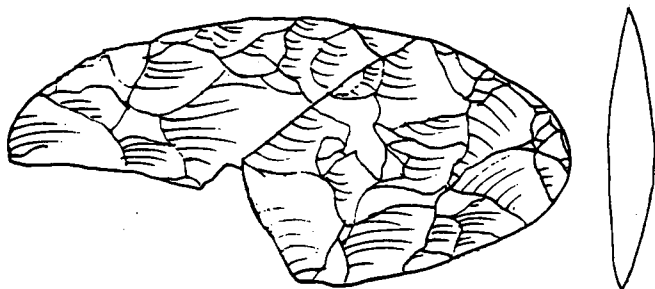


Fig 2. Flint dagger.

(conglomerate) quernstone fragment as well as tegulae (including shellgrit types) and hypocaust tile. Roman tile fragments were also found at Hill farm deserted medieval village. The re-use of Roman tile, if only as hardcore on medieval sites, has been noted at Caddington (Journal 30).

Medieval

A few sherds, possibly Saxon in date, were found with Roman and Medieval potsherds near Chalgrave Manor Farm and may suggest continuity of land use in this area.

The pottery finds at Hill Farm mainly came from the area of ploughed out building platforms (Coleman, 1986) and not scattered across the fields.

A similar observation was made about the medieval pottery finds from the ploughed out motte site near Chalgrave Church (Pinder and Davison, 1988) (Fig. 1, 5). The pottery from Wingfield and Chalgrave has a suggested date range of 11th-14th centuries, with both sites yielding quantities of developed St. Neots type shelly wares, grey and brown sandy wares and a few fragments of green glazed wares

Post Medieval

A generally thin scatter of material, tile, brick, glass and potsherds indicates post medieval manuring scatters. Denser scatters were noted around Church Cottage, Chalgrave

Church, New Barn and along the Wingfield road, indicating the sites of former buildings.

Conclusion

The fieldwalking survey of Chalgrave Manor Farm has indicated a possible multi period find site of Mesolithic, Neolithic-Bronze Age, Iron Age and Romano-British dates. It has also indicated a possible late Neolithic burial site. At Wingfield a large Iron Age and Romano-British site has been discovered on the hillslope close to the trackway known as Edeway, which appears to have been an important ridgeway route from prehistoric times.

References

- Coleman S R, 1986; *Chalgrave: Bedfordshire Parish Surveys, Historic Landscape and Archaeology*: 6
 Pinder A and Davison B, 1988: "The excavation of a Motte and Bailey Castle at Chalgrave, Beds", 1970. *Beds Archaeology* Vol. 18.
 Hudspith R, 1991 & 92; "Fieldwalking at Caddington", *Manshead J* 30 & 31
 Hudspith R, 1992; "Fieldwalking at Houghton Regis", *Manshead J* 31

Limbury

During 1991 observations were made along the route of a new water pipeline at Limbury (Fig 3). A few sherds of medieval pottery and several worked flints were found at TL 073 244 about 200 m north of the Black Swan Lane site (*Manshead Journal* 30, p34).

Near the Icknield Way (TL 073 245) on the north side of the River Lea, a larger scatter of medieval potsherds was found along with animal bone fragments, probably representing refuse from a domestic site. This may well have been the site of one of the several water mills situated along the Lea in Medieval times.

There was also a scatter of chalk blocks, either evidence of flimsy foundations or, more likely, clunch block field drains. (As noted at Barton; *Manshead Journal* 30, p30). The

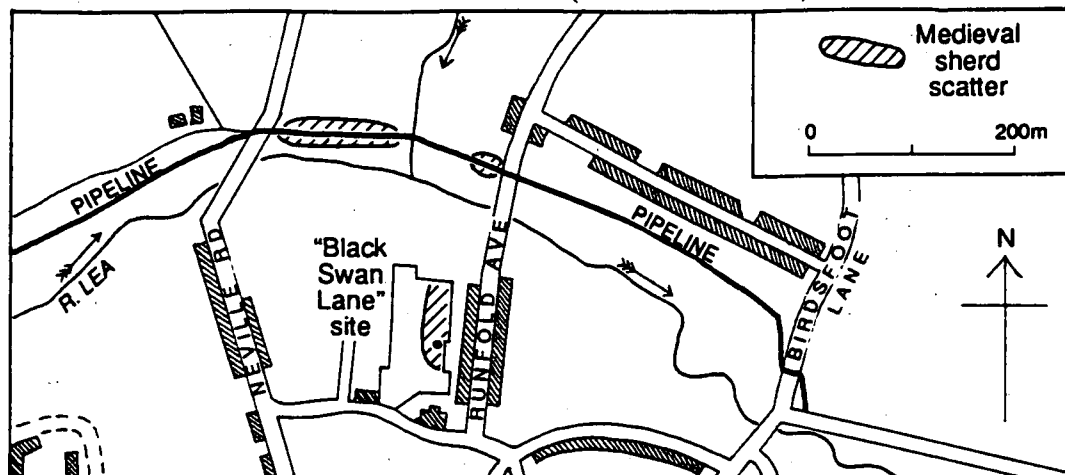


Fig 3. Limbury pipeline.

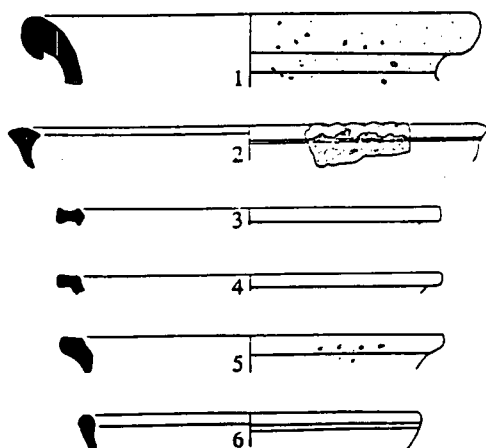


Fig 4 Pottery from Limbury. Scale 1:4.

1. Jar, hook rim, brown shell-grit tempered, Romano-British TL 080240
- 2.. Bowl, brown, flint-grit ware, finger decoration on rim, medieval, TL 073245
3. Bowl, greyware, medieval, TL 073245
4. Bowl, greyware, medieval, TL 073245
5. Bowl, brown, flint-grit fabric, medieval, TL 073245

potsherds were mainly coarse sandy wares, but also included some flint tempered sherds, similar to finds from Black Swan Lane, and a few sherds of developed St. Neots type wares, with a suggested date range of 11-14th century. To the south of the river near Fallowfields TL 080 240 a late Roman shellgrit rimsherd was found as well as a small scatter of worked flints. Some of the finds are illustrated in Fig. 4.

Reference

Hudspith R, 1990; "Barton & Black Swan Lane", *Manshead J* 30 p 29 & 34 resp.

Sundon and Streatley 1990-91

During last winter the Society fieldwalked an area of about 4km² around Sundon and Streatley. The area has an undulating landscape, with steep scarp slopes to the north and boulder clay covered ridges to the south and east. There are two village sites; Upper and Lower Sundon, both shrunken medieval villages with extant earthworks. Upper Sundon (height 160 m OD) is the larger of the two modern settlements.

In 1977 the area was surveyed for archaeological sites by D Hall and R Fowler (Hall, 1992).

The map shown in Fig 5 indicates the sites found by fieldwalking in 1990-91 and those identified by D Hall. A note and discussion on the finds, by period, is given below.

Mesolithic

Small scatters of Mesolithic flintwork, blades, flakes and cores, were found on the scarp to the North of Sundon; with

a small scatter on the southerly facing slope near Sundon Park.

Neolithic and Bronze Age

Most of the finds were of waste flakes, with a few cores and retouched pieces; probably late Neolithic or Bronze Age in date. A few finds of flint gritted potsherds may have been late Bronze- Early Iron Age in date (Fig. 5, 1).

To the north of Bramingham Farm a large late Neolithic-Early Bronze Age flintworking scatter was identified; with finds of cores, scrapers, and cutting flakes amongst the debitage (Fig. 5, 11).

Iron Age

Three areas yielded finds of flint gritted pottery, (Fig. 5, 1, 5 and near 13), perhaps of early Iron Age date, as well as scatters of burnt flints.

Late pre-Roman Iron Age (Belgic) potsherds were found at various sites (Fig. 5, 1, 2, 5, 12 and 13) along with early Roman potsherds, perhaps indicating continuity of settlement. Similar finds came from TL 056271 (Fig. 5, 4; D Hall's SU4 site: finds in Luton Museum) but only a few Roman sherds were found at the site in 1991.

Romano-British

The pottery and tile finds from the Aubers Farm sites (Fig. 5, 6, and the evidence from Fig. 5, 4) suggests there may have been several farmsteads, or a shifting settlement pattern, along the ridgetop (including Fig. 5, 12). This ridgetop settlement pattern continued with the occupation site at Streatley, (Fig. 5, 14 near The Edeway) and possibly to the north of Great Bramingham Farm where a small scatter of potsherds and tile was found.

Late Roman potsherds and tegulae fragments were found near Upper Sundon, perhaps indicating another farmstead site (Fig. 5, 3) and small scatters of sherds and tile (Fig. 5, 8, 10) along the scarp suggests manuring scatters or further occupation sites.

Medieval

A large scatter of Late Medieval pottery was found near the road between Upper and Lower Sundon (Fig. 5, 12), perhaps indicating an occupation site. Other smaller scatters were found along the scarp to the north (along the route of a track) near the Luton Road (at Sundon Park; Fig. 5, 1) and to the north of Great Bramingham Farm. (There was a Medieval site to the south of the farm, Fig. 5, 16).

Post-Medieval

The remains of several buildings (stone and tile scatters) were found during the survey, either Medieval or Post-Medieval in date. A widespread scatter of Post Medieval material indicates extensive arable cultivation over the past 400 years.

Conclusion

The fieldwalking survey has, in part, confirmed the sites found by D Hall in 1977, as well as adding further

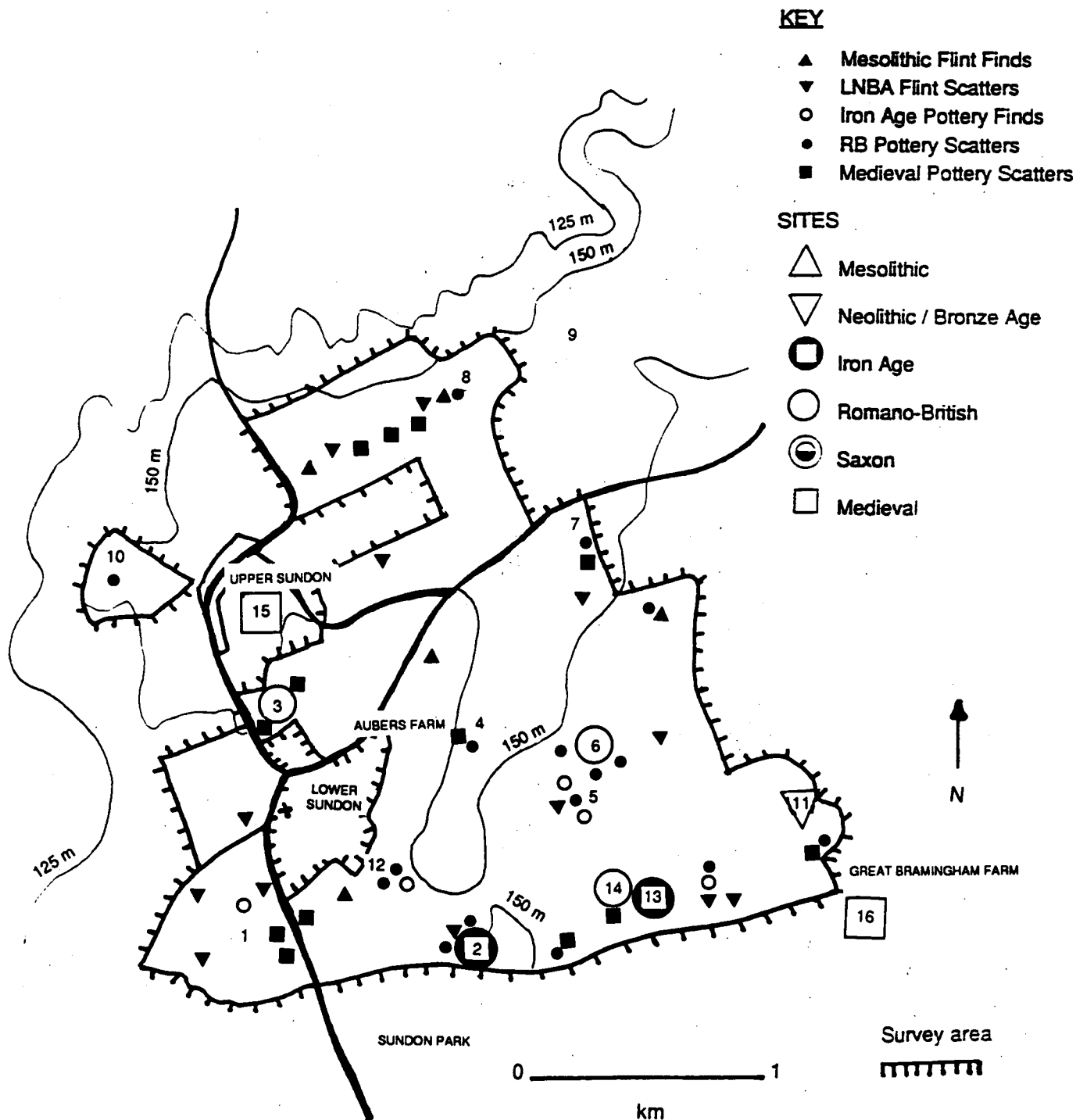


Fig 5 Gazetteer

- 1 TL 047265 Small scatter Iron Age pottery, Roman and Medieval sherds, worked NBA flints. (Hall's SU 1 site)
- 2 TL 054255 Scatters of Belgic pottery, Roman sherds and burnt stones. (Hall's SU 2 site)
- 3 TL 047273 Scatters of Roman sherds and tile, Medieval sherds (Hall's SU 3 site)
- 4 TL 056271 Few sherds of Roman and Medieval pottery, stone scatters and quernstone fragments (Hall's SU 4 site)
- 5 TL 062269 Scatter of Iron Age sherds (Hall's SU 5 site).
- 6 TL 062272 Scatters of Roman sherds and tile and quernstone fragments (Hall's SU 6 site).
- 7 TL 062279 Few Roman and Medieval sherds (Med/Post-Med building) (Hall's SU7 site TL061280)
- 8 TL 055285 Small scatters of Roman and Medieval sherds

(Hall's SU 8 site; TL 058267)

- 9 TL 064289 Hall's SU9 site (not walked).
- 10 TL 041278 Small RB sherd and tile scatter. (Hall's SU site; TL 041279)
- 11 TL 072268 Flintworking scatters (Late Neolithic-Bronze Age), Roman sherds, tile and Medieval sherds.
- 12 TL 055272 Small scatter of Belgic and Roman sherds; tile).
- 13 TL 064264 Scatters of Belgic sherds and bone fragments.
- 14 TL 063264 Early Roman site, sherds (including samian) and tile.
- 15 TL 047277 Medieval earthworks (occupation), Upper Sundon.
- 16 TL 074264 Medieval earthworks South of Great Bramingham Farm.

information on the archaeology of the Sundon area. At Streatley the survey has identified several previously unrecorded sites near The Edeway, again suggesting how important this routeway was in the past.

Reference

Hall D, 1992; *BAJ* 19

Glass Vessels from Early Roman Burials in Bedfordshire : a Review

by David H. Kennett

At various dates in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, early Roman burials were found at a number of sites in central Bedfordshire: at Shefford in 1826 ⁽¹⁾, at Stanfordsbury in Southill parish in 1832 ⁽²⁾, and at Ickwell in Northill parish in 1845. ⁽³⁾ Each of these contained a different glass vessel.

Work done some years ago on the flagon from Ickwell and the jug from Shefford is currently being prepared for publication in depth. The present note seeks to summarise the conclusions of the forthcoming paper ⁽⁴⁾ and to provide a similar note about the jar from Shefford and the bowl from Stanfordsbury. A future paper in a subsequent issue of *SMA* will provide notes on a similar group of burials with glass vessels from Buckinghamshire. ⁽⁵⁾

The present note considers only the glasses; it does not examine the wider context of the three burials.

The Stanfordsbury Glass Bowl

One notable glass survives from the well-known vault B at Stanfordsbury, in Southill parish. This is a pillar-moulded bowl in blue-green glass.

It is a ubiquitous type, found "with monotonous regularity on Flavian and Trajanic sites, but so far absent from the sites on Hadrian's Wall". ⁽⁶⁾ Dating appears to be consistent across the Roman Empire; manufacture was in the third quarter of the first century AD. Finds from burials in Essex include those from Takely and Beerchurch, the former with coins of Vespasian and Domitian. ⁽⁷⁾

In Leicestershire, the finds, now lost, from a burial discovered in 1856 at Hallaton, included a glass of this type. ⁽⁸⁾ These are all examples of Isings type 3a, a shallow bowl with ribs to the base. ⁽⁹⁾ The vessel type is also found in polychrome wares, probably dating to a quarter century earlier than the monochrome ones. A good example of this type is that from Radnage, Bucks. ⁽¹⁰⁾, in a burial associated with a flagon of a type akin to that found at Ickwell.

Both plain and polychrome pillar-moulded bowls are found exported beyond the frontiers of the Roman Empire.

The Shefford Bowl

The Shefford burial contained two important glass vessels: an amber-coloured spherical jar with a ribbed body and a spherical jug in a deep cobalt-blue glass. The amber-coloured spherical jar belongs to Isings type 67c. ⁽¹¹⁾ It is a commonly found type in Belgium, often associated with glass flagons of the type found at Ickwell. ⁽¹²⁾ Complete English examples seem to be few: single pieces from Colchester, Faversham and Wroxeter. ⁽¹³⁾ Fragments of the type have been noted from Gadebridge Park, Herts., and Caerwent, Gwent, Wales. ⁽¹⁴⁾ However, without the rim it is difficult to tell whether a body fragment or a base piece is from this type of jar or from one of the various flagon types which are contemporary.

The Shefford Jug

The Shefford burial contained a glass jug with a spherical body on a base ring with a tall neck, an elaborate spout, and a broad handle. It is in a deep blue metal.

There is no vessel quite like it known to me. However, the Shefford jug belongs to a variant of the flagons of Isings type 52b, a vessel of bulbous or spherical form with a ribbed body and a long plain neck. Dating is to the first century AD. ⁽¹⁵⁾

The Shefford vessel is a jug because it has the means to pour out the liquid, presumably wine, contained in it.

The deep blue glass is called in German "Kobaltglass" from the use of cobalt in the salts which are a deliberate addition to the metal. This additive is known as smalts.

Except for the elaborate spout, a good analogy for the Shefford jug is the vessel found at Grange Road, Winchester, which, however, has a plain body, making it representative of Isings type 55a. ⁽¹⁶⁾ Another mid-first century burial with a blue glass flagon is that from Hallaton, Leicestershire, dated on the presence of the rare Faurskov type of bronze skillet and the pillar-moulded bowl to before AD 70. ⁽¹⁷⁾

Other examples include a piece with a squashed spherical body with ribs and a medusa mask from Litlington, Cambs. ⁽¹⁸⁾, in a blue-green monochrome glass, and one in an amber coloured glass from Faversham. ⁽¹⁹⁾

The elaborate spout on the Shefford jug is a skeuomorph of the well-known bronze vessel type of trefoil-lipped jug, of which there is one from Shefford itself.

The Ickwell Flagon

The Ickwell glass flagon "the colour of port wine" has a conical body with a long thin neck and a tall handle with a central rib and eleven teeth where it grips the body. It has been skilfully restored from fragments.

The vessel is representative of Isings type 55b, a conical-bodied vessel, with a plain or decorated body, with

a cut-out base ring, dating to the late first and early second centuries AD.⁽²⁰⁾

The colour of the Ickwell flagon can be seen in first century glasses from north-west Italy, now in the Museo d'Antichita, Torino, but on the whole the deep purple colour is rare.

Direct parallels from England are few. The closest is a now lost piece discovered in barrow 1 at Bartlow Hills, Essex. There are finds from the Netherlands and the Rhineland of similar shape but only one from Esch, Noord-Brabants, has any firm associations placing it in the late first century AD.⁽²²⁾

Burials and Glass

Glass in early Roman burials, those of the first and early second centuries AD, differs from bronze vessels. Evidence has accumulated of the use of damaged and old pieces among the bronze vessels. In contrast, the glasses when buried appear to have been complete and fairly new when buried. While fragments of both the Shefford jug and the Ickwell flagon can be noted as absent, the missing portions appear to be the result of damage post burial, either from a collapsing vault or poor collection of the finds; the wear visible on the glasses themselves is inconsistent with long use in the world.

Strict attention to the chronology of burial allows the changing nature of the glass buried, and with these the other accoutrements included, to be charted.

The Roman writer Strabo listed glass as among the imports into Britain from the Roman Empire prior to the conquest of AD 43. The burial at Hertford Heath, Herts., with an early form of pillar-moulded bowl, is a good example of the social standing of the end user of the product in the early first century AD. The wealth is seen in the person burial in vault B at Stanfordsbury, Beds., and those occupying the graves at Hallaton, Leics., and Takeley, Essex, both of which, like the Stanfordsbury vault, are to be dated to AD 43-70. The tradition continues with the burials at Shefford and Ickwell, both of which could be placed in the second half of the first century AD.

When the deposition of these glasses began, south-east England was on the fringe of the Roman Empire or just within its frontiers. A sidelight can conclude this note. The glass vessels of the earlier types, the pillar-moulded bowl and spherical jar, have a context well beyond the Roman Empire. The later types, represented by the Shefford jug and the Ickwell flagon, do not. This may indicate a change in the origin of the glasses themselves.

The earlier forms are of Italian origin; the later types have their place of manufacture in the Rhineland or the Meuse valley, frontier regions of the northern Roman Empire.

Paradoxically for the later archaeologist, the onset of Romanisation in Britain would seem to have brought about

a narrowing of the horizons not a widening of the points of contact. In the second half of the first century AD, immediate contact was with the other, northern, frontier area, not with the totality of the Roman Empire.⁽²²⁾

NOTES

1. Kennett D H, 'The Shefford Burial', *Beds. Magazine*, 12 (1970), 201-203.
2. Dryden H, 'Roman and Romano-British Remains at and near Shefford, Co. Beds.', *Publins. Camb. Ant. Soc.*, 1 no. 8 (1845); I M Stead, (A La Tene III Burial at Welwyn Garden City'), *Archaeologia*, 101 (1967), 1-62, esp. 44-48 and 56.
3. Unpublished; forthcoming publication, D.H. Kennett, 'The Ickwell Flagon and the Shefford Jug: a note on glasses of Isings' type 52 and 55', *Beds. Archaeol.* forthcoming.
4. Kennett, forthcoming, gives full documentation of the types and their parallels including an annotated list of the vessels of types 52 and 55 from Britain.
5. Principally the finds from Radnage and Thornborough Barrow.
6. Charlesworth D, 'Roman glass in northern Britain', *Arch. Ael.*, 4 ser., 37 (1959), 33-58.
7. C.H. Essex III.
8. Kennett D H, 'A Roman skillet from Hallaton, Leicestershire', *Trans. Leics. Arch. Soc.*, 52 (1976-77), 82-85 published the only known object from this burial; the skillet is in Bedford Museum.
9. Isings C, *Roman Glass from Dated Finds* (Groningen/Djakarta, 1957).
10. Painter K S, in *Masterpieces of Glass*, (London: British Museum, 1968), 44 with pl. 51.
11. Isings, 1957.
12. Faider-Feytmans G, 'Les verreries du tumulus de Frizet', *Etudes...namurois dediees a Ferdinand Courtoy*, (Namur, 1952), 71) 81.
13. Thorpe G, *English Glass*
14. Neither publication is to hand.
15. Isings, 1957.
16. Harden D B, 'The Glass Jug', in M. Biddle, 'Two Flavian Burials from Grange Road, Winchester', *Antis. Journ.* 47 (1967), 238-240 with pl. 43a.
17. Kennett, 1977.
18. Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge.
19. Canterbury Museum.
20. Isings, 1957.
21. Full details of these, mainly unpublished, pieces in Kennett, forthcoming.
22. Paper written 7 October 1991. It represents a return to work done in the mid 1970s and set aside first because of pressure on journal space in *Beds. Arch. J.*, of which the

writer was then the editor, and subsequently due to family reasons.

St Neots Ware Revisited: a Clue to the Topography of Bedford

by David H. Kennett

It is generally agreed that the medieval town of Bedford comprised a northern burh centred around St. Paul's church and a southern burh with St. Mary's church at its crossroads. More recently it has been argued that the parish boundary of St. Paul's with the parish to the north, St. Peter de Merton, along Lime Street and Lurke Street represents a line of intra-mural street from the northern burh. The defence of the town was to the north of this west to east line.⁽¹⁾

This interpretation places St. Peter's church outside the medieval defences. The present note seeks to draw attention to some evidence which has not been considered before and which would reinforce that interpretation.

During the 1930s, part of the southern side of St. Peter's Street was re-developed, most notably the site of the Granada Cinema, in 1934. From this site and the rear of properties adjacent a number of pottery finds were made at depths recorded as between 17 ft and 25 ft (5.18-7.62 m). Handling this material some twenty-eight years ago, the present writer was struck by the particles of wet mud still adhering to some of the finds. Records contemporary with the discovery of the pottery noted that it had been found under waterlogged conditions.⁽²⁾

At the time of discovery, it was assumed that the pots had been thrown into wells. This would have accounted for the wet mud remaining on the jugs, bowls, socketed bowls, dishes, and cooking pots examined in 1964 and still wrapped in the boxes wherein they had been stored after discovery. Those pieces on public exhibition were mostly in a cleaner state.⁽³⁾

In the light of the suggestions about the topography of Bedford in the tenth to thirteenth centuries, the widest possible date range of the pottery examined, it may be possible to suggest that their place of deposition was not a series of wells in the back gardens and back yards of the properties facing St. Peter's Street but the northern ditch of the northern burh of Bedford.

Such an interpretation would also eliminate the query posed by the negative evidence that the only pottery which was found was St Neots ware of the ninth/tenth to twelfth/thirteenth centuries. None of the pottery examined in the mid 1960s, prior to the extensive archaeological excavations in Bedford, was of a later date. The collection of medieval jug fragments studied by two authors in the early 1970s have other finds spots.⁽⁴⁾ The lack of later finds may be fortuitous but it might indicate that the ditch was no longer available for dumping by the fourteenth century.⁽⁵⁾

NOTES

1. Haslam J, 'The Origin and Plan of Bedford', *Beds. Archaeol.*, 16 (1983), 29-36, with refs. to earlier literature.
2. Kennett D H, 'Some St Neots ware Socketed Bowls from Bedford', *Beds. Arch. J.*, 3 (1966), 19-21; Kennett D H, 'St Neots Ware from Bedford: Jugs and Bowls', *Beds. Arch. J.*, 4 (1969), 17-26. Cooking pots and dishes examined in the mid 1960s were not published, see Kennett 'Saxo-Norman Pottery in the Ouse Valley' (BA dissertation, University College, Cardiff, 1966). Most of the notes and the original pencil drawings from this were lodged in Bedford Museum's archive in the mid 1970s.
3. It was assumed that these vessels had been cleaned prior to being put on show in the cases of the old Bedford Museum.
4. Linger S and Kennett D H, 'Medieval Jugs from Bedford', *Beds Arch. J.*, 7 (1972), 67-72.
5. Note written 17 October 1991.

The Fate of the Monastery: a Quantitative Approach

by David H. Kennett

Introduction

The second millennium AD has seen four periods of substantial landscape change: when the Normans came in 1066, the dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530s and 1540s, the creation of an industrial landscape in late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and the making of a suburban landscape in the middle and late decades of the twentieth century. Of these, the third has had little effect on the four counties which make up the area covered by CBA South Midlands Group, and the last-named has been selective, concentrated in its earliest phases in major towns like Oxford and Luton, spreading only to smaller centres such as Bedford and Aylesbury some twenty-five years later, and affecting the villages only in the past two decades. But both the coming of the Normans and the dissolution of the monasteries were immediate in their consequences.

The question these notes seek to examine is two-fold: how many monastic houses became country houses and in the light of the evidence from the South Midland counties how far this phenomenon is concentrated in the area around London.⁽¹⁾

The fate of the monastery in the 1540s and subsequently was one of being flattened completely, including in towns to be built over so that nothing is visible; remaining a ruin; the church remaining in use; or the site being used as the basis of a great country house. Of these the last is the best-known, but not always the most typical.

There are, of course, a few monasteries where more than one fate is followed simultaneously. Elstow Abbey, Beds., was both used as the parish church and became the site of a future

country house, with the nave of the abbey church, now the parish church, being seen as the northern wing of a typical Jacobean 'E-plan' house, with particularly deep wings. Something similar occurred at Canons Ashby Priory, Northants., where the parish uses part of the nave and the north aisle with the north-west tower as the village church, the house being originally made out of the buildings of the priory, still very serviceable as domestic occupation. But the guest house of the priory is the basis of the present house. But within the four counties of the South Midlands, these two are the only examples of dual usage. Outside the area, across the River Thames in Berkshire, Ladye Place, a Tudor mansion, occupied the site of the infirmary of Hurley Priory while the parish was assigned the nave for use as St Mary's church.

The Church Retained

The survival of a monastic church as a place of worship depended on the legal relationship between the monastery and the local parish. If no other ecclesiastical building was provided, the church fabric west of the monastic pulpitum was legally the property of the parishioners of the village or town where the monastery was situated. Hence in Harrold, Dunstable, and Elstow, Beds., and Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxon., the church remained in use. In the two last-named Bedfordshire churches it was cut off at the monastic pulpitum. At Chetwode, Bucks., the Augustinian priory was dissolved in the fifteenth century and the chancel of the monastic church was used as the parish church with the addition of a west tower. The former nave was demolished. At Royston, Herts., the present parish church occupies the chancel of the former monastic church.

One monastery became a cathedral. St. Frideswide's, the mother church of Oxford, was taken over by Thomas Wolsey for Cardinal College and partly demolished, but in 1547, after a period of experimentation with Oseney Abbey as the local cathedral, the new cathedral for Oxfordshire was transferred to a more central site within King Henry VIII's foundation, on Thomas Wolsey's site, of Christ Church.

Henry VIII had great plans for new cathedrals, not all of which came to fruition. The large diocese of Lincoln was to be split into several smaller dioceses. Part was put into action: at Oxford, for Oxfordshire, and at Peterborough, for Northamptonshire and Rutland, new cathedrals were established in former monastic churches and attendant buildings. But the proposal to create a diocese for Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire based on Dunstable Priory and using the revenues of Dunstable, Newnham and Elstow, from Bedfordshire, together with those from Missenden Abbey, Bucks., came to naught.

The retention of the church, however, was rare. In the four ancient counties of the CBA South Midlands region, only seven monasteries out of the sixty-eight known sites have the church surviving in use.

Much more common was total demolition.

No Surviving Remains

For an institution so ubiquitous, the disappearance of so much physical evidence must rank as one of the great demolition jobs of all time.

Town centre sites were especially vulnerable. Each of the four county towns in the South Midlands has lost at least one monastery with not even a pillar surviving. In Bedford, it is Cauldwell Priory, which is now the site of County Hall and Mander College. In Aylesbury, the Franciscan Friary has been built over totally. In Oxford Rewley Abbey has disappeared. In Northampton the sites of the Augustinian St. James' and the Cluniac St Andrew's have both been built over, as have all six mendicant houses: one each of the Dominicans, the Franciscans, the Franciscan Nuns, the Carmelites, the Austin Friars, and the Friars of the Sack. Even in smaller towns, a friary like the Franciscan house at Dunstable could disappear completely, to be rediscovered only by archaeological excavation. The Cluniac priory at Daventry has also been totally obliterated.

Rural sites can also leave no trace. In Bedfordshire, the rural monasteries of Beaulieu, Grovebury, and Newnham have disappeared. In the larger counties of Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire, the list is even longer. The demolition men were no respecters of age or order. The list of demolished monasteries includes Benedictine houses like Luffield Priory, on the borders of the two counties, the Premonstratensian houses of Sulby and Lavendon, in Northants and Bucks respectively.

There are surprisingly few monastic ruins in the South Midlands. Bradwell Abbey, Bucks., is the best known. There are others in Oxfordshire: Eynsham Priory, Godstow Priory, and Oseney Abbey. But unlike, say Norfolk, the South Midlands is not a region with much evidence of monastic ruin.

To become a house is a more frequent fate.

From Monastery to Country House

Each of the counties of the area has the well-known example of a monastery which became a country house. This is very often reflected in the name of the house: Woburn Abbey, Beds., Missenden Abbey, Bucks., Delapre Abbey, Northants., and Wroxton Priory, Oxon.

In the South Midlands, this is not uncommon. Five of Bedfordshire's largest houses owe their origins to a monastic site. Woburn Abbey has been mentioned; the site was granted to the first Earl of Bedford in 1547 as the executor's fee for work done on the will of King Henry VIII. The courtyard house was the largest house in Bedfordshire - indeed in the South Midlands - before the building of Blenheim Palace in the eighteenth century. Its assessment in the hearth tax (82 hearths) is exceeded only by Welbeck Abbey, Notts., (88 hearths), and by Hardwick Hall, Derbys., (114 hearths), which was not built on a former monastic site. Of the counties for which no hearth tax is in print, Essex

provides another example of the exceptionally large house. The surviving Audley End is about a third of the original house: it is three ranges out of the four of the principal courtyard, but lacks both the front court and the kitchen court. A drawing, done prior to any demolition, shows ninety chimney stacks. These are exceptional houses especially in their size.

Much more typical of the scale of the monastic conversion are the other four Bedfordshire monasteries which became country houses. Bushmead Priory is rated at 14 hearths; Chicksands Priory at 23 hearths; Elstow Abbey at 17 hearths; and Warden Abbey at 20 hearths. This size can be matched elsewhere in the South Midlands. In Oxfordshire, Bruern Abbey is rated at 10 hearths, Clattercote Priory was assessed at 10 hearths, Thame Abbey at 29 hearths, and Wroxton Priory at 34 hearths. In Northamptonshire, Catesby Priory is rated at 20 hearths and the house on part of the site of Canons Ashby Priory at 23 hearths.

These figures should not surprise the reader. Monastic houses were rarely large establishments. Surviving quadrangles like those incorporated in Delapre Abbey, Northants., and Hitchin Priory, Herts., are under 1000 sq ft (100 sq m) in area.

In converting a small monastic establishment into a modest country house, the newly-established gentry family of modest means was taking on an affordable project and rarely sought to over-extend its resources.

Regional Differences

As will be seen from Table 1 a relatively high percentage of the monastic houses of the four counties of the South

TABLE 1
THE FATE OF THE MONASTERY

County	Church Retained	No Extant Remains	Built Over	Remains in Ruins	Became House	TOTAL
Bedfordshire	2 ^a	5	0	0	5 ^a	11 ^a
Buckinghamshire	1	6	1	1	10	18
Northamptonshire ^b	2 ^c	7	2	0	9 ^c	19 ^c
Oxfordshire ^d	2	1		3	12	19
Berkshire ^d	2 ^e	2	0	2	5 ^e	10 ^e
Hertfordshire	2	1	0	0	5	8
Huntingdonshire	1	7	0	0	2	10
Leicestershire	2	14	0	2	4	22
Lincolnshire	6	73	0	11	7	97
Herefordshire	4	7	1	3	2	17
Warwickshire	6	1	2	4	5	18
Worcestershire	4	3	0	3	2	12

NOTES TO TABLES

- a Elstow Abbey is counted as both church retained and became a house.
- b Northamptonshire includes the Soke of Peterborough.
- c Canons Ashby counted as both church retained and became a house.
- d Oxfordshire and Berkshire have the historic boundaries.
- e Hurley is counted as both church retained and became a house-

Midlands became country houses: 45% in Bedfordshire, 47% in Northamptonshire, 55% in Buckinghamshire, and an even larger 63% in Oxfordshire. In the adjacent counties of Berkshire and Hertfordshire, the percentage is equally high: 50% and 63% respectively.

But this may not be universal. In the East Midlands, only four out of twenty-seven monasteries in Leicestershire became country houses, seven out of seventy-three in Lincolnshire, and two out of ten in Huntingdonshire. These are much lower percentage: 18% in Leicestershire, 9.6% in Lincolnshire, and 20% in Huntingdonshire. Similar figures may be seen in the West Midlands: five establishments out of the eighteen in Warwickshire, two out of the twelve in Worcestershire, and two out of seventeen in Herefordshire. The percentages are respectively 28%, 17% and 12%.

The contrast is considerable. In none of the South Midland counties is the percentage of monasteries becoming country houses under 40%; both to the north and the west the counties show almost totally percentages under 20%, with Warwickshire, the next county out from London, at an intermediate figure of 28% conversions.

Another contrast appears also. The larger monasteries of the South Midlands are the ones which have survived: mainly as country houses, but as a church at Dunstable, Peterborough and St. Albans. With rare exceptions this may not be the case elsewhere. (2)

NOTES

1. As this article intends to answer a specific question, detailed footnotes have been eschewed. For introductory surveys of the monasteries see the volumes of N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England* (Harmondsworth, 1951-74, with revised later editions). From these also the statistical work for Table 1 was done.

2. Paper written May 1991; it derives from notes made for *The Country House in the Landscape*, a book which has yet to find a publisher.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY MUSEUM ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE

REPORT FOR 1991

Michael Farley

Fieldwork undertaken during the year by the Museum's archaeological service included excavations, evaluations, watching briefs, and survey work. The main items of fieldwork are described below :

Dinton Anglo-Saxon Cemetery (SP 765115)

Following an application to develop farm land at Dinton as a golf course, the developer agreed to fund an evaluation of the area in conjunction with detailed examination of land adjoining, a known Anglo-Saxon cemetery. The work took place in January-March 1991 under the direction of Andrew Hunn.

Twenty inhumation graves were located. In general the preservation of the bone was poor and there had been much post-mortem disturbance. The graves were orientated roughly in two groups at right angles to each other, with heads SW - feet NE and heads NW - feet SE. The soil conditions were difficult and grave cuts undetectable, the fill apparently being backfilled subsoil which was in this case sandy-silt. Extensive assistance was provided to the excavators by one group of metal detector users, on the other hand night-time security had to be provided to deter others less well intentioned.

The cemetery was first discovered in 1769 when a cone beaker, now in the County Museum, was recovered. The majority of the inhumations recovered during the recent work were accompanied by grave goods of one kind or another. Saucer, disc and applied brooches were equally represented. There was one great square-headed and a single small long brooch. Textile traces are present on several together with impressions of human skin. A number of graves contained bead strings of amber and glass. Knives were the commonest find apart from beads. There was one drinking bucket.

In several instances whole blocks of soil were lifted for laboratory examination. Conservation of the objects at the County Museum and through the Area Museum Service is continuing to bring to light new information. A freak of survival has meant that although the site is in no way waterlogged, the staves of the drinking bucket have survived virtually intact. A large ditch to the east of the site may have defined the cemetery's limit, although it may have been an field boundary. The cemetery is provisionally dated to the mid-sixth century.

Magiovinium (SP 896332)

An excavation directed by Andrew Hunn for the County Museum and funded by English Heritage, was carried out in advance of construction of the Little Brickhill by-pass and following a geophysical survey by English Heritage. The work abutted an area previously examined by David Neal in 1978-80.

Further evidence was uncovered for a series of ditched enclosures, apparently regularly planned, to the east of the defended area of the town. Most of these property divisions appear to have been maintained with little re-positioning throughout the period of occupation which lasted from the first through to the later fourth-century. Trial trenching further east of the main investigation area may have located surfaces of Watling Street. A single contracted inhumation burial was found within one of the enclosures during topsoil stripping for a contractor's compound.

Chequers Manor Farm, Stokenchurch (SU 767936)

An evaluation adjacent to a cropmark of uncertain character was carried out under the direction of Andrew Hunn, in advance of proposals for golf course construction near Cadmore End. The site lay on the Chilterns plateau at approx. 660 ft (190 m) above sea level on a level promontory of pebbly gravel and clay-with-flint. The evaluation revealed several small cut features including ditches, containing small quantities of struck flint. The majority of this material could be dated to late Mesolithic-late Neolithic. Some buried soil horizons were also present containing similar material which was also reflected in surface collection. Overall six scrapers and fourteen cores were recovered. Fire-cracked flint was also present in archaeological contexts.

Although small scale the evaluation is interesting in that it reinforces the impression gained from fieldwalking of widespread use, and presumably extensive clearance, of the Chiltern plateau during the earlier prehistoric period.

Wolverton Mill Mid-Saxon site (SP 803407)

An evaluation of two pieces of land was carried out on behalf of the Post Office by Andrew Hunn, at the Wolverton Mill Training and Conference Centre. The larger land parcel, a playing field, lay adjacent to a ring ditch excavated by H S Green for the Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit in 1972. The 1972 excavation had revealed part of an enclosure visible on air photographs, whose ditch contained Saxon pottery. The 1991 work evaluated a larger area confirming the course of the enclosure ditch on the south side, the northern part having been previously destroyed. Although finds were not plentiful a small amount of mid-Saxon

pottery was recovered together with part of the handle of a handled comb, and a biconical headed copper alloy pin.

A second smaller piece of land which was evaluated to the north of the college, and was later surveyed electronically, produced part of an sunken featured building.

It is hoped that full excavation may follow the evaluation. It may be that the settlement was the tun which gave Wolverton its name.

Other work of the County Archaeological Service

A watching brief was carried out at Bury Lawn, Newport Pagnell by Hugh Beamish. The work was kindly funded by McCarthy and Stone (Developments Ltd). Although few archaeological features were recorded on the housing development itself, a trench dug from the site into Union Street, cut a deep feature containing a rim sherd of St Neot's type in its primary fill. This may be the first slender indication of a previously hypothesised Late Saxon defence for the town.

A small investigation at Abbey Farm, Great Missenden, revealed traces of structures adjacent to the recently identified gatehouse to the abbey. A survey by Julia Wise at Whiteleaf, Princes Risborough, mapped various previously unrecorded earthworks ranging from a probable cross-ridge dyke to First World War practice trenches. A grant from The Forestry Commission enabled preparation of material for information boards to be erected at Boddington hillfort.

This has been the first year when commercial archaeological fieldwork has had an impact; work has been carried out for developers by the Oxford Archaeological Unit at Great Linford, the Wessex Archaeological Trust at Three Locks, Soulbury, and on the proposed Thames Flood Relief Scheme in the south of the county.

Considerable advance continued to be made on development of the County's SMR. Assistance was provided to the Royal Commission who funded a contract post in order to update some of their Buckinghamshire Records. The initial round of Monuments Protection data collection having been completed by Joe Peachey for English Heritage, an increase in the number of Scheduled Monuments in the County is eagerly awaited.

It has been a busy year for planning consultations and following PPG 16, all District Councils have agreed to incorporate sieving for archaeological sites at the development control stage. Resolution of outstanding problems over the advance evaluation of development grid squares in Milton Keynes, in the wake of the cessation of fieldwork by the Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit, has not been so easy to achieve.

The section continues with its publication programme and *Records of Bucks* 32 (1990), included reports on the Iron Age site at Coldharbour Farm, Aylesbury, and on the Leyhill pottery and tile kilns at Latimer.

The section's work will be considerably enhanced by the appointment of Jonathan Parkhouse as Field Archaeologist. Jonathan has joined us from the Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust

Last but not least, grateful thanks are due to the many members of the County Museum Archaeological Group who have provided welcome support on excavations, in fieldwalking, in finds processing and in the continuation of particular projects such as the Buckinghamshire turnpike study and field name mapping.

MILTON KEYNES ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT

The Deserted Village of Caldecotte

J. Roberts, I. Charles and N. A. King

Introduction

The final project in the Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit's twenty year programme of major excavations in the city began in September 1990 on the earthworks of the deserted village of Caldecotte (SP 894353). The entire site, which is a scheduled ancient monument, was originally earmarked by the Development Corporation for housing but, after representations from English Heritage, the part of the monument containing the best preserved of the earthworks is to be retained as open space. Despite this reduction the area requiring archaeological examination still totalled some 35,000 m², and contained a mixture of ridge-and-furrow, small enclosures or crofts in varied states of preservation and what appeared to be a hollow-way.

Survey

Prior to excavation a detailed contour survey of the area available for archaeological investigation which did not contain ridge-and-furrow was carried out. This was used in conjunction with a 'desk-top' survey of the available documentary, field survey and aerial photograph evidence for the site, in order to decide which parts of the monument should be investigated. Also taken into account in this study were the Unit's excavations to the west of the scheduled monument carried out between 1978 and 1980 (Fig 2). These revealed evidence of early Roman industrial activity, as well as a medieval moat and a post-medieval water mill (*CBA 9 Newsletters* 9-11). During the winter of 1990 the contour survey was extended to include certain earthworks within the part of the scheduled monument which is to be retained.

Objectives

As a result of this preliminary work, four areas were targeted for topsoil stripping (Fig 2). Area 1, covering approximately 14000 m² in the south-east corner of the site, encompassed much of what appeared to be a hollow-way, as well as several possible enclosures or crofts. To the north of this, Area 2, covering 1200 m², was intended to examine a part of the site devoid of any visible earthworks. Area 3, measuring 3600 m², was excavated to test an area of

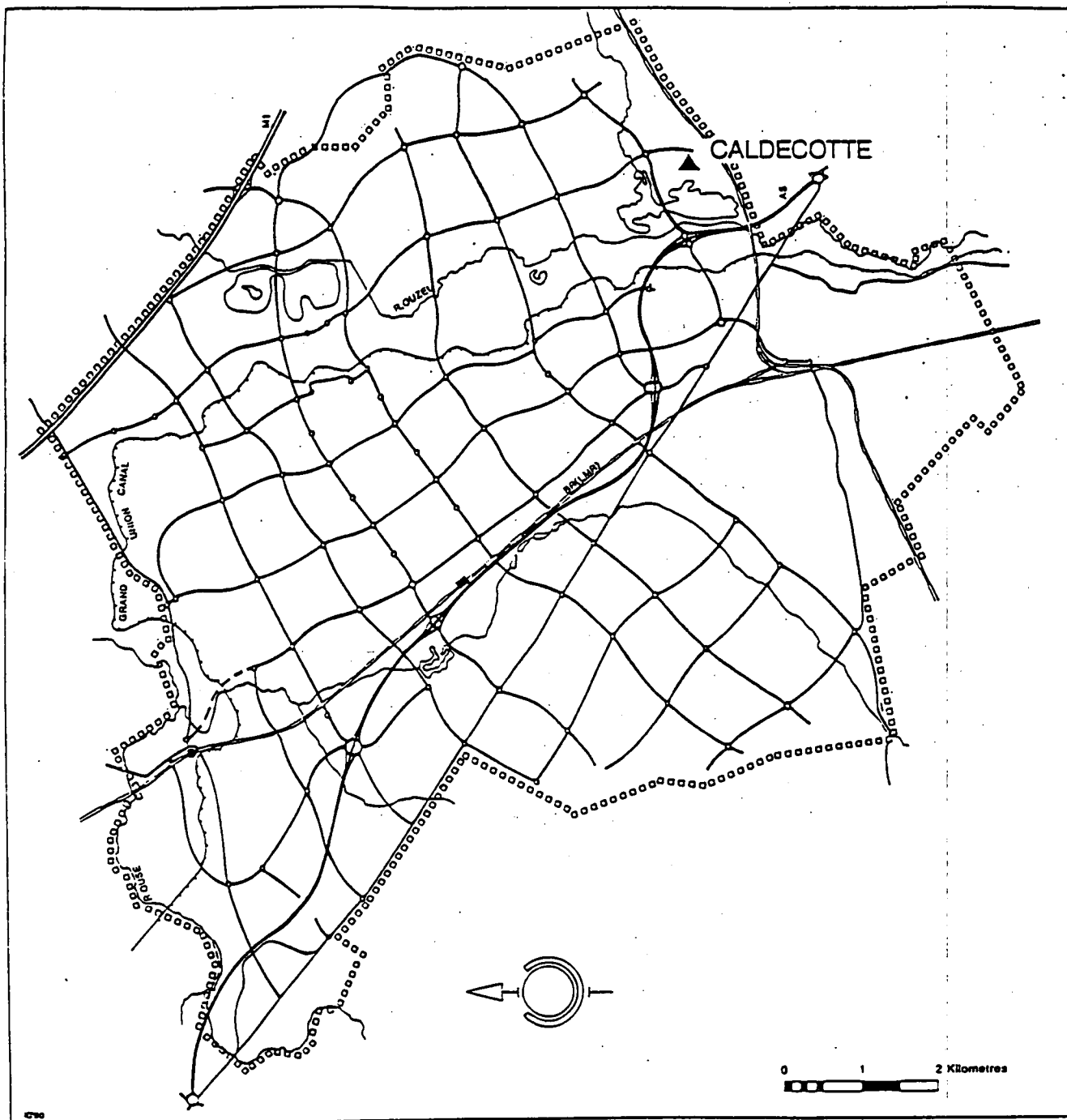


Fig 1. Milton Keynes.

ridge-and-furrow to the west of Area 1 for traces of earlier occupation. Area 4, covering 2700 m², was intended to ascertain the eastward extent of the Roman features noted in earlier excavations, and to examine the ditch which formed the western boundary of the scheduled area.

Results

Areas 2, 3 & 4.

The only archaeological features contained within Area 2 were two nineteenth century land drains. Excavation of Area 3 confirmed the existence of ridge and furrow but produced no indication of earlier occupation. The most pronounced earthwork to show up in these two areas was what appeared to be a headland formed as a result of the ridge-and-furrow

at the west end of Area 3. Despite the fact that ten years previously, only 40 m to the west, extensive Roman remains had been excavated, no evidence of human activity earlier than the surviving ridge-and-furrow was found in Area 4. One possible explanation for this disparity is the presence of a substantial ditch between the site of the 1980 excavation and Area 4, marking the western boundary of the scheduled monument. A section through the ditch revealed it to be 6.5 m wide and 1.1 m deep. At a depth of 0.8 m a compact layer of stones was uncovered. This layer of stones, 0.3 m thick, was removed to reveal the undisturbed gravel of the river terrace. It may be that this ditch represents a hollow-way or track, and that it follows the same line as a

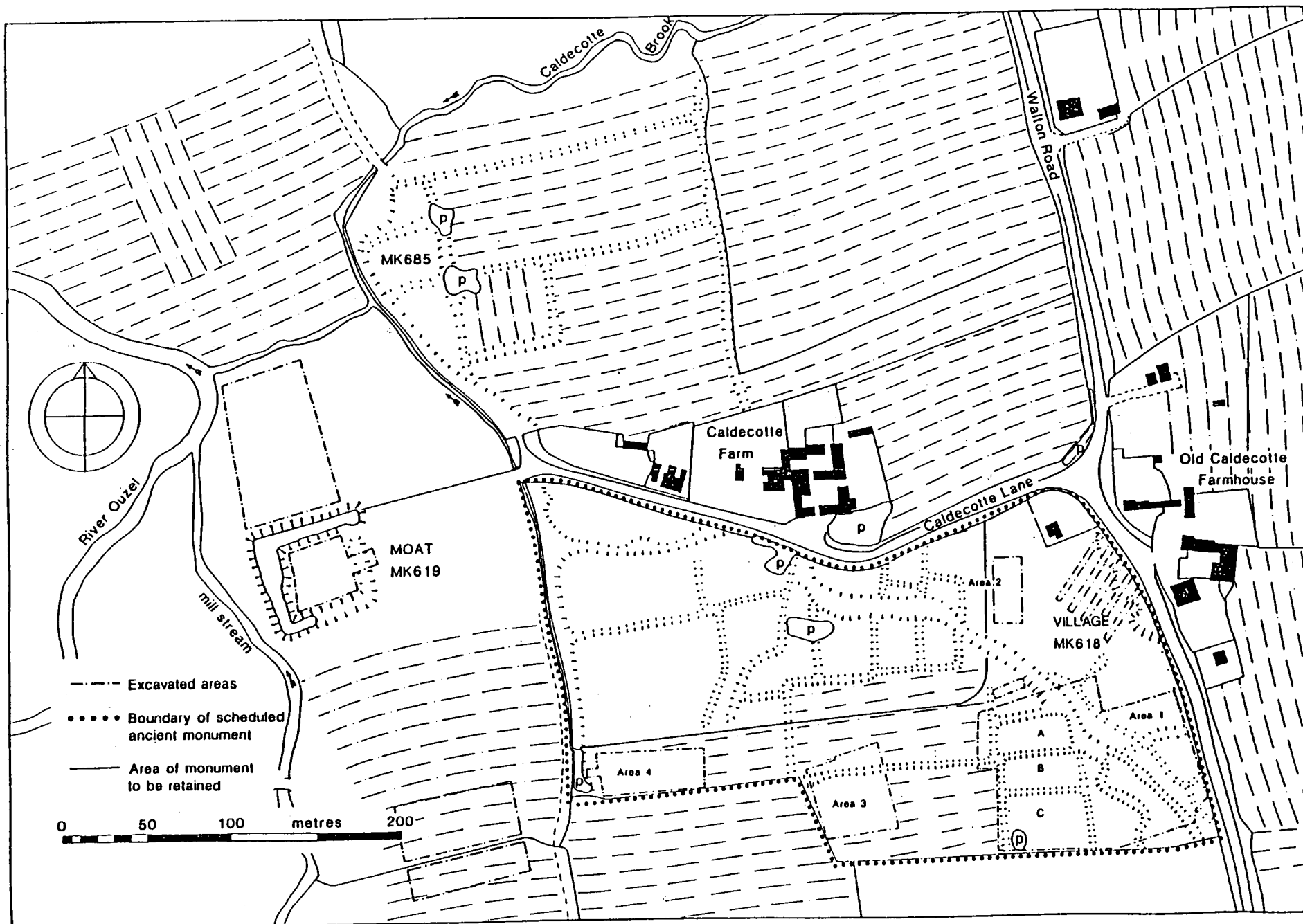


Fig 2. Caldecotte village.

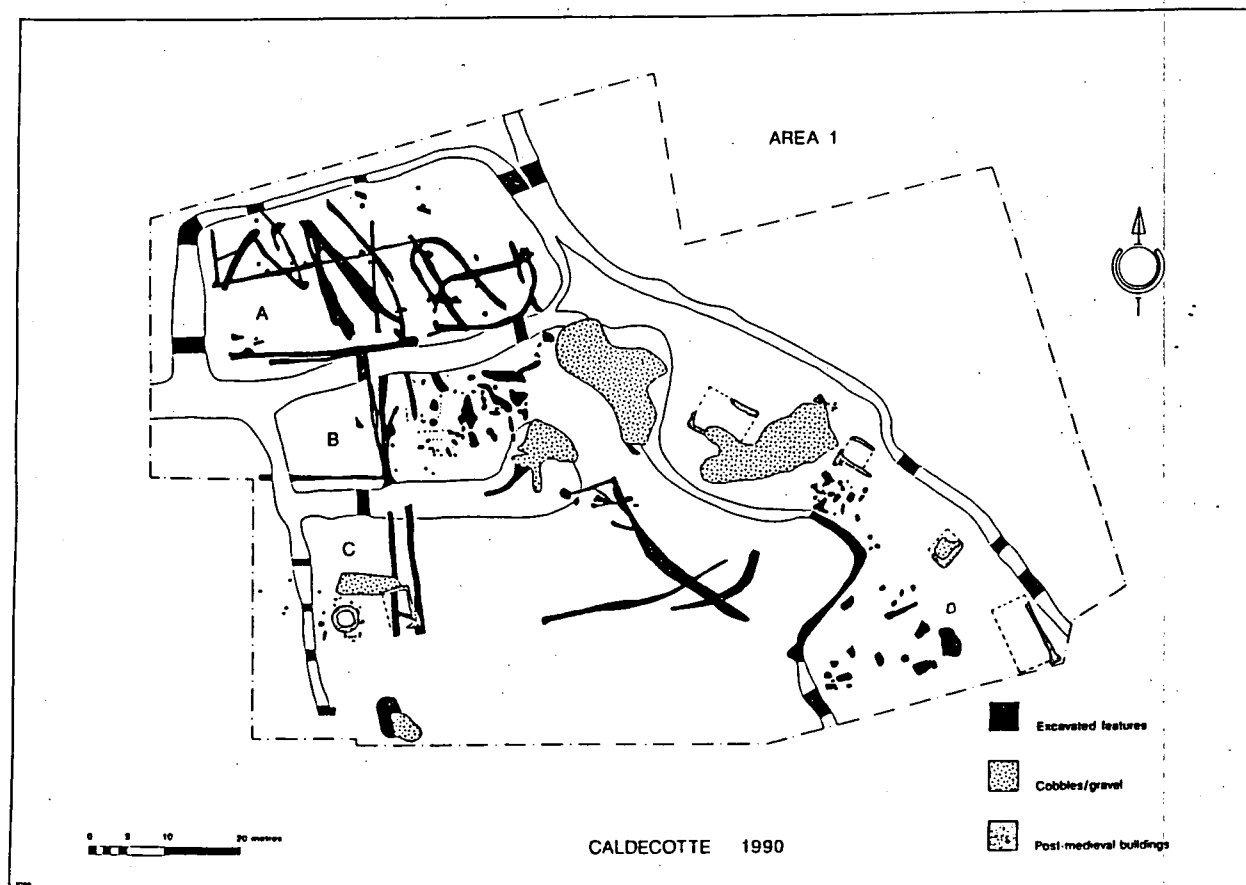


Fig 3. Caldecotte village.

much earlier man made or natural depression, which in its turn marked the limits of Roman activity.

Immediately to the east of this ditch was a bank 1.5 m high and 5 m wide. The exact relationship between these features was difficult to determine due to the amount of tree root disturbance. Further complicating the picture was the fact that, at this point, both bank and ditch had been disturbed by later attempts at gravel extraction. Excavation indicated that at least part of the bank was associated with the ridge-and-furrow to the east of it, rather than representing upcast from the ditch. The interpretation of the bank as a headland would also explain why it does not run continuously along the eastern side of the ditch, but stops at the point where the earthworks in the north-western corner of the scheduled monument begin.

Area 1

This part of the excavation contained all the visible earthworks that could not reasonably be attributed to ridge-and-furrow (Fig. 3). Attention was concentrated on three groups of features.

1) The Hollow-Way.

The most obvious of the earthworks visible within Area 1 was a wide ditch which runs south-east to north-west across the field and which, on the surface, bore many of the hallmarks of a typical medieval hollow-way. It was best

preserved in that part of the site between Area 1 and the earthworks of the monument which are to be retained, where it was 10 m wide and 2 m deep. At the north end of Area 1 this ditch formed the eastern boundary for two enclosures. Further south it branched into two; one arm continues south in a straight line while the other meandered to the south-west. The area between these two arms was generally at a lower level than the rest of the site so that the impression given was of a depression between two banks rather than a platform between two ditches. Trenches had been dug at the base of each bank and land drains inserted. Within this depression the remains of three post-medieval buildings were discovered.

A trench was excavated through the hollow-way immediately to the east of the most northerly of the enclosures in Area 1 (Fig. 2, A). Here the feature was 7.8 m wide and 1.1 m deep, and its sides were of undisturbed Oxford clay. Several cuts were visible in the section, including one containing the land drains found further south. Also visible in the section was what appeared to be the truncated continuation of one of the enclosure boundary ditches.

2) Post-Medieval Features.

Evidence of post-medieval occupation at Caldecotte fell into two distinct areas. Contained within the depression formed by the two arms of the hollow-way in the south eastern

corner of Area 1 were the remains of three post-medieval buildings. The most southerly was a simple rectangular structure measuring 12.8 m x 7.5 m. From what remained of the foundations of this building it would appear to have been built of timber, although the eastern and southern wall construction trenches contained large blocks of ironstone, presumably to act as pads for timber uprights. The central building consisted of two rooms, the larger measuring 5 m x 5 m, and the other 2 m x 3 m. The smaller room butted onto the eastern wall of the larger. The eastern construction trenches for both rooms again contained large blocks of ironstone. The most northerly building of the three, measured 10 m x 7.6 m. Once more two of the wall lines, the eastern and the northern, contained ironstone blocks. The north-west corner of this building consisted of a large square ironstone block surrounded by mortared brickwork. Separating the central and northern buildings was a spread of cobbles measuring approximately 18 m x 7 m. It is tempting to interpret these cobbles as some form of courtyard between the two buildings. However, excavation of the cobbles indicated that they post-dated the ironstone footings of the northern building.

The demolition layers of these structures contained considerable amounts of brick, although the northern building was the only place where it survived *in situ*. Some of the bricks were mortared on one side and worn smooth on the other, suggesting perhaps that they had been used as flooring. Also present in large quantities amongst the rubble were tiles and fragments of plaster. The tiles were for the most part plain, and many showed signs of having been used for roofing.

The second group of post-medieval features were located in the south western corner of Area 1. The most substantial of these were the remains of a circular building with a diameter of 3 m. Walls of stone three courses high, and 0.6 m in width, survived to a height of 0.7 m. There was also evidence of a timber extension to the building, with a series of post holes encircling the stonework. The size and shape of this building point to its use as a dovecote. In an attempt to confirm this interpretation soil samples were taken which will be subjected to phosphate analysis. Immediately to the east of the circular structure were the remains of a rectangular building 6 m x 4 m. Its outline could be discerned from the ironstone blocks which lay in a shallow construction trench. There was a considerable amount of demolition material surrounding this structure which, when removed, revealed a layer of cobbles which seemed to respect the wall line of the building.

To the south of these two buildings the pre-excavation surveys and aerial photographs showed a large circular depression approximately 12 m in diameter. On excavation this feature was found to contain several layers of peat, in which were preserved fragments and items of wood and leather. The waterlogged layers were bounded on their eastern side by an extensive spread of cobbles which contained brick, tile and slag material similar to that found in association with the post-medieval buildings.

3) Enclosures and Ditches.

Pre-excavation survey revealed three distinct enclosures running north to south along the western side of Area 1. They measured on average 40 m x 20m, and all three were surrounded by ditches. The central and northern enclosures (Fig 2, A & B) seem to have utilised the hollow-way as their eastern boundary, while the ditch that separated these two enclosures was a continuation of one which, further west, divided the area of extant ridge-and-furrow (Fig 2). Neither the contour survey nor excavation revealed any sign of this ridge-and-furrow in the area of the enclosures. However, excavation did produce other evidence of ploughing running north-west to south-east across all three enclosures. Machine cut trenches to the north of Area 1 revealed that these plough marks continued in that direction for another 15 m. Excavation showed that all the ditches which surrounded the enclosures in this part of Area 1 contained land drains. However, as the trenches dug in order to lay these drains were considerably smaller than the original ditches, it was possible to see that these ditches cut through the plough marks. Also visible to the west of the hollow-way in Area 1 were a number of linear features running north to south and east to west. In some instances these features seemed to run the entire width of Area 1. However, as with the plough marks, they did appear to be earlier than the enclosure ditches. Other features within this area seemed to respect the boundaries of individual enclosures, and appeared to post-date the plough marks. In addition to this, the nature of the features within each platform was different. The northern one provided evidence for what are possibly building construction trenches, while the central one contained several groups of stake holes.

Conclusion

While any major interpretation must await a detailed analysis of the material recovered from the excavation and the correlation of the structural evidence some provisional conclusions can be drawn from the initial analysis of the data. The Roman activity uncovered in 1978 does not seem to extend into the scheduled monument, or at least that part of it for which consent had been given to excavate. The only part of the site which produced evidence of occupation other than ridge-and-furrow was Area 1. Here a variety of features yielded pottery, with dates ranging from the twelfth to eighteenth centuries. The earliest features within Area 1 seem to be the series of plough marks, which appeared to be cut by the linear features which ran east to west and north to south in the part of Area 1 which lies to the west of the hollow-way. Both the plough marks and the later features were cut by the ditches which formed the boundaries to the enclosures. The only features which seemed to respect the boundary ditches were the groups of stakeholes in the north-east corner of enclosure B, and a sub-rectangular feature measuring 15 m x 10 m in the south-east corner of the enclosure A. The latest phase of occupation was represented by the post-medieval buildings, which were constructed within the hollow-way and which may be contemporary with the three post-medieval features in the south-west corner of Area 1.

The full excavation report, with others from the Caldecotte area, will be published in 1994 in the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society Monograph series.

Dovecote Farm, Shenley A Thorne

In April 1991, trial trenching was undertaken at Dovecote Farm, Shenley Church End (SP8345 3575) by A Thorne for Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit, in advance of development. Several Romano-British features were found plus some traces of later medieval activity. An abundance of post-medieval features were probably associated with an earlier farmhouse known to have been in the vicinity. The anticipated medieval dovecote was not detected. The site archive is held at Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Evaluations on three sites in Buckinghamshire were undertaken by the Oxford Archaeological Unit in 1991. The results from these projects are summarized below. Fuller reports have been lodged with the Buckinghamshire County Sites and Monuments Record.

Dorney, Boveney Court (SP 930770) - T Allen and J Moore

In preparation for the submission of an application for the construction of a Rowing Lake by Eton College evaluations were undertaken in 1987 and 1990. Extensive cropmarks occur in this part of the Thames Valley and have been subjected to an appraisal by P Carstairs (1986). The lettering system adopted here follows the scheme used by Carstairs.

Trenching on the south side of Site D, the probable Neolithic causewayed enclosure, failed to find the south side of the enclosure: it is therefore presumed that the enclosure did not encroach on the proposed development area. However, Neolithic flints were recovered from silt filled hollows indicating that activity did occur outside the enclosure.

Carstairs Site F is bisected by a palaeochannel and although parts are contemporary it is easier to describe in two parts - Site F (west) was found to comprise extensive field systems and enclosures of the mid to late Bronze Age. Associated with the rectilinear system were pits, postholes, and gullies suggesting a large scale settlement. The southern enclosure contained a large triple ring ditch. About 75 m to the east an 'urnfield' cemetery of the middle Bronze Age was found. Overlying the Bronze Age field system was a Romano-British field system.

Site F (east) again comprises a mid to late Bronze Age field system. A small area on the south-west side of the gravel island produced evidence of gullies, pits, and postholes. The

two islands on which both parts of Site F lie were found to be separated by a narrow channel.

Site G is a cropmark enclosure with associated linear features. The enclosure was dated to the early Roman period. In addition to discrete features of this date there were features of the late Bronze Age indicating further settlement activity on this gravel island.

About 200 m south-west of Site G a further gravel island, OAU Site X, produced evidence for the remnants of a prehistoric topsoil containing finds of late Bronze Age material. On the west side of the island pits, postholes, and scoops of the late Bronze Age period were located. The cropmark ring ditch was not located.

Further Bronze Age occupation debris was recovered from silt filled hollows in the vicinity of five ring ditches (Site I). One of the ring ditches was examined: no mound material was found and the enclosing ditch had been severely truncated.

The cropmark field system (Site F) is one of the most extensive in the middle Thames. Its Bronze Age date makes it among the earliest evidence for large scale land division and settled agriculture in the Thames Valley. The association of the enclosures with middle to late Bronze Age settlement makes this site significant: as hitherto evidence for the middle Bronze Age in this region has previously mostly been in the form of funerary urns. The evidence of further Bronze Age settlement on Sites G and X shows that all the higher and drier areas were being used, and the apparent absence of rectilinear enclosures on these latter islands suggests that a variety of activities is represented within the Dorney Bronze Age occupation. The presence of Bronze Age horizons surviving off the islands show that the various gravel island cropmark clusters are not discrete settlements, but parts of one continuous landscape. The association of settlement and cemeteries within one preserved landscape is unusual.

Reference

Carstairs P, 1986; "An Archaeological Study of the Dorney Area", *Recs Bucks* 28, 163-168).

Medmenham, Danesfield Camp (SU 817884) - G D Keavill and G Campbell

This site is a bivallate hillfort occupying an outcrop of chalk-with-flints capped with a thick layer of plateau gravel, lying immediately to the N of a bend in the River Thames between Henley and Marlow: Danesfield Camp is situated 1 km E of the village of Medmenham. No archaeological work had been carried out at the site before 1990, although occasional finds of worked flint have been made and a late Bronze Age spearhead was found on the site in the early years of this century (Cocks 1910). The east half of the site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Danesfield Ltd, the owners of the site, commissioned the Oxford Archaeological Unit to undertake an evaluation and limited excavation of areas of the hillfort. The late Victorian Danesfield House was being redeveloped as a hotel. The work took place in two stages from August to December 1990.

The work revealed evidence for Neolithic activity. Worked flints were found in a shallow ditch and a layer overlying it. The flints were predominantly secondary flakes. The main phase of activity consisted of middle Iron Age features and finds within the hillfort, including pits, postholes and gullies. A possible roundhouse was identified. Finds included an iron ring, pottery, and structural daub. There was little evidence for continuity into the late Iron Age, although it should be stressed that the excavations were limited in extent. The results of the work will be published in *Records of Buckinghamshire* 33.

Reference:

Cocks A H, 1910; "Spear Head, from Medmenham", *Recc Bucks* 9, 438-9

**Stantonbury and Great Linford
(SP 841 400) - R Morse and S Palmer**

Small scale evaluation work was undertaken as part of an environmental impact statement for a development just north of Milton Keynes (Linford Lakes Linear Park). The site lies close to the DMV of Stantonbury and the Roman settlement of Stanton Low. A Roman road (Viatores route 172) was considered to transect the evaluation area. Although the road itself was not confirmed a series of Roman field ditches was revealed.

THAMES VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

**Maidenhead, Windsor and Eton Flood Alleviation Scheme
Steve Ford**

This extensive evaluation was commissioned by the National Rivers Authority (NRA) in connection with their application to construct a flood alleviation channel from the River Thames at Taplow (opposite Maidenhead), running through Buckinghamshire to the north of Dorney and Eton Wick, to rejoin the Thames at Datchet.

Two stages of evaluation had been undertaken by Buckinghamshire County Museum; examining existing SMR evidence, inspecting documentary evidence, and a fieldwalking and geophysical survey of the route. The third stage of evaluation involved machine and hand-dug trenches along the route of the proposal, carried out during January to March 1991.

The most interesting areas of prehistoric activity located in Buckinghamshire were identified at Taplow Mill (including shallow Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age features), Amerden Lane East (2 sites), Marsh Lane East (2 sites) including a possible midden containing Middle Bronze Age pottery, and a ring ditch) and Lake End Road West (4 sites including a Middle Bronze Age cremation).

Features of medieval date were located in several areas, together with a possible Saxon site at Lake End Road West.

CHESS VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**A windmill mound at Penn Bottom, Penn, Buckinghamshire
(SU 924944) - Stanley P Cauvain**

The survey of a mound at Penn Bottom, Penn, reported in the *Records of Buckinghamshire* (1989, 31, 237-239) suggested that it was the base for previously unknown Buckinghamshire windmill. The mound is surrounded by a ditch and the whole monument is about 30 m in diameter. The top of the mound has a ring-like appearance but being only 10 m in diameter at this point it is too small for a motte as has been suggested. At its highest point the mound stands about 2.4 m above the current bottom of the surrounding ditch.

A limited excavation was undertaken to provide evidence for construction and date. A trench 1.5 m wide was cleared traversing the ditch along a radius to the centre of the mound. The ditch was cleared to establish its original depth, the sides of the mound were cleared but not excavated, and a small section was removed from the approximate centre of the mound to provide constructional information.

The mound had been constructed by dumping a mixture of clay, flints and large pieces of chalk directly onto the existing ground surface. The apparent single phase of construction eliminated the possibility that a pre-existing mound, such as a barrow, had been re-used. The ditch had provided much of the material used to create the mound and additional material had been provided by an adjacent shallow pit. The ring-like appearance on the top of the mound was probably the result of activities associated with dismantling of the windmill.

Ceramic finds were surprisingly numerous from such a limited investigation and included 7 fragments of the same roughly made brick with traces of clear glaze. There were a total of 23 sherds of roof tile, including 2 with peg-holes and 96 sherds of medieval pottery.

The pottery forms included jug and jar rims, the forms and fabrics of which are typical of material from the nearby Tylers Green/Penn medieval kilns. This material being datable to the middle to later 14th century suggests a likely

date for construction of the mound is towards the end of the 14th century. There is a reference to a 'Miller End' in the Manor Court Rolls of AD 1481 and though there is no way of connecting this reference to the mound in question the date is not too inconsistent with that suggested by the pottery.

REVIEW

Jonathan Parkhouse

Windows on the Past (Marion Blockley for Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit; design and layout by Derek G Mynard) Milton Keynes, 1992. Price £3.95.

To cram over twenty years work in an area that has seen more archaeological study than almost any other area in England into some seventy pages is an achievement; to have done it so well is an accomplishment for which Marion Blockley is to be congratulated.

The material is not presented on a period by period basis; rather the chapters follow a number of themes (Country life and farming; Home life; Crafts and technology; Transport, travel and trade; Pagans and Christians; Death and Burial); these topics are then discussed on a more-or-less chronological basis, each related to specific discoveries within Milton Keynes.

Inevitably there has had to be selection of material. The dozen sites shown on the map of pre-Roman activity only

tell a small part of the story. Perhaps to have included funerary sites and isolated finds would not have added much to the general intelligibility of the prehistoric periods; nevertheless the first impression is that little happened until the Romans arrived. It is a pity too that there is relatively little about the environment in which all the activity described took place. But these are minor criticisms; the overall impression is of the extremely wide range of information which archaeology provides.

The text is clear and concise throughout, and complemented by copious and excellent illustrations which range from "action shots" taken on site to charming line drawings. The layout is well thought out, and the standard of production high.

All in all this is a worthwhile retrospective of all the investigation that has taken place during the lifetime of the Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit. One looks forward to the fuller academic discussion that will appear as the remaining monographs are published. The new city is still being developed even though the days of the Development Corporation are over and those of the Archaeological Unit are numbered; other chapters remain to be written in the future. Perhaps one of the interesting ones will be the extent to which the public's perception of the past has been enhanced and changed by the unit's work; *Windows on the Past* is a useful tool in that process.

Windows on the Past

ARCHAEOLOGY IN MILTON KEYNES



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT

Report for 1991

Compiled and edited by Michael Shaw

INTRODUCTION

The year 1991 was a period of change for archaeology in Northamptonshire as in the rest of the country. The challenge of managing the archaeology of the county in the light of PPG16 was met by the creation of an extra post of Project Supervisor (Planning) in September. A large number of evaluation briefs were issued by the Unit's Curatorial Section, and a substantial amount of evaluation work was undertaken by the Contracts Section. As the year progressed the number and size of the evaluations commissioned noticeably decreased, presumably due to the economic recession.

The year was also notable in seeing the closure of the last of the major fieldwork components of the Raunds Area Project, with the end of the final season of excavations by the Central Archaeological Service at Stanwick Roman villa. This was also the last excavation of any size in the county and 1992 may be the first year in over two decades when no major fieldwork project has been undertaken in the county. This can to some extent be seen as due to a successful application of a policy of preservation first. It remains to be seen, however, whether in those cases where preservation is not a viable option developer funding can fill the gap left by the withdrawal of English Heritage monies. For the moment the lack of any major excavation project in the county is likely to hamper the work of the interpretation and education projects in presenting the past to the public.

Much effort has been expended by the Unit's management team in preparing a business plan for the organisation. It is hoped that this document, when completed, and the definition of an Historic Environment Strategy for the county will more fully define the objectives of the Unit and its role in managing the archaeology of the county.

CURATORIAL SECTION

Sites and Monuments Record

Christine Addison

A major review of the IT presently used by the SMR was instigated in 1991. The results of this are still awaited, but it seems likely that the present RESCUE software will be replaced by ORACLE at some time during 1992. The possibility of using a Geographical Information System will continue to be pursued as a desirable future development for the SMR.

The provision of a full and up-to-date set of data printouts from the SMR has been effected. These, together with a set of SMR base maps, are housed within the unit library for

maximum general accessibility. The feasibility of installing a second computer terminal for users to tap directly into the SMR will be studied during 1992.

A total of 1,900 aerial photographs taken by the Unit in 1990 were finally accessioned into the SMR. Approximately 250 new sites were identified from these photographs, most of which have now been fully recorded on the site index. The plotting of these new sites will be undertaken by an outside contractor during 1992.

Other major inputting work consisted of features and finds documented on the growing numbers of SMR report forms submitted by fieldworkers in the county. Thirty-seven new sites were added to the SMR from survey other than aerial photography.

The annual updating of the SMR 6 inch OS base record maps was achieved, and copies of these will be circulated to local District/Borough Councils as an initial step towards the provision of Constraints Maps. It is intended that feedback work from the Monument Protection Programme will facilitate the production of these planning aids in the future.

Due to staffing problems within English Heritage the Monument Protection Programme came to a standstill in the summer of 1991. However 34 recommended sites of national importance within the county have now been formally scheduled under MPP, and it is expected that assessments of additional monument types will be resumed during 1992.

Discussions have taken place with representatives of the Royal Commission on Historic Monuments (England) to establish enhancement priorities for the SMR, and to examine the potential for grant-aiding of co-ordination work to effect this enhancement. Industrial Archaeology will be tackled as the first priority, and the CBA Industrial Archaeology Working Parties are currently establishing a standardised recording form for submission to SMRs nationwide.

One hundred and fifteen outside enquiries were made of the SMR during 1991, of which 28 involved visitors to the Unit. These figures comprise mainly researchers, archaeological fieldworkers and commercial land developers. The use of the SMR for educational purposes continued, and visits by teachers are being actively encouraged during 1992. Access to the SMR continues to be free of charge to all but commercial enquirers.

Interpretation Project

Marion Blockley

Melanie Whewell left Northamptonshire in October 1991 to take up a new post in Northumbria. Marion Blockley, a refugee from the Milton Keynes Unit, was appointed to the post of Interpretation Officer in December 1991.

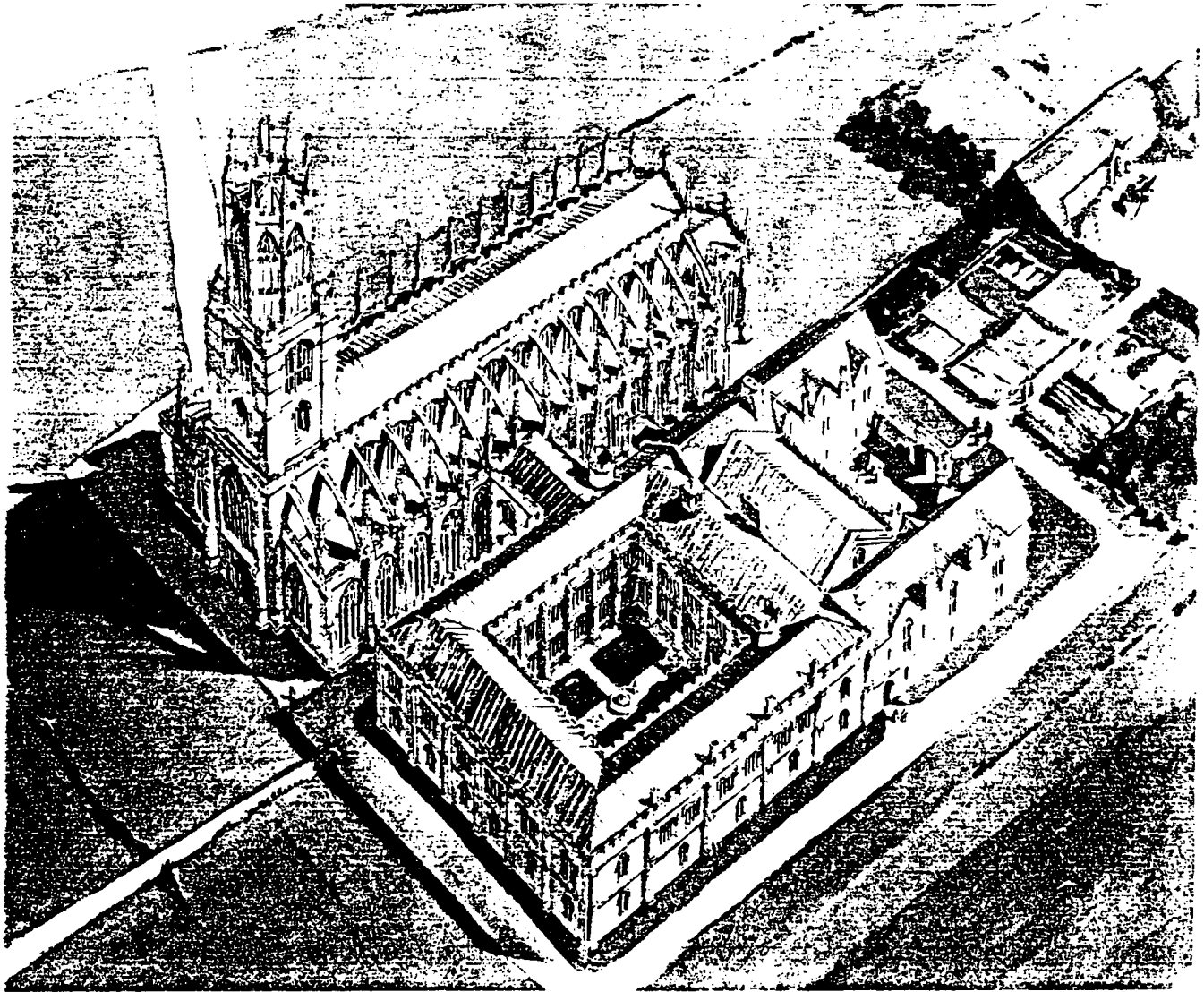


Fig 1: Artist's impression by Terry Ball of Fotheringhay Church and Ecclesiastical College from an interpretation panel on the site. The nave is drawn at its original length, twice that of the existing parish church.

The interpretation project has expanded to involve liaison with local communities and individual landowners throughout the county. The County Council administers a guardianship policy whereby it maintains significant historic sites on behalf of their owners, in conjunction with the county's building conservation section. A number of monuments including stocks, dovecotes, crosses and historic gates are being repaired and managed with a view to providing improved public access. Waymark signs and key holder posts have been installed at a number of sites and a series of leaflets are being produced.

The moated site at Walgrave is at present being taken into guardianship as part of an interpretation scheme for the whole village. A management plan for the long term care of monuments there is currently being prepared in consultation with the local community.

At Fotheringhay village a scheme to present aspects of the historic village to the public, without intruding on the privacy of the residents, is in progress. Display panels have been produced for the castle site, church and former ecclesiastical college. These panels are enhanced by very

fine watercolour drawings by Terry Ball who produces artist's impressions for English Heritage and CADW. As part of the interpretation process geophysical survey was carried out on the bailey of the castle site by the Contracts Section of the Unit.

The new postholder's first priority was to commence preparation of an exhibition on Northamptonshire Castles which will be on display at Rockingham Castle from April - September 1992 and will subsequently tour the county for six months.

Education Project

Rachel Shaw

The impact of the National Curriculum, particularly in History, was felt increasingly as the year progressed. Predictably, demand has increased for services with a direct bearing on what is now required to be taught - for us, this provides a useful framework for our planning.



Fig 2: Artist's impression by Terry Ball of Fotheringhay Castle in the late fourteenth century. The keep is surmounted by the Fetterlock an eight-sided building built by Edmund Langley and described by the antiquary Camden.

Ten new Roman Artefact Kits were put together, and are borrowed regularly by teachers to give pupils hands-on experience with finds in the classroom. The Ashton Teachers' Resources pack, based on excavations at the Roman town of Ashton, has been revised to bring it into line with National Curriculum requirements, and reprinted. We are currently preparing a Teaching pack based on a selection of the best air-photos held in our collection.

We are finding that teachers value the opportunity to get out into the countryside with some expert guidance and our one-day training sessions have proved popular. In July 1992, for example, we are organising a day on The Medieval Landscape of Northamptonshire, showing teachers how to research and use evidence from the landscape to increase their understanding of the Medieval period.

Much of our time is still spent working directly with school pupils. Our last season of educational site visits took place at Stanwick Roman villa, with the support of David Neal, and culminated in an On-Site Open Day, attended by visitors with a particular interest in Archaeology and Education. In 1992, we shall be offering fieldwork for pupils at Kirby Hall, Chichele College (Higham Ferrers) and the deserted Medieval village of Upton, Northampton.

The Education Assistant, Gerry Mico, and myself, are regularly asked into schools to speak to pupils, and it is encouraging that 'A' level History teachers are making greater use of the Unit, especially the SMR, with their students. Some very successful sessions have been run jointly with the Northamptonshire Record Office, giving students the chance to see the relationship between both archaeological and documentary evidence for one particular site. There is a steady increase too in research visits by teachers, using the SMR as a tool in Local Studies.

We have been fortunate in the support, both financial and practical, given to this project by both Northamptonshire Education Authority and English Heritage. Changes in the financing of Education, however, mean that from April 1992 we shall have to charge schools directly for our services. Much time has therefore had to be devoted to the production of a Prospectus and the setting up of a Subscription Scheme, open to any school, which we hope will enable the Unit to continue its educational work.

Field Officer Graham Cadman

The Field Officer undertakes non-developer funded fieldwork, chiefly strategic studies of particular areas or threats and watching briefs, in addition to assisting with the Section's development control and fieldwork monitoring functions. A major survey programme linked to the County's revised Sand and Gravels Plan was completed early in the year. Subsequent survey works included those initiated in advance of the construction of the M1-A1 road link. Numerous smaller scale salvage excavation, survey and watching brief projects have been undertaken including road bypass schemes at Middleton Cheney and Brackley and church works at Oundle. Completion of post excavation commitments arising out of this and previous years fieldwork has remained a high priority. Liaison with local metal detectorists has been strengthened resulting in several co-operative ventures most notably that involving the Midland Archaeological Research Society in the Naseby area late in 1991.

The following summary features the most notable results from the year's field projects; some ongoing projects will be

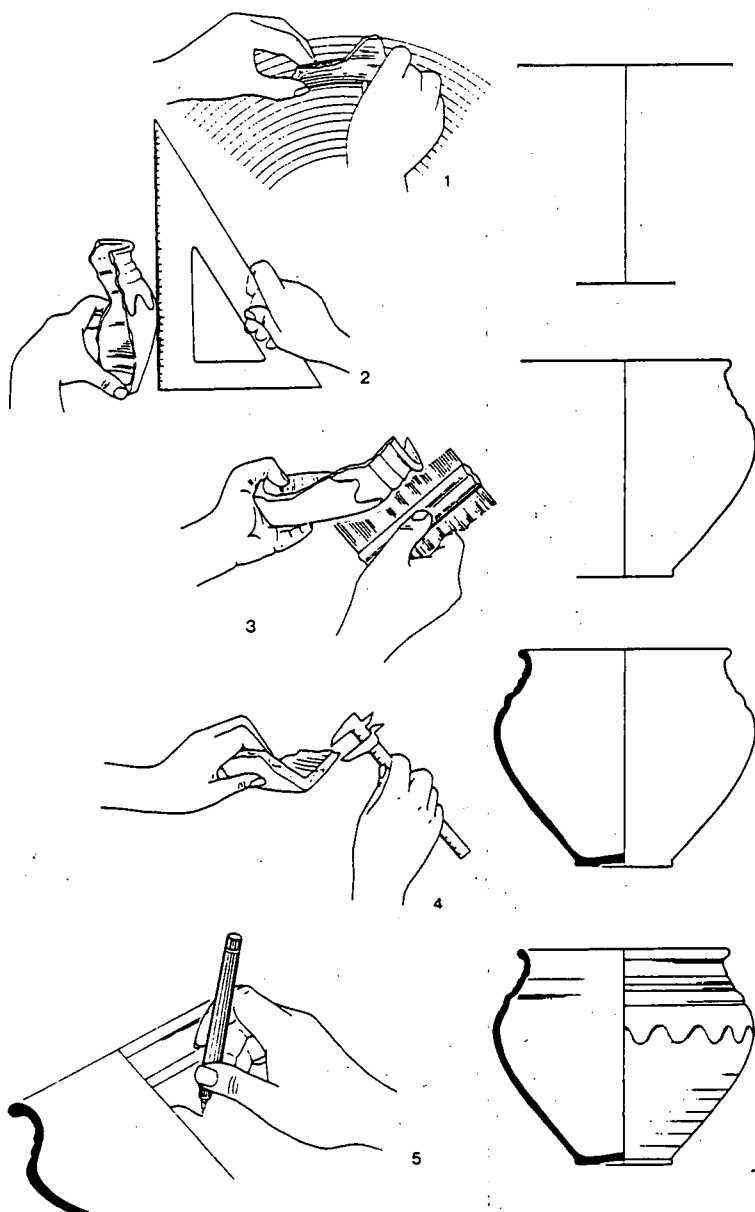


Fig 3: Illustration of how to draw pottery included in the Artefact Handling Kits used in schools as part of the Education Project. Drawn by Lesley Collett.

reported upon in future years. Unless otherwise stated all fieldwork is by the Field Officer.

Near Brackley

Part of two mosaics were uncovered temporarily over a weekend by local amateur archaeologists in October 1991. One, of the late 4th century AD, depicts a Bellerophon scene within a star of two points formed by two overlapping squares. The first head of the Chimaera has the face "of a wolf or dog rather than a lion, and the third head is that of a snake, which is in line with classical tradition" (*The Independent*, 17th October 1991). The mosaics were subsequently covered over again and it is proposed that the

area should be protected by scheduling. Earlier in the year a quantity of Roman pottery and tile was recovered from an adjacent field during the construction of a new gas pipeline and 44 Roman coins, part of a Colchester-type fibula brooch and a late 4th century zoomorphic belt buckle were retrieved by metal detectorists.

Culworth; St Mary's Church (SP 54444694)

A brick vault was temporarily exposed in the south aisle during renewal of flooring. A small quantity of unstratified medieval pottery was noted during the excavation of service trenches through the graveyard immediately west of the church.

Denton; Dovecote (SP 83735806)

A single small inspection trench was opened adjacent to the south-west wall of the dovecote by Gary Haley of NAU Curatorial Section. A small amount of post-1750 pottery and two medieval sherds were recovered.

Dodford SP60656060

A large wooden trough or drain segment was recovered by farmer, Mr G Smith, during excavations for a new pond. It is not directly datable but is suspected to be of fairly recent origin.

Easton Maudit; Horn Wood (c SP 89635762)

A single sherd of Iron Age pottery was found by Mr G Brockman in a tree throw hole. Geophysical survey by Peter Masters of the NAU Contracts Section was unable to establish the extent of the earthwork enclosure at c SP 89645758.

Fotheringhay; Castle Farm Cottage (TL 6069306)

A small evaluation conducted on the site of a proposed new garage in September exposed several minor features cut into natural gravel. These and overlying horizons appear to be of recent origin. Apart from the presence of two unstratified 12th-13th century pottery sherds no evidence for medieval activity was observed.

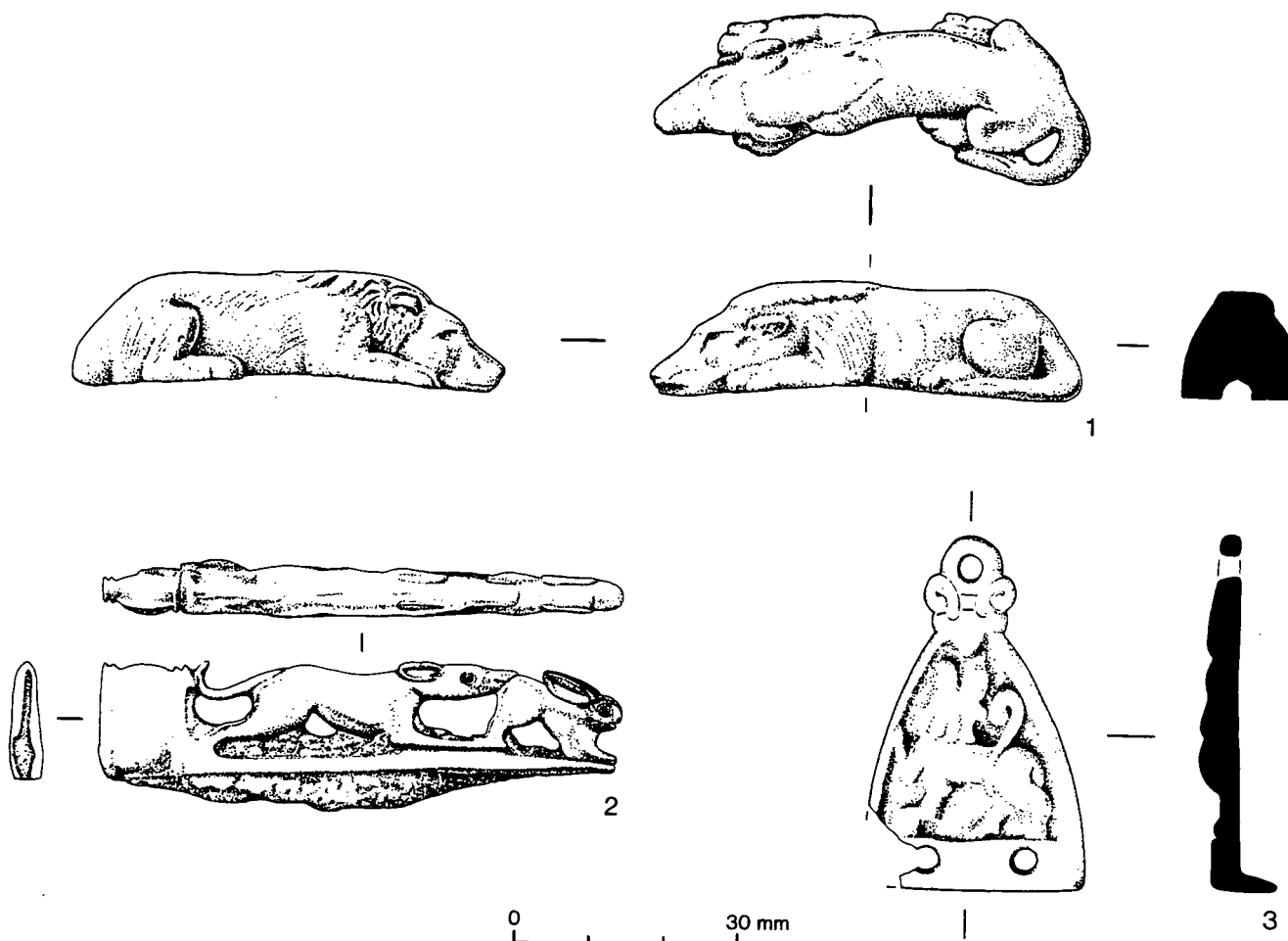


Fig 4: Three items found near Brackley by Gary Croucher and John Stanton of OHRDC and recorded by the Field Officer as part of his role in liaising with detectorists. 1 - copper alloy crouching lion of uncertain function and date. Possibly a Roman decorative vessel mount but other opinions welcome! 2 - Roman copper alloy clasp-knife in the form of a hound chasing a hare. The corroded remnant of a folded blade is visible along the base. 3 - copper alloy book mount, provisionally dated to the 11th century. 1, 3 drawn by Lesley Collett, 2 drawn by Melanie Connell.

Grafton Regis (SP 738840)

Fourteen sherds of early/middle Saxon pottery, including one decorated sherd, together with a small quantity of later material, were recovered during fieldwalking. The concentration lay on a prominent knoll adjacent to the River Tove.

Grafton Regis (SP 752468)

Medieval pottery, stone scatters and a pit or ditch were recorded during the construction of a new sewer immediately to the north of the manor site excavated 1964-5. Seventeen lead shot, one jetton and other items were recovered by Gordon Heritage. Other metal detecting finds discovered elsewhere on the scheme include a medieval buckle plate, a crotal bell and a coin of Magnentius. Part of a medieval mirror case was recovered during works on a nearby Anglian Water scheme (SP7 6374756).

Grafton Regis (SP 758468)

Following the top-soil stripping of an area of 25m x 5m on a pasture field at the junction of The Lane and Church Road, observations were made by Mark Holmes on behalf of the NAU Curatorial Section. Structural elements in the form of two possible limestone walls and a small brick feature were noted. Areas of small limestone pieces, possibly representing associated surfaces, were also observed. Quantities of post-medieval pottery and tile were recovered along with a small quantity of medieval pottery.

Great Harrowden; All Saints Church (SP 88047084)

A watching brief during the construction of a ventilated drain trench around the south and west sides of the church observed traces of the demolished south aisle.

Hardwick; St Leonards Church
(SP 85066978)

An undated burial was located below a buttress adjacent to the south-east corner of the tower and south-west corner of the nave during underpinning. The burial may hence pre-date the construction of the nave.

Harrington; Church Lane
(SP 77678031)

A watching brief during development recovered a small quantity of medieval pottery.

Hartwell; Hartwell End Farm
(SP 7934951)

A concentration of limestone, including walls and surfaces, together with a small amount of unstratified medieval pottery was recorded along with minor earthworks during agricultural levelling works. "Green glazed" pottery sherds are reported to have found during work on barns to north-east of Hartwell End House at c SP 79474963.

Hartwell; Elms Farm
(SP 79334977)

Shell-tempered medieval pottery was recovered from ploughsoil by Mrs Finnegan.

Irchester; River Nene
(SP 912671-921675)

Observation during dredging of the River Nene adjacent to Irchester Roman town, conducted with the assistance of members of the Midland Archaeological Research Society, during the winter of 1990-91, led to the recovery of a small quantity of Romano- British and later pottery and miscellaneous metal items including a coin of Valens. A scatter of dredged limestone fragments may be associated with a crossing point situated in line with an earthwork causeway surviving a short distance to the north.

Irthlingborough; High Street
(SP 94377049)

A supine human burial of possible medieval origin, with limestone fragments close packed around the skull, was partly exposed during garden re-modelling works. The remains were sealed by up to 0.6 m of silty clay. It remains uncertain whether this is an isolated burial or part of a larger burial group.

Kettering; Barton Seagrave
(c SP8890772)

A substantial stone wall incorporating several re-used architectural fragments was reported by Mr S Holder. The

source of these pieces is unknown but might have originated from the site of the nearby Barton Seagrave Castle.

Kings Sutton; Astrop House Grounds
(SP 50753654)

Earthworks including banks and possible building platforms were observed either side of a sunken former roadway. These may represent 17th - 18th century expansion of settlement associated with "Astrop Spa" or may have earlier, medieval, origins.

Naseby
(SP 69107883)

Field survey retrieved small amounts of Saxon and later pot sherds.

Northampton; 13 Marefair
(SP 75116038)

Up to 1.6 m of post-medieval and recent dump materials was observed during building works.

Oundle; St Peters Church
(TL 042882)

Archaeological recording works were undertaken by Jo Woodiwiss and Gill Johnston during extensive re-ordering works in August 1991. Replacement of the nave, aisle and transept floors exposed several features of interest. These included traces of walls pre- dating the existing arcades and the remains of wall footings to the north and west of the crossing. A small quantity of unstratified early/middle Saxon pottery was recovered.

Paulerspury
(SP 718476; SP 723474)

Field survey identified Roman pottery and tile associated with a limestone scatter centred on SP 718476. Six sherds of Saxon pottery were present at the south end of the field. At c SP 723474 a further scatter of Roman pottery and tile was identified.

Potterspury; St Bartholomew's Church, Furtho
(SP 77344309)

Observation and recording of structural engineer's test pits and other features was conducted as a prelude to a proposed extensive refurbishment programme.

Rockingham
(SP 85609155)

A scatter of Roman pottery and one early/middle Saxon sherd (centred on SP 85609155) were identified during field survey.

Rockingham
(SP 86679201)

A rectilinear ditched and banked earthwork enclosure approximately 65 by 60 m in extent with an entrance to the north was located by field survey. It is flanked immediately to the west by the continuation of a holloway previously recorded to the north-west on the other side of the A6003.

Rockingham
(c SP 86559200)

Medieval and a small quantity of early/middle Saxon sherds were discovered by field survey, close to the north-west corner of the modern village of Rockingham.

Shutlanger
(c SP 735480)

Two small, low, circular mounds up to 7 m in diameter and up to 0.3 m high were observed in pasture flood plain.

Stanion; Willow Lane
(SP 91558681)

Medieval pottery was recovered during the excavation of footings for a new house and garage. There was no evidence of any industrial activity.

Stanion; 1 Little Lane
(SP 91458699)

A watching brief maintained during the excavation of foundations for a small house extension identified limited archaeological features and in excess of 200 sherds of c 15th century pottery including wasters. Two reconstructible medieval jugs were found in a small pit along with bowl and roof tile fragments. No kiln or related structure was located.

Stoke Bruerne; Stoke Park
(c SP 741490)

Observation by Glenn Foard and Gary Haley of NAU Curatorial Section during construction of a new access road recorded occasional medieval and later pottery and some limestone scatters including a putative wall.

Thorpe Mandeville; Lower Thorpe Farm
(SP 535454)

A watching brief conducted during re-development recorded the presence of an early 19th century overshot waterwheel at the north end of the farm buildings. To the east were the overgrown remains of a stone-built sheepdip situated on a leet bypass channel.

Towcester; Leisure Centre
(SP 68554810)

Two small gullies were recorded during construction of a new leisure centre. Both features lacked dating material though several unstratified Roman-British sherds were found in close proximity.

Towcester; Wood Burcote
(SP 69454677)

Two undated wells together with traces of archaeological stratigraphy and occasional unstratified medieval pottery were observed during building works in December.

Whittlebury; Whittlebury House
(SP 69104427)

An undated ditch approximately 3 m wide by 1 m deep and aligned east-west was observed by Gary Haley during development works.

Wollaston; Wollaston Hall
(SP 90936309 - 90966310)

A stone built drain with barrel vaulted roof was discovered during works in the cellar of Wollaston Hall. The drain, with a maximum internal height of 1.64 m and width of 0.75 m ran west from the hall for a distance of over 26 m. Roof collapse prevented further exploration east. The drain was almost certainly constructed at about the same date as the early 18th century hall.

Woodford
(centre SP 986771)

Field survey recorded the presence of Iron Age and Romano-British pottery together with a small number of early/middle Saxon sherds from the north end of the field.

Yardley Gobion
(SP 75454472)

A small quantity of medieval and later pottery was recovered during the construction of duplicate water mains.

Yardley Gobion
(SP 76304490)

An undated stone well was discovered by the owner, Mrs Gray, in her back garden. The remains of a stone wall are located close by to the east. Earth recently moved from the vicinity of the wall contained several sherds of medieval pottery.

CONTRACTS SECTION

The commissioning of the Contracts Section by the Historic Royal Palaces Agency to undertake work on the gardens at Hampton Court Palace saw the section undertake work outside the county for the first time. The Section sees that some of its strengths - in this case garden archaeology and an in-house geophysical survey capacity - can be offered outside the county, thereby permitting a greater flexibility of operation. Post-excavation work has continued on those components of the Raunds Area Project undertaken by the Unit. Michel Audouy's report on the excavations at North Raunds is on schedule for completion early in 1992, and will be followed by Steve Parry's report on the Field Survey in 1993 and Andy Chapman's report on West Cotton in 1994 - Dave Windell having absconded to sunnier climes in Greece. The reports are intended for publication in the English Heritage Monograph Series.

Fieldwork in 1991

Brackley, Egerton House

(SP 59103735) - Michael Shaw and Sean Steadman

An archaeological evaluation was carried out in the grounds of Egerton House, Brackley in May - June 1991, ahead of the determination of a planning application. The work was financed by English Heritage. A total of seven trenches were excavated in areas affected by development proposals.

Traces of settlement activity dating to the late Iron Age - early Romano-British period were uncovered. To the north of the house part of a large ditch was discovered. A number of shallow pits, postholes and stakeholes suggest a possible structure immediately south of this ditch. To the east of the house a shallow ditch may mark a boundary of this period. These features were overlaid by a layer of loamy material which may be the remnants of an agricultural soil of late Romano-British - Saxon date.

There was little evidence of Saxon activity, although a small amount of early/middle Saxon, middle Saxon Ipswich ware and late Saxon pottery was present as a residual element in the ceramic assemblage. The Ipswich ware sherds are of interest in being one of the most westerly discoveries of this pottery type.

To the north of the house a medieval boundary ditch was uncovered. It was replaced in the post-medieval period by a linear stone feature on the same line. To the east of the house the remains of a late medieval or early post medieval stone structure and a series of stone surfaces were uncovered beneath a recent embankment. Stone rubble, mortar and wall-plaster found in association with post-medieval material beneath the lawn to the south of the house would appear to be demolition material from an earlier building. A large number of pits of medieval date were uncovered, especially to the south of the house.

Chipping Warden, Roman Villa

(SP 512482) - Michael Webster

A watching brief was carried out on the site of the Roman villa in accordance with the conditions of the Scheduled Monument Consent for the renewal of a water pipe. Metalled areas and possible stone walls were observed and recorded and small quantities of Romano-British pottery, of 2nd - 4th century date, and tile were recovered.

Clay Coton; Manor Farm

(SP 59407700) - Sean Steadman

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on earthworks adjacent to the Stanford-on-Avon road to the north of the modern village of Clay Coton. Fragmentary stone footings, pits and boundary ditches of medieval date were uncovered, but most of any related structural evidence along the street frontage is either badly disturbed or has been destroyed by later activity associated with landscaping around the post-medieval house. A hollow way at right angles to the road proved to be a post-medieval feature, probably part of an earlier carriageway leading to the house.

Fotheringhay; Fotheringhay Castle

(TL 06249297) - Peter Masters and Mark Holmes

Geophysical survey was undertaken at the site of Fotheringhay Castle in order to attempt to locate internal features to assist with an interpretation project on the castle. The best results came from the Inner Bailey where the previous layout of buildings could be reconstructed by combining the results of magnetometer and resistivity survey with a descriptive survey of 1625. No significant results were obtained from the summit of the motte, which appeared to have been extensively disturbed in the past, or from the Outer Bailey.

Grafton Regis; Anglian Water pipeline

(SP 76064688 - 75994660) - Sean Steadman

An archaeological recording action was carried out for Anglian Water on a section of the proposed water mains duplication to the east of Grafton Regis in October 1991 in an area of ploughed-out earthworks which had been suggested as representing an Iron Age enclosure. The work was financed by Anglian Water. A trench, 260 m long and 4m wide, was machine excavated under archaeological supervision. All archaeological features were recorded on plan and then sampled to establish their date and function where possible. No feature of earlier than 1st century AD date was located. Two parallel ditches, both c 2 m wide, and set c 2 m apart, were the earliest surviving features discovered on the site. Two worked flints and a few pottery sherds of Belgic - early Romano-British type were also recovered, mainly from residual contexts. The remains of a possible stone building of late medieval date, consisting of limestone rubble and a small hearth, were uncovered at the

northern end of the trench. A boundary ditch of the same date, probably the back boundary of settlement fronting on to a hollow way which still survives along the northern edge of the field, was discovered to the south of the building remains. Evidence of ridge and furrow cultivation and 19th century quarrying were also uncovered. A watching brief was maintained on the excavation of the pipe trench through the hollow way but no features pre-dating the medieval period were identified.

Gretton; Kirby Hall (SP 925927) - Brian Dix

Further excavations for English Heritage identified a series of lost structural features associated with the Elizabethan and later house in addition to concluding the investigation of the surrounding gardens. The foundations of two semi-circular bays were located at the west and east sides of the state apartments respectively and the remains of demolished service buildings were discovered beneath the so-called Privy Garden. The investigation of aspects of former water-management included the excavation at a right-angled bend in the canalised stream-bed of a previous water-gate with sluice and elaborate wooden sill. Further downstream a separate bridge had been remodelled and was provided with a series of sham arches in the 18th century.

Harpole; Northampton North-West Bypass (area of SP 706612) - Mark Holmes

Evaluation work for Northamptonshire County Council Planning and Transportation Department on the proposed route of the Northampton North-West Bypass was continued with the systematic fieldwalking of four fields around Norwood Farm. Pottery of Iron Age, Romano-British, early/middle Saxon and medieval date was recovered from Field 1 (centred on SP 704609). However, only the Iron Age and early/middle Saxon distributions are likely to be of significance. The distribution of worked flints in the field is of interest in that a range of tool types, including two arrowheads, was discovered. The other three fields walked were centred on SP 707609, 706614 and 705616 respectively. Although further flint and pottery was recovered from these fields no significant concentrations were recognised.

Higham Ferrers; Site of Higham Ferrers Castle (SP 961686) - Michael Shaw and Sean Steadman

An archaeological evaluation was carried out in November 1991 on an area at the southern end of the site of Higham Ferrers Castle, (Scheduled Ancient Monument, Northamptonshire NN13607) ahead of the determination of a planning application for sheltered housing on the site. Nothing now remains of the castle above ground and the evaluation was intended to discover whether archaeological deposits relating to the castle or to pre-castle occupation survived below the present-day surface.

The evaluation comprised an assessment of the documentary sources and trial trenching. Four trenches were excavated (Trenches A - D).

Pre-Castle Occupation

The limestone subsoil was located in Trench A at the east end of the site, 1.3m below the present ground surface. It was overlaid by a layer of yellowish red loam which may be the remains of a ploughsoil of pre-late Saxon origin. In an extension of Trench B to the east a portion of a post-in-trench structure of probable late Saxon date was located. It cut the yellowish red loam layer. Ten sherds of late Saxon pottery and a single sherd of early/middle Saxon pottery recovered as a residual element in later contexts are also likely to have originated from pre-castle occupation levels.

Early Castle-Period Occupation

The earliest castle on the site is generally assumed to be a motte and bailey castle of late 11th century date, although there is no documentary reference to a castle on the site until considerably later. No definite traces of an early castle were recovered. In all trenches a layer of dark loam with charcoal flecks which contained post-1100 pottery was located. A low mound (Mound 2), c 1 m in height, uncovered at the western end of Trench D overlying the dark loam layer and

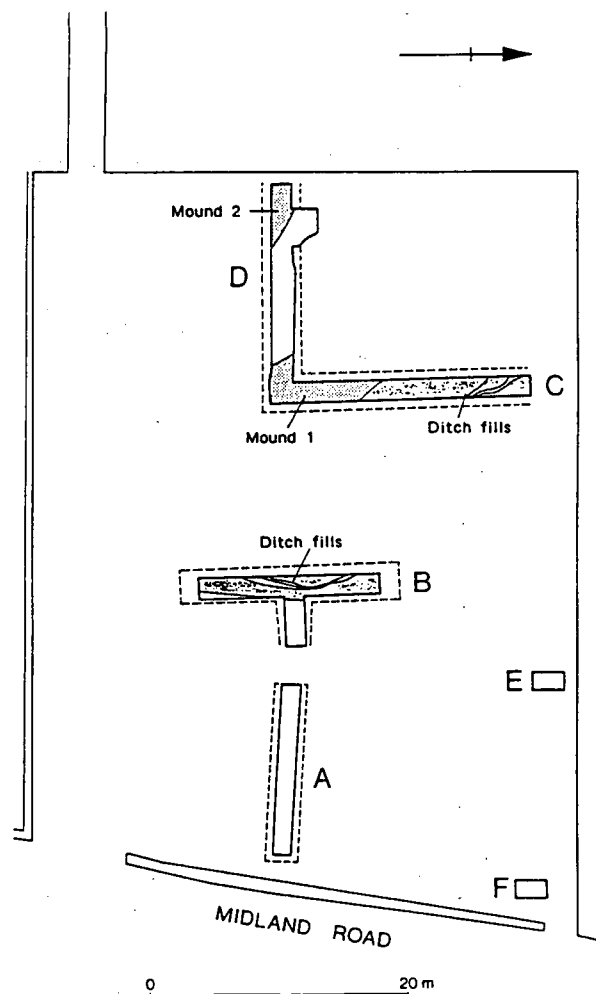


Fig 5: Plan of trenches at Higham Ferrers Castle showing location of ditch and Mounds 1 and 2.

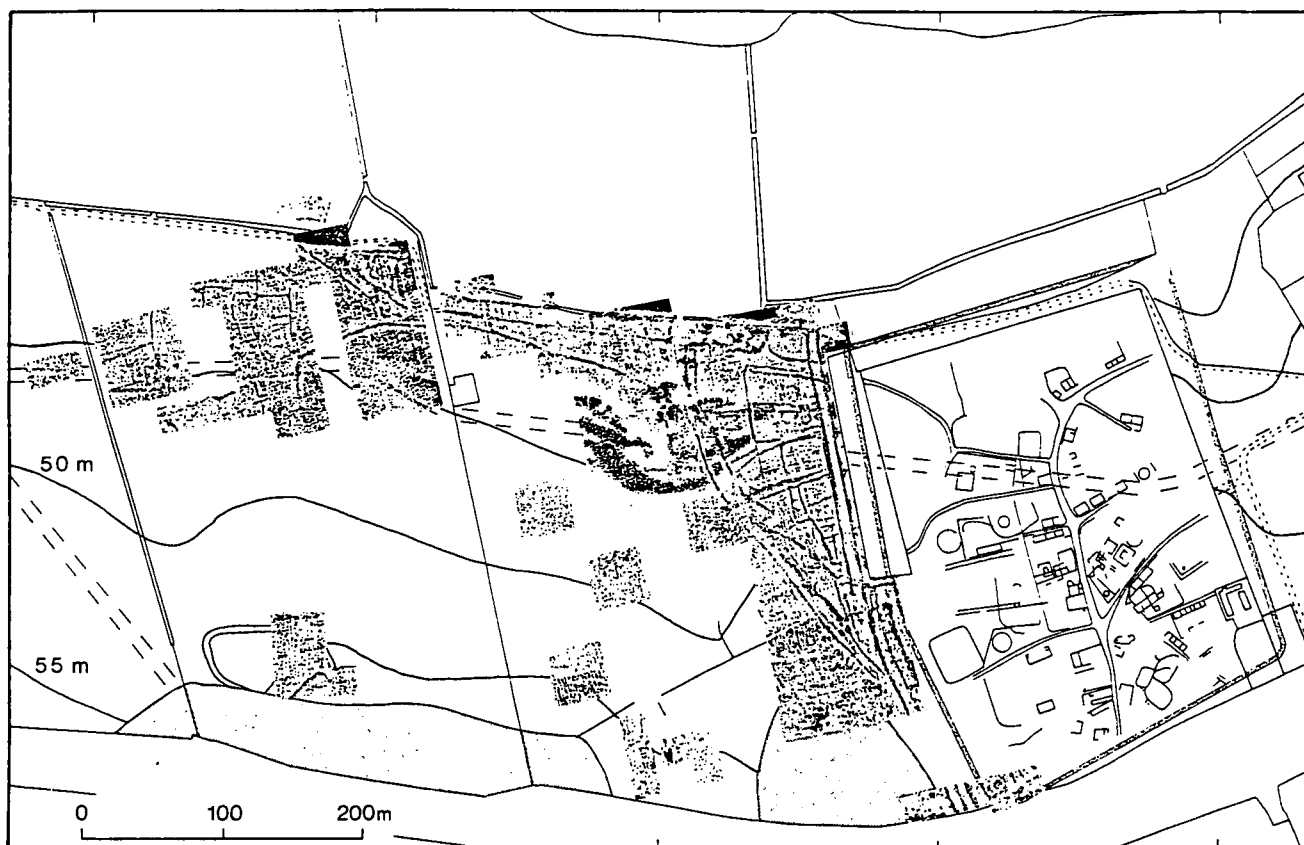


Fig 6: Irchester Roman Town. Detail of magnetometer survey of area to west of the walled town.

a short length of stone foundations located in the south-east corner of Trench B are probably also of this period.

Later Castle-Period Occupation

A large ditch was located in Trenches B and C. Due to the alignment of the trenches at an angle eccentric to that of the ditch it was not possible to ascertain the width of the ditch or its precise course. Its fill was removed to a maximum depth of 1.6 m. A series of fills of medieval date was overlaid by a thick layer of silt which presumably indicates a period of slow silting into a partially backfilled ditch. A Nuremberg token of Hans Krauwinkel (active 1580 - 1610) was recovered from the silt layer. The silt layer was overlaid by a series of fills of post-medieval date which suggest that the subsequent infill of the ditch took place over a long period of time between the 17th and 19th centuries. An early 19th century documentary reference to the filling of a deep moat and the levelling of the area within it perhaps relates to the final infill of this ditch. There can be little doubt that this ditch is part of the defences of the castle; possibly it enclosed the Inner Ward.

A mound on the inner edge of the ditch (Mound 1) is likely to have been created at the time of the excavation of the ditch. The area between this mound and Mound 2, a distance of 9 m, was then filled, perhaps with material excavated from the ditch, raising the height of the area inside the ditch by c 1.4 m.

Irchester, area west of Roman Town

(area of SP912667) - Brian Dix and Michael Webster

Fieldwalking reconnaissance, magnetometer survey and selective trial excavation to the west of the walled town revealed evidence of extra-mural activity including masonry at SP 91406648. A series of rectilinear enclosures bounded by ditches, with some containing possible circular structures lay immediately to the west of the walled area (centred at SP 91506669) and would appear to pre-date the laying out of the defences. They were bordered by a trackway which was joined at the north by another running from the north-west corner of the walled area to connect with a large area of extra-mural settlement further to the west, centred at SP 91186680. There the trackway divided around a series of enclosures containing timber and stone buildings. In some cases the original boundary ditches appear to have been replaced by fences and limestone walls. The area appears to have been primarily agricultural.

Mears Ashby

(SP 83206670) - Mark Holmes

Fieldwalking undertaken for Anglian Water as part of an archaeological evaluation of the proposed route of the Northampton South trunk main revealed a concentration of early/middle Saxon pottery.

Raunds; Mallows Cotton
(SP 97707330) - Peter Masters

A range of geophysical survey equipment was used at Mallows Cotton in an education project for sixth form students from a number of schools in the county. Two areas were investigated - Mallows Cotton DMV and palaeochannels adjacent to the DMV. The survey successfully located the continuation of Iron Age and Romano-British features beneath the medieval village including a substantial driveway which was previously detected in Field 12 of the Raunds Area Survey (SMA 21), 67- 68). The palaeochannels were successfully detected by resistivity survey.

Raunds; Manor House
(SP 99927301) - Michel Audouy and Michael Webster

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Raunds Manor House, Manor Street, Raunds, in November 1991, ahead of the determination of a planning application for housing in the grounds of the Manor House. The evaluation comprised the excavation of six trenches, a magnetometer survey of an area of 0.32 ha, and an architectural survey (by Brian Giggins) of the Manor House itself. The site lies adjacent to St Peter's (formerly St Mary's) Church, the parish church, c 200 m south-west of the Burystead excavation site, where Saxon and medieval occupation deposits had previously been found.

Evidence of extensive settlement dating to the Saxon and medieval periods was recovered. All trenches contained cut features, including postholes, gullies, ditches and large quarry pits, at depths of only 0.15 m - 0.4 m. No structural patterning could be observed, possibly due to the small scale nature of the work. The ceramics recovered during the excavation range from early/ middle Saxon wares to late medieval types. A predominance of late Saxon wares suggests a peak of activity at this time. The presence of Ipswich ware pottery, albeit in small quantity, in some contexts suggests occupation during the middle Saxon period.

The architectural survey of the manor house suggested that part of the existing building dates to the fifteenth century. Two moulded stones of 12th century date, re-used as the jambs of a doorway, may attest to an earlier origin.

Sywell
(SP 82506900) - Mark Holmes

Fieldwalking undertaken for Anglian Water as part of an archaeological evaluation of the proposed route of the Northampton South trunk main revealed a concentration of Romano- British material.

Tansor; Tansor Crossroads
(TL 057901) - Michael Shaw and Michael Webster

Examination of aerial photographs and fieldwalking was carried out around Tansor Crossroads as part of an

archaeological evaluation of the route of the Warmington Bypass (see entry for Warmington). A low mound is visible at TL 05719016. Aerial photographs taken by the Northamptonshire Archaeology Unit and Steve Upex suggest that the mound is surrounded by a ring ditch and other possible ring ditches are present in the same area. Fieldwalking of the field in which the ring ditches are located revealed a minor concentration of worked flint in the same area.

Towcester; Meeting Lane
(SP 69314858) - Sean Steadman and Michael Shaw

An archaeological evaluation was carried out in June 1991 on a small area of land (0.05 ha in extent) off Meeting Lane, Towcester, between Watling Street and Richmond Road, within the walled Roman town of Lactodurum. Three small trial pits were excavated. At the northern end of the area a large pit and a pit/ditch, both of Romano-British date, were discovered up to 1.85 m below the present ground surface. At the southern end a shallow ditch, also of Romano-British date was uncovered 1.6m below the present ground surface. In both trenches the Romano- British features were overlain by a thick layer of dark earth suggestive of dereliction or agricultural use of the area. Towards the centre of the site a wall, 0.8 m wide, of late medieval or later date, was revealed 0.8 m below the present ground surface. Its purpose was uncertain but it was set in a substantial foundation trench which was cut into a layer of dark clay loam whose depth could not be ascertained.

Towcester; Paynes' Nursery
(SP68984914) - Michael Shaw and Michael Webster

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Paynes Nursery, Towcester, in December 1991, ahead of the determination of a planning application for housing. The site lies immediately to the north of the walled Roman town, fronting on to Watling Street. It was thought that the area may have lain within the northern suburbs of the Roman town and that occupation layers of this date might be located below more recent deposits. Seven trial trenches were excavated. None contained any features of definite Roman date and few sherds of residual Roman pottery were recovered. It would appear therefore that the area was not occupied at that period. The presence of layers of alluvium would suggest that the area was prone to regular flooding, which would have acted as a deterrent to occupation. Above the alluvial layers were thick layers of dumped material of recent date. They may have been intended to raise the land above the flood plain.

Warmington
(TL 0791) - Michael Shaw and Michael Webster

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by along the proposed routes of the Warmington bypass for Northamptonshire County Council Planning and

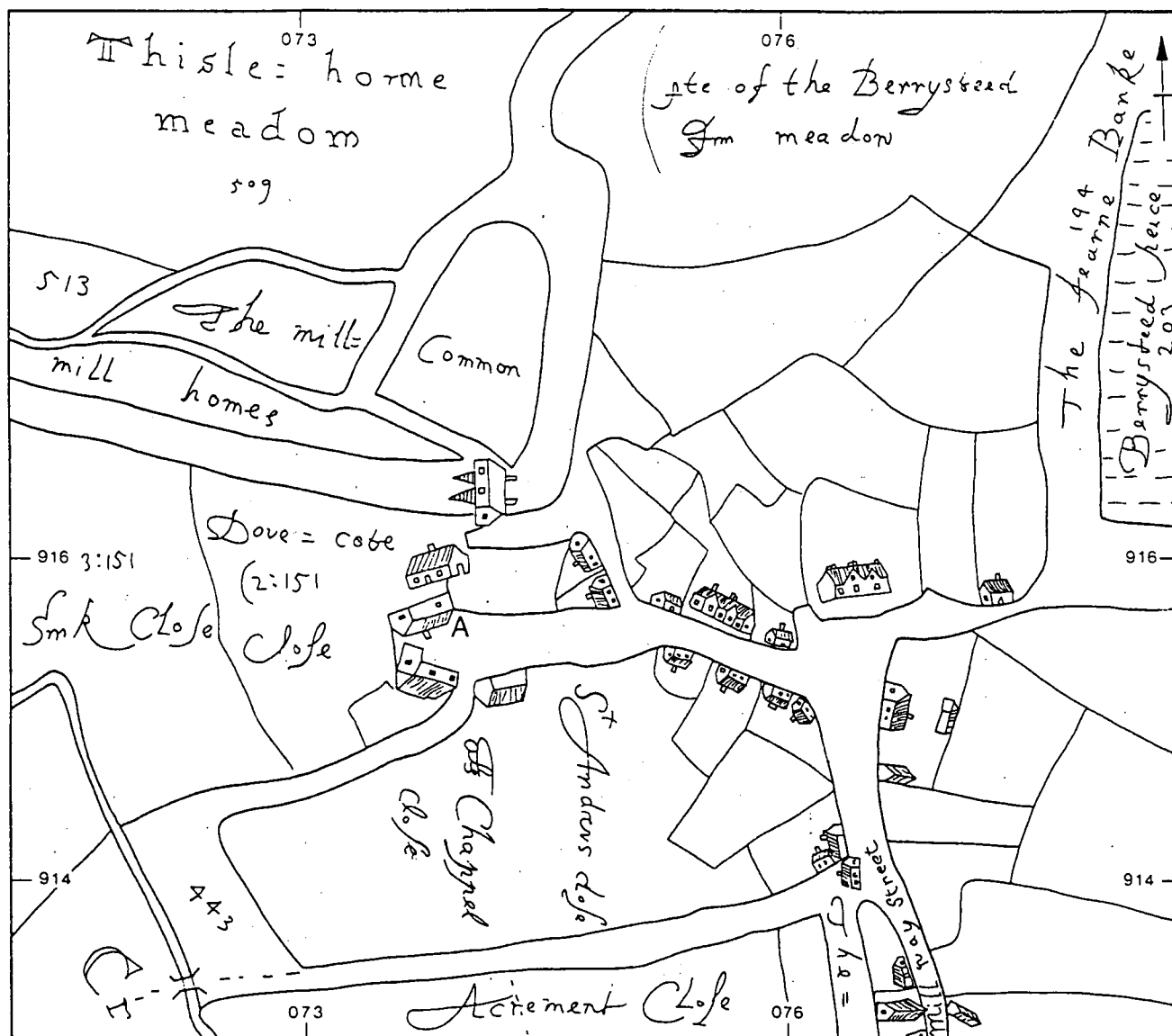


Fig 7: Warmington. Detail of copy of parish map of 1621 showing area of the "Berrysteed" (A on plan). Reproduced by permission of Oundle school Library.

Transportation Department. The evaluation comprised: the collation and mapping of existing archaeological evidence, including the plotting of cropmarks discovered by aerial photography; an assessment of the documentary sources; fieldwalking of all available arable fields along the proposed routes; an earthwork survey; geophysical survey; and trial trenching.

Cropmarks Extensive cropmarks of linear boundary ditches, pit alignments and ring ditches visible on Northamptonshire Archaeology Unit aerial photographs in the area of TL 080919 were plotted. No significant concentrations of material were located when this area was fieldwalked.

Documentary Survey A parish survey of 1621 (fig 7) and accompanying maps were examined and the maps were copied and assembled into a single sheet of the whole parish. A manorial site, called in the survey "Berrysteed", was located at TL 07399152. An adjoining field to the south is described as St Andrews' Close, alias Chapel Close, while a mill site is shown to the north on a site now occupied by a

disused nineteenth century mill. This area is probably the site of the main medieval manor of Warmington, which belonged to Peterborough Abbey.

Fieldwalking All or part of six fields (WR1 - 6), covering a total area of c 32 ha, were fieldwalked at 30 m intervals. The chief concentrations of finds were of Romano-British pottery in Field WR4 at TL 071912 and of early/middle Saxon (hereafter - EMS) pottery in Field WR5 at TL 066913. Other more minor concentrations of EMS pottery were also recovered - in fact pottery of this date was recovered from five of the six fields walked. A further field (WR13) in which part of the manorial site lay was fieldwalked at 15 m intervals. A concentration of EMS pottery was located at TL 073915.

Trial Trenching A total of seven trenches were excavated to check features identified in the earthwork survey and to examine the manor site and adjacent EMS Saxon pot scatter at the point where one of the proposed bypass routes cuts through it. All features uncovered were planned and

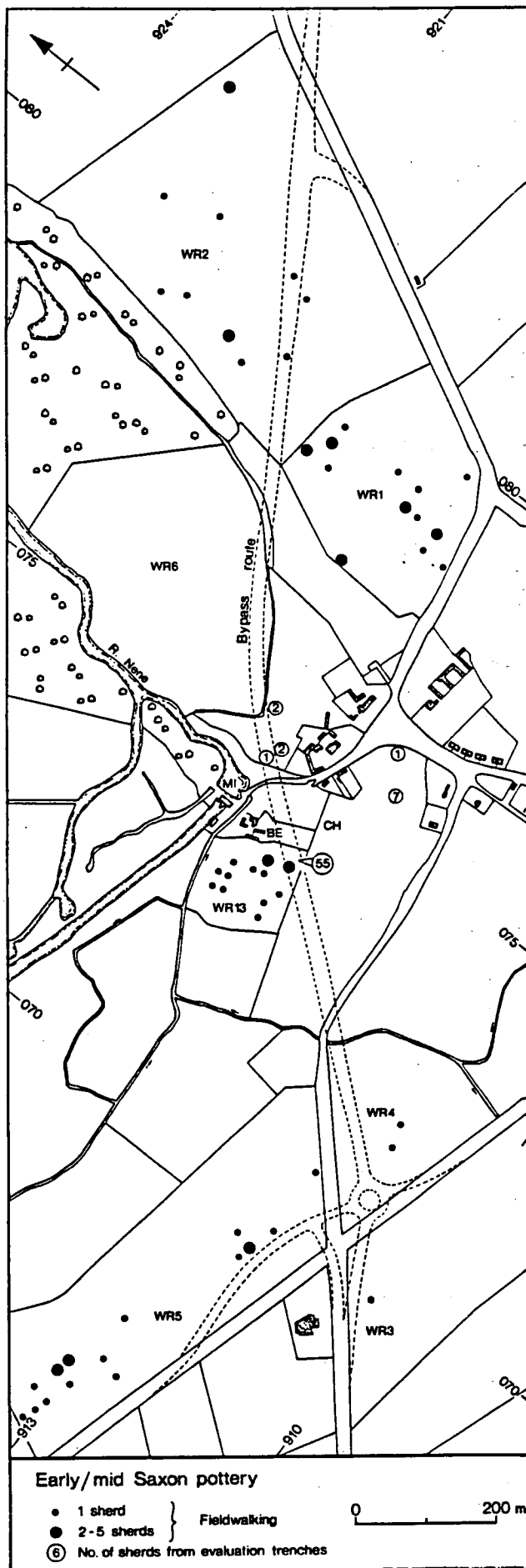


Fig 8: Warmington. Finds of early/middle Saxon pottery along the bypass route. Fields walked are prefixed by WR. Features identified in the 1621 survey are BE - Burysteed; CH - St Andrews' Close, alias Chapel Close; MI - mill.

recorded but only limited excavation was undertaken. Features of medieval date were located at TL 07509165; while a building, probably of post-medieval date, was located at TL 07619150. On the manor house site surfaces and features of medieval date were located at TL 07389150. They were badly damaged by ploughing. A large number of EMS sherds were recovered this trench. None of the features could be positively assigned an EMS date, although some of the undated features may have belonged to this period. Small but, given the scale of the work, significant quantities of EMS pottery were recovered from five of the other trenches.

The quantity and widespread occurrence of EMS pottery (fig 8) is of especial interest. Apart from a few sherds of middle Saxon Ipswich ware, the remainder of the assemblage could only be assigned a broad AD 450 - 850 date range.

Further work will be undertaken ahead of and during the construction of the bypass.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Evaluations and environmental assessments on several sites in Northamptonshire were undertaken by the Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) in 1991. The results from these projects are summarized below. Fuller reports have been lodged with the Northamptonshire County Sites and Monuments Record. The OAU wishes to thank Glenn Foard, Graham Cadman, and Sandy Kidd of the Northamptonshire Archaeology Unit; Andrew Bate and Ron Binder of ARC Central; Mark Egar, agent for the Althorp Estate; and Gerald Cadogan of Culworth Parish Council for their help, support, and advice throughout the year.

Brackley Castle (SP 5818 3645) - D Jennings

In November 1991 the OAU carried out a small field evaluation on the site of Brackley Castle, a motte and bailey earthwork, on behalf of Mr B Sheppard. On documentary evidence the castle, which is located to the SW of the town centre, was constructed soon after 1086 and may have gone out of use in 1173 (*Pipe Roll; Diceto* I, 404) when the estates of the Earl of Leicester, to whom the castle belonged, were seized by the crown. It had certainly ceased to have a military function by 1230-40 when the site of the castle was granted to the Hospital of St John (*Mag. Coll.* D119). In the sixteenth century the antiquary Leland noted that the ditches of the castle were still visible; however, only the motte, which is approximately 4 m high and 40 m in diameter, is discernible today.

Three trenches were placed on the motte and a fourth was located in the bailey. The two trenches in the vicinity of the modern barn, located on the motte, revealed modern

build-up which directly overlay natural limestone, demonstrating that the motte consists at least partially of a natural limestone hill or ridge. Examination of the topography suggests that the motte is only predominantly man-made in a segment from the N through to the E, thereafter especially along its western and southern edges the motte would appear to be a largely natural feature. This exploitation of a natural feature provides a clear reason for the precise location of the castle, which it had previously been speculated may have been affected by plans for the construction of tenements or a second bailey between the castle and the Oxford to Northampton road. Archaeological deposits, which consisted of several layers of cobbling, were encountered in the trench in the centre of the motte: a sondage within the trench revealed up to 0.15 m of stratigraphy. Pottery recovered from this trench dated from AD 1100 to c 1250. No archaeological features were located in the trench in the bailey.

Berry Hill Close; Culworth
(SP 544 470) - G D Keevill

In February 1991, the OAU undertook an assessment of an area of approximately 600 m square in a glebe field to the N of St Mary's churchyard. Culworth Parish Council wished to extend the existing cemetery into this area, which lies adjacent to a large ringwork (County Scheduled Ancient Monument No. 26). The work was jointly funded by the Parish Council and English Heritage.

Four trenches were excavated, representing a sample of approximately 15.6% of the proposal area. At least three phases of activity were noted. The first comprised a large early Iron Age enclosure, most of which underlies St Mary's churchyard and Culworth Primary School to the N and W respectively. The enclosure was defined by a ditch, 3 m wide and 1.7 m deep, running E-W along trench 1. Numerous potsherds were recovered from the ditch, including several flat-topped, upright rims from a round-shouldered bowl. Three gullies and a posthole were found within the enclosure: not all of these contained pottery, but their stratigraphic positions were all equivalent to that of the ditch. The posthole was overlain by a stone post-pad; a soil lens above this contained a single small sherd of late Saxon pottery, hinting at an otherwise undefined phase of activity.

The Iron Age features were sealed by a 0.5 m thick deposit of sandy loam. The nature and date of this layer could not be determined, but it may be associated with the construction of the ringwork. Ridge-and-furrow earthworks are present in most of Berry Hill Close, showing that the soil was being cultivated during the medieval period.

A modern pit which cut the sandy loam layer was found at the W edge of the site.

Irthlingborough
(SP 950 700) - G D Keevill

The OAU was commissioned by ARC (Central) Ltd to assess the archaeological potential of land south of the A6

at Irthlingborough. The land is virtually flat at 36 m above OD, but slopes steeply up to Irthlingborough village on the west.

A very slight depression in the ground was noted c 30 m SE of the main channel of the R Nene. Trial trenching confirmed that this marked the position of a masonry building. This was divided into at least two rooms, and the overall plan was slightly bowed. The structure had been abandoned and become ruinous; alluvium had built up against the surviving walls, and after ruination the building seems to have been submerged in water. A layer of clayey soil containing abundant snail shells sealed the structure.

No dating evidence was recovered from the building. The snail-rich layer contained a Roman potsherd, but this may be residual, as it seems likely that the building was of medieval origin. It was clearly built late in the alluvial sequence, and alluvium lay against the external wall faces. The final alluvial phase in the Nene floodplain is dated to the later medieval period (information from M Robinson).

The function of the building could not be determined with certainty. It does not resemble the mill structures excavated at West Cotton, although structural timbers have not survived at Irthlingborough because of the lack of waterlogged deposits. The plan does, however, resemble the malting-house in Tenement C at West Cotton (Windell *et al* 1990, Plate 11).

Reference:

Windell D, Chapman A and Woodiwiss J 1990; *From Barrow to Bypass: Excavations at West Cotton 1985-1989* Northamptonshire County Council.

Northampton, Kings Heath; Whitelands
(centred on SP 730 635) - G D Keevill

During April-May 1991 the OAU undertook an assessment of approximately 120 ha of land at Whitelands, Kings Heath, for and funded by the Althorp Estate. The assessment area contained several sites identified from aerial photographs, including a Neolithic Causewayed Enclosure (Dallington Heath) overlain by a possible henge, several ditched enclosure complexes apparently of Iron Age/Roman date, and three alignments of pits.

The Northamptonshire Archaeological Unit had fieldwalked the area in 1988. The records and finds from this work were analysed and plotted by staff of the Oxford Archaeological Unit. At the same time Geophysical Surveys of Bradford carried out a magnetometer survey of several transects across the site. The results of these preliminary surveys determined the subsequent trenching strategy. The results for each site defined by the assessment are summarised below.

Site 1

The Dallington Heath Causewayed Enclosure is centred on SP 72546350. The site measures 280 m (N-S) x 240 m

(E-W), enclosing an area of approximately 6 ha. Part of a second interrupted circuit can be identified 60-70 m within the W side of the outer circuit. A sub-annular cropmark in the centre of the enclosed area has been interpreted as a later Neolithic/early Bronze Age Henge monument. Other cropmarks, apparently overlying the N and S side of the outer circuit, may represent later enclosure and ditch systems.

Fieldwalking produced a small number of recognisable flint tools, mostly in the immediate vicinity of Site 1. The most significant finds are four polished flint axe fragments, which probably came from Lincolnshire. The magnetometer survey confirmed the accuracy of the cropmark plot both with regard to the position of the monument, and the discontinuity of the ditch circuits. The inner circuit of the Enclosure was found to be more extensive than was suggested by aerial photographs. Furthermore a series of anomalies suggested that pits might be present outside the Enclosure to the W.

Three trial trenches were excavated on the Causewayed Enclosure. Although the site has suffered some plough damage, evident in the spread of ironstone debris across the top fill of the outer circuit ditch, it is suggested that this occurred in the Roman period. The excavation of Trench 1 across the outer circuit ditch, though limited in extent, did confirm that the ditch had not suffered substantial erosion. The fieldwalking results and the survival of insubstantial early Saxon features cut through the plough-damaged layer (see Site 6) show that there has been little or no medieval or later ploughing of the site. The pits outside the Enclosure were located, but they did not produce dating evidence. Their fills, however, were of the same character as the top fill of the outer circuit ditch of the Causewayed Enclosure and the pits could therefore be contemporary with the Enclosure.

Site 2

Site 2, a cropmark complex centred on SP 73156390, consisted of two conjoining sub-rectangular enclosures, features within the enclosures, and a linear feature running SW from the N enclosure. The complex covers approximately 1 ha. Examination of aerial photographs taken in 1983, and subsequent examination of the site, shows that this site is now covered by modern farm buildings. None of the methodologies, therefore, was effective in assessing the site.

Site 3

Site 3, centred on SP 73456340, consisted of a sub-rectangular enclosure apparently associated with a complex of ditches and/or trackways. The features are generally aligned SW-NE or NW-SE and they cover an area of approximately 4 ha.

The fieldwork confirmed that Site 3 is of Roman date with a possible Iron Age origin: pottery of these dates was recovered both from fieldwalking and the trial trenches. The magnetometer survey suggested that site extended further E from the cropmarks, effectively to the floor of the

eastern dry valley. Trial trenching confirmed this. The Roman features, therefore, appear to be confined to the area between the two dry valleys.

There was little evidence of settlement activity except at the E end of the site, where a well, a drain, and several gullies were found. Features in other trenches were generally very substantial ditches. The character of Site 3, therefore, suggests that it consisted of stock enclosures, boundary features, and possibly trackways; while a small settlement area may exist at the E end of the Site.

Features were well-preserved, with little evidence of plough damage or other erosion. This partly explained the low density of fieldwalking finds in the area. The presence of substantial deposits of hillwash below the 80 m contour, apparently coinciding with a medieval or later headland, suggests that Site 3 has been protected from all but the deepest ploughing.

Site 4

Previous work by the Northamptonshire Archaeology Unit had demonstrated the presence of a substantial and extensive Iron Age settlement SW of the assessment area. Site 4, centred on SP 7295 6315, represented the presumed extension of that site to the NE.

The magnetometer survey and trial trenching demonstrated that the Iron Age site did indeed extend into the assessment area. A modern feature had disturbed the archaeological features, so that only deeply-cut ditches were visible below it. Shallow features, however, are likely to have been destroyed. The site did not extend far to the NE, being restricted to the central peak and not continuing into the slight NW-SE valley which separates the peak from the ridge to its NE.

Site 6

A small concentration of early Saxon pottery was detected in the fieldwalking NE of the Causewayed Enclosure. Trial trenching in the area of this scatter located several features. No dating evidence was recovered from these features, although early Saxon pottery was recovered during machine removal of the topsoil and medieval ploughsoil in one trench. It is likely, therefore, that most of the features are of early Saxon date.

Pit Alignments 1 and 2

Two N-S alignments of pits were visible on aerial photographs, running into the field from its N edge between Lodge and Grange Farms. Alignment 1 ran for c 250 m into the field, while Alignment 2, 230 m to the W, ran for c 210 m, terminating at the valley floor broadly in line with the end of Alignment 1.

The existence and nature of the pit alignments was confirmed by trial trenching, although no dating evidence was recovered. No connecting feature could be found between the cropmark termini. Analysis of the fieldwalking finds showed that Roman pottery was virtually all found to the E of Cropmark 2. The trial trenching also failed to

produce settlement evidence of Roman date W of Cropmark 2. Trial trenching showed that the Causewayed Enclosure was slightly plough-damaged, but that features coinciding with the early Saxon pottery scatter were cut through the disturbed layer. It can be assumed, therefore, that the cultivation took place in later prehistoric or Roman times. If the latter is the correct date, it would argue for different land-use on either side of Cropmark 2.

Wellingborough, Ditchford gravel pit
(SP 917 673) - J Moore and M Roberts

An evaluation was undertaken on behalf of ARC in advance of a proposed extension to the gravel pit at Ditchford. A linear earthwork traverses part of the site, and is aligned on the Roman town of Irchester to the south. The earthwork remains in sections, two sections occurring in the evaluation area. The southern end of the northern section and the areas where the earthwork did not exist were examined. Several palaeochannels on the floodplain here are known from aerial photographs.

The causeway was found to consist of gravel overlying an original ground surface. The gravel bank was c 6 m wide and was still 0.1 m thick. The causeway was flanked by recut ditches serving as quarry ditches and was probably constructed to control drainage. The primary ditches were 5 - 6 m wide and c 1.5 m deep. The extreme eastern part of the causeway gravel bank had been overlaid by a sandy loam to widen or stabilise this side.

To the south of the northern section the line of the causeway crossed a palaeochannel. Surviving in the bottom of the

relict stream course were remnants of limestone cobbles overlaid by a later surface of loam and gravel. At least one of the quarry ditches was cut through this palaeochannel.

South of the southern section of the causeway at least five former courses of the river Nene were identified. The causeway was located on a gravel ridge around which the river had flowed. Where examined it was found that the flanking ditches cut across the palaeochannels. Four recognised metallised surfaces, one of river pebbles and the others of limestone fragments, overlaid the relict stream courses.

Environmental analysis of samples of waterlogged material recovered from the palaeochannels under the metallised surfaces indicate the stream was flowing through an open landscape. While most seed remains are consistent with a pre-Roman date, the presence of corn cockle, an introduction in the Iron Age/Roman transition period and one seed of *Bupleurum rotundifolium* indicates a later date for the stream course. *Bupleurum rotundifolium* has not been found associated with deposits dated to before 8th century AD in this country (M Robinson *pers comm*).

While it seems likely that the causeway for a road, which made use of a natural gravel ridge in the valley bottom, is of Roman origin as it is aligned on the Roman town, the environmental evidence suggests later usage. The differing fill of the primary and recut ditches suggests a change in environmental conditions between the two phases. It is possible that the road was reused and refurbished in the late Saxon/early medieval period.

OXFORDSHIRE

OXFORD ACHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Evaluations and environmental assessments on several sites in Oxfordshire were undertaken by the Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) in 1991. The results from these projects are summarized below, starting with a report on the Didcot-Oxford Thames Water Pipeline and continuing with reports on individual sites arranged in alphabetical order of parish name. Fuller reports have been lodged with the Oxfordshire County Sites and Monuments Record.

The Didcot-Oxford Thames Water Pipeline G D Keevill, A Parkinson, and M Parsons

Thames Water Utilities plc commissioned the Oxford Archaeological Unit to carry out assessments, excavations, and watching briefs as necessary on a new water trunk main from Didcot to Oxford. The pipeline route was chosen so as to avoid areas of known archaeological potential if possible. Nevertheless some archaeological landscapes simply could not be avoided, particularly in crossing the Thames near Clifton Hampden. In these instances mitigating measures were necessary, involving either redesign of the pipeline route, or excavation.

As far as was practicable, the entire length of the pipeline operation was visited at least once, and records were made of all finds and/or features. In many cases these were isolated sites which did not warrant further examination. In three instances, however, significant discoveries were made: these were at Fullamoor Farm in the parish of Clifton Hampden, Lower Farm in the parish of Nuneham Courtenay, and Hadden Hill in the parish of South Moreton. These are described below under their respective parish names.

Chesterton, Alchester, A421 (Centred on c SP 572 209) - Paul Booth

Excavations were carried out in 1991 at a number of sites N of the walled Roman town of Alchester in advance of road construction. The two principal sites (A421B and A421C) lie respectively NE and NW of the junction of Chesterton Lane (thought to follow the line of Roman Akeman Street) with the A41 (formerly A421). Some 300 m SW a Bronze Age cremation and field systems of Iron Age-early Roman date were examined (A421A). A fourth site (A421D) c 400 m NE of the central area, contained ditches, gullies and other features suggesting adjacent domestic activity of late Iron Age date.

The main sites, which lie N of Akeman Street and W of its junction with the major N-S (Towcester-Dorchester) Roman road through Alchester, were situated in the two halves of the projected new A41/Chesterton Lane junction. Both produced evidence of middle Iron Age settlement, but this

was extensively disturbed by Roman features. The settlement, bounded by a ditch on its SE side, appears not to have been enclosed.

The earliest Roman feature was a ditch c 5-6 m wide and 1.5 m deep, aligned E-W and traced for a minimum distance of 200 m across both main sites. It ran parallel to the line of Akeman Street, but probably lay at some distance from the Roman road. The earliest fills are poorly dated but the ditch may have been dug in the mid 1st century AD. It established an E-W alignment which was perpetuated throughout the Roman period by a complex succession of ditches which gradually shifted southwards.

By the 2nd century N-S boundary ditches had also appeared. These may have divided the site into a series of properties of varying width probably laid out in relation to Akeman Street. Structures in this period are likely to have been sited adjacent to the Roman road frontage and therefore lay largely outside the excavated areas. Pits and a few cremation burials of 2nd century date were encountered in A421B. A pit containing pottery and horse and bird bones was probably associated with the cremations. In the SE part of the site (A421B) the earlier Roman features were covered by a number of levelling-up layers, above which were late 3rd-4th century buildings which broadly followed the earlier alignment. Most of these buildings lay above the levelling layers over the E-W ditch complex: in some cases subsidence into the underlying fills caused structural problems in the Roman period.

Hints of a structure lying N of the excavated area were found at the E end of the area. To the S lay an extensive cobbled area with successive surfaces whose relationship to the adjacent structures is uncertain. NW of this was an enclosure bounded on the E side by a N-S wall (which replaced earlier ditches) and on the S by a substantial fence. Associated with the fence was a timber gateway. S of these lay the latest of the E-W ditches, which ran through a culvert at the access point in front of the gate.

Within the enclosure lay a circular building on stone foundations 6 m in diameter associated with a sequence of well-paved yard surfaces. To the N was a larger but less substantial circular structure. Immediately W of the first round building a rectilinear structure, of timber on irregular stone foundations, may have been part of the same complex.

West of these buildings, in the adjacent plot, there were probably at least two more structures, one partly stone-built and the other of timber on a stone platform, but the details of the plans are elusive. The boundary ditch at the W edge of this plot contained large quantities of iron slag, suggesting that iron working was a major activity in the property to the W, almost entirely beyond the excavated area.

Still further W, in A421C, the pattern of the late-Roman buildings was rather different. A partly stone-built structure found at the S edge of the area would have been much closer to the line of Akeman Street than those examined further E. This building probably had at least one timber predecessor

and, like the buildings in A421B, was constructed over a mass of infilled ditches aligned c E-W. N of this building there was little of the complex stratigraphy recorded in A421B, partly because this area lay further away from the focus of Roman activity and partly because deposits were less well-preserved than in A421B as a result of much more intensive agricultural activity. The upper part of the main E-W ditch complex, to the N of the building, was, however, partly sealed by rubble layers. It is uncertain whether these served to support timber structures as in A421B.

The alignment of the A421C site meant that the excavated area covered a large part of one N-S aligned plot, with the complex ditch sequence on its eastern side lying towards the E edge of the area. To the N of the area more E-W ditches included one which almost certainly marked the formal N boundary of the occupied zone. S of this ditch were features appropriate to such a settlement margin location, including a stone-lined well and a corn drying oven. Immediately N of the ditch and aligned on it was a group of 31 inhumation burials. Two graves contained 4th century coins and one burial had a copper alloy bracelet. A late-Roman date seems certain. To the S and E was a further group of ten burials, aligned at random and transgressing into the settlement area. These were stratigraphically later than the latest fill of the E-W settlement boundary ditch, which produced a few early Anglo-Saxon sherds. A post-Roman date is therefore likely. Further slight evidence of post-Roman activity was encountered in A421B, where a layer adjacent to the N-S boundary wall also contained a small quantity of Anglo-Saxon pottery.

Clifton Hampden, Fullamoor Farm
(SU 530944) - G D Keavill, A Parkinson, and M Parsons

Aerial photographs have revealed numerous cropmarks of ring ditches, linear features, and pits on the N bank of the Thames between Clifton Hampden and Culham on the proposed course of the Didcot-Oxford Thames Water Pipeline (see above). Thames Water redesigned the pipeline route so as to avoid a group of ring ditches S of Fullamoor Farm. An assessment of the new route was followed by excavation of all archaeological features along the pipe trench width. The substantial depth of alluvium and other subsoils meant that no features were affected outside the trench width.

A ground surface, apparently of late Bronze Age date, was cut by several features including a major linear ditch oriented NE-SW. This ditch seems to cut off a broad sweep of the Thames between Appleford (on the S bank) and Clifton Hampden. Several gullies in the southern arm of the trench appeared to be contemporary with the ditch. It is suggested that these features are of late Bronze Age - Iron Age date. A pit excavated during the assessment contained the semi-articulated skeleton of a sheep/goat; a small quantity of late Bronze Age pottery was also recovered.

A track or causeway metalled with limestone was found in the southern arm of the trench. The track was aligned N-S

and presumably continued to the N bank of the Thames. The river is very wide at this point and is unlikely to have been bridged. The track is more likely to have served a small wharf or ferry. A complete rim from an Oxfordshire ware narrow-necked jar was found in the make-up layer for the track: unfortunately the pot is not closely diagnostic, having a date range from the second to the fourth century.

Eynsham Abbey
(SP 433 093) - G D Keavill

The Oxford Archaeological Unit's major programme of excavations on the site of Eynsham Abbey continued during 1991 and ended in February 1992. This note summarises the results of the project.

At the base of the stratigraphic sequence, the substantial ditches of a Bronze Age enclosure were found. No trace of banks have been found. The main axis of the enclosure is NNE-SSW. Within it pits, postholes, gullies and a roundhouse have been found. Pottery from the middle and upper fills of the enclosure ditch suggests that the site had been abandoned by the beginning of the Iron Age. The ditches were probably still visible as slight hollows for many centuries thereafter and the alignment of the enclosure seems to have influenced activity on the site until the Norman period.

The site was abandoned for about 1500 years. A few coins and abraded potsherds indicate that the site was being ploughed during the Roman period. In the early Saxon period a settlement was established. Six sunken-featured buildings were constructed during the sixth-seventh centuries: pits, postholes and gullies were associated with them. Large amounts of pottery have been recovered from the structures, including very fine stamp-decorated vessels. Other finds, such as loomweights, spindle whorls and fragments of bone combs, show that craft industries were being carried out on the site.

The eighth century saw a change from sunken-featured buildings to post-built halls. One, measuring 14 m by 6 m, was associated with a pit which contained large quantities of domestic rubbish and two Saxon *sceattas*. Both coins were in mint condition and date to c 720 AD.

The hall was surrounded by gullies which appear to delineate several individual properties aligned on the main axis of the Bronze Age enclosure. The properties continued in use until the Abbey was founded in AD 1005. It is likely, therefore, that the middle Saxon buildings were part of the Minster complex, known to have been in existence by AD 864 and probably dating back to the seventh century AD. A third Saxon coin, a mid-ninth century *styca*, is of great interest. These coins were minted by the kings and archbishops of Northumbria and are extremely rare in southern England.

At least three ranges of substantial buildings belonging to the late Saxon Benedictine Abbey have been found. They,

like the earlier properties, were clearly influenced by the alignment of the Bronze Age enclosure. The principal structure was a large hall (22 m by 8 m externally) aligned NNE-SSW. Buildings were ranged to the north and west of this, while a courtyard seems to have lain to the east.

Two substantial structures were built during the fifty years after the Norman Conquest, when the Abbey was apparently abandoned. One of these was a kitchen, roughly 8 m square. This contained a sequence of four hearths, each associated with ashy layers rich in fish bones and eggshell. The other building is unusual in plan: it is basically square, but there are foundations for three-quarter circular towers at the SE and SW corners. It is difficult to see how this building functioned, but it may have been a gatehouse.

The refoundation of the Abbey by royal charter in AD 1109 led to a complete rebuilding on the typical Romanesque claustral plan. The principal axis was corrected to E-W. The Great Cloister lay at the north end of the excavations. The W cloister walk was paved with finely-cut stone slabs and several graves were dug in the S walk. None of the graves contained anything to indicate the status of the deceased.

The SW corner of the cloister garth contained a Lavatorium, rebuilt once during its lifetime. This would have consisted of a large basin or fountain contained within a small pavilion. The basin would have held holy water for the monks to wash themselves before prayer or before entering the refectory (Frater) which lay on the S side of the Great Cloister. The used water was taken away in lead pipes.

The Frater was a plain hall about 30 m long and 12 m wide. Towards the end of its use stone benches were built around the S and E sides at least of the hall and a fine diamond-patterned stone pavement was laid down in the centre. A square kitchen was built onto the S side of the Frater, immediately to the SE of the early Norman kitchen. The Abbey kitchen was divided into two parts. The N end contained a range of ovens stretching right across the width of the building. A sequence of hearths, floors, and ashy layers raked out from the hearths occupied the S half of the structure. Lead pipes fed water from the Lavatorium into three vats, while drains took the waste water away to the SE.

Two massive cellars were found to the S of the kitchen. One of these went out of use during the medieval period, and the other may have been built to replace it. A courtyard lay between them, its S side marked by a boundary wall. The yard was used as a rubbish dump and a series of deep pits were found, each containing much domestic refuse.

Further domestic buildings lay to the E of the courtyard. They were basically plain, and may have been part of the monks' dormitory. A series of cess-pits lay to the south of the block, being sluiced by drains from the kitchen.

The Abbey was suppressed in AD 1538, and thereafter was systematically robbed of stone, lead, tiles, and other reusable materials. At the same time several large quarry pits were dug for gravel.

Fieldwork currently in progress is examining a small moated site associated with the Abbey. Furthermore the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments has surveyed all surviving earthworks within the precinct during March 1992. Particular attention was paid to the complex flight of fishponds to the S of the excavations. It is also hoped that the Ancient Monuments Laboratory will be able to undertake a geophysical survey of part of the precinct. In these ways the excavation project has been broadened into a study of the landscape of the Abbey.

Eynsham, Mead Lane
(SP 444 095) - J Moore

An evaluation was undertaken by OAU on behalf of ARC in 1989. Fieldwalking on the site had previously produced numerous flints mostly of the late Bronze Age period but also including Mesolithic and Neolithic lithics. Geotechnical investigation indicated a first terrace gravel island c 550 m by 100 - 250 m in area surrounded by alluvial deposits.

Intensive trenching of the 'island' located settlement evidence occupying c 7 ha with less dense remains over an area of c 3.2 ha on slightly lower lying land.

The settlement remains comprised postholes, gullies, and pits. Parallel panel ditches may represent ditched and hedged field boundaries. Relatively large quantities of pottery and flint were found indicating a late Bronze Age/early Iron Age date for the occupation (c 800 BC). Several loomweight and quern fragments were found.

Away from the gravel island, two discrete areas of contemporary activity were found on the floodplain. One comprised a burnt layer containing a considerable amount of rubbish in the form of pottery, bone fragments and firecracked flint covered an area of 30 m by 20 m. The other burnt deposit, similar to the first, overlaid an earlier palaeochannel.

A ditch interpreted as belonging to a ring ditch and two external cremations were found just west of the settlement area.

The proposed excavation here will add substantially to the study of the Thames Floodplain in the LBA period supplementing the work currently in progress at Yarnton (see below) and the A40 Cassington - Witney improvement.

Eynsham, Wharf Farm
(SP 449 095) - G Hey, J Moore, and A R Whiteman

A further area of 27.5 ha of land immediately west of Eynsham Mead Lane was evaluated on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council. Numerous relict stream courses were located on this part of the floodplain at the Evenlode/Thames confluence.

Archaeological remains were scarce. Two gullies, one dated to the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age, were found. Hollow ways still existing as earthworks are post-medieval farm trackways. The flint artefacts indicate some prehistoric activity probably associated with the dense scatter of Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age material to the west of Mead Lane.

Fyfield and Tubney, Tubney New Plantation (SP 449008) - Gill Hey

Introduction

In Spring 1991 the Oxford Archaeological Unit undertook archaeological investigations at Tubney New Plantation in advance of sand extraction. This work was funded by the developer, Hills Aggregates Ltd, and lay on land owned by Magdalen College.

The site is located on the Corallian ridge at a height of c 95.5 m OD. It lies within the parish of Tubney, bounded by the tributaries of the Ock, the Osse Brook, and Freya's Dyke and covers an area of approximately 11 ha. The natural ground is sand overlying the limestone of the ridge.

This site contained the largest Mesolithic flint scatter excavated so far in Oxfordshire. In total 6860 struck and worked flints were recovered. Although none of the flints came from archaeological contexts they are unlikely to have been moved far from their original place of deposition. All finds came from ploughsoil or tree holes and were recovered by sieving.

Mesolithic flint scatters are known all along the Corallian ridge, mostly from fieldwalking. The nearest scatter to the Tubney site is 500 m to the southeast at Hitch Copse. The largest later Mesolithic site on the Corallian Ridge, apart from Tubney, is Longworth (SP 391 994) where 122 struck flints were recovered.

Mesolithic

The main use of the site in the past was in the Mesolithic period. Some early Mesolithic material was recovered but the majority of the flintwork was later in date (c 6500 - 6000 BC).

Three main activity areas were identified: the densest in the west where 4380 struck or worked flints were recovered, an area to the south-west where 2204 flints were found, and a more extensive area to the north covering c 1.8 hectares. The latter area was not examined in detail but c 260 pieces of flintwork were recovered. Within these areas individual clusters were located but as flints were mostly recovered from treeholes it was suspected that this grouping was largely a result of post-depositional activity. Smaller scatters in the south were also located.

A preliminary assessment of the flintwork suggests that this area was a hunting camp probably used on a seasonal basis. The assemblage was of waste flakes and obliquely touched (hunting) tools to the exclusion of any other type. The lack

of any cores, except those which had been exhausted, and lack of microburins indicates that the site was not a knapping floor. The blades seem to have been brought to the site and retouched there, the unexhausted cores were taken away, and only the discarded tools were left. Assemblages from all three areas were similar.

Neolithic

There was an element (less than 1%) of Neolithic flintwork. It lay mostly to the north of the site but has not yet been quantified. Three sherds of late Neolithic Grooved Ware were recovered from the excavation. This pottery was unabraded and came from two test-pits 5 m apart within Area A, probably from within treeholes. This Grooved Ware is similar to that found at Durrington Walls where it is only found in ritual deposits. (It should be noted that one of these test-pits also contained one Roman and five medieval sherds).

Bronze Age

Trenches were excavated by machine to locate a Bronze Age barrow marked on the modern Ordnance Survey map. The Victoria County History for Berkshire mentions two barrows on this site and a tumulus is marked on Rocque's map of 1761, though in a different location. There were no signs of a barrow ditch, mound, associated burial, or contemporary finds on any of the possible barrow sites.

History of Land Use

Evidence suggested that past land use of the site varied between woodland, heath, and ploughland.

The excavation showed that the area had been ploughed. Post-medieval finds were consistently found within the ploughsoil indicating that the latest ploughing episode was fairly recent. However, a light and even scatter of Roman and medieval (13th and 14th century) finds throughout the area evidenced the manuring of arable fields in both these periods. The only sub-soil features observed were treeholes. Treeholes seemed to be both sealed by and cut through ploughsoil. The area of the excavation was mostly heath in the post-medieval period (Rocque and some of the Magdalen College estate maps), though most recently had been a plantation.

Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor bypass (A420) (SU 38059757 to SU 41859855) - J R Hunn

An evaluation of the route of the bypass was undertaken by the Oxford Archaeological Unit in January and February 1992. The new road will be 4 km long and take up to 22.05 ha (54.5 acres) of agricultural land. Some 54% of the route was fieldwalked and 45% trial trenched.

The evaluation discovered the approximate locality of a new Romano-British site just to the north of Kingston Bagpuize (SU 398985). The ceramic evidence comes from three ditch fills and adjacent layers. Although these ditch fills also contained several fragments of medieval pottery, the quantity and quality of the earlier sherds suggest the

proximity of an occupation site. According to the ceramic evidence the site would appear to have been of a fairly low status (probably a native farmstead) and dated to the 3rd and 4th centuries AD.

The opportunity was also taken to examine several parish boundaries through which the bypass was to cut. The boundary between the two ancient parishes of Hinton Waldrist and Longworth (SU 383986), the township boundary between Draycott Moor and Kingston Bagpuize which was also the hundred boundary between Ganford and Ock (SU 412985), and the boundary between the ancient parishes of Longworth and Fyfield (SU 412985) were each examined by a single 1.6 m wide slit trench. The last of these boundaries was referred to as 'Aelfrith's Ditch' in the mid-10th century. No dating evidence was forthcoming from any of these features though a greater insight into their physical characteristics has been gained. By a combination of topographic analysis, field observation, and excavation it will be possible to comprehend more fully the sub-division of the Anglo-Saxon landscape (the results of this work will be published elsewhere).

Milton, Land off High Street (SU 489924) - J Moore and M Roberts

On behalf of Messrs G C Cannon Ltd an evaluation was carried out in advance of a proposed housing development. The site was in the north-east of Milton Village, 400 m N of Milton Farm and just east of the High Street on second terrace gravels.

100 m to the north Saxon burials were discovered in 1832 and three more burials were found 500 m to the south in 1944. To the north of the site are a series of cropmarks which may represent Roman enclosure and Saxon settlement and a similar group of cropmarks exist 500 m to the east.

The only archaeology found was preserved under a headland, later ploughing having removed evidence elsewhere with the top of the gravel c 30 cm higher under the headland than in the rest of the field. A series of ditches were found, one of which may have formed an earlier boundary which was later carried on in the form of a headland.

A ditch containing Saxon pottery was found orientated at right angles to the above boundary. Two pits were located nearby with one of them containing a sherd of similarly dated pottery.

Nuneham Courtenay, Lower Farm (SP 538005) - G D Keevill, A Parkinson, and M Parsons

Oxoniensia XXVIII (1963, 90) contains a bald statement that 'sherds of Romano-British pottery were found ... 300 yards east of Lower Farm' (at SP 539006). This find spot is immediately to the E of the Didcot-Oxford Thames Water Pipeline (see above). As the first stage of pipelining work,

a narrow drain was cut along the east edge of the 25 m-wide easement and large quantities of Roman pottery were recovered from the excavated soil. Subsequently a 200 m length of the pipe trench was excavated, with localised extensions on either side. The excavations revealed a Roman kiln site which had been in use from the 2nd to 4th centuries AD on an intensive scale.

Three distinct zones could be recognised. The N end of the site was the settlement area. Ditches, pits, and postholes were found: the postholes seem to belong to two separate timber-built huts, circular in plan. Animal bones, pottery, and quernstones were recovered. Three infants had also been buried here.

South of the settlement area and separated from it by an open space 10 m wide was the pottery workshop. Features included stone-lined chests where potting clay was stored, stone drying-racks, drains for water supply, and a deep well. Many complete 'wasters' had been thrown into the well.

Immediately to the S of the workshop area was a waster dump. This was massive, extending approximately 100 m N-S and at least 15 m E-W with a maximum depth of 1.2 m. Complete pots were also recovered. The pottery from the well and dump makes it clear that the kiln site was operational throughout the life of the Oxfordshire industry and that the kiln site produced vessel forms typical of the Oxfordshire industry.

In the medieval period the site was part of Lower Field, one of the four main fields of the ancient parish of Nuneham Courtenay. Lower Field was broken up into smaller lots in the late eighteenth century, at which time the current Lower Farm was established. The kiln field contains the last remnant of medieval ridge-and-furrow field strips to survive in Lower Field; all the rest has been destroyed by deep ploughing. The fact that the ridge-and-furrow has been left uncultivated for 500 years means that the Roman archaeology below it has been preserved intact.

The N side of Lower Field forms part of the parish boundary between Sandford-on-Thames to the N, and Nuneham Courtenay and Toot Baldon to the S. The full line of the boundary runs in a straight line from the Thames eastwards to the old Roman road between Alchester and Dorchester-on-Thames. Clearly, then, the boundary is at least medieval in date and, in fact, it is described in an Anglo-Saxon land charter drawn up in AD 1054. Sandford is first mentioned in a charter of AD 811 recording the donation of land to Abingdon Abbey by Kenulf, King of the Mercians. Further royal grants of land were made in AD 931 and AD 1050, suggesting that the parish might originally have been a royal estate. The Nuneham-Sandford boundary, therefore, may date back at least to the mid-Saxon period. It is possible that the boundary fossilises the line of a Roman side road by which the kiln products could be transported to local markets.

Oxford, All Souls College
(SP 516063) - Chris Lynes and Brian Durham

In advance of repaving work the college commissioned the OAU to investigate the underlying levels in three places. The work started in the 15th-century Front Quad where fragments of a structure were found which probably belonged to a medieval building fronting onto Catte Street.

Beneath the W walkway of the 18th-century Great Quad was a massive robber trench on the line of the outer wall of the medieval cloister, proving it to have been of very solid construction. There appeared to be no burials in the cloister walk. On the S side of this quad the wall of the medieval hall was located with more stone surviving, and adjoining it was the floor of a later building, perhaps the buttery. Geophysical survey is proposed in an effort to trace the full extent of these buildings.

From All Souls came the most unusual find from Oxford this year. It is a lead rod with a cast decorative end, the other end of the rod being pointed. Despite corrosion it is possible to distinguish slight faceting at the point, and we are grateful for Martin Biddle's confirmation that this is a lead crayon used for writing or drawing. Simple rod-shaped crayons are well known, but this appears to be the first decorated example from this side of the English Channel, and it is appropriate that it came from a medieval college site fronting onto Catte Street, Oxford's medieval centre of book production.

Oxford Castle Moats: Worcester Street (SP 509 060) and Paradise Street (SP 508062)
Brian Durham and Mark Roberts

The OAU has investigated two sites proposed for redevelopment on the line of the castle ditches. In 1989 the large Worcester Street car park NW of the castle was trenched, and found to be almost entirely on infilled 13th-century moats. At the extreme S edge of the site the trenching crossed the medieval line of Worcester Street which seems to have been a causeway giving direct access from the castle to the 12th-century royal palace of Beaumont. At this point there would previously have been a Barbican gateway and probably a drawbridge over the watercourse feeding the castle moat, but documentary research by Julian Munby suggests that the gatehouse itself will be under the line of Park End Street.

In 1991 OAU opened two trenches at Paradise Street on the S side of the castle to assess the ditch deposits on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council, who are proposing to build offices on the site. The Prison yard has taken up half the width of the medieval ditch, but it was still possible to demonstrate two or three phases of lined channel along the mid-line, with a narrow lateral channel which may have been a domestic water supply for a neighbouring house. Most interesting however was the realisation that a plan of c 1617 clearly shows a culvert house at the W end of the moat, which would have controlled the water level. It seems

highly likely that the base of this building survives with its culverts and possibly also its sluice mechanism, and, if so, it will certainly be affected by sewerage work required under the development proposal.

Oxford, The Grandpont: British Telecom Tunnel
(SP 514056) - Greg Campbell and Brian Durham

In St Aldates, near the junction with Thames Street, the OAU investigated elements in the early story of Oxford's bridge system. BT have been installing new telephone cables by tunnelling under St Aldates across the line of Grandpont, the Norman Bridge which lies underneath the middle of the main road here.

When quantities of Ragstone appeared from the tunnel, OAU approached BT and their contractor McNicholas for access to record the bridge. Because of the limited working space the contractors left one side of the tunnel unboarded every time they moved forward a metre, and stopped for one hour in every four to allow the Unit to record the sections; we are very grateful for their co-operation.

The picture seems to be as follows. A layer of small stones at the bottom of the ancient channel is likely to be an early ford, deeper even than the so-called Oxenford found previously. After a period of silting, a thick layer of blue clay appears, which is outwardly very similar to the clay of the putative Mercian Causeway. This material had never before been seen so close to the centre of the road, and a layer of stone cobbles on its surface could be the Mercian street metalling. Cut through it are big timber piles, which are likely to be either part of a raft for the Norman stone bridge or, more interestingly, the piers of a Saxon trestle bridge which must have existed on such an important route. The piles await tree-ring dating, but a horizontal timber has been spot-dated by Dr Jenifer Hillam to a felling date of AD 577-619, much earlier than the late 8th- or early 9th-century date assumed when a similar deposit was seen in 1971 (Durham 1977, 176-9).

These deposits may therefore have the answers to the origins of one of the oldest regional routes of post-Roman Britain. Other timbers may at the same time may confirm the dating of Norman Grandpont, which remains the oldest medieval bridge in the country.

Reference:
Durham, Brian, 1977, *Oxoniensia* xlii 176-9).

Oxford's medieval fields
(SP 510072, 513052, 516065, and 519063) - Brian Durham

A rush of college developments to the N, S, and E of the medieval city have provided new insights into the medieval field system. At Magdalen College (SP 519063) there were no signs of strip boundaries in the Grove against Longwall, but a lowered area of deep silty soil suggested the ploughed floor of a managed pond, close to the assumed line of the

medieval aqueduct which fed the Hospital of St John from this side. North of Holywell St, where Manchester College (SP 516065) is building new student accommodation, an archaeological evaluation showed traces of the staggered boundaries depicted on the early maps, extensively cut about by later pits and quarries.

St Anne's College (SP 510072) lies well to the N of the town, on a narrow tongue of the N field between the Banbury and Woodstock roads. There was some evidence of N-S ridge and furrow, and a possible half-Groat, which possibly belongs to the time when this area must have lain between the Royalist and Parliamentary lines in the Civil War, was found here. Also on the N side of Oxford, but more suburban, was an investigation of the site of a new extension to St Cross College (SP 511066) in St Giles and here one of the medieval strip properties ultimately became the site of a purpose-built Friend's Meeting House in 1687, part of which was excavated.

Finally a much more extensive field system visible on air photographs was trenched at the Oxford City Football Ground (SP 513052) at Whitehouse Road south of the Thames. Here the strips run back from the side-road to a small channel of the Thames presently called the Hogacre ditch and there is a scatter of medieval pits belonging to a farm on the site of the Old White House. More will be seen of this because it overlies a middle Iron Age settlement and is therefore likely to be the subject of a more extensive excavation prior to a housing development.

Radley, Eight Acre Field (SU 525980) - G Campbell and J Moore

The site lies c 150 m south of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Goose Acre Farm - a Romano-British settlement. In the course of gravel extraction to the south-west Neolithic features, an early Bronze Age cremation, and late Bronze Age pits have been uncovered.

Tuckwell and Co proposed to extend their gravel extraction and an evaluation was undertaken to determine the presence or absence of archaeology.

An area of c 0.7 ha of prehistoric activity was found in the south-east part of the site. The evaluation trenches revealed gently curving gullies. The 'V' shaped gullies averaged c 0.8 m across and 0.7 m deep. Only lithics were recovered from their fills and the low number recovered prevents accurate dating of this activity area.

Further to the north the evaluation trenches located several ditches forming a reasonably coherent pattern. Pottery of the late 1st or 2nd century AD was recovered along with the occasional sherd of Iron Age date. These features appear to form the boundaries of roughly rectangular fields arranged in a pattern broadly parallel to the Thames. They are confined to the part of the site with a more gravelly clay subsoil and second terrace gravels and do not extend onto the heavy clay overlying the gravels in the south part of the

site. This field system is likely to have been associated with the settlement site to the north.

South Moreton, Hadden Hill (SU 546 908) - G D Keevill, A Parkinson, and M Parsons

An extensive complex of ditches, pits, and a posthole were recorded 2 km E of Didcot at Hadden Hill as part of the investigations along the line of the Didcot-Oxford Thames Water Pipeline (see above). Features were noted over a N-S length of c 190 m of the pipeline. Roman pottery was recovered from most features and also from the topsoil which had been stripped from the pipeline easement. The most notable sherd was a face-mask rim from a mid-late fourth century flagon.

The pottery suggests that the features belong to two distinct periods: late first to mid-second century features occupied the central 80 m of activity, while late third to fourth century features were located to the N and S of this. The limited nature of the excavation inevitably reduces the potential for analysis of the site, but even at a minimal level there does appear to be a distinct separation of features by date.

Stratton Audley, Proposed Quarry Extension (SP 590240) - R Chambers and J Moore

An evaluation for ARC proved that a suspected prehistoric burial monument was a natural geological feature. Although three possible Iron Age sherds were found in the east of the area there was no accompanying settlement evidence.

Tackley, Elms Close (SP 46862015) - J Moore and M Roberts

The site is located to the north-west of the church and north of the vicarage. The close proximity of the site to the church suggested the possibility of finding medieval dwellings of the shrunken medieval village.

The archaeological evidence recovered suggests a pattern of small somewhat irregular enclosures or paddocks of the late 12th to early 13th century. More than one phase of medieval activity is indicated by intersections of ditches on different alignments.

No clear cut evidence of *in situ* domestic activity was found in the form of distinct structures, hearths, occupation layers or rubble spreads such as were recorded at the excavation at Copt Hay in 1971-2 on the line of the motorway. However two, possibly three, pits were found and there was a scatter of medieval pottery across the site.

Tetsworth, Spencers Farm (SP 687025) - J Moore

The extent of the medieval part of the village on the north side of the A40 is unknown. An evaluation at Spencers Farm

provided no evidence of medieval settlement. The name of Marsh End for the road along the western side of the Green may imply that the area was too wet for settlement.

Thame, Bell Lane/North Street

(SP 706062) - G Laws, J Moore, M Roberts & D Wilkinson

Two developments have recently been carried out some 80 m north of the High Street in Thame, within the curve formed by Bell Lane and North Street. Due to omissions during the planning stages the archaeology was not treated satisfactorily. The first development is the supermarket, archaeologically evaluated in 1988, and the second the new Police Station, evaluated in 1991. Excavations were not carried out and due to the working methods watching briefs were unsuccessful.

Before the Domesday Survey Thame was already a settlement of some importance, being the centre of a bishop's estate and having a Minster Church. The early settlement was centred around St Mary's Church. The focus of the town shifted to the south-east from the mid 12th century onwards, so that new Thame lay north and south of the High Street and Cornmarket. The status of the town as a market centre meant that it continued to flourish until the 19th century. The area north of the High Street burghage plots and contained within the area of North Street and Bell Lane is, historically, a relatively unknown area.

Evidence for pre-medieval activity was represented by a Bronze Age sherd found in one medieval feature and an unstratified flint flake.

The evaluations found evidence of buildings with frontings on North Street and Bell Lane. Under the present supermarket car park a trench 35 m long and 1.1 m wide running back from North Street revealed a concentration of pits, ditches, and small gullies which contained pottery dating from the mid 12th to mid 13th centuries. Some of these features were substantial, including pits up to 1.5 m in diameter and ditches 0.8 m wide and 0.6 m deep. At its south-west end the trench was crossed by a stone wall, 0.4 m wide, of which only one course survived. This wall had apparently formed part of a tile-roofed building of similar date to the other features. Some of the gullies may have been robbed out footing trenches associated with this structure.

Within the area of the Police Station development the earliest features were of the 13th century: these were shallow ditches aligned north-south, two groups of pits, and other solitary pits. In part the 13th century features were sealed by 14-15th century building debris. A wall footing at least 30 m long, observed during construction work, orientated north-west to south-east demarcated an area which was higher than that to the south-west. This height difference may be accounted for by a build-up of material associated with buildings. The wall was covered by 14-15th century building debris and may relate to this building. The south-east end of the wall was narrow for its last observed 1 m, narrowing to c 0.2 m. At the end and lying against the

north-east face was a large stone. Approximately 4 m from the south-east end of the wall was a hearth 0.9 m x 0.85 m in size. On the side a large stone was flanked by vertically set narrow limestone blocks. The hearth was not on the same alignment as the aforementioned wall. Approximately 12 m to the north a small section of wall footing was observed, orientated north-south.

Various ditches located during the evaluations and watching brief indicated medieval plot divisions some of which are aligned on present boundaries. South of a major boundary ditch orientated east-west and c 65 m from North Street/Bell Lane the soils indicated an agricultural use for this area with an old ploughsoil below the topsoil.

Recent landuse of this area has included workshops, a chicken farm, and a paddock for the eastern part of the area investigated while the western part was densely covered by shrubs and trees within an old orchard in the area of the Police Station development.

A small trench was excavated in the garden of 105-106 High Street 45 m behind the modern street frontage. The trench located the north wall of a stone built building of the 15th century behind which lay a complex of deep intercutting pits of the 16th to 19th centuries.

Witney, Mount House: Bishop of Winchester's palace (SP 357093) - Brian Durham

In advance of the erection of a permanent protective cover for the monument, the OAU carried out rescue excavations in the areas of the proposed anchorage points and walkways. The work was funded by English Heritage and, as an extension of the project, a series of additional trenches were opened to answer specific questions left unanswered by the 1984 excavations which discovered the site.

The new findings relate to the solar tower and adjoining buildings. The 1984 excavations showed the tower and antechamber preserved in their 12th-century form, and the anchorage points, being at the periphery, not surprisingly gave a clearer impression of how the Norman core had been modified in later centuries. Substantial additions to the NW corner of the tower included two small rooms and a garderobe infilled in the 14th century. To the N a length of the antechamber E wall was exposed, and trenches to the NE showed a much more comprehensive plan of the building previously identified as a chapel. The 'chapel' range has three cells, each of different widths, with full cross-walls between each, and a stone stair on the N side of the E cell. This does not necessarily alter the existing interpretation as a chapel, but the plan now shows some similarities with a building illustrated in 1730 which could otherwise be construed as a small chamber block.

The most interesting of the new findings were on the S terrace of the tower, where it was evident that the upper revetment walls were more symmetrical than previously thought and had reentrants which extended back to the

quoins of the tower itself. It is argued that these would have been a liability in a defensive tower and must therefore represent superficial reshaping of the terraces for decorative purposes after they had ceased to have a defensive function. This would correspond with the period of ornamental gardens established at the nearby royal hunting lodge at Woodstock in the reign of Henry II and is a reminder that other manor house and castle terraces may preserve the shapes of ancient landscape gardening.

Woodeaton, Temple Hill

(SP 537124) - J Moore, A Mudd, M Parsons, & M Roberts

Previous work on this site located a Romano-British Celtic temple. In addition early Iron Age pottery and metalwork have been found while a later Iron Age phase has evidence for metal working. Evidence for Iron Age structures was slight (Harding 1987).

For a proposed agricultural development of the site an evaluation was undertaken on behalf of Mrs R Hall. A surface collection survey over half the area indicated a dense concentration of Iron Age and Roman pottery both to the east and west of the Temple with a moderate scatter of pottery of both periods and Roman tile over the majority of the areas examined.

An area, external to the Scheduled Monument and c 80 m due south of the Temple was evaluated by trenching. This stage of the investigation was to find an area of non-intensive archaeology where building development could be sited. Following the identification of such, an area was stripped of overburden down to the cornbrash to assess the archaeology in relation to the proposed development.

Although there were no objections to the proposed development on archaeological grounds, the planning application was rejected. Subsequently the archaeology was reburied.

The area evaluated and exposed lies on the south facing slope just below the crest, on which the Temple is sited, and affords wonderful views down into the Cherwell Valley. While the area was not cleaned after stripping and no features were excavated, features were recognisable and datable from pottery in their upper surfaces. Numerous postholes led to the identification of one roundhouse with the probability of others being present. Associated with these postholes were several pits. Early Iron Age pottery and some slag were found with these features. A major ditch of the Roman period, orientated north-east to south-west and parallel to the crest of the hill, was present in the southern part of the area opened. Other smaller ditches or gullies were undated.

In the majority of area examined ploughing had extended down to the cornbrash with evidence of the top of the bedrock having suffered the effects of the plough. Features had been truncated and vertical stratigraphy as seen in previous excavations had been destroyed. An exception to

this was an area east of the track running from the top of the hill down to the road to Woodeaton. Here a layer of dark grey charcoal-rich clay loam underlay the ploughsoil and overlay what is interpreted as an early Iron Age soil horizon. The charcoal-rich layer contained numerous fragments of burnt limestone and burnt daub, and a large quantity of Iron Age pottery. Many of the thirteen postholes and six pits (in a trench 20 m x 1.6 m) were seen to cut this layer which was only partially removed. Other features associated with the early Iron Age horizon were suspected.

Reference:

Harding, D W, 1987, *Excavations in Oxfordshire 1964-66* (University of Edinburgh Dept. of Arch. Occ. Paper No 15).

Yarnton, Floodplain field evaluation

(SP 475110) - Gill Hey

Introduction

In November 1991 the Oxford Archaeological Unit undertook field evaluation over 16 hectares of Thames floodplain at Yarnton. The work was funded by English Heritage. The site lay below the Yarnton second gravel terrace settlement which was excavated in 1990 and 1991 (Hey 1991).

The evaluation revealed the wide extent and variety of the archaeological resource of this floodplain area despite the small percentage of the site so far sampled. It strongly reinforced a current perception that floodplain areas offer enormous potential for the examination of our past and are not blanks as previously believed.

The Topography

The present uniformity of landscape masks a more varied past topography. River channels cut through the floodplain gravels creating islands. One of these palaeochannels ran round the northern edge of the evaluation area and another bisected it. The southern channel migrated northwards and a soil horizon developed on the early inorganic silty channel sediments to the south. Thus, by the time of the early prehistoric occupation of the site, dry land existed both between the channels on a gravel island and south of the southern channel on earlier channel fill.

Subsequent alluviation filled the channels and then overlay the land surface on each side, sealing the earlier occupation.

The Archaeological Evidence

The presence of early prehistoric activity over all the floodplain area was clearly demonstrated, with an apparent bias to channel bank location. A range of features were encountered, including ditches and other features with a presumed domestic function such as postholes and gullies. The settlement layout is potentially recoverable. A possible ring ditch suggested a ritual element in the landscape and posthole and gully alignments on the south bank of the channel could be similarly interpreted. The activity appeared to span at least the late Neolithic to late Bronze

Age periods and stratigraphic relationships between these phases was present on the channel edge.

Two causeways, one running down to the channel edge and another broadly parallel to it, were located on the south bank indicating that a wider landscape and communications between sites could be investigated. These causeways have not yet been investigated.

Channel related activity was located within the southern palaeochannel. A wooden structure, which would have formed some kind of platform, stretched into the centre of the channel from its northern bank where there appeared to be a focus of activity which was possibly contemporary and possibly late Bronze Age in date. Waterlogged organic deposits, some at least contemporary with adjacent settlement, were found preserved in the channel with obvious environmental potential for revealing the economic aspects of the settlement and understanding the form of the landscape at the time. Alluvial sequences were clearly exposed and further research may lead to greater understanding of the processes at work.

Information on later floodplain land use is potentially available, both from the examination of contemporary sediments within the channels, waterlogged remains located within them and the study of in situ ploughsoils surviving beneath the modern ploughsoil.

Reference:

Hey, G M, 1991, "Yarnton Worton Rectory Farm", *SMA* 21, 86-92.

THAMES VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Didcot - Wallingford Road

(SU 539899) - Isabelle Ruben and Steve Ford

An evaluation was carried out in May 1991 for London Retail Investments Ltd. Fifteen machine dug trenches revealed the presence of a small prehistoric site consisting of shallow pits, post-holes and ditches. The site is situated in the eastern part of the Vale of the White Horse in which very few prehistoric sites have so far been recorded. Prior to construction in August 1991 an area of c 2800 m⁽²⁾ was stripped of topsoil and all features investigated.

The site has been used discontinuously since the Mesolithic period up to the present day. A small number of Mesolithic flints were found both on the stripped surface and as residual finds within features.

The earliest occupation appears to have been in the Late Neolithic, or more likely, in the Early Bronze Age. This was represented by a scatter of struck flints including a petit tranchet derivative and barbed and tanged arrowheads.

Certain and probable Collared Urn pottery was also found, tempered, as with most of the other prehistoric pottery on the site, with quartzite.

Middle Bronze Age occupation was also indicated by subsoil features. One other interesting aspect of this site are a number of linear features also of Early/Middle Bronze Age date. They form a rectilinear pattern and are best interpreted as a field system. The final report has been submitted to *Oxoniensia*.

Wallingford - Harris Garage

(SU 606894) - Steve Ford

An archaeological evaluation was carried out for South Oxfordshire District Council prior to the construction of a car park. The site lay close to the centre of the modern town and also presumably within the core area of the medieval and Saxon towns. It was also thought that this site lay within the limits of a large Roman site located to the west of the present town (Airs *et al*, 1975).

A total of seven trenches were dug by machine. Archaeologically significant levels were typically encountered at a depth of c 1 m below the present ground surface. The features discovered appear to date from the medieval period only, although some of the pottery from features may be tentatively dated to Late Saxon times. No features were clearly of late medieval or early post-medieval date. Lack of disturbance in post-medieval and recent times appears to have resulted in the good survival of medieval deposits in some parts of the site.

The centre of the site produced a moderate density of features consisting of ditches/gullies and pits (property boundaries?), some of which were densely backfilled with rubbish. A few postholes may indicate structural activity.

A large number of faunal remains were recovered, including fish bone, mostly in excellent condition. High status refuse may be hinted at by the presence of unusual species such as hare and woodcock.

Waterlogged features were encountered but none could be shown to contain preserved organic remains, although they may still be present in the deepest parts of some of the features.

These limited results have helped shed some light on the extent of activity at various periods in the town with only Late Saxon and medieval material being discovered. No evidence was found for either Roman or late/early post-medieval activity on the site.

Mapledurham - Golf Course

(SU 696733) - Steve Ford and Leigh J Torrance

An evaluation with three components comprising earthwork survey, field walking and machine-assisted trenching, was

undertaken prior to the proposed golf course for Invicta Leisure Ltd.

Fieldwalking produced 1009 struck flints representing a range of periods (including a little of Mesolithic or Early Neolithic date). The majority of the flintwork appears to be of Late Neolithic through to Late Bronze Age date and several clusters would appear to indicate occupation areas. Bronze Age pottery and cremated bone was also found during fieldwalking and was subsequently shown to have originated from a Middle Bronze Age cremation burial containing about 1/5 of a globular urn. Machine trenching a short distance away revealed a number of undated features (a posthole, a pit, a scoop, plus another possible cremation burial) along with one feature containing Roman pottery. Just a single sherd of Roman pottery was found during fieldwalking.

Subsequent alterations in the golf course design led to a further phase of trenching but no new features of archaeological significance were discovered.

A final phase of fieldwork consisted of a watching brief during topsoil stripping, paying particular attention to those areas with flint scatters.

Nothing of archaeological significance was found. Although conditions for finding subsoil features were not ideal, this provides further evidence to suggest that many earlier prehistoric occupation sites are now represented only as scatters of finds within the topsoil.

References

Airs M, Rodwell K and Turner H, 1975; "Wallingford" in K. Rodwell (ed.), 1975, *Historic towns in Oxfordshire*.

Bradley R, 1978; "Rescue excavation in Dorchester-on-Thames 1972", *Oxoniensia* 43, 17-39.

Rodwell K, (ed.) 1975; *Historic towns in Oxfordshire*.

The Bampton Research Project: Interim Report, 1989-92

John Blair

The Bampton Project is an intensive investigation of an Anglo-Saxon minster church in its historical, archaeological and topographical contexts. The main aims are to elucidate the origins of the church, and to define its continuing role in the development of a small market town and of society, landscape and parochial organisation within its territory. This report continues those published in *SMA* 16 (1986), 87-92, and 18 (1988), 89-93.

The first report defined a complex series of ecclesiastical sites arranged on a west-east alignment. These include a great oval enclosure, interpreted as monastic, containing the church in its south-west corner; a section through its perimeter ditch was published in the second report. The present Fig 1 is a revised and amplified plan of the whole

complex, showing the relationship of most of the sites described below.

The Deanery: Bronze Age ring-ditch, medieval 'canal' and Romanesque windows

The Deanery (ie rectory) house, a complex medieval building immediately west of the church, is described in the second report. A completely new discovery is that its stands within the circuit of a Bronze Age ring-ditch (centre SP 31180331), of which about a fifth of the circumference was plotted in small trenches during landscaping. Although there was no stratigraphical evidence that this survived as an earthwork into the historic period, its relationship both to the 12th-century Deanery buildings and to the great oval enclosure (Figs 2, 5) provides strong circumstantial evidence. It therefore seems likely that the ritual topography of Bampton minster, like that of many other Anglo-Saxon minsters, was planned with reference to older monuments.

Immediately west of the house, trenching in advance of a proposed swimming-pool revealed the profile of an artificial water-course, 16 m wide and rubble-revetted on its west side, which continued northwards the line of the existing fishpond. This feature is clearly no later than the late middle ages, but its date and function are otherwise unclear. It could be a fishpond, but an intriguing possibility is a canal for water-transport, feeding into the Great Brook which enters the Thames at Shifford. It is hoped that further work will be possible.

A major refurbishment of the Deanery clarified its architectural development. The eastern windows of the late 11th century 'lower chapel' have been unblocked and conserved (Fig 3).

The churchyard: boundary ditches and burials

Trenches in the western part of the churchyard (Fig 4) and against the walls of the church threw light on the natural topography of the site, and revealed a series of boundary ditches. It was shown that the mounded-up surface of the churchyard (Fig 5) partly reflects a natural hillock in the gravel terrace, though accentuated by thousands of burials. The lower, western part of the churchyard was occupied by a north-south road, overlying the back-filled ditch of the great oval enclosure (ditch 1) and bounded by side ditches (ditches 2 and 3); a western churchyard boundary (ditch 4) presumably co-existed with this road.

Samples from two skulls, redeposited in the fill of roadside ditch 3 (Tr.XVI W), produced radiocarbon ages (RCD refs. 293 and 294) of 1150 +/- 50 bp and 1100 +/- 60 bp. The first of these gives a calibrated date between the late 8th and late 10th centuries, and is therefore the earliest non-written evidence so far for religious use of the site. Radiocarbon dates from the earliest undisturbed burials suggested that ditch 4 was the boundary of the active graveyard in the late 12th and 13th centuries, and that burial extended westwards across its fill in the 14th century. Two exceptional burials, in wooden coffins lined with thin layers of domestic ash, were dated to the late 13th or early 14th centuries on pottery and radiocarbon evidence.

The fabric of the parish church

Recording and analysis of this complex building (SP 31260332) has proceeded much further, making it necessary to reject the hypothesis of an Anglo-Saxon double chancel arch proposed in the first report. The structural phases earlier than *c* 1200 are now defined as follows (Fig 6):

I Nave, built of rubble laid mainly in pitched courses. Fragmentary rubble voussoirs in the east face of the chancel-arch wall may indicate a window in an originally flat east wall.

II The early Norman chancel arch, originally serving a small altar-apse, probably inserted into the east wall of Phase I but perhaps contemporary with it (in which case Phase I would be no earlier than the 1070s). The Anglo-Norman church probably also had a massive west tower, with a westwards-projecting stair-turret of which the base was excavated (Fig 4); this may have been the tower 'built in old times with marvellous ingenuity' which King Stephen besieged in 1142.

III A grand remodelling of *c* 1160-90, in which a tower was built over the east end of the earlier nave and a new chancel and transepts were added, producing a church of much more than ordinary parochial size.

The mis-alignment of the late 12th-century north transept, and data from an excavation outside its eastern chapel (which contained St. Beornwald's shrine), suggest that this transept overlies an earlier structure, possibly the Anglo-Saxon church, which would have lain alongside the Phase I/II nave; the latter is on almost exactly the same axis

as the Norman 'lower chapel' of the Deanery to its west (Fig. 5).

Folly House: Grubenhaus and remains of d'Oilly manor-house

Assessment trenches at Folly House (SP 31560306), which stands in open grounds on the southern fringe of the town, were excavated by B Durham of the Oxford Archaeological Unit on behalf of Commander O Lascelles. A ditch was identified on the south edge of the site, probably following the edge of the gravel terrace. A distribution of medieval features across the property, concentrating towards the site of the present house (which contains one possible medieval wall), support the evidence of post-medieval documents and maps that this was the site of the manor-house of Bampton d'Oilly, a minor manor recorded in Domesday Book. More important, one of the trenches encountered (at SP 3151 0307) a typical Grubenhaus with early Anglo-Saxon pottery in its fill. This discovery contributes to the picture of a pagan Anglo-Saxon presence preceding the Christian sites at Bampton.

(This work was carried out in connection with a proposed housing development; a report has been lodged with the County Sites and Monuments Record.)

Bronze Age ring-ditches re-used for square ritual enclosures

A group of cropmarks near the Thames to the south of Bampton, centred on SP 342004, was plotted from aerial photographs (Fig 7) with the help of a magnetometer survey by Dr A Aspinall (Bradford University). It contains nine ring-ditches, assumed to be Bronze Age barrows, of which the two largest contain exactly square enclosures.

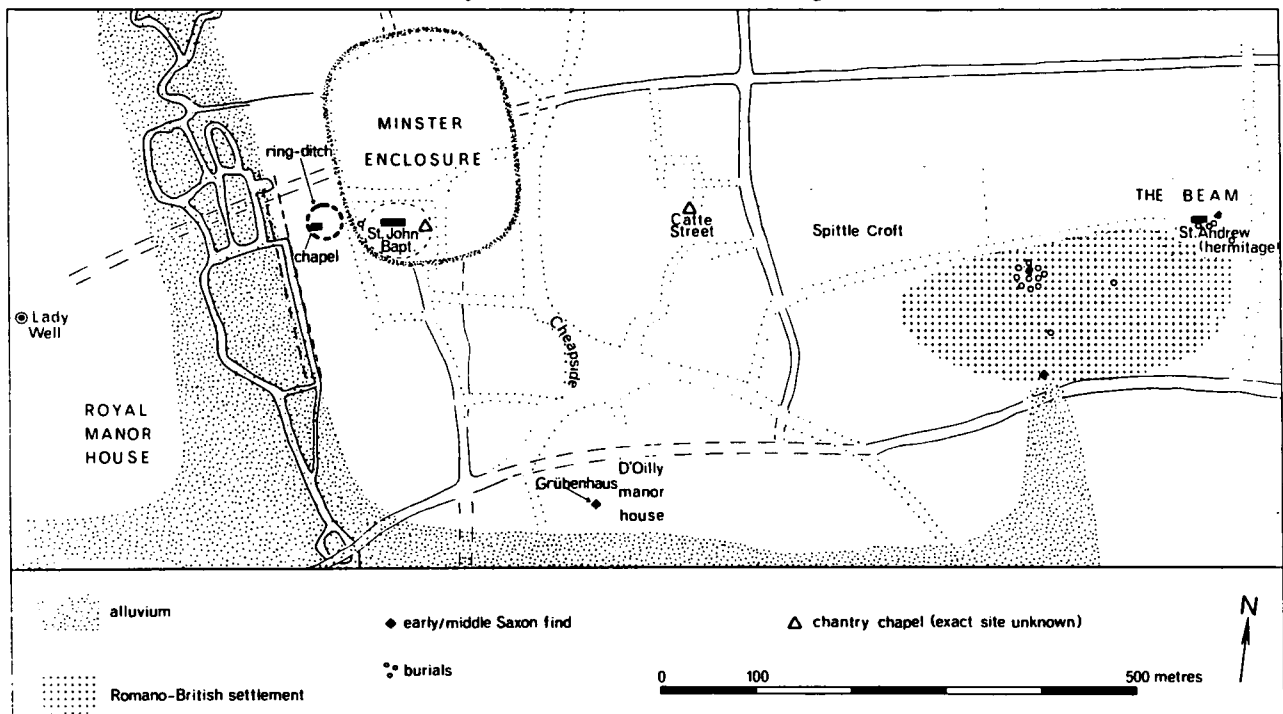


Fig1. The pre-urban topography of Bampton: a complex of religious sites arranged on a west-east alignment. (Existing pre-town roads in continuous line; inferred pre-town roads in broken line; roads relating to the town and market-place in dotted line.)

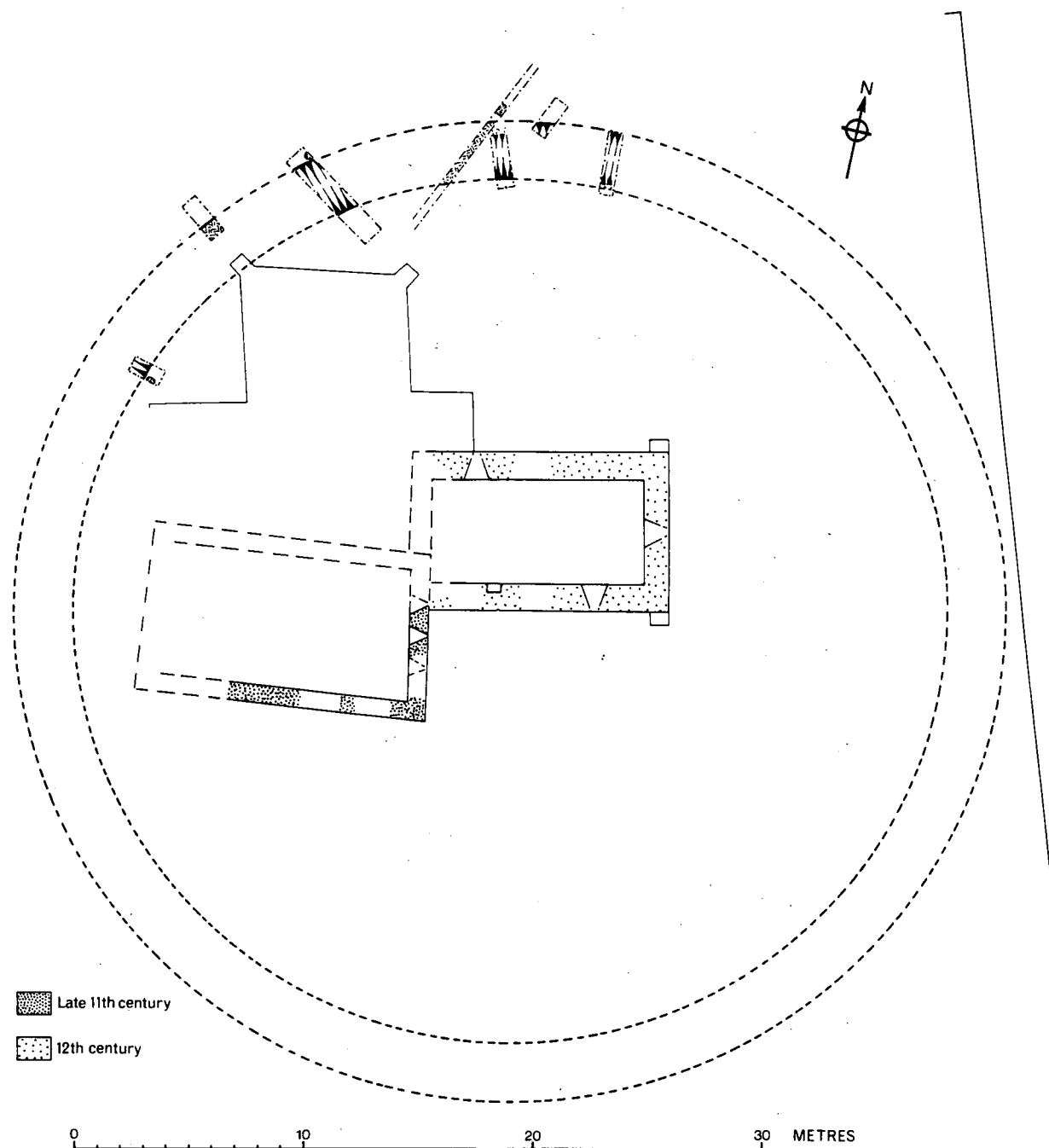


Fig 2. Bampton Deanery: excavated sections and projected circumference of Bronze Age ring-ditch, shown in relation to the late 11th- and 12th-century buildings of the Deanery.

Fieldwalking over these, led by Dr S Crawford, revealed that both are still visible as ploughed-out mounds, strewn with small fragments of cremated human bone.

The squares are unusual and cannot yet be dated, but square ritual and mortuary enclosures are reported at various places in England, Scotland and Ireland with dates ranging between the late Iron Age and Middle Saxon periods. The possibility that the square enclosures near Bampton are pagan Anglo-Saxon cremation cemeteries is the more interesting in view of the possible pre-Christian site at the Beam (see first report), part of the ritual complex at Bampton itself.

Late medieval houses in the town

Several of the vernacular buildings have been examined in conjunction with work by Dr S Townley for the Victoria County History. Most of them are rubble-built and of the late 17th to 19th centuries, but occasional discoveries of encased timber frames suggest that 16th-century Bampton was a town of timber houses. Two apparently late medieval houses with open halls have been surveyed.

Knapps Farm House, Bridge Street (SP 31360304; Fig 9) retains three bays of an open roof, all soot-encrusted, and evidence for timber-framed walls. The principal rafters are

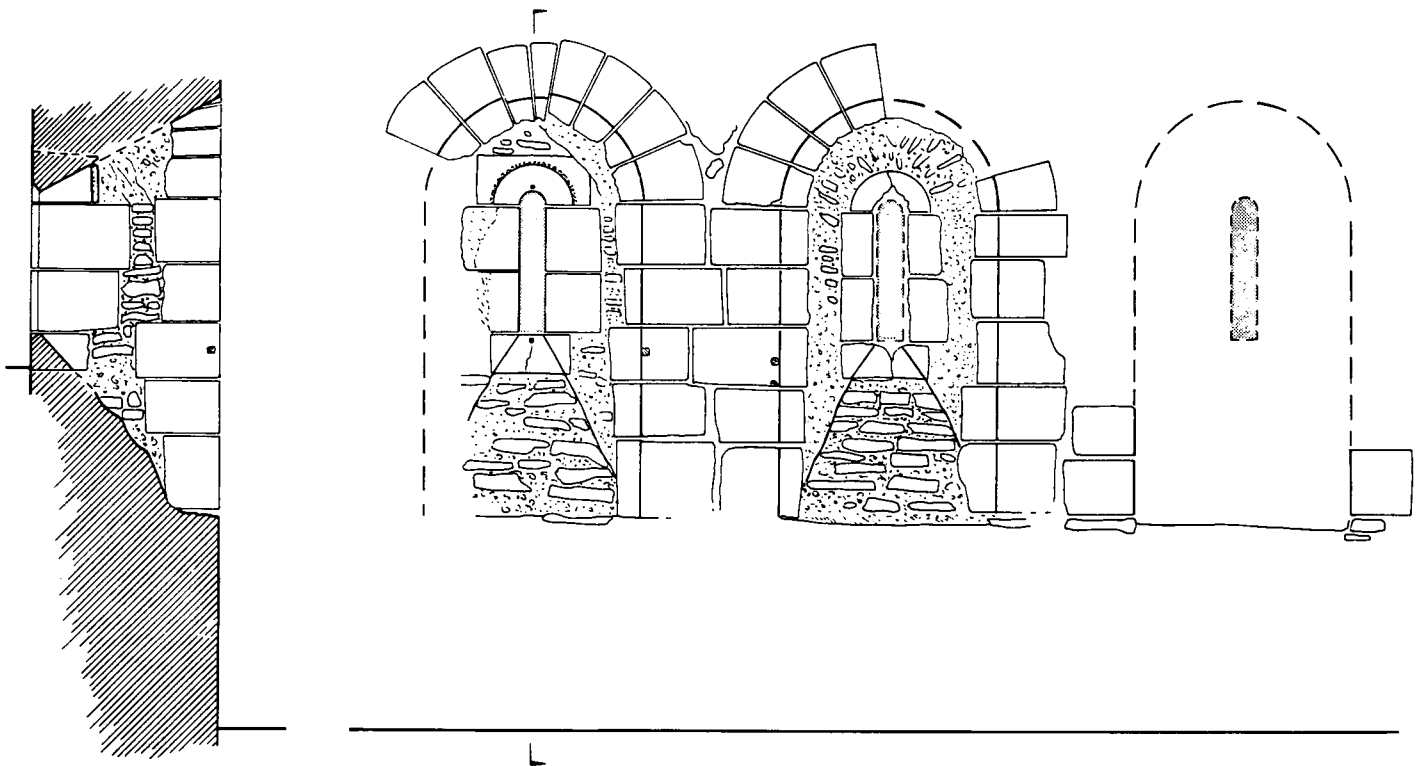


Fig 3. Bampton Deanery: Romanesque windows in the east wall of the late 11th-century 'lower chapel', unblocked 1991.

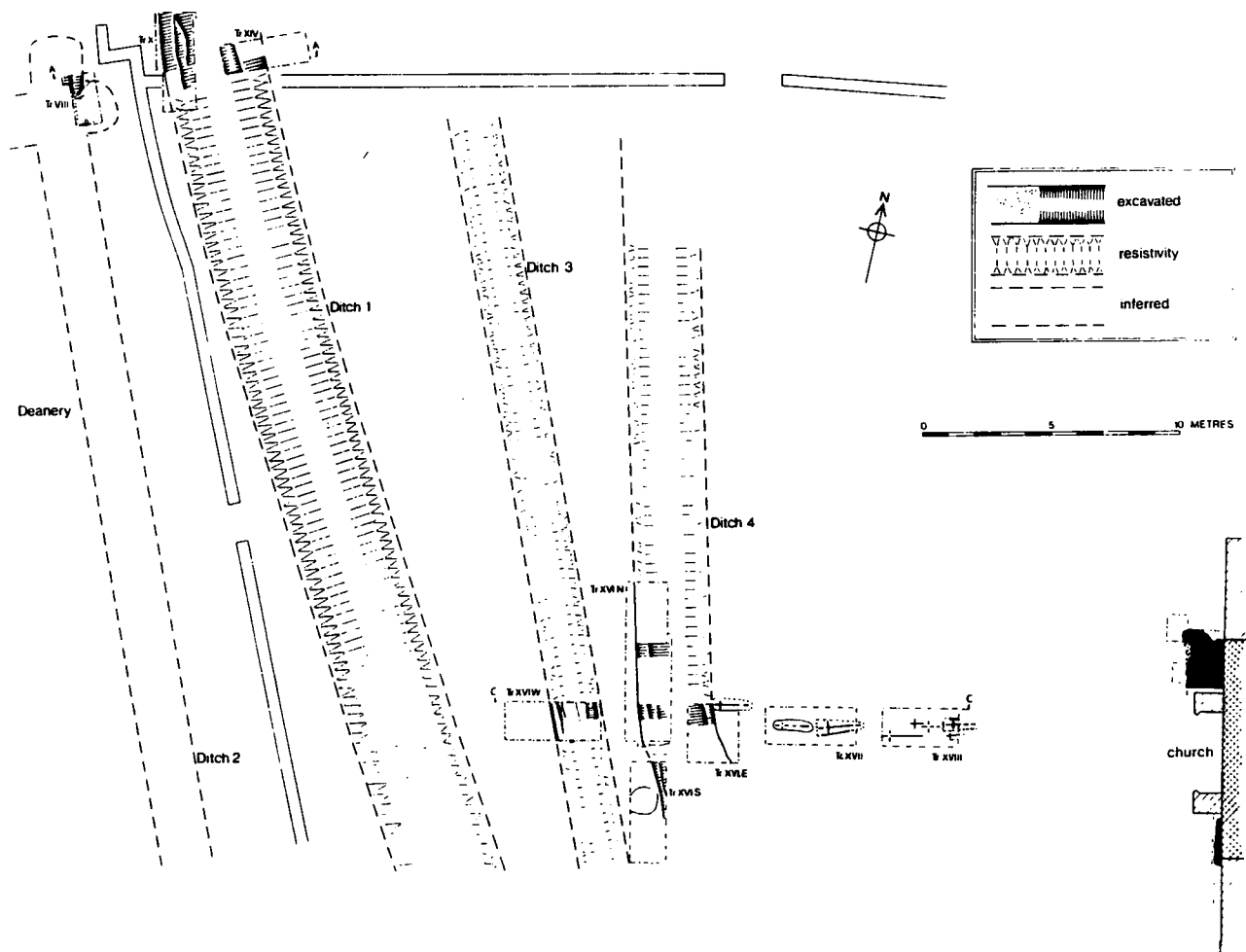


Fig 4. Trenches in the west part of Bampton churchyard, with interpretation of ditch alignments based on resistivity survey. The two burials shown with stippled coffin-shaped outlines were in ash-lined coffins.

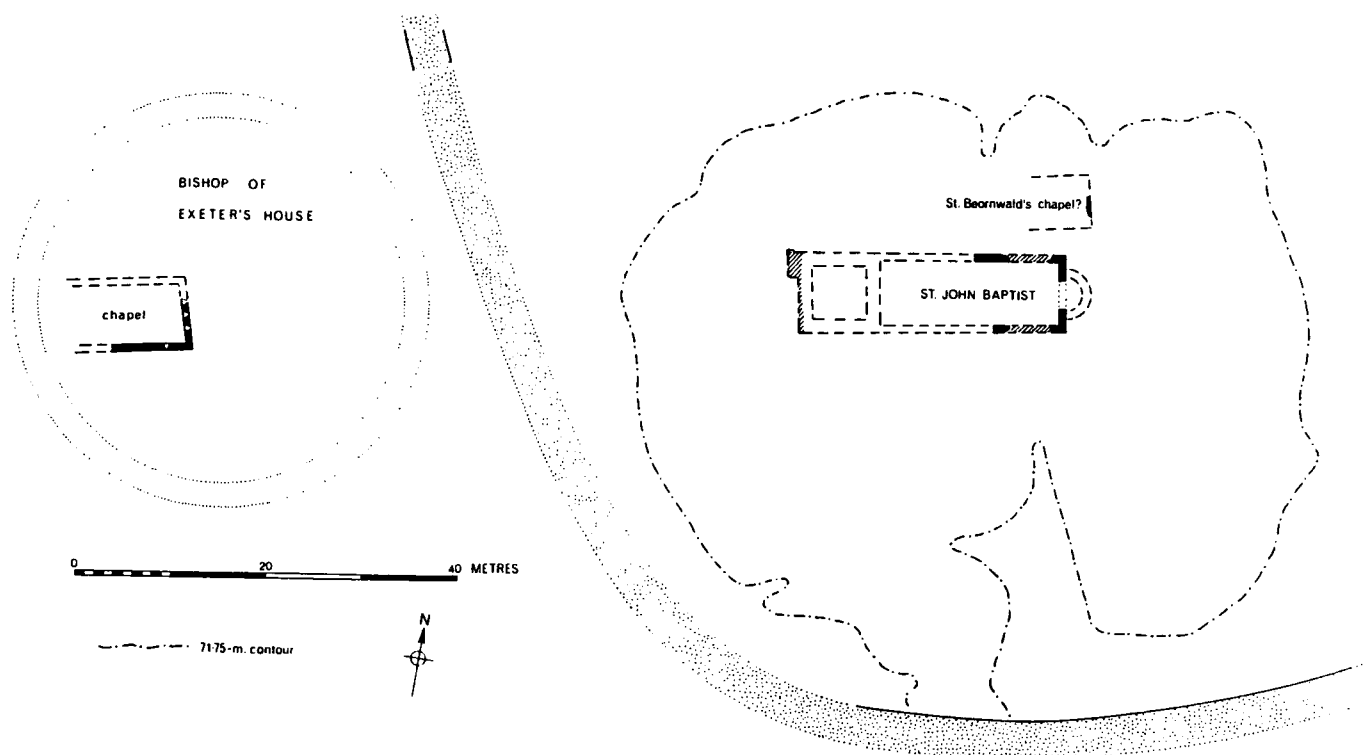
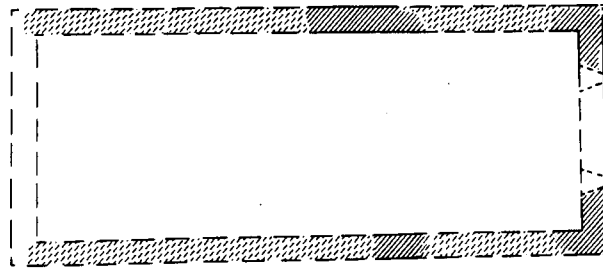


Fig 5. Bampton church and Deanery in the early 12th century, showing the alignment of the two buildings and the probable earlier church or shrine-chapel on the site of the present north transept and 'St.Beornwald's chapel'.

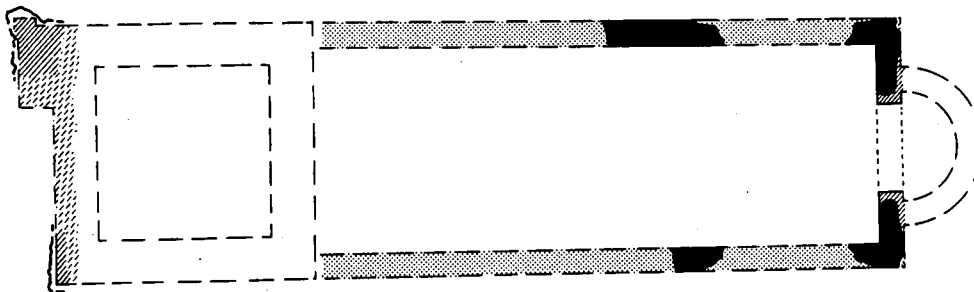
tenoned into the tiebeams, and have a pair of purlins trenced into their backs; the common rafters are a continuous sequence ignoring the bay-divisions. The post-head assembly was of an odd and possibly archaic kind, with unjowled posts. Thatched Cottage, Church Street (SP 3134 0325; Fig 8) is strikingly similar, except that the post-heads were jowled and the walls are lower. Again, all visible roof-timbers are soot-encrusted. In both cases the apex construction is inaccessible, but its likely form is suggested by a late 16th-century house (The Old Forge, Broad St.) which has a ridge-piece on yokes. The two houses are of almost identical width, probably representing a local perch of 18 feet.

These houses belong to the family of principal-rafter roofs with back-trenched purlins, and possibly also with ridge-pieces. The type, which bears a clear though still undefined relationship to cruck construction, is attested by

the mid 14th century, though not necessarily at a vernacular level (J T Smith in N W Alcock, *Cruck Construction: an Introduction and Catalogue* (1981), 23; *Oxoniensia* 53 (1988), 200). Such roofs are normal at Stanton Harcourt (e.g. No.41, Sutton) but not represented in the large sample of houses surveyed at Harwell (*Oxfordshire 1987 Proceedings of Vernacular Architecture Group*, 37, 43 and appendix), so they may be characteristic of the Bampton area. An instructive comparison can be made with the nearby raised-cruck roof at Manor Farm, Black Bourton (SP 2883 0393; Fig 9), which (despite its higher status, better finish and stone walls) spans a hall of virtually identical width to the Bampton houses. These parallel traditions suggest that the lost 13th and 14th-century peasant houses of Bampton were built in one of the cruck-related forms, an idea supported by a reference in 1440 to a Bampton cottage 'now standing to three couples' (*de tribus copul*) (Exeter Cathedral Archives, MS 4756).

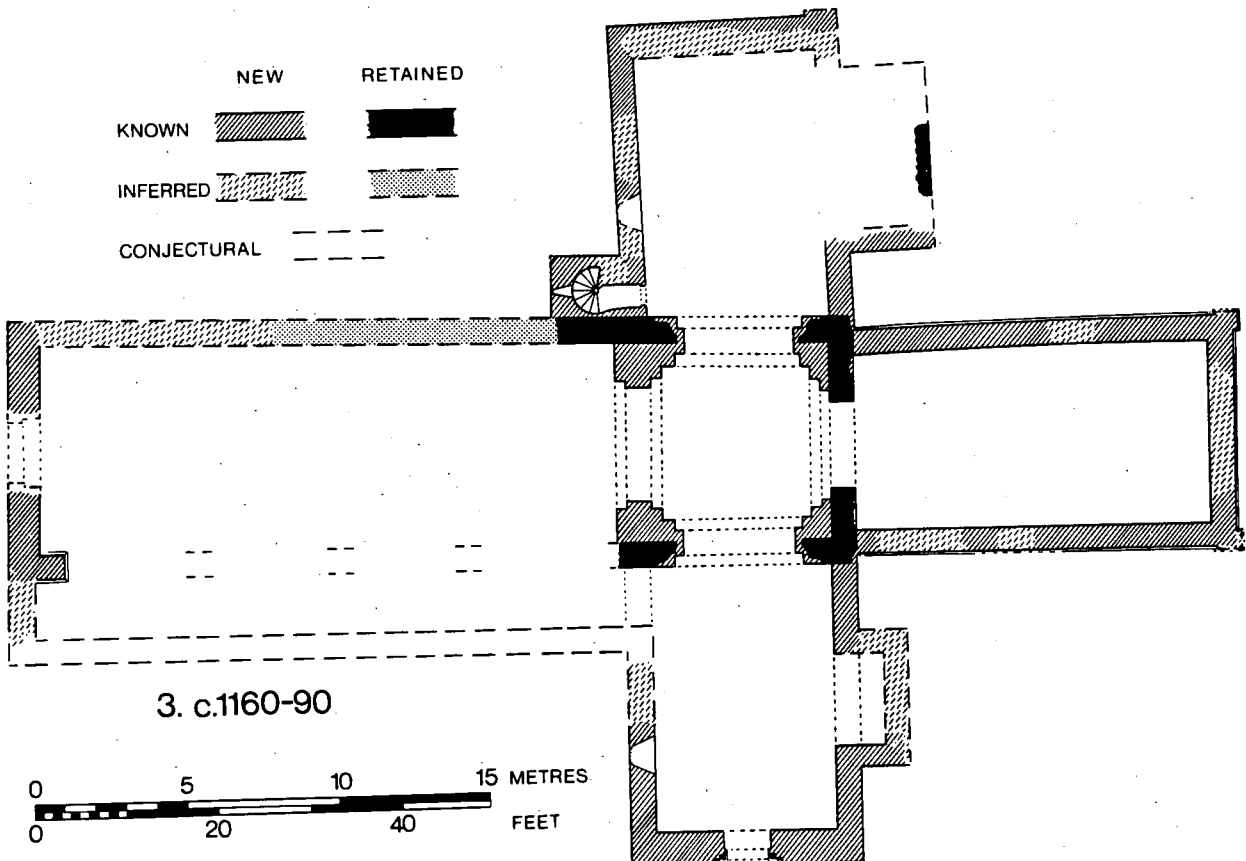


1. Primary (Anglo-Saxon?)



2. Additions to c.1140

	NEW	RETAINED
KNOWN		
INFERRED		
CONJECTURAL		



3. c.1160-90

Fig 6. Bampton parish church: interpretation of development up to 1200.

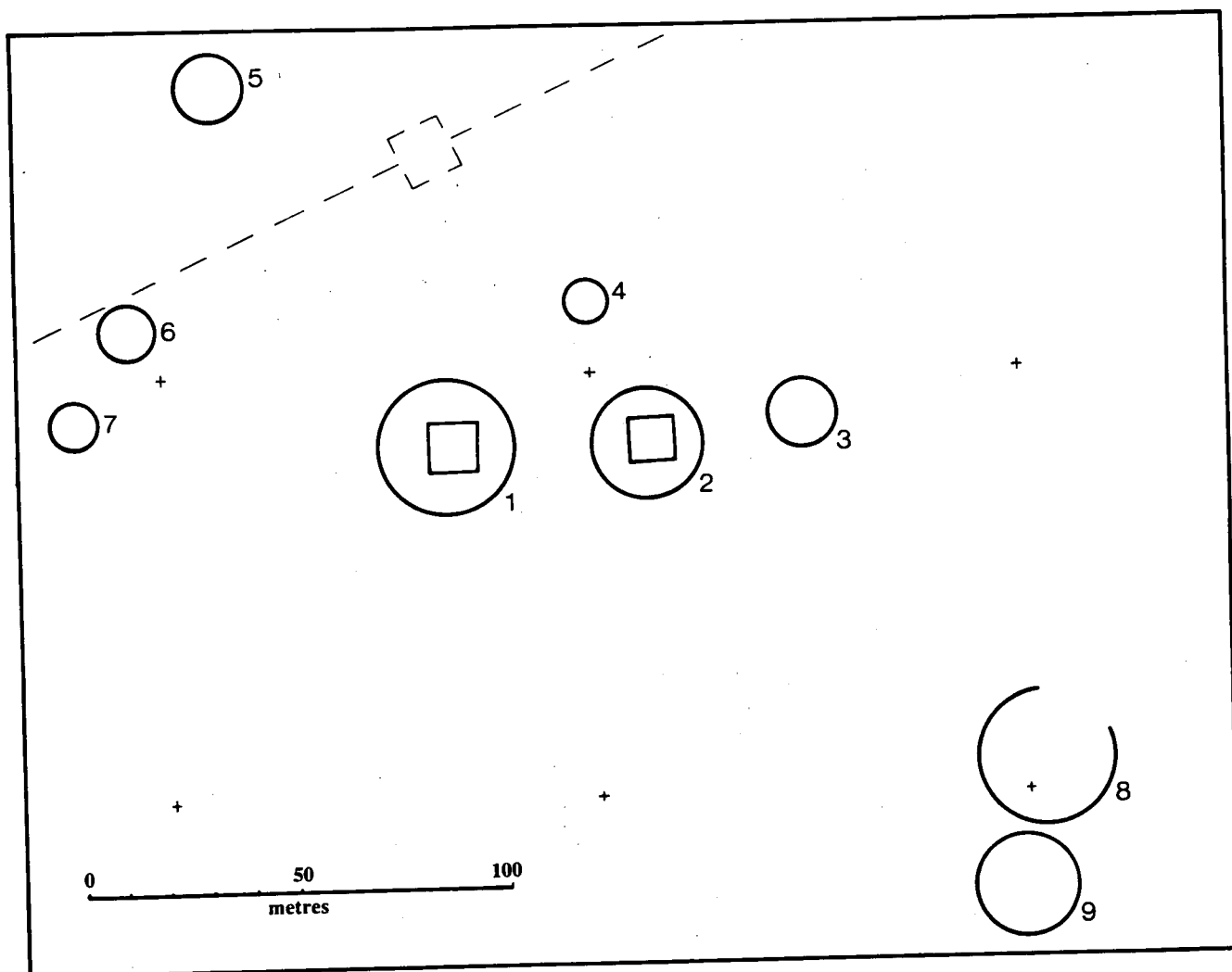
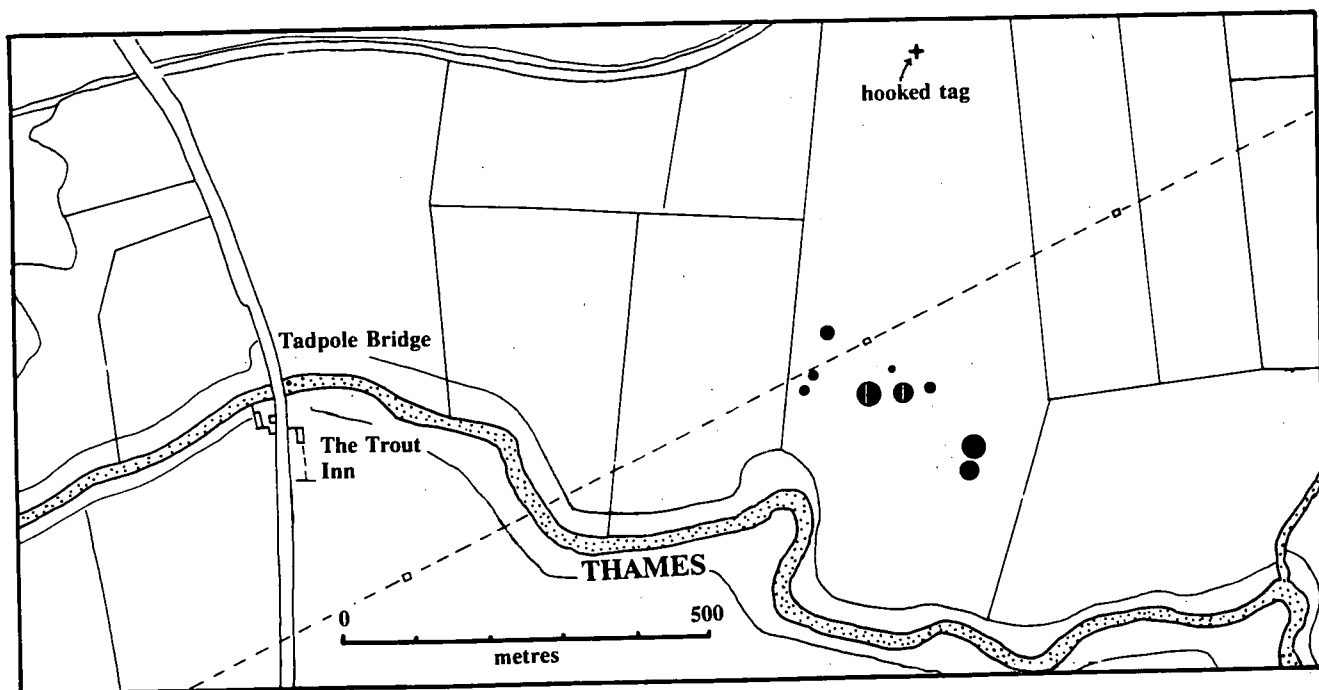


Fig 7. Cropmarks in Bampton Aston, between Tadpole Bridge and Chimney: plot from aerial photographs.

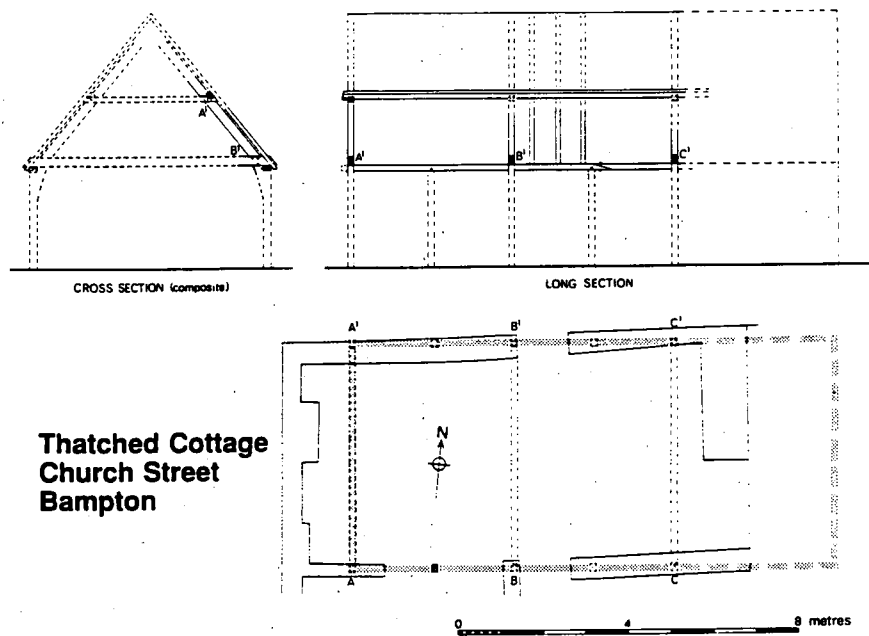


Fig 8. Thatched Cottage, Bampton: original fabric.

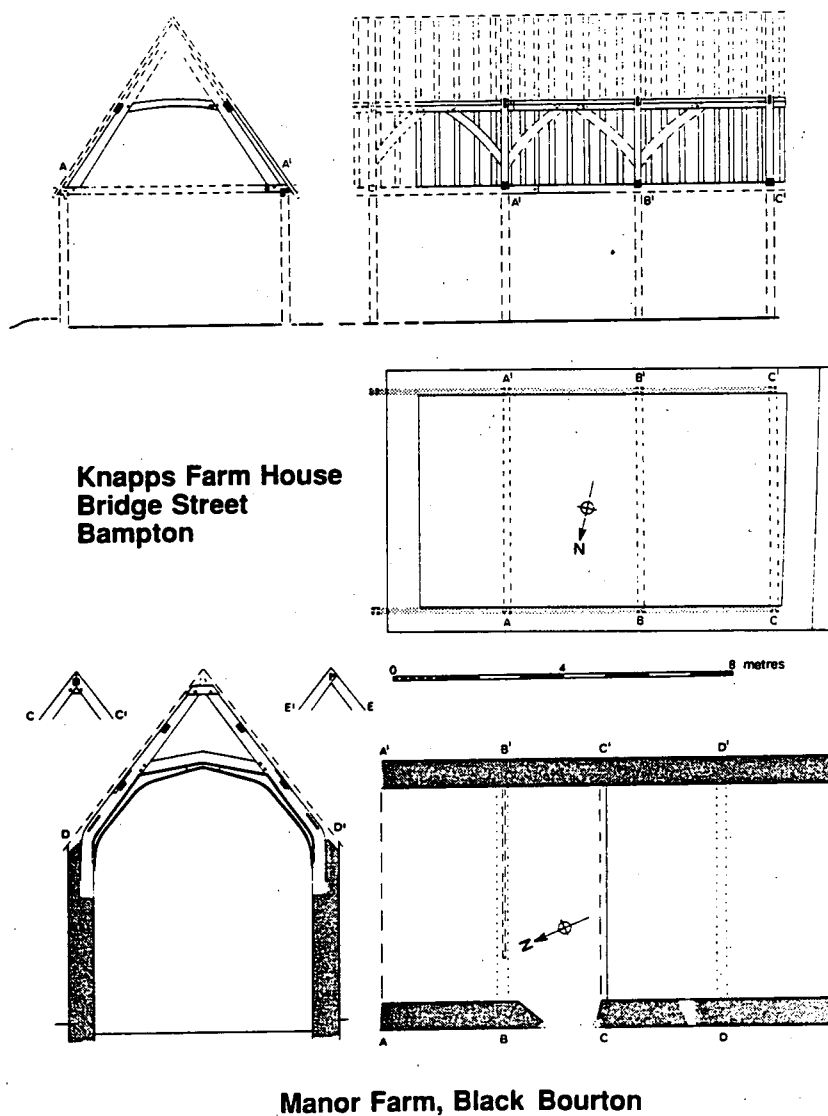


Fig 9. Knapps Farm House, Bampton: original fabric. Compared with Manor Farm, Black Bourton (open hall stippled).

ABINGDON AREA ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Excavations at Thrupp near Radley, Oxon (SU 52329763) - Roger Ainslie

An Iron Age enclosure was discovered by Mr J Wallis late in 1991. This was then excavated by the Society in advance of gravel extraction.

This site is similar to several others from the Thames gravels. In particular sites at Ashville, Farmoor and Watkins farm Northmoor are comparable. In the past several sites have been excavated in Thrupp, most recently Bronze Age remains by the Oxford Archaeological Unit.

The site was principally a round house shown by a ditch, feature 1, which had been re-thatched or re-built after its first ditch had silted and a second gully, 5, was then dug, which was shallower and soon silted. After these gullies had filled an enclosure was constructed to the north. This had at least two phases. Ditches 9 and 8 had parts with vertical sides

possibly from a palisade type of fence, although shells of *Lymnaea palustris* indicate that this was later an area of stagnant water subject to seasonal drying. On its northern side the site was bounded by a ditch which had a succession of re-cuts, the latest containing a sherd of Roman pottery. No occupation was found north of these ditches. To the east of the main house was a well (33) which had been filled with deposits containing iron smithing slag and parts of crucibles used for bronze casting. The fills of the house ditch also contained a little smithing slag. To its south were some small pits containing pottery and similar remains.

The finds are fairly typical for a site of this date, approximately third-fourth century B.C. Of note are the bronze working crucibles from the fill of the well and the very large urn weighing 7 kg from ditch 10. A piece of human skull was recovered from the fills of the main house ditch on its northern side. A rubbing stone was found in ditch 9 together with a large deposit of sheep bones, particularly lower jaw bones. The flints were only flakes except a scraper from ditch 8.

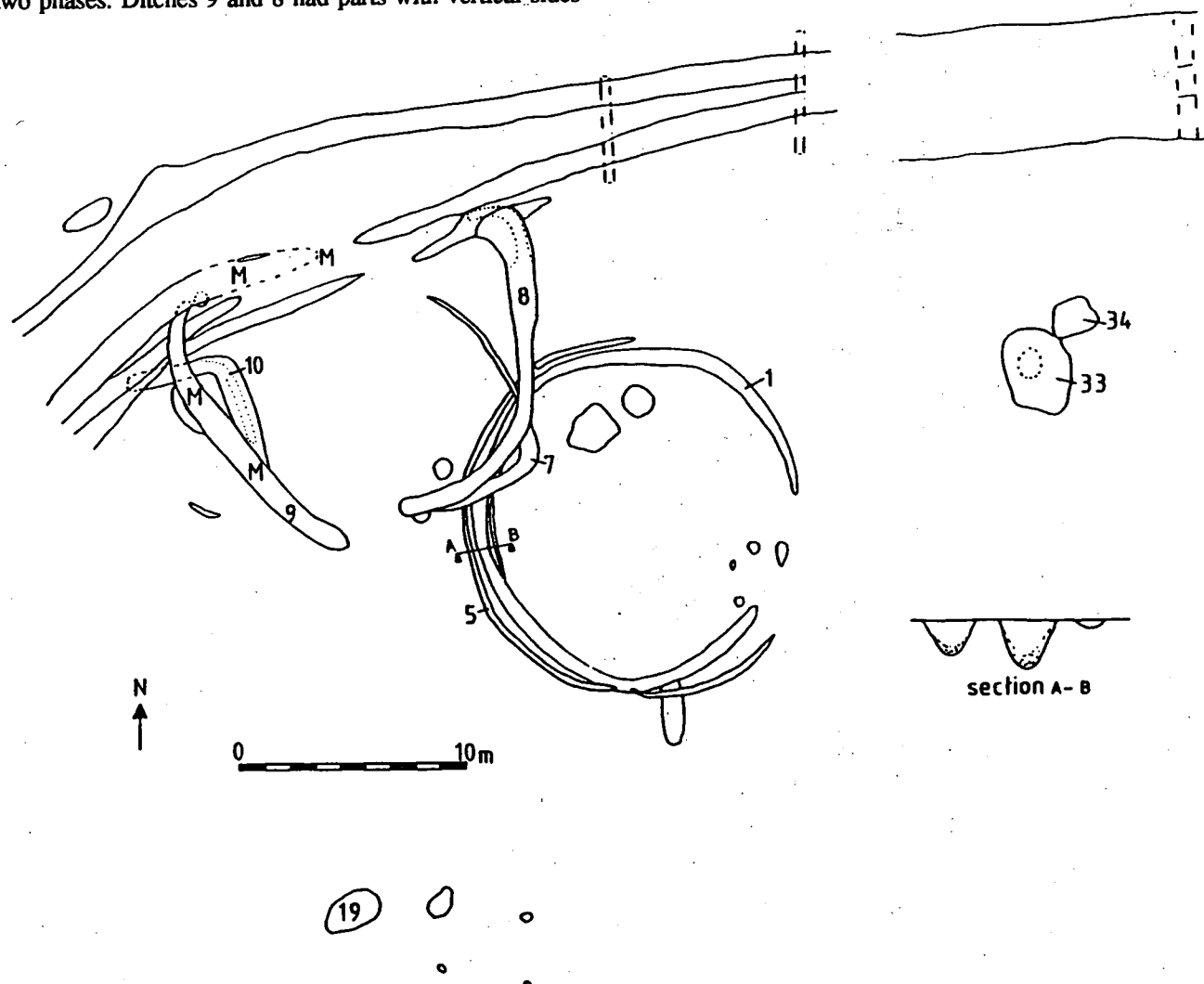


Fig 1. Thrupp.

The numbers of finds from the principal feature were:

POTTERY

Feature	Bone	Flint	Slag	Limestone tempered	Sand tempered
1	246	3	1	57	146
5	6		1	11	13
7	120	1			36
8	88	1		18	121
9	446	1		10	83
10	73			19	204
33	163	7	20	37	143
Site	1451	16	23	199	776

Grog and chaff tempered pottery were also found.

Acknowledgements

The digging team was Sally Ainslie, John Carter, Bob Eeles, Sarah Hallewell, Jackie Smith, Terry Stopps, Jeff and Sandy Wallis, Bob Wilson, Jane Wyatt and the Oxford University Archaeological Society and myself.

Mark Robinson advised on the snails, Peter Northover and Chris Salter on the metal working remains and Tim Allen on the pottery. We are grateful to H. Tuckwell and Sons for allowing us to carry out the excavation.

It is anticipated that the finds and archive material will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Council's Museums Service.

ILLUSTRATED FINDS

F	TYPE	INT	EXT	BREAK	TEMP	DIAM
1	large urn	pink/black	pink	pink/black	sand	460
2	handle	brown	pink	dark brown	sand	-
3	rim	black	black	black	sand	7
4	Boss	brown	brown	dark grey	sand	-
5	rim	grey	grey/brown	grey	grog/shell	17
6	rim	pink	pink	pink	sand	9
7	bone pin					
8	rim	brown	brown	black	sand	14
9	rim	dark grey	dark grey	dark brown	limestone	15
10	rim	black	black burn.	grey	sand	17
11	rim	pink	pink	brown	sand	15
12	decor. sherd	black	black burn.	grey	sand	-
13	decor. sherd	black	black burn.	grey	sand	-
14	quartz cobble	end used as rubbing stone				
15	rim	black	black	black	sand	17
16	rim	light grey	light grey	grey	limestone	14
17	rim	pink	pink	pink	sand	22
18	rim	pink	pink	pink	sand	32
19	handle	pink	pink	pink	sand	-
20	rim	pink	pink	dark grey	sand	18
21	rim	dark grey	dark grey	dark grey	sand	28
22	crucible	light grey	yellow grey	light grey	none	9

Key

F = feature; INT = interior; EXT = exterior; TEMP = temper; DIAM = diameter
burn. = burnished; decor. = decorated

Abingdon - Tithe Farm (SU 48289588)

Two small trenches were put into this field following surface finds of material brought up by recent ploughing in September 1991. The purpose of the excavation was to investigate the type of archaeological deposits here and the extent of plough damage to them.

Trench 1

This was located where large sherds of pottery, shown in illustration 1, were found on the surface. This found a ditch which contained early Iron Age or possibly Dark Age pottery in its upper layers (1/1) whilst the lower levels contained Roman grey ware amongst late Iron Age pottery. This could indicate that the ditch was dug during the late first century AD through an area containing Iron Age material. Alternatively the relatively large sherd sizes of pottery from (1/1) could indicate that it is not residual and is of post Roman date, probably Dark Age. In all approx 0.4 Kg of pottery came from this trench.

Trench 2

This was located where the quern, illustration 10, was ploughed up. This also found a ditch which, although the excavated area was only half the size of trench 1, contained approx 1.4 Kg of pottery, including larger sherds indicating that its fills were not heavily disturbed in antiquity. The lower levels (2/3) were early first century AD whilst the upper ones (2/2) were dated by butt-beaker sherds to be mid first century. Layers 2/2 and 2/3 contained residual early Iron Age sherds.

Overall the finds from this site have several similarities to the site at Ashville, (*CBA Research Report* 28, 1978), which is only some 1.5 Km away, (*SMA* 1990 73-78). This indicates that this area must have been well populated at the end of the Iron Age. The settlement here could have then become deserted or changed in pattern for field ditches to cut through it. The early Iron Age pottery and crop marks indicate earlier settlement in this area and the, (unpublished) excavation of a Roman villa-like building before the 1970s residential development at Tithe Farm shows a later use of the area. The quartzite hand-axe type of implement found in the ploughsoil is probably of Palaeolithic date. Ploughing at the top of the hill here appears to have destroyed everything down to the top of the natural gravel. Only the ditches protect archaeological deposits. The large sherds from the upper levels of trench 1 are still unexplained. If they are early Iron Age they are above later Iron Age/Roman deposits.

Archive and Finds

The archive material will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Council's

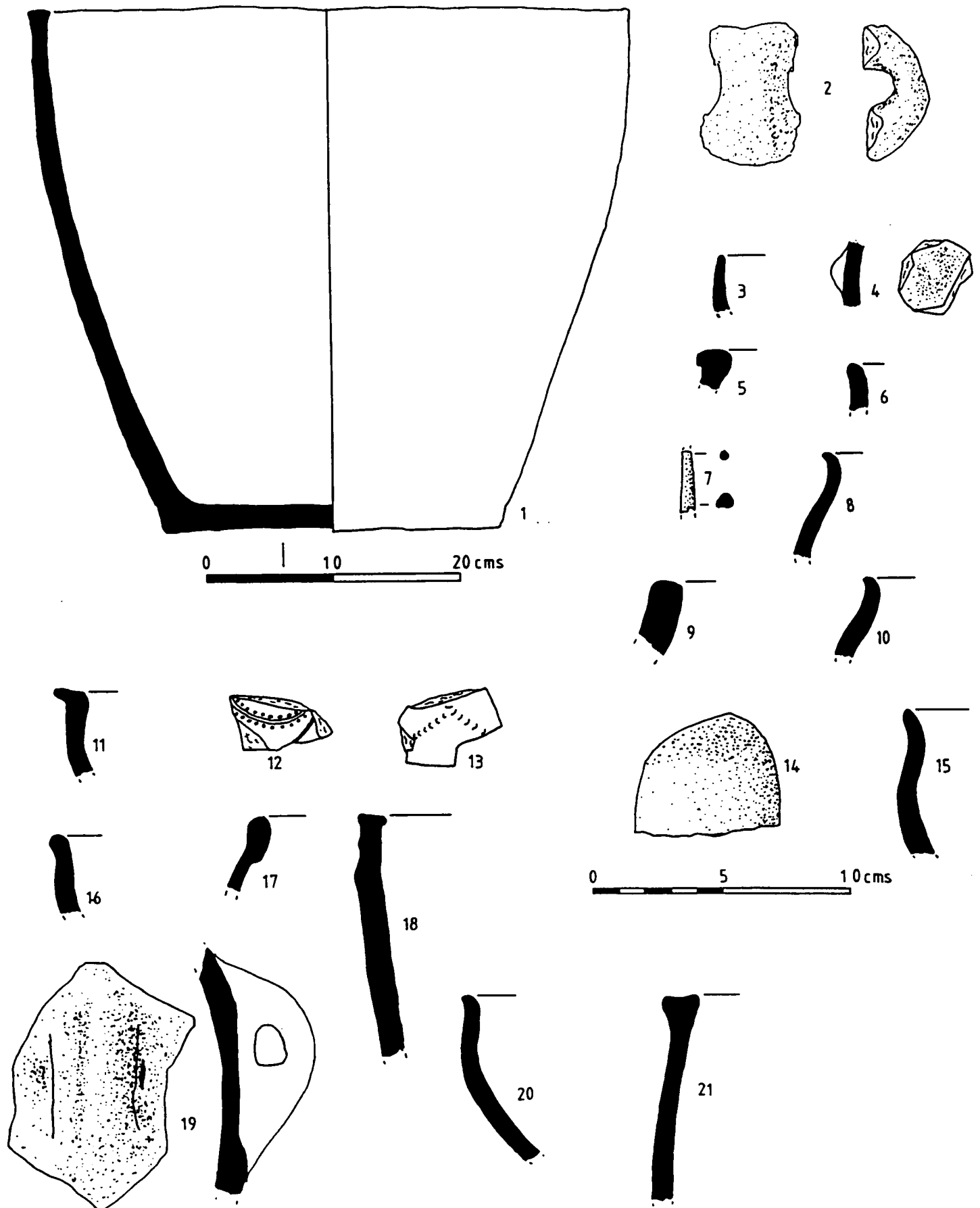


Fig 2. Finds from Thrupp.

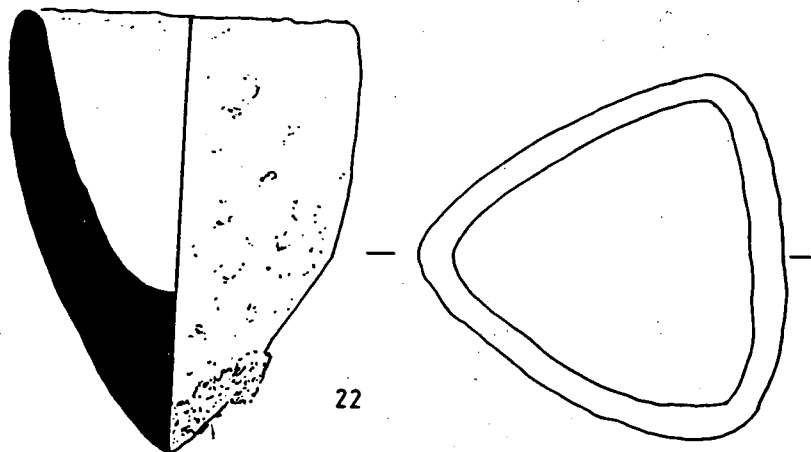


Fig 3. Thrupp.

Museum Service as will the finds should the landowners agree.

Acknowledgements
We would like to thank the farmer, Mr. de Haan, for his consent to this excavation. Tim Allen kindly gave his advice on the pottery and Philip Powell kindly identified the clay used in the pottery from 1/1.

THE FARM

Illustrated Finds

1. Rim. Pinkish grey interior and exterior; break pink/dark grey. Fossils of *Exogyra Virgula* (Defrance) indicate that this fabric comes from a local deposit of Kimmeridge clay. From 1/1.
2. Wheel made jar. Interior and break light grey; exterior dark grey. Some sand in fabric. From 2/2.
3. Fingernail decorated shoulder sherd of carinated bowl. Exterior and interior light grey; break dark grey. Flint tempered. From 2/2. Early Iron Age.
4. Base in sandy fabric. Interior and break light grey; exterior black. Holes were put through base after firing. Exterior burnished. From 2/2.
5. Wheel made jar with everted rim. Interior and break light grey; exterior dark grey/black and burnished. Sandy fabric. From 2/2.
6. Fingernail decorated sherd. Interior and break grey; exterior black. Sand tempered. From 2/3. Early Iron Age.
7. Necked bowl. Interior and exterior black, break dark grey; burnished exterior. Flint tempered. From 2/3.
8. Pedestal footring. Interior and exterior black; break grey. Sand in fabric, burnished exterior. From 2/3
9. Base. Exterior black; interior grey/black; break grey. Sand tempered. From 2/3.
10. Quern made from limestone. From 2/1.
11. Quartzite cobble with several flakes removed. Probably Palaeolithic. (See R.J. Macrae in *Oxoniensia* 1982, p.10). From ploughsoil near the excavation.
12. Flint scraper from 1/3.

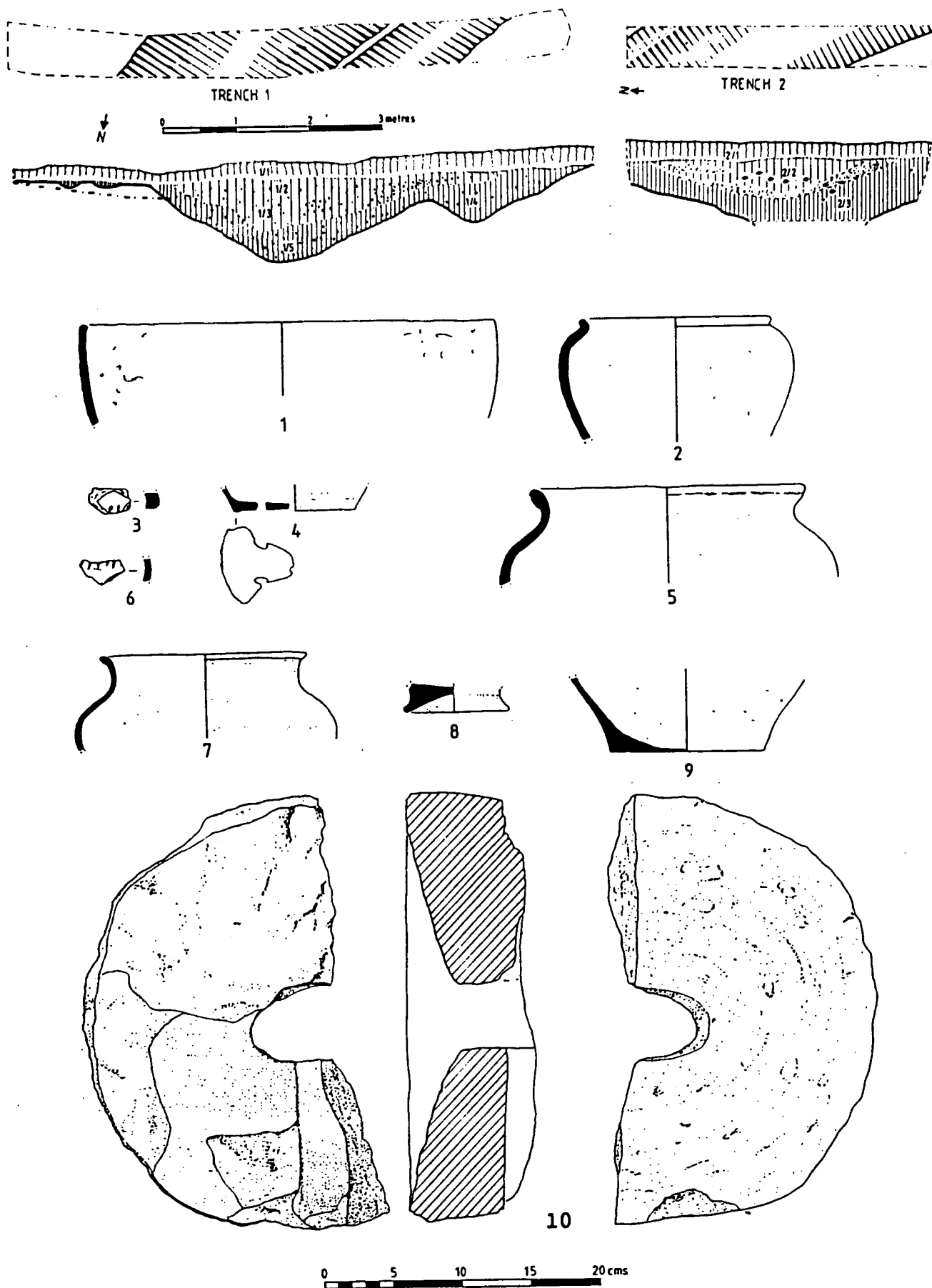


Fig 1. Finds from Tithe Farm.

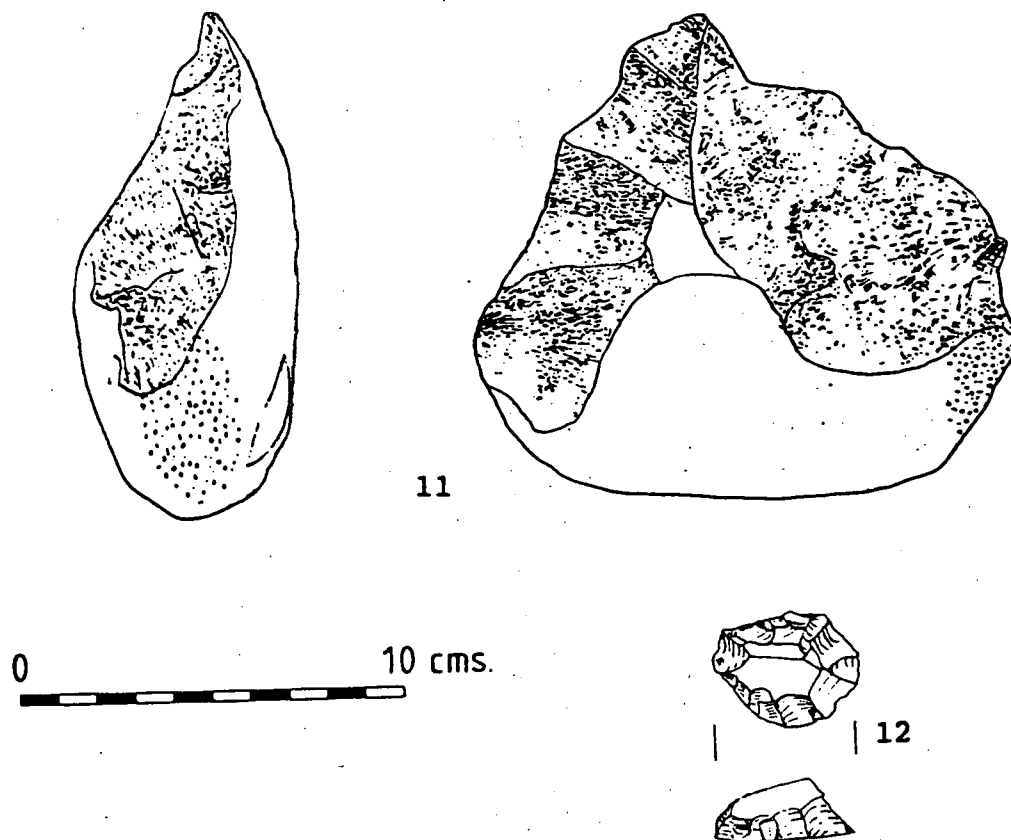


Fig 2. Tithe Farm.

Investigations of Prehistoric Features E of Peep O Day Lane, south of Abingdon

by Jeff Wallis, Alison Gledhill and Bob Eeles

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to members of the Abingdon Archaeological Society especially R. Ainslie, J. Carter, J. Cooper and J. Smith. Richard Hornsey kindly provided a resistivity survey as his contribution to the project.

Introduction

National Monument Records air photography SU 4994/10/19 18th June 1974 and SU 4994/18/317 27th July 1975 highlight several features which may eventually be destroyed by gravel extraction to the east of Peep O Day Lane.

The area bounded by the Thames on the east side consists of flood plain gravel subsoils capped in part by alluvial clays. There are two clear gravel 'islands' displaying cropmarks. A long enclosure with ditches approximately 20 m apart (fig 1) is prominent, parallel with and 110 m east of a previously excavated section of the Drayton Cursus, (Ainslie and Wallis 1982). A trackway clearly cuts the north terminal curving away north-east towards features encountered in Curtis and Sons gravel quarry. The south section of the enclosure is not clearly seen but may terminate

with a later ovoid enclosure seen obliquely on 18/317 possibly respecting its presence.

With permission of the landowner, Bob Allen, the east ditch of the enclosure was examined by means of four trenches. In order to obtain dating evidence and identify a useful sequence, trench 1 was cut to give a cross-section of as much of the internal area as possible and to investigate an area of alluvium that almost blankets the feature on the east side. Trenches 4, 5 and 6 were cut to intersect and trace as far south as possible the line of the east ditch to a hoped for termination. This was not achieved. Trench 7 was also excavated to investigate the survival of any internal features.

Trench 2 was cut in an area containing a dense flint scatter that exists directly over and around the enclosure and several unexplained cropmarks. Trench 3 was cut to investigate the curving track ditch, but failed to locate that mark.

Trench 1, 4, 5 and 6 were all located on the line of the east ditch. For sections through the enclosure ditch see fig 2. It was not possible to excavate the ditch fill in trench 6 but it was seen in plan as a dark red/brown loam feature cutting into natural gravel.

Trench 1 (fig 2), a hand dug slot, was cut across the centre of the features through the east ditch and almost to the edge of the field. The ditch section revealed a sequence of naturally silting layers in many respects similar to a barrow ditch. Originally rather trench-like with flattish base, the

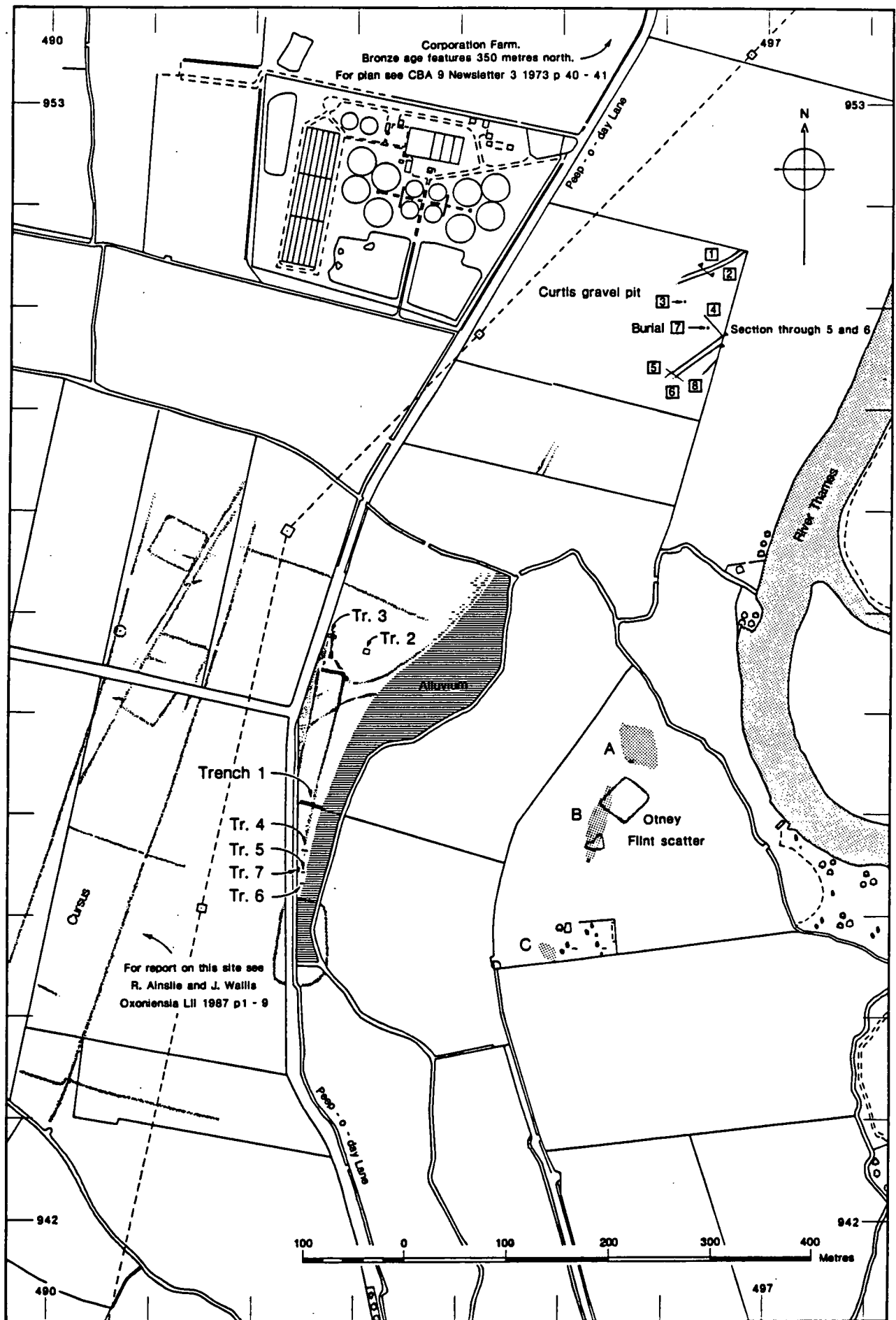


Fig 1. Prehistoric features east of Peep-O-Day Lane.

Drayton Long enclosure

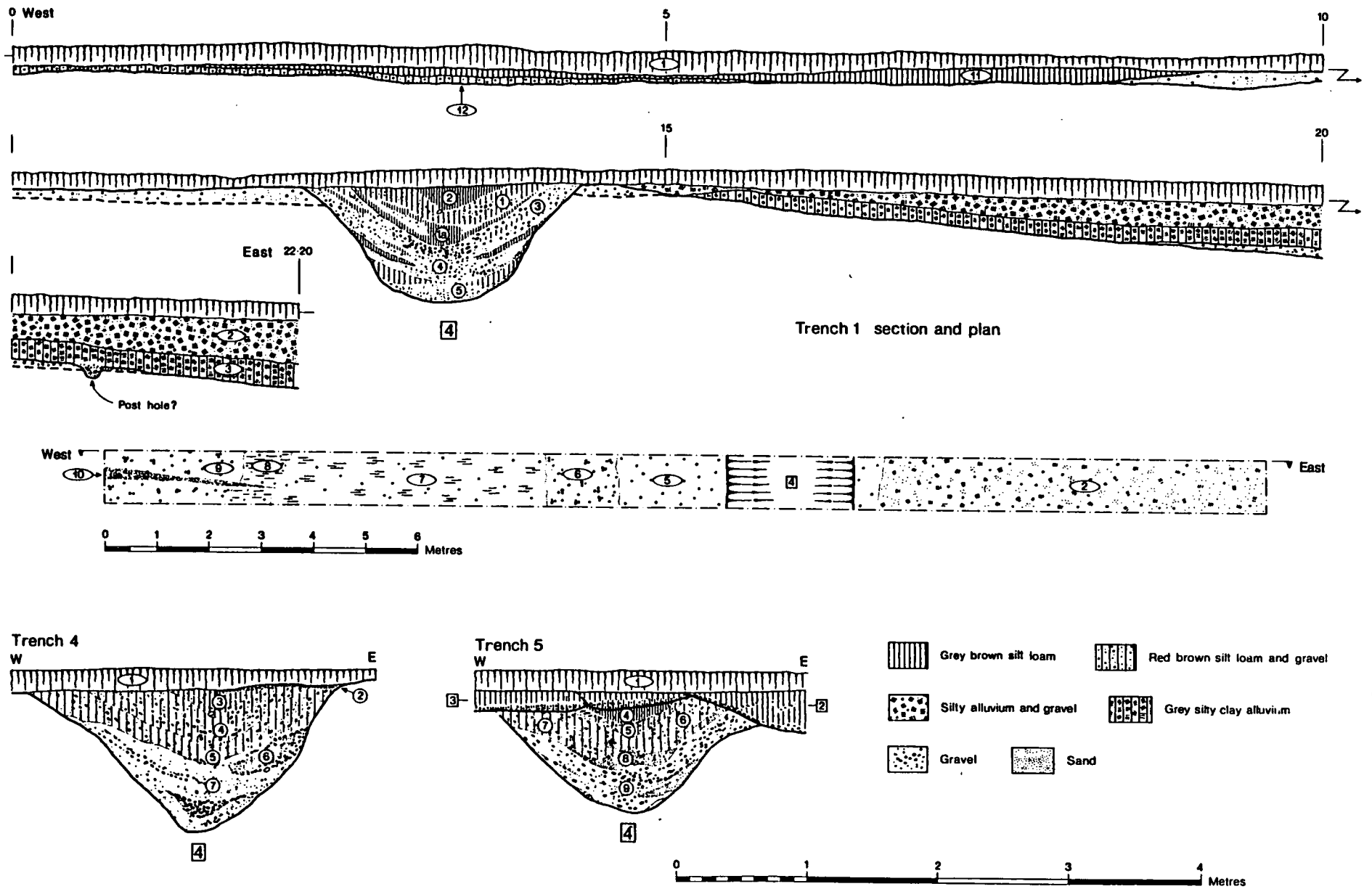


Fig. 2. Peep-O-Day Lane.

Abingdon

Curtis gravel pit

Tree throw pit

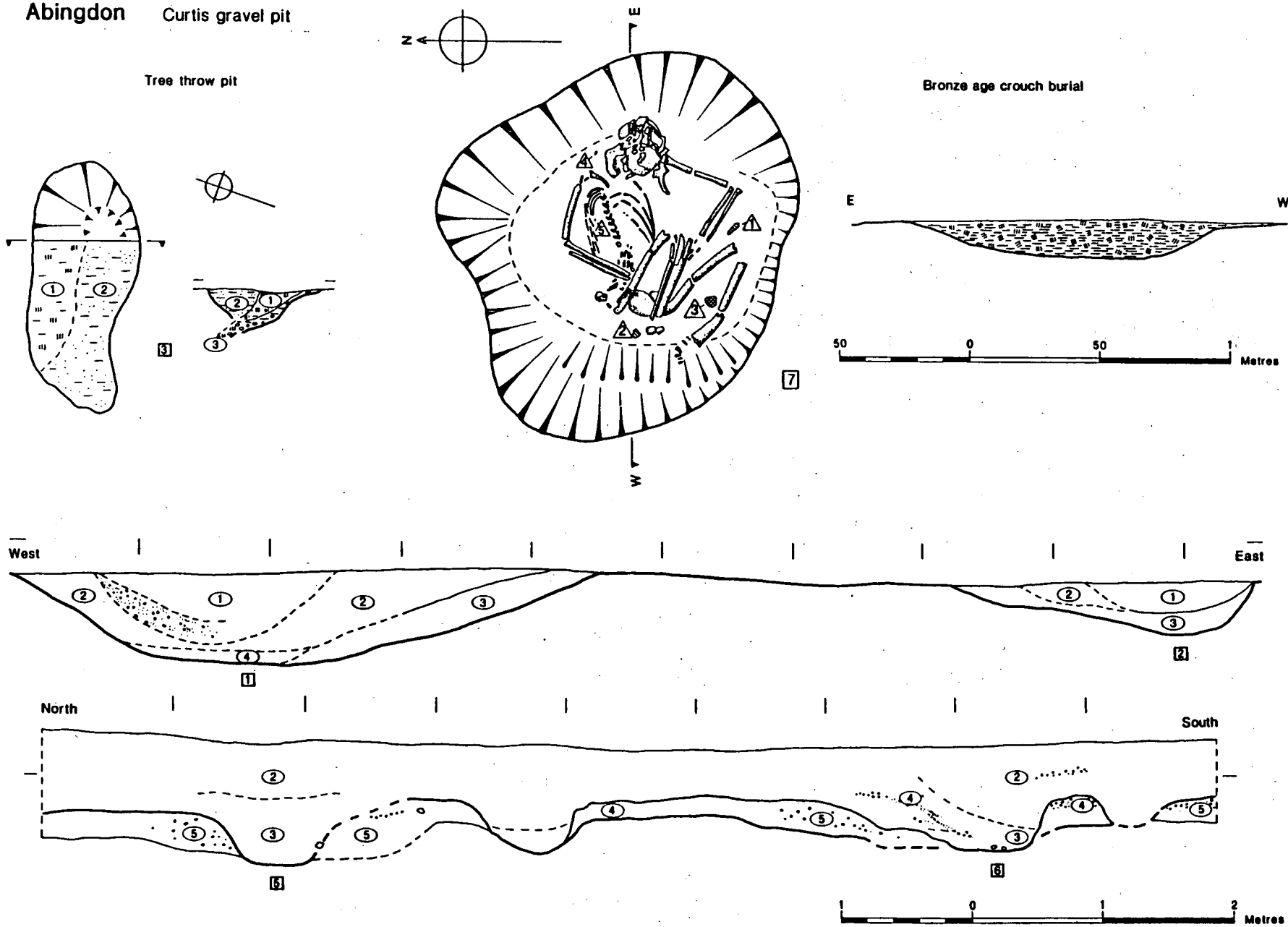


Fig 3. Peep-O-Day Lane.

sides eroded and collapsed forming a thick layer of primary silt and gravel. Turf clods fell in followed by a period of stabilisation. Further silting took place incorporating struck flint including a microlith. The feature was 2/3 full of silts by the Early Bronze Age as a sherd located in trench 4 [4/5] suggests.

Finds list

Trench 1. [1] 1 clay pipe stem. 1 tile sherd. Bone crumbs.
Trench 1. [2] 1 crested white patinated blade. Bone crumbs.
Trench 1. [4/1] 4 white patinated flint flakes. 3 burnt pebbles. Bone crumbs.
Trench 1 [4/2] 1 burnt limestone rubber.
Trench 1 [4/3] 1 late Mesolithic microlith. 1 burnt blade.
Trench 1 [4/5] 1 chalk flint spall. 1 burnt blade.
Trench 1 [9] 1 Ichthyosaurus vertebrae.
Trench 1 [10] 1 white patinated burin spall.
Trench 1 [11] 1 iron horse shoe (frag.) 2 bones
Trench 2 [2] 1 white patinated secondary blade. 1 white patinated platform rejuvenation flake. 1 white patinated burnt nodule. 1 white patinated nodule.
Trench 3 [2] 1 gravel flint core white patinated and invaded by 7 removals of spalls.
Trench 4 [2] 1 iron knife blade (frag.) 16th century (?),
Trench 4 [4/5] 1 white patinated chalk flint discoidal core re-used as scraper.
Trench 4 [4/5] Sherd. Crushed flint grey brown throughout. Bronze Age.
Trench 5 [4/2] 1 white patinated secondary flake retouched into scraper. Neolithic.

Curtis' gravel pit

With permission of J Curtis and Sons Ltd a watching brief was maintained during the summer and autumn of 1988 in advance of topsoil stripping. Much of the north-west end of the field was disturbed by silted ditches and soakways originating from the Corporation Farm Sewage Works. The east edge of the field contained a 50 cm thick medieval shelly alluvium overburden and grey clay alluvium of possible Iron Age date resting on an eroded Neolithic land surface. This consisted of a clay silt with at least 50% pebbly gravel with associated pits coloured by burning. This surface was rapidly removed by excavator. The underlying gravel surface was peppered with truncated tree throw pits, which are now easily recognised through comparison with 'sausage' pits investigated at the Drayton Cursus (Ainslie and Wallis, 1982). The pits were associated with the Neolithic land surface. Many of the pits contained only burnt pebble, some with additional patches of charcoal. A few promising examples were rapidly hand-dug but produced no artefacts or signs of occupation debris. However, Pit 3 (fig 3), contained 31 flints, lightly patinated and in sharp condition, weighting 127.6 g, all from the layer 1, grey clay silt. The flint is typical chalk flint and appears to be from opposed platform flake cores. Two are heat-cracked and two are face rejuvenation flakes. This layer was overlain by layer 2, a buff, sandy silt resting upon layer 3, a pebbly silt, that appeared to dive under the clean natural gravel core of the tree throw pit.

Features 1 and 2 form a track which was obliterated as topsoil removal progressed. A section was cut (figure 3) with a layer sequence as follows: layer 1/1, dark grey shelly clayey silt; layer 1/2, orange brown sandy silt with 30% gravel; layer 1/3, dirty gravel; and layer 1/4, mid-grey silt with coarse gravel. Ditch 2 was smaller in all dimensions with a similar layer sequence. The ditches contained no datable artefacts.

A similar pair of features (5 and 6) were covered by the grey/buff clay alluvium layer 2, (fig 3). This must be the same as one encountered adjacent to the long enclosure, and thought to be a medieval/post medieval alluvium. The ditches cut the Neolithic land surface (?) seen here as layer 5, a silty orange clay with 20% gravel and pebble cut by two tree throw pits. Ditch feature 5 was flat bottomed and filled with pale blue grey alluvium, (layer 3). It was evident that the ditch was cut during the early phases of alluviation. Ditch feature 6 had a similar fill. Indications of bank upcasts were observed as orange, silty sand and gravel lenses, (layer 4). Ditch feature 4, seen in plan only, faded to a stain in the gravel surface. It was probably contemporary with feature 5 as the fill at its intersection was identical. Ditch feature 8 was also cut from a similar level into the alluvium. None of these features contained finds.

During a search of the tree throw pits, a crouch burial was located and excavated. The plan and reconstructed section are presented as fig 3. On removal of yellow brown clay and gravel silt grave fill the almost intact skeletal remains of a young male (?) were revealed. The burial was tightly contracted in a now shallow irregular pit, 0.14 m deep, with no indication of surrounding ditch or other associated features. The body was orientated with the head to the east resting on the left side with the skull pressed down into the upper ribs. The grave could be described as typically beaker with the left arm and hand up against the skull and the right arm down against the hip with the hand bent upwards. The legs were tightly contracted. Only a few toe bones survived the machining of the overburden.

Finds recovered were 1, denticulated flint blade; 2, an unpatinated tertiary flint flake; 3, a burnt quartzite pebble; 4, a secondary unpatinated flint flake; and 5, a flint bladelet. No other burials were located in the area.

Otney Flint Scatter

The site at Otney lies 1 km to the S of Abingdon and is located on a Thameside gravel island. The soils at the site are light and gravelly in the centre of the field and grade out to darker, deeper alluvium and clay nearer the river. The field has been assessed by Holgate (1986) and more recently by the Oxford Archaeology Unit (OAU), (Moore, 1992).

Field walking was undertaken in the autumns of 1989-1991 and was concentrated within areas of flint scatters already identified by the author in 1988, (fig 1). Three areas were recognised (A,B and C in fig 1). All flint was white patinated and was of a type typical of Chiltern origin.

The number of implements was not large, representing 7.6% of all flint. Site A contained the largest quantities and the largest pieces of flint and also the most implements.

Most flint waste pieces (480) and implements (45) came from site A. The presence of 2 fragments of polished flint axes suggests a probable Neolithic or Beaker date for this site. In addition 28 retouched flakes, 12 scrapers and 3 retouched blades of possible Mesolithic date were found. The flint scatter in site A may extend underneath the alluvium blanket.

Site B may be an extension of site A although the scatter fades out between them where the soil is most disturbed by ploughing. 40 waste flint flakes and 6 implements were found. The presence of 2 barbed and tanged arrowheads suggest a beaker date for the scatter in site B. There were in addition 4 retouched flakes.

Site C is probably of an earlier date than A and B as attested to by the presence of 3 leaf shaped arrowhead fragments and 7 microliths. A late Mesolithic or early Neolithic date is likely for these objects. This site was probably a knapping floor due to the large number of flakes under 1 cm (224) in any dimension.

Previous investigations of the Otney site by Holgate (1986) and by OAU (1992) have failed to prove the presence of the substantial quantities of worked flints.

Discussion

It is clear from field work on both sides of Peep O Day Lane that pockets of land surface are preserved sealed under alluvium of Neolithic/Iron Age, Roman and post-Roman date. The land surface peppered as it was with tree throw pits, could be considered to be lightly wooded on a thin pebble soil. Burnt pebbles and discoloured soils together with consistent finds of flint knapping debris tossed into the silts of these pits must indicate a gradual clearance, burning down and grubbing up of this slightly raised gravel landscape, surrounded by lower land subjected to the first influx of alluviation.

Into this developing landscape the long enclosure was constructed. Observations indicate that this monument was carefully placed on the top of a gently sloping edge of first terrace gravel. If it had an internal bank (no evidence in section) it would have appeared as an impressive long mound. An Iron Age/medieval alluvium has since covered the terrace giving a flat meadow impression to the landscape.

No internal features were located and modern ploughing has cut into the gravel totally removing any trace of early land surfaces. The function of this monument is still unknown but it must be of Neolithic origin and may even predate the Cursus. Further investigation is planned to discover how it relates to the large southern oval enclosure. A possible parallel arrangement to this has been investigated at North Stoke (Case, 1982).

The early Bronze Age is represented by a cluster of ring ditches and a possible henge previously investigated (Henderson, 1973) and it can only be assumed that crouch burial 7 is an extension of that burial complex. The small number of finds and the characteristically crouched position oriented to the east must argue an early Bronze Age date, (skeletal details not available). It is, therefore, probably compatible with the round barrows [?] focused near a north terminal? of the North Drayton cursus.

The Otney site contains one of the most dense flint scatters in the flood plain of the Thames around Abingdon and is probably a multi-period occupation site in common with the majority of the gravel islands adjacent to the Thames south of Oxford, (Wallis and Eeles, unpublished). Otney site A contained the largest waste pieces of flint and several large cores indicating a good availability of flint and, therefore, a good distribution from the lower to upper Thames.

The area developed into a rural farming scene by the early Roman period. A network of fields were clearly oriented on the cursus and possible farmstead enclosures were served by a track. The broad track cutting the north end of the long enclosure, carefully describing the edge of encroaching alluvium may also be of Roman origin. Its north course towards Abingdon may be traced by an isolated 'trackmark' and possibly by ditch feature 1 and 2. Features 5 and 6 may be a drove road serving small paddocks within partly alluvial covered flood meadows.

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SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP

Gatehampton Farm, Barrow Field 1992

Cynthia A. Graham-Kerr,

A member of SOAG noticed a trench being machine-dug across the Barrow field, lying west of the Oxford-Reading railway and 1km south of Goring-on-Thames (see fig 1).

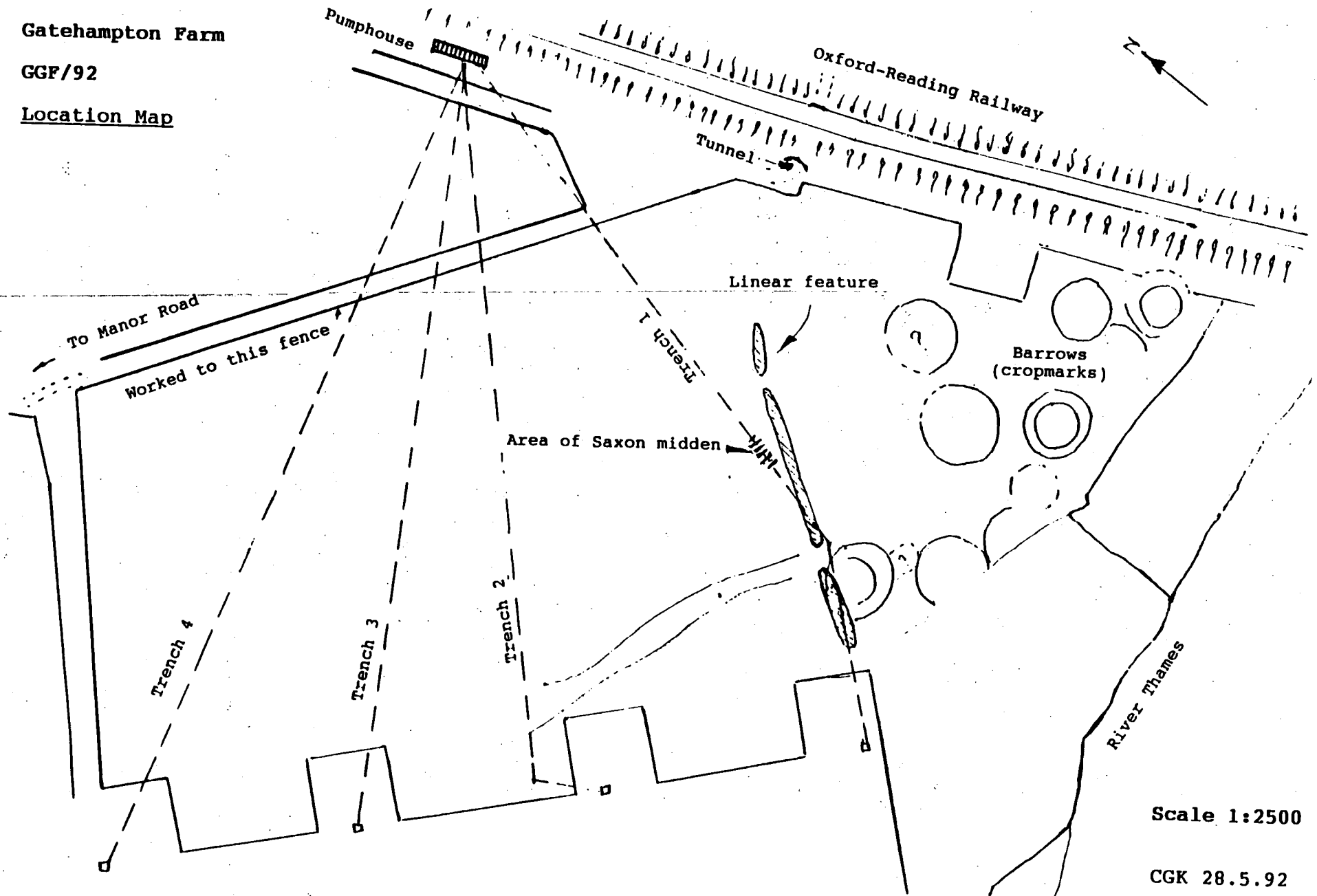
This field is known from cropmarks to contain a Bronze Age cemetery (Gates, 1975 map 6) and is the site of the previous

Gatehampton Farm

GGF/92

Location Map

Fig 1. Gatehampton Farm.



excavations carried out by the Oxford Archaeological Unit. (SMA 18, pp77-80, *SOAG Bulletin* 1988 pp.11-12).

We found that Thames Water were renewing four cables running from the Pumphouse to the boreholes near the Thames. After hasty consultations with Mike Hall, the Thames Water Archaeologist, Tim Allen of OAU obtained permission for us to investigate the trenches. We would like to thank the contractor, Mick Keen, and his assistant Kevin, for being so co-operative throughout.

Approach

Trench 1, judging from the aerial photograph, appeared to cut a linear cropmark feature - (possibly a causewayed camp) and a large barrow. This barrow is the westernmost of the barrow cemetery and still just discernible on the ground.

Trenches 2, 3, & 4 lay further west and no archaeological features were known in this area.

Strategy

For each trench, SOAG walked the whole length, and any ditch-like features in the easterly sections were recorded on scaled section drawings. The trenches were walked in 30 m lengths for about 3 m wide along the surface of one side, from south to north. (These 30 m lengths were also used for the sections)) and finds recorded per length. There were a great many struck flints.

Recording

Trench 1

The interesting lengths of section were trowelled down, then a member of OAU recorded and plotted them. Pottery (including Saxon and Roman sherds), flints and potboilers were found in a dark area, during trowelling.

This dark soil was probably a Saxon midden deposit, lying on the top of one of the silted channels which cross the site. A full section was drawn of this dark fill, and soil samples taken. Two 20 m lengths, 3 m wide, were walked each side of the trench, from the southern end.

Two sections, 12 m long, were drawn of the barrow where it was cut by the cable-trench. The barrow-ditch was located on the N. side, and contained a small cremation: no trace, however, was found of the barrow-ditch on the S. side. Several other pits were found inside the barrow-ditch, but there were no finds.

Tim Allen of OAU supervised this recording. As there was not sufficient funding for a full-time watching-brief by OAU, it was arranged that SOAG should carry on with the recording of the next three trenches.

The discovery of flints and a feature in Trench 4 led to further recording in this trench by OAU.

Trenches 2, 3, and 4

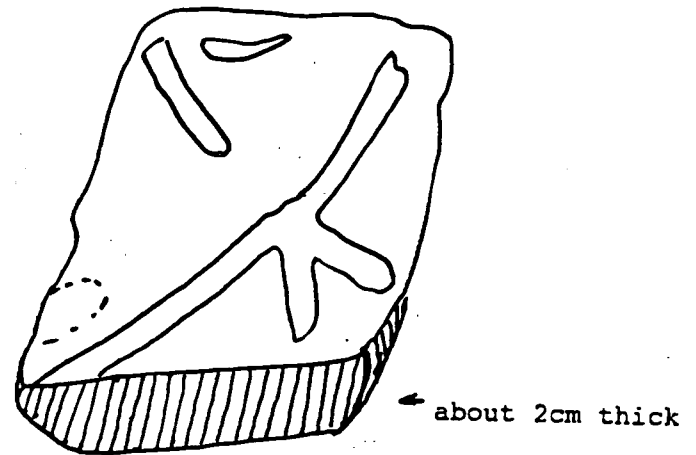


Fig 2. Medieval encaustic tile.

The trenches were measured off in 30 m lengths, and walked on one side for a width of 3 m (with the exception of Trench 4 flattened by the JCB and flooded with rain, and with the crop well up on the other side).

Trench 2 The "ditches" were cleaned down and recorded on a scale drawing as before (always on the E side). Finds were bagged and the sudden soil-change to the north recorded.

Thames Water provided a map showing where the cables were supposed to run, but these were not correct, so we took measurements and replotted them (see fig 1).

In conjunction with the recording of the trench sections, Tim Allen and other members of SOAG made a contour-survey of the barrow by Trench 1.

Trench 3 was recorded in 30 m lengths as before. Field walking by members of SOAG recovered a heavy scatter of flint, potboilers, tile and a little pottery. A piece of medieval encaustic floor-tile was found towards the north end. This was keyed at the back and about 2 cm thick, the pattern was in white clay and the tile blackish and unglazed. This has been compared with the ones in Goring Church, but is totally different, so it is unlikely to have been "rubbish" from there, cast on the fields (fig 2).

Trench 4 had noticeably fewer "ditches" and a great band of clayey loam centrally, for several 30 m lengths.

There was, however, a scatter of worked flints in this clayey material, at 136.3 m (from S end) surrounding a feature, which contained a heap of burnt, rounded stones, with flints and charcoal. This was drawn and photographed.

We thought of pits or a hearth, but when the stones were removed, there was nothing further, and it may have been a posthole.

No further features were observed in the narrow trench (all were about 0.5 m across)) only a number of flakes and tools such as blades and scrapers, and many potboilers, in the

vicinity, and we collected all we could under the oncoming JCB. The "ditch" features were recorded as before.

Processing

The whole assemblage of finds was washed and bagged ready for Andy Brown to examine them. He has now identified them as a Middle Bronze Age date (c 1500 BC).

This is a period not significantly represented in the earlier excavations, and so is an important addition to the prehistory of Gatehampton.

We shall continue to keep a watching-brief and perhaps do some further work in this area, and our thanks go to our SOAG members (especially Tim Allen of both SOAG and OAU) who turned out in appallingly wet and dirty conditions, and returned well camouflaged with mud.

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