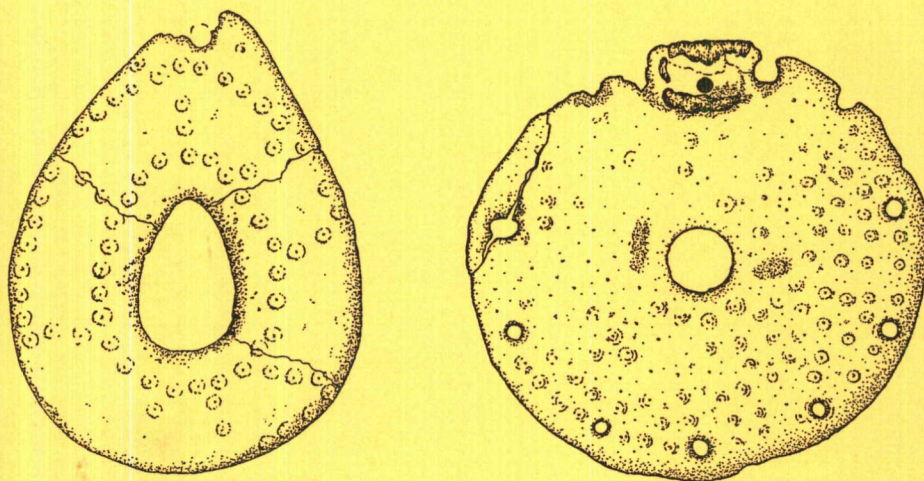




SOUTH MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY

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

NUMBER 34, 2004

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It should be noted that the reports in this volume refer, in the main, to work carried out in 2003

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to volume 34.

The cumulative index to volumes 1-34, is available on the website at:

WWW.britarch.ac.uk/smaindex

The index to the CBA Industrial Bulletin Nos 1-16 (1967-71) is available on the website at:

WWW.britarch.ac.uk/smaindustrialindex/index.html

If anyone wishes to have a copy for their own PC would they please send me a 3.5" disk and a stamped addressed envelope and I will provide them with a copy.

A number of new organisations have provided reports and this is very encouraging. However, some organisations continue to provide no report of their work in the area. County archaeologists and peers must apply pressure to these defaulters.

Through this editorial could I again please request that when contract archaeologists do work in an area they make their presence known to the local archaeological society, because it is that society to which the public will address questions about what is going on; it does help archaeology's image if we all seem to be working together.

In conclusion I would like to thank all those who sent in reports and ask that they, and anyone else, send in articles for *SMA* 35. Please send a note, however short, of any work carried out in the four counties.

Copy date for *SMA*35 is 31st March 2005; please refer to Notes for Contributors.

Barry Horne AIFA
Editor

BEDFORDSHIRE**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES AND
CONSULTANCY LTD**

Sharnbrook Upper School (SP 9880 5920)
Martin Lightfoot

In January 2003 an evaluation comprising a geophysical survey followed by excavation of twenty seven trial trenches, was carried out on land at Odell Road, Sharnbrook, in advance of a new housing development. Three possible ditches or gullies of likely modern date, and a 'burnt patch' possibly a hearth, of unknown date were present.

Britannia Ironworks, Bedford (TL 0465 4910)
Nigel Wilson

During March 2003, six archaeological evaluation trenches were excavated on the site of the former Britannia Ironworks, Kempston Road in advance of a new housing development. The work revealed that the site had been badly truncated during the construction of the ironworks. A single ditch orientated north-east to south-west survived towards the north-eastern end of the site, which contained an assemblage of 13th and 14th century pottery sherds.

**Nettle Barn, Little Park Farm, Ampthill
(TL 0240 3750)**
Nigel Wilson

In August 2003 a watching brief was maintained on the ground disturbance associated with an extension on the north side of Nettle Barn. The site lies in an area of known medieval settlement. No significant archaeology or artefacts were found.

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS
(CONTRACTS) LTD (Formerly the
Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust)**

Fieldwork and Publication Roundup 2003

Land at 72-88 Ampthill Close, Shefford (TL 1360 3894).
Ben Roberts and Wesley Kier

In September 2003 an archaeological evaluation was carried out on land at 72-88 Ampthill Close prior to the determination of a planning application to redevelop the site. Seven trenches were excavated and, despite the presence of an early Roman cemetery and villa to the south of the site, no archaeological features or finds were revealed. The site is situated on the edge of the floodplain of the river Flit to the north. Alluvial deposits and a layer of desiccated peat provided evidence of periodic inundation of this evidently historically marginal site. No residual finds

were made to indicate any earlier prehistoric occupation of this part of the river valley. Similarly no Romano-British finds were found to indicate a continuation of activity recorded to the south.

**Land south and east of Manor Road, Marston
Moretaine (SP 9955 4108)**

Ian Rowlandson, Matt Sutherland, Brendon Wilkins and
Dr Rob Scaife

During February and March 2003 an evaluation was conducted on land to the south and east of Manor Road. The evaluation was conducted in advance of proposed redevelopment of the site for residential uses. The site lies in the vicinity of the medieval parish church and within the area of a former moated site of medieval date. The investigation revealed evidence of the moat known to have been infilled in the latter part of the 19th century, in addition to another, smaller ditch which was probably part of the same water management system. Study of historic cartographic sources suggests that the north western arm of the moat lies just within the eastern part of the site, possibly with a return to the east. The evaluation indeed confirmed the presence of a large, generally north-south aligned linear feature in the eastern part of the site, probably with a return to the east. The moat is clearly shown on maps of the mid 19th century, and is known to have been infilled by 1883, when it is not shown on the OS 25" map. Local references record the levelling of the area, and the extension of the churchyard into the area of the former moat by 1901.

Further subsequent reclamation of the site to provide a firm and level base for the new garage blocks was undertaken in the earlier 20th century, removing any earlier land surfaces that may have been present on the site. Two boreholes were sunk into the fills of this medieval moat. The depth of the profile was similar at between 2.23 and 2.32m. The fills comprised typical grey/olive green silts which may also indicate a strong cess component. The sediments were largely homogeneous with few inclusions and no archaeological artefacts present.

**14 Leighton Road, Heath and Reach, Leighton Buzzard
(SP 9250 2791).**

Dan Hounsell

In January 2003 an archaeological evaluation was undertaken at 14 Leighton Road in advance of the redevelopment of the former scrap yard for residential use. The village of Heath and Reach lies within an area of general archaeological interest and the site itself lies within the area thought to be the medieval core of the village of Heath, positioned close to the Green and the main north-south road to Leighton Buzzard. Previous archaeology works in the vicinity have, however, failed to produce any significant archaeological data. Four trenches in total were opened up and no archaeological features or finds were identified. Some previous ground disturbance associated with the use of the site as a scrapyard was identified, though the rear of the site was less disturbed.

Bedfordshire

Land adjacent to 16 Vicars Close, Biddenham
(TL 0225 4975)

Nicholas A Crank and Jonathan Grant

In April 2003 an archaeological evaluation was carried out on land adjacent to 16 Vicars Close. The investigation was undertaken in advance of proposed development of the site. This part of the Great Ouse valley is distinguished by extensive evidence of human occupation with finds, settlements and monuments from the Palaeolithic period to the present day. These include evidence for Neolithic hengiform monuments, Bronze Age barrows, Iron Age and Roman farmsteads and medieval/post-medieval agriculture. Two trenches were excavated and despite the high potential of the site, the evaluation revealed no archaeological features, and no finds were recovered.

HERITAGE NETWORK

St Lawrence School, Wymington (SP 9547 6442)

Hannah Firth

The school governors commissioned an archaeological evaluation on the site of a new school hall. The school lies in an archaeologically sensitive area in the medieval core of the village, between the parish church and the manor. Evidence for extensive Roman settlement has been recorded in the vicinity, together with a number of Neolithic flint implements.

Although the area of the actual new building was blank, four archaeological features were revealed outside the footprint, to the south-west. One of these produced pottery fragments of probable Saxo-Norman or early medieval date.

Sandy Heath Quarry, Sandy (TL 200 495)

Chris Turner & Geoff Saunders

In response to a condition on the minerals extraction permit for an extension to Sandy Heath Quarry, the owners commissioned a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording on the topsoil stripping of the site.

No known archaeological sites lie within the limits of the study area. However, a series of cropmarks has been recorded crossing the site and this, coupled with the results of fieldwalking and trial trenching, suggested there may be limited potential for Prehistoric, Iron Age or Romano-British archaeological features or finds.

Five linear features were observed during the course of the present works. None produced any dating evidence. Three of these appear to represent a trackway running northwest-southeast. A further ditch, on a parallel alignment to the trackway and 95m to the southeast, may represent a contemporary field boundary. The fifth linear feature is probably modern.

No evidence of any settlement was recorded.

Shortstown Pipeline, Shortstown (TL 0680 4683)

Geoff Saunders

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out during the construction of a new sewerage pipeline at Shortstown, to the south of Bedford. Although the pipe was drilled without breaking the present ground surface, a series of twelve thrust pits was excavated along the pipeline.

Despite the route of the pipeline crossing an area of known archaeological activity, including a series of cropmark sites and the medieval hamlet of Harrowden, no archaeological features or artefacts were observed during the course of the groundworks.

A Multi-Period Site at Etonbury Farm, Arlesey, Bedfordshire (TL 1940 3790)

David Hillelson

Summary

An extensive archaeological landscape was revealed following the ground clearance works for the construction of an earth bund and new access road at Etonbury Farm, Arlesey. The eastern half of the site included a series of large linear features, principally on a north to south alignment. These appear to represent field boundaries on the edge of an occupation site. The middle and western half of the site contained soil marks representing a variety of cut features, including probable pits, postholes and possible graves. These features are indicative of buildings and occupation on the site. The surface finds suggest a date range from the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age through to the early Romano-British period.

Introduction

Archaeological monitoring on ground clearance works, ahead of the construction of a soil bund and new access road at Etonbury Farm, Arlesey, was undertaken during April and May 2002. The development proposed the construction of the southern half of a new access road to a new dwelling, and the creation of a soil bund to provide screening for the property from the bypass.

Topography

The site lies in a flat open, well-watered landscape on the north side of the A507 Arlesey/Stotfold Bypass and to the east of the River Hiz, to the south of the River Ivel and to the north of the Pix Brook. The ground slopes down slightly across the site from east to west.

The geology consists of river-deposited orange brown sandy gravel beneath a silty clay buried soil, approximately 0.4m in depth. This was sealed by a 0.5m deep dump deposit of hard grey clay, possibly originating from the brickearth quarries to the north of the site.

Archaeological Background

Evidence for prehistoric, Roman and medieval activity has been recorded in the vicinity, including finds of prehistoric flint implements and Iron Age, medieval and post-medieval pottery. Cropmarks have revealed the presence of a possible

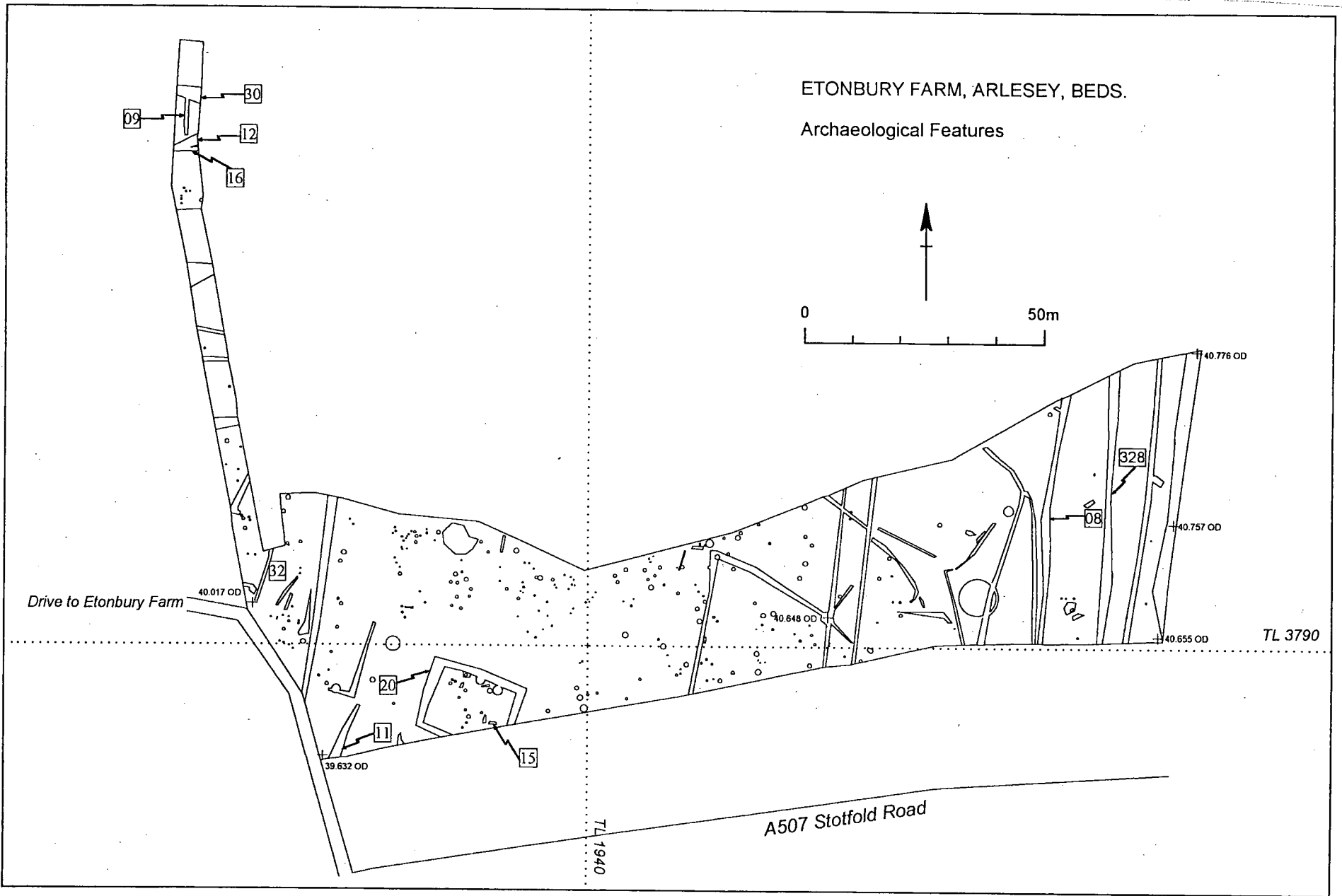


Fig 1. Etonbury Farm, Arlesey.

Bedfordshire

deserted medieval settlement and ridge and furrow cultivation.

To the north is a series of earthworks, the site of a possible medieval manor. This was recorded in a document of 1566 as Etonbury Manor. Finds collected from the site include medieval pottery and Roman artefacts. The site has been damaged by a number of post-medieval developments, starting with the construction of the railway in the mid 19th century.

Results

The initial ground reduction across the site revealed over 320 archaeological features, including 37 linear features, 168 possible pits, 106 possible postholes, 8 beam slots, a rectilinear enclosure, a ring ditch and a grave cut (Fig 1). Due to the nature of the development, and the density of these features it was decided that the site should be preserved in situ, rather than by record. It has been protected beneath a layer of geotextile membrane, sealed by at least 300mm of gravel ballast. The bund has been constructed above this.

A limited number of features were archaeologically investigated across the site (Fig 1). One of these was an inhumation, grave [15], which contained only the pelvis and legs of a single adult male, the remainder of the skeleton had been truncated by earlier ploughing on the site. The burial was on an east to west alignment and was located inside a ditched enclosure, Feature [20], in the centre of the site. A single sherd of abraded flint-tempered pottery, of late Bronze Age/early Iron Age date, was collected from the ditch surface.

Three linear features on the eastern side of the site were also investigated, gully [05]/[1003] and ditches [07]/[1005] and [08]/[1001]. The pottery recovered from the fills of two of these features, gully [05]/[1003] and ditch [08]/[1001], indicate that they date to the early Roman period.

Discussion

The distribution of features across the site suggests that the settlement was focused on the western side. This area had the highest density of pits and postholes, which are indicative of domestic activity and occupation. The eastern side had the highest density of linear features, which probably represent field boundaries and land divisions.

Although the pottery assemblage is small (65 sherds, weighing 1028g) it indicates occupation on the site from the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age through to the early Roman period. It should be borne in mind that the bulk of this material was collected from the surface of features, rather than from stratified contexts, and may, therefore, be either residual within the feature or represent later intrusion.

The bulk of the assemblage was represented by prehistoric flint-tempered wares (fabrics F01A/B) and by Roman shelly wares (fabric R13). Small amounts of late Iron Age grog-tempered ware (F06C) and miscellaneous Romano-British grey and black wares (fabrics R06 and R07) were also recovered. The ceramic evidence indicates domestic activity, with no high status wares, suggesting the occupation on the site may represent a small rural farmstead. No pottery later than the early-mid 2nd century

was recovered, suggesting that the settlement had declined by this period.

Despite the proximity of the site to the earthworks at Etonbury (HER 395) which are thought to represent the remains of a medieval manorial site, no archaeological features or artefacts dating to the Saxon or medieval periods were identified during the current archaeological investigations. Given that activity on the present site appears to have declined from the early to mid 2nd century AD, it could be suggested that the settlement may have relocated to the north after this time.

Without the excavation of identified features, it is not possible to fully understand the nature of the site. In considering the evidence, it is important to note that the majority of the finds assemblage is made up of sherds recovered from the surface of features, rather than from well stratified deposits, and the possibility of contamination cannot be ruled out.

MANSHEAD ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Excavations at Priory Middle School (TL022216)

July - October 2002

R Hudspeth

With the kind permission of Mr R Pepworth, Headmaster of Priory Middle School, the Society carried out an excavation in the school grounds.

Volunteers from the school also assisted with the excavation. At the same time a resistivity survey was carried out across the adjacent playing field.

The area of excavation was situated to the west of the school buildings close to former excavation sites at the school and Wellington Terrace. The former excavations in this area of the school grounds had revealed evidence of a partially cobbled roadway running parallel with High Street South. Finds from the surface of the track suggested usage into the early 19th century.

Ordnance Survey, 1925 shows that this area comprised small closes containing trees.

The current excavation comprised an "L" shaped trench 9m x 5m, with natural chalk at 0.3m below the surface in the west of the trench sloping down to 0.4m in the east.

The natural chalk was found to be full of hollows or tree root holes, containing a sterile orange fill with occasional flints. Residual Roman and medieval potsherds were found in the subsoil immediately above the chalk but not, generally, within the fill of the hollows, suggesting that some of these features were sealed below the Roman and medieval plough-soil and may represent woodland cleared in prehistoric times. Various other features were found cut into the chalk, all probably late or Post-Medieval to 19th century in date. Four were postholes, a bone handled knife being found in the packing of one of them; two may have been pits and an enigmatic circular chalk feature may have served as a post pad for a hay-rick.

Evidence for the previously identified post-medieval trackway was observed with cart ruts (filled by peg tiles and flints) running northeast - southwest across the area of excavation.

An 18th century 'tongue' type horseshoe was found in one of the cart ruts.

Excavations at Priory Middle School (TL022218)

July - September 2003

R Hudspith

Again with the kind permission of the Headmaster the Society carried out an excavation in the school grounds between July and September 2003. The excavation was planned to tie in with the CBA's National Archaeology Day (July 19th) and involve volunteers from the school, who helped with trowelling, sieving and finds washing.

The excavation trench was dug in the north-east corner of the playing field, close to previously excavated areas which contained medieval and Roman features. On this occasion, the only identified feature cutting the natural chalk was a ditch/pit/tree throw containing peg tile in the upper fill. A post-hole with peg tile and flint packing [03/04] was also found cut into the subsoil. Linear depressions in the chalk may indicate ploughing or cart ruts.

The finds from the topsoil and subsoil included c 19kg of peg tile fragments, modern, post-medieval, medieval, Roman and Iron Age potsherds and c 1.5kg of animal bone fragments.

Small finds included a trading token, a fob watch key and an iron arrowhead. Residual finds of late Iron Age pottery suggest domestic occupation nearby and that this area may have been cultivated in the later prehistoric period.

The area of excavation was situated only a few metres from medieval and Roman features which appear to represent the limits of Roman and medieval Dunstable in this part of the town; and suggest that at various times in the historic past this area was part of a cultivated field system.

Excavations at Grove House Gardens (TL018220)

May 29th - June 8th 2003

R Hudspith

As part of Dunstable's History Week activities, the Society carried out further trial trenching at Grove House Gardens, with the kind permission of the Town Council. The purpose of the excavation was to look for a continuation of features observed in 2002 (Warren 2002).

Two trenches were dug by JCB then hand cleaned to natural chalk. Much of the removed spoil was sieved for finds. These included 6.6kg of peg tile fragments, as well as residual modern, post-medieval, medieval and Roman sherds. Small finds included an iron arrowhead, a 1770 farthing, a straw-splitter (used to make strips of straw for making straw hats) and corroded scissors.

In Trench C several enigmatic features, possibly the result of tree growth or tree planting, were identified cutting an ancient water channel or ditch. There were no finds associated with these features.

In Trench B there was further evidence of tree root holes and possible stake holes cutting the natural chalk. A 'rotten' chalk surface was identified covering much of the trench, probably indicative of natural waterlogging or puddling by farm animals, but with no domestic finds to suggest a prehistoric hut floor.

Victoria Allotments West Street (TL014213)

R Hudspith

With the kind permission of Mr J Collop, allotment owner, the Society carried out a series of test pit excavations at Victoria Allotments during October 2002. A surface survey of the allotment in 2001 indicated the archaeological potential of the site, with finds of worked and fire-fractured flints, Iron Age, Roman and medieval potsherds.

The excavation area is situated in the southwest corner of Victoria Allotments, 300m from West Street. A series of six test pits were dug, planned and back-filled in one operation. No obvious archaeological features were identified, apart from tree root holes, which were filled and sealed by an orange, silty clay deposit which contained no archaeological finds.

The late Iron Age, Roman and medieval potsherd finds were residual and probably indicate manuring scatters, perhaps from farmsteads alongside the Icknield Way.

Amongst the Roman sherds were two Samian fragments and sherds of imported Rhenish wares. The localised scatter of worked flints in one pit included several cores, a scraper and retouched flakes.

Excavation at 184 West Street, Dunstable (TL014215)

R Hudspith

With the kind permission of Mr & Mrs L Evans a trial excavation was carried out in the garden of 184 West Street. No archaeological features were identified during the excavation. Natural chalk was observed at 0.7m below surface. Finds were mainly of post-medieval and modern material, with a few residual medieval sherds, indicating that cultivation was the primary land use in this area of Dunstable.

References

Hudspith R, 2002; Archaeological Work in Dunstable, 2001-2002, *MJ* 42, 4-10.

Warren D, 1993; Wellington Terrace, *MJ* 32, 5-10.

Warren D, 1994; Priory Middle School Excavation 1993, *MJ* 34, 1-6.

Warren D, 2002; Grove House Gardens History Week Excavation May 2002, *MJ* 42, 1-4

Warren D & Hudspith R, 1993; The 1992 Excavation at Priory Middle School, Britain Street. *MJ* 33, 4-11,

Priory Lighting 2003

D Warren

Work undertaken to facilitate the installation of underground cables for exterior lighting units around the Priory Church Dunstable. This entailed the digging of five holes by hand at intervals along the south side of the church immediately south of the concrete gully which runs along that side. In addition a trench was dug, also by hand, parallel to the north wall of the church just east of the north porch. The five holes on the south side were between 103 and 125cm long x 30cm wide x 45cm deep each butting up to the outer face of the concrete gully and going as far as the nearest box hedge. The trench was 9m long by the same

Bedfordshire

width and depth as the holes. The fill of each of the holes was modern garden soil containing such things as plastic wrappers, ring pulls and slate fragments. The only find of passing interest was a small fragment of moulded green window glass probably 'Victorian'. Numbered from the west end 1 to 5 there was nothing of archaeological interest in 5. However, in 1, 2, 3 and 4 right at the southern end and bottom of each hole was a trace of wall core apparently running parallel to the church wall. Running alongside and found in all the holes was modern orange plastic pipe, 15cm diameter, belonging to the storm drain system which truncated the northern edge of the wall core.

The Little Theatre, High Street South, Dunstable (TL0215 2165)

D Warren

In September 2003 a watching brief by the Society at The Little Theatre revealed a feature of Roman date and others of post-medieval/19th century-Modern date. The evidence can be interpreted as a Roman ditch possibly of military origin with a suggestion of recuts. The main 19th century find is a well/pump.

26 Burr Street, Dunstable (TL 01552158)

D Warren

This site, close to known Roman and Medieval features in southwest Dunstable was archaeologically cleared by the Society on behalf of Birch Corporation. Two areas, Area A to the rear, ie, west end of the site and area B on the street front, were stripped by JCB using a smooth bucket down to 2 - 5cm into solid natural chalk. Close observation of this part of the operation ensured that even small features were spotted as they were revealed.

All features were modern and only three small medieval sherds (2 surface, 1 in a 19/20th century feature) were found.

NETWORK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

St Ives, Plantation Road, Leighton Buzzard (SP 9213 2652)

Julie Dilcock

During November 2000 Network Archaeology carried out an evaluation on Land at St. Ives, Plantation Road. The edge of a 19th century sand quarry was recorded, no other archaeological remains were encountered, and only two residual worked flints were recovered.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

Compiled by Andy Chapman and Pat Chapman

Broom, Broom Grange (TL 181 436)

Ian Fisher and Steve Morris

Geophysical prospection comprising magnetic susceptibility (MS) and gradiometer survey was carried out,

on behalf of Tarmac Southern Ltd, as part of an archaeological evaluation in advance of mineral extraction on approximately 54ha of land north of Broom Grange. The MS survey showed enhanced levels of susceptibility over areas of archaeology suspected from aerial photography and over other areas apparently blank of cropmarks. Subsequent detailed gradiometer survey revealed anomalies reflecting a complex of ditches, ditched enclosures and pits, probably from prehistoric and Romano-British field systems and settlement.

Elstow, Elstow Lower School (TL 0525 4714)

Simon Carlyle

Following an evaluation by Northamptonshire Archaeology (SMA 33 (2003) 16), an archaeological recording action, commissioned by Mouchel Property Services acting on behalf of Bedfordshire County Council, was carried out on undeveloped land prior to the building of a new school and playing field.

An early Bronze Age ring ditch, with an external diameter of c 29m, had been heavily truncated by ploughing and there were no surviving internal features. Several sherds of early Bronze Age pottery and a flint tool were recovered from the ditch fills. Early Iron Age activity consisted of a large pit, two clusters of smaller pits and a possible gully.

A large pit and one other pit were possibly of early/middle Saxon date, but a majority of the later features were late Saxon, dating to the 10th and 11th centuries. They comprised ditches flanking a trackway and linear field/plot boundaries, several small pits and postholes, and three large pits probably cut into the alluvial gravel to extract water. Later features comprised a small post-medieval quarry, a modern ditch and several pits, and the line of a former hedgerow.

Great Barford Bypass A421

Ian Fisher and Steve Morris

Geophysical prospection by fluxgate gradiometer was carried out along the line of the proposed A421 Great Barford Bypass on behalf of JacobsGIBB. This was in addition to the work carried out in 2001 (SMA 32 (2001), 9-10). Sites included possible later prehistoric or Romano-British enclosures and field systems. Also detected were the likely remains of the shrunken medieval settlement of East End and a possible linear settlement related to Howbury Ringwork.

Leighton Buzzard, Pratts Quarry (SP 935 236)

Tony Walsh and Steve Morris

Despite no evidence arising from a geophysical survey, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the site of a proposed extension to Pratts Quarry. Two sherds of residual Roman pottery were recovered from one of a series of parallel drains, and several post-medieval linear gullies were also located.

Luton, Luton Hoo (TL 1047 1847)

Ian Fisher and Jim Brown

A geophysical survey, commissioned by Oxford Archaeology acting on for Elite Hotels, was undertaken on approximately 120ha of land at Luton Hoo in advance of a proposed development. Reconnaissance gradiometer survey detected 74 isolated anomalies. Subsequent detailed gradiometer survey targeted the anomalies and sampled blank areas, revealing a random pattern of isolated anomalies, part of a rectilinear enclosure and evidence of widespread recent utilisation of the landscape including modern services and buildings.

Souldrop, Church Farm (SP 985 616)

Andy Chapman and Chris Jones

An earthwork survey and the excavation of test pits was carried out on behalf of CgMs Consulting, acting for clients, to identify any archaeologically sensitive areas in relation to the proposed provision of a new driveway. The earthwork features all related to a system of ponds and water channels of recent date, while irregular channels on the steeper slopes appeared to be naturally eroded, probably by the outflow from former springs. Some shallow pits may have been clay pits, and a single linear bank ran down the steeper slope.

No archaeological features were found in the test pits, which rarely reached the bottom of the subsoil, and only a few residual sherds of medieval and post-medieval to recent pottery, and clay tobacco-pipe stems were found.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

AOC ARCHAEOLOGY

Former Ercol Factory Site, Conegra Fields, London Road, High Wycombe (SU 8100 2700)

Darryl Palmer

Archaeological test pitting and watching brief in December 2002 on behalf of Bellway Homes.

A total of 37 test pits were excavated across the site to ascertain the level of truncation and terracing and to define any areas with potential. In addition to this, a watching brief was carried out during the removal of the concrete slab across site. Previous archaeological interest in the site has been based on the premise that it may contain the site of a Neolithic flint mine.

The investigations showed that large parts of the site had been terraced. The investigations did reveal that some areas had not been heavily truncated, a fact proven by the presence of what were probably plough scars in a number of the pits. Features were recorded in three of the Test Pits. Test Pits 6 and 11 revealed large near vertical sided features which were probably the result of post medieval terracing. Test Pit 3 revealed two pits and two post holes. These features were undated. Natural across the site was chalk.

Buckinghamshire

St. Mary the Virgin, Radnage (SU 7860 9795)

Sophie Adams

Archaeological evaluation carried out in May 2003 on behalf of Caroe and Partners in the churchyard of St Mary the Virgin, Radnage. The evaluation involved the opening of two, machine-excavated trenches; one to the north of the church at the end of the vestry and the other to the south at the western extent of the churchyard. No archaeological features or horizons were recorded in any of the trenches. The natural across the site was chalk.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES AND CONSULTANCY LTD

North Salden Farm, Mursley (SP 8240 2980)

David Fell

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at North Salden Farm in April 2003 during the construction of an extension at the farmhouse. The works had the potential to disturb remains of the 16th century palace of Sir John Fortescue which stood on the site. A post-medieval wall foundation was present at the north side of the site, reused as the footing of a later wall. The foundation may date from the 16th or 17th centuries and may have formed part of the Tudor building. An assemblage of architectural fragments was collected. The fragments were found during machining of overburden across the footprint of the extension and comprised fragments of window/door frames which may have formed part of the Tudor mansion or an associated building. A single architectural fragment from a possible earlier building was also found.

West Lodge, Shardeloes, Amersham (SU 9470 9780)

David Fell

In May 2003 an evaluation was undertaken at West Lodge, Shardeloes Estate in advance of the construction of an extension and a separate garage. The works had the potential to disturb archaeological remains from a Roman villa estate (Yeoman P A & Stewart I J (1992)). Four archaeological trial trenches were excavated. Three trenches did not contain archaeological remains, but a deposit of redeposited Roman building material was present in Trench 4, on the footprint of the proposed garage.

Yeoman P A & Stewart I J 1992 'A Romano-British Villa Estate at Mantles Green, Amersham, Buckinghamshire' in *Recs of Bucks* 34, 107-182

30 High Street, Winslow (SP 7700 2770)

Jonathan Hunn

In June 2003 an evaluation was undertaken at 30 High Street. The work was required prior to the redevelopment of the site and with the intention of locating medieval burgage boundaries. Two trenches were excavated but the only features revealed were of 19th century date and probably related to the existing buildings on the site.

Buckinghamshire

Manor Farm, Main Street, Mursley (SP 8180 2850)

David Fell and Nigel Wilson

A Desk-Based Assessment was compiled for Manor Farm. The site is in the medieval core of the village and may have been the site of the manor and the existing farmhouse has a 16th century core. An evaluation comprising eight trial trenches was subsequently undertaken but no significant archaeological features were revealed.

Claydon Road, Hogshaw (SP 7373 2250)

David Fell

During July 2003 a watching brief and programme of salvage recording was undertaken during development of land off Claydon Road. The work was necessary because the site was occupied by the Order of the Knights Hospitallers and medieval settlement and buildings associated with the order exist on the site. The watching brief took place within the Knights Hospitallers site and within a field immediately to the south.

Monitoring of a service trench within the Knights Hospitallers site revealed two substantial stone walls. Due to the extremely limited width of the trench, it was not possible to examine these in detail.

Substantial archaeological remains were located and recorded during the construction of an access road in the field to the south. At least eight buildings were identified and are interpreted as part of a medieval or late-medieval settlement, possibly the deserted settlement of Hogshaw. An area of possible light industrial working was identified in the southern part of the route.

The evidence primarily comprised remains of the lower courses of walls, principally constructed of limestone blocks. They were of light construction and foundations were not identified. No mortar or bonding material was observed and the buildings may have been of dry stone construction, or low stone footing walls supporting a wattle and daub, timber framed structure.

Little evidence for stratigraphic buildup of deposits was observed and pits and postholes were not identified. Areas of occupation were identified as the stone walls of the buildings discussed above and spreads of ironstone cobbles, which may have been plough damaged cobble surfaces or destruction deposits. This evidence should be regarded as minimal and it is likely that further structures, laid on sill-beams and constructed of wattle and daub were present. Such structures are often difficult to identify in limited areas such as this.

It was not possible to provide an accurate date for the buildings. A worn copper alloy coin was found within the stones of one of the buildings. This is probably Roman in date and may be residual. A general indication of the likely date of the settlement was provided by a dense scatter of pottery sherds in the topsoil ranging from the Saxo-Norman period to the 16th century. Unstratified pottery cannot be used as accurate dating evidence and it has not been possible to date the buildings more accurately within this period. The nature of the structural evidence indicates a broad range during the medieval period, but it is not clear whether the settlement predates the construction of the

adjacent Knights Hospitallers site, or was constructed following its demise.

The extent and nature of the settlement is not fully understood but a complex of linear earthworks have been identified in this area through aerial photography and are interpreted as enclosures or paddocks, separated by ditches. The earthworks indicate the presence of settlement and probably comprised the tracks or streets through the village. The new access route traverses the east edge of these earthworks and the buildings identified may thus have stood on the edge of the village.

81-83 High Street Great Missenden (SP 8951 0121)

Bob Zeepvat and Sallianne Wilcox

In July and September 2003 an historic building survey was carried out at 81-83 High Street prior to the conversion of its buildings into a museum and exhibition centre dedicated to the novelist Roald Dahl. Fig 1.

The core of the property comprised a range of timber-framed buildings fronting the High Street, constructed in the 16th century. In the 17th century, a north range with domestic rooms was constructed to the rear of 81 High Street. No. 83 was also extended to the rear to provide increased domestic accommodation in the 18th and 19th centuries. In the 19th century No 81 became a hotel *Marquis of Buckingham Arms*, and a range of brick-built stables and a coach-house were constructed along the south side of the rear yard. On the north side of the yard, a flint-and-brick public hall was also constructed in the 19th century. In the early 20th century, the street frontages of both properties were probably rebuilt, and Georgian style doors and windows were inserted. With the advent of the car, garages were built in the early 20th century at the east end of the hotel yard. At this time a toilet block and a boiler house were added to the public hall. Subsequently No 81 became a bank, and No 83 shops. This entailed significant changes to the interior of both properties. The hotel garage was extended to the rear, and became an engineering works.

Kiln Lodge, Lacey Green (SP 825 003)

Jonathan Hunn

A watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of footings for a new garden building at Kiln Lodge. The site was thought to lie on the alignment of a prehistoric earthwork known as Grim's Ditch and the works had the potential to damage or disturb part of the monument. The excavation of six holes was observed and then recorded but no archaeological deposits were observed.

The 'Old Cross Keys', Lenborough Road, Buckingham (SP 69280 33210)

David Fell

During September 2003 a watching brief was undertaken during the construction of an extension at the rear of the Old Cross Keys, 29 Lenborough Road. The building is a former public house but has been a private residence since about 1914. No evidence to indicate that the area was occupied prior to the development of existing building was observed.

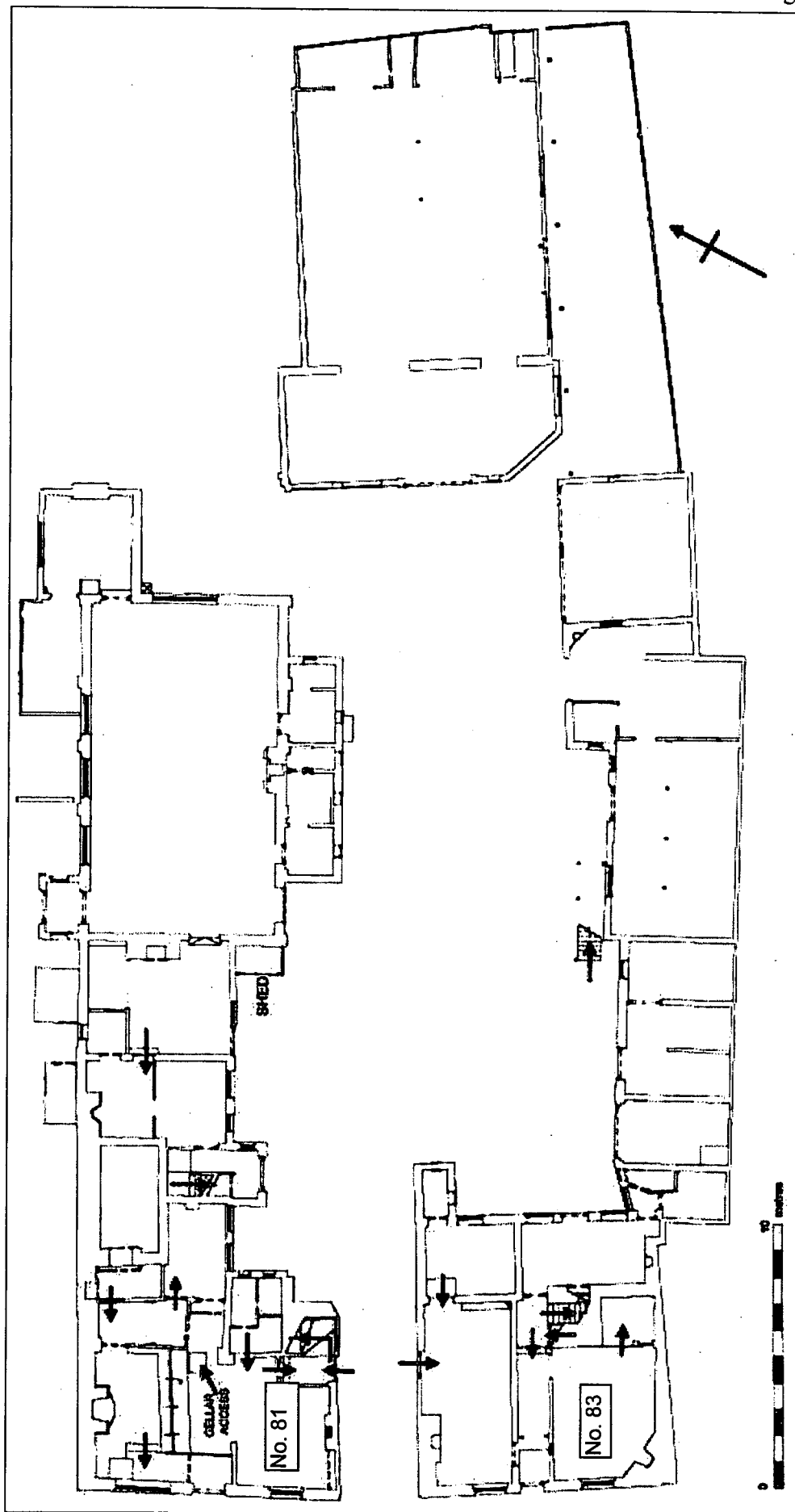


Fig 1. 81-83 High Street, Great Missenden.

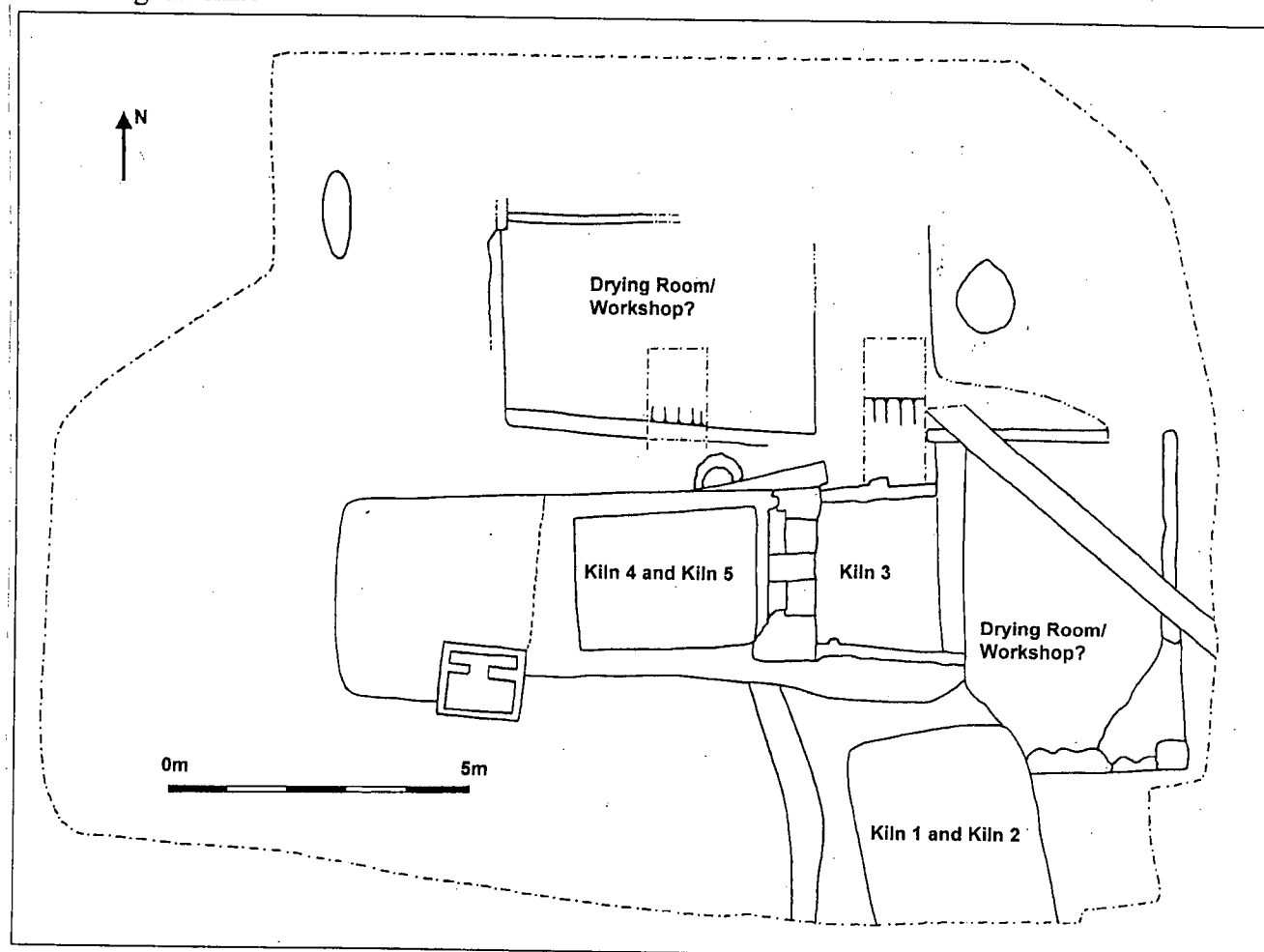


Fig 2. Rose Cottage, Tylers Green, Penn.

3 Wood End, Great Horwood (SP 7930 3070)

Jonathan Hunn

In the autumn of 2003 a series of test pits followed by observations on the foundations at 3 Wood End. The site had been truncated in the past and the ground partly filled in with modern building rubble. There were some slight indications at the northern end of the site of the site a terraced section revealed a possible man made feature in the form of either a ploughing headland or boundary.

Land at School End, Great Horwood (SP 7702 3121)

David Fell

In June 2003 an evaluation was undertaken at School End, Great Horwood in advance of the construction of a new residential development. The site was in an area of possible Saxon and medieval settlement and the development had the potential to reveal remains of these periods. Two archaeological trenches were excavated and a group of features, dating to the 19th or early 20th centuries, was present. These were probably associated with 19th century buildings which are known to have occupied the site.

Rose Cottage, Tylers Green, Penn (SP 9070 9394)

Joe Abrams and Jonathan Hunn

During July and August 2003 an excavation was carried out on land at Elm Road, adjacent to the Penn and Tylers Green Sports Ground. This excavation followed an earlier stage of fieldwork (Fell 2001) carried out in order to evaluate the archaeological potential of the site. The stoke hole and part of the furnace chamber of a tile kiln were excavated and recorded during this earlier project. Eleven pieces of medieval Penn type decorated floor tiles were recovered. A tile built wall was also recorded. Fig 2.

Five kilns were excavated and recorded during the excavation at this site. Kiln 1 was stratigraphically the earliest of these and Kiln 5 was the latest. Kilns 1, 2 and 3 were all constructed from tile. Initial specialist comment suggests that these tiles were medieval in date. Kilns 4 and 5 were brick built, it is not clear at this point whether these are late medieval or post-medieval in date.

On the basis of pottery sherds recovered from deposits within these kilns, and brick and tile samples taken from their walls, the structures are currently thought to have been constructed and used between the 14th and 16th centuries AD. It is anticipated that specialist input during the post-excavation part of this project will clarify the dating. In particular the results of two archaeomagnetic samples taken from the floors of Kiln 2 and Kiln 5 will be very

useful. It is hoped that these will give fixed dates for the last firings of the most recent kiln (5) and for the second earliest kiln (2). This will supplement the information provided by tile and pottery specialists in order to provide the most reliable dating information.

The site is also of interest because of the excellent stratigraphic sequence revealed during excavation. It has already been possible to phase all five kilns by the physical relationships between the structures. Therefore the structures were not in use at the same time, rather the site appears to have been repeatedly used for tile production, each kiln being replaced as necessary.

Other features recorded at the site included two drying rooms/workshops related to the kilns discussed above. A beehive oven and a single flue or oven feature, both thought to have been medieval industrial features related to the tile making processes taking place at the site. A ditch and pit containing sherds of medieval pottery were also recorded. A 19th century cesspit was recorded cutting the most recent of the kilns (5).

Fell D (2001) *An Archaeological Evaluation at Rose Cottage, Tylers Green, Buckinghamshire*. ASC Ltd

'Bull & Butcher', Aston Abbots (SP 8485 2008)
Jonathan Hunn

In December 2003 an archaeological evaluation was undertaken on land to the rear of the Bull & Butcher public house in an area of suspected medieval settlement. Five trenches were excavated three of which were entirely blank while the two others contained several pits of modern date. No significant archaeology was present in the trial trenches.

Bradwell Abbey (SP 8268 3947)
David Fell

In February 2003 an archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Bradwell Abbey, during the cutting of trenches for a new gas supply to Bradwell Abbey Farm Cottages. The site was situated to the southwest of the main monastic complex and the watching brief did not reveal the presence of archaeological features. The area had been extensively disturbed by modern service installations and the natural strata were observed at the base of the trenches.

Stables, The Old Rectory, Great Linford (SP 8518 4214)
Bob Zeepvat

Between October 2002 and March 2003 a watching brief was carried out during the redevelopment of the former stable yard at The Old Rectory for residential use. Observation of the footing trenches for new structures on the site did not reveal any features or finds of archaeological significance. Although the site lies within the historic core of the village, it seems likely that it remained undeveloped until the stable yard was established, probably in the mid-late 17th century.

4 Vicarage Road, Bradwell (SP 8321 3962)
Bob Zeepvat

In April 2003 a watching brief was maintained on groundworks for the construction of an extension to the rear of 4 Vicarage Road, Bradwell. The property, a Grade II listed house of 18th century date, is located in the historic core of the village, close to the medieval castle mound. No archaeological features or finds were observed during topsoil stripping and the excavation of footing trenches.

25a Northampton Road, Lavendon (SP 9150 5361)
David Fell

In April 2003 a watching brief was undertaken during excavations for footings for a house extension at the above property. The site was within an area of medieval settlement but no archaeological remains were observed.

Manor Farm, Newton Blossomville (SP 9228 5152)
Nigel Wilson

During May 2003 an evaluation was undertaken at The Rick Yard, Manor Farm in advance of housing development. The site was adjacent to the High Street in the medieval centre of the village. Three trenches were excavated but no archaeological remains were observed and it is likely that the plot has always been open land or used for barns and other farm buildings.

Pinkard Court, Woughton on the Green (SP 8730 3760)
Nigel Wilson

In July 2003 a watching brief was maintained during the excavation of a cable trench, on the north side of Woughton Green. As "The Green" is a Scheduled Ancient Monument consent was required from English Heritage for the work. A single post medieval "peg" roof tile from the topsoil was identified during the watching brief but no other remains were observed.

Manor Farm, Old Wolverton (SP 8072 4176)
Nigel Wilson and David Fell

During April and May 2003 an archaeological watching brief was maintained on the cutting of a series of service trenches at Manor Farm. The main trench ran from Old Wolverton Road to the south-east corner of the farm buildings, along the line of a proposed new access road. From this point, various spur trenches ran through the farmyards to the farm buildings. A limited number of archaeological features observed. About 50m north of Old Wolverton Road, a single shallow east to west ditch was recorded. c 40m south-east of the farm buildings, the trench cut through a distinctive earthwork bank standing c 1.5m above the surrounding land. Between the bank and the farm several shallow plough furrows were encountered. At the entrance to the farm complex two north-south ditches were located. Within the confines of the farmyard the trench revealed only a shallow layer of overburden above the

Buckinghamshire

natural limestone. Exceptions to this were an east-west ditch near the southern limit of the farmyard, and a series of plough furrows in the barns. A second phase of work in late June involved observing the removal of topsoil from the car park to the east of the farm complex. The major ditches seen in the earlier work were seen to continue across the area. The base of an east - west wall cutting the ditches was also identified.

Cooper's Yard, Great Linford (SP 8524 4259)

Bob Zeepvat

A watching brief was undertaken in September 2003 at Linford Wharf during the construction of a new housing development. The site lies north of The Grand Union Canal and it was considered possible that features relating to the wharf might be found on the site. It was also possible that towards the northern boundary of the site features relating to the Wolverton to Newport Pagnell Railway including the Linford Station stationmaster's house could be disturbed.

During the watching brief no features relating to either the canal or railway were exposed, though it was noted that the ground had been disturbed down to a depth of c 1.1m at the southern end of the site, probably in the 18th or 19th centuries. It is possible that the disturbed/re-deposited clay seen in the footing trenches is the spoil from construction of the canal basin.

29 High Street, Newport Pagnell (SP4395 8768)

Sallianne Wilcox and Bob Zeepvat

During October 2003 an historic building survey was carried out at 29 High Street prior to the proposed conversion of its attic space for residential use.

29 High Street was originally constructed as a timber framed building fronting onto the High Street during the 16th century and a small extension to the rear was constructed during the early 17th century. Two separate extensions were added to the rear between the early 17th and early 18th centuries, possibly forming two separate houses, with entrances from an alley to the west.

The property fronting onto the High Street was purchased by the *International Tea Company* c 1903 and converted into a shop. The ground floor ceiling was raised during the conversion of this part of the building and a marble and glass shop front were inserted, which still survive. The ground floor of the buildings to the rear were subsequently also converted for shop use and a single storey storage building was added to the rear.

Calverton House, Calverton

(SP 7890 3883 – SP 7888 3891)

Nigel Wilson

In October 2003 a watching brief was maintained during the development of a flood alleviation scheme at Calverton House, 1.5km south of Stony Stratford. The watching brief focused on the area around two listed bridges where overflow channels and closed culverts were being constructed. Observations made indicate that the only disturbance to the ground was associated with the

construction of the bridges. No archaeological features or artefacts other than the bridges were identified during the work.

Land at Cranborne Avenue, Westcroft (SP 8252 3442)

David Fell

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at land to the west of Cranborne Avenue in November 2003 in advance of housing development. Eighteen trenches were excavated across the site in the immediate vicinity of an Iron Age enclosure (Anthony 2003). No archaeological features or finds were observed in the trial trenches and it is likely that the enclosure was an isolated feature within the landscape.

Anthony S 2003 'Iron Age settlement at Cranbourne Avenue, Westcroft, Milton Keynes' *Recs of Bucks* 43, 39-46

Site 12, Westcroft, Milton Keynes (SP 8261 3418)

David Fell

An evaluation was undertaken at Site 12, Westcroft, in November 2003 in advance of housing development. Six trenches were excavated across the site in order to locate the site of a building and adjoining paddock marked on an estate map of 1801 (The Salden Estate map). The evaluation revealed a spread of building rubble over an area of 12 by 29m immediately to the south-east of the predicted location. A small assemblage of post-medieval pottery sherds and was recorded.

33 Cross End, Wavendon (SP 919 371)

David Fell

A watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a house extension at 33 Cross End. The site was adjacent to an earthwork which is often referred to as a motte and the works had the potential to disturb archaeological remains associated with the monument (Griffiths 1968). No archaeological remains were observed.

Griffiths R W 1968 'Excavation at the Mound at Wavendon, September 1963' *Wolverton and District Archaeological Society Journal* 1, 29-31

Sherwood Cottage, Clifton Reynes (SP 903 513)

David Fell

A watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of footings for an extension at Sherwood Cottage. The site was in the centre of the medieval village and had the potential to disturb archaeological remains. The excavation of the footprint of the extension and the footing trenches was recorded but archaeological remains were not observed. Much of the site had been terraced during the late 20th century. The site has probably always comprised open land and it is unlikely that archaeological remains are present on the site.

Land at Wilton Road, Bletchley (SP 8651 3359)

Bob Zeepvat

A programme of archaeological recording was carried out in December 2003 on a site adjacent to Wilton Road. Three demolished structures were recorded, prior to site clearance for housing development. These buildings were constructed in 1942 as part of the World War II Bletchley Park code-breaking and intelligence establishment, centred 200m to the north. Two structures formed part of a larger dormitory complex, of which one block survives as the local driving test centre. The third structure appears to have contained a number of rooms, the functions of which are uncertain. The buildings formed part of the Post Office National Training Centre until they were demolished in the 1990s.

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS
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Archaeological Trust)**

Fieldwork and Publication Roundup 2003

No 1 Portway, North Marston (SP 7759 2263).

Iain Williams and Ben Roberts

In August 2003 two evaluation trenches were excavated on land at No 1 Portway. The evaluation was conducted in advance of the construction of a bungalow and access. Despite the potential for Saxon and medieval remains, the investigation revealed only post-medieval features. The latter comprised a ditch, probably part of a boundary, and a gully, possibly to assist in the drainage of the ground. A cobbled surface, thought to be of a later date than the ditch and gully, was also revealed and may have been associated with the cattle shed that stood on the site in the early-mid 20th century

**Buckingham Flood Alleviation Scheme, Ford Street,
Buckingham. (SP 6965 3379)**

Jonathan Grant

In September 2003 a programme of archaeological monitoring was undertaken at Ford Street, Buckingham during the excavation of hand-dug test pits in advance of a flood alleviation scheme for the town. Though the site is located within the historic centre of Buckingham and a post-medieval well has been identified in the immediate area, few significant archaeological features were identified. Despite the potential for remains from any period, especially Saxon and medieval, no archaeological finds or features were identified. A wall was observed and was of probable modern date, built below ground level in an attempt to catch the water overflow in times of flood. The construction of the bridge next to the site may have caused some disturbance to the riverbank. The car park had also clearly levelled and truncated the area. No surviving subsoil layers or archaeological features were identified.

Latimer Park House, Latimer (SP 9986 9856).

Nicholas A Crank and Jonathan Grant

In October 2003 seven evaluation trenches were excavated on land at Latimer Park House, Latimer. The project revealed eight postholes, two pits and a gully of probable medieval date. Four of the postholes formed a clear alignment and may be structural. No substantial evidence of ancillary features associated with the Romano-British villa complex was identified, and little residual material of this date was encountered. The finds of mediaeval date are probably associated with the contemporary farmstead. The site exhibited a variable amount of overburden, indicative of episodes of levelling and landscaping in the 19th and 20th centuries. Investigations of anomalies revealed during a previous phase of geographical survey suggested they were of recent origin (for example water pipes).

Bourne End Marina, Wharf Lane, Bourne End

(SU 8900 8732)

Nicholas A Crank

Between March and May 2003 a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out at Bourne End Marina. This was required due to the redevelopment of the site as a residential and marina complex. No archaeological features were revealed or finds recovered during the monitoring and recording.

Considerable modern disturbance was present across the site, especially the western part of the site in which extensive late 19th/early 20th century bottle/rubbish dumps were revealed.

3/7 Spittal Street, Marlow (SU 8485 8664)

Wesley Keir, Ian Rowlandson and Ben Roberts

In February 2003 an evaluation was carried out on land at 3-7 Spittal Street. The evaluation was conducted in advance of proposed redevelopment of the site for new office and residential use. Two trenches were opened up and revealed brick and chalk walls overlain by post-medieval and modern demolition debris. No archaeological features or finds predating the post-medieval period were revealed. The remains of a possible structure were recorded. No evidence of the medieval hospital of St Thomas was recorded despite its probable location in the area of Spittal Street.

82-84 Walton Street, Aylesbury (SP 8225 1325)

Jonathan Grant

In March 2003 an archaeological desk-based assessment was carried out on 82-84 Walton Street. The site is located to the south-east of the historic core of the settlement on the road between the main settlement and the former hamlet of Walton. Walton Street became a significant artery for the successful medieval market place in the centre of Aylesbury. The historic settlement of Aylesbury dates to Saxon times when a burh fortification was constructed, giving the settlement part of its modern name. The town developed along the Roman Akeman Street having been

Buckinghamshire

occupied by Saxons, Danes and Normans during the early medieval period, to become a Royal town after the Conquest, and a Parliamentary stronghold during the 17th century Civil War. Various finds of a Bronze Age date have been previously identified in the vicinity of the site. Saxon grubenhäuser have been identified with associated finds, the land being later redeveloped in the 12th/13th century as part of a manorial estate, but abandoned and not redeveloped until the 1960s for its most recent purpose as Aylesbury District Council Offices. Walton Street became an important route for transport of people, materials and goods, particularly in the early 19th century with the opening of the railway and the Grand Junction Canal along its alignment.

Broughton Manor Farm, Broughton, Milton Keynes (SP 902 393)

Jonathan Grant, Wesley Keir, Brendon Wilkins and Ben Roberts

In August and September 2003 an archaeological evaluation was carried out on land at Broughton Manor Farm, Broughton (centred on SP 902 393). Previous phases of investigation revealed a 'background level' of prehistoric flints, residual Roman tile and pottery, and medieval pottery. A ring-ditch was also recorded in the eastern part of the site by aerial photography. Fifty eight trial trenches were excavated and located so they overlay the main cluster of finds and also enclosures revealed during the fieldwalking and geophysical survey of the site. The trial trench evaluation revealed a large volume of archaeological features of Romano-British date, the majority focussed in the central northern part of the site. These included enclosures and discrete features such as pits, with the finds assemblage (which included domestic items, and small-scale building materials) indicative of settlement. It would appear that the site comprises a Roman rural settlement or probable farmstead, with finds indicative of an earlier Roman (later 1st to mid 2nd century) date, though later material of the 3rd and 4th centuries may indicate a continuity of possibly contracted occupation into the later Roman period. The pattern of enclosures and discrete features largely reflect the anomalies recorded in the previous geophysical survey, with a limit of occupation to the south and east clearly identified, and becoming far more sparse to the west. The site would have clearly exploited the fertile soils of the terrace of the Broughton Brook. A single ditch terminal/pit of later Bronze Age date (c 1400 – 1000BC) was also recorded and is significant, though no trace of the possible barrow identified by aerial photography (but not identified by geophysical survey) was found to exist during the evaluation.

Broughton Manor, Broughton, Milton Keynes (SP 900 397).

Brendon Wilkins and Jonathan Grant

In September 2003 an evaluation was carried out on land at Broughton Manor. A larger adjacent site to the immediate south had recently been evaluated by AS (see above), revealing extensive Romano-British activity. Seven

trenches were originally opened up on the site. Given the concentration of finds and features in the evaluation to the southeast of the present assessment site it was thought probable that archaeological features of Romano-British date extended into the site from the south and east. Only one trench revealed an archaeological feature, a pit of pre-Roman origin. Two additional trenches in the south-eastern corner of the site revealed a continuation of Romano-British ditches and gullies already detected in the neighboring site. Given the largely sterile character of the trial trenches, the focal point of Romano-British settlement lay to the south, in the area of the present business park, 19th century manor and arable fields, and that the current site lay on the periphery of this settlement. The settlement would have been ideally situated on the fertile terrace of the Broughton Brook. Dating evidence from the site suggests that occupation of the earlier Roman period (later 1st and 2nd centuries), broadly the same date range as the main focus of occupation to the south. The discovery of a large pit containing middle Iron Age material is significant, indicating a separate, pre-Roman phase of activity in the vicinity

COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

Denham, The Lea (TQ 0490 8600) Interim Report

Laurent Coleman, Tim Havard, Mark Collard, Simon Cox and Ed McSloy

Introduction

Following evaluation in 2000 (Coleman 2001, 17) and the first phase of excavation in 2001 (Coleman *et al* 2002), the second phase of area excavation in advance of gravel extraction was carried out on behalf of Harleyford Aggregates Limited. The excavation, covering a total area of c 1ha, took place between April and August 2003 and comprised two areas located immediately to the north of the 2001 excavation area (Fig 3).

The gravel is covered across the whole site by alluvium. All the features excavated in this phase of work, from the prehistoric through to the post-medieval, were cut into the upper surface of this alluvium, and it appears that by the Late Bronze Age the over-bank flooding of the River Colne to the east had ceased. No features were encountered on the gravel surface after the stripping of the alluvium.

Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age

No features dating to these periods were identified, a small quantity of residual worked flint, including a single bladelet of probable Mesolithic date, was found in a number of the later features.

Early to Middle Bronze Age

A badly truncated urned cremation burial was identified at the eastern side of the excavation area. Only the lowest part of the vessel had survived but the fabric and general form were consistent with Collared Urn or Bucket Urn classes of Early to Middle Bronze Age date. Located c 13m to the north-east was the western part of a ring ditch, the majority of which lay beyond the eastern baulk of the current

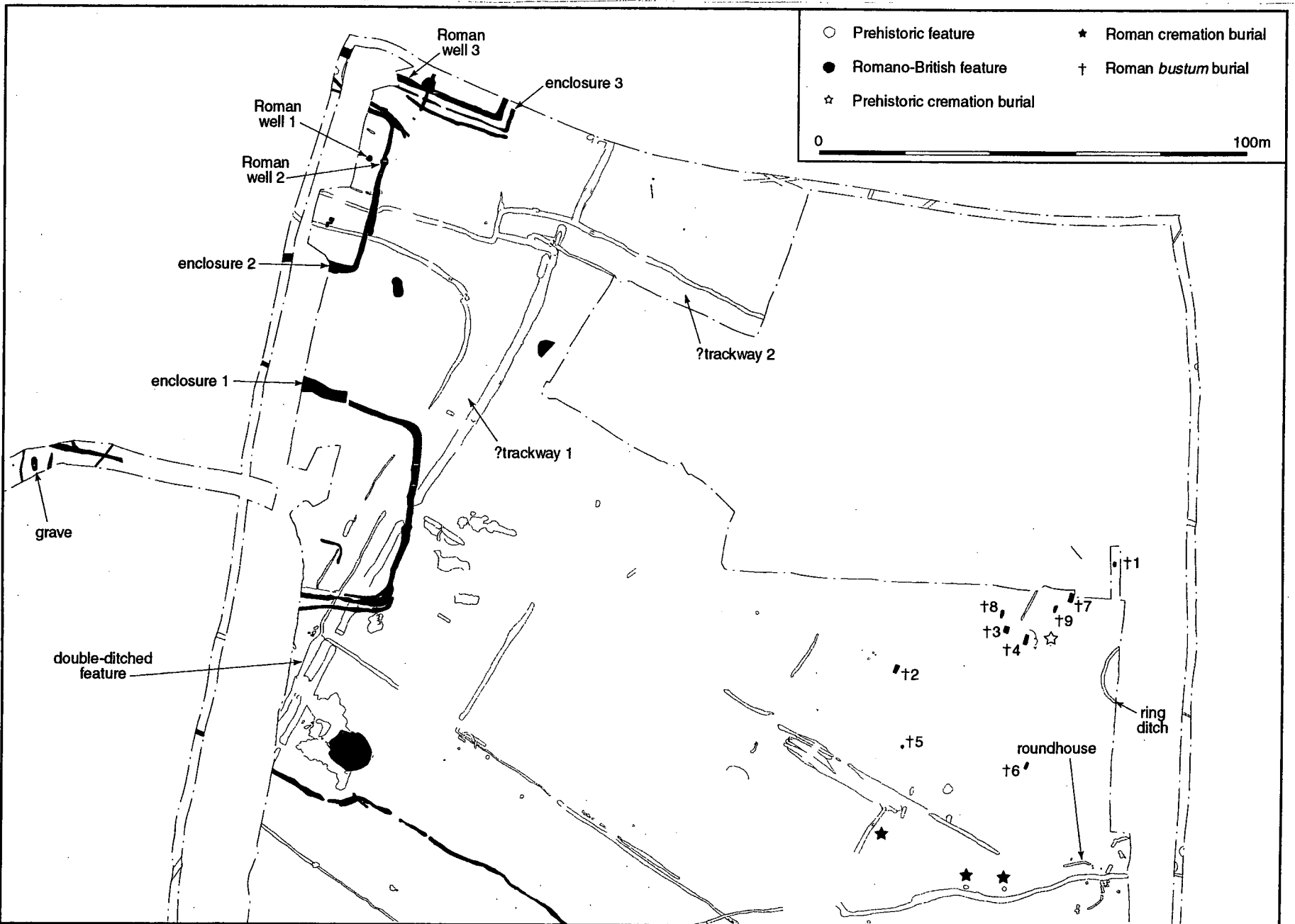


Fig 3. The Lea, Denham. Phases 1 and 2 excavation, all features.

Buckinghamshire

excavation area. Excavation revealed the distinctive 'V-shaped' profile of the ring ditch, no features were identified within the small area exposed inside this feature but pottery dating to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age was recovered from the fills of the ditch. It is perhaps most probable that the satellite urned cremation burial and the ring ditch are broadly contemporary. None of the pottery recovered derived from the primary silting of the ring ditch, but pottery may have been incorporated into the fills of the ditch substantially later than the construction of it.

Mid to Late Bronze Age

The double-ditched feature, probably representing a trackway (1), identified during the first phase of excavation was found to continue, as a single ditch, to the north-east. Again, this feature appeared to represent a focus of Mid to Late Bronze Age activity. A number of contemporary ditches were located in the vicinity, however, the clearly defined pattern of the rectilinear field system identified during the first phase of excavation was not simply repeated further to the north. Instead, a second probable trackway (2) orientated north-west/south-east was found.

Within the eastern part of the site, part of the rectilinear field system was found to extend to the north-west. However, whereas the ditches during the first phase of excavation were narrow and had not been recut, the ditch excavated during this phase had been recut and realigned several times.

Small quantities of coarse or fine calcined flint-tempered and organic-tempered pottery were recovered from these ditches. This pottery assemblage was comparable to that recovered from the earlier excavations, and is clearly in the same Middle to Late Bronze Age Deverel-Rimbury tradition. Forms include thick-walled bucket-like vessels with applied 'thumbed' strips and finer bowl-like vessels with fingernail rim impressions.

Iron Age

No activity dating to the Iron Age was identified during this phase of excavation.

Romano-British (1st and 2nd centuries AD)

Two further Romano-British enclosures (Enclosures 2 and 3), on the same orientation as the enclosure identified during the first phase of excavation (Enclosure 1). In contrast to Enclosures 1 and 2, Enclosure 3 was double ditched with a third, external ditch along the southern side.

Romano-British (3rd and 4th centuries AD)

The Romano-British enclosure ditches had probably fallen out of use by the later part of the Romano-British period and had probably silted up by this time. However, later Romano-British activity was identified at the north-western corner of the site. A pair of beam slots, one cutting the fill of Enclosure 2 and one containing pottery dating to the later part of the Romano-British period, was found in this part of the site. These features probably represented the gable ends of a building. A hearth with an associated square pit and shallow gully was also identified c 25m to the south and contained pottery dating to the later part of the Romano-British period.

Three wells were identified in the north-western part of the site. Well 1 was unlined and excavation of the fills revealed evidence for some silting followed by deliberate infilling with redeposited natural clay. Located immediately to the east was Well 2. This well was deeper and had a lining constructed from large flint nodules within a clay matrix. The lining did not extend to the base of the well and it is likely that the base of the lining was originally supported by a wooden framework. Well 2 was found to cut Enclosure 2. A further unlined well (Well 3) and a large pit were identified at the northern edge of site and were found to cut the inner ditch of Enclosure 3.

A large quantity of Romano-British pottery was recovered from the enclosure ditches and later features within the north-western part of the site. Significant mid to late 2nd and late 3rd/4th century groups were recovered. Types represented comprise mainly greywares in utilitarian forms together with Oxfordshire whiteware mortaria and finewares including Central Gaulish Samian and Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware.

Of particular interest was the identification of eight bustum burials. These burials result from the cremation of the deceased on a pyre which is constructed above a rectangular pit. During the combustion process the cremated human remains, and the charcoal derived from the pyre, fall to the base of the pit. On the completion of the combustion process the pit is backfilled (McKinley pers. comm.).

The focus of this funerary activity was located c 30m to the south-west of bustum 1, which was identified during the earlier evaluation, and a similar distance to the west of the Bronze Age ring ditch. The bustum burials were all broadly rectangular, orientated north-east to south-west, exhibited discolouration of the natural clay through heating and contained quantities of charcoal and cremated human bone.

The dimensions of these features were found to be extremely variable. The smallest (Bustum 5) measured 0.8m in length, 0.61m in width and 0.07m in depth whilst the largest (Bustum 4) measured 2.22m in length, 0.79m in width and 0.5m in depth. This variation presumably reflected such factors as the varying physical statures of the deceased, differences in social status, prevailing conditions and the degree of truncation by later ploughing.

Differences were also noted between the treatment of the remains after cremation. For example, Bustum 4 was found to contain the largest quantity of cremated bone, much of which appeared to be located in the correct relative anatomical position (with the head to the north-east) and after the cremation of the body, the bustum was rapidly backfilled. In contrast, the cremated remains within the shallower Bustum (7) located to the north-east, appeared to have been gathered at the north-east end of the feature. A small pit was then dug at the north-west corner of the bustum and all of the cremated bone was placed within it, the whole bustum was then backfilled. Bustum 2 was found to contain three iron nails, these may have been used during the construction of the pyre or may have been part of items of furniture which were then burnt on the pyre. Alternatively they may simply represent the reuse of structural timbers as fuel.

A miniature conical flanged (pottery) bowl was recovered from Bustum 3, and would seem to indicate a date no earlier than the second quarter of the 3rd century AD. The vessel is

complete and burnt, factors which may suggest that it was used during the pyre ceremony. It was recovered from the south-west end of the bustum, probably by the feet of the deceased, together with three conical fired clay objects. These enigmatic objects, each c 50mm in height, may have been as supports for some item used in the funerary rite. Parallels for these items have yet to be found. Bustum burials are rare, but not unknown in south-east England. At least seven, possibly of a slightly later date (AD 325-350), were identified 15km to the south-west of Denham, at Bray, Berkshire (Stanley 1972, 4).

Medieval and post-medieval

No activity dating to the medieval and/or post-medieval periods was identified during this phase of excavation.

Discussion

Hitherto unanticipated funerary activity dating to the Early to Middle Bronze Age was identified at the north-eastern corner of the excavation area. This activity comprised a ring ditch and a broadly contemporary satellite cremation burial. This phase of excavation also revealed a continuation of Middle to Late Bronze Age activity to the north. To the north-east, this activity appeared to represent a continuation of the rectilinear field system identified in 2000. To the north-west a more complex pattern of ditches was identified, at least some of which appear to represent a stock management system with trackways.

The Romano-British activity was also found to continue to the north-east of Enclosure 1 with the establishment of two further probable rectilinear enclosures in the Early Roman period. These enclosures appeared to have gone out of use by the later Romano-British period. Activity dating to this later period was represented by the excavation of three wells, the hearth and beam slots, all indicative of occupation of some form. The distribution of features and the finds recovered from the Romano-British features again suggested the presence of a settlement focus, possibly with substantial buildings, to the north and/or west of the current excavation area.

The identification of eight further bustum burials proved that the bustum burial identified during the evaluation was not an isolated feature. These features are of some importance given the probable continental origin of the rite and its comparative rarity in south-east England (Philpott, 1991, 48-9).

The relationship between the bustum burials and the Romano-British cremation burials identified to the south during the first phase of excavation is, at present, uncertain. However, the possibility exists that material may have been collected from some of the bustum burials and then buried within the cremation burials. Both *in situ* burial of the cremated remains, and removal of the remains to a separate site in the vicinity for burial was identified at Bray (Stanley 1972, 4).

No activity dating to the post-Roman or medieval periods was identified although there was some limited evidence for agricultural activity dating to the post-medieval period.

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M40 Junction 4, Handy Cross (SU 8530 9100)

Tim Havard

An evaluation was undertaken on land at M40 Junction 4 in November 2003. This revealed an undated ditch and an area of post-medieval infill probably relating to a pond or quarrying activity.

HERITAGE NETWORK

Fulbrook Farm, Hogshaw, Quainton (SP 4750 2224)

Geoff Saunders

Fulbrook Farm is the site of a deserted medieval village which has been scheduled as an Ancient Monument (Bucks. SAM 68). The northern section of a new access road to the farm crosses the scheduled area and required archaeological monitoring in accordance with Scheduled Monument Consent issued by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

In order to protect any underlying archaeological features and deposits, whilst ensuring the removal of the existing surface vegetation, a maximum machining depth of 0.1m was allowed. The machined area was then covered with a geotextile membrane before building up the new road.

One feature, a metalled surface, was observed during the groundworks. This ran across the access road, close to its northern end, on a northwest to southeast alignment. The surface appeared at approximately 0.1m below the existing ground level and was constructed of unbonded stones. No dateable artefacts were observed, although post-medieval peg tile was recorded in the overlying topsoil. The feature aligns with a public bridleway which crosses the scheduled area and joins a footpath that forms part of the Midshires Way. It seems likely that the metalled surface was laid down to consolidate this route.

MARLOW ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY - FIELDWORK UNIT

Colin Berks and John Hawes

West of Marlow (SU840855).

During the summers of 2002 and 2003 Marlow Archaeological Society - Fieldwork Unit undertook investigations of the crop mark circles SMR 1161 (i), (ii) and (iii) Fig 4. In previous years, field walking and limited geophysical surveys had determined there had been prehistoric activity on the site. The crop marks are located on a gravel area higher than the surrounding flood plain of

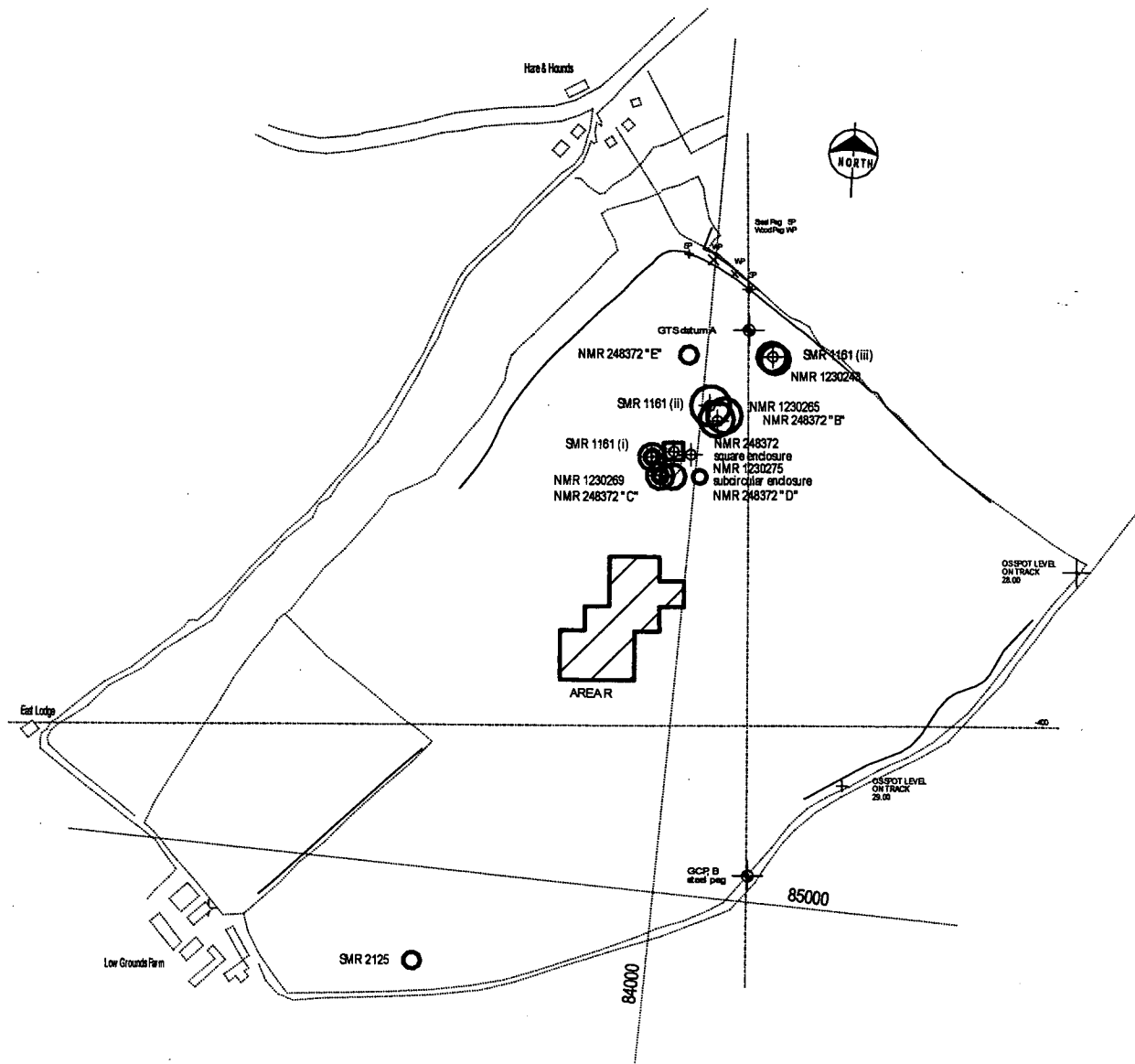


Fig 4.

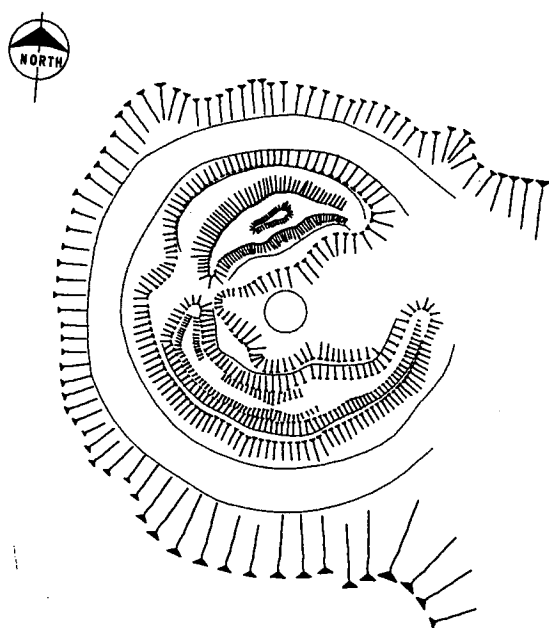


Fig 5.

the Thames. The results of an auger survey produced evidence of palaeo-channels running either side of the gravel bank which may have been an island.

During 2002 and 2003 extensive geophysical surveys were undertaken in the first instance using resistivity with the TR/CIA meter and during the near-drought conditions of last summer, with a fluxgate gradiometer.

In 2002, resistivity was concentrated on the continuation of high ground to the south of the crop circles (Area R Fig 4) to ascertain if any archeological features existed. Fourteen 20 x 20m grids were surveyed but did not produce any evidence, except marks left by deep ploughing.

Area B SMR 1161(ii) was also surveyed in 2002, using 20 x 20 grids with 1m and 0.5m pitch.

The result is shown in Fig 5. The circle is thought to be a circular ditch approximately 36m in diameter. Some higher resistance anomalies were identified in parts of the ditch area and were resurveyed using 0.25m pitch which confirmed these as high resistance spikes. These may be large pieces of stone as they did not show up on the succeeding magnetometer survey. Feature FB is believed to

be a ploughed out Bronze Age ditched bowl barrow but this will have to be confirmed by excavation. The area of disturbance in the eastern part of the circle may be the result of antiquarian 'excavations'. The magnetometer survey in 2003 did not show any carbon deposit and therefore the area may not have been open for very long, therefore confirming this possibility of a short term excavation. Comparison of the magnetometer and resistivity plots indicates the same ditch, when overlaid on the CAD survey, in the same position.

Feature D SMR 1161 (i) was surveyed in 2002 using resistivity at 1m pitch and produced a further circular ditched feature approximately 28m in diameter, but heavily damaged by ploughing on the eastern circumference. It is however believed to be a further ditched bowl barrow.

In 2003 an extensive resistivity survey covering Feature FA, SMR 1161(iii) and surrounding features identified from aerial photographs, was undertaken but due to near drought conditions no archaeologically identifiable results were obtained.

A smaller area was surveyed with a magnetometer, first on Feature FB SMR 1161(ii) as a test run on a known feature, and then eight grids around feature FA SMR 1161 (i). The survey, Fig 6 identified three features, FA, FE and FF.

Feature FA has two circular ring ditches, the outer being 26m in diameter and the inner 16m. Feature FA appears to be a double ditched ring work. This may represent two phases of construction. The inner ditch may surround a smaller bowl barrow. The inner ditch may then have been back filled and the whole mound structure enlarged and enclosed by the outer ditch. There appears to be a rectilinear anomaly at the centre formed by 4 corner anomalies, and measures 7.86m on the long axis. CAD measurement shows all of the feature to be symmetrical but the centre rectilinear anomaly does not seem to align with any other feature recorded on site. Close inspection of the data shows that the circular features show typical recordings for a ditch with carbon deposit over a long period of time, graded from the centre to the outer edges. The data from the central feature is of a different nature. The edges of this are quite well defined on the contour plot but it does not display quite the same graded profile when seen on the surface plot. This may be due to it being a different shape of ditch or due to it being of a different material. It may belong to a central chamber or succession of central chamber excavations or relate to a different earlier feature.

Feature FF is more problematic. At first this was thought to be a small bowl barrow but it appears to have some unusual features in the south east circumference. It could be a roughly circular ditch with another ditch cut across or a rectangular feature. We either have two features superimposed on one another or we are seeing the result of antiquarian excavation and trenching which was a possibility recognized in Feature B in 2002.

Feature FE is one of the more interesting features of the site. Several different types of analysis and plots were used to obtain a clearer picture of this feature, the best are shown on Fig 6. The width of the feature is 11.86m. The shape appears to be of a rectangular U with an open end at the south west and the main axis broadly in line with the three main circular ditches (barrows A, B & D). At each end of the ditch there may be a separate feature, possibly a large post

hole or pit. The profile of the data is similar on the separate features to the ditch making it likely, but not certain, that the separate features are part of the ditch. Filters and extract systems were used to investigate the centre of this feature but no anomalies were found. A trench dug across the northwest corner in 2002 revealed a U-shaped ditch in the section and some association with Neolithic flint work. The feature may not be associated with the other more circular features on the site and appears to be unique amongst the other crop marks. A tentative suggestion is that this is a mortuary enclosure predating the barrows.

The north west corner of the site covering grids 03R42 to 03R63 (20M x 20M) Fig 7 was also covered with a magnetometer survey where a number of small indistinct circular features were identified from aerial photographs. The differentiation in magnetometer signal was slight, making interpretation difficult. Various analysis methods were used to search for any features from the data and a pattern of circular features emerged. Both the magnetometer and air photo plot show some correlation of circular features. These seem to be in three clusters, possibly overlapping. The east of the grid had been subject to previous fieldwalking with flintwork and burnt flint being the predominate finds. The fieldwalking finds show an increase in density towards the area of the cluster of circles.

The possible circular features may represent the drip channels of circular huts identifying this as an occupation area. Circular huts are, however, associated more with the late Bronze Age and Iron Age and so far no material from field walking in this area can be associated with the latter period. The circular features may, on the other hand, be further small barrows heavily damaged through ploughing.

The 2002 and 2003 surveys have confirmed the crop marks to be archaeological features and probably part of an early Bronze Age barrow cemetery with three large barrows and some possible smaller barrows. To the north of the barrows there may be a settlement area. Further geophysical survey is required to record all the features located in the aerial photographs and for excavation to confirm the nature of the features identified and to date them.

MUSEUM OF LONDON

Marble Hall Ceiling, Stowe School (SP67400 37400)
Andy Chopping and Jonathan Godfrey

MoLAS photographers and surveyors worked with internationally recognised Hirst Conservation to produce an accurate photographic survey of the Marble Saloon dome ceiling. A reflectorless total station was used to record the corners of the trapezoid panels making up the ceiling, which were individually photographed using high end digital cameras.

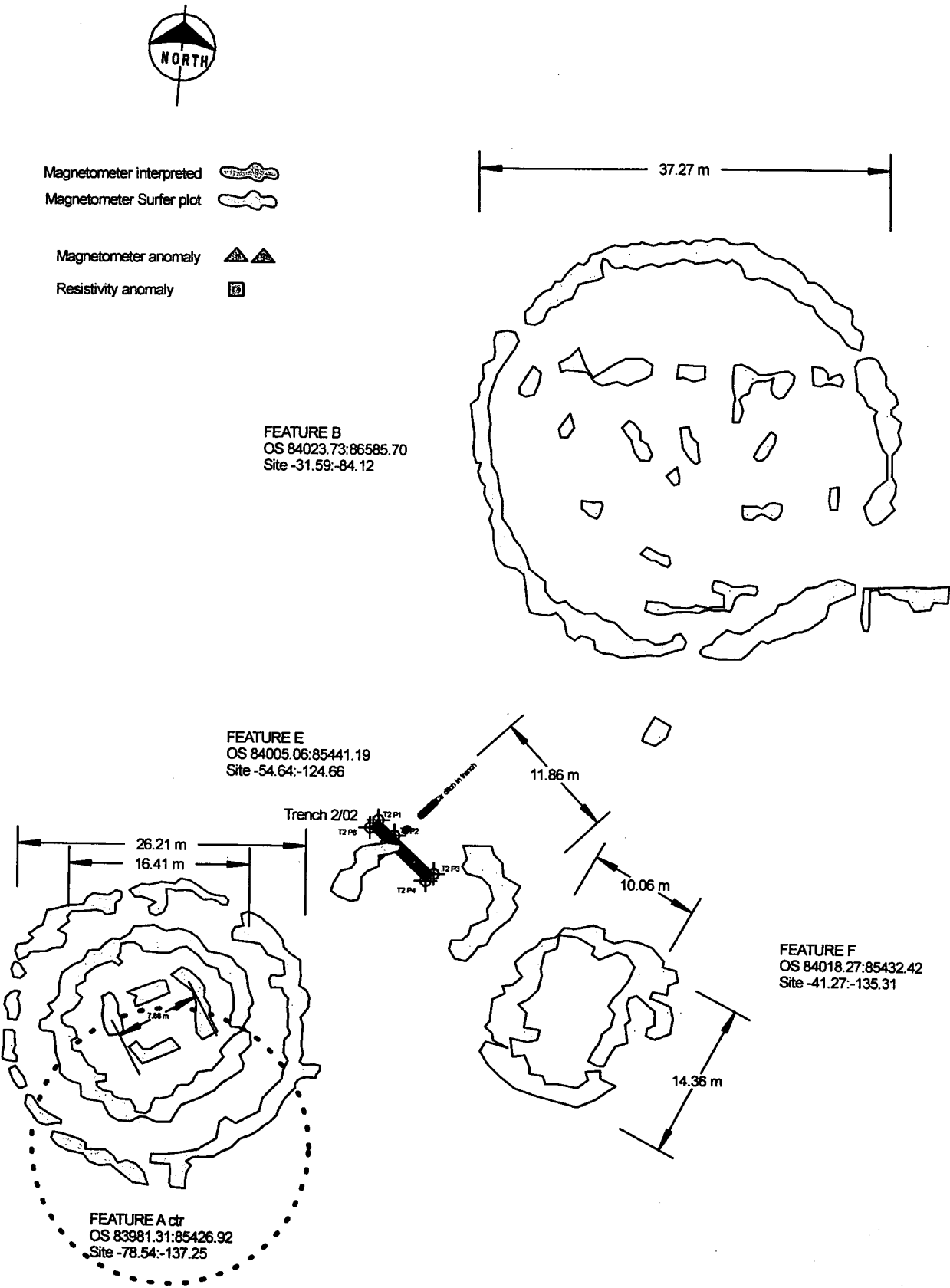


Fig 6.

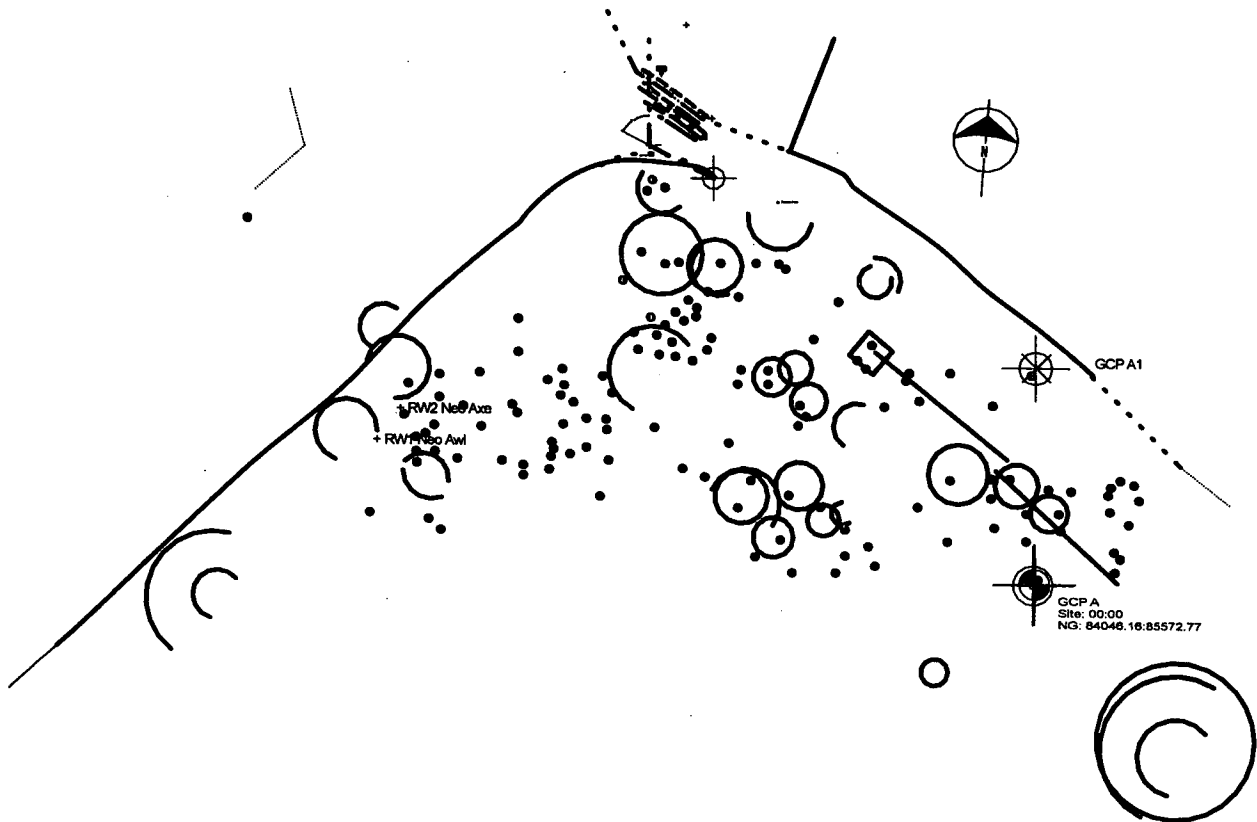


Fig 7.

NATIONAL TRUST

Ashridge (SP970130)

Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned during the first half of 2003 to carry out a survey of Pitstone Hill, Aldbury Nowers and Down Farm, which forms part of the Trust's Ashridge Estate. The topographical survey, which mapped all earthworks at 1:2500 scale was undertaken in order to provide a gazetteer, management recommendations and interpretive information for the Trust's SMR. The Trust's project archaeologist Melanie Solik has recently completed entering information from past surveys onto the SMR for the estate and is currently working on contract to produce written reports and an archaeological gazetteer for the property. Pitstone Hill and Aldbury Nowers retain important earthwork evidence for the Buckinghamshire Grimm's ditch, plus Bronze Age barrows, flint quarries and later medieval earthworks. The survey has identified a previously unidentified section of Grimm's Ditch in the woodland at Aldbury Nowers.

Bradenham Manor (SU828971)

Brick footings were found in several locations in the gardens at Bradenham Manor as a result of excavations associated with the restoration of the gardens. A substantial brick footing was found in a trench measuring 5m x 2m at the base of the north-facing grass bank overlooking the Forecourt. This brick foundation is almost certainly the north wall of the mid 17th century west range of the house. Several fragments of what appear to be a moulded stone

plinth associated with the wall were recovered during the excavation. This north range was probably demolished in the 18th century, leaving only five courses *in situ* to act as a retaining wall for a grass terrace behind the wall. Remnants of diagonally-set paving were found below the retaining wall, suggesting a formal walk existed along the south side of the Forecourt, perhaps leading to steps on the garden terrace.

On the main south lawn brick footings for what are thought to be garden walls were revealed by a small 1m square trench dug to assess clear parch marking on the west side of the main lawn. The existing lawn forms a level expanse of grass, separated from the lower lawn by a grass bank. The garden walls revealed by the excavation probably date from the late 17th or early 18th century, suggesting that previously a much more formal enclosed garden landscape existed at Bradenham. Through various excavation and geophysics projects a picture is slowly developing of the earlier appearance of the formal garden landscape.

Northamptonshire Archaeology was contracted during 2003 to monitor excavations for laying irrigation pipes through the Wilderness Garden and across the main south lawn. The results proved to be somewhat surprising as only a single terrace wall was discovered between the main lawn and the lower lawn. A series of trial trenches proved more successful in locating the course of a gravel path laid over a brick base along the west edge of the lower lawn.

Cliveden (SU912845)

A survey of earthworks along the Green Drive, which forms the main axial drive through the 18th century gardens, was

Buckinghamshire

commissioned in 2003. The work was undertaken to inform proposals for restoration of the Drive, which will take place when the Cliveden Hospital site is redeveloped.

Fingest Farm, Fingest (SU777911)

A vernacular buildings survey of the farm house and farm buildings was completed by James Moir of Finial Associates during 2003. The survey established that the earliest building on site – the stables – probably dates from the mid 17th century. The large barn dates from the 18th century. Fingest Farm was left to the National Trust in 2003 and it is intended that the main barn will be used as a conservation workshop.

Hughenden Manor (SU861953)

A watching brief was maintained by the Trust's Regional Archaeologist over excavations to lay drainage pipes beneath the flowerbeds of the south front. These excavations revealed the brick footings for a pergola or climbing frame for ivy, which was known about from late 19th and early 20th century photographs. It is intended that using evidence from photographs and from the excavations it should be possible to restore the pergola.

Stowe Gardens (SP677374)

Excavations around the Doric Arch by Northamptonshire Archaeology successfully managed to locate three brick and rubblestone bases for statues, which are known to have existed on either side of the garden temple. Potentially there are 10 of these bases for Apollo and the Nine Muses, a statue group, which, according to 18th century plans, were arranged as a horseshoe around the arch. Unfortunately tracing the other seven bases has so far proved elusive, although the evidence is urgently needed for the restoration of the group, which is last shown on a plan of the 1790s. Flint cobbles and an early gravel surface were found on the east side of the arch during work to reduce the ground level around the building. These early surfaces actually exist below the level of the rubblestone base of the arch, suggesting that the rough rubblestone was exposed as a rustic feature of the building rather than being concealed by gravel.

Restoration of the Corinthian Arch at Stowe commenced during 2003 and a watching brief has been maintained by the Trust's project archaeologist. Samples were taken from the rafters, the timber construction of the arch and the brackets forming the cornice for dendrochronology dating. These have returned dates of 1765 and 1766, confirming the evidence from the 18th century accounts at Stowe, which suggest that the arch was built between 1765 and 1767. A military sword, probably of the early 19th century, was recovered from a void below the floor boards of the attic, together with a bone handled knife, a small auger, and several pieces of cloth. It is known that the field in front of the arch was used by the Buckinghamshire Yeomanry during the 19th century and this may partially explain the deposition of the sword within the building.

Other archaeological projects undertaken at Stowe during 2003 have included a geophysical survey of the Alchester-Towcester Roman road immediately to the north of the gardens. This revealed a linear high resistance feature precisely on the line of the road as shown on the Ordnance Survey maps. Other projects have included excavations to locate the original paths around the Hermitage, excavations for electric cables at the two Boycott Pavilions and an excavation at the Queen's Temple, which located one of the 18th century gravel paths. Building recording was carried out at Home Farm when the south wall of one the early 19th century cattle sheds had to be dismantled and rebuilt.

West Wycombe Park (SU830945)

This is one of the few properties in the Trust's Thames and Solent Region that until now has not been covered as part of its regional archaeological survey programme of the early 1990s. A project was therefore undertaken in 2003 to assimilate onto the Trust's SMR the results of previous surveys, excavations and watching brief projects carried out in the gardens and park, and in West Wycombe Village. A survey report and property gazetteer is due for completion in April of 2004.

NETWORK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Compiled by Martin Lightfoot

Highwood, Kiln Lane, Lacey Green (SP 8250 0030) Andrew Hunn

During March 1999 a watching brief on the construction of a driveway across the projected line of 'Grim's ditch', a long distance prehistoric earthwork was carried out. A dump of post-medieval brick and tile, believed to be waste from a former brickworks, was found along the line of the monument. This material may have been used to fill in the ditch.

Land at 330-336 London Road, High Wycombe (SU 8830 9220) Julie Dilcock

During September 2001 an evaluation on land at 330-336 London Road carried out. Evidence of post-medieval mill buildings and associated watercourses and an artificial terrace were encountered, though only early modern pottery was recovered.

Kiln Lane, Lacey Green (SP 8253 0027). Rosey Burton

During April 2002 an evaluation was carried in advance of the construction of a house on land between Kiln Lodge and Kiln Barn; a ditch, almost certainly part of the prehistoric linear earthwork system known as *Grim's Ditch* was encountered. A stony layer beside this ditch may be the remains of an associated bank. The presence of the ditch

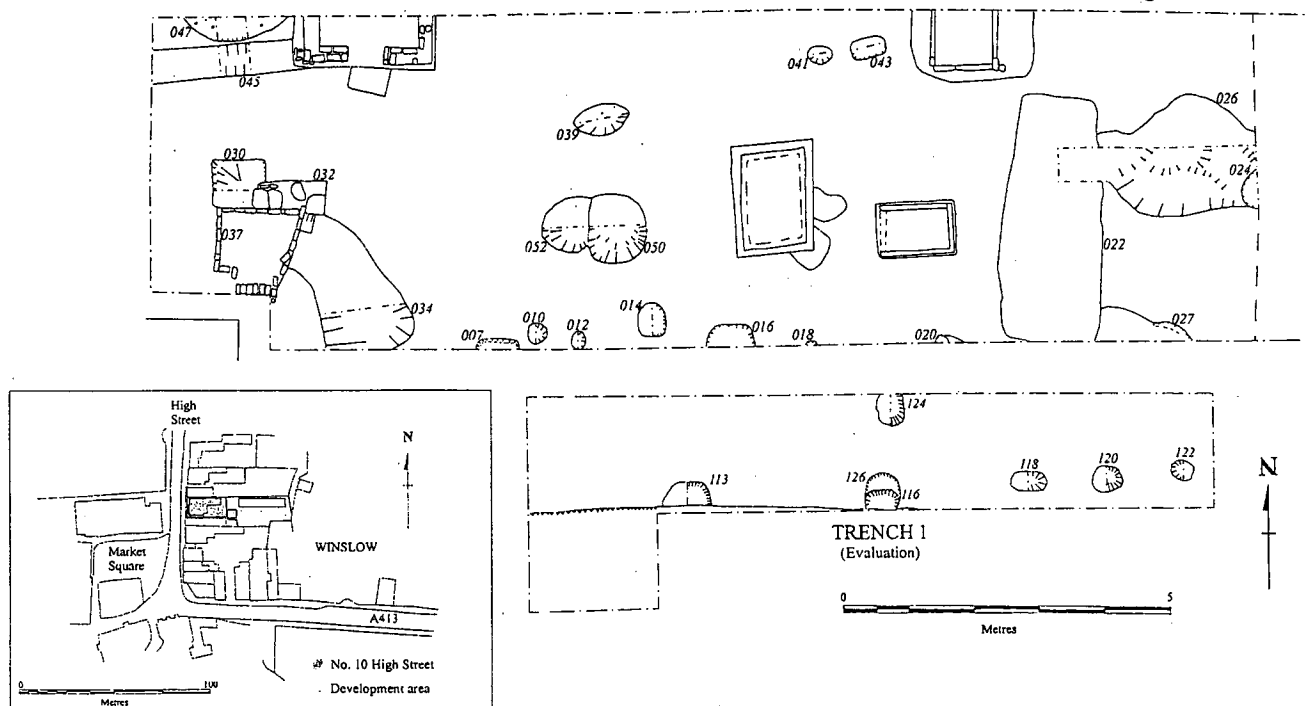


Fig 8. 10 High Street, Winslow. Site location and location of archaeological remains.

The presence of the ditch suggests that the apparent gap in the course of *Grim's Ditch* in Lacey Green is not genuine.

The Barn, little Pednor, Chartridge (SP 9252 0276)
Rosey Burton

Between December 1998 and December 1999 building recording and a watching brief at The Barn, Little Pednor were undertaken. Remains of brick walls and a wooden stake were recorded *in situ*, and a flint flake and post-medieval glass, and tile fragments were also recovered. The recording revealed many phases of alteration, rebuilding and repair. From an examination of the standing building, and subsequent study of the barn's structural remains and associated stratigraphy, after demolition, the historical development of the building could be traced from its construction in the 18th century through to the 1980s.

Rosemary Cottage, Shipton, Winslow (SP 7770 2720)
Julie Dilcock

During September 2001 a watching brief on land at Rosemary Cottage was undertaken. A 19th century well, an undated wall footing and evidence for the removal of a tree was observed. A small quantity of post-medieval and modern pottery was also recovered.

10 High Street, Winslow (SP 7702 2761)
Frank Martin

During June 2002 an open area excavation on land to the rear of number 10, High Street, within the historic core of the town of Winslow was carried out. A moderate amount of possibly late medieval, post-medieval and early modern

activity was recorded. This consisted of; rubbish pits, postholes, a soakaway, the remnant of a wall foundation and a boundary ditch. Fig 8.

The excavation produced a small amount of finds: animal bone, ceramic building material, clay tobacco pipe, glass, iron, pottery and stone. Although these ranged in date from the medieval period to the late 19th century (or later), the majority of datable artefacts were of middle or late 18th century date.

The lack of medieval remains indicates that this area was probably outside the medieval village, though it is possible that post-medieval activity has destroyed any earlier activity.

Middleton Fishponds, Milton Keynes (SP 8857 3922)
Anni Byard

From June to October 2003 a watching brief on the landscaping of medieval fishponds at Middleton was carried out. The depth of excavation was not sufficient to uncover archaeological deposits and no finds were recovered.

Plot 1, Osier Lane, Shenley Lodge, Milton Keynes (SP 8382 3599)

Rosey Burton

During September 2002, an evaluation on land at Osier Lane was carried out. Medieval, post-medieval and modern pottery, ceramic building material, and metalwork were recovered. Environmental sampling suggested that a pond or 'Osier bed' was formerly here, possibly dating to the medieval period on the basis of medieval pottery being recovered.

Buckinghamshire

Fire Station, Newport Pagnell (SP 8710 4380)

During January 2000 a watching brief on the excavation of house foundation trenches was undertaken. A possible cultivation or garden soil was revealed, possibly dating to the medieval and or post-medieval periods, and a cobbled yard surface dating to the 16th or 17th century was also recorded.

Roald Dahl Museum (SP 8950 0110)

During November 2002 a watching brief on soil test pits excavated in advance of demolition and refurbishment works at 81-83, High Street, within the historic core of Great Missenden was undertaken. Test pits in the workshops at the east end of the courtyard showed made ground to a depth of c 2m, suggesting the presence of a backfilled chalkpit. Investigations around the north range indicated a mid to late 19th century date for the upstanding walls and identified site levelling deposits from the same period. Test pits in and around the south range showed that the upstanding walls dated from the 19th century and revealed the remains of a late 18th or early 19th century wall footing below the present south wall. This work was carried out as part of a condition of planning permission relating to a proposal to convert the premises into The Dahl Museum.

Manor Farmhouse, Oving Road, Whitchurch (SP 7998 2103)

Chris Turner

During April 2001 an evaluation on land at Manor farm, Oving Road, Whitchurch was carried out. The remains of a 20th century 'Dutch Barn' were encountered but no significant archaeological remains were revealed.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

Compiled by Andy Chapman and Pat Chapman

Ashridge Estate (SP 952 129 – SP 955 155) Andy Chapman

An archaeological survey of land at Aldbury Nowers, Pitstone Hill and Down Farm was carried out for the National Trust as part of their larger study of the Ashridge Estate, which lies in both Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire.

The principal monument within the study area is the Grim's Ditch, and the present study has clarified details of its form and arrangement. In places it comprises only a single bank and ditch, but along much of the chalk escarpment in the woodland of Aldbury Nowers and on Pitstone Hill there are parallel upper and lower ditch systems, linked at the ends by short lengths that climb directly up the escarpment.

However, on the highest ground within Aldbury Nowers the system is completely absent, with the earthworks

terminating at the base of low natural scarps that encircle the hilltop.

In addition to the two known upstanding round barrows in the woodland, the presence of a low-mounded round barrow on Pitstone Hill, located in a recent survey, was confirmed. The quarry pits on Pitstone Hill and in the woodland were recorded, and the presumed Neolithic flint mines on Pitstone Hill were surveyed in detail. A chronology for the hollow way system that climbs the escarpment onto Pitstone Hill has been suggested. Finally, the earthwork remnants and the ploughed down system of lynchets and field banks have been shown to relate to boundaries of the recent field system, as shown on historic maps, and not to an earlier Celtic field system. The woodland banks and ditches in Aldbury Nowers were also recorded.

Astwood, Cottages at the Bury, Turvey Road (SP 4976 4857)

Alex Thorne and Joe Prentice

Building recording was carried out prior to the conversion of cottages at The Bury, Turvey Road into two dwellings. A watching brief was carried out during the construction of the access drive and the digging of new wall and service trenches.

The timber building was shown to be a three-bayed residence with parlour, hall and service room on the ground floor, and with a specially built bay for a stone and brick chimney stack. Several fixtures and door fittings, which appear to have been made especially for the building, suggest a 17th century date for the timber phase. Several survivals of daub, likely to have come from former wattling, also suggest that the timber framing was standing before the brick infill was inserted. When two stone cottages were added, prior to 1881, the timber building was divided into two separate cottages and its former access and internal arrangements were changed accordingly. All four cottages were decorated and equipped with the same fittings, and all had attic rooms. A later lean-to building, had been added to the northern side by 1900, required further alterations and the blocking of some windows.

Calverton, Passenham Quarry (SP 7786 3896) Simon Carlyle and Tim Hallam

Archaeological trial trench evaluation, commissioned by Adrian Havercroft acting for clients, was carried out at the site of a proposed extension to Passenham Quarry in Calverton parish, to confirm the presence and nature of features identified by aerial photography and earthwork and geophysical surveys.

The earliest features are a line of four ring ditches situated on a gravel island adjacent to the river. A small number of flint artefacts and the general morphology of these features suggest they are Bronze Age round barrows, but with only the truncated ditches surviving. No evidence was found for internal structures. An undated possible sub-circular enclosure with internal features may be associated.

A complex enclosure system on the slopes at the margin of the floodplain was confirmed as being an Iron Age/Romano-British settlement. The recovery of building

materials such as brick and hypocaust tile (box and pilae), along with finds of coins and metalwork, suggests that this was a small but relatively well appointed 'settlement' or farmstead.

Haversham, Hill Farm (SP 8370 4370)

Tora Hylton and Michael Webster

A small-scale excavation at Hill Farm, Haversham, Milton Keynes, revealed evidence of Roman occupation from the mid 1st through to the 3rd or 4th centuries AD. A probable enclosure ditch was succeeded in the later 1st/2nd century by stone-founded buildings, which were abandoned during the 3rd century. The finds recovered indicate particularly intense activity in the 1st and 2nd centuries with an unusual abundance of fine wares appropriate to a dining area. There was, however, little building material and it was not clear what sort of buildings the remains represented.

Milton Keynes, Shenley Wood (SP 8270 3592)

Ian Fisher

Geophysical survey comprising magnetic susceptibility (MS) and gradiometer survey was carried out over 22.5ha at Shenley Wood. The work was commissioned by Oxford Archaeology to inform a planning application for development. The MS survey showed little variation in low levels of susceptibility other than over a former archaeological excavation. Subsequent detailed gradiometer survey was carried out over four areas revealing several possible ditches or furrows and a putative brick structure.

Olney, Cowper Tannery (SP 887 510)

Alex Thorne

Following an evaluation (*SMA* 33 (2003) 30), Bloor Homes Midlands commissioned a recording action in advance of a housing development. A minor prehistoric presence comprised a small Neolithic flint assemblage and two postholes that contained some middle/late Iron Age pottery. A scatter of Roman coins, pottery, glass and roof tile may indicate the presence of a nearby building.

Early/middle Saxon occupation comprised a single foundation slot. There was a cluster of late Saxon features, but the site was principally developed from the 11th century when a timber building and yard was set within a plot or enclosure. By the 12th century a system of linear ditches divided the site into quarter and half-acre sized plots set alongside a track. Features within the plots included an iron smelting furnace, together with evidence of nearby smithing, a well and rubbish, cess and quarry pits. The plot boundaries were redefined during the 13th century, and one of these boundaries was retained into the post-medieval period, when it was defined by a limestone wall.

In the later medieval period there were few features within the plots, although a malting oven of 14th century date stood close to the frontage. From the 16th century to the present day the site was divided into the three plots, and they contained contemporary rubbish pits, postholes, wells and cobbled surfaces.

Olney, The Stable at Cowper Tannery (SP 8874 5171)

Alex Thorne

A full record of the 19th century stable building was made, commissioned by Bloor Homes, before it was converted into a single dwelling. The sub-rectangular structure is of one build with the site retaining wall on Lime Street. The ground floor comprises stalls and a separate tack-room with a large hayloft over. A former window in the stable room was blocked and had been covered by a lean-to built in the adjacent property. A sloping brick floor shows the position of two stalls with an open passage in front. Some original but repaired wooden fittings survived including stable doors, a stall and hayrack. The tack room was last used as a garage whilst the hayloft appears to have been used until recently for storage.

Stowe Landscape Gardens (SP 674 383)

Joe Prentice, Tora Hylton, Adrian Butler, Ian Fisher, Dave Leigh and Ailsa Westgarth

Work has been carried out on behalf of the National Trust as part of the ongoing restoration of the landscape and monuments.

Lakeside Pavilions

Building recording during the removal of the present roof covering of the lakeside pavilions revealed a variety of carpenters and masons marks which may relate to the alteration of the structures after they were relocated during 1764. Dendrochronology dating of some of the roof timbers did not conclusively establish the phasing of the present roof structure. It is thought that the decorated plaster ceilings of both pavilions were replaced during the 1970s when previous restoration work was carried out under the tenure of Stowe School. A geophysical survey between the pavilions and outside the ha-ha failed to conclusively establish the former positions of the buildings or the steps into the gardens.

Deer Park

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the restoration of historic tree planting within the Deer Park at Stowe Gardens. All tree pits were examined as they were dug and a percentage were recorded in detail. No archaeological features or artefacts were found.

Weston Underwood and Ravenstone, "White's Close" and "Chase Pales" (SP 8452 8552)

Adrian Butler, Jim Brown, Ian Fisher and Chris Jones

A geophysical survey was carried out at White's Close in advance of the proposed extension of woodland at Hanger Spinney, and trial trenches were excavated prior to the construction of a residential dwelling at Chase Pales. Both works were commissioned by John Niles Forestry acting on behalf of the owner Mr T Jensen. Possible ditches were identified by the geophysical survey, but no archaeological features or artefacts were found in the evaluation trenches.

Buckinghamshire

Weston Underwood, Weston House (SP 8675 5074)

Joe Prentice and Danny McAree

A building survey and trial excavation at Weston House, Weston Underwood was carried out ahead of the building of an extension to the south of the present house and a detached garage at the east of the property.

The present building is all that remains of a substantial courtyard building dating from the 16th century with extensive additions in the 17th and 18th centuries. The remaining building once formed part of the service range of the main house and contains four main phases of building. The core of the house dates to the late 16th century and was later refaced in the early 18th century to balance with an opposing wing of the main house. Four additional rooms, linked by a corridor and new staircase, were added under a gabled extension in the early 19th century. Part of an adjoining 18th century building was connected to the present house in the early 20th century. Cellars to the west and south of the 16th century building contain a four-centred arched doorway.

The trial trenches were excavated to assess the survival of the original building layout. A substantial stone wall foundation, flanked by a stone lined culvert, defined the original line of the 18th century east wing.

Whaddon, Stearthill Farm (SP 8065 3120)

Ian Fisher

Magnetic Susceptibility survey was undertaken on approximately 62ha at Stearthill Farm, Whaddon. It revealed a system of parallel linear features that may either be remnants of a medieval ridge and furrow field system or post-medieval land drains. Two areas of enhanced data in the southern part of the study area could denote the presence of archaeological remains, but further survey or excavation would be required to confirm this.

Wolverton Mill, Milton Keynes (SP 801 409)

Ed Taylor

A watching brief and small area excavation was carried out at Wolverton Mill Training Centre, Milton Keynes, on behalf of Quadrant Homes Ltd.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

Land adjacent to 2 Stratford Rd, Buckingham

(SP 6985 3417)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at land adjacent to 2 Stratford Road on behalf of Mr J K Halford, between the 5/9/2003 and 4/11/2003. The site is situated on the outskirts of the Saxon and medieval town. The watching brief revealed two layers of cultivated soils, which had been cut by a 19th century foundation trench.

Stratford House, Stratford Road, Buckingham

(SP 6985 3417)

Jon Hiller

An excavation was undertaken on behalf of MOH Properties Ltd, between 13 and 15th August 2003. The site was a derelict plot located on the south-west side of the Stratford Road. The excavation indicated that the site was occupied from the 11th to 13th centuries and then again from the 17th century down to the present day, with a hiatus in occupation between these two periods. This could indicate that the town contracted in the aftermath of the Black Death, with the excavation site then lying derelict until the town expanded again in the post-medieval period.

St Leonard's church, Grendon Underwood

(SP 6772 2099)

Jon Hiller

A field evaluation was undertaken on behalf of the Parochial Church Council, between 10/11/2003 and 14/11/2003. The church is 12th century in date with 14th century additions. It had been renovated on the 19th century. The evaluation consisted of four trenches in the proposed area of the development. The evaluation revealed a sequence of medieval and possibly late Saxon activity against the north wall of the nave. This comprised the insertion of 3 graves into a buried medieval soil horizon sometime in the 12th to 13th centuries and possibly two phases of construction for buttresses in the 14th and possibly 15th centuries. Sherds of late Saxon pottery were recovered suggesting activity of that period in the vicinity.

Springfield, Church Road, Penn, High Wycombe

(SU 913 934)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at Springfield on behalf of Derbygrove Ltd, between 2/9/03 and 10/9/03. On the site stood a 1930s house and garages. These were demolished and the new house and garages constructed on the site. No archaeological features or deposits were observed within the area of the development.

Notley Abbey, Long Crendon (SP 715 093)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at Notley Abbey, Long Crendon on behalf of Mrs A Danny between the 13/6/03 and 2/7/03. The watching brief monitored the rebuilding of a collapsed post-medieval garden wall, which contained reused moulded stone probably from the demolished abbey buildings.

Old Rectory, Ludgershall (SP 6590 1720)

James Mumford

A field evaluation was undertaken at the Old Rectory on behalf of Mr D Howden, on the 30th October 2003. The area of proposed development is located immediately adjacent to

a scheduled moated manorial site (SAM 32105) and is situated in land to the rear of a coaching house. The moated site has a leat or extended fishpond that may possibly extend into the rectory grounds.

The evaluation exposed substantial made ground deposits, a possible backfilled medieval leat or fishpond and an 18th century ditch, pit or posthole and possible buried lawn associated with re-landscaping of the area.

Beam End Cottage, Church Road, Penn (SU 9095 9340)
James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at Beam End Cottage on behalf of Mr S W Jones, between 9/7/2003 and 17/7/2003. The cottage had a tile with the date of 1660 set into the side of a rear doorway. This was possibly placed there during a later rebuild, the roof being retiled and the lower timber frame walls being replaced in flint and tile. The watching brief revealed a number of features relating to the 17th century occupation and alterations to the cottage. These consisted of a flint-lined well and rubbish pits, which had been truncated by the late 20th century extension to the cottage.

Whiteleaf Hill, Princes Risborough (SP 822 040)
Caroline Dennis

An investigation of the archaeological monuments on Whiteleaf Hill in the Chilterns, was carried out on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council. Investigations focused on the re-excavation and reinstatement of a Neolithic oval barrow (Scheduled Monument Number, SM, 19053) which was extensively excavated in the 1930s by Sir Lindsay Scott. The investigation revealed the extent of the 1930s excavation, the nature and extent of the in situ barrow remains, the location of the surrounding ditch and, cut into the chalk within the barrow, an earlier two post mortuary structure. Upon completion of the investigation, Scott's original contour survey was used as a guide to accurately reinstate the monument in its correct location.

The other monuments investigated include two round barrows, a cross-ridge dyke and a chalk-cut cross on a triangular base. Excavation of the first round barrow (SM 19047) revealed a very dense flint scatter, of probable Bronze Age date, on what seemed to be a natural knoll; there was no evidence of a burial mound. Evaluation of the second round barrow (SM 19048) revealed one arm of a cross-shaped cut in the centre of the mound, representing the foundations of a post-built medieval windmill; no evidence of a burial mound was found. Evaluation of the cross-ridge dyke (SM 27148) revealed both a large V-shaped ditch and the remnants of a bank running east-west across the north-south escarpment for approximately 55m. A Bronze Age date was considered most likely for this feature but this cannot be confirmed as no dating evidence was recovered. Two small trenches were excavated at the base of the chalk-cut cross (SM 27147) but no dating evidence was found. The first documentary record of the cross dates to the mid 18th century.

All Saints Church, Soulbury (SP 8820 2705)
James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at All Saints Church on behalf of the Church Parish Council, on the 6th February 2003. The watching brief monitored the service trench as it crossed numerous earthworks visible in the vicinity of the church and probably representing the remains of houses, crofts and closes of the medieval village. Nineteenth century made ground deposits were recorded around the church, but evidence of the medieval village was observed in the vicinity of the earthworks.

St Giles Church, Stoke Poges (SU 9701 8350)
James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at St Giles Church on behalf of the Church Parish Council, between 22/9/2003 and 24/9/2003. The archaeological watching brief revealed three unmarked graves and foundation trenches for the late 18th century boundary wall and 1907 vestry.

Stowe School, Stowe (SP 6700 3750)
James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at Stowe School on behalf of the School, between 14/8/02 and 3/4/03. The watching brief monitored a number of new service trenches excavated around the grounds of Stowe School. The watching brief revealed a number of features and deposits relating to various landscaping activities around the house dating from the late 17th century through to the Victorian and later periods.

Stowe House, Stowe (SP 6700 3750)
Andy Holmes

A small excavation was undertaken of a hole for the support to the scaffolding, which was followed by a geophysical survey and a watching brief to monitor the remainder of the works. This was on behalf of Stowe School, between 3rd and 17th July 2003. The work consisted of the excavation of ten scaffolding anchor pits, of which four were on the south side of the house and six on the north.

The excavations in the North Front revealed an alignment of three stone plinths on either side of the North Portico roughly respecting the present arcade. These structures may have been built during or after the construction of the North Front by the first Lord Cobham in the mid to late 17th century, or later under the direction of Earl Temple in the 18th century, and represent a possible colonnade or arched arcade. A modern and earlier 19th century system of brick and stone culverts was found under the cobbled walkway behind the arcade.

In the South Front the excavations revealed a clay-lined tank possibly associated with the construction of Stowe House. This structure was built over and within substantial deposits of made ground forming the South Front terrace constructed in the late 18th century by Earl Temple. Garden features in the form of paths and possible hedge trenches were also

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identified, though these were recent modern additions to the South Front.

Geophysical survey results identified possible earlier garden features within the south-west lawn, west and outside of the area of trenches in the South Front.

4 South Street, Wendover (SU 8677 0770)

Jon Hiller

A field evaluation was undertaken on behalf of Sidleys Chartered Surveyors, between 3 and 4th December 2002. This consisted of two trenches situated on the site of a garden, with paths, small trees and an upstanding greenhouse. The evaluation revealed a pit of probable 15th century date, a post-medieval property boundary or garden ditch and several post-medieval domestic rubbish pits. These latter features are probably associated with documented properties on the site in the 17th and 18th centuries. A layer of roofing tile observed above the level of these features probably relates to the demolition of these structures.

RICHARD IVENS

Akeley, Broadlands, Leckhampstead Road (SP 7099 3753)

A trial trench evaluation was carried out as a condition of outline planning permission to erect a dwelling house. Evidence in the form of postholes, a stone wall and yard surfaces associated with 13th or possibly late 12th century pottery was revealed, indicating that the Application Site contained at least part of a homestead or similar settlement of 13th or possibly late 12th century date, perhaps connected with assarting along Leckhampstead Road. Following the abandonment of the settlement, the site seems to have reverted to agricultural use, but by the late 18th century it was again part of a homestead enclosure, although the associated buildings seem to lie west of the Application Site. Later 19th and earlier 20th century map evidence suggest the Application Site lay within a small field (2002).

Akeley, The Roses, Chapel Lane (SP 7086 3777)

A trial trench evaluation was carried out as a condition of planning permission. The trial trench evidence suggests that the east part of the Application Site formed part of the adjacent field, which may be of medieval origin. Only slight and poorly preserved remains survived, consisting of possible medieval ditches and post-medieval ditches and a trackway.

There is clear evidence from the more westerly trenches (5 and 6) that the west part of the site was divided into plots in the 13th or 14th century, in fact there is evidence of two phases of such divisions. No structures of this period were identified and it is likely that their remains lie beneath the extant buildings bordering Main Street. The medieval and post-medieval strata revealed suggest that the Application Site has been used for agriculture or gardening from the 11th century to the present.

Evidence was further revealed suggesting that a substantial boundary ditch existed in the 11th or 12th century, possibly forming the rear of tenement plots running off Main Street or the boundary to an open field, or more probably serving both purposes.

It is also apparent from the excavation of Trenches 5 and 6 that the present topography is very different to that of the Middle Ages, with a substantial raising of the ground level having taken place, possibly a deliberate measure to reclaim what must have been a low and rather wet part of the village (2003).

Bradwell, Bradwell Abbey (SP 8270 3950)

Between 1995 and 1997 a series of investigations was carried out on the site of Bradwell Abbey, mainly in response to the development of the City Discovery Centre (CDC). Full reports have been deposited with English Heritage, CDC and Milton Keynes SMR.

Geophysical Survey

In 1995 a Geophysical Survey was carried out by Mr A Aspinall and R J Ivens in the paddock to the west of the farmhouse and over the site of the priory church.

The interpretation of the resistivity survey of the church area is complicated by the gravelled-path reconstruction of the church and areas of earlier archaeological excavation (see Mynard, 1994 for a report on excavations of the site and an account of the documentary evidence).

The most obvious feature is the large rectangular building with internal subdivisions situated to the west of the standing chapel. This feature does not seem to match any structure described in Brabazon's 16th century survey (Mynard 1994, 8ff), nor the general pattern of Benedictine monastic architecture. It may of course be of post-medieval date, but does not appear on any of the extensive range of known maps of the 18th century and later. The possibility that it is an early structure, perhaps predating the extant medieval buildings, must therefore be considered. This is certainly an area of the site that would repay further investigation. The very high values at the east end of this 'new' building probably indicates the site of the cow shed or barn which stood here until c 1950. North of this 'new' building is a rectangular cell marked by low values which may indicate another, robbed, stone building which is otherwise unknown.

A second rectangular structure can be seen to the south of the church site. No modern farm buildings are recorded at this point and the feature aligns with the robber trench found in trial trench Cutting II (1967/8; Mynard 1994, Fig. 14), a little to the south. The position of this building also approximates to the row of houses some 86ft in length which was noted by Brabazon (Mynard 1994, Building 12, Fig 3). If this building is indeed the row of houses described by Brabazon, then the various reconstructions of the Abbey's plan all require minor modification. Thus the row of houses should be placed a little further to the east and north, running south from the chapter house.

Turning now to the church. The positions of the nave, chancel and transepts are fairly clear, as is that of the chapter house. On either side of the chancel, at its junction with the

nave, are pairs of almost square cells. It seems likely that the cell in the angle of the north chancel and nave walls is the small chapel (17 x 16ft) described by Brabazon (Mynard 1994, 8ff). The block of very high values immediately east of this might be the unlocated vestry (as it does seem to be a likely position), but could be no more than building debris. The double cell on the south of the chancel may be the second chapel mentioned by Brabazon, for which he gives no measurements. Alternatively the western cell may be the chapel, paralleling the northern chapel, while the east cell is some other structure. Only excavation could further clarify these matters.

Little can be said as to any other monastic buildings set around the cloisters, as the survey area was only able to include their margins.

The second survey area, in the paddock to the west of the farm buildings, is in some ways less complex but certainly no less interesting. A ditched island with a central square feature is apparent and this must surely be the dovecote noted by Brabazon and shown on a late 18th century estate map (Mynard 1994, Fig 4).

Areas of high resistance are noticeable immediately south of the probable dovecote and unsurveyed quarry and more particularly over the eastern side of the survey area. The former may be no more than debris associated with the quarry. The latter is suggestive of building tumble and shows ragged north-south and east-west lines. This band of high values coincides with a low earthwork bank and it does seem likely that it is the site of the range of 'diverse houses' (180ft long) noted by Brabazon and therefore fits well with the various reconstructions of the Abbey by Mynard (1994, Fig. 3). There is no clear evidence indicating the site of Gatehouse and associated structures, and it may be these lie outside of the surveyed area.

A hollow-way-like feature running south from the quarry may still be seen (Mynard 1994, Fig 2) and the resistivity survey reveals that this feature is bounded by two ditches, and so the whole feature looks like a ditched-hollow-way. A prominent low between these two ditches may be a well or pit of earlier or later date.

Church 'Excavation'

On September 15th 1996 as part of the National Archaeology Day events at Bradwell Abbey a short section of the gravel paths marking out the plan of the excavated priory buildings was removed and the surviving footings and robber trenches exposed, but not excavated. The investigation was designed to clarify the relationship of the walls of the southwest corner of the priory church and the adjacent structure (interpreted by Mynard (1994, Fig 17, walls 1, 9 and 10) as the King's Chamber) as it had been noticed that the wall between the church and the 'King's Chamber' was considerably narrower than the south and the greater part of the west church walls.

This investigation confirmed that the wall between the church and the 'King's Chamber' is significantly narrower than the adjacent walls of the Priory Church and was also butted against the south wall of the church. The wall forming the south side of the church and the 'King's Chamber' appeared to be of a single build. Extensive robbing precluded the possibility of establishing the

relationship of the north wall of the 'King's Chamber' with the west wall of the church.

The reason for this narrow wall between church and 'King's Chamber' remains obscure but it could be blocking of an opening between the church and the 'King's Chamber'. The 'King's Chamber' might now be seen as another small chapel (though there is no mention of such in Brabazon's 16th century survey), or perhaps as the vestry mentioned by Brabazon (Mynard 1994, 8ff).

If the King's Chamber is to be sited elsewhere then the position of several other buildings (Hall and Prior's Chamber) which Brabazon describes in relation to the King's Chamber may also need to be modified. In practice this questions large parts of the current interpretation of the layout of the monastic buildings. There are therefore a number of questions regarding the structure of the church and the layout of the other monastic buildings which can only be answered by further excavation.

City Discovery Centre Building Excavation

In September and October 1996 the 'footprint' of the new City Discovery Centre building was excavated, following the demolition of the 1950s prefabricated concrete barn which stood on the site. No evidence of medieval or earlier activity was revealed and the whole area seems to have been deliberately reduced for the construction of the concrete barn, and all that survived was slight evidence of 19th and 20th century use.

Watching Brief

Between March and November 1997 a watching brief was maintained during the digging of new service trenches, wall foundations and minor structural modifications to standing buildings.

The overriding impression created by these investigations is one of massive and wholesale post-medieval destruction. To a considerable extent this is true, though it should be remembered that a deliberate policy of avoiding archaeologically sensitive areas was rigorously implemented. It may be that future work, in the area of the church or within other surviving medieval buildings, will prove more rewarding.

Those areas of the site which had been used for farming purposes, particularly the trackways and yards, had been heavily disturbed in post-medieval and modern times. No archaeological remains survived in the trenches alongside the road connecting the site with Alston Drive, and the whole of the outer yard (now a car park) had been completely destroyed and it is unlikely that any archaeological remains survive. The farmyard to the south of the Cruck Barn had also been heavily disturbed by the laying of post-medieval yards and repeated modern trenching for drainage (and other services). A similar pattern was revealed in the inner courtyard, between the Farmhouse and the Bakehouse.

Perhaps more surprising than the level of destruction is the paucity of medieval artefacts discovered. Even allowing for such a heavy degree of disturbance one would still expect to find a substantial amount of redeposited medieval pottery, etc. in an area that was clearly within the bounds of the priory. Many of the excavation areas were a considerable

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distance from the main monastic settlement in areas of purely farming activity and this partly explains the scarcity of artefacts in the more southerly trenches. In the vicinity of the undoubtedly medieval Bakehouse, however, a similar dearth of finds occurred.

The site seems to have undergone a major clearance and redevelopment in the late 17th or early 18th century, when the Alston family are known to have carried out a considerable rebuilding and landscaping of their estate (Mynard *et al* 1994, 17). It is this development which seems to have scoured so much of the site of its medieval remains. Subsequent farming activities exacerbated this.

Some of these post-medieval remains do, however, provide us with a somewhat fragmentary picture of the site in the late 17th or early 18th century. At this time the Alstons restored and enlarged the house and laid out a park to the west. The farmyard to the south of the Cruck Barn and the inner courtyard next to the house also seem to have freshly laid out about this time. The inner courtyard had a pitched stone paving and an elaborate stone-built drain system serving the newly renovated house; the elaborate drain is certainly the wall noted in a manhole in 1982 (Mynard 1994, 52). Traces of an elaborate block-paved track leading to the south porch of the Cruck Barn attests to refurbishment of that part of the site. The substantial rebuilding of the Cruck Barn, for which clear evidence was discovered, may also have formed part of this general refurbishing of the site. Other developments of this period include the Stone Barn. Some evidence was revealed suggesting that much of the east end of the Cruck Barn, including the west wall of the south porch, was a post-medieval rebuilding. Absolute proof in the form of wall footings was found demonstrating that the medieval barn originally extended to join the stone east wall of the 'Astronomer's Hut', built along the western edge of the Great Pond. Consequently, of course, the present east wall of the Cruck Barn must be secondary.

Otherwise, a number of useful details concerning the construction techniques of the Cruck Barn, the Spiral Room and the Bakehouse range were revealed.

Reference

Mynard, D. C. 1994. 'Bradwell Abbey', *Rec of Bucks* 36, 1-61

Broughton, Brooklands Farm (SP 8977 4002)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of stanchion pits for a new barn. No pre-modern archaeological features were observed (2001).

Lavendon, Abbey Farm Lodge Lavendon Grange (SP 9026 5334)

A watching brief was carried out during groundworks for a new orangery. The site had been considerably disturbed by garden works, construction and drainage works associated with the existing house, and by earlier, 19-20th century, drainage schemes. No pre-modern deposits or artefacts were observed (2003).

Lillingstone Lovell, land off Deanshanger Road (SP 7184 4247)

A watching brief was carried out during the stripping of topsoil in advance of the construction of a stable block. At no point was the entire thickness of topsoil removed.

During the course of the ground-works a quantity of pottery and other artefacts, predominately of 17th to early 18th century date, was recovered. It is suggested that this pottery bearing deposit is related to the linear soil-mark (BCAS 4817) which runs through the Development Site. It is further suggested that the linear soil-mark itself is the remnant of one of the roads recorded as crossing the area on late 17th and early 18th century maps (2002).

Milton Keynes Village, Birds Cottage (SP 8893 3912)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of the foundation and service trenches for a new garage, garden room, etc., immediately northeast of Birds Cottage itself. Birds Cottage dates to about 1300 and may have been the centre of a small manor. The Development Site was formerly occupied by a series of 19th century barns and sheds associated with the Birds' family building company. Remains of these modern buildings, service trenches and numerous 19th century rubbish pits were observed during the course of the Watching Brief. No archaeological remains predating the 19th century were observed (2001).

Milton Keynes Village, Pondwykes, Willen Road (SP 8877 3923)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of the foundation trenches for a small extension at the southeast end of the existing house. The area of the extension proved to have been heavily disturbed by modern service trenches. A yard surface of brick and cobbles extended over all the undisturbed area and this was found to seal a large pit of 19th century date (2001).

Newport Pagnell, The Old Fire Station, High Street (SP 8874 4394)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of several small service trenches and a pit for a manhole in the yard of the Old Fire Station. At no point did the ground disturbance penetrate to a depth of greater than 450mm and was entirely confined within a topsoil layer cut by an existing soak-away and several modern service trenches, all sealed by a modern concrete slab paving. Finds were limited to 19th and 20th century brick and pottery fragments. No archaeological deposits were revealed (2000).

Newport Pagnell, 126 High Street (SP 8726 4380)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of the foundation trenches for a new garage and workshop at the rear of the property. A large and sharply cut ditch-like feature was recorded in both the western and eastern footings of the garage (7.75m apart). The ditch was some

3m wide and although not fully excavated was at least 1.6m deep. During a partial collapse of the western foundation trench, natural gravel was observed behind the fill of this ditch, and this suggests that the ditch turns sharply to the north, immediately west of the Development Site. The few artefacts found in the fill of the ditch indicate a post-medieval date and there is really only one event in the history of post-medieval Newport Pagnell which could have produced such a defensive ditch, the Civil War between Parliament and King Charles I. The section of ditch revealed during the Watching Brief may be the southern ditch of Bastion B shown on Cornelius Vanden Broome's 1644 plan of the Civil War defences of Newport Pagnell (2001).

Olney, 106 High Street (SP 8897 5179)

A trial trench evaluation was carried out as a condition of planning permission.

Substantial remains of a post-medieval building (stable block ?) were revealed. A large stone-built but robbed drain was discovered, probably of post-medieval date, but possibly earlier. A scatter of medieval pottery indicates medieval use of the area but the only probable medieval feature was a cess (?) pit. A single sherd of Roman pottery in a stratigraphically early gully may suggest some utilisation of the area in the later 2nd century (2003).

Olney, 5 High Street South (SP 8890 5113)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of foundation trenches for a new conservatory. The development area proved to have been much disturbed by recent service trenches, etc. No medieval or earlier contexts were identified. Two unstratified sherds of late medieval pottery were recovered. Natural ground was not established and the site may have been levelled-up in the 19th century. Archaeological remains could, therefore, survive below the relatively shallow foundations of the new building (2002).

Olney, 8 Silver End (SP 8901 5124)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of the foundation trenches for a small extension to the rear (west) of the standing brick terrace house. The development area proved to have been much disturbed by recent service trenches and modern (20th century) pits. The stone footings of the northern property boundary wall and the western wall of No 8 Silver End were shown to be of a single build. No other significant remains were observed (2001).

Ravenstone, Whilom Wheatsheaf (SP 8497 5083)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of foundation trenches for a house extension. The development area proved to have been much disturbed by levelling for a modern car park and garden terrace as well as recent service trenches. No deposits or artefacts were found which could pre-date the 20th century. Natural limestone of the Great Oolite series was established over most of the development area (2002).

Waldridge, Waldridge Manor, Owlswick Road, Ford (SP 7817 0727)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of foundation trenches for a small extension. The site was found to have been disturbed in modern times by an earlier extension to the existing house and by numerous drains. Evidence was also found indicating that much of the area investigated had been disturbed in post-medieval times. No remains were identified which could be confidently associated with the 16th or early 17th century manor house and no medieval or earlier remains were noted (2002).

WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY

Princes Risborough: Upper School (481200 203000)
J Gardiner

The discovery of a human burial during groundworks at Princes Risborough Upper School led to a small-scale excavation. The remains of three individuals were recovered: an infant and two neonates who had been buried within the terminus of a ditch and an adjacent pit. The area was sealed by a relatively thick deposit of Romano-British material, including pottery and animal bone. It is likely that this area represents the edge of nearby settlement.

Wexham: Langley Park House (500900 181560)
J Gardiner

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on the excavation of a geotechnical test pit in advance of the proposed excavation of a 7 x 3.5m area to accommodate a temporary pool, associated with the production of a film. Although no archaeological features were revealed by the test pit, a number of post-medieval layers were recorded in section, which may have related to former garden features. Subsequent to the watching brief, it was decided to abandon the sunken pool in favour of a 'free-standing' pool in the same location.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES AND CONSULTANCY LTD

The Old Rectory, Wicken (SP 7432 3947)
Bob Zeepvat

In January 2003 building recording work was undertaken at The Old Rectory during refurbishment and conversion of the building, formerly a hotel, to private residential use. The Old Rectory, an early 18th century Grade II-listed building, was the subject of a detailed historic building survey in April 2002 (SMA 33, 39), at the start of the refurbishment and additional recording was required as a number of significant structural features had been revealed during

Northamptonshire

building works. These features included: early decorative schemes in the hall (Room 1) and main stairwell; evidence of the 19th century remodelling of Room 2; the false cellar beneath Room 3; blocked windows and other openings in the rear of the first phase house and structural information on several ground floor partitions. The observations these provided additional evidence for dating the phases of the house.

New Stable Block, Towcester Racecourse (SP 7061 4764)

Joe Abrams

During January and February 2003 a watching brief and earthworks survey was undertaken during the groundworks for the construction of new stables and associated parking, on land at Towcester Racecourse, near Towcester.

Medieval ridge and furrow earthworks and three post-medieval tree stumps were recorded within the development area.

The Saracens Head, Daventry (SP 5710 6248)

David Fell

In Spring 2003 an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during refurbishment works and the construction of an extension at the Saracens Head public house. The site was situated within the medieval centre of the town and the works had the potential to disturb remains of medieval date. No significant archaeological remains were observed. The areas had been extensively terraced during the 20th century and a number of modern footings were revealed within the footprint of the extension. Map evidence shows that the plot within which the inn is situated may have been created from the combination of three medieval tenements.

Flood Defences, Kislingbury (SP 6970 5970)

Joe Abrams

Between May and September 2003 an earthwork survey, watching brief and salvage excavation were carried out on land at Kislingbury during the construction of a flood defence scheme. Seventeen earthworks were identified within the study area, although only eight of these were subsequently affected by the groundworks.

Twelve archaeological features were identified during the watching brief. A wall was identified on the west side of the village (SP 69664 59822) which was considered of such importance as to merit a salvage excavation. As a result detailed plans of the wall were made and pieces of animal bone and boar tusks were recovered from an associated occupation layer. Other archaeological remains included a second stretch of wall, a fishpond and three pits, two of which contained sherds of medieval pottery. It is suggested that all of the above were medieval in date. A palaeochannel was also observed in this area.

Immediately west of the Kislingbury road bridge (SP 69965 59849) groundworks revealed the remains of a substantial masonry structure. It is likely that this structure formed part of an earlier, possibly medieval, bridge over the river Nene.

To the east of the village the remains of a 19th century agricultural building (SP 70041 59781) were noted. Associated earthworks and the platform of a second building were observed immediately east.

Wren Wing, Easton Neston (SP 7018 4930)

Bob Zeepvat and Sallianne Wilcox

An historic building survey of the Wren Wing, Easton Neston House near Towcester, was carried out between September and December 2003. The survey was required following a fire in July 2002.

The Wren Wing is the sole survivor of two matching wings flanking the forecourt of Easton Neston House. The Wren Wing was probably designed not by Wren himself, as tradition suggests, but by a draughtsman in his employ. It was probably constructed during the 1680s at the same time as the cellars of the main house, as a service wing containing servants' accommodation.

The building has undergone a number of alterations during its life. In the 19th century the main north elevation was refaced and new door and window surrounds were inserted. The north west wing was separated from the rest of the building and was extended to provide further staff accommodation. The roof was relaid in slate and changes were made to the dormer windows. In the latter part of the 20th century additional partitions were inserted when the building was converted for office use.

Middlemore Farm, Daventry (SP 5670 6500)

Nigel Wilson

In November 2003 an excavation was undertaken at Middlemore Farm where an area of late Iron Age/Roman and medieval activity was revealed. The earliest features on the site comprised a series of ditches aligned northeast to southwest, which are interpreted as field boundary ditches. Use of the landscape intensified during the Roman period and the field system was superseded by two enclosures, defined by ditches. Settlement features, including a number of pits and post-holes, were present within the enclosures and a major ditch towards the south side of the site probably defines the limit of the enclosures. A medieval plough furrow was also recorded. Fig 1.

Filling Station, Northampton Road, Brackley (SP 5930 3850)

David Fell with Jim Possinger

A watching brief and metal-detector survey were undertaken in September 2003 on a site near Brackley. The work was undertaken because the site was adjacent to an area known to contain human burials and settlement features, of possible Iron Age date. The watching brief revealed a small number of undated archaeological features and a 16th century copper alloy buckle. No further burials were observed.

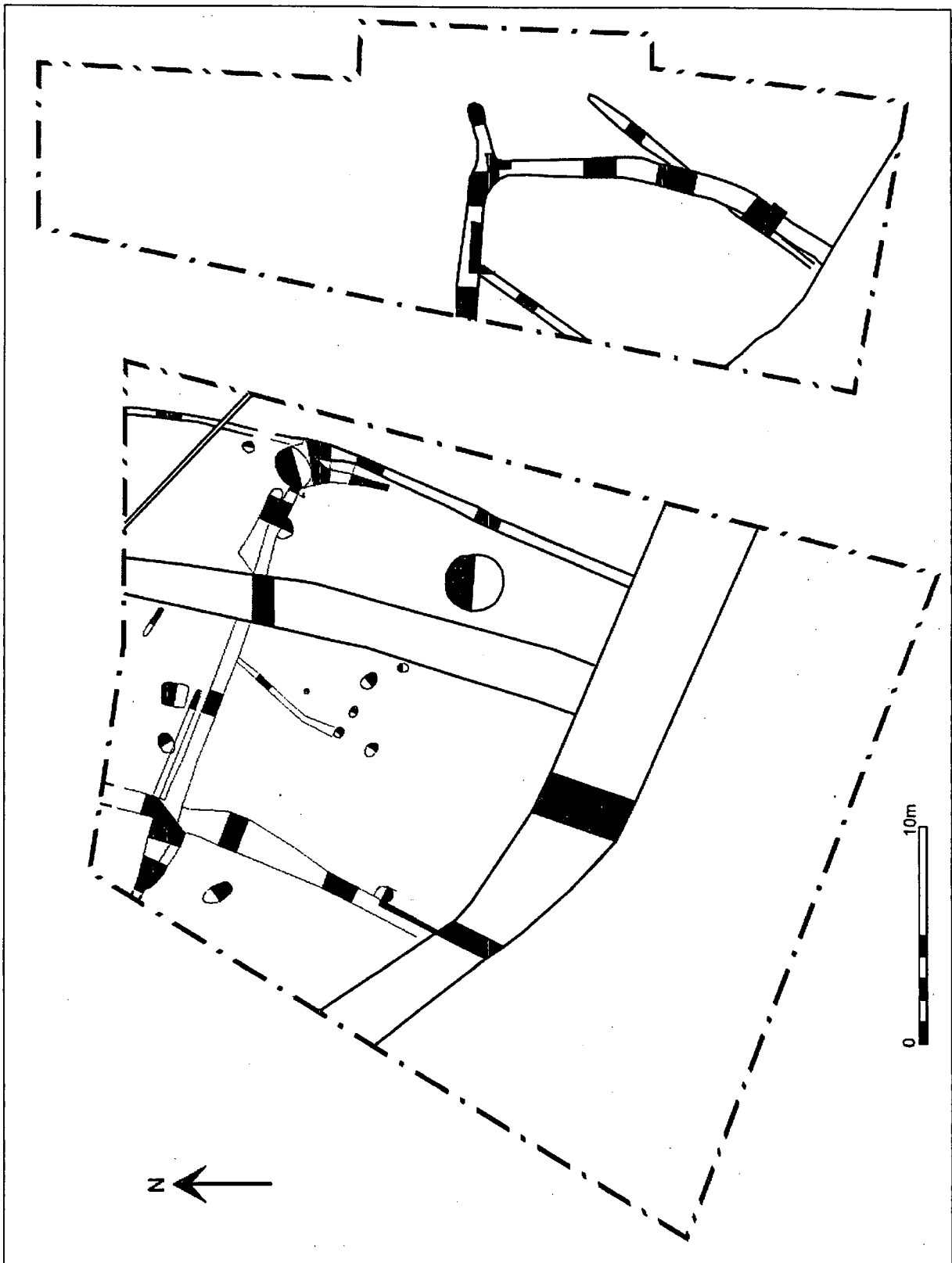


Fig 1. Middlemore Farm, Daventry.

Northamptonshire

'Shoulder of Mutton', Welford (SP 6422 8040)

Joe Abrams

During October 2003 archaeological excavation was carried out on land at the Shoulder of Mutton public house. The site was situated to the rear of the High Street and five phases of activity were defined.

Phase 1 comprised a pit of medieval date. This was cut by an east to west orientated ditch (Phase 2) forming part of a more extensive ditch system. This ditch system does not respect the High Street and may predate the laying out of the High Street and its associated properties.

The landscape was remodelled later in the medieval period when the Manor House was constructed to the west of the site. The wall of the Manor House lay close to the west boundary of the site and a substantial northeast to southwest aligned ditch is probably associated with the Manor House wall (Phase 3). The wall and ditch are parallel with the High Street, which may have developed during this period. The northeast to southwest ditch was probably only in use for a short period as the area was divided by two further ditches, which were aligned perpendicular to the High Street (Phases 4 and 5). The latest phase is defined by three pits each of which contained an articulated horse skeleton. These are post-medieval in date and probably represent activity within the backyards of properties fronting onto the High Street.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS (CONTRACTS) LTD (Formerly The Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust)

Fieldwork and Publication Roundup 2003

Land at Broad Street/St Andrew's Street, Northampton

(SP 7522 6092)

Nicholas A Crank & David Britchfield

During February 2003 a trial trench evaluation was carried out on land off St Andrew's Street. The evaluation was conducted in advance of proposed redevelopment of the site for residential use. Seven trial trenches were excavated, revealing considerable post-medieval and modern truncation in addition to substantial modern levelling/terracing of the sloping site. The latter is attested by the presence of a comparable sequence of dumped deposits in all the trenches. A backfilled cellar of probable late post-medieval date and a single undated small pit was recorded. Four of the trenches contained a former 'garden soil' overlying the natural clay and Northampton Sand deposits. Finds from this deposit were late post-medieval in date, and it was sealed by layers containing modern material. It is likely that this deposit represents a buried late post-medieval land surface, prior to subsequent modern levelling/terracing.

HERITAGE NETWORK

Land at Dando Close, Wollaston (SP 90 62)

Helen Ashworth

The assessment report on this important Anglo-Saxon settlement site has just been produced. Analysis of the excavated features, artefacts and ecofacts has revealed that occupation on the site started in the early Saxon period and continued through into the late Saxon period. This continuity of occupation is unusual for the region. Medieval activity, in the form of quarry pits, was also observed on the site.

A variety of types of building, including post-built structures and Sunken Featured Buildings were present on the site. Evidence for industrial activity, including iron working and weaving, was also recorded. Work has now started on the final publication, which will eventually appear in Northamptonshire Archaeology.

NETWORK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Compiled by Martin Lightfoot

47-53 High street, Potterspury (SP 7586 4313)

Anni Byard

From March to October 2003 a watching brief on land at 47-53 High Street, Potterspury was carried out. Two archaeologically significant deposits were encountered containing large amounts of medieval pottery,

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

Compiled by Andy Chapman and Pat Chapman

Two Anglo-Saxon bone pendants from Northamptonshire

Andy Chapman and Tora Hylton

Anglo-Saxon burials excavated at Glapthorn Road, Oundle and at Wootton Fields Roman villa, Northampton had each been buried with grave goods that included similar antler pendants (Fig 2: a, Oundle; b, Wootton). At Oundle a small cemetery containing at least nine inhumation burials lay on the margins of a Roman farmstead, (*SMA* 30 (2000), 40 & fig 3) while at Wootton a single inhumation burial lay just outside the ditch marking the precinct of a small Roman villa (*SMA* 30 (2000), 40 & fig 2; *SMA* 33 (2003), 53).

The two pendants are both manufactured from flat plates of antler taken as transverse slices from the burr end. They are decorated on both sides with ring-and-dot motifs and while the Oundle example has a simple perforation for suspension, the Wootton pendant is furnished with an iron clasp held by a fine rivet. Both have a central perforation, matching the respective tear-shaped and circular forms. In addition, the Wootton pendant has small marginal perforations, and a further object may have been suspended

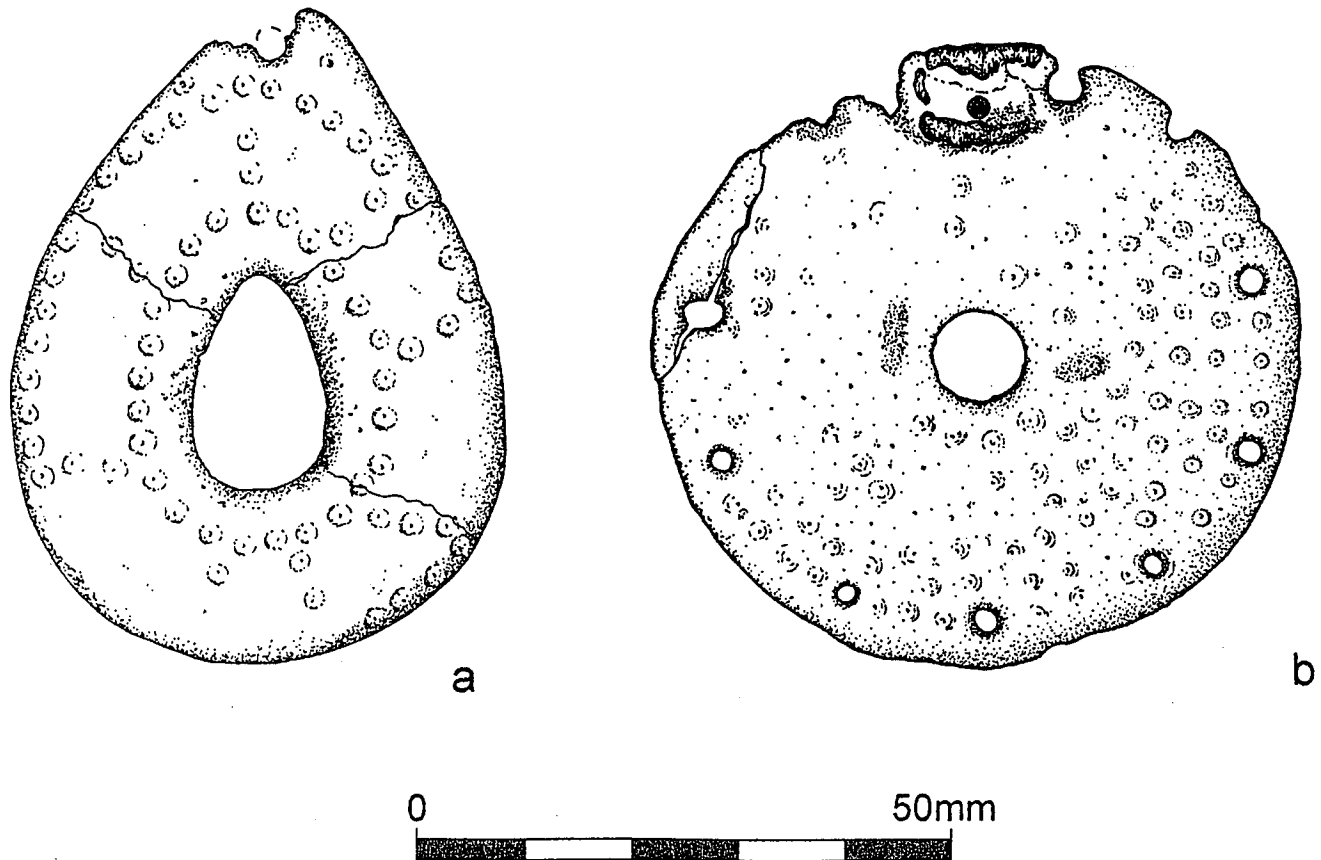


Fig 2. Two Anglo-Saxon bone pendants from Northamptonshire. a, Oundle; b, Wootton

from the lowest of these, which shows signs of wear. In both burials the pendants lay at waist level, indicating that they had probably been suspended from a belt. The function of these objects is uncertain, but it is possible that they may have been worn as protective amulets rather than merely as decorative jewellery.

The burial from Oundle, a woman aged only 20-25 years, was the most richly endowed in the cemetery as, in addition to the pendant, she was provided with two plain pottery bowls, a bone comb, three beads, a copper alloy brooch, a copper alloy buckle and a simple knife. The Wootton burial, a woman of 40-50 years, was provided only with the pendant, a single amber bead, a perforated copper pin and a simple knife.

For both burials the character of the grave goods indicated relatively late dates, in the 6th or even 7th century AD. Given the similarity of these objects, both burials have been radiocarbon dated to provide dates both for the burials themselves and for the use of antler pendants. The radiocarbon dating has confirmed the typological dating. The Oundle burial has been dated to the mid-6th to mid-7th century AD (540-640 cal AD, 68% probability, 1481 $\pm$ 49 BP, Wk-11235), while the Wootton burial is probably slightly later, dating to the early to mid-7th century AD (600-670 cal AD, 68% probability, 1403 $\pm$ 38 BP, Wk-11232). The mid-7th century date for the Wootton burial would also be consistent with the provision of such a modest collection of grave goods.

A6 Rushden to Higham Ferrers bypass (SP 9673 6827)

Ian Fisher and Steve Morris

A geophysical gradiometer survey was undertaken on 0.9ha of land along the route of a proposed water pipeline adjacent to the new bypass. Detailed survey revealed anomalies reflecting ditches of probable Iron Age or Roman date and forming either a ditched enclosure or field systems.

Remnant furrows of the medieval ridge and furrow field system were also located.

Blatherwyke, Boundary Cross (SP 9883 9693)

Simon Carlyle

At the request of English Heritage (East Midlands Region), a watching brief was carried out during the reinstatement of Blatherwyke Boundary Cross (National Monument Number 29713). A foundation pit for the new base stone was excavated 0.4m south of the original location, which had been previously excavated (*SMA* 32 (2002) 26), to avoid future tree root disturbance. No archaeological features or artefacts were found in the pit.

Brackley, Winchester House School (SP 5859 3721)

Alex Thorne

The excavation of trial trenches took place in advance of the construction of new teaching facilities. A few shallow features dated to the medieval period were identified.

Northamptonshire

Post-medieval features included the evidence for demolished structures and the foundations of a demolished boundary wall that had fossilised the line of former medieval tenement boundaries.

Bugbrooke (SP 6867 5675)

Ian Fisher and Peter Masters

A geophysical gradiometer survey was carried out on 2.4ha of land west of Bugbrooke, on behalf of Steve Young of University College, Northampton, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. A series of curvilinear and rectilinear enclosures from at least two phases of activity were revealed, probably of Iron Age and Roman date. There were also the remnant furrows of the medieval ridge and furrow field system.

Daventry, Middlemore Farm (SP 56 65)

David Leigh

A watching brief and excavation was carried out at Middlemore Farm, Daventry, on behalf of Persimmon Homes in advance of the construction of new housing. To the north of the recent farm buildings there were two linear ditch systems that contained a small assemblage of Romano-British pottery and ceramic building tile spanning the late 1st to 4th centuries AD. These features together with the results of previous excavation to the south, indicate the presence of a small Roman settlement occupying an area of at least 1ha and lying under and around the present farm buildings.

Glendon, Glendon Hall, Coach House Barns

(SP 8457 8135)

Joe Prentice and Jacqueline Harding

Building recording was carried out ahead of a proposed conversion of the Coach House Barns of Glendon Hall, a grade II listed building, into residential dwellings. The barns were built in 1862 and an extension was added before 1884. Only the size of the arched opening and the presence of window blinds to prevent fading indicated the use of the barn for coaches, and there was a fireplace probably for the use of a groom's accommodation.

Great Doddington, St Nicholas' Church (SP 8815 6485)

David Leigh

A watching brief undertaken during groundworks associated with the installation of a central heating system at St Nicholas' Church, Great Doddington, revealed evidence of an earlier step associated with the south porch.

Harpole, Barn Close (SP 6890 6200)

Ian Fisher

A geophysical gradiometer survey was undertaken on behalf of Steve Young of University College, Northampton, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The survey revealed the boundary ditches of an extensive field system

as well as also the remnant furrows of the medieval ridge and furrow field system.

Higham Ferrers, College Street (SP 9596 6880)

Chris Jones

Following trial trenching by Northamptonshire Archaeology (*SMA* 33 (2003) 50), a small area excavation was undertaken ahead of residential development on land west of College Street, Higham Ferrers. A number of shallow ditches and pits indicate that the area was first occupied through the 12th century, and tenement plots had probably been established at this time. By the later 13th century several stone buildings had been constructed. The presence of a circular oven base and stone-lined drains suggests that these were ancillary buildings perhaps pertaining to a domestic residence fronting onto College Street, although no evidence for this was located. To the west a ditched and later walled boundary, found in the trial trenching, appears to have divided the frontage from back plots, which contained only quarry pits and scattered smaller pits and ditches. The buildings appear to have fallen out of use by the end of the 15th century when the town is known to have been in decline. The historic map evidence indicates that the southern part of the area was still undeveloped at the end of 16th century, and remained an orchard until well into the 19th century, despite extensive development to the immediate north from the 18th century onward.

Irchester, Roman Town (SP 910 668)

Ed Taylor

A trial excavation was carried out, on behalf of ProLogis Developments Ltd, on land to the west of the Roman walled town, ahead of development of the proposed Victoria Business Park. No archaeological remains were located, and anomalies shown as parchmarks in aerial photographs are likely to represent land drains and modern dumping.

Kettering, Burton Wold Farm (SP 9155 7514)

Ian Fisher

A geophysical survey was carried out over 3.2ha of land containing cropmarks at Burton Wold Farm, Kettering, proposed as the site of a wind farm. A large number of magnetic anomalies were detected indicating the presence of many buried ditches and pits, the majority possibly within a large ditched enclosure.

Kettering, 74 Lower Street (SP 8636 7896)

David Leigh

A watching brief was carried out on behalf of JJ Construction Ltd during groundworks associated with a residential development on land at 74 Lower Street, Kettering. It revealed extensive modern disturbance across the entire site. No archaeological deposits were present, nor were any artefacts recovered.

Kettering, Montague School (SP 876 802)

Ailsa Westgarth

A watching brief was carried out ahead of the construction of a new teaching block at Montague School, but no archaeological features or artefacts were found.

Northampton, Barnes Meadow (SP 7700 5965)

David Leigh

A watching brief during groundworks associated with the creation of a wetland habitat at Barnes Meadow revealed no archaeological deposits, nor were any artefacts recovered.

Northampton, Hardingstone, Tunnel Hill Farm (SP 7417 5866)

Adrian Butler and Ian Fisher

Both gradiometer and resistivity geophysical surveys were carried out over an area of 0.2ha, but only one area revealed a possible boundary ditch associated with an earlier field pattern.

Northampton, Harlestone Quarry extension (SP 708 635)

Jim Brown and Ian Fisher

Geophysical survey was carried out in advance of a proposed extension to the existing quarry at Harlestone within three fields of approximately 22ha. The geophysical survey identified possible ditches of unknown date and remnant medieval ridge and furrow from the former open field system.

Northampton, Holy Sepulchre (SP 7540 6094)

Peter Cinquini

Plans to remove and rebuild an unstable 9m stretch of the north cemetery wall at the Holy Sepulchre Church, entailed a reduction of the surrounding burial ground level by up to 3m. Archaeological excavation within this area uncovered three burials from the Victorian period. They were cut through 1.5-2m of imported soil into a pre mid-19th century horizon. The underlying burial soil contained disarticulated human bone, suggesting that the graveyard may also have been landscaped. It also contained pottery, glass and tile dating from the 13th century through to the post-medieval period, and an assemblage of bone tentatively ascribed to tannery waste. Although the graveyard was apparently closed in the mid-19th century, burials continued to be interred until the late 19th century.

Northampton, Kingswell Street and Woolmonger Street (SP 7532 6033)

Simon Carlyle

An evaluation of land at the junction of Kingswell Street and Woolmonger Street, was carried out on behalf of Westleigh Developments Ltd in advance of proposed redevelopment. Much of the site had been extensively

truncated by modern development, but well-preserved archaeological remains were located beneath a car park fronting onto Kingswell Street. A stone wall, a possible hearth, a bread oven or kiln and a series of layers, some of which appeared to contain cess and other domestic refuse, are broadly dated to the 13th and 14th centuries and show the presence of medieval buildings fronting onto Kingswell Street. These remains were sealed by a layer of soil that probably accumulated in the late medieval to early post-medieval period, when this area was open ground.

Later activity consisted of the remains of a house dating to the late 17th century, a pit of a similar date, and the extensive remains of 19th century buildings. No evidence was found for the 'lost' medieval lane, 'Lewnyslane', connecting Woolmonger Street and Kingswell Street.

Northampton, Lower Mounts and St Michael's Road (SP 7584 6084)

Simon Carlyle

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Lower Mounts, ahead of proposed new buildings for Northampton College. The evaluation revealed significant 19th and 20th century disturbance, with up to 3m of made ground and the remains of brick buildings and basements/cellars. It was not possible to determine whether any earlier deposits survived beneath the recent levels. In the car park set back from the road frontages the natural was located, and a gradual slope to the south was recorded. This suggests that the northern limit of the medieval and Civil War defences would lie near the base of the grass bank bordering Lower Mounts. No artefacts or features predating the 19th century were found. No remains of the short-lived Victorian church of St Michael's were located.

Northampton, 46-50 Sheep Street, former Swan Garage (SP 7537 6082)

Jim Brown

Building recording and analysis followed by trial excavation, commissioned by Hazelwood Renovations Plc, was carried out on the former Douglas Garage, later renamed Swan Garage, prior to proposed demolition of existing structures and its redevelopment as dwellings.

Excavations located a number of deep, later medieval quarry pits, but no other contemporary features. An assemblage of 18th century clay tobacco-pipes, suggest that one of the properties had been a manufacturer's workshop. The buildings mostly date to the construction of a purpose-built garage in 1937, which comprised show rooms and offices at the front with accommodation above and workshops to the rear. Subsequent alterations, particularly to the workshops were also noted. Earlier structures had survived adjoining the property to the north (52 Sheep Street) but too little remains to indicate how the earlier garage, which was established in 1928, operated.

Northamptonshire

Northampton, Upton Way (SP 72745966)

Chris Jones

A watching brief was undertaken on behalf of English Partnerships during groundwork for new drains and a new spur road feeding west to a proposed new development. No archaeological deposits were revealed. Evidence for past use of the landscape was limited to the remnant furrows of the medieval ridge and furrow field system.

Northampton, Weedon Road to St Crispin's link road (SP 7173 6050)

David Leigh

A watching brief was undertaken on behalf of English Partnerships during the construction of the Weedon Road to St Crispin's link road, Upton. No archaeological features were found although a few residual finds were recovered through metal detecting.

Northampton, Wootton Fields Centre for Learning (SP 771 561)

Ian Fisher, Steve Morris and Tim Upson-Smith

Northamptonshire County Council and Kajima Construction commissioned a watching brief and excavation prior to the construction of the Wootton Centre for Learning. A series of linear boundary ditches and remnants of associated enclosures, one including a stone-lined, T-shaped drying oven, are dated to 3rd to 4th century AD. This area of late Roman occupation lies 300m from Wootton Fields Roman villa (*SMA* 30 (2000), 40 & fig 2; *SMA* 33 (2003), 53) which is situated on the opposite valley slope.

A hoard of some 1900 late Roman coins, dated to the late 330s AD and contained in a pottery jar with an inverted bowl as a lid, had been buried in a ditch at the margin of the settlement area. They were in poor condition and the majority had fused into a solid mass. An undated inhumation burial lay nearby.

Silverstone, Pits Farm

Steve Morris and Tim Upson-Smith

A geophysical survey and fieldwalking were carried out for CgMs Consulting over 1.92ha of land west of the A45 at Pits Farm, Silverstone. A number of magnetic anomalies were found, but as they lacked any cohesive or identifiable pattern they have been attributed to geological changes. Fieldwalking located only a light scatter of post-medieval artefacts.

Stanwick Quarry (SP 9669 7150)

Andy Chapman

A watching brief during stripping prior to gravel extraction has defined further details of a palaeochannel system (*SMA* 33 (2003) 55) that is broadly contemporary with the Neolithic and Bronze Age monument complex extensively investigated in the 1980s in the Raunds Area Project. To the

west of the Redlands Farm long barrow, an area adjacent to the main river channel was a former pond, that became a wooded swamp in the early Neolithic period as it silted up. Further downstream, an ox-bow channel had silted up by the later Neolithic, and in the early/middle Bronze Age a line of oak posts, unearthed by the machine drivers during gravel extraction, had been driven into its margins. The scapula and a leg bone from an aurochs were also recovered. On the eastern edge of Irthlingborough island, and to the immediate north of a preserved round barrow, there was a small undated ring ditch, only 10.5m in diameter, which has added a new monument to the extensive prehistoric landscape. A minor palaeochannel that formed the eastern edge of the island, had silted up and been invaded by Alder carr by the early Neolithic, but carbonised wood from a shallow pond near the round barrow has been dated to the early Bronze Age.

Thrapston, Oundle Road (TL 0067 7901)

Danny McAree

John Samuels Archaeological Consultants (JSAC), on behalf of David Wilson Homes commissioned a trial excavation ahead of planned residential accommodation on land off Oundle Road, Thrapston. No archaeological features or artefacts were found.

Towcester, Burcote Road (SP 696 478)

Andy Mudd

A watching brief during groundworks associated with a residential development on land at Burcote Road, Towcester, carried out on behalf of JS Bloor (Northampton) Ltd, revealed extensive modern disturbance across much of the site. No archaeological deposits were present, nor were any artefacts recovered.

Towcester, Tove Valley Business Park

(SP 4965 6901)

Barry Lewis

An archaeological watching brief and a brief salvage excavation were carried out during groundworks at Tove Valley Business Park, Towcester for Hampton Brook Developments Ltd. The site lies on high ground some 650m north-west of the Roman walled town. A number of heavily truncated ditches and pits in one area of the site were of Romano-British date, 2nd to 4th centuries AD, and probably represent either part of a minor settlement or the periphery of a larger one.

Towcester, Watling Street (SP 0646 0567)

Danny McAree and Tim Upson-Smith

The Environment Agency commissioned a watching brief during excavation for the erection of flood alleviation works along the western edge of the A5 Watling Street, Towcester. No archaeological features or artefacts were found.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

Brackley, Lime Cottage (SP 5892 3730)

Windmill Banks, Higham Ferrers (SP 9597 6928)

Alan Hardy

The final excavation of the Kings Meadow Lane Project took place in the summer of 2003. The Project, in advance of development by the Duchy of Lancaster, has been running for ten years, and has revealed (amongst other things) a nationally important Middle Saxon complex, which appears to represent part of a Royal estate centre. The last site revealed further evidence of the huge stock-holding enclosure, along with ditches. Evidence was also found of a brief but intense phase of occupation, in the form of courtyard surfaces, drains and building foundations dating to the early medieval period. In 2002 a large and well-preserved 15th century pottery kiln was found in an earlier phase of the project; another of a similar date was found on this site, although it was much more damaged by later activity.

The post-excavation analysis is now underway, and all of the Saxon and medieval evidence from the whole 10-year project will be presented in a monograph, due to be published in 2005.

RICHARD IVENS

Aston le Walls, Manor House (SP 4940 5074)

A watching brief was maintained during the construction of a tennis court. The evidence recovered suggests that much of the site had been cleared and partly levelled in the later 19th century. The only substantial feature, Wall 9, was almost certainly demolished during the second half of the 19th century and is probably the outer or western wall of a range of farm buildings mapped in 1850. This range was presumably demolished when its successor was built immediately alongside but a little to the east. No evidence of any activity or archaeological remains pre-dating the 19th century was noted (1999).

Aynho, Field Barn, College Farm (SP 5211 3425)

A watching brief was carried out during the construction of two new agricultural buildings. No artefacts or archaeological features were noted (2000).

Benefield, Yokehill Fisheries

(SP 9601 8944 – 9614 8944 – 9607 8923)

A watching brief was carried out during the archaeologically controlled topsoil stripping of two new fishing ponds. The site proved to have been very heavily plough-damaged and the only archaeological features noted were the vestigial and intermittent remains of plough furrows (? medieval). Artefacts were very scarce but included one Roman potsherd, one medieval potsherd and two late medieval potsherds (2001).

A watching brief was carried out during the excavations of the footings for a new garage and for a small extension to the southwest end of Lime Cottage. The site had been severely disturbed in recent times, probably when the present house was constructed. The upper part of a well, recently and loosely backfilled with stone, was identified during the excavation of the northeast corner of the new garage foundations. No other archaeological deposits or artefacts were noted (2003).

Brackley, Welbeck, Pebble Lane (SP 5890 3720)

Historic map and excavation evidence indicates that the Application Site had been part of the open field system before the Inclosure of 1830 and continued to be used for agriculture until the middle decades of the 20th century when, first a bowling green and then the present house were constructed.

Trial trench evidence confirmed that the site had been heavily truncated by terracing for bowls greens, tennis lawns and gardens. Slight evidence was recovered in the form of pottery and roof-tile sherds, suggesting that there has been substantial Roman and Saxo-Norman occupation in the vicinity of the Application Site. A possible Roman ditch was identified, together with a large post-medieval pit and evidence of medieval or later ploughing (2001).

Cold Ashby, Church of St Denys (SP 6560 7625)

An intermittent watching brief was maintained during the rebuilding of the north and northeast revetting boundary wall of the churchyard, fronting Church Lane and Thornby Road. The removal of the wall involved intermittent cutting back behind the wall by up to 150mm. The foundations were also deepened by up to 600mm. All the new foundations were found to lie within modern road make-up and natural undisturbed ground. The vertical face revealed behind the demolished wall consisted of natural ground, overlain by a thick and uniform layer of sandy earth which was in turn sealed by a layer of topsoil. The thick layer of sandy earth was periodically interrupted by zones of mixed rubble and earth. These are probably the result of periodic collapses and repairs to the wall and outer edge of the churchyard, though some may represent the rubble backing of the churchyard wall which was not always entirely removed.

There is no evidence that any of these deposits predate the 19th century. No human bone was noted nor was there any evidence of burials along the examined boundary of the churchyard. No evidence of medieval or earlier activities was noted (2000).

Denton, Church of St Margaret (SP 8379 5798)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of two shallow service trenches. No archaeological structures or strata were observed other than the footings of the 19th century rebuild of the church. The steeply sloping western end of the churchyard appeared to have been deliberately

Northamptonshire

raised in modern times. Finds were limited to occasional small pieces of human bone, one medieval potsherd, and 19th century and later pottery, brick, tile, etc. Although the church was rebuilt in the 1820s, the chancel, tower and fragments of the west end of earlier phases of the church survive (2003).

Ecton, Church of St Mary Magdalene (SP 8285 6355)

A trench measuring 1.2 x 0.6m was hand-excavated within the church tower. The very limited excavation within the church tower revealed the inner face of the massive tower foundations. These foundations had been sealed with a thick clay and stone layer which also lay over what appeared to have been an old ground surface and the poorly preserved remains of a slight wall; a series of strata which were revealed below the old ground surface continued below the limit of the trial trench. A few fragments of human bone were recovered. A single sherd of Stamford Ware was also retrieved, from the lower levels.

Subsequently a watching brief was carried out during the reduction of the Tower Floor, down to the old ground surface, in readiness for the construction of toilet and kitchen facilities. Cistercian ware pottery was recovered showing that the interior of the 13th century tower had been reduced in antiquity (not earlier than the 15th century). A small (lead-worker's) hearth was found cut into the top of the old ground surface and into the disturbed and truncated remains of a burial.

On the basis of this additional evidence it seems likely that the slight early wall, the hearth and the top of the old ground surface, all relate to 15th century or later building works on the tower; however, it is still possible that the surviving part of the old ground surface and the burial predate the original 13th century tower.

The excavation of the service trenches in the churchyard was also monitored. Numerous burials were encountered throughout the length of the service trenches but no significant archaeological remains were noted. Where the trenches butted against the west Tower and western north Aisle walls, it was found that modern disturbances had already destroyed any archaeological deposits which might have existed (2001).

Foscote (Abthorpe), Grafton Court Manège (SP 6574 4713)

A watching brief was carried out during the construction of a Manège. No archaeological features were noted during the course of the works other than ridge-and-furrow which covered the entire site (2001).

Foscote (Abthorpe), Kingscourt Stables (SP 6579 4718)

A watching brief was carried out during the construction of a stableyard. A broad (up to 4m wide) and somewhat damaged stone trackway was revealed in the southeast part of the site, probably related to 18th and 19th century buildings known from map evidence to have existed in the vicinity. No medieval or earlier remains were noted during the course of the works (2003).

Geddington, land at 18-24 Queen Street (SP 8923 8279)

A trial trench evaluation was carried out in advance of a housing development. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were noted. Modern yard surfaces, hard-core deposits and service trenches were found to lie directly on Northampton Sand over all the trenches. It appears that any archaeological remains that might once have existed have been destroyed by earlier works connected with the site's use as a garage and petrol station (2002).

Grendon, Church of St Mary (SP 8780 5942)

A trench was hand-excavated from within the church tower to 1m west of the tower along the line of a proposed foul drain. The trench was then extended westwards for 10.4m by mechanical excavator to a manhole pit (2 x 2m) which was also mechanically excavated.

The hand-excavated trench revealed the massive wall foundations of the west wall of the church tower running beneath and across the west door of the tower. The upper levels of the foundation wall had been robbed in post-medieval times. The excavated internal levels were probably all of post-medieval date, though one piece of 13th century pottery was recovered. A hard red-brown clay deposit was revealed at the base of the internal excavations, but was not itself disturbed. This latter deposit may be an earlier tower floor. Externally, all the excavated deposits were of post medieval date.

The full depth of the mechanically excavated drain trench lay entirely within a thick soil layer, probably consisting of the fills of numerous graves. Apart from one area of very loose earth (a recent burial?) no features were noted in this trench.

The large manhole pit cut at the end of the drain trench on the west boundary of the churchyard did reveal some archaeological levels. The greater part of the exposed strata were either natural clays or recent burial deposits. However, there were some indications of an earlier phase of burial and what may be an old ground surface (2001).

Helmdon, Church of St Mary Magdalene (SP 5905 4316)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of several service trenches in the graveyard and during the reduction of the floor level of the south Porch. Minor details regarding the construction of the south Aisle and evidence that the graveyard had been extensively used were revealed. Evidence suggesting that the south Porch was a completely new construction of 1841 was also noted (2002).

King's Sutton, Field Barn (SP 4984 3734)

A trial trench evaluation of the site of a range of new farm buildings was carried out. The site had been heavily ploughed and ironstone and marl lay immediately below the plough-soil and several modern plough-scores were noted. No trace of the linear cropmark (Roman road (?) to Blackgrounds Romano-British site; SMR No. 5708/1/1) which crosses the site was observed. If a roadway ever crossed the site of the excavation it must have been

completely ploughed away and it therefore seems unlikely that any substantial flanking ditches could have existed, at least along the eastern end of the cropmark which crosses the Application Site. No other traces of Roman activity were found, apart from one pot sherd in a plough-furrow.

A single sherd of medieval pottery was found, in the only post-hole identified on the site. Other features consisted of: a broad ditch-like feature of medieval or later date; a broad shallow ditch-like feature cut into a clay outcrop; an area of stone quarrying (probably post-medieval - modern); and a large stone-built drain constructed after 1945 (1997).

Maidford, Church of St Peter and St Paul (SP 60975252)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of shallow drainage trenches and associated soak-away pits at the east and south sides of the church. No significant remains were noted other than traces of burials. The sections of the drain trenches adjacent to the church wall had been previously disturbed by a gravel-filled trench running all round the church. However, this only extended down for about 20-25cm and therefore any wall foundation trenches should survive quite well. The trench against the east end was cut through an area heavily disturbed by recent drainage works, though as this is likely to be of very limited extent it is likely that the chancel foundation trenches will generally survive (2001).

Old, Church of St Andrew (SP 7860 7320)

Two small test pits were hand-excavated in the northwest and northeast angles between the nave and north porch. Both trenches were excavated to a depth well below the maximum disturbance which would be caused by the proposed development, but at no point were natural strata revealed.

The limited excavation either side of the north porch revealed nave and porch foundations and confirmed that the porch was added to the nave. Burial deposits cut by the western nave and porch foundations were revealed.

Dateable artefacts indicate that the porch and eastern end of the nave were built no earlier than the mid 15th century. It is possible that part of an earlier and shorter nave, or side wing, was incorporated into the existing nave, though the exact date and nature of this building sequence still requires clarification.

Subsequently, a watching brief was maintained during the digging of drainage trenches along the north church wall and northwards to two soakaway pits. The trenches close to the church were too shallow to reveal any significant archaeological remains, and further north, where the trenches were deeper, only extensive and probably relatively recent burials were observed.

Inside the church an area of timber floor was removed adjacent to the north wall and east of the north door. The timber joists exposed appeared to be of relatively recent date and were supported on a series of low stone walls, also of recent date. The ground between the supporting walls was covered with a spread of sandy mortar. As the mortar

spread was not disturbed by the construction works it was not removed (2001).

Passenham, Church of St Guthlac (SP 7805 3945)

Two test pits (1 x 2m) were excavated by hand, one against each of the north and south walls of the nave at positions selected by Northamptonshire Heritage.

The southern 1.2m of the north trench was entirely occupied by the base of a 19th century furnace. Damage to the nave wall, including a missing section of chamfered string course, showed where the chimney stack had once stood.

North of this furnace base a small charcoal and ash-filled pit was identified which may certainly be associated with the furnace. The furnace base isolated the north section of the trench from the nave wall and importantly implies that there has been an internal underfloor system of heating flues, though no sign of these is currently visible. The construction trench of the adjacent buttress which appears to be contemporary with the 13th century nave wall was also identified and found to be cut into a substantial deposit containing disturbed or redeposited human remains. As this latter deposit was cut by the buttress foundation it can be no later than the 13th century and the find of a sherd of glazed ridge-tile indicates that this layer was deposited (or at least disturbed) no earlier than the 13th century.

A recent gravel-filled pit was found at the south end of the south trench which appears to have been an earlier attempt to solve the waterlogging caused by the flow from the waterspouts. Almost the whole of the upper 600mm of this trench had been scoured off during the 19th century exposing three *in situ* burials. Fragments of nail-studded coffins survived in two of these graves and they are clearly of post-medieval date and were consequently not investigated further. The only other feature of note was the construction trench of the nave wall which contained masons' spalls, fragments of ceramic roof tile (presumably of 13th century date and perhaps the original roofing material of the 13th century nave) and two human skulls.

No medieval or earlier burials were identified but the presence of human bone in 13th century deposits does indicate the earlier use of the site as a burial ground (2000).

Passenham, Church of St Guthlac (SP 7805 3945)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of service trenches and three soakaway pits in the graveyard. No *in situ* (pre-modern) archaeological remains were observed. Most of the excavation areas had been disturbed by grave-digging, and in one instance by previous drainage works. Several sherds of medieval pottery were recovered (2002).

Paulerspury, land adjacent to Jarak, Pury End

Two separate watching briefs were carried out during the excavation of house foundations.

The first, to the west of Jarak (SP 7108 4331), showed that much of the site had been levelled-up in recent years and therefore there was little disturbance of ancient deposits.

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Three large pit-like features of medieval date were recorded and in all probability these three features are part of a single, large feature, possibly a quarry pit (2002).

The second, to the east of Jarak (SP 7110 4333), showed that much of the site had been levelled-down to bedrock in recent years and other areas had been disturbed by the footings and drains associated with late 20th century buildings (shop and sheds). Two pit-like features of unknown date were recorded (2002).

Paulerspury, King Forester Lodge (SP 7380 4450)

A development involving a new stable block and associated track at King Forester Lodge was inspected. The only archaeological feature noted was a small cremation burial. In plan it was roughly triangular with a curving hypotenuse and measured about 30cm north-south. Excavation showed that the cut survived to a depth of 10cm, had a flat bottom, near vertical west and north sides and a steeply sloping southeast side. The fill consisted of a dark brown charcoal-flecked earth containing lumps of redeposited natural clay and numerous fragments of charcoal and calcined bone. The entire contents of this feature were salvaged but no artefacts were discovered and its date must therefore remain uncertain.

This cremation may be an isolated example but others could lie concealed below the adjacent fields. The lack of medieval or earlier finds suggests that there was no other significant past use of the development site (1999).

Potterspury, 7 Church Lane (SP 7614 4317)

A watching brief was carried out during the demolition of garage and associated sheds at the north of the existing house, and during the excavation of the foundations and service trenches for a new two storey extension. No archaeological features or artefacts were noted (1999).

Potterspury, 28 High St (SP 7565 4330)

A watching brief was carried out at the request of Northamptonshire Heritage and under the auspices of Northamptonshire Archaeological Network at 28 High Street Potterspury during the preparation of the site for five new houses.

No formal archaeological investigations had been attached to the planning consent as a report on a geophysical survey suggested the site contained no significant remains, despite the clear and well known documentary evidence of potters living on or adjacent to the site in the 17th century (Mayes, P., 1968. 'A seventeenth century kiln site at Potterspury, Northamptonshire', *Post-Medieval Archaeology*, 2, 55–82., especially 57–8). Nonetheless the owners, J and A Stanton, readily gave permission for the Watching Brief and both they and the contractors, Radford Ltd, rearranged their schedules to allow a little additional excavation time.

The site slopes steeply from south to north and the development involved the terracing of the slope to form five house platforms and the construction of a new access road from the High Street.

The line of the access road had formerly been occupied by several cottages and more recently, an abattoir. No archaeological remains had survived these modern disturbances.

The preparation of the house sites was preceded by a partial topsoil strip, rapidly followed by terracing into the southern end of the site and dumping of the excavated material across the central part; the northern section abutting Sanders Lane was merely stripped.

Subsequently a series of drains and soakaways were dug. All stripping and other ground disturbances were monitored continuously and a number of significant archaeological remains were observed, recorded and a limited amount of excavation carried out.

A small single-flued late medieval kiln in the southeast corner of the site was fully excavated (SP 7570 4324).

A second medieval kiln in the southwest corner of the site was identified and the section within the development site largely excavated, together with a large pit which had partly destroyed the kiln (SP 7567 4325).

A dump of wasters was demolished a few metres northeast of this latter kiln. A substantial sample was collected and this was consistently of 14th century character.

The newly excavated medieval kilns produced a range of jugs, bowls, cooking pots and green-glazed roof tiles similar to those produced by other kilns in the village.

No archaeological features were observed in the central part of the site due to the superficial nature of the topsoil strip and rapid dumping and stacking of spoil.

Similarly no remains were noted in the 7m wide zone to the south of the existing bungalow on Sanders Lane, as this area was used for a spoil stack and was never stripped.

Immediately north of this spoil stack an extensive spread of 17th century wasters was revealed immediately below the topsoil together with two stone spreads (yard/road?). Trial excavations showed this great dump of pottery to be up to 1m thick, to spread over c 250 square metres and to conceal large clay filled features containing medieval (and only medieval) pottery, perhaps abandoned clay pits.

It was also possible to establish that this waster dump incorporated a large, oval, single-flued kiln of later 17th century date (SP 7567 4328). The kiln was extensively excavated but its stoke-pit lay to the south below the spoil heap and was therefore inaccessible; the stoke-pit was subsequently largely destroyed by a soakaway.

During the excavation of this kiln a substantial stone wall was revealed along its eastern side and may have been part of an associated structure, or some earlier building. This wall was sealed by the same strata as the kiln so cannot be later than the sealing of the kiln. A stone-revetted ash-filled pit was also excavated, this was cut by the kiln structure and may have been associated with the stone wall.

It was only possible to examine very small parts of the enormous waster dump and it is quite likely that further structures still lie concealed.

The area to the east of the 17th century waster dump was not fully stripped of topsoil and was quickly buried by the raised terrace.

The final area of stripping, the plot adjacent to Sanders Lane, proved to have been heavily disturbed by modern

dumping, of stone, concrete, etc. and no archaeological remains were observed.

Finally, a series of drainage trenches were excavated and for the most part these passed through disturbed ground alongside the new access road or did not penetrate the freshly raised terrace across the central part of the site. In one area on the eastern edge of the site, however, a drainage trench did penetrate archaeological remains. In this instance the trench just clipped the surviving top of the outer edge of two further and undoubtedly medieval kilns. No real damage was inflicted on the kilns and as they were not threatened and a large part of them lay under the garden of the adjacent bungalow they were not further investigated.

Very large quantities of pottery ranging in date from the 14th to later 17th century was recovered during the course of the investigations. This has not yet been examined but in the course of excavation and washing many forms and decorative styles of 17th century pottery have been noted some of which have not previously been recognised as products of the Potterspurty industry: glazed jugs, cups, mugs, flower pots including ornamental urns, and an enormous number of large bowls and platters. The two latter types had frequently been decorated with different coloured clay slips forming elaborate and ornate patterns (joggled or marbled slipwares). Unusual items were also recovered, such as water pipes, perhaps for garden fountains and the like, and a unique example of a pottery button bearing a decorative device which may be the 'fair maiden' symbol of the Worshipful Company of Mercers.

The site is of considerable significance not merely because of the number of kilns, their wide chronological range and the presence of formerly unknown Potterspurty types but because it demonstrates quite conclusively that there is a 'potters' quarter' at the west end of the village in addition to the well established potting area in the Woods and Church Lane area at the east end of the village. This must also raise the possibility that there are other potting areas in the village. Here it should be noted that kilns and wasters have been found scattered along the length of the neighbouring village of Yardley Gobion, though never with the same density as seen in Potterspurty.

This second area of dense potting activity also suggests that Potterspurty was an important local centre throughout the medieval and early post-medieval period (contrary to Mayes, P, 1968, 55-82, especially 57) as indeed the great quantities recovered from settlement sites in the area suggest.

There are no early records of documented potters in the village though the surname Potter does occur. Between 1461 and 1485 one William Lacy, potter, was living in Potterspurty and again in the 16th century Potter surnames occur but there is no evidence that they were potters. A potter called Leonard Benton was already working in Potterspurty by 1646 and either he or his son or grandson (both also called Leonard) rented a cottage near to the present Cock Inn, only a short distance from the site.

At some time before 1694 a potter called John Stowe was living close to the site of the Cock Inn and in his will of that year requested that his brother William 'go on with my art of potting and bring up my son John to it'. William died in 1706 and his nephew John disappears from the records after 1705.

It seems probable that the late 17th century kiln found at 28 High Street was the property of either the Benton or Stowe families.

In conclusion it must be stressed that it was only possible to examine small parts of this site and it highly probable that many more kilns and perhaps other associated remains still lie concealed (2000).

Preston Capes/Fawsley, Grange Farm All Weather Gallop (SP 58675321 - SP 57765260)

A watching brief was carried out during the construction of an all weather gallop. All upstanding field boundaries, etc. had been removed by about 1989 and the site had been much disturbed by field drains and chisel ploughing. Slight evidence of furrows (? medieval) survived in one section of the gallop (c SP 5855 5295).

The only other remains consisted of stone and ceramic field drains, and truncated field ditches. The latter are of post-medieval or uncertain date but all align exactly with those shown on OS 1884 1st edition 6 inch survey. A slight ditch was found where a township boundary crossed the gallop however no dating evidence was recovered and this ditch also coincides with a post-medieval field boundary.

Note that the two cropmarks (SMR Nos 5730/0/1 and 5730/0/2) recorded close to the development may probably be associated with the site of former farm buildings (Top Barn), old field boundaries and a former stream or open drain (see OS 1884 6 inch survey and 1920 Little Preston tithe apportionment -NRO T35) (1999).

Preston Capes, Manor Farm Gallop (SP 5765 5370 - 5848 5510)

A watching brief was carried out during the construction of an all weather gallop. Slight evidence of a headland and ridge-and-furrow (? medieval) survived in one section of the gallop (SP 5810 5450). A slight bank was noted where the gallop crossed the west boundary of Preston Deer Park. There was no internal ditch, apart from a modern field ditch. The topography slopes steeply away from the inner (ie Park) side of the bank at this point thereby obviating the need for an internal ditch. The ditch of another modern field boundary was also noted. No artefacts were recovered.

Stanion, 23 Little Lane (SP 9144 8717)

Two 3 x 1.5m trial trenches were excavated by hand in advance of a small house and garage extension. Two levels of rough stone yard/path were revealed, the lower of which is certainly of medieval date. Several small and poorly preserved features of uncertain date were also identified. Approximately 200 sherds of medieval pottery were recovered, mainly from subsoil levels. The pottery is predominately of Lyveden/Stanion B Ware (CTS 320) - 1225-1400 AD. Most sherds were small and abraded though several wasters were noted. In all probability the occurrence of this material was the result of the manuring and cultivation of the development site. No evidence of pottery manufacture on the site was identified and the small number of waste sherds could easily have been derived from known

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nearby kiln sites, though it is possible that a kiln or kilns lie elsewhere within or adjacent to the property (2000).

Stanwick, The Paddock, Hall Farm (SP 9770 7110)

Three trial trenches, totalling 80 square metres were investigated as a condition of planning permission for a small housing development. One (undated) gully and one shallow pit (modern - probably a tree hole) were identified. Otherwise topsoil was found to lie directly on natural deposits and no archaeological features or levels were identified. No trace of the suspected back-lane indicated on Bryant's 1823 map was identified (2000).

Stanwick, land off Villa Lane (garden of 39 High St) (SP 97735 71275)

A watching brief was carried out during the construction of a new house. Natural undisturbed geological deposits were established over the greater part of the site, immediately below a thin subsoil. The only exception was a large irregular feature which may probably be best explained as 19th century quarrying. No pre-modern deposits or artefacts were observed (2003).

Towcester, Watling Well Inn (SP 6954 4843)

A building survey (P Woodfield) and watching brief were carried during renovations and extensions to the inn.

Evidence was recovered from the historic building survey confirming the mid 17th century date for the primary structure of the inn. The survey also indicated that significant original elements survive, although the building as a whole has been frequently altered.

The archaeological watching brief showed that a thick dump of material had been laid over the site in the 17th century, perhaps in preparation for the erection of the inn and probably indicating that the site was at least intermittently waterlogged. Evidence was also discovered of a substantial stone structure of 17th century date, bordering the northern edge of the rear of the development site. This structure could not be certainly related to the plan of the existing inn, nor to the much larger building which occupied the site in 1844, but is in all probability part of the original 17th century inn.

The yard to the rear of the inn appeared to have been levelled in modern times and any deposits of the later 17th to later 19th century had been removed. No deposits predating the 17th century were exposed.

Finds were limited to a small number of sherds of pottery and wine bottles of 17th century date, two clearly residual sherds of Roman pottery and a scatter of late 19th or early 20th century pottery, glass bottles, clay pipes, etc (2000).

Warmington, 22 Church St (TL 0758 9103)

Twenty metres of trial trench were excavated in advance of a small housing development. Several small features were identified (gullies, scoops, etc.), all of which had been heavily truncated by later activities on the site. Most of

these features contained no artefacts or other dating evidence but one could be attributed to the Late Saxon/Early Medieval period on the basis of associated pottery. A small amount of Late Saxon - Medieval pottery and one small sherd of Early/Middle Saxon pottery were recovered (2000).

Warmington, 23 Church St (TL 0785 9095)

Desk-based and field evaluations were carried out in advance of housing development. Map evidence shows quite clearly that the present property boundaries date back to at least 1621, and that the frontage of the property, along Church Street, was occupied by a range of buildings which evolved from 1621 until the site was cleared in 1950, for the construction of the present house.

The trial trench evaluation and watching brief have shown that 19th and 20th century activities, particularly the 1950 site clearance and subsequent gardening activities have almost entirely destroyed the evidence of the early post-medieval occupation and of any earlier medieval settlement.

Evidence was identified of a two phase northern boundary, possibly dating to as early as the 12th or even 11th century. A small number of artefacts recovered from this boundary, from the surviving subsoil and from later features do suggest some activity on or near the site from the Late Saxon period onwards, though given the small size and numbers of such finds they could all be explained by agricultural activities such as manuring.

Slight traces of the 17th century building which occupied the site were identified (Features 50 and 52 and an associated coin hoard).

Several fragmentary walls were discovered which could be of medieval date, but might be significantly later (2002).

Weldon, land to rear of 11 Chapel Road (SP 42518976)

A magnetometer survey was carried out and seven trial trenches, totalling 180m², were investigated in advance of a small housing development. The magnetometer survey revealed no clearly interpretable individual magnetic anomalies and this suggested the site was unlikely to have been a significant focus of settlement or industrial activities. The trial trenches did reveal several sections of medieval boundary ditches and evidence was also discovered suggesting that a 1580s mapping of an east-west boundary across the site was no more than a fossilised headland. A small number of medieval pottery sherds and one piece of Roman flue tile were recovered, together with a small amount of animal bone. No evidence of medieval or earlier habitation or industrial activity was observed (2001).

Yardley Gobion, land off Brownsfield Road (SP 7644 4471)

A series of short trial trenches and test pits were excavated in advance of a housing development. The earliest use of the site for which any evidence survived seems to have been as part of a Roman field system. This view is suggested by the amount of Roman pottery (in many different and often fine fabrics) scattered through the subsoil and in a series of small

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Centred approx. SP 799589

ditches, invariably filled with deposits identical to the subsoil. The pottery associated with these 'field' ditches ranges in date from the first to the 5th century AD.

Several other ditches yielded Saxo-Norman and later medieval pottery.

Medieval activity was of a rather low key nature. Aside from the ditches already mentioned and the slight and heavily robbed remains of a single stone wall, the only evidence of medieval use of the site came from a number of what can only be described as quarry pits. Some of these pits also contained moderate amounts of Roman pottery, and some could be of Roman date (1997).

Yardley Gobion, Ivy Bank, Moorend Road
(SP 7644 4478)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of the foundations of a small extension. No pre-19th century remains were observed. Much of the development area had been destroyed by previous terracing of the site, or by a main sewer (2002).

Yardley Gobion, Kerry Farm (SP 7599 4491)

A series of trial trench investigations and watching briefs were carried out in the garden of Kerry Farm in advance of two separate planning applications for the erection of single houses.

The most significant find was the badly robbed remains of a pottery kiln. The oven appeared to be roughly circular and had a narrow flue to the north. No kiln structure survived within the excavated area. The pottery found within the fill of the kiln is identical in character to the products of the other medieval pottery kilns found in Yardley Gobion: (Northants SMR 1221/0/2-3), though the range of forms seems to be much more limited, consisting only of: jugs, pans and rarely pipkins and shallow bowls. The wasters recovered probably date to the later 14th century, or possibly to the early 15th century.

Evidence of several medieval (13th - 14th century) small pits and gullies, a boundary ditch, and the possible footings of a timber-framed structure was revealed.

Otherwise only post-medieval remains were discovered on the site, consisting of several animal burials and other features relating to the use of the site as a farmyard, orchard and garden (1997-8 and 2001).

Yardley Gobion, Tower Bungalow, Moorend Road
(SP 7596.4491)

A watching brief was carried out during the construction of a new house. The only archaeological feature discovered consisted of a late 17th century ditch, which can probably be correlated with a field boundary mapped in c 1725 and which survived until the later twentieth century. The site appears, therefore, to lie outside of the bounds of the medieval village (2003).

The site lies within an extensive area of Iron Age and Roman finds. It is within 400m north-east of two Roman pottery sites, and the 1996 Iron Age burial with torc, (A. Chapman, *Northamptonshire Archaeology* Volume 29 p1-41), and 300m south-west of the South Houghton Complex, 15ha centred SP 802593, which has produced Roman coins, pottery and kiln bars. Only 100m south-east, at SP 801586, Iron Age and Roman pottery and kiln bars were found in 1960. One-and-a-half kilometres north-east is the East Houghton Complex, around SP 812600, which includes Roman buildings, Roman and Iron Age settlement remains, pottery, coins, and artifacts. As such, the finding of a defended enclosure with inturned entrance might be the key to understanding the wider settlement pattern.

The site is within the modern parish of Great Houghton, but formerly in Little Houghton, and is midway between Great Houghton and Little Houghton villages. It occupies a low promontory (between 75 and 85m elevation above O.D.) between two small valleys, the headstreams of which almost isolate the promontory on the south. The name of the farmhouse to the east, Walworth Cottage, possibly gives additional credence to the possibility of a settlement here. The south-west corner of the enclosure lies just south-west of the former Northampton to Bedford railway embankment at SP 798587 where deep ploughing has obliterated any trace. The remainder of the site is north of the railway, and forms a triangle with the east corner at SP 800588, the two sides tapering northwards to the third angle at SP 798590. It is over 350m long by up to 250m, about 6ha, contained, where remains survive the overlying ridge-and-furrow, within a bank, scarp, ditch and counterscarp.

The key to understanding this site is the inturned entrance almost midway on the north-east side. The defences south-east of the entrance are offset by about 30m north-east of those the other side of the entrance. The outwork banks curve in to form the entrance gap. The main ramparts curve in only slightly, but the terminal on the south is a prominent feature. At the head of this funnel, a 3.5m broad sill may be an original feature marking the site of the gate. There were no obvious signs of guard chambers, but ridge-and-furrow extends to the top of the funnel. Although the entrance has been used by a modern track, this does not appear to have contributed to the shape of the entry.

The best-preserved defences are on this north-eastern flank. Ridge-and-furrow on the summit has largely destroyed a bank along the crest, but there are traces about 8 to 9m wide, set back from the scarp by a berm of 2 or 3m. This is followed by a steep drop of 2 to 3m over between eight and 13m distance, below which is a less marked colluvial slope. This appears to have been modified into an along contour cultivation ridge, as is the line of a possible ditch, simply a level terrace. The outwork is a bank about 8m broad, counterscarp to the ditch, which formed a headland to cross-contour ridge-and-furrow below it, and is cut through by modern drains.

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At the north angle, ridge-and-furrow obliterates the outwork, several ridges cutting into and rising across the rampart, causing offsets on the profile, and distorting the curve round to the west. A fragment of the outwork is just visible here, as it comes on to the line of a field boundary shown on the 1st edition OS 25 inch plan (1885). On the west a terrace created in 1978 to enable trucks to carry the spoil greatly alters the slope below the enclosure. In 1978 two fishponds at SP 797589 were buried under spoil from the Little Houghton by-pass roadworks (*Council for British Archaeology Group 9 Newsletter* No 9, p 46). The valley at this point has been filled in.

UPPER NENE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

2003/4 Interim report on the Piddington Iron Age settlement & Romano-British villa (SP 7965 5400)

R M & D E Friendship-Taylor

Piddington, situated within gently undulating countryside on an east facing slope, lies 6 miles (9.65km) south-east of Duston, the important late Iron Age settlement and Roman precursor of modern Northampton. The site is located on well-drained light boulder clay, with underlying Oolitic

limestone in places, close to the surface, together with deposits of tufa (often used for bathhouse roofs) and fissile limestone (used for general roofing). This is attested by the extensive use of the material in both the building of the villa and the well and by later quarrying operations in the area. The site is close to the Wootton Brook, a small tributary of the River Nene.

There is no obvious watercourse close by. However, water is to be found in the deeper soils towards the lower slopes of the valley, at only 2m or so below the surface. Therefore, ideal conditions for settlement are to be found in the immediate area of this occupation.

Originally found in 1781 by limestone quarrymen, "a frantic treasure hunt" (Friendship-Taylor, in Rollo, 1994, 2) ensued, following the discovery of a skeleton with a spear and a nearby gold ring, which concluded with "the wholesale destruction" (Friendship-Taylor, 1989, 1) of a reputed 50ft square mosaic - actually 8.75m x 10m (28ft x 32ft.), with an underlying channelled hypocaust.

Several threats confronted the practically forgotten site in 1979, including a proposed new water main, a vicar armed with a metal detector, and deep ploughing, which contributed a major threat to the site. To avoid further destruction, the pipeline was relocated to the west of the site, where it would be clear of all known Roman features.

Thanks to the co-operation and continued support of the landowner, Mr J Chambers, the rescue excavation has now developed into a long-term research project. As a result, the Piddington excavations have provided a rare opportunity to study various aspects of the late Iron Age and succeeding Romano-British period in detail. Over the years, it has become one of the best-explored Roman villas in the country (Selkirk (ed.), 1996, 57).

Early prehistoric occupation

Tantalising evidence, suggesting early origins/occupation of the Piddington site, is intimated by the large number of prehistoric worked flints accumulated through excavation and field walking in the fields surrounding the site of the villa. Mesolithic (*c* 8000 BC) microliths, Neolithic leaf-shaped arrowheads and Bronze Age tanged and barbed arrowheads, blades, scrapers, cores and flakes (*c* 4000 – *c* 900 BC), all attest to intensive prehistoric activity in the vicinity. Related prehistoric structures or features remain enigmatic however, and "no significant pattern can be ascribed to the scatter" (Friendship-Taylor, in Rollo, 1994, 2). It is perhaps not unreasonable to assume that ploughing and later use of the site would have destroyed or masked earlier flimsier structures, but nonetheless, the finds remain an important aspect of the use of the area surrounding the site.

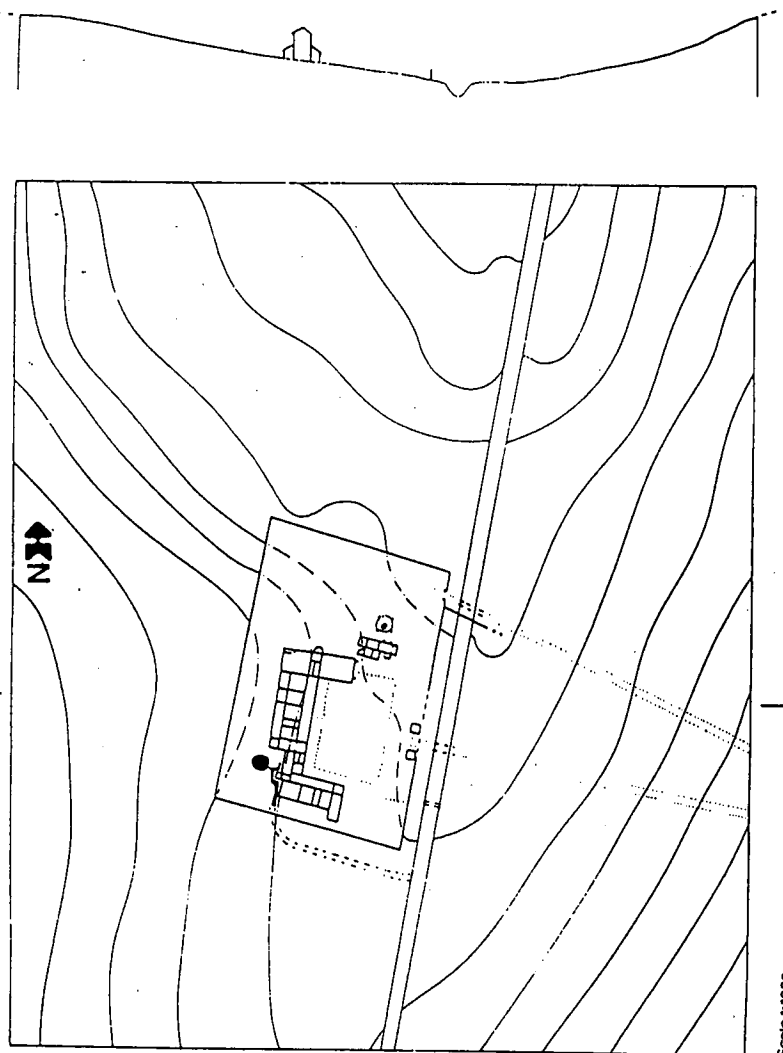


Fig 3. Piddington in the landscape.

Piddington late Iron Age settlement & villa phase descriptions

During the later Iron Age (c 50BC), communication was mainly with the south-east rather than due south, with many close parallels of pottery and metalwork at sites such as Baldock (Herts) (Stead & Rigby, 1986) and Colchester (*Camulodunum*) Essex (Hawkes & Hull, 1947), which may have been situated on the early route taken by the many early Continental imports found at Piddington.

Recently, a possible early Roman road has been discovered running from *Magiovinium* (Fenny Stratford, Bletchley) towards Duston, passing the villa to the south. Other routes must also have existed in the area, allowing communication with other Roman centres such as Irchester.

The river Nene (Nen) is only about 10km away. *Durobrivae* (near Peterborough) was within easy reach by waterborne transport, no doubt extensively used to bring in favourite sea food luxuries to the villa at Piddington – oysters, whelks, scallops, mussels and other shellfish (over 25,000 oyster shells have been found), plus pottery from the important potteries around *Durobrivae* and the Oxford region from the second to 4th centuries. Other imported luxuries, such as fine pottery, glass and metalwork, came from the Rhineland (Germany).

Phase 1. c 50BC – c AD44

The earliest structures at Piddington are three 'D'- shaped post-built structures, with earth floors. Only a little pottery was found associated with these, which has enabled these early houses at Piddington to be dated to c 50 BC.

Following this early, rather transient period of occupation, a more settled farming picture begins to emerge, with a range of domestic activities, such as weaving and metal working, but with farming probably being the main source of wealth.

A series of larger round-houses was constructed from about AD 25, associated with land or property boundaries, which were beginning to dominate the landscape. At least two large round houses and a smaller house of similar design were built. For the first time in this part of the South Midlands, a small rectangular building with plastered walls and a clay floor (very similar to an example at the late Iron Age site at Skeleton Green, Herts) was built within this complex, associated with a small round-house, probably just before the Roman Conquest of AD 43.

Site Phases:

Phase 1: 50BC - AD44 Late Iron Age-Conquest period

Phase 1a: AD44 - AD60/70 Military phase

Phase 1b: c 70 - 90/100 (Trajanic/Hadrianic)

Phase 2: 90/100 - 120 (Hadrianic)

Phase 3: 120 - 160 (Hadrianic/Antonine)

Phase 4: 160 - 190 (Antonine/Severan)

Phase 5: 190 - 280/290

Phase 6: 280/290 - 420

Phase 7: 420+

Phase 1a. AD44 – AD60/70

Towards the end of this period, the Roman army came to Piddington, possibly about AD 44, only a year after the

actual invasion of Britain in AD 43. So far, there are only a few features, such as pits, ditches, hearths/furnaces and post-holes associated with this event. However, they did leave plentiful evidence behind, such as imported fine ware pottery, amphorae and military equipment, suggesting a reasonably prolonged stay and giving a clear picture of their presence.

The Roman military presence appeared early in the sequence at Piddington and was probably contemporary with the recently discovered fortress at Alchester (Sauer, 2002) and at Longthorpe (Frere & St. Joseph, 1974). Sauer dates his fortress at Alchester to as early as AD44 through tree-ring dates. Indeed, Piddington is located virtually midway between both fortresses.

The existence of a probable fort at Piddington has recently been noted from a series of air photographs taken by the 'Royal Commission' some 8 to 10 years ago and is now being followed up by on site field work such as geophysical surveys and also evidence from work undertaken beneath the adjacent villa in the neighbouring field.

The large quantities of early imported and native pottery and other military associated finds from Piddington would certainly appear to be contemporary with that obtained by Sauer from Alchester.

Phase 1b. c AD70 – c 90/100

Soon after the military had departed, a new timber proto-villa was begun over what had probably been the 'works dépôt'. This was a rectangular building constructed of mortared gravel and limestone cobbles which formed the base for a timber-framed building. It has at least 6 separate rooms to date. A phosphate analysis conducted over this structure (by Dr Paul Middleton of the Peterborough Regional College), noted that the level of phosphates indicated extensive human or animal activity over the whole area of the building. All the rooms had high readings except two, which had exceptionally high readings, suggesting intense human or animal activity, probably indicating that different rooms were being used for different purposes.

There were no ceramic roof tiles associated with this structure, so the roof was either thatch or wooden shingles (tiles made of wood). This building probably remained in use after the stone villa was built, probably reused as a workshop. Evidence for bronze casting was found in one of the rooms.

Under the Phase 2 stone villa, a transitional phase is indicated by the remains of a beam slot with attached fragments of white wall plaster and fragments of mortary clay flooring, indicative of an early timber structure, of some pretension, "only in the later first century and after did it become commonplace to consolidate a structure in stone" (Bédoyère, 1991, 16). The subsequent building in stone, with substantial foundations, virtually obliterated the timber phases, which then become difficult to identify.

Phase 2. c AD 90 – 120

During this phase, two rectangular 'cottage' style stone buildings were built. This time more durable materials were used, stone for the walls and ceramic and stone tiles for the roof. The main south facing building had two cellars

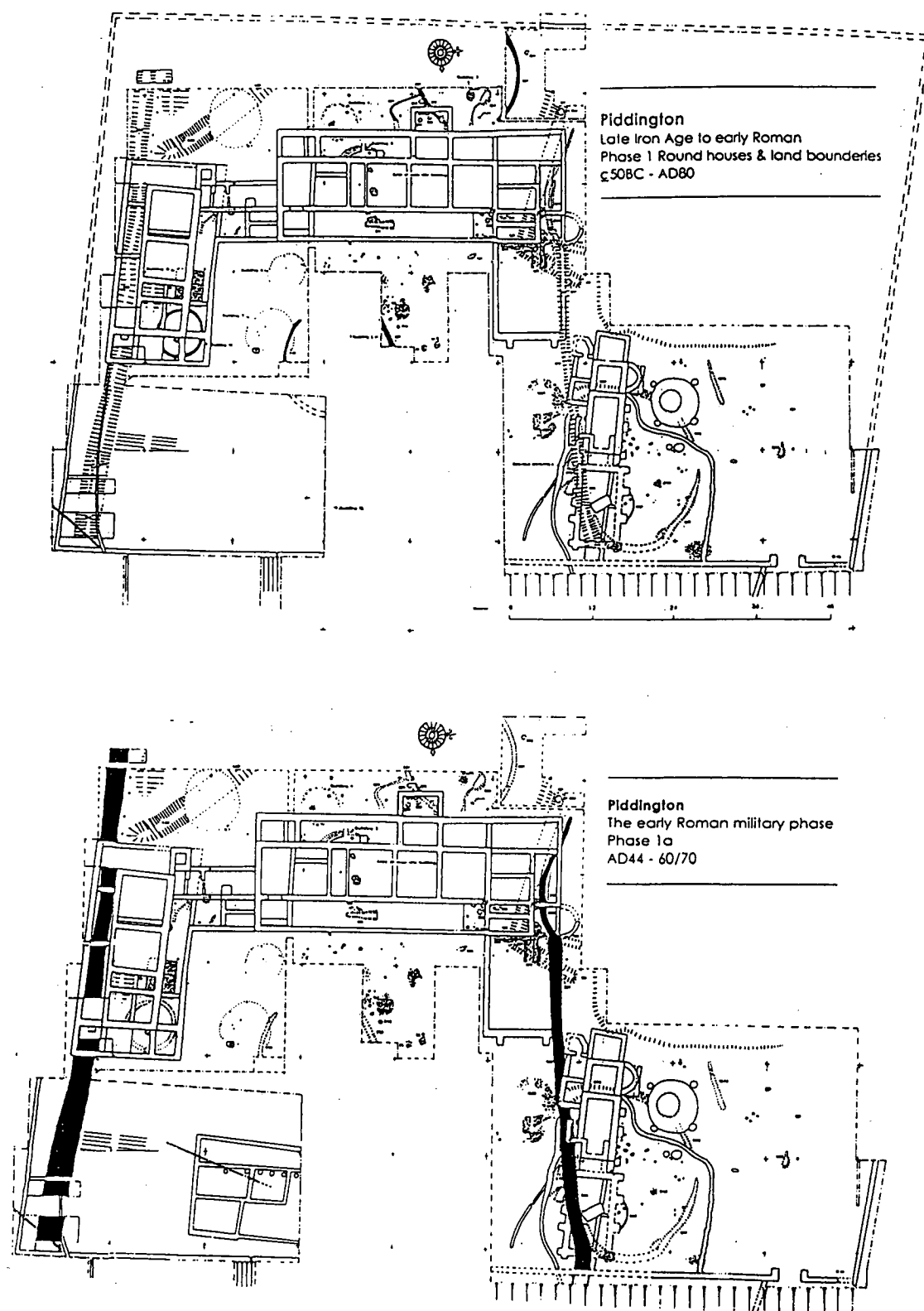


Fig 4. Piddington, pre-villa phase 1 & 1a, the Military phase (with the outline of the later villas shown)

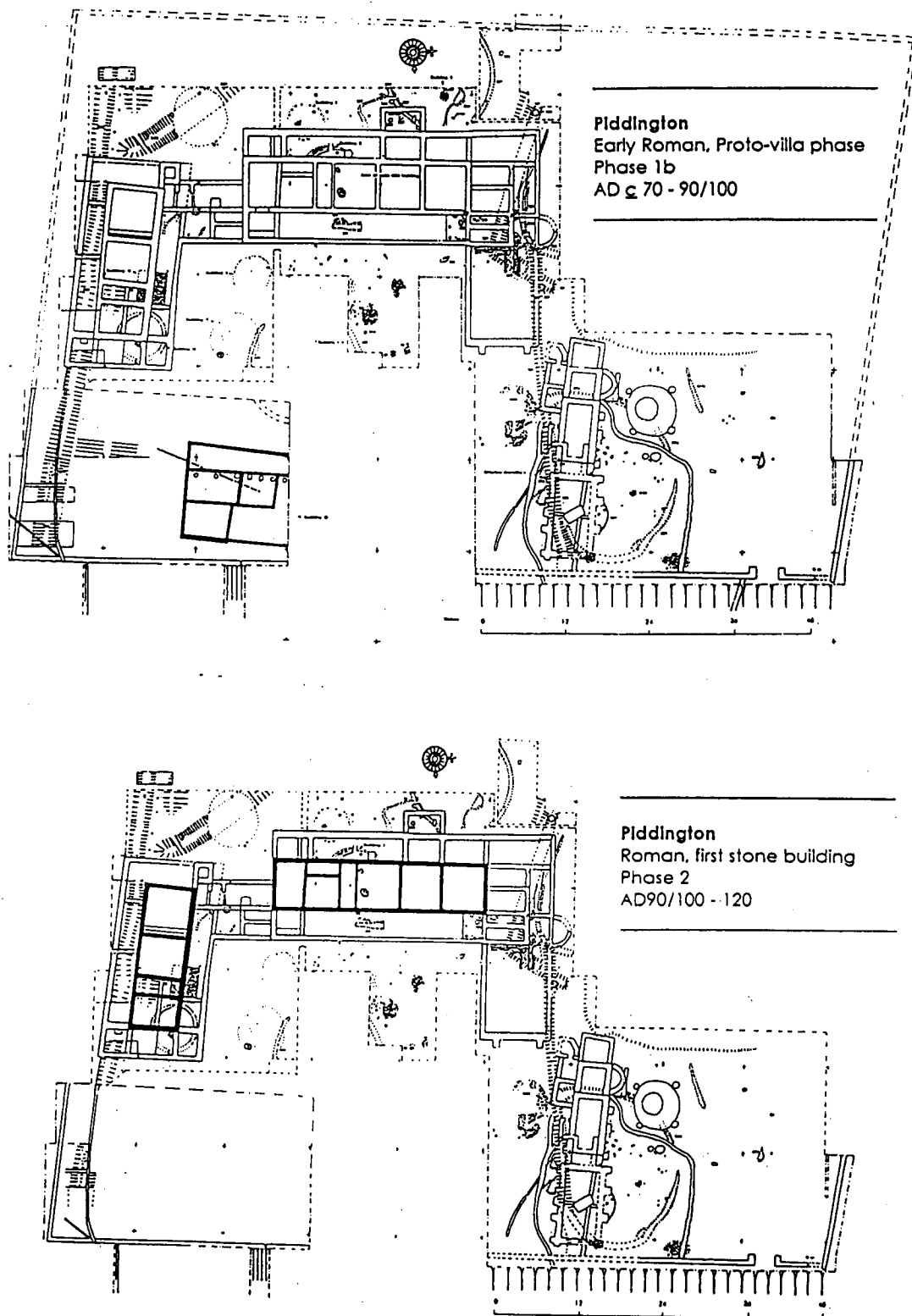


Fig 5. Piddington, the first timber villa phase 1b & stone villa phase 2.

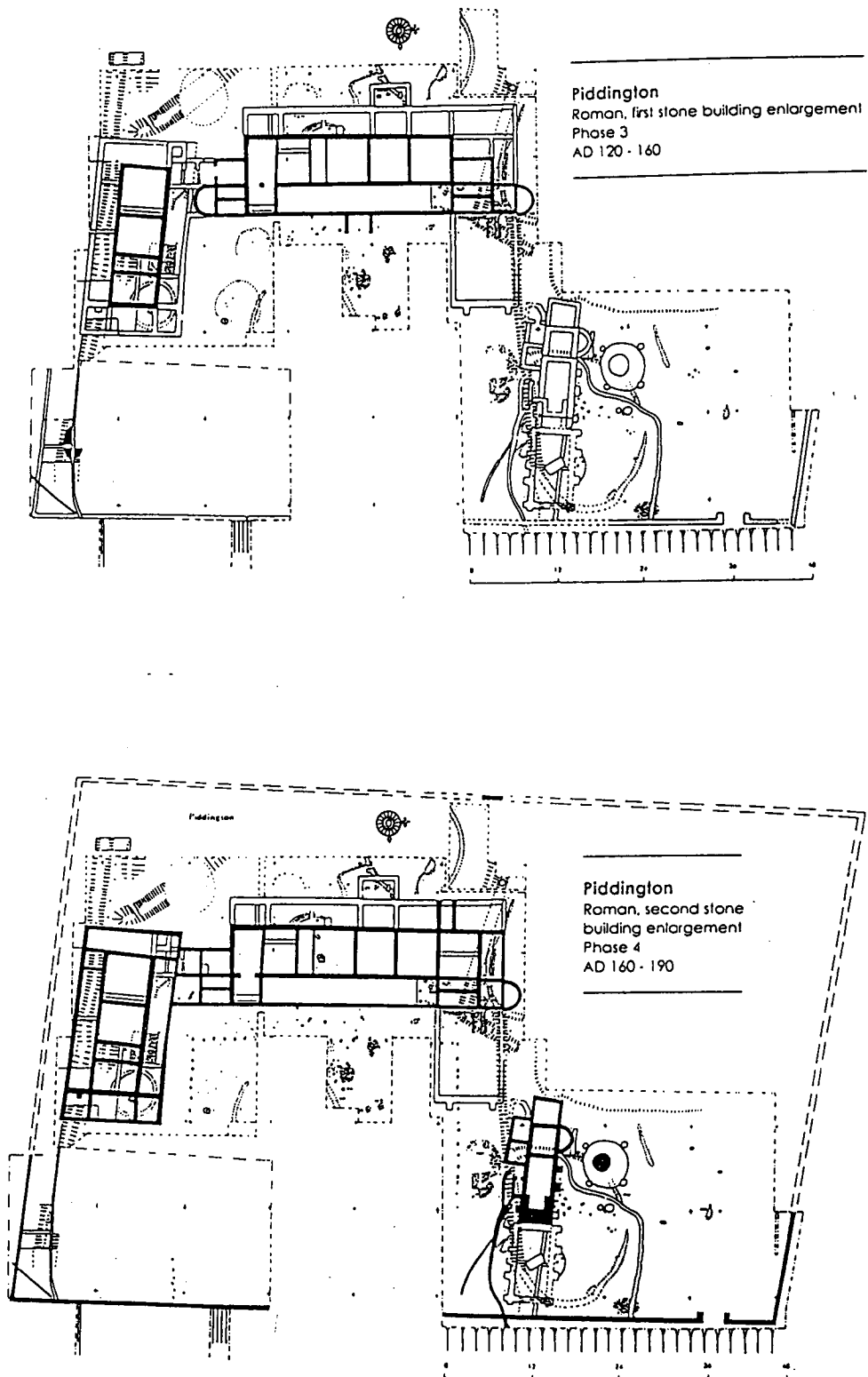


Fig 6. Piddington, stone villa phases 3 & 4.

incorporated into its southern end, with two small windows just above the ground, facing east.

The south wing was built at an obtuse angle to the main north-south aligned building, probably reflecting the angle of the earlier Claudian ditch (AD43/44), which must have still been partially visible next to this wing.

The floors in this building were of either clay or beaten earth, similar to those in the earlier villa. Wallplaster decorating the walls was either white or a plum red.

Phase 3. c AD 120 - 160

By this time, the building was becoming more elaborate, with a corridor floored with small bricks, *opus spicatum* (meaning: 'ears of wheat') fronting the rooms behind. There are elements of a symmetrically planned architectural design, with an apsidal (semi-circular) room at each end of the main building, which may have contained family shrines.

Painted wallplaster would have decorated most of the rooms and mosaics may have been added at this time. The four-roomed detached building built during Phase 2, making up the south wing, had not been altered and remained in use.

Phase 4. c AD 160 - 190

New rooms had encased the original simple 'cottage-type' building of the south wing. The apse at the south end of the main building was demolished to make way for a new integral bathhouse, which would link the south wing and the main villa building. Also, at about this time, another much larger detached bathhouse was added to the north-east of the main building complex, possibly for use by the slaves/servants/workers or, possibly, guests. Serving this bath house and adjacent to it, was a huge stone-lined well, over 2m in diameter and 8.5m deep, with what appears to have been a major elaborate structure covering it.

In the late 2nd century, an enclosing wall was constructed, defining the area around the villa. The villa was designed to be approached from the east, ie from the direction of the modern village of Piddington. An elaborate gateway would presumably have been set into this wall. The foundations of this boundary wall fronting the villa (ie the east side) are up to 0.5m deep, which would have supported a wall of about 2 to 2.5m high, whereas the boundary walls at the sides and back were laid directly on to the subsoil and would only have supported a dry stone wall about 1.5m high. Therefore, any visitor to the villa approaching from the east or south-east was sure to be suitably impressed, especially as the exterior walls might have been rendered and/or, painted. The corridor roof was covered with decorative grey/blue imbrex tiles and cream coloured tegulae. The main clerestory roof was red. Many of these tiles had clearly been painted this colour.

Punctuating the northern part of this east facing front wall was the 'tradesman's' entrance, which led into a stone surfaced yard immediately to the north of the main villa complex.

At the end of this phase of expansion and evident opulence during the late Antonine period (c AD 260s), a serious fire devastated the whole building.

Phase 5. c AD 190 - 280/290

After the fire, rebuilding on the same site took place and the opportunity seems to have been taken to make several alterations and additions to the original plan. Wall paintings must have adorned many rooms at this time - in some cases using some quite rare colours such as cinnabar and blue frit. Cinnabar had to be obtained from as far away as Anatolia (Turkey). Again, no expense was spared with the fixtures and fittings.

During this phase a new wing was added, this time at the north end of the main building, now making this villa conform to a standard 'winged corridor villa' plan. However, this north wing did not have any internal rooms, remaining a large hall-like structure and its function is a mystery. Opportunity was now taken to rebuild the integral bathhouse between the two main wings, adding its own water supply via timber pipes and a water storage sump.

Phase 6. c AD 280/290 - c 420

Life at Piddington was to change forever at the beginning of this phase, for reasons we can only guess at, and which may have been of a political nature. The villa seems to have been abandoned mid-way through a massive refurbishment programme, leaving large heaps of unused tesserae in the courtyard and at the rear of the main north-south range and unpainted plaster littered the floors of the integral bathhouse.

But life did not come to an end at Piddington. 'Squatters' moved into what had now become a ruinous building site, part renovated and part dismantled. At least 7 family groups or units now occupied various rooms, knocking down some walls and building others. Evidence found by the excavators, showed that they were living in what we would perceive as considerable 'squalor'. In one room, there was even a horse's head in the corner, along with masses of oyster shells and other domestic rubbish! Towards the end of this phase, the well to the north of this main villa building began to be filled up with late 4th century rubbish from the nearby dwelling built into the 'workers' bathhouse. These family units within the old villa complex must now be seen as the early beginnings of the modern village of Piddington - which gradually moved towards the field to the west of the present parish church.

This late period of 'squatter' occupation lasted into the post-Roman period and seems to have merged seamlessly into the next major phase of British history - the post-Roman/ Saxon period.

Phase 7. c AD420+

The site now seems to be occupied solely by an Anglo-Saxon family group, characterised by a small *grubenhaus*, built over the hollow of the large, now filled-up well, forming a storage cellar for the occupants. Nearby, a small cemetery was located in the former north wing of the villa. This contained three skeletons, an elderly male, buried on his left side, with a small knife and a joint of meat in an oval-shaped grave; a much younger well-built male, buried on his back, also with a small knife and a staff with a copper alloy disc at its top, by his right shoulder and an iron *ferule* at the base. Nearby, was another skeleton, this time of a young woman in her early to mid 20s who was buried face

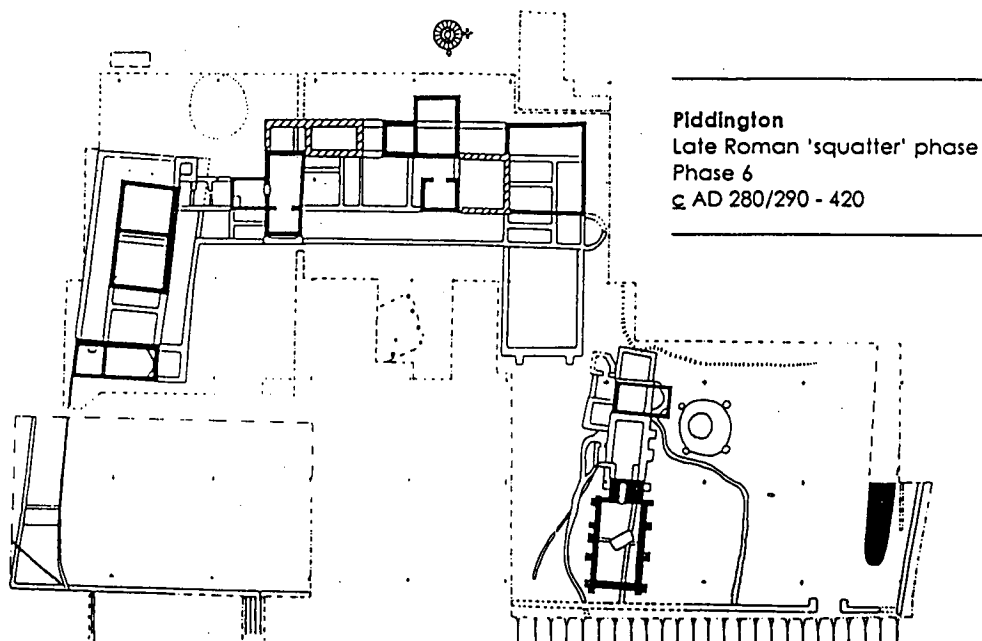
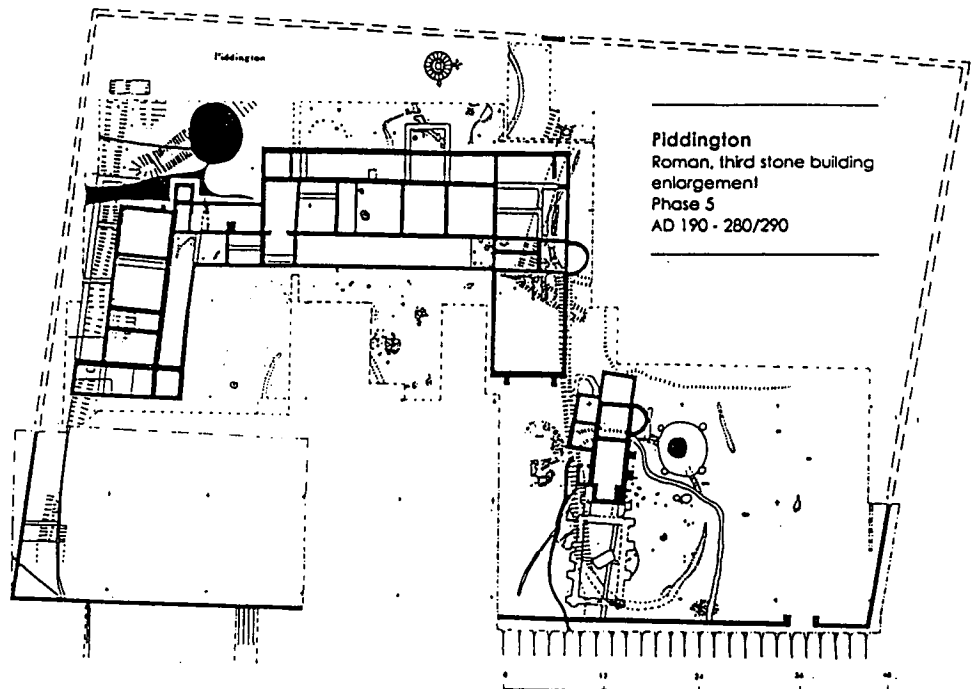


Fig 7. Piddington, stone villa phase 5 & the late Roman 'Squatter' phase 6..

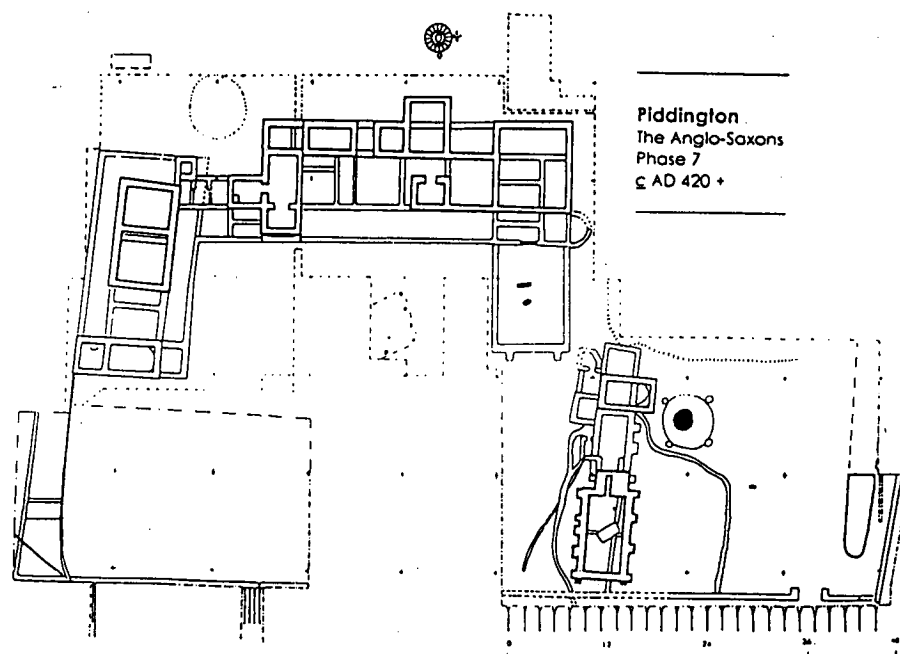


Fig 8. Piddington, phase 7, the Anglo-Saxon phase.

down in the possible position of a doorway into room 11 of the stone-built villa.

In 1781, the workmen digging for limestone near the villa discovered a large mosaic. The then vicar of Piddington visited the site and wrote to a colleague, describing what he had seen of the mosaic, which he said "looked like a carpet". He also mentioned a further skeleton, buried on the mosaic, with a spear, almost certainly an Anglo-Saxon warrior burial. Could these burials have been PIDDA and his family?

Discussion

The first stone villa at Piddington (Phase 2) (Fig 3) has been tentatively dated to the late Trajanic to early Hadrianic period, 90/100 AD. Built at the end of the first century or beginning of the second, it began its life as a typical cottage type villa, later developing via various stages into the winged corridor form. At about this time, a stone boundary wall (108m x 76m) was constructed around the villa. The front (east) wall had deeper foundations than the other three sides, to support a high wall, presenting a more imposing aspect to impress an approaching visitor. At least two gateways were sited in this east wall: the northernmost was used for wheeled traffic, while the south gate was a single leaf postern gate, leading from which a row of stone-lined post holes may have formed part of a formalised garden arrangement within the courtyard. A major entrance may be sited close to the postern gate.

Towards the end of the second or the beginning of the third century, "a villa with buildings on three sides of a courtyard" (Selkirk (ed.), 1996, 59) *op cit* had evolved (Phase 5). A second, larger, bathhouse located to the north of the courtyard, perhaps for estate workers, was constructed within this period, with an adjacent large stone-lined well with what appears to have been an elaborate structure surrounding it. This continued in use through to the 4th century 'squatter' phase and produced much fourth century pottery, coins and wooden objects,

together with insects, snails, dog and wolf skulls, the study of which is discussed below. A disastrous fire, later in the 2nd century brought the main villa phase to an end, leading to a complete rebuilding programme, seemingly on a more elaborate scale (Phases 3 and 4).

Towards the close of the 3rd century, the villa witnessed a dramatic change, whereby evidence points to a planned rebuilding and at the rear of the main villa building. An unworn coin of Allectus had been lost under one of the piles of unused brick tesserae in the courtyard. Some of the plastering remained unfinished in the integral baths, the main north bath suite was demolished and replaced by a tile kiln, workshop and a yard for the storage of limestone tiles, over the top of the now demolished old detached bathhouse, along with other anomalies, which all suggest major refurbishment. However, "building work seems to have been interrupted" (Frere, 1989, 292) and has henceforth been taken to indicate that "villa life came to an abrupt end" (Friendship-Taylor in Rollo, 1994, 5) *op cit*. It seems that in times of civil war the estates of those on the losing side were often confiscated by the state, adding weight perhaps to the proposed suggestion that the owners of Piddington, possibly supporters of Carausius/Allectus, started to rebuild the villa, only to have it confiscated on Allectus' defeat. Whatever the reason for this abandonment, there was very little activity on the site, perhaps for less than a decade, until the buildings were once again occupied in the earlier 4th century. This time however, the whole area of the villa was occupied by a series of small independent 'family units', with some rooms being repaired, extended and reoccupied, whilst other parts of the main building were dismantled (Phase 6). A courtyard gully was levelled with much rubbish, fine wall plaster and coins of Constantine I of the London mint, which is interpreted as the clearing of the site prior to re-occupation.

One such family unit, living in Room 49, settled above the, by then, disused cold room and cold plunge bath in the detached bathhouse (Rooms 52 & 53) sited adjacent to the well (F815) - see Fig 6. This contained quantities of late

Oxfordshire

Roman pottery, coins, oysters and, in one corner, a complete horse's skull *op cit*.

During the latter part of the 3rd century, the baths were demolished and a tiler's workshop erected on its eastern side. This contained hearths and working surfaces and a 'clay puddling pit'; a ceramic tile kiln was also inserted through the west wall. This renewed activity heralded the 'squatter' phase of occupation.

Adjacent to, and contemporary with, the late Roman occupation of Room 12, a corn-dryer or malting oven, was added to its south wall, very similar to one found in the late occupation of the villa at Great Casterton, Lincs. (Corder, 1951, 54, 61). Charred peas and cereal grains were found surrounding this feature. Room 12 also contained an accumulation of some 50cm of ash, along with vast quantities of oyster shells, good groups of 4th century pottery, bone working debris such as inlay, complete worked bone objects, many coins, and other domestic debris. All this provided a date range of c AD 330 to c 410+ for the main 'squatter' phase of occupation. In all, some seven of these separate 'family' units produced evidence of intensive activity and, although the romanised trappings of life were still much in evidence, such as the presence of Oxford, Much Hadham, Nene Valley fine colour coated wares and a large quantity of 4th century coins, the living and working accommodation had every appearance of utter squalor! (Friendship-Taylor in Rollo, 1994, 5 & 7).

Just inside the north boundary wall, a large flat-bottomed ditch (F1184), of unknown length to date, with a terminal near the north-east corner, containing late 4th century coins and pottery, may represent a late Roman boundary or defence after the stone boundary wall had fallen out of use. To the west, much of this ditch was destroyed by 18th century quarrying.

Coin evidence suggests that activity on the site continued into the 5th century, with examples of Arcadius, AD 395-408 and Honorius, AD 395-423. A full coin analysis is awaited. Later reuse of the site nonetheless occurs in the Saxon period, when a possible sunken structure, associated with early Saxon pottery, was incorporated into the 'sag' or depression of the in-filled well. In addition, at least 4 Saxon burials were cut into the, by now, ruinous northern end of the main villa building and the north wing.

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OXFORDSHIRE

ABINGDON AREA ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Bayworth, Manor Farm (SP 5034 0140)

A resistivity survey, contour plot, metal detecting survey, and limited excavation was undertaken at Manor Farm, Bayworth, directed by Paula Levick. This was the site of a former medieval and post medieval manor house and chapel.

Early documents record the existence of a house on the site by 1329, although its construction is believed to be slightly earlier. During the medieval period, Abingdon Abbey twice owned the house and land, on the second occasion until the dissolution. In 1597 the property was purchased by Sir Thomas Baskerville, and remained in the hands of the family for 4 generations until 1721. The house was in ruins by 1727, and timbers and beams were used in the construction of the later farmhouse.

Today, although very little survives above ground, a number of features identified by resistivity were confirmed through excavation. This found that remains are only some 20cm below the ground surface and cobbled floors and wall footings survive – indicating that the site has not been ploughed since its demolition.

In the northwest of the field, foundations and floors of a multi-phase building extend for approximately 33m. Tiled, mortared, and cobbled floors, together with walls, were all recorded. Window glass, roof tiles, stonework and other artefacts were recovered from the destruction layer.

To the south of the house, trenches were placed to examine various phases of drystone walls constructed from local corallian limestone, and probably belonging to formal gardens. These were excavated down to the natural at a maximum of 1.6m. Metalworking slag, and 11-12th century pottery was recovered from layers starting at approximately 60cm.

A well, that appears on the 1886 OS map, was no longer visible, and is absent from more recent maps. This was found to lie in a courtyard of well-laid, pitched limestone blocks, to the southeast of the building. A path extends from the courtyard into a road or trackway of similar construction, for 70m, before meeting the modern fence line. A cropmark visible on aerial photographs suggests it may have continued across the adjacent field towards Abingdon.

In the very north of the field, demolition debris gave the appearance of an apsidal building on the resistivity plot. Excavation has shown this to be a rectangular building 6 x 9m with a mortared floor from which medieval pottery and Stonesfield slate roof tiles were recovered. This was investigated at the very end of the excavation in September 2003, and it has not been possible to establish its function.

Dating of the finds, and historical research into the property and its ownership is ongoing, with a full report planned at a later date.

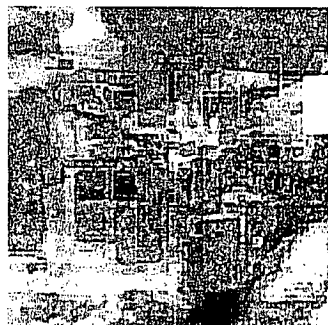


Fig 1. Part of the resistivity survey 100m x 100m. High resistivity shows as lighter marks

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES AND CONSULTANCY LTD

Granary, Crowmarsh Battle Farm, Preston Crowmarsh (SU 6164 9060)

Bob Zeepvat

In January 2003 an historic building survey of The Granary, Crowmarsh Battle Farm was undertaken in advance of a programme of refurbishment and minor alterations. The building, a timber framed, weatherboarded two-storey structure with a plain tiled half-hipped roof, probably dates from the mid 18th century. The survey showed it to be largely unaltered from its original condition, with few obvious repairs. This type of granary, located close to the farmhouse and supported on staddle stones, is common in southern England in the 18th and 19th centuries. Fig 2.

The Laurels, Brook Street, Watlington (SU 6885 9420)

Jonathan Hunn

In the winter of 2002/3 a watching brief was maintained during construction of a new housing development on land to the south of Brook Street. The site was within the town centre, to the rear of a medieval timber-framed building, but no archaeological remains were observed.

Watlington Park, Watlington (SU 706 925)

David Fell and Sallianne Wilcox

During the winter of 2002/3 an historical and archaeological study and building assessment was made of Watlington Park. The earliest references to the park occur in the 13th century when land was granted to Richard, Earl of Cornwall. The park subsequently reverted to the crown and was sold to William Stonor in 1632. The Stonor family built the first house in the park c 1655 and the estate remained in

the hands of the Stonor family until 1753 when it was sold to John Tilson. The present Palladian style building was constructed shortly afterwards.

The park was extensively developed during the late 18th and 19th centuries by successive generations of the Tilson and Carter families. The house was enlarged during the 19th century and Arthur Renshaw, an early 20th century owner, made additional improvements, notably extensions to the house and improvements to the grounds, including the construction of an ornamental pool.

The park was sold to the Brett family in 1921. Oliver Brett (3rd Viscount Esher) immediately made a number of further improvements, notably by commissioning *trompe l'oeil* decoration in the hall from the then fashionable architect Philip Tilden. Many of the 19th century additions were removed in 1954 by the 4th Viscount Esher when he restored the house to its original 18th century appearance.

Despite changes made to the house during the 19th and 20th centuries many parts of the house retain elements of their original form. Parts of the original staircases, doorways, doors, fireplaces, fire surrounds, wall decorations, etc survive within the building.

Old Surveyor's Office, 38 Ock Street, Abingdon

(SU 4495 1970)

Sallianne Wilcox

In November 2003 an historic building survey was made of The Surveyors Office prior to the conversion of the building into office use.

The building was probably built between the 15th and 17th centuries as a private residence. It fronted onto Ock Street and was partially timber-framed. It was extended to the rear during the late 18th century or early 19th century and had a back garden bounded by a stone wall and during this period it was sold to the Eagle Brewery.

The building was sold to Morland Brewery towards the end of the 19th century when further alterations were made. The original part of the building was converted into offices, a shop and a laboratory while a one-and-a-half storey south range was constructed on top of the surviving stone garden wall to the rear. This may have been used as a brewhouse during the early production of beer by Morlands on the site. Two cellars were constructed beneath the building both of which had gone out of use by the end of the 20th century.

In the early 20th century two single storey buildings were added to the rear of the property and the frontage was altered incorporating new windows, timber frame cladding, pilasters, dentil cornices and pebble dash render. This part of the building was also re-roofed during this period.

COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

Abingdon Pipeline (from SP 563 014 to SU 480 964)

K. Cullen, J. Webster, E. R. McSloy, S. Inder, L. Higbee, T. Gilmore

Introduction

A programme of archaeological recording was undertaken from February to September 2003 at the request of RSK ENSR Environment Ltd (on behalf of Transco) along the

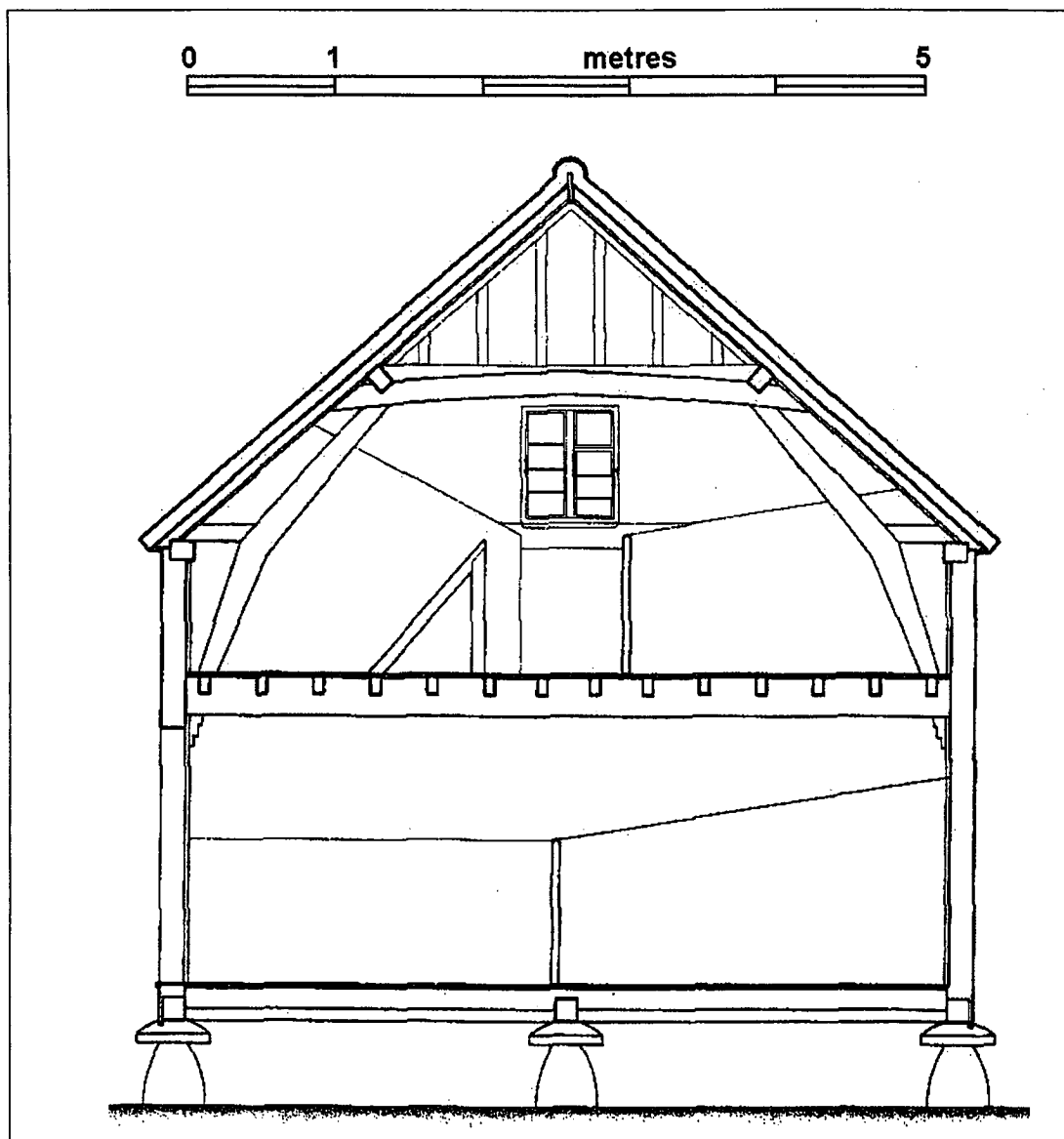


Fig 2. South gable end, The Granary, Crowmarsh Battle Farm.

pipeline route. Walkover (CA 2003a and b) and geophysical surveys (Bartlett, 2003) were undertaken prior to the evaluation work, and 20 evaluation trenches were excavated along the pipeline route. Subsequently two areas 5m in width (Areas 1 and 2) were subject to excavation to a total length of 740m along the pipeline route. The two areas were separated by the course of the railway line. A watching brief was also carried out along the remaining route of the pipeline. Fig 3.

Several periods of activity were noted within the areas of investigation from the Mesolithic through to the post-medieval periods, with a bias to Iron Age and Romano-British features.

Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age

The earliest periods represented are reflected in the items of worked flint. These included two Late Neolithic arrowheads, as well as Mesolithic blades and other undiagnostic flint flakes. One pit of Mesolithic date was identified and reflects the probable exploitation of the area in general throughout the early prehistoric periods. Flint

tools from the Late Bronze Age, and hazelnuts were retrieved from a few discrete pits, but in general dateable prehistoric features were absent. An isolated Middle Bronze Age Deverel Rimbury urn cremation burial was also found near to Iron Age structures, but had been heavily truncated by modern ploughing.

Iron Age

Of particular interest were the remains of rectangular and circular post-built structures to which a Late Iron Age date can be ascribed. The rectangular structure pre-dated the roundhouse, and was unenclosed on the western side. A gully to the west of the roundhouse may have functioned as a drip gully, but was not visible to the east. A pit inhumation burial containing the largely intact remains of an adult female was situated nearby. Associated with this burial were over 60 pieces of worked flint, which may derive from an earlier disturbed feature, due to the more characteristically Neolithic or Bronze Age technology. Other Iron Age features were present in the form of large intercutting storage pits, which contained Middle to Late

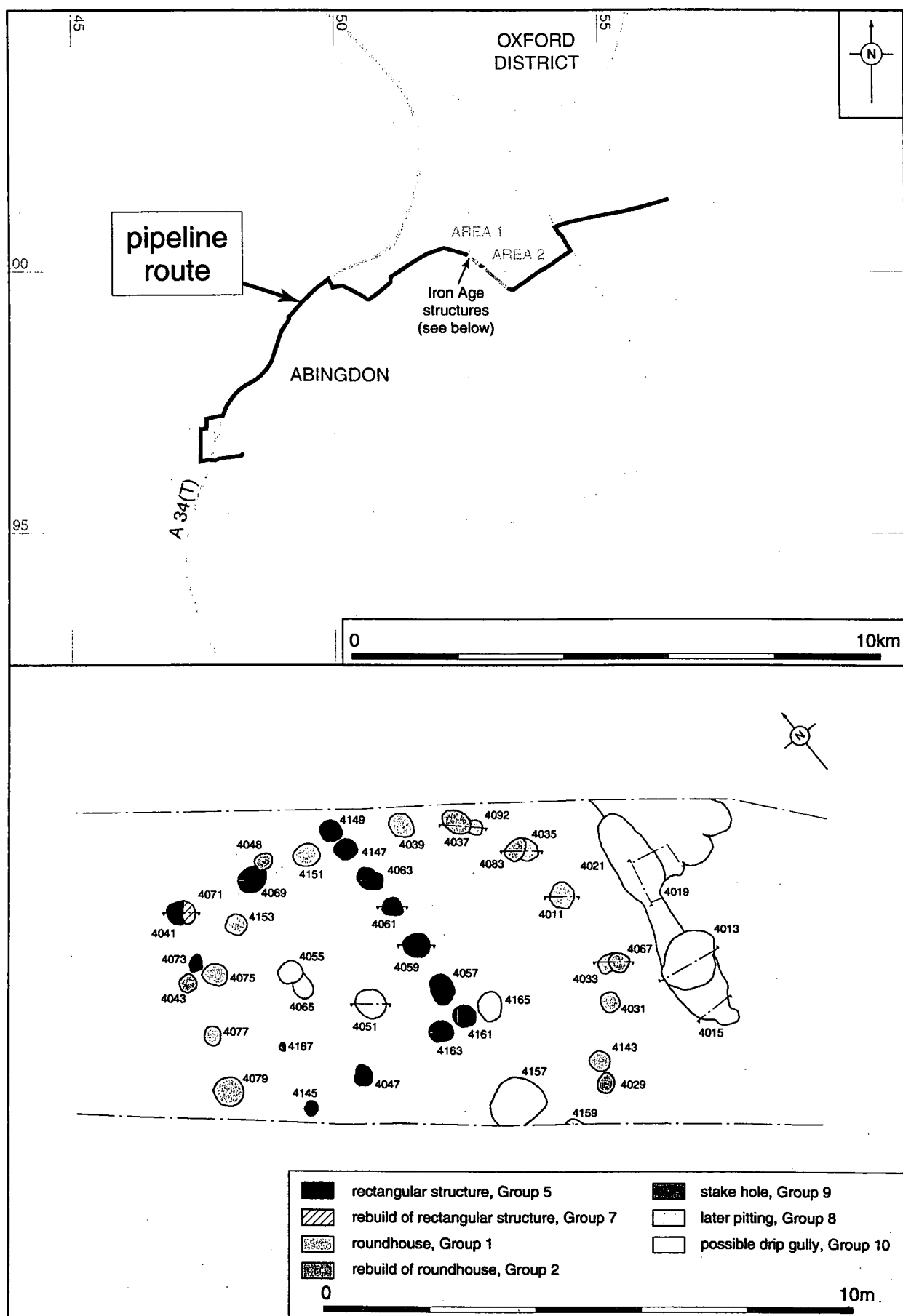


Fig 3. Route of pipeline and detail of Iron Age structures.

Oxfordshire

Iron Age pottery and worked flints. A Late pre-Roman Iron Age/Early Roman cremation burial that contained several conjoining pottery fragments lay to the south-east of the inhumation burial.

Romano-British

Several pits dating to the early Romano-British period contained large quantities of daub with wattle impressions, and were situated in and around the Iron Age post-built structures. A double-ditched enclosure which had been recut several times contained a broad date range of Romano-British pottery. Within this enclosure was a stone lined pit into which led a stone drain, which was interpreted as a soakaway. Late pre-Roman Iron Age/Early Roman pottery was also retrieved from the soakaway, as well as quantities of 3rd and 4th century backfill material and a fragment of quern stone. The enclosure may have contained a farmstead, which lay outside the area of excavation. A trackway in the form of two gullies also dating to the 3rd or 4th centuries contained disarticulated bones from a human newborn/neonate.

Outlying field systems presumably associated with this settlement activity were identified in both areas of excavation; however the paucity of dating has limited in-depth interpretation, as has the degree of truncation throughout by ploughing activities.

Medieval and Post-medieval

Recognised medieval activity was restricted to a few sherds of tile. Post-medieval field boundaries and land drains were the only later features existing within the pipeline route.

Discussion

The artefactual evidence points towards a long-lived settlement of the area from the Middle Iron Age through to the late Romano-British period, probably in the form of an evolving farmstead. The buildings appear to have been situated on the higher ground of the gravel terrace in Area 1, with the outlying field systems containing the storage pits below in Area 2.

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Langhams Yard, Gloucester Street, Faringdon
(SU 2870 9561)

Franco Vartuca

An archaeological evaluation undertaken in November 2003 identified a single pit containing a mixture of mid 17th and early 18th century pottery, including glazed red earthenware, German Frechen stoneware and delft ware.

The Development of Oxford's Northern Suburb: Evidence from 1-12 Magdalen Street (SP 5016 0646)

Clifford Bateman, Dawn Enright and Annette Hancocks

Summary

A programme of archaeological investigation and recording, carried out during the redevelopment of a department store, discovered evidence relating to the suburban development of Oxford in the medieval and post-medieval periods. Most of the surviving deposits originated to the rear of tenements or in the 'backlands' behind buildings that fronted onto Magdalen Street. These indicated that occupation of the area commenced in the 12th and 13th centuries but suffered a decline in activity in the later medieval period, with development recommencing in the later 17th or early 18th century.

Introduction

An archaeological excavation and a watching brief were carried out between April and July 1999 during the redevelopment of 1-12 Magdalen Street, Oxford (Fig 4). The demolition of the existing department store and associated outbuildings, with the exception of the Magdalen Street and George Street facades, took place over an area of approximately 4250m². A three-stage programme of archaeological recording was agreed between the site owners, Crest Nicholson plc, and Oxford City Council. The nature of the remains encountered during evaluation led to the excavation of two areas prior to redevelopment and a watching brief during groundworks below the level of pre-existing basements (Fig 5).

Background

The following account is largely taken from the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared for the project by Phoenix Consulting (PC 1998). The site lies just outside of the line of medieval Oxford's town wall, approximately 40m to the north of the original North Gate. Archaeological investigation has yet to provide evidence for the presence of a Saxon suburb north of the area defined by the medieval wall (Andrews and Mephum 1998, 197). It is generally considered that the Saxon settlement of Oxford was confined to the area later defined by the medieval wall, at least along its northern limit. However, it has been suggested that the Church of St Mary Magdalen, to the east of the site, may be pre-conquest in origin (Hassall 1987, 16), and it is likely that the earliest suburban settlement would have been close to the gates of the town.

The development of suburbs to the north of the city wall is attested in the late 11th century and is thought to have intensified during the 12th and 13th centuries (VCH 1979, 24), the first documented reference to George Street (as Irishman's Street) being in 1251 (ibid, 476). The Palace of Beaumont, built by Henry I in the first half of the 12th century in an area to the north-west of the site, was granted in the 14th century to the Carmelite (White) Friars. Fragmentary remains of the friary have been found, including 15 burials uncovered during construction of the Playhouse Theatre. Friars' Entry, forming the northern boundary to the site, provided access to the friary from Magdalen Street.

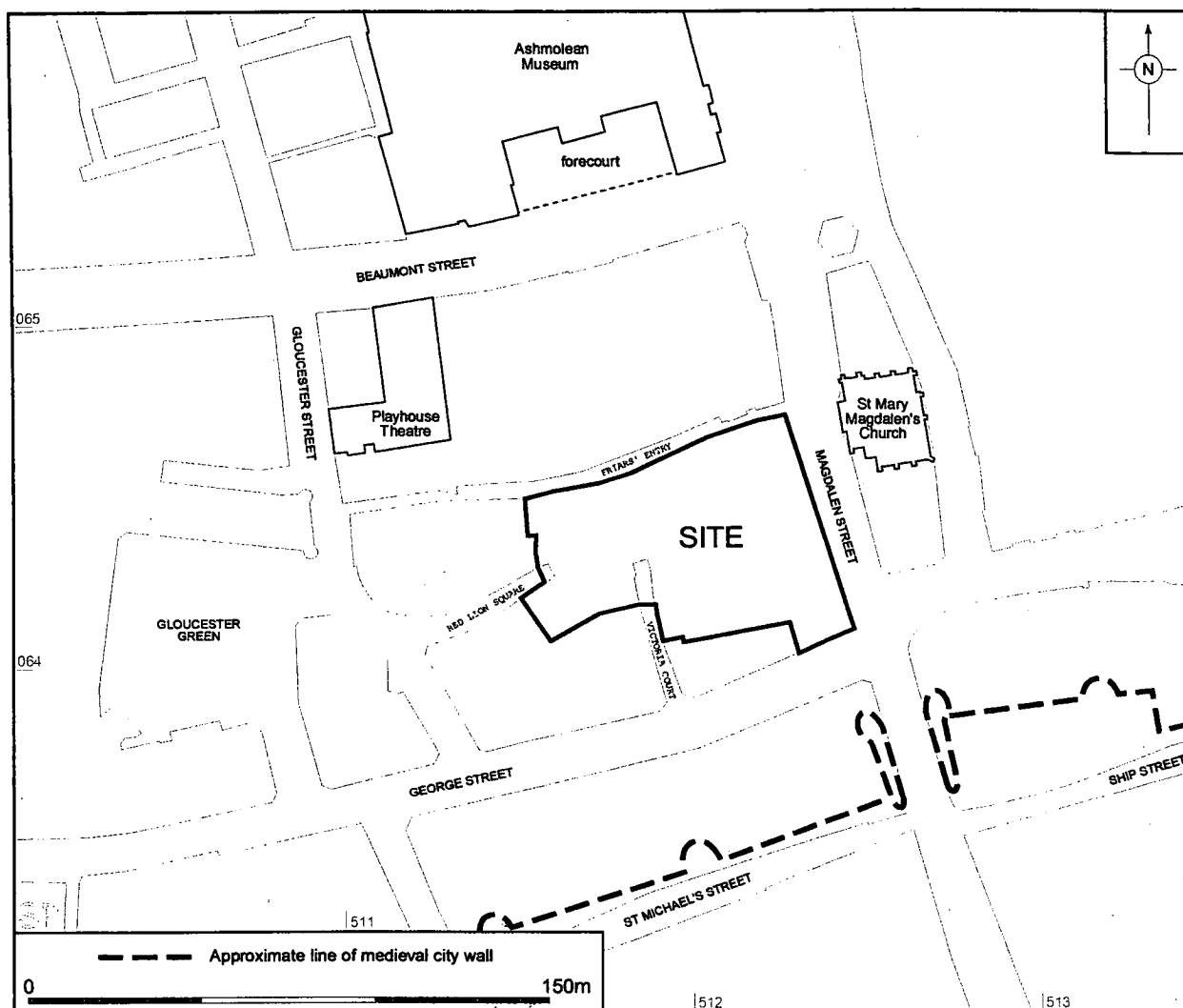


Fig 4. 1-12 Magdalen Street site plan.

The later medieval period (14th to 15th centuries) saw a decline in Oxford's population with some areas of previously occupied land returning to waste ground (Bond 1986, 137). Salter's *View of Medieval Oxford* (compiled 1934) depicts a range of tenements on the Magdalen Street frontage between Friars' Entry and George Street, but to the rear of these tenements and along George Street is an area of waste ground known as 'Broken Heys'. The tenements include two inns, The Christopher (established by the late 14th century) and The George (established by the mid 15th century), and also properties belonging to the Chantry of St Mary, Oseney Abbey and the Hospital of St John. The properties as depicted by Salter are shown in relation to the results of the archaeological investigation (Fig 5).

In the mid 17th century (following the Civil War), building activity resumed in earnest in the area. This period of development is documented by the outcry of parishioners over the building of cottages on the waste ground and bowling green at Broken Hayes (Hassall 1987, 91-5). Intensive rebuilding took place across the city in the later 17th and 18th centuries, when almost all buildings of any antiquity were destroyed, including the Friary buildings and the city's defensive walls.

The 1st edition OS map of 1875 shows that the site had been extensively developed by the late 19th century. The Victoria

Theatre occupied much of its western extent between Red Lion Square and Victoria Place (now Court), and its facades formed part of the unloading depot existing prior to redevelopment. Between 1876 and 1913 the buildings fronting Magdalen Street and Friars' Entry were demolished prior to the construction, with extensive basements, of commercial premises for Elliston and Cavell Limited (VCH 1979, 202).

Methodology

Following evaluation, two areas were designated for archaeological excavation: Area 1, immediately north of the Apollo Theatre in an area proposed for lift pits, and Area 2, immediately west of the existing shop basements. A watching brief was maintained subsequently during further reduction of the basements. Archaeological excavation took place to a level no deeper than that required by the development. During excavation, pits and postholes were fully excavated, with 20% of linear features excavated along their exposed length. During the watching brief, excavation of features was undertaken as appropriate and where health and safety considerations allowed.

The following account is a brief summary of features recorded and finds collected from the excavations and

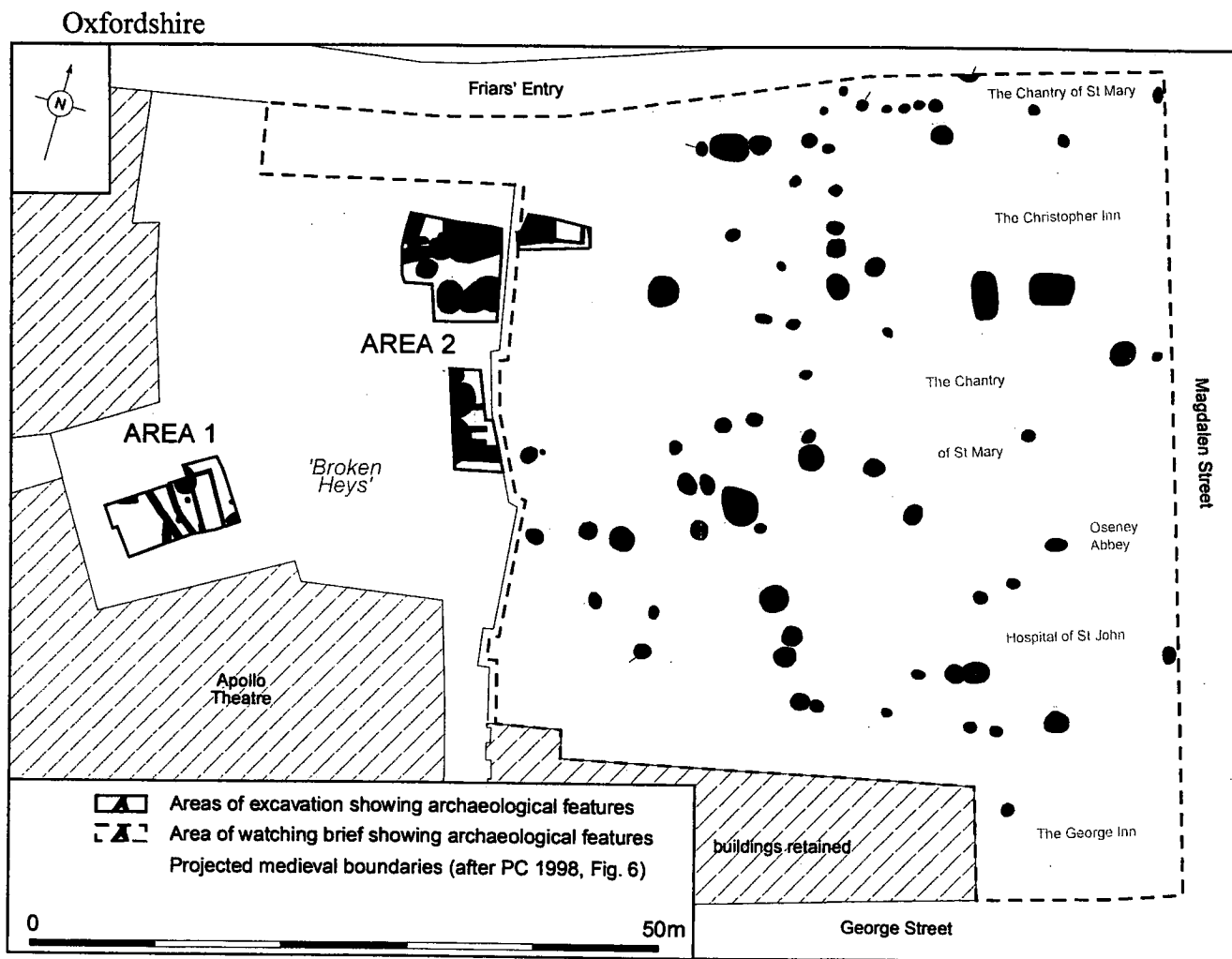


Fig 5. Site plan.

watching brief and will form the archive report for the site. Full details are available in the site archive, which will be deposited at the Oxford Museum under the accession number OXCMS: 1999.33.

Results

Stratigraphic evidence was collated from all stages of recording, with dating derived from the pottery and clay tobacco pipes. Four periods were identified:

- Period 1: medieval 11th to 13th century
- Period 2: late medieval/early post-medieval 14th to 16th century
- Period 3: post-medieval 17th to 18th century
- Period 4: modern Late 18th century to modern

Features not illustrated are identified by ni.

Area 1 (Figs 6 and 7)

Area 1 was located adjacent to Red Lion Square, about 30m north of the present George Street frontage. The total area of excavation measured 10m by 6m. Natural deposits of Summerton Radley terrace gravels were identified at 1.8m below the existing ground surface, at 62.5m AOD.

Period 1: medieval (Fig 6)

The natural gravels were overlain by layers of cultivation soils (including layer 1038) dated to the 12th to 13th centuries. Across the central part of Area 1, these soil layers were cut by a number of ditches, including ditches 1078 and 1050, later recut as ditches 1052 and 1043. Evidence for different types of activity was recorded to either side of this ditched boundary. To the northeast, medieval features included several pits (1037, 1040 and 1081) and a posthole

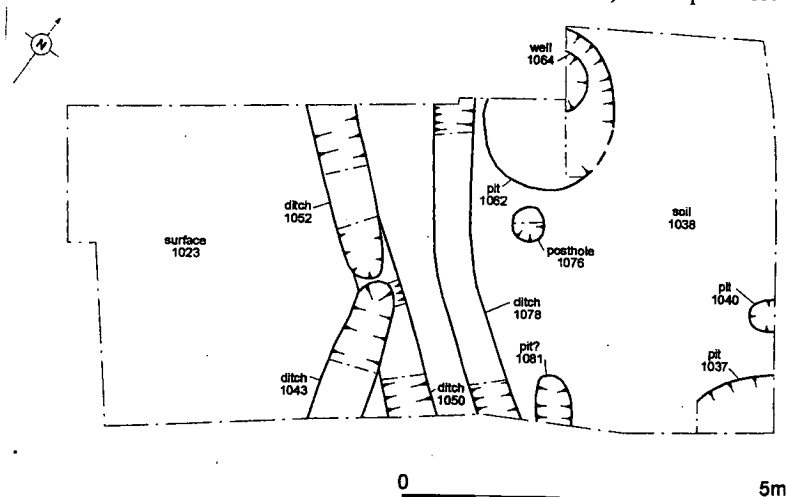


Fig 6. Area 1. Period 1.

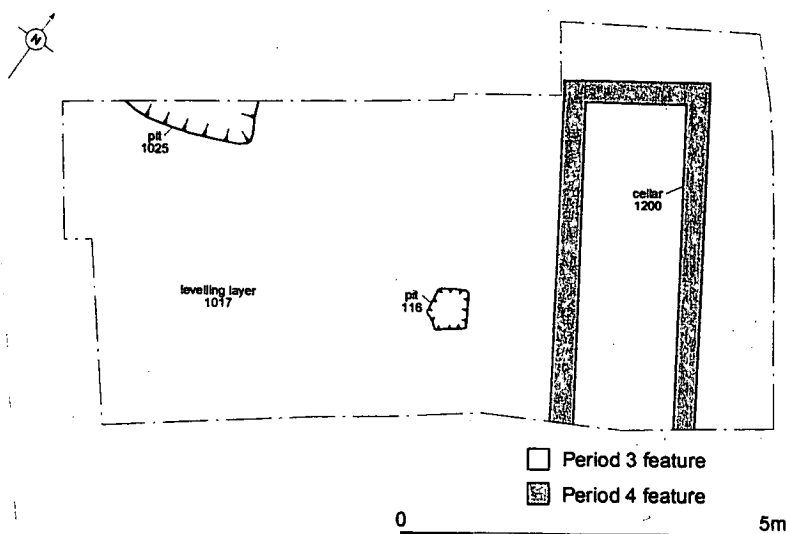


Fig 7. Area 1. Periods 3 and 4.

(1076). Pit 1081, which was earlier than ditch 1078, may equally have been the terminus of an earlier ditch. All of these features yielded pottery dating to the 12th to 13th centuries. A large pit (1062) had truncated the top of an earlier well (1064) and a good ceramic group of some 27 sherds was recovered from both features, again mostly 12th to 13th century types. The uppermost horizon of pit 1062 (fill 1055, ni) contained later 18th century material.

Following the re-establishment of the boundary by ditches 1043 and 1052, a compacted limestone surface (1023) was built immediately to the southwest. Construction of surface 1023 involved the removal of the earlier soil layers, as it lay directly on the natural gravels. Surface 1023 also appeared to date to the 13th century.

Period 2: late medieval/early post-medieval

All medieval activity was sealed by layers of levelling deposits up to a depth of 0.3m, which were dated to the 14th to 16th centuries. No other features or deposits from this period were recorded.

Period 3: post-medieval (Fig. 7)

The uppermost levelling deposits (layers 1017 and 1018 (ni)) contained locally manufactured clay pipe bowls, including two examples of Oxford Type B (c 1650-90) from deposit 1018. These deposits were cut by a sub-angular pit (1025) that contained an unusual clay pipe with a long bowl, dated c 1665-90. Pit 1025 was cut by a later pit (1027; ni) which may have originally contained a timber lining. Both were interpreted as cess pits. Several subsequent levelling horizons and pits, many containing residual medieval material, were also evident.

One later feature of note is pit 116, from which a significant proportion of the Period 3 pottery assemblage (45% by weight) was derived. This is a varied and well-preserved group of wares dating from the later 17th to mid 18th centuries, with many complete profiles, including a Westerwald tankard with a lozenge pattern. One of the latest pieces in the group was a rim of a pearlware plate of mid 18th century date. Pit 116 also contained a major deposit of 18th century clay pipes and a Georgian medallion.

Period 4: modern

Most of the earlier features in the north-eastern half of Area 1 had been truncated by the construction of an 18th century cellar (1200), built of dressed limestone blocks bonded by lime mortar. The external dimensions were 6.3m by 2.1m wide, with internal dimensions of 5.6m by 1m, and a depth of at least 2m. The cellar walls were founded on the natural gravels. There was no evidence for a floor surface surviving at the base of the cellar. Repairs in machine-made bricks attested to the cellar's continued use into the 19th century.

Area 2 (Figs 8 and 9)

Area 2 measured 20m by 12m overall and was located approximately 50m from Magdalen Street and 35m from George Street. Due to the intrusive nature of modern building

foundations and services, the area was excavated in three separate, stratigraphically isolated trenches: areas (i), (ii) and (iii). Natural gravels were identified 1.3m below the existing ground surface, at 62.44m AOD.

Period 1: medieval (Fig 8)

The earliest deposits were cultivation soils (including layer 217) overlying the natural gravels, similar to those identified within Area 1. In Area 2 (ii), the earliest feature was a substantial ditch (5126), orientated east/west and probably a property boundary, which yielded pottery of 12th to 13th century date. Other early features were found in Area 2 (i), including pits 5081 and 5046, which were also dated to the 12th to 13th century. The latter was at least 3m in diameter and penetrated the natural gravels by at least 1.86m to an overall depth of more than 2m.

Deeper still was the contemporary well 5030, which was excavated to a depth of 3.8m by machine into the natural gravels without the base being reached. The vertical-sided nature of the well shaft within the gravels suggests that it had been lined, but no direct evidence of this had survived.

Period 2: late medieval/early post-medieval

Evidence of Period 2 activity was limited to pits, the largest of which (pit 5124) was located in Area 2 (ii) and cut the earlier medieval boundary ditch 5126. Pit 5124 was sub-circular and at least 4m in diameter, and dated to the 15th or 16th century. Analysis of the waterlogged and charred plant remains recovered from pit 5125 indicated that it was probably a typical rubbish pit.

Elsewhere the Period 2 pits formed two distinct clusters, one in Area 2 (i) and the other in Area 2 (iii). In Area 2 (i), a sequence of numerous intercutting pits (including pits 5050, 5053, 5055, 5068 and 5083) lay to the east of well 5030 and over pit 5046. A further three pits (5085, 5087 and 5089) were identified in Area 2 (iii). The pottery retrieved from these features ranged in date from the 13th to 17th century with the earlier material being residual.

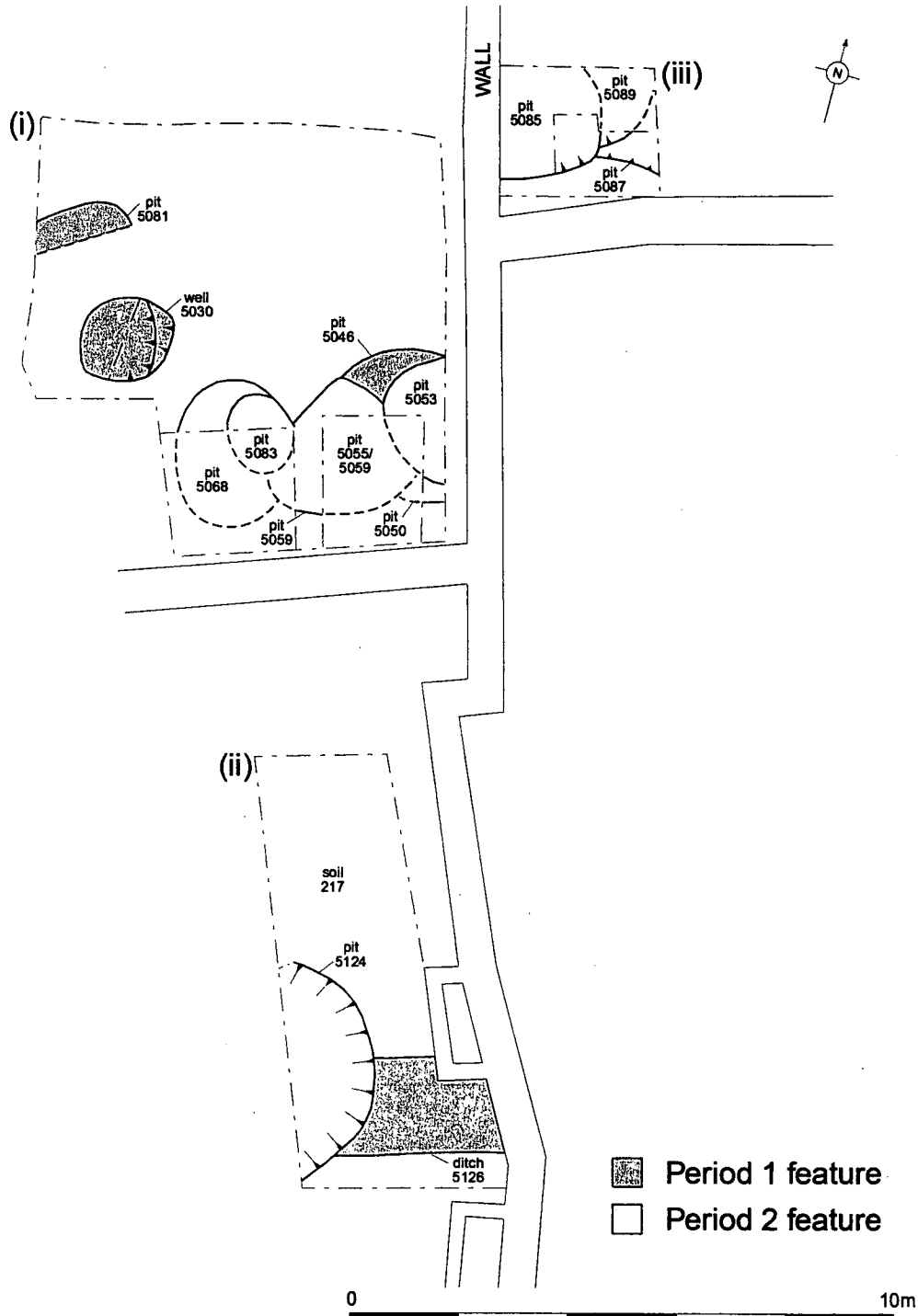


Fig 8. Area 2. Periods 1 and 2.

Period 3: post-medieval (Fig 9)

In Area 2 (i), the earliest post-medieval feature appeared to be a 17th century culverted drain (5061). Drain 5061 was constructed in coarse, roughly dressed limestone capped by limestone slabs, and was aligned north-east/south-west. It had been truncated at its north-eastern end by a large, irregular pit (5199). Pit 5199 was soon infilled and a surface of limestone cobbles (5008) was built over, with kerb of pitched limestone blocks (5010) running parallel to a drainage gully (5013). Gully 5013 was capped with limestone slabs, and drained from northeast to southwest. In Area 2 (i), the drain continued below ground as culverted drain 5026, also constructed in limestone, overlying the

infilled quarry 5199. In the northwest corner of Area 2 (i), an 18th century stone-lined cess pit (5001) was located. Three clay pipe bowls from cess pit 5001, all of Oxford Type C dated to c 1690-1720 (Oswald 1984, 252-3), mark the transition into the 18th century.

In Area 2 (ii), two parallel, limestone walls (5129 and 5132) were revealed. The walls ran parallel to the medieval boundary 5126, and formed a narrow northeast/southwest-aligned alleyway. Wall 5132 had been subsequently cut by a large pit (5130); a further large pit (5134) lying adjacent. The latter provided no dating evidence.

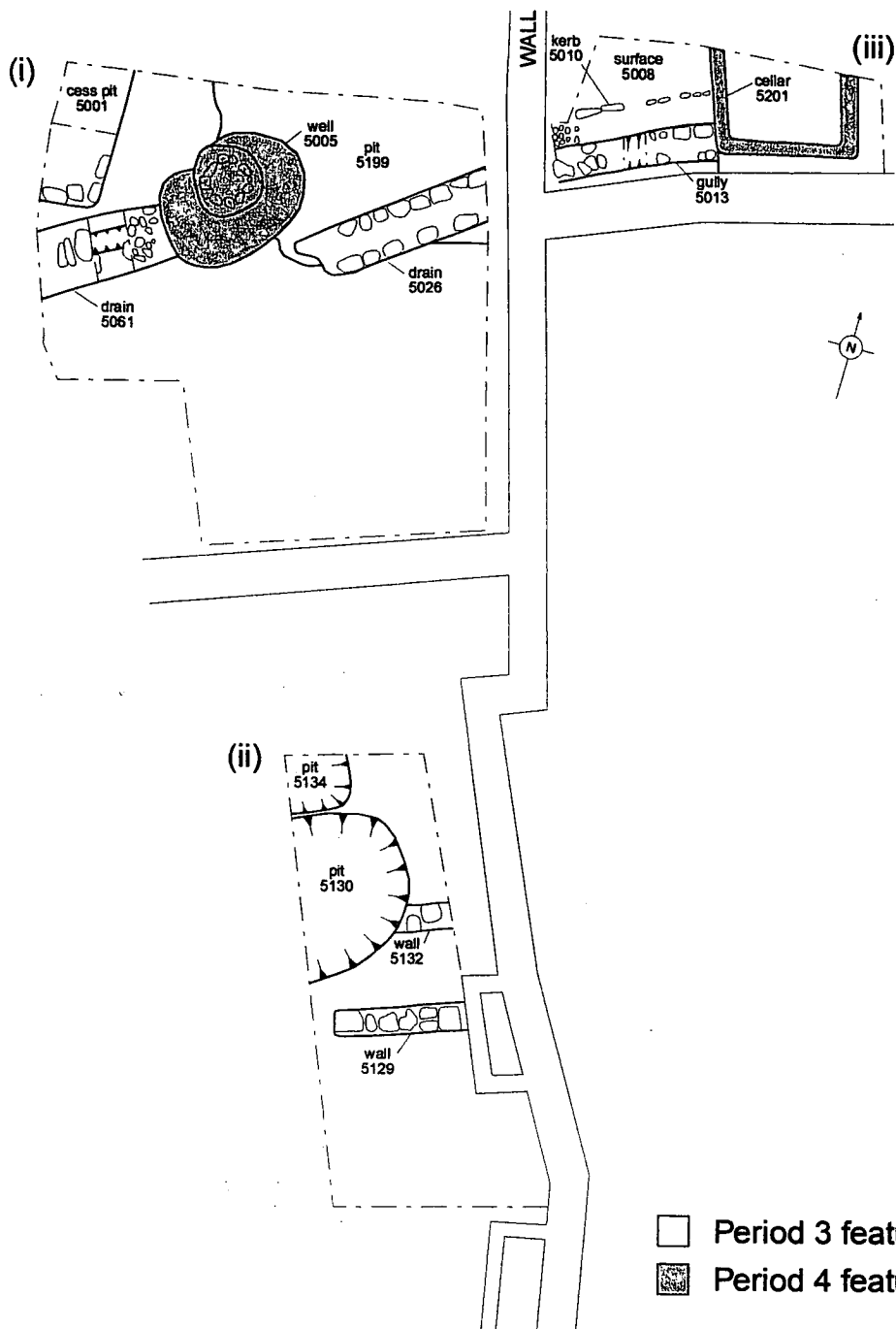


Fig 9. Area 2. Periods 3 and 4.

Period 4: modern

In Area 2 (iii), surface 5008 and gully 5013 had been truncated by the construction of a cellar (5201) of roughly-dressed limestone blocks. No artefactual material was retrieved to indicate a possible construction date, but cellar 5201 had been infilled during the construction of the department store basement. In Area 2 (i), an 18th or 19th century stone-lined well 5005 had further truncated drain 5061.

The watching brief (Fig 5)

This took place within the footprint of the basement of the proposed department store and covered an area of approximately 3200m². The floor of the basement was at

60.7m AOD, 1.8m below the level of the natural gravels previously identified within Areas 1 and 2.

The nature of the groundworks was not conducive to the identification of archaeological features and opportunities to investigate their nature and date were very limited. Nonetheless, given the depth of truncation, a surprisingly high density of features was located below the level of the modern basements. All of these must have been very deeply cut features, and were presumably deep pits or wells. As would be expected, the majority of features were located more than 20m from the modern street frontage, away from the location of earlier buildings fronting Magdalen Street.

The artefacts recovered generally represent items from the surface of exposed deposits only. The majority of these

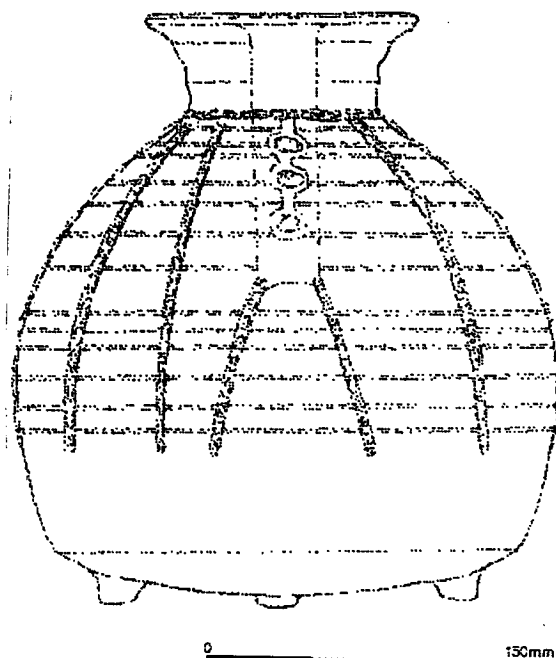


Fig 10. Medieval tripod pitcher.

artefacts proved to be of 10th to 14th century date. Of particular note are two Oxford ware jars from pit 6024, an unusual polychrome decorated tripod pitcher from pit 7064 and a Brill/Boarstall ware decorated pitcher/jug with red-painted stripe decoration recovered from pit 7114. Unstratified finds included a complete medieval tripod pitcher of typical Oxford style with a thin, patchy glaze (Fig 10). No finds dating to between the 15th and 18th centuries were recovered during the watching brief.

Discussion

The earliest deposits in both excavation areas were medieval cultivation soils, but a single sherd of Iron Age pottery was also retrieved from these layers. Other residual artefacts recovered from the site include two fragments of Roman tile and two fragments of Late Saxon pottery. Chance discoveries of prehistoric and Roman finds within early soil horizons have previously been noted within Oxford, with more substantial evidence of Middle Iron Age settlement being identified at Whitehouse Road, c 1km to the south (Mudd 1993, 33-85). A Roman quernstone and clay figurine have also been found within the immediate vicinity, at St Johns Road and Gloucester Green respectively (PC 1998). Significantly there are no examples of St Neots ware in the pottery assemblage, which played a major role in pottery supply to Oxford in the 10th century (Mellor 1994).

Period 1: medieval

Both excavation areas lay at least 30m from both Magdalen Street and George Street, and consequently beyond the location of any medieval buildings that fronted these streets. Although the watching brief was undertaken up to the modern Magdalen Street frontage, construction of the modern basement had truncated any evidence of earlier structures.

The presence of 12th to 13th century cultivation soils indicates that agriculture was being practised within the site

in the early part of Period 1. The establishment of 12th or 13th century boundaries in both excavation areas (ditches 1050, 1078, etc. in Area 1; ditch 5126 in Area 2) represents the earliest known subdivision of the site. In Area 1, these ditches may represent a boundary between medieval tenements fronting George Street. To the west a metalled surface was laid, whereas to the east, pits were dug and a possible well was built. In Area 2, ditch 5126 was probably a boundary between plots fronting Magdalen Street, and coincides with the projected position of a medieval property boundary (see Fig 5).

Although no evidence of medieval structures survived, the 12th to 13th century date of the boundary ditches and associated activity fits well with the documentary sources, which indicate that the Magdalen Street frontage had been established by the mid 13th century at the latest (Salter 1969, 222-7). Elsewhere, excavations undertaken within the forecourt of the Ashmolean Museum also produced evidence of late 12th century activity, with no evidence of structures until the mid 13th century (Andrews and Mephram 1998).

The majority of the features identified during the watching brief were undated, but evidence of 12th to 13th century pit digging was revealed at the northern end of the site close to Friars' Entry. Only the deepest cut features survived truncation by the basement, but a broad correlation is apparent between the east/west pit alignments and Salter's plotted medieval tenement boundary in this vicinity (see Fig 5).

Period 2: late medieval/early post-medieval

In Area 1, this period was only represented by 0.3m of levelling deposits. It is unclear whether this represents deliberate raising and levelling of the contemporary ground surface or is indicative of ad hoc disposal of rubbish on waste ground. In Area 2, a number of pits dated to this period and most notably the substantial rubbish pit 5124, which cut across the line of the earlier boundary ditch 5126 (Fig. 8).

The paucity of late medieval features and artefacts from Oxford in general has been interpreted as a reflection of the town's documented contraction from the 14th century onwards (Salter 1960). However, the excavated evidence for further deposition and pit digging suggests that the area was not completely abandoned at this time, although the interruption of ditch 5124 by pit 5124 suggests that previously established land divisions had fallen out of use, at least towards the rear of the properties. Documentary evidence indicates that both the George Inn and the Christopher Inn continued throughout this period, doubtless taking advantage of their location along a major thoroughfare into the city (Salter 1960). Excavations undertaken along the Ashmolean Museum frontage (Andrews and Mephram 1998) also noted a significant decrease in activity within this period, although again the site was not completely abandoned. This contrasts with the evidence from Jowett Walk in the town's north-eastern suburb, where it is suggested that tenements fell into disuse and the area reverted to cultivation during the 15th century (Roberts 1995).

Period 3: post-medieval

Increased activity was apparent from the 17th century onwards. Cartographic evidence suggests that by the later 17th century the former backlands of the tenements were being subdivided and developed. In Area 2, walls 5129 and 5132 may have bounded a narrow alleyway providing access to the rear of the Magdalen Street tenements. It is unclear why both the alleyway and the broadly contemporary drain 5061 were abandoned and subsequently cut by pit digging, but in Area 2 (i) and (iii) the pit was soon infilled and covered with a metal surface (5008) with associated drainage, presumably in the rear yard of the Christopher Inn.

Within Area 1, the presence of cess pits 1025 and 1027, and of a substantial deposit of pottery in pit 116, may indicate that development had resumed along the George Street frontage

Period 4: modern

Late 18th century and later features were only represented within the excavation areas by three deeply cut features: two cellars and a well. Later 19th century concrete and brick footings partly formed the limits of excavation in both areas.

Conclusions

The area of archaeological investigation lies outside the line of the defensive medieval city wall and beyond the area of Saxon settlement as it is currently understood. The complete lack of any St Neots-type ware in the pottery assemblage supports the premise that Saxon occupation did not extend northwards of the line later adopted by the medieval walls.

The development of suburbs to the north of the city wall is attested in the late 11th century. Development at this site appears to have been slightly later, from the 12th or 13th century onwards. Pottery from the later medieval period is less well represented, corresponding with the decline in the population of Oxford and the abandonment of some of the land outside the walls at this time (Salter 1960). Increased activity from the mid to later 17th century is supported by the numerous finds and features dating to the later 17th to 18th centuries.

With the possible exception of pit 116, the pottery assemblages recovered from individual features are too small to provide much information about patterns of use. Overall, there is nothing unusual about the pottery assemblage, which appears to reflect a fairly standard domestic group. The forms are typical utilitarian types with a mixture of cooking wares and tablewares. Despite the presence of the inns in the post-medieval period there is nothing in the ceramic assemblages which might reflect refuse from such establishments.

Acknowledgements

Cotswold Archaeology would like to thank Andy Richmond of Phoenix Consulting, Crest Nicholson Properties Ltd and Brian Durham of the Oxford Archaeological Advisory Service for their assistance during this project. The excavations were directed by Cliff Bateman and the watching brief by Tim Havard. The

project was managed by Dawn Enright with the post-excavation being managed by Niall Oakey, Martin Watts and Annette Hancocks.

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NATIONAL TRUST

Gary Marshall

Chastleton House (SP248290)

A single trench for laying an electrical cable in the stable yard at Chastleton House near Chipping Norton revealed the substantial stone foundations for a previously unrecorded building on the northeast corner of the yard. The foundations measured 0.96m in width and 7.15m in length, running parallel with the east wall of the stable yard and continuing beneath the south wall on the existing Coach House. Right-angled returns were found at either end of the 7.15m section, though they could not be explored because of the present location of the Coach House. It is likely that these return walls extend up to the line of the existing wall separating the stable yard from the entrance Forecourt, implying a building 7.15m in length and 6.4m in width. An inventory taken on the death of Walter Jones, the builder of Chastleton, in 1633 mentions several outbuildings, which can no longer be traced. This could therefore be the 'Wool Howse' (Jones was a wool merchant) or it could be an earlier Coach House.

Oxfordshire

Coleshill Model Farm (SP235936)

The Trust have commissioned a major survey into the history and phased development of the mid 19th century model farm buildings at Coleshill. The survey is being undertaken by Finial Associates and will provide the historical basis for a conservation plan for the farm buildings.

Greys Court (SU724834)

Samples taken for dendrochronology dating taken by the Oxfordshire Dendrochronology Laboratory at Greys Court have established a felling date of 1451 for the timbers of a jettied timber framed building, which forms the core of the present house. Sampling also gave felling dates of 1587 or 1588 for the timbers of Donkey Wheel House, 1578 for the timbers of the 'Cromwellian' stables and 1559 for the Keep Cottages. The dating was undertaken as part of a major survey of the buildings carried out by English Heritage, which for the first time has managed to elucidate the complex phased history of this medieval fortified manor.

Priory Cottages, Steventon (SU465914)

Recording of the south and west ranges of this important timber-framed building was undertaken by Finial Associates during repairs. Samples were also taken for dendrochronology dating, confirming a 14th century date for the earliest part of the building, which forms the south end of the west range.

NETWORK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Compiled by Martin Lightfoot

Boars Hill main, Harcourt Hill, Oxford

(SP 48412 04130 to 48553 04310)

Rosey Burton

During July 1999 a watching brief along the Thames Water Boars Hill main pipeline at Harcourt Hill, Oxford was carried out. The pipeline ran adjacent to the remains of a known Roman Road. Nearly sixty sherds of locally made Romano-British pottery were recovered, along with several worked flints and sherds of prehistoric and early medieval pottery. The majority of the finds were recovered from the ground surface prior to stripping. Excavation of the pipe trench revealed two colluvial layers containing burnt clay and charcoal flecks, but no datable finds.

Eynsham rising main (SP 43870 09998 to 46150 12010)

Rosey Burton

During August 1999 a watching brief on Eynsham Rising main pipeline was carried out. A number of gulleys were recorded and two sherds of early medieval pottery were recovered from an animal burrow.

Wooton water main reline (SU 5335 9705 to 5160 9850)

Rosey Burton

From December 1999 to April 2000 a watching brief on the relining of a water main between Culham Reservoir and Abingdon was carried out. Romano-British and post-medieval pottery and ceramic building material were recovered along with some prehistoric worked flints. Two sherds of late Iron Age pottery were recovered from the topsoil. A multi-phase series of ditches and pits, apparently part of a Romano-British settlement was also encountered.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

Compiled by Andy Chapman and Pat Chapman

Ambrosden, Laburnum Close (SP 6019 1939)

Jim Brown and Ian Fisher

A geophysical survey was carried out on behalf of Oxford Archaeology ahead of housing development over 0.5ha of building land adjacent to Laburnum Close, Ambrosden. It was believed that a post-medieval brick-built tunnel passed beneath the site and intermittent magnetic anomalies were detected that may identify part of the feature. Unfortunately the site as a whole proved to contain a high level of magnetic disturbance from rubbish and building debris and only a putative line of the passage was located.

Wallingford, High Street and St Martin's Street (SU 8940 6075)

Simon Carlyle

A trial excavation, commissioned by John Samuels Archaeological Consultants (JSAC), was carried out on 0.86ha of land to the rear of High Street and St Martin's Street, Wallingford in advance of development. The site is located in the historic Saxon and medieval core of the town. Part of the area contained a complex sequence of layers and inter-cutting pits that contained cess, ash and charcoal, indicative of domestic waste. Lumps of slag-like material suggest some industrial activity on or near the site. The pottery dates to the later medieval period, the late 13th and 14th centuries. One of the pits contained two plain copper alloy dishes and a complete green-glazed, Brill/Boarstall ware pitcher with applied decorative strips, similar to wares produced in the Northern French style. Elsewhere, the buried soil horizons contained 18th and 19th century pottery, glass and clay tobacco-pipe stems.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

British Gas Site, 75 Vineyard, Abingdon

Tim Allen

A field evaluation was undertaken on land located to the rear of 75 Vineyard, Abingdon on behalf of CgMs Consulting, between 30th June and 4th July 2003. The site

was formerly occupied by a Gas Works which has since been subject to remediation works to remove contaminated land. The main areas of Gas Works installations and subsequent remediation on the southern portion of the site have severely impacted upon and removed potential archaeological horizons. However, a considerable area occupying the northern portion of the site demonstrates excellent preservation of densely spaced archaeological features and deposits. These comprised rubble layers/surfaces, gullies, ditches, pits and postholes. Pottery evidence demonstrates a date range concentrated between the late Saxon 10th century and 14th century. Features outside of the medieval concentration were also identified including a single Iron Age gully. A sequence of recut ditches predating the medieval pits within Trench 1 produced many fragments of mixed human bone from at least two individuals. These ditches were not securely dated. However, the gravelly fills and reddish soil infilling them are suggestive of a prehistoric date rather than a more recent time span. Post-medieval deposits and features were also present but had not severely truncated or removed the medieval remains.

Air Balloon Public House, Ock St, Abingdon

(SU 4896 9698)

Andy Holmes

A field evaluation was carried out on behalf of Thomas and Co, two days' work in May 2003. The site was a pub and associated outbuilding to the rear of the property. This was to be developed into new housing. The evaluation consisted of two evaluation trenches. Both the trenches contained a number of pits, which dated from the 11th century to the late 19th century. A linear feature was also revealed and a post-hole. These suggest medieval activity on the outskirts of the medieval town of Abingdon, with later disturbance in the 19th century when Abingdon expanded.

Abingdon West Central Redevelopment Area, between West St Helen Street and Winsmore Lane, central Abingdon (SU 4962 9702)

Steven Weaver

Between November 2002 and December 2003 a programme of archaeological investigations was carried out within central Abingdon. The archaeological works were commissioned by Lovells Homes as part of their redevelopment of an area of land situated between West St Helen Street and Winsmore Lane. Previous archaeological evaluation had been carried out on the site by Oxford Archaeology in 1997. Evaluation revealed the presence of significant and well preserved archaeological remains. These included a small cemetery, dated to the Civil War period, the remains of a substantial medieval building, thought to represent St Helen's vicarage, and a series of defensive/enclosure ditches that dated from the Iron Age through to the post-medieval period.

A total of 26 inhumations were uncovered and recorded in the Civil War cemetery. The majority of the graves were aligned east-west, and were regularly spaced, in rows. A discrete cluster of four differently aligned north-south

burials was uncovered immediately to the north east of the main cemetery. Dating evidence recovered from the grave fills would appear to confirm the Civil War date previously assigned to the burials and this recorded evidence will form an important comparative assemblage to the burial cemetery recorded to the north east at the Vineyard.

Following the excavation of the cemetery and demolition of the former Southern Electric Board Depot evaluation was undertaken which revealed the remains of medieval structures associated with occupation along the frontage of West St Helen Street. Evaluation was immediately followed by area excavation. The excavation revealed that the earliest medieval phase of construction relates to the presence of probable thirteenth century tenements. These appear to have been combined into a single structure in the 14th/15th century. The remains of two stone-built garderobes (toilets) associated with these buildings were also uncovered. Earlier activity, likely to date to the Roman period, was also recorded on the site.

Excavations were also undertaken within the area of the known medieval vicarage identified by the earlier evaluations. The excavations revealed further surviving structural remains of the medieval vicarage with an additional L-shaped structure immediately to its north. Surviving remains of a floor surface, possibly associated with the vicarage, have also been recorded, from which glazed tiles were recovered.

Further evaluation trenching was implemented following the demolition of the Regal Cinema located along the frontage of Ock Street. The evaluation produced evidence for what is believed to be the continuation of the outer Iron Age/Roman ditch, previously identified through earlier evaluation, that are believed to have enclosed the early settlement. A further ditch of Iron Age date was also recorded lying further to the west. The defensive ditch appeared either to terminate within the trench, or to have continued on an easterly alignment. Further evidence of activity on the site dating to the Roman period was indicated by the remnants of a pit that had been cut by the western edge ditch.

Medieval and post-medieval activity on the site was also revealed. This was represented by the remains of a series of pits, wells, walls and remnants of structures that are likely to relate both to medieval occupation activity along the frontage of Ock Street and to the post-medieval Lamb Inn which occupied the frontage of Ock Street from the period after the Dissolution of the Monasteries. It was held by the Ely family from 1553 until 1720 and was a courtyard inn of considerable size. The Inn was extended in the 18th century, and continued to occupy the site until 1851.

Targeted excavation followed the results of the evaluation. Further evidence of the Iron Age and Roman defensive/boundary ditches, medieval pits, and surviving remains of the former Lamb Inn were recorded. Predominantly the excavation recorded surviving evidence of the former Lamb Inn. This was represented by stone walls, a cobbled yard surface and a structure, likely to have been used for refuse disposal, with associated activity in the form of further pits and wells of contemporary post-medieval date. As well as recording evidence for occupation, the excavations also produced large quantities of pottery, animal bone and leather off-cuts from the fills of

Oxfordshire

excavated medieval pits indicative of tanning processes and leather manufacture on the site to the rear of properties likely to have fronted onto Ock Street during this period.

A final phase of evaluation was conducted following the demolition of the Neave building situated along Winsmore Lane. The evaluation produced further fragmentary evidence of prehistoric dated ditches, medieval pits and post-medieval activity on the site. Further examination of this area was not considered appropriate due to the restricted area of the site and high levels of later disturbance.

The programme of archaeological works has produced a large collection of artefacts and material that includes interesting finds of worked and decorated bone, metal pins, coins, a knife, glass and preserved fabric. Industrial evidence of tanning has also been recorded on the site. The recovery of charred plant remains and cess deposits from the excavations may produce important environmental evidence, such as information regarding diet.

The investigations have provided significant further evidence regarding the early development of settlement within Abingdon in the Iron Age and Roman periods. Additionally it has further indicated that this part of the town was relatively well developed and densely occupied by the late 12th to 13th century.

Old Foundry, Wilsham Road, Abingdon (SU 4956 9663)

Jon Hiller

A watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Thomas & Co, between February and April 2003. The site was formerly a wharf providing a loading station off the nearby River Thames or Isis. The watching brief revealed that the site had been extensively raised with imported material to a depth of over 1m, prior to the construction of the foundry works. No archaeological features or finds were observed.

Wabag Water Engineering Ltd, Aynho Road, Adderbury (SP 4790 3572)

Jon Hiller

A field evaluation was undertaken on behalf of Charles Church, South Midlands Ltd, between 18th and 19th of August 2003. The site is thought to contain the remains of medieval and early Post-medieval settlement, which had been levelled during the construction of an embankment and subsequent landscaping by Capability Brown at Adderbury House. The evaluation consisted of four trenches across the site. These revealed a large area of the site had been truncated by landscaping, whilst lower lying, marshy areas had been sealed below a substantial depth of made ground.

The paddock to the west of the site showed evidence of being permanent pasture with no other activity. No archaeological remains were encountered during this evaluation.

Park Rise and Laburnum Close, Ambrosden

(SP 6020 1946)

Andy Holmes

A field evaluation was undertaken on behalf of BDG Design, between 18th and 20th June 2003. The evaluation consisted of five trenches in which revealed a section of a brick built tunnel well preserved beneath a thick layer of modern made ground. The tunnel was 3.5 m wide and thought to be 2.5 m high and was probably constructed in or shortly after 1740. It is thought that the tunnel linked the basements and offices of Ambrosden Hall to the church of St Mary the Virgin. No other features or deposits of archaeological significance were discovered.

St Laurence, Appleton (SP 445 015)

Ceridwen Boston

Between July and September 2002, a watching brief and recording programme was carried out at the church of St Laurence, Appleton. This was carried out in advance of the construction of a new extension to the northern side of the church and installation of a new floor and underfloor heating. The origins of the church are obscure but the earliest part of the church, the nave, dates to the 12th century AD. Several later phases of building are evident architecturally within the church.

Test pits dug within the nave of the present church revealed the foundation walls of an earlier, smaller church. This earlier church had a doorway in the western wall. The church was extended eastwards in the late 12th or early 13th centuries and some of the contemporary column bases reused the earlier wall as foundation blocks. The western wall, beneath the later blocked arch also had a doorway possibly leading to an earlier tower.

Twenty-two intra-mural earth-cut graves were located within this area. Most were orientated west-east but four were orientated north-south. Some graves in the western end may be contemporary with the early church whereas metal coffin fittings within some of the graves in the eastern end indicate that they were clearly post-medieval in date. As the graves were located below the impact level, they were not excavated. Four earth-cut graves and ten brick-lined vaults were present in the north aisle. Low-resolution osteological analysis was undertaken on five skeletons. The earth-cut graves had been truncated by the widening of the aisle in the 17th century or by the 18th and 19th century vaults. Five of the vaults were flat-topped. The barrel-vaulting had been removed when the floor was lowered in 1883. Inscriptions from memorial slabs indicated that the individuals in the brick-lined vaults almost certainly all belong to the Sellwood family.

Coffin fittings from six burials were discovered and the styles compared with the corpus of fittings identified at Christ Church, Spitalfields (Reeves and Adams 1993). The fittings that matched this corpus dated the burials to the mid-18th - mid-19th centuries. One grip plate design and one coffin plate were found to have no known parallels.

Reference

Reeves, J. and Adams, M 1993: The Spitalfields project: Vol. 1. The archaeology- across the Styx; *CBA Research Report* 85, London

Corner Garage, Main Road, Ardley (SP 5427 2751)

Andy Holmes

A field evaluation was undertaken on behalf of Thomas and Co, between 6th and 7th August, 2003. The site lies within the historic core of Ardley. Immediately to the west of the site are the remains of a shrunken medieval village, visible as earthworks (SMR 9015) with associated medieval holloways (SMR 1159). The evaluation consisted of two trenches. One did not produce any archaeological features; the second trench revealed a ditch and several pit-like features (probably tree throws) relating to the medieval shrunken village.

36 Shipton Road, Ascott-Under-Wychwood (SP 2973 1848)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at 36 Shipton Road on behalf of Brian Ridley, between 24/3/03 and 23/4/03. The area of the watching brief lies within the bounds of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 21806) of the motte and bailey castle of Ascott Earl that was constructed during the early medieval period. The watching brief revealed no archaeological features and that the site had been extensively built up in the late 20th century over the old soil horizon.

Banbury Flood Alleviation Scheme (SP 465 430)

Andy Holmes

A field evaluation was undertaken on behalf of the Environment Agency, between 2nd and 19th June 2003. The evaluation consisted of 73 trenches across the site which was bordered by the M40 to the south-west, the mainline Birmingham to Banbury railway to the west and the Oxford Canal to the east. Archaeological evidence was concentrated in the central part of the site and dated principally to the Neolithic and Roman periods. A middle to late Neolithic pit was exposed in one trench. In others, a number of ditches were tentatively dated to the Neolithic period on the basis of the finds, including a rare sherd of Peterborough Ware. An extensive system of Roman-period ditches and gullies was uncovered, representing a farmstead or other small settlement spanning the 1st to 3rd centuries AD. The evaluation also revealed a cremation burial and possible placed deposit. More linear features were uncovered in the eastern and northern parts of the site. These were generally undated or isolated, but may have been associated with the concentration of dated archaeology. The archaeological remains, especially those of Neolithic date, are potentially very significant, given the paucity of comparable sites in the region.

New Housing, Berinsfield (SU 5740 9636)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken on behalf of South Oxfordshire Housing Association, between 20/6/2003 and 15/8/2003. The watching brief monitored three different sites of new housing in Berinsfield. No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the watching brief. This was probably due to the landscaping and grading that was carried out on the site of the former airfield, that was built there in the early 1940s.

Elm Tree Farm, Station Road, Blackthorn (SP 6242 1952)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken on behalf of M J Brian Homes, between 3/10/2002 and 26/6/2003. The development area was in the historic core of Blackthorn, thought to be of late Saxon origin. Previous archaeological evaluation on the development site found medieval midden deposits over in-filled ditches, possibly of late Saxon date. The watching brief revealed two ponds relating to the farm buildings and a number of undated boundary ditches.

St John the Baptist Church, Burford (SP 2525 1242)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken on the Church Parish Council, between 27/11/2002 and 26/2/2003. The watching brief monitored the trench along the south side of the church towards the west end of the church. The watching brief recorded a number of burials and exposed the wall to the Guild chapel.

St Mary's Church, Cogges (SP3610 0971)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at St Mary's Church, Cogges, Oxfordshire on behalf of the Church Parish Council between the 3/11/2003 to the 6/11/2003. The watching brief was to monitor the ground works for the construction of new drainage in the graveyard. The watching brief revealed a medieval construction layer sealing an earlier graveyard soil.

9 Watling Lane, Dorchester-upon-Thames (SP 5764 9420)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Mr M Richmond, between 4/4/03 and 15/4/03. The watching brief monitored the removal of the demolished house foundations and the excavation of the foundation trenches for the new house. The watching brief revealed undated soil deposits over the site of the location of the Roman town ditches.

Oxfordshire

Manor House farm, Duns Tew (SP 455 284) James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at Manor House farm on behalf of M J Brain Homes between 24/6/03 and 4/7/03. The area of the watching brief was situated within the historic core of Duns Tew, a settlement that dates to at least the end of the Anglo-Saxon period. The watching brief did not reveal any archaeological features or deposits, but the area had been used for the dumping of rubbish from the farm from the late 19th century.

Ringdale Manor, Fernham (SU 289 927) James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at Ringdale Manor on behalf of Mr Fish, between the 17th February and the 13th March 2003. The site lies within the remains of earthworks of a hillfort (SAM 207) in which the present 1930s manor house was built. The watching brief exposed the location of the east rampart to the Iron Age camp and part of a late Roman field system overlain by medieval ridge and furrow.

Land adjacent to Wychwold, Fulbrook (SP 2595 1325) James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at land adjacent to Wychwold, Fulbrook, Oxfordshire on behalf of Greenford, on 9/5/03. The site of the watching brief was near to possible house platform earthworks and an evaluation in 1993 uncovered traces of revetment work and pottery from the Romano British period to the 12th century. The watching brief exposed topsoil on top of natural subsoil and did not reveal any archaeological features or deposits.

Hatford Quarry, Sandy Lane, Hatford (SU 3285 9565) Steven Weaver

In 2003 an excavation was carried out on behalf of Hatford Quarry in advance of mineral extraction. The fieldwork was directed by Andy Simmonds and the project managed by Steve Weaver. An area of one hectare was excavated at the western margin of a known prehistoric and Romano-British settlement complex, part of which had been examined by Tempus Reparatum in 1991 (Bourn 2000). A few flints suggested intermittent activity perhaps from as early as the Mesolithic period, but the earliest features were probably of later middle Iron Age date. Discrete features, a possible ring gully and a small enclosure of two phases, were succeeded in the late Iron Age by a rectilinear field system aligned roughly north-south and east-west. This was itself of two phases. Groups of pits, postholes and an infant burial were associated with the boundaries, but there was no clear evidence of structures. The dating evidence suggests that occupation had probably ceased by the end of the 1st century AD. Modest quantities of finds indicate a low status settlement concerned with the practice of mixed agriculture.

Reference

Bourn, R, 2000 *Manorhouse Farm, Hatford, Oxfordshire*, in R J Zeepvat (ed) *Three Iron Age and Romano-British Rural*

Settlements on English Gravels, Brit Archaeol Rep (Brit Series) 312, 1-70.

2 Stephen's Road, Headington (SP 5425 0715) Ceridwen Boston

A watching brief was carried out at 2 Stephen's Road, Headington following the unexpected discovery of an early Anglo-Saxon skeleton. Although no further burials were discovered during construction work on the site, the burial was almost certainly part of a larger cemetery that has since been destroyed by later building work. The burial was remarkable both for the date of the burial, and for the richness of the grave goods assemblage that accompanied her. Although a number of early Anglo-Saxon inhumation cemeteries are known in Oxfordshire, such as Berinsfield, Didcot and Abingdon, no such site has been identified in the immediate vicinity of Oxford. Indeed, in general very little is known archaeologically about Anglo-Saxon occupation of the area prior to the construction of Ethelflaed's burgh in the 10th century. The existence of this rich burial suggests a hitherto undetected early Anglo-Saxon presence in the Headington area, and hence, is of considerable local significance in understanding the occupation of this region.

The burial consisted of an older woman (aged 40-50 years) laid out supine and extended within a north-south orientated grave. She was accompanied by several grave goods that date the burial to between the late 5th to mid-6th centuries AD. A copper alloy disc brooch was located at the right shoulder, and a necklace of amber beads overlay the right upper body, adjacent to the right arm. An iron knife was located at the right side of the pelvis, and an iron object of uncertain function lay beneath the third lumbar vertebra. A large bronze sewing needle rested on the right side of the chest. This last object is rare in Anglo-Saxon graves. The most unusual aspect of the grave goods assemblage, however, was the positioning of a swastika-type brooch on the forehead of the skeleton. It appears to have been worn by the deceased as a head-dress. Whilst no parallels are known in Britain, a broadly contemporary mosaic from Ravenna, Italy, depicts a female who is wearing some form of scarf around her head with an attached brooch positioned at the centre of her forehead.

Former Garage Site, Queen Street, Hook Norton (SP 3555 3324)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Mansel Architects, between 22/5/2003 and 18/6/2003. The site was a former garage, which was demolished for the construction of a new a Post Office, shops and houses. This is located in the historic core of Hook Norton, but the watching brief did not reveal any archaeological features or deposits.

Kennington Service Station, The Avenue, Kennington (SP 52290211)

Andy Holmes

A watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Coleman Hicks Partnership, between 27th February and 3rd March

2003. The site was a former garage which was demolished for the construction of fifteen self contained flats. The watching brief revealed a shallow, post-medieval west-northwest – east-southeast aligned drainage ditch, but no indication of any earlier activity.

St Matthews Church, Langford (SP 2480 0255)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken on behalf of the Parochial Church Council, between 26/6/2003 and 4/7/2003. The watching brief did not reveal any archaeological features due to the limited depth of excavation.

Four Winds, Little Tew (SP 3833 2831)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Mr Gibson, between 15/1/03 and 16/4/03. The watching brief was in the garden of the Four Winds, which is adjacent to the medieval manor. Although part of an enclosure is thought to pass through the garden, no archaeological features or deposits were revealed.

St Nicholas Church, Newton Blossomville (SP 925 515)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken on behalf of the Parochial Church Council, between 13/5/2003 and 12/6/2003. The church mostly dates to the 13th century though parts could suggest earlier origins. The north aisle windows are early 14th century. The watching brief recorded a grave and foundation cut for the 14th century tower in a thick graveyard soil.

Yew Tree Cottage, Northmoor (SP 4200 0250)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Mr and Mrs G Shelton, between 18/9/2003 and 19/9/2003. The watching brief monitored the excavation of a new cable and water pipe trench across Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) 141, which was a series of cropmarks dating from the late Iron Age to Roman period. A number of late Iron Age to early Roman period cropmark features were recorded, sealed below a late Roman plough soil.

57 St John's Street, Oxford (SP 1035 6618)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken on behalf of BHP Harwood Architects, between 24/1/2003 and 5/2/2003. The watching brief revealed early 19th century construction relating to the building, overlying cultivated soils from the Beaumont gardens.

New University Club House, Mansfield Road, Oxford (SP 5175 0608)

Dan Poore

In January and February 2003 an archaeological watching brief was carried out at New University Club House, Mansfield Road, Oxford. The work was commissioned by The University Surveyor's Office in advance of the construction of a new clubhouse. The watching brief revealed the presence of part of the inner Civil War defences in the form of a ditch and associated bank.

Former Thames Water Depot, Paradise Street, Oxford (SP 5094 0609)

Dan Poore

In December 2003 a second phase field evaluation was carried out at Paradise Street, Oxford on behalf of Ambroseden Court Ltd, representing St. Peter's College. The evaluation revealed a limestone spread which may have formed part of an early ford or weir at the point where the castle moat fed into the Mill Stream. Layers of re-deposited clay and gravel were also discovered, which probably date to the construction of the defences of the adjacent Oxford Castle. The floor of a probable 13th century building was discovered at the north end of the area excavated. A sequence of metalised surfaces related to Paradise Street itself was uncovered, dating to between the 13th and 16th centuries, along with a road-side drainage ditch. A channel revetted by stone walls, which was probably involved in management of the flow of water from the moat and which had been previously observed in the Phase I evaluation, was further investigated, and the foundations of a sluice house which formerly stood over it were identified. This structure was dated to the 16th century and is believed to be the building recorded at this location on a map dating to c 1615. Floor surfaces belonging to later buildings fronting onto Paradise Street were also present.

Park End Street and St Thomas' Street, Oxford (SP 5080 0618)

Dan Poore

In February 2003 a field evaluation was carried out at Nos 40-41 Park End Street and Nos 67-69 St Thomas' St, Oxford on behalf of Kingerlee Ltd. The evaluation revealed the remains of medieval and post-medieval structures and a garden plot along the St Thomas' St frontage. A possible medieval revetment wall was exposed along the southern bank of the Wareham Stream where post-medieval walls and soils were also revealed. Possible 16th or 17th century garden paths were identified along the north bank of the Wareham Stream. In the north of the site a post-medieval orchard soil, a stone culvert and two infilled channels were identified. Subsequent excavation and watching brief on the site between August and November 2003 investigated these sites further - post-excavation assessment and analysis has yet to start.

Oxfordshire

Oxford Castle, Oxford (SP 5099 0617)

Dan Poore

Large-scale excavations, historic building recording and an extensive watching brief have been underway at the site since April 2003. To date the investigations have revealed an un-consecrated burial site containing the remains of at least 60 individuals (assumed to be executed prisoners), dating from between the 16th and the 18th centuries. Very well preserved elements of the castle's defences, in the form of ditches, ramparts, walls and a bridge pier have also been excavated. The cemetery of the 11th century chapel of St George has also been investigated. Evidence of the western end of late-Saxon Oxford has also been found, in the form of the town wall and rampart, and at least 3 timber buildings, two with cellars. Numerous late-Saxon pits have also been found.

Master's Field, Jowett Walk in the City of Oxford (SU 5180 0660)

Daniel Dodds

A field excavation was carried out at Master's Field, Jowett Walk in the City of Oxford on behalf of Balliol College. The excavation revealed a series of garden features from the post-medieval period and a number of large 20th century features associated with the wartime photographic reconnaissance laboratory that occupied part of the site. Although surrounded by prehistoric and Civil War archaeology, Jowett Walk did not exhibit any archaeological evidence from these periods.

St Frideswide Middle School, Marston Ferry Road, Oxford (SP 514 088)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken in the grounds of St Frideswide Middle School, Oxford on behalf of Oxford County Council between 22/7/2002 and 27/5/2003. The watching brief was to monitor the ground works for the construction of a new classroom building and hard play area. The watching brief exposed modern surfaces and ground make up over truncated natural deposits.

Night Shelter, Luther Street, Oxford (SP 5140 0575)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at the health centre in Luther Street on behalf of Oxford Night Shelter between the 16/10/2003 and 17/11/2003. The watching brief was to monitor the ground works for the construction of a new larger night shelter building linked to the present medical centre. The watching brief revealed cultivated soil overlying river silts, both of which had been truncated by 20th century construction.

Land at Dunnock Way, Blackbird Leys, Oxford

(SP 5561 0240)

Andy Holmes

A field evaluation was undertaken on behalf of Oxford City Primary Care Trust, between 8th and 10th April 2003. The development site is located on Dunnock Way beside Northfield Brook, which runs through the middle of the historic parish of Sandford on Thames. The evaluation consisted of three trenches on the site. These revealed a sequence of alluvial clay layers above the natural rock, associated with the nearby Northfield Brook. An undated turf line/ground horizon was identified in two trenches, sealed beneath further alluvial clay layers. Areas of modern disturbance and intrusion relating to the construction of the surrounding Housing Estate were noted across the site.

Randolph Hotel, Beaumont Street, Oxford (SP 5115 0644)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at the Randolph Hotel, Beaumont Street, Oxford on behalf of the Forte Hotels Ltd between the 2/10/02 to the 20/6/03. The watching brief was to monitor the ground works for the construction of a 3-storey building fronting Friars Entry. The building replaced an existing garage and provided additional accommodation for the hotel. The watching brief revealed the foundations for the mid to late medieval houses that once fronted Friars Entry with later post-medieval rubbish pits to the rear. The remains of later construction phases were also located, including the 1930s garage at the rear of the hotel.

Thames Street, Oxford (SP 5140 0580)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at Thames Street, Oxford on behalf of British Telecom between the 7th and 8th August 2003. The watching brief was to monitor the ground works for the construction of a new service chamber and relaying of new cable ducting. No archaeological deposits or features were revealed due to earlier disturbances by deep cable ducting.

St Peter's College, New Inn Hall Lane, Oxford (SU 5105 0626)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at St Peter's College, New Inn Hall Lane, Oxford on behalf of St Peters College, between 24/4/03 and 17/6/03. The area of the watching brief was along the line of the old Oxford City wall. Post-medieval garden soils cut and sealed by 19th century school construction and services were observed.

Radcliffe Infirmary Eye Hospital, Oxford

(SP 4509 2070)

Jon Hiller

A field evaluation was carried out on behalf of Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust, between 14/12/2002 and 15/12/2002. Two trenches were excavated in the car park. In one trench three 19th century pits and an 18th century cultivation layer were seen. A modern live electricity cable halted excavation in the other trench.

St John's College, Oxford (SP 5138 0668)

Jon Hiller

A field evaluation was undertaken on behalf of St John's College, 16 - 17/12/02. The evaluation was within the grounds of St John's college and lies to the east of the north quadrangle, within the President's Garden. Three trenches were excavated and revealed evidence for medieval or post-medieval gravel quarrying at the north end of the area evaluated. Across the whole site were levelling deposits dating to the 16th or 17th centuries, which probably relate to the original construction of the college and the laying out and landscaping of the President's Garden. A wall was discovered next to the current carport, interpreted as the north wall of the kitchen building shown on Logan's print of 1675.

126 Abingdon Road, Standlake (SP 3915 0278)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken at 126 Abingdon Road on behalf of Mr G Bannell, between the 24th and 26th March 2003.

The development was located adjacent to a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 140), comprising a complex of cropmarks identified through aerial photography. Those visible include enclosures, ring ditches, hut circles, trackways and pits, all of possible prehistoric date. The watching brief revealed two undated features sealed below medieval ridge and furrow.

Rectory Farm, Stanton St. John (SP 5765 0944)

Andy Holmes

A field evaluation was undertaken on behalf of Thomas and Co, two days' work in May 2003. Rectory Farm is immediately west of St John the Baptist church, the core of the early settlement of Stanton St John. Prior to demolition, the site was a farmyard with outbuildings. The evaluation consisted of five trenches around the farmyard. A single ditch of probable post-medieval date was uncovered in a trench and a 19th century former yard surface in another. These were the only significant finds uncovered in the trenches.

Tubney Wood Quarry (SP 4480 0080)

Steve Weaver

A field evaluation was commissioned at Tubney Wood quarry on behalf of Hills Minerals and Waste Ltd. The evaluation revealed a low density scatter of Mesolithic flint over Extension Areas 2 and 3; a slightly higher density scatter was located towards the south-east limit of Extension Area 3, probably reflecting the edge of a scatter excavated in 1991. A Roman ditch, containing significant quantities of pottery, was located in Extension Area 2; a possible Roman ditch was also found in Extension Area 3. Two undated ditches located to the north of Extension Area 3 probably represent the former boundary of a plot of land shown on the 1841 tithe map interpreted as the former medieval church graveyard. No graves were located within this land plot, however, a large quarry of medieval date was found. In addition, five undated ditches, some of uncertain archaeological origin, and five tree-throw holes were examined.

Bridge Villa International Camping and Caravan Park, Crowmarsh Gifford, Wallingford (SU 6120 8930)

James Mumford

A watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Mr Andrew Townsend, between 31/3/2003 and 8/4/2003. The watching brief was carried out due to known ditches that may be associated with an alleged 12th century siege castle within the caravan site. A 12th century leper hospital is reported to have stood on the Newnham end of Wallingford Bridge. On the site of the development was a small holding built in the mid 19th century and farmed up until the 1950s, when it developed into the present caravan and camping site. The watching brief revealed a number of features from the post-medieval period relating to activities at the rear of the farmyard.

OXFORDSHIRE BUILDINGS RECORD

David R Clark

Bishop's Manor Barn, Harwell (SU 494896)

The Bishop's Manor is one of the last group of buildings on the east of the road which runs through Harwell from south to north, terminating in a track known as Cow Lane. The barn lies parallel to this road on a north-northeast bearing, and is set back from it by some 12-15 feet.

External description

The barn is timber-framed and weather-boarded, and towards the farmyard sits on a low plinth of rubble stone on which are three brick courses. The bricks are of various types and dates, some narrow and hand-made, others factory made in standard sizes. The weather-boards appear to be elm. The roof is covered with factory-produced pantiles, but the owner reported that it was previously thatched with corrugated iron in places. Planning permission has been given for conversion to a dwelling.

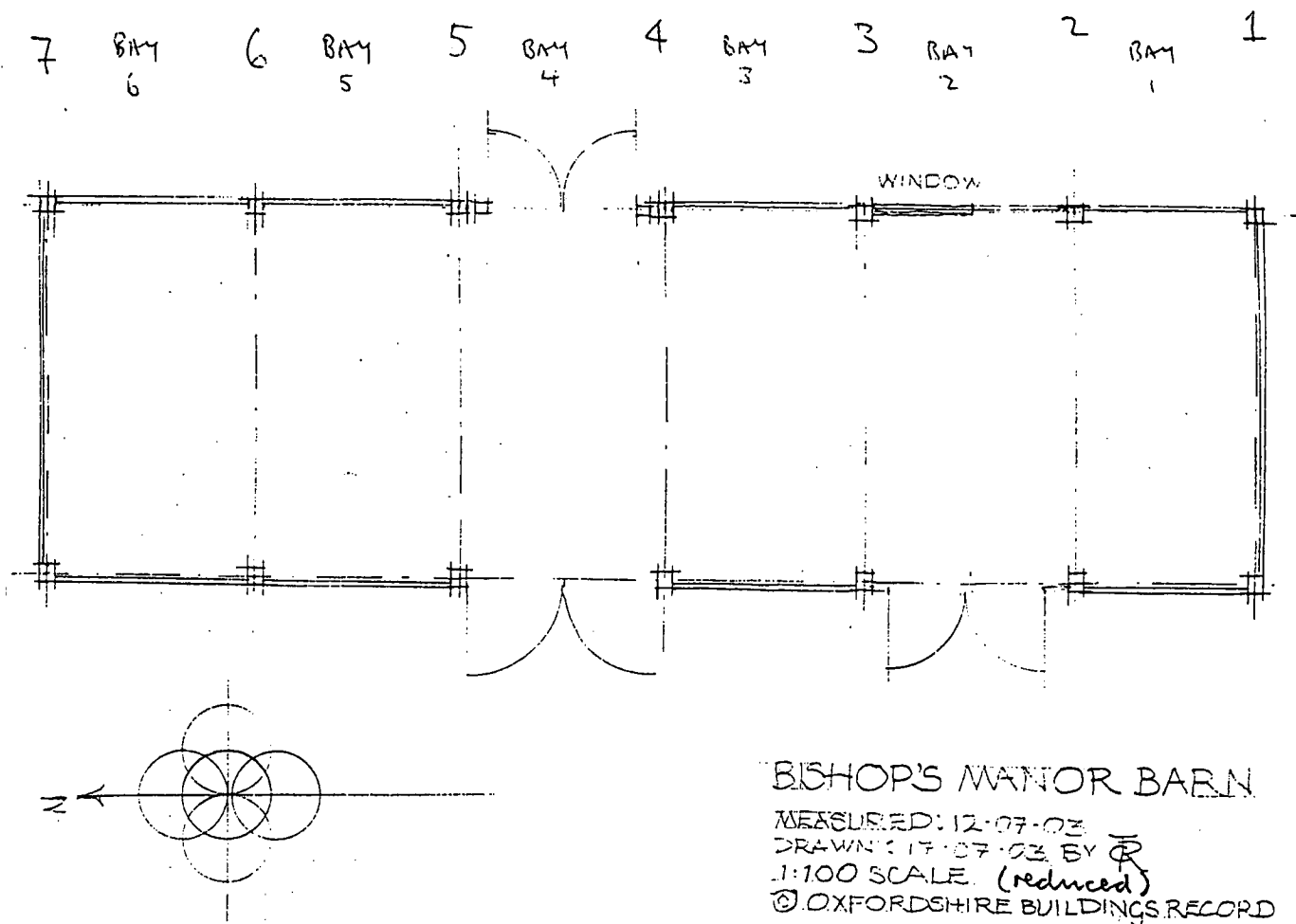


Fig 11. Bishop's Manor Barn.

The floor plan is shown at Fig 11. The barn is of six bays, and has a one-third-hipped roof. There are opposing full-height doors in bay 4 (from the south), but no porches. There is a smaller doorway in the west end of bay 2, and a window in the east wall at bay three. Under this window, the weather-boards have been replaced. The length of the barn is 24m (78 feet), the width 7.5m (24 feet). The bays are some 4m wide.

Timber Frame

The timber frame consists of a heavy sill-beam on which stand seven queen-strut trusses, linked by a wall-plate and a roof with two tiers of purlins on which sit the common rafters; there is no ridge. Truss 4 is shown in Fig 12.

Each post has been cut from a single tree, but the massive jowls at the top are different at each truss. At the top of each post an off-centre tenon flush with the inner face fits into a mortice in the tie-beam, while to the rear of the post, a similar tenon secures the wall-plate. The trusses either side of bay 4 (with the opposing doors) have been framed with a 'fair face' inwards to the space between the doors. The principal rafters are edge-halved, lapped and pegged at the apex. About half way up, they are joined by a collar, and a pair of queen-struts from the tie beam are morticed in to them a short distance from the rafter. Raking struts, also

apparently primary, rise from the tie-beam and collar to each row of purlins.

The purlins are through-purlins, with pegged lap-joints close to the principal rafters supporting them. Wind-braces lapped in to the rear of the purlins are pegged in to mortices on the principals; 19 of the possible 48 in the 6 bays are missing. The common rafters, wider than they are deep, are pegged in to the purlins, 8 per bay. The wall-plates are made from a number of shorter pieces of timber, and all the joints visible are edge-halved and bridled scarfs. First found in 1375, this type of joint continued in use until the 1650s, and so is unhelpful in confirming the date of the structure. On the underside are round stave-holes at (mostly) 30cm intervals. These are found in all parts of the wall-plate except that in the end bay (truss 7) to the north.

Between each truss are rails, with grooves in upper face, and round holes on the lower. In the southern gable wall arch braces rise from the corner posts to tie beam. There are none in the northern wall. On the side walls, arch braces rise from the southern post to the mid-rail in bays 1, 2, 3 and 5, but from both posts in bay 6. In the southern gable wall two additional angled braces have been inserted to give stability, while in the northern wall, three modern short posts terminating at tie-beam level fulfil this function. Drawing 3 shows a typical wall panel. Between the primary studs, additional studs have been inserted at some later date, and have been nailed in place rather than pegged.

BISHOP'S MANOR BARN

HARWELL

TRUSS 4 N. SIDE

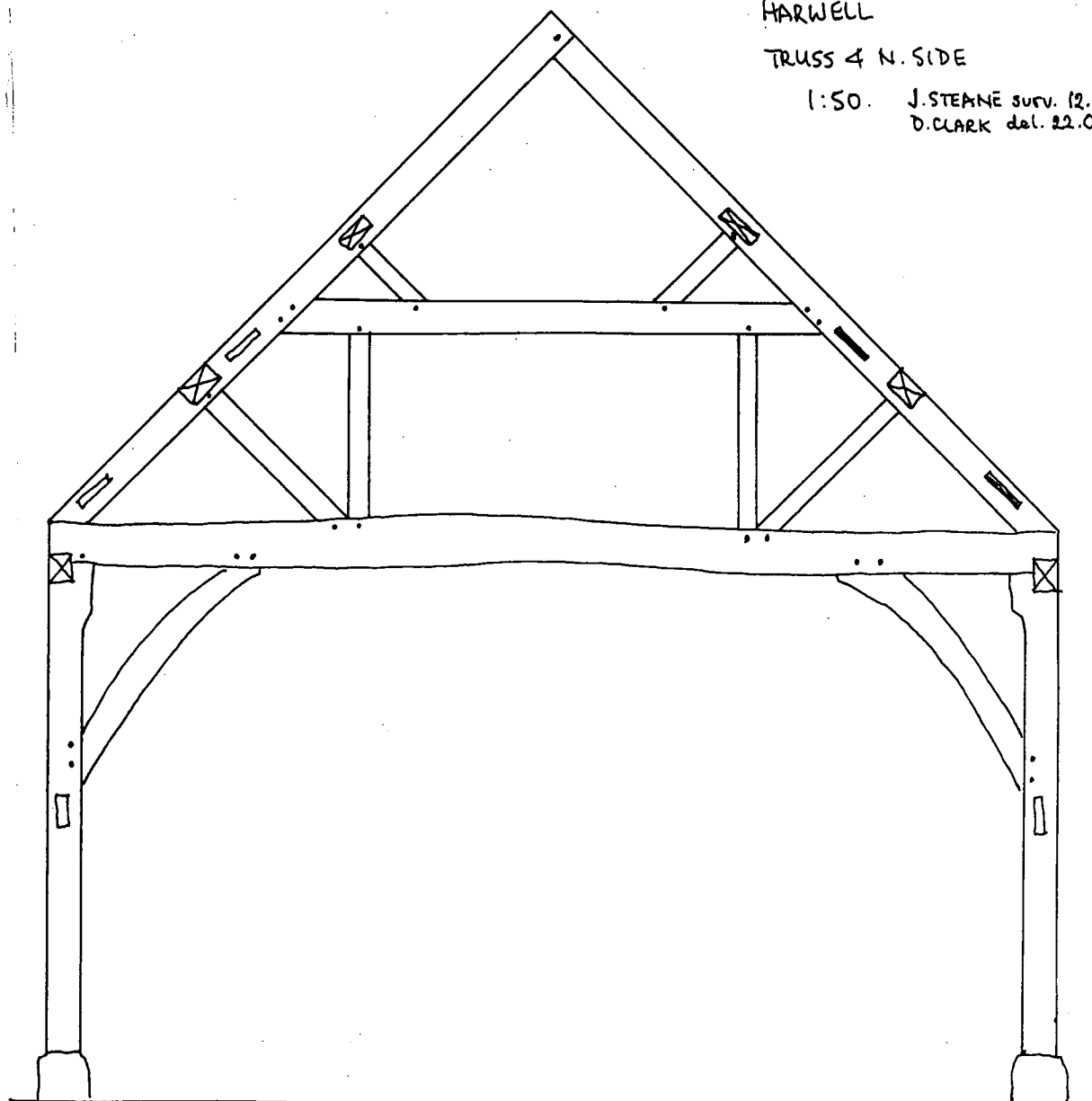
1:50. J. STEANE SURV. 12.07.2003
D. CLARK DEL. 22.09.2003

Fig 12. Bishop's Manor Barn.

There are level marks on the rail near truss 5 (see Fig 13), on the tie-beam of truss 5 and the eastern post of truss 4; assembly marks on trusses 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Internal Fittings

There is no evidence of a threshing floor, and the barn has been adapted over the years to accept modern farming equipment. The main item, which takes up most of the space in bays 1-3, is the grain cleaner and drier. The concrete and breeze-block base unit is some 517cm deep, 246cm wide, and rises from a height of 92cm at the front, to 198cm at the rear. The grain elevator equipment was supplied by Ballard and Son Ltd of Abingdon, and the cleaner was a Lainchbury 'Master' model, supplied by a firm in Kingham. Signs give recommended sieve sizes for both pre-clean and dressing of barley, wheat, oats and red clover. The grain pit survives to

the right, and the lifting cups are within the vertical columns between this and the drier.

Documentary material

The manor, assessed at 10 hides in 1086, became the property of the see of Winchester, and remained in the hands of the bishop until the 19th century, passing first in 1863 to the lessee, John Hopkins, then in the early 20th century to the family of the present owners.

Building accounts (see Currie, 1985) dated 1506 survive for a barn at the Bishop's Manor in Harwell. A major objective of the recording was to establish whether these related to the present structure. The cost of the barn (net of timber trimmings) was £31 19s 5d. There was a variety of basic materials, 101 oak trees, laths, walling boards, nails, hooks, hinges, staples, stone, thatch, bindings and spars. The largest expense was for the timber £4 3s 4d (net); then the

Truss 6

Truss 5

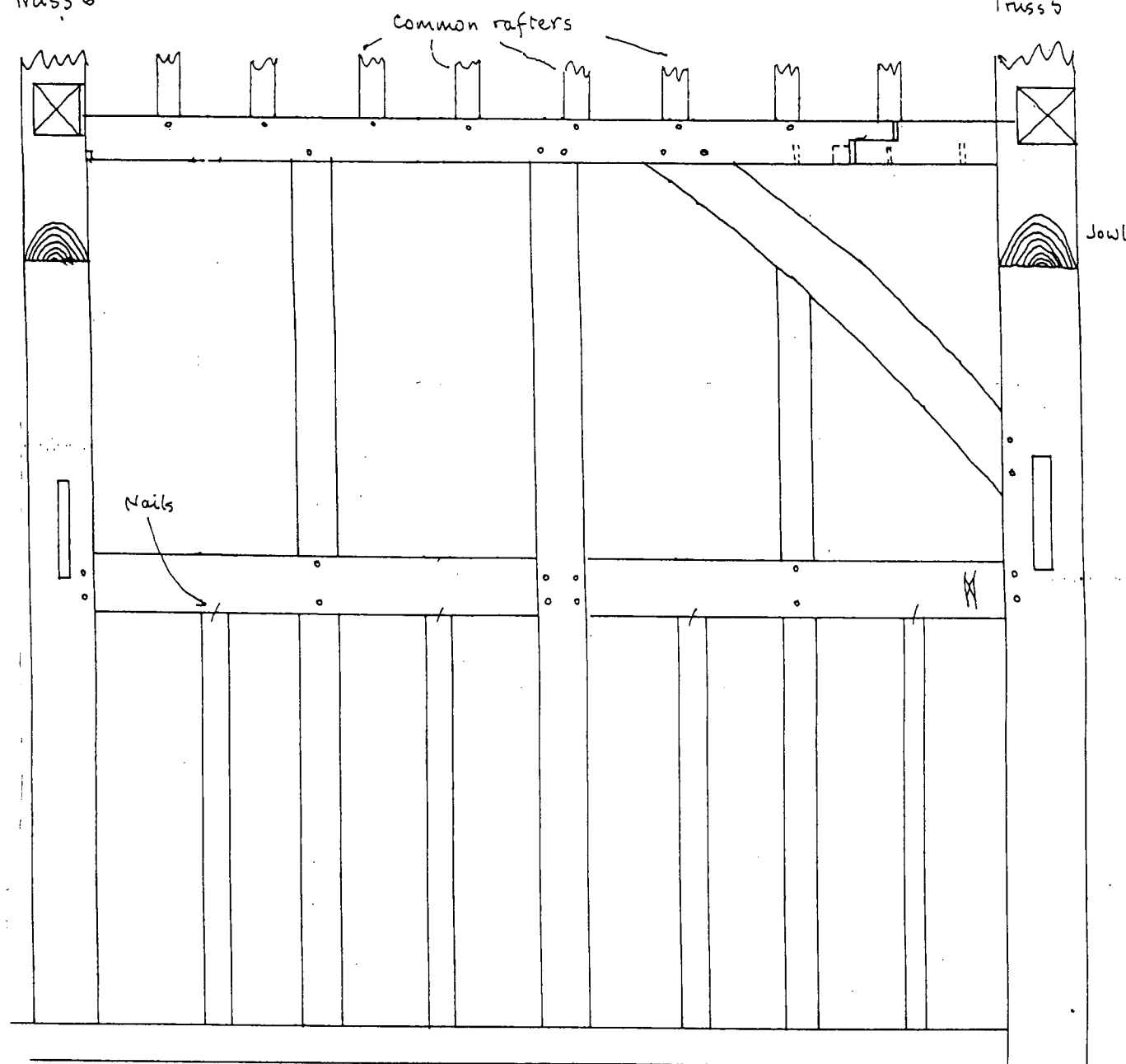


Fig 13. Bishop's Manor Barn. Wall plate. D Clark del 23.9.03.

boards, at about half this figure. Thatch cost £1 15s, with the remaining items all below £1 each. Raw materials were 30% of the total. Carriage played a significant part, £4 16s 10d, 15% of the total. Labour was also a key cost at 55%. The longest time any person was employed on the job was 96 days, but thatching could not start until the frame was complete, so if one man did it alone at 6d per day, this would have taken a further 46 days. Thus the construction took more than four months, including framing at Hailey Copse, which is six miles away to the south on the Downs near Peasemore (SU 465780).

Original build, form and function

The eastern doorway appears to be primary, but the posts are set within the trusses, making a narrower entrance than that to the west. The western large doorway has empty

mortices and stave holes in the wall-plate, consistent with braces and a stud. The doorposts have mortices for a rail. However, the fair-face framing of the midstrey leads to the conclusion that the final structure of the barn might have differed from the original plan, and that both doorways are original.

The lack of stave holes in the tie-beam of truss 7 together with an apparent truncation of the principal rafters at roof level to form the one-third hip argues that this truss was originally open, and hence that the barn originally extended a number of bays further to the north. The pair of braces in bay 6 suggest that it was the central bay, so the original length was of 11 bays.

We believe that the building accounts are consistent with an 11 bay barn, but some of the items pose problems. The stave

holes and grooves in the rails and wall-plates suggest that the original intention was for the barn to have wattle-and-daub panels or, less likely in our view, woven lattice-work in the upper panels. The building accounts, however, refer to boards and laths. It is possible that the barn was boarded below the mid-rail, and lath-and-plastered above, but there is no mention in the accounts of materials and labour for plastering, so perhaps the laths were woven through staves like wattles. The decision to board the barns seems to have been made after the rails had been prepared with stave holes.

The surface area of the walls, gables and doors of the present barn is some 2600 square feet, and, if it were originally of 11 bays, 4100 square feet. Even at the larger size of barn, and allowing for overlapping boards, 2500 boards seem more than enough. An 11-bay barn would also explain the need for 5000 laths.

It is not possible to say from the architectural evidence when the barn was reduced in length; the gap into the farmyard is present in the 1876 OS map, so it was certainly before then.

Conclusions

This limited study of an important building has allowed a number of conclusions to be drawn. Firstly, the barn has been reduced in size from probably 11 bays to six. Secondly, it was likely to have been half-boarded from the start, having been planned to have wattle-and-daub panels, this was changed during the building period. In the time available, we were unable to examine every timber in the building, and no dendrochronology has been done.

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PHOENIX ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORIC RESEARCH

Mark Morris

As a follow up to the report regarding the the excavation of the late Iron Age/early Roman enclosure excavated at Wigginton in the summer of 2002 and published in a previous edition of *SMA*, this short article attempts to outline briefly what the group has been doing since then. As was mentioned in the previous report the group had originally decided against any excavation on the known villa site as excavations in previous years had shown the villa to be of standard format and it was felt that no further information could be extracted by digging.

The group's views however were altered when it became apparent that the villa had not been excavated in entirety and indeed (as mentioned in the previous report) the untimely death of the director of the last dig had left a large proportion of the site unrecorded.

Mole hills had brought to the surface various traces of occupation evidence in a field separated by a hedge next to

the known villa site. A brief survey determined that there was a further part of the original building lying in this adjoining field.

With a vigour and determination only equalled by the likes of English Heritage and other such esteemed bodies, the group acquired the means and know-how to obtain a geophysics survey of this adjoining field in summer of 2003 (and all for just £20). The result was that below the surface lay some intriguing-looking anomalies.

The group fenced off the area surveyed and put up notices to warn any trespassers off, then set to work digging its first 4ft by 10ft trench. The finds from this trench included some loose coloured *tesserae*, nails, and a coin (yet to be dated). Most interesting was a 2ft wide section of wall showing that the building from the adjoining field did appear to stretch into the new field (or at least a part of a Roman building). There was also the possible edge of a further wall.

Within the fenced off area the group also dug another trench (4ft wide again) at about a 42° angle and 10 feet away from the first trench (carefully piling the turfs so that a perfect field could be restored to health after the excavation). This time another wall of similar dimensions was found running in line but not parallel with the first wall. Furthermore, traces of coloured plaster were found in this trench along with a large slab of limestone that appeared to have been shaped into a porch or a seat.

At the end of the summer the dig was shut down, albeit, hopefully, until the summer months of 2004 when further excavation can be made and the finds identified properly.

At this point it is worth breaking off from the work at the villa site and looking at other features in and around the location of the villa that the group investigated in 2003.

The owner of the site allowed us to investigate and date three other features within the 'villa complex'. The first feature was a small stone bridge spanning a small stream at the bottom of the field, below the villa and the 'Iron Age' enclosure. This bridge was constructed of a Hornton stone type material and was hard to date. Whilst locals called it the 'Roman Bridge' on account of its fine construction it was deemed unlikely to be so. No dating evidence could be found despite a few group members doing an underwater search near the bridge. The age of the bridge was undecided as no similar rural bridge design could be used as a precedent.

The second area looked at was an area next to the villa and known locally as "manor farm ponds". As its name suggested this was an area previously thought to contain fish ponds that may have served the nearby manor and church. Despite much legwork, clearing of weeds and head scratching no evidence could be found that the ponds were created by hand. It was a pity that the group could not afford core sampling equipment as this might have given the evidence required.

The last feature lay next to the 'ponds' and indicated that whilst maybe not being medieval, as hoped, these natural ponds had been used as a means of collecting surface water. At the end of the 'ponds' was a brick built construction (hidden beneath a mass of weeds) of semi-circular design possibly dating from around the early part of the 20th century. It was decided that this 'holding tank' could have been built as a means of maintaining a constant supply of water ready for use by the farmer of that time. No similar

Oxfordshire

construction could be found on record and despite being looked at by an authority on water supply its ultimate use remained a mystery.

Much has been learned by the group in the past year; not least that money availability, expertise in given specific areas, and access to sophisticated technical equipment can hamper the attempts of a well organised amateur group to thoroughly achieve its objectives.

UNIVERSITIES OF EDINBURGH, LEICESTER AND OXFORD

Wendlebury (Alchester fortress): the 2003 season
(SP 570 203)

Eberhard Sauer

Confirmation of the main fortress-annexe theory

The main aim of the 2003 season had been to prove or disprove the theory that the western military compound, built in autumn AD 44, was an annexe to an (earlier?) main fortress underneath the later town. Three separate indications confirmed the correctness of this hypothesis. They are discussed in the first three sections.

Indication 1: ditches of the western compound do not continue in the area of the later town (Trenches 42 and 41). Excavations in Trench 42 established that the southern ditches of the western compound do not continue underneath the later town. Furthermore, there is a strong probability that sections of a ditch of similar dimensions encountered in Trenches 32 and 42 are part of the same early Roman drainage ditch. Pottery from its bottom fill in Trench 32 suggests that it dates to the military or early civilian period in the first century (Nick Cooper, *pers. comm.*; Berrington 2003). That this ditch would be parallel to other Roman north-south running features adds strength to the attribution of both segments to the same ditch. If so, level values prove that the water flowed, as one would expect, from the north to the south, following the natural gradient. Since it would make little sense to dig a drainage ditch across much deeper fortress ditches, it indicates that no fortress ditches crossed the line between Trenches 32 and 42.

This suggests that our theory that the western compound with its tree-ring-dated gate of AD 44 formed an annexe to the main fortress underneath the town is correct. While we established that there is no military gate underneath the west gate of the town, it seems likely that it is slightly further to the west in the area of the gap in the town wall ditch. The fact that the annexe ditches do not continue leaves little doubt that there was a main fortress whose western defences roughly coincide with those of the later town. It is unimaginable that such a fortress was not protected by ditches, rampart and gates. The fact that there were military-period west-east-running gullies in Trench 41 proves decisively that the west-east road also in this section of the town goes back to the mid 1st century. Three or four gullies appear to belong to this phase while a fifth stone-lined gully is likely to be later. The outer edges of the southern and northern drainage gullies are 6m apart (as in

Trench 20N). The absence of any traces of early timber buildings from Trench 41, encountered the year before just slightly further to the east in Trench 32, suggests that we have reached the intervallum, the unoccupied space just inside the defences. Two possibilities emerge:

1. the 14.5m wide town ditch explored in Trench 28 in 2001 incorporated not only the ditches (normally some nine metres wide including the space between them) of the earlier main fortress, but also the area of the earlier rampart (perhaps as a convenient source of gravel if still existent in the late second century).

2. The town ditch incorporates the inner ditch and the rampart of the main fortress. The outer ditch might have been formed by a c 3m wide ditch, 4m outside the town wall ditch, equally explored in Trench 28 in 2001. The function of this sterile ditch had never been clarified, but because of its U-shaped profile and the irregular uneven base it has previously been considered not to be military. With hindsight the question arises whether the uneven base could have been the result of the bottom of the ditch being deliberately filled with sterile gravel.

Option 1 seems more likely than 2 because of what would be an unusually wide gap (of 4m) between the two ditches in the latter case. The outer ditch is likely to be associated with the town wall. Further fieldwork is required for ultimate clarification and it still seems possible that gate timbers survive which could clarify whether the main fortress dates to AD 43 or AD 44.

Indication 2: the water supply (Trench 41)

Five gullies were found in Trench 41 (as stated above). The middle gully was comparable in section to the flat-bottomed gully with slanting sides thought to be originally timber-lined and interpreted as a water supply gully in Trench 20N (Sauer 2001: 15). While the base in Trench 20N had been encountered at 62.6m above sea level, it was at 62.775m at the west (east-facing) profile in Trench 41 and at 62.8m at the east (west-facing) profile. With a difference of no less than 200mm from east to west there is no longer any doubt that water was channelled from east to west, ie, presumably, from the earlier main fortress to the later annexe. This also explains why the gully in Trenches 40, 29 and 26 (whose bottom reached a greater depth than the water supply gully in both, Trench 41 and 20N), which predates the earliest military buildings in this area, is curving from the southeast to the northwest. This is a further argument for the correctness of the theory that there was an earlier fortress (of AD 43?) with an annexe of AD 44.

Indication 3: a double granary in the main fortress (Trenches 49 and 48)

We established that the military timber granary explored in 2001 and 2002 is part of a double granary, the western building measuring 13.7m by at least 16.9m and its eastern counterpart probably being of similar size. The north-south extent of the pair of buildings depends on how much, if anything, has been destroyed by the later town ditch or still awaits discovery on the other side of the Gagle Brook. There

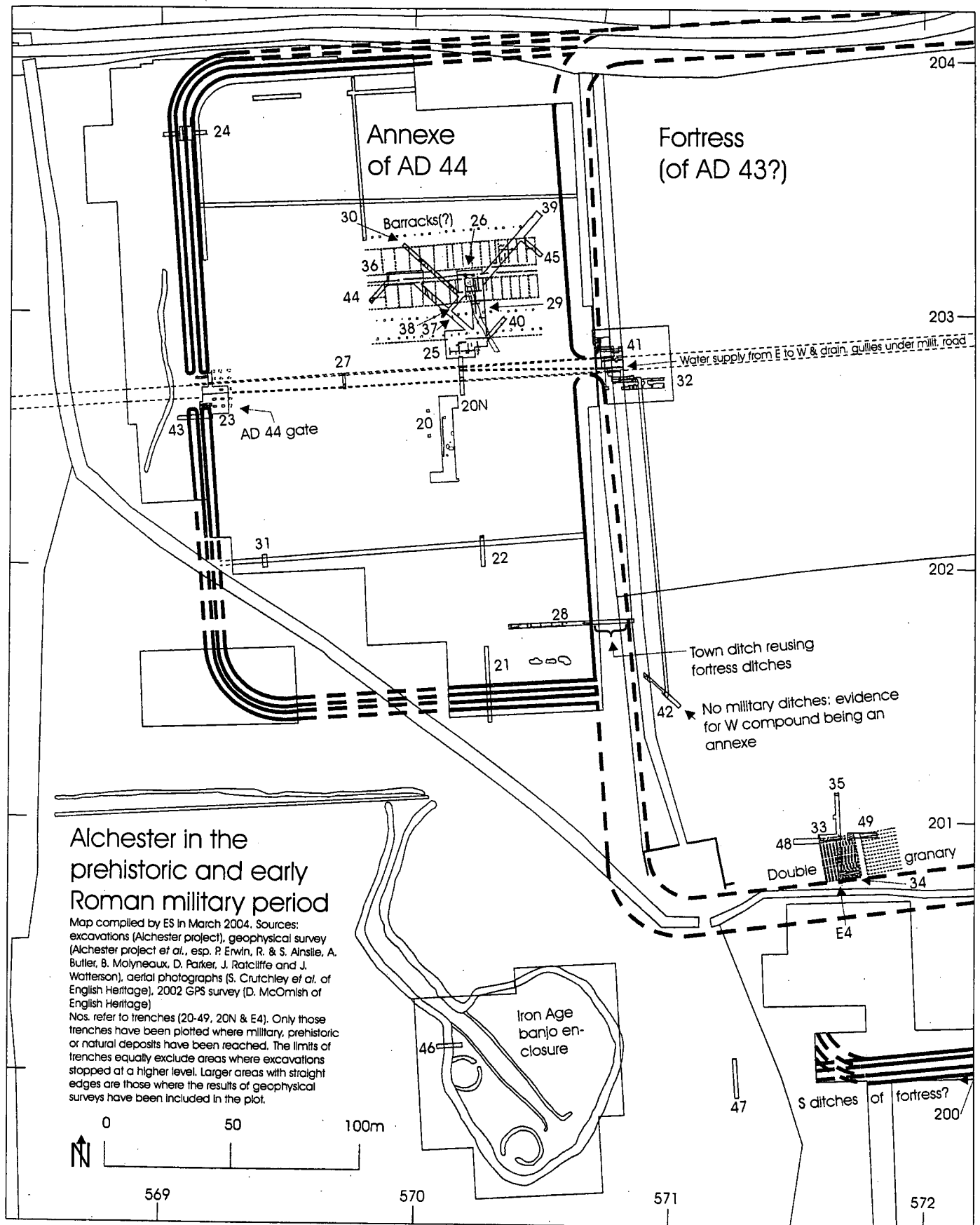


Fig 14. Alchester.

The double granary and other features in trenches E4, 33, 34, 35, 48 and 49

Please note that more precise dating of the features will be possible after full analysis of the pottery

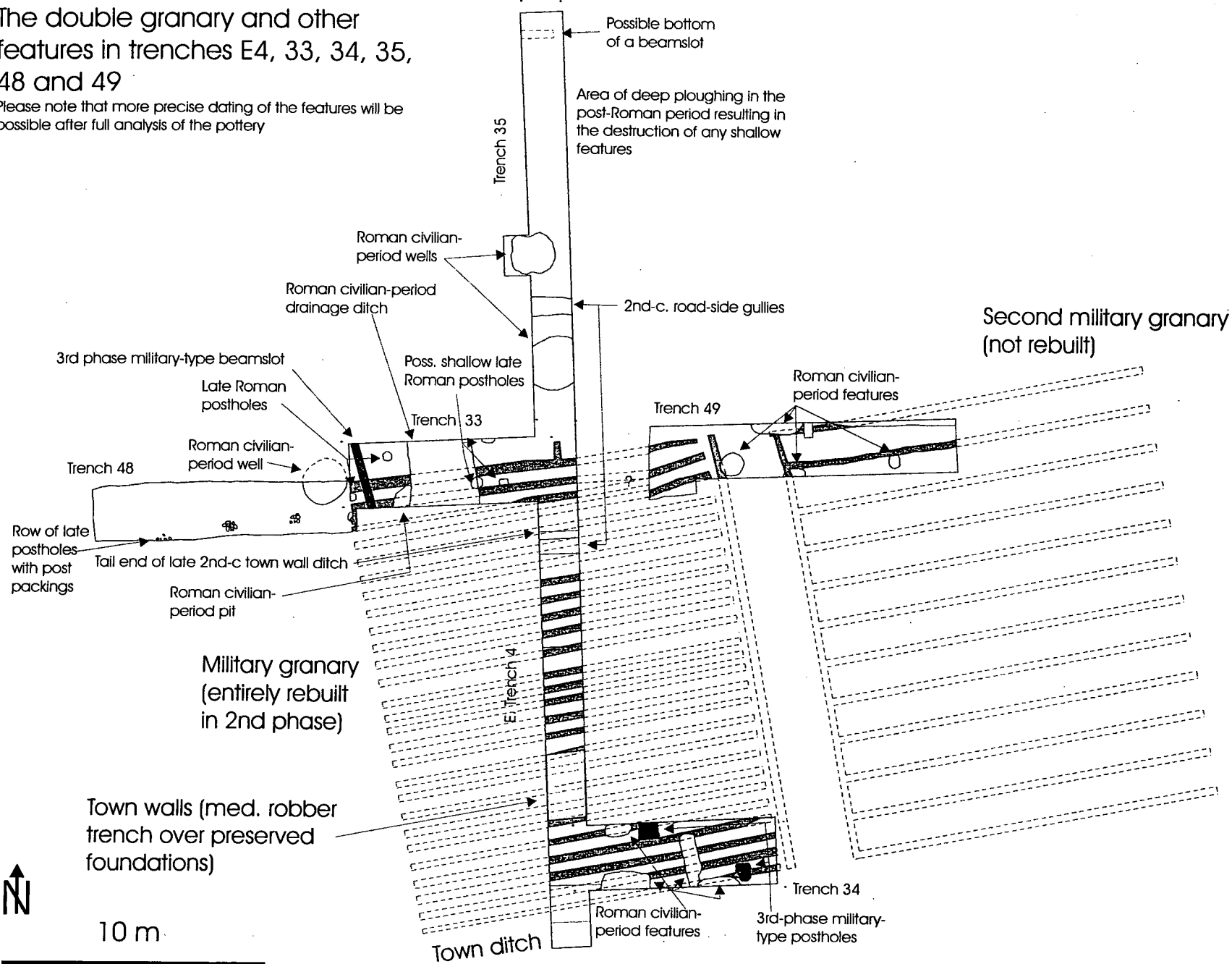


Fig 15. Alchester.

can no longer be any doubt about the interpretation of the parallel timber foundation trenches as being part of military structures and their location in the south of the town thus strongly suggests that all of the 10.5 ha large Roman town was built over an earlier fortress. Together with its c 4 ha large annexe the Alchester base is almost as large as the legionary fortress at Exeter (and may have been of similar size if it extended further south).

The spacing between the timber foundation trenches for the raised floor (c 1.3m centre to centre) of the eastern granary is about twice as great as in the western, but they are in a similar alignment. The spacing in case of the eastern building are normal for a Roman granary while it is only half of what one would have expected in case of the western. This suggests that the western granary was rebuilt, but not its eastern counterpart. A possible explanation is that the garrison was reduced at some stage. The question arises whether this was when the garrison was withdrawn, presumably in the late AD 50s or early AD 60s. It seems odd that it should have been necessary to entirely demolish and rebuild a timber granary within less than 20 years rather than just re-using one in case of a reduction in the garrison. However, it has to be borne in mind that the timber buildings in the annexe also saw substantial alterations; we know that the annexe was abandoned by the mid AD 60s at the latest, thus indicating that the maximum period of occupation cannot have lasted much longer than 20 years at most. It seems unlikely that we are dealing with a complete abandonment of the site to be re-occupied later by a different garrison during the period of consolidation of Roman power in the Southeast. There is in any case no evidence for any change in the defensive perimeter after AD 44 or for the complete levelling of any part of the site. Furthermore, no single structure encountered so far has been destroyed by fire. There is no space here discuss the question as to whether or not Alchester might have been partially re-occupied in the Flavian period (cf. Howgego 2003). Alternatively, there may simply have been some structural reason why one granary had to be demolished and rebuilt, but not the other.

Revision of the interpretation of the timber buildings in the annexe (Trenches 44 and 45)

The total length (west-east extent) of the rows of rooms north of the west-east road in the annexe of AD 44 amounts now to as much as 67.3m while still no edge could be found in the west. (It is possible, but not certain, that the easternmost north-running beamslot in Trench 45 marks the eastern limit of the complex.) This renders it increasingly unlikely that they formed part of a courtyard building, especially considering that the north-south extent of 45m (or up to 48m at most allowing for a section next to the road to have been destroyed by later road-side ditches) would render this an unusually oblong ground plan for which no parallel could be found. It seems now much more likely that we are dealing with parallel barrack blocks. The width of the *contubernia* (double rooms for the accommodation for eight soldiers each) of c 3.5 to 5.4m is within the range known for early imperial barracks as is the total length of 9 to 10m with frequent internal subdivision (and a few hearths located in interior rooms). They are somewhat irregular in size and subdivision, but, in contrast to the contemporary

barracks at Longthorpe (Frere and St. Joseph 1974: 28-33 with fig 17), their alignment is very regular. It seems possible that the centurions' quarters were located to the west of the buildings. The question why there is a rectangular pit in place of an earlier water basin, the latter with its supply channel pre-dating the military buildings, in the area of one of the *contubernia* is still unresolved. What had previously been interpreted as an aisle between two parallel ranges of rooms poses a second problem with the interpretation as barrack blocks. If this was in fact the empty space between the backs of two barrack blocks, then the beamslot subdividing it in Phase 3 must have been the new back of either block or part of a new building. Yet, in this case one would have expected more room partitions to branch off from it. Notwithstanding these problems in the proposed interpretation as barracks, the overall dimensions of the complex render it increasingly unlikely that it could have been a separate annexe headquarters or another building where a large rectangular pit would be easier to explain, such as the military workshops. It is in any case clear that the area was densely occupied in the military period and that the annexe served to house troops rather than for storage purposes.

Discovery of a military-period well or other waterlogged feature (Trench 42)

We found parts of what appeared to be a circular feature within the main fortress whose upper fill was very rich in waterlogged wooden artefacts while the lower fill remains as yet unexcavated. Because of its depth below the surface and because our Trench (No 42) encompassed only parts of it, it has not been possible to excavate more than necessary to verify that it is indeed a feature with waterlogged fill with mid 1st century material from the very top. It is worth bearing in mind that latrines are frequently located in the *intervallum*. In the case of the equally partially waterlogged fortress of Bergkamen-Oberaden a series of rectangular basins in the *intervallum* have been interpreted as latrines (Kuehlborn 1992: 76-8). The circular shape is, however, more likely to point towards a well. If so, this would be the first of military date from Alchester. Whatever the correct interpretation, well or latrine, this early waterlogged feature has a high potential to give unique insights into military diet in the invasion period and other aspects of the occupation of the main fortress.

Archaeological evidence for additional defences next to the gate of AD 44 (Trench 43)

We established that the area between the ditch terminals and the south tower of the western gate of the annexe retained exceptionally well-preserved traces of sophisticated defences. A small ditch lined the south side of the road. Waterlogged remains of the bottom of vertical stakes *in situ* indicate almost certainly that it served as an 'ancient equivalent to a mine field'. Their function was, presumably, similar to the *lilia* described by Caesar (BG 7,73). The perished upper portions of the stakes would almost certainly have been sharp and pointed, so that enemies trying to gain access to the berm between the inner ditch and the rampart or to escape from it would have been at risk of impaling their feet. This is, to my knowledge, the first such feature with surviving waterlogged remains of the stakes to be found in

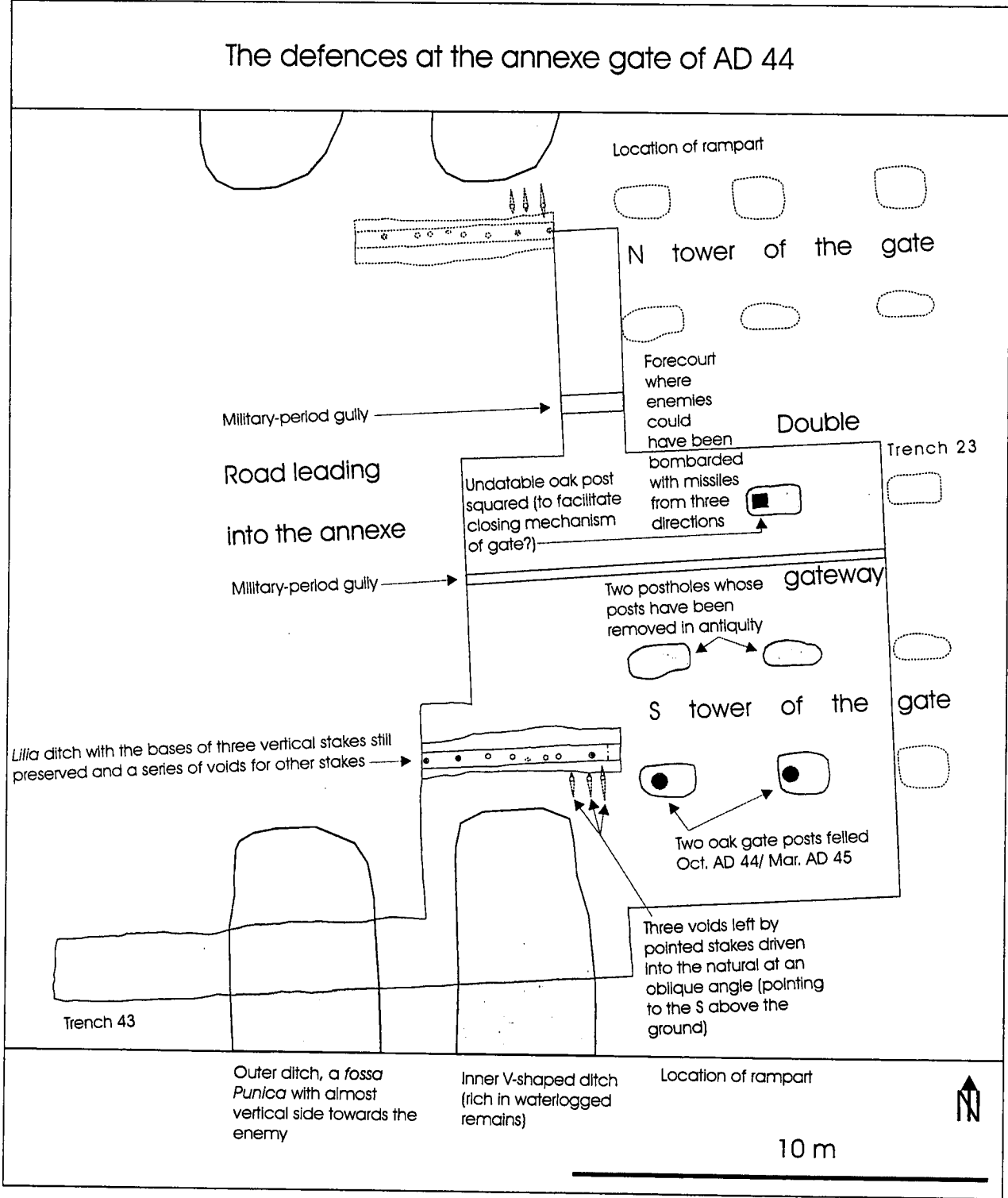


Fig 16. Alchester.

the Roman Empire (though similar features above the water table have been found elsewhere, such as at Rough Castle on the Antonine Wall.) Negative impressions prove the presence of three further pointed stakes at an oblique angle to the vertical between the tower and the ditch terminal; they formed an additional obstacle. Their tips above the ground would have pointed to the south, away from the gate. As one of the best-preserved defensive systems of its kind, this is of far more than regional importance for the history of military defences. Furthermore, these sophisticated obstacles may well indicate that rebellion and an attack on the fortress was regarded as a real danger or that there might even have been guerrilla warfare. They render it unlikely that the area was considered to be entirely pacified at the time.

The southern defences of the fortress

No military features were found in Trench 47. The ditches encountered in the trench were small and served drainage purposes and/or as property boundaries. They were not defensive. While we disproved the hypothesis that military ditches crossed the area of Trench 47, further fieldwork is required to clarify whether or not the main fortress extended beyond the modern course of the Gagle Brook to the south (as the location of the double granary in Trenches E4, 33, 34, 48 and 49 would suggest). Trial trenches in the meadow east of Trench 47 should answer the question. Geophysical survey has allowed us to detect a double ditch in this area, but it is, unfortunately, unclear whether it is curving to the north or running to the west. It is perfectly possible that this double ditch forms the southern limit of the main fortress, but it cannot be excluded that it served some other function, eg that it was part of a minor road. The fact that it does not continue far to the west adds strength to the former rather than the latter hypothesis.

Discovery of important waterlogged remains (Trenches 43 and 42)

We recovered a large number of important waterlogged artefacts and objects. They include probably dendro-datable posts from Trench 42 and the earliest evidence for the import of stone pine cones into Britain (Dr Mark Robinson, *pers comm*) from the ditch terminals next to the AD 44 gate of the annexe (Trench 43). These ditch terminals also yielded a wealth of wooden artefacts, including various thin wooden tablets and what is probably a wooden stylus. The tablets are being conserved at Leicester under the direction of Dr Graham Morgan and we will have to await the results of conservation to see whether or not any of them carry writing.

The Iron Age Banjo enclosure (Trench 46)

The section through the Banjo enclosure ditch proved to be very rich in waterlogged material. Because of the density of twigs and wood debris, we excavated slowly and therefore have not reached the bottom. The pottery was, except for the pieces from the uppermost layers, exclusively of Iron Age date, but has not yet been analysed. To judge by differences in the gravel concentration, there must have been a bank on the inside of the enclosure ditch.

The colonnaded street (Trench 41)

We found the northern counterpart of the wall unearthed in 2002 and described in *SMA* 33. Its position and width leave no doubt that this is a section of the parallel northern wall, even though it had been robbed out. The correctness of the theory of the two walls, quite possibly forming part of a colonnaded street, leading along either side of the west-east running road for at least 140m has thus been confirmed.

A decapitated burial (Trench 45)

We discovered a burial with the skull positioned at the feet of the deceased. Found on the last scheduled day of the excavations, only parts of the skeleton were uncovered and none of the bones was exhumed. Post-mortal beheading, undoubtedly for ritual reasons, was widespread in the later Roman period in Britain (cf. Sauer 1999: 65, 67) and other examples have been found at Alchester before (Booth *et al.* 2001: 152-9 *passim*). It is likely that this example belongs to the same period even though no grave goods or stratified datable objects provided independent confirmation. This appears to be an isolated burial rather than being part of a cemetery since it is the only one encountered so far in the area.

The west gate and town wall of Alchester (Trench 41)

The town wall in the area of the trench had been entirely robbed out except for its rubble foundations. Two stones *in situ* were all that survived of the upstanding masonry. By contrast, various superimposed surfaces of the road leading through the gate were preserved, being of little interest to the post-Roman stone robbers. The gate opening at foundation level was 2.95m wide corresponding roughly to ten Roman feet. There were no traces of a widening of the foundations (if one excludes a single irregular 0.4m wide and 2.2m long buttress on the outside (west) of the town wall (from 2 to 4.4m north of the gate opening). This suggests that the gate had not been provided with any massive flanking towers (if any towers at all), which would have required wider foundations than the town wall (whose foundations were three metres wide). The incorporation of 20 fragments of a Roman legionary tombstone, a fragment of a second tombstone and of an un-inscribed sculpted stone painted in red suggests that the town wall was erected at a time when security concerns were greater than any respect for the stone monuments erected by earlier generations. The tombstone of a legionary veteran itself is of substantial interest for the history of Roman Oxfordshire, providing the first known biography of an inhabitant of this part of Britain. It, furthermore, indicates that Alchester in all probability had been the base of the Second Augustan Legion and, initially, of Vespasian himself. It is intended to provide a much more detailed report on this important epitaph in the next issue of *SMA*. Since fragments of the tombstone were found in the buttress and main foundations alike, we may conclude that they are contemporary. Sections further demonstrated that the foundations had been built at once and that we are not dealing here with any later modification. Not a single one of the 17 re-used stone monument fragments whose three-dimensional position is known was found south of the gate opening, suggesting that two separate working parties were responsible for either side and only one of them used spoils in this area. The re-use of spoils, an

Empire-wide phenomenon, incidentally, which one encounters more frequently on the Continent and in northern Africa than in Britain, is normally a late Roman practice, mainly from the mid 3rd century onwards. Coins from artificially built-up deposits west of the town wall, into which the town wall was cut, suggest now a *terminus post quem* of AD 260 (probably even AD 286) for its construction. It seems likely that it will be possible to refine this date once the pottery has been analysed and the coins cleaned. By this time the earlier town ditch, probably associated with a rampart/earthwork defence of the late second century had already been at least partially filled up.

Further evidence for a lowering of the water table (all Trenches except 44, 45 and 49)

Our fieldwork yielded further evidence that much of the unique waterlogged deposits is currently well above the summer water table. Wood was found in places over 500 mm above the present water table and at the moment still well-preserved wood was found as much as 305 mm above the present water table. The water table was distinctly lower than it had been in 2002; in the area of the granary the drop amounted to 230 mm, in the area of the west gate of the town it exceeded 315 mm. It is thus of paramount importance to continue to recover deposits which may well contain Britain's earliest handwritten documents and other unparalleled evidence for the history of the first years of the Roman conquest of Britain, before their imminent destruction in the light of a falling water table.

Acknowledgements

This article is dedicated to the memory of the late Mr Mick Miller without whose kind, dedicated and generous support the Alchester excavations could not have taken place. His deep interest in our project and his company will be sorely missed by all participants.

I would like to extend my thanks to Mrs Miller, Katie Miller and Paul Miller. I am grateful to the generous sponsors of the 2003 season, the British Academy, the Royal Archaeological Institute, the Roman Research Trust, the T W Greene Fund of the Craven Committee, the Administrators of the Haverfield Bequest and the Association for Roman Archaeology. The whole team has once again worked with commendable dedication and diligence. While there is no space to thank all members of the team individually, I have to mention Roger and Sally Ainslie, Beverley Bailey, Jenny De Bono, Steve Boscott, Gill Cox, Chris Green, Ann Griffin, Seren Griffiths, Bernard Jones, Dr Brian Molyneaux, Robin Newson, Jackie Potts, Andrew Rich, Judith Rosten, Roderick Scott, Paul Sorowka, Steve Usher-Wilson and Dr John Watterson who supervised or directed trenches, geophysical surveys or the processing of the finds. For essential contributions to the post-excavation I am indebted to Nick Cooper, Tony Gouldwell, Dr Graham Morgan, Daniel Prior, Dr Mark Robinson and Dr Richard Thomas. The 2003 season took place while I was a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow and based at the University of Oxford as well as being an honorary fellow at the University of Leicester. I would like to thank all of these institutions as well as the University of Edinburgh where I am based now.

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UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

The Ridgeway and Vale Project: Excavations at Marcham/Frillford 2003.

Gary Lock and Chris Gosden (with contributions by David Bukach, Patrick Daly, David Griffiths, Paula Levick, Jędrzej Majewski, Sheila Raven, Peter Warry, Carole Wheeler and Steve Yeates)

The background to the project and site has been detailed in previous interim reports in this journal (Lock *et. al.* 2002; Lock, *et. al.* 2003) and also on the website

As in previous years the excavation acts as a training excavation for Oxford University students and is committed to education in the widest sense. Education Officers were on-site throughout the month of excavation and gave tours to many visitors including groups from local schools and community organisations. Various activities were organised for National Archaeology Day when c 2,500 people visited the site and talks are given to groups throughout the year.

The location of trenches is shown in last year's interim report (Lock, *et. al.* 2003, page 85), they are based on a geophysical survey which was published in the first year's interim report (Lock *et. al.* 2002, page 71).

Brief report on the excavations in 2003

Based on our previous excavations, and those in the garden of the Noah's Ark in the 1930s (Bradford and Goodchild 1939), the south-western area of the site shows a high concentration of Iron Age activity. This will be described first.

Trench 14

This was excavated over the two seasons of 2002-3, measured 15m x 10m and the features recorded in it ranged in date from the Iron Age to the Romano-British period.

MF 03 Trench 14

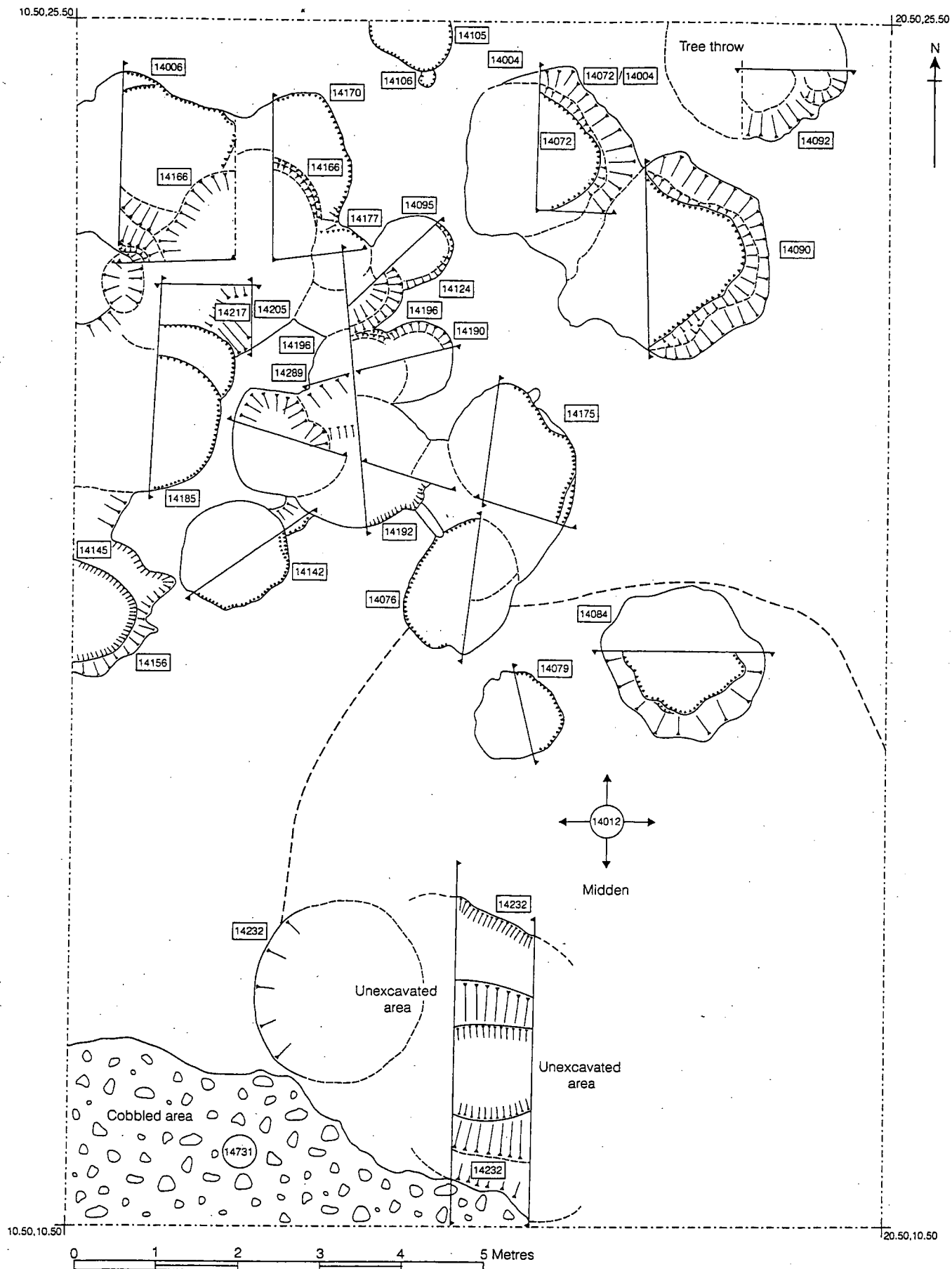


Fig 17. Trench 14, overall plan.

Oxfordshire

The earliest archaeological features were a series of pits, which were, tentatively, from the pottery recovered, catalogued as being early to middle Iron Age in date. In the northeast corner of the trench there were seventeen inter-cutting pits, Fig 17. Lying outside of this dense cluster were a further seven pits. The pits varied in size with some being up to 2m in diameter. There was also variation in depth, some being over 1m deep and others surviving only as shallow depressions. The stratigraphic deposits within the pits were often structured, with deposits of burnt and un-burnt stone and bone covered with layers of soil. There was considerable variation within the pit fills; in some, for example, there was more than one deposit of burnt stones. The fill of pit [14090], one of the outlying pits, had a rapid fill in its lower part evident from the re-deposition of a layer of natural sand with very little contamination. The upper part of the pit was weathered, which would indicate that the pit had been filled partly and then the edge of the pit was allowed to weather. Such a process would suggest that the pit had never been used for storage and was excavated for the disposal of material, perhaps produced during a specific act or event.

This type of deposition has been noted in other pits throughout Southern England and is now recognised as structured deposition. Here it has been noted that there are deliberate processes in action when pits are filled, and that certain types of domestic refuse, and the deposition of certain types of animal or human bones can be recognised as occurring in specific groups. It is interesting to note that at this site there seems to be a continuity of this activity between the Iron Age and Romano-British periods, perhaps indicating a long lived practice that helps to explain the location of the temple complex.

In the southern part of Trench 14, there were Romano-British deposits, including the remains of a metallised surface (1473) and a large pit [14232], approximately 6m long, 3m wide and 1.5m deep. A number of fills were recognised in the pit, but there were also deposits of dumped stones and associated animal bones including the remains of a skull, of bovine or ovis-caprid species. The material recovered from the pit seems to come from throughout the Roman period.

The pit continued to be used for the deposition of rubbish after it was full when it built up into a midden. Fulford has recently argued that traditions of structured deposition in pits, as widely claimed for the Iron Age, continued into the Romano-British period. The deposition of stone and bone in the pits of both periods in Trench 14 would support this argument, even though there had been an apparent break in use of the site in the late Iron Age with the practice being re-started. Though it is difficult to determine where the beasts deposited in the Roman pit were killed and consumed, the proximity of the temple and the temenos, and the fact that there were a number of complete skulls may indicate that these were the remains of sacrificial animals. Across the rest of the site, the other trenches excavated in 2003 were mainly concentrated on Romano-British elements as follows:

Trench 18

In continuation of the work started during the 2002 field season (Lock *et. al.* 2003), Trench 18 was re-opened with

the main aims being to determine how many discrete structures were present and to conduct a detailed investigation of the southern part of the trench and the structure therein. It was revealed that there are at least two separate structures represented, both of which seem to be rectangular buildings oriented along an east-west axis. The dimensions of the structure to the north are still not known, but the building in the south consists of two main walls [18006 and 18115; 18123] running east-west for approximately 7m. The building is approximately 3.3m wide, and has clear evidence for at least two phases of construction, with a smaller wall [18004] running north to south in the western half of the building. The exact chronological relationship has yet to be clarified, but at present, it seems most likely that wall [18004] was built in a different phase to walls [18006, 18115; 18123], and is probably later.

Interestingly, and as suspected in 2002, there is only a partial north south wall at the eastern side of the building [18058]. However, rather than seeing this as a robbed out or damaged area, additional evidence strongly suggests that it is an intentional part of the architecture. This is supported by the fact that there are several sandy-gravelly floor surfaces both inside what would be the larger room of the structure [as defined by walls 18004; 18006; 18058; 18123], and in the area to the east of wall [18058]. While still speculative, it is very possible that the structure did not have a substantial eastern face, and in fact, might have had a working surface on the outside that was directly associated with its function, perhaps covered by a more ephemeral structure, such as an awning or wooden wall. By the end of the 2003 field season a significant sample of the interior of the southern building had been excavated down to natural to determine stratigraphic depth and complexity, Fig 18. In addition, the excavations extended into the area just north of the southern building to determine the nature of the area between the southern and northern buildings, and, if possible, the relationship between them. This work has not been conclusive, and will continue during the 2004 field season.

A cursory examination of the material culture recovered during the 2003 field season from the southern building, and the area just outside to the north show a remarkable richness of artefacts, both with regards to quality and quantity. Large amounts of ceramics, tile, building material, ceramic *tesserae*, shell and animal bone were found. In addition, many small finds, such as coins, finely crafted metal tools and jewellery, the remains of delicate ceramic and glass drinking vessels, multicoloured painted wall plaster, and a very well preserved intaglio depicting [a Greek heroic figure] were recovered. All of this strongly suggests the presence of at least one, but possibly more, structures most likely associated with the temple based upon provisional dating and possible function. At this stage the dating of the finds suggests a range from late first/early second century to late 3rd/early 4th century, approximately contemporary with the temple. It is possible that the structures in Trench 18 are part of a number of ancillary buildings built around the outside of the temple's temenos wall that existed to serve the needs of visitors to the temple, and to facilitate the activities carried out therein. Many of the finds so far indicate feasting and food consumption including imported fine ware beakers and cups, samian bowls, flagons, handled

MF03 Trench 18

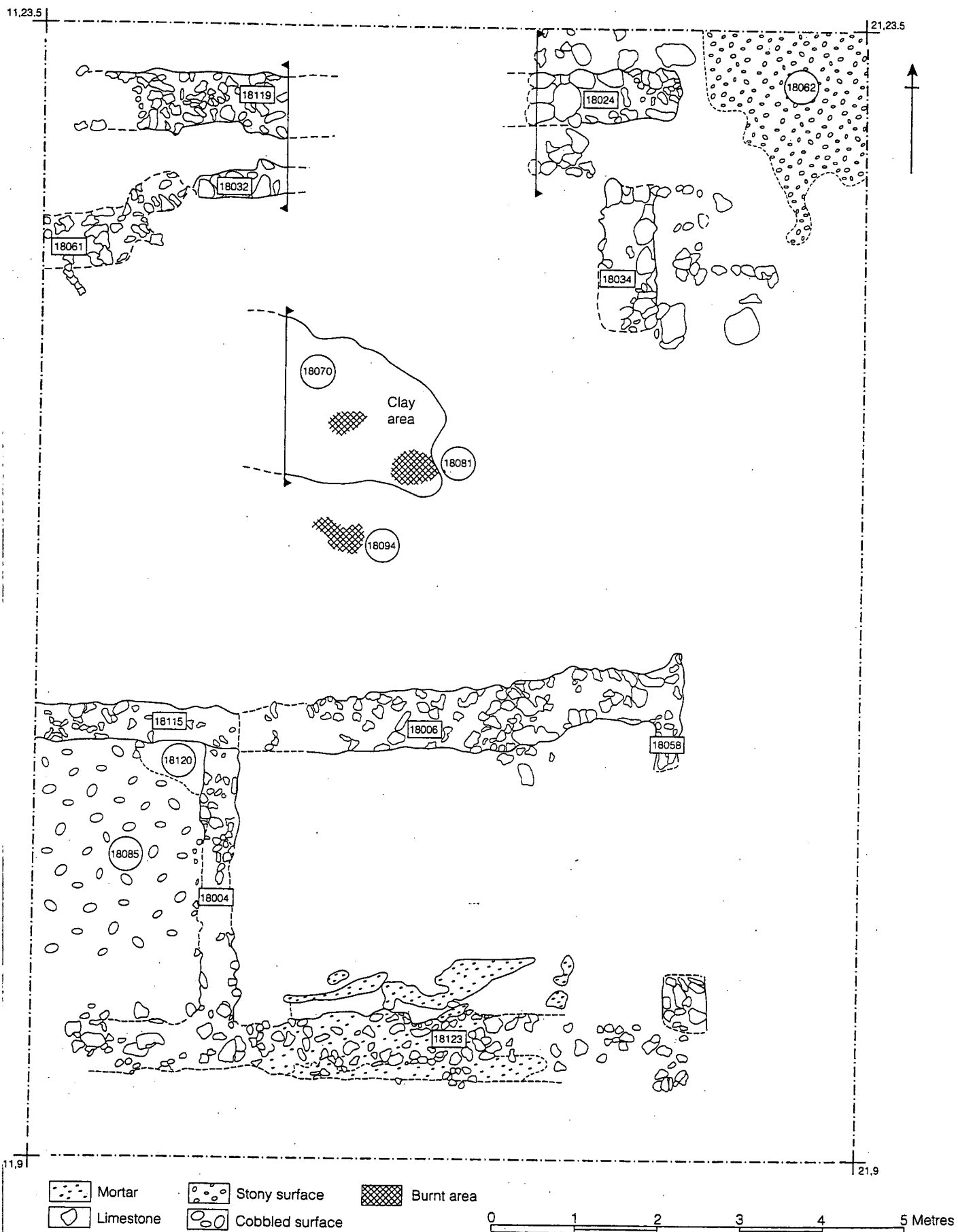


Fig 18. Trench 18, overall plan.

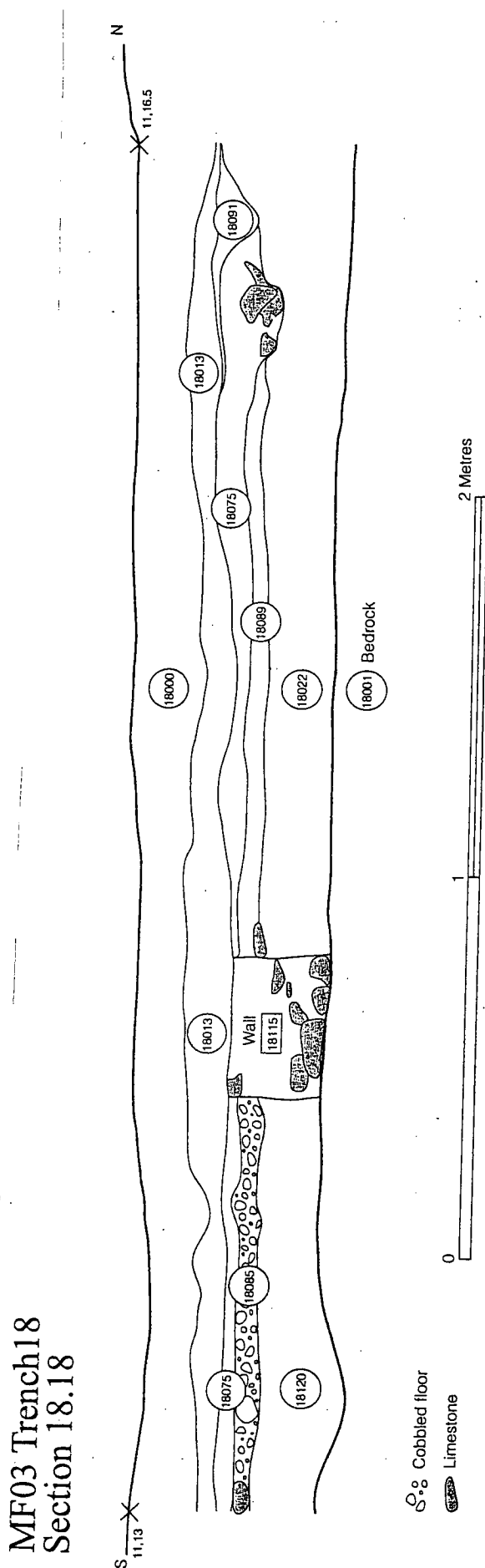


Fig 19. Trench 18, section across the southern building.

glass vessels together with the bones of young pig, lamb, chicken, wild birds, calf or veal and many oysters.

The excavations in Trench 18 will continue during the 2004 field season with the aim of completing the excavation on the northern structure and the area in between the two buildings – hopefully establishing phasing for the buildings, providing more evidence of function, and relating both structures to the wider Marcham/Frilford complex.

Trench 2

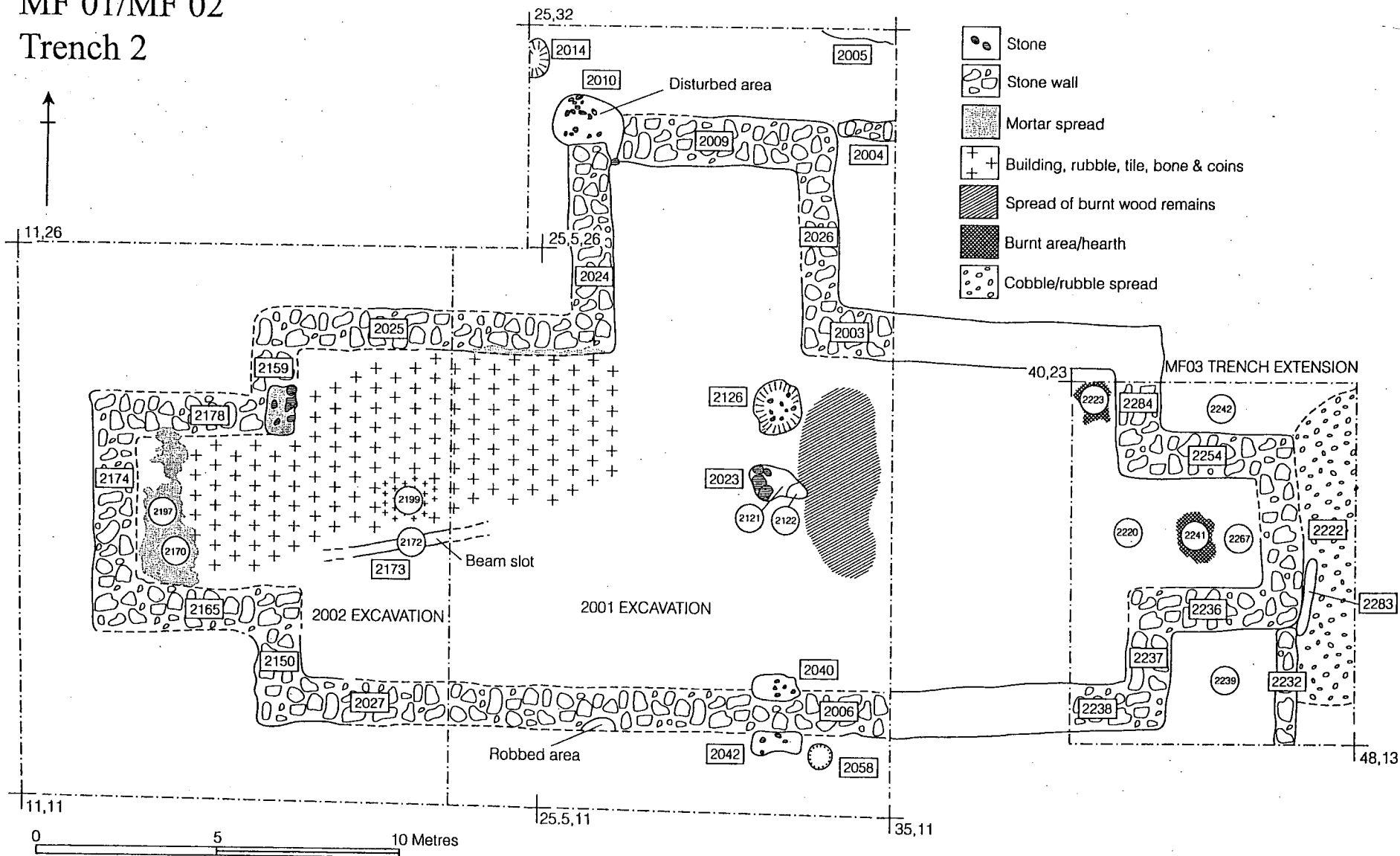
Work continued on the large rectilinear building, located by magnetometer survey in 2001, which is positioned centrally in the excavation area between the 'amphitheatre' and the temple complex. This structure, which is nearly 34m long and up to 17m wide, Fig 20, and apparently originally conceived on a monumental scale, now consists of a series of low limestone wall bases approximately 1m in width, the tops of which meet the lowest horizon of ploughsoil. Excavations in 2001 and 2002 showed that the building had been burnt, probably early in its life, and lower-grade occupation such as quartering for animals may have subsequently taken place prior to abandonment. The coin finds from within the building, the chronology and detailed distribution of which is still being analysed by Adrian Marsden, strongly suggest that both construction and re-use happened in the late to very late Romano-British period. The walls enclose an internal area which is characterised by successive spreads of mortar and mixed rubble with tile/animal bone – this rubble deposit in particular contains large numbers of low-denomination late Romano-British copper coins, principally from the 4th century and stretching at least to the very early 5th century in date. The coins from this building are dominated by post-AD 348 issues through to c AD 402, with only one pre-4th century coin (a small radiate imitation of the 3rd century). The profile of the numismatic evidence suggests a start-date of significant coin loss or deposition around AD 340.

Excavation had so far concentrated on the central and western parts of the building with the plan of the central part of the building being investigated in 2001/2. Much of the internal Romano-British deposits had been removed or ploughed out, leaving an orange subsoil containing considerable Iron Age evidence including several pits with pottery and human and animal bone. Spreads of burnt timber (see Fig 20) were initially thought to be associated with the burning episode of the building. However, in the winter of 2002-3, a radiocarbon accelerator date was obtained from a piece of charred oak timber in this spread (OxA-12608, wood charcoal, $\delta^{13}\text{C} = -25.6\%$) giving a (uncal) date of 2141 ± 32 BP. This gives a 71% (cal) probability of 550 BC – 390 BC, giving an early to middle Iron Age date.

This date helps to define a substantial phase of Iron Age activity in the area of Trench 2, which is particularly marked in the centre of the trench although given the chronological gap, it is highly likely that the building was sited without reference to the position of the earlier activity. There was, however, evidence in 2001 that the northwest corner of the northern extension had been underpinned with mortar and stone as it was constructed over a large Iron Age pit [2010], and it had in fact subsequently slumped slightly into the softer pit fill.

MF 01/MF 02 Trench 2

Fig 20. Trench 2, overall plan.



Oxfordshire

In 2002, the series of better-preserved Roman-period interior deposits discovered in 2001 and trending towards the western end of the building, which were clearly associated with the building, were investigated. In 2003 an extension trench measuring 10m x 8m, and separated from the main Trench 2 area by 5m of unexcavated ground, was opened in order to define and characterise the eastern end of this intriguing structure.

The main central/western trench covering the majority of the building in 2003 proceeded as a continuation of the 2002 season. The mortar spreads forming floor levels in the western 'extension' were disentangled, showing that an upper spread, which in places overlies the inner surfaces of the walls, is separated from a lower mortar spread (2170) by the characteristic rubble/bone/tile layer with 4th century coins, the southerly extent of which is limited by an east-west beam slot running at a slight angle to the long axis of the building [2173]. Occasional dense concentrations of mortar with large stones were encountered eg (2199), suggesting possible pads for roof-supports for the original building, but these were consistent in neither form nor pattern, indicating that if there had been a roof supported on the floor surface, most evidence has been lost. There were no post-holes of any appropriate size or position to indicate roof supports. An alternative scenario might see a roof supported upon rafters rested on the walls at their original height.

Beneath the lowest mortar 'floor' spread, there was considerable evidence for burning, with fire-reddened and blackened soil lenses with charcoal powder and flecks, possibly including some burnt wall plaster, abutting deep pink burn marks on the limestone walls. These were carefully studied, during which it became clear that some of the larger 'pit-like' anomalies on the geophysical plot around the inside of the walls, were in fact probably reflections of dense concentrations of burning. Four transverse sections across the interior were excavated to show the stratigraphy of the burning, mortar and rubble/bone/tile layers in relation to the walls.

The burning evidence suggests that the building probably originally had a wooden floor, which burnt *in situ*. The arrangement of mortar and rubble/bone/tile spreads suggests that the rubble layer was imported as a dump of secondary material (probably from derelict buildings nearby) to level up the interior for a new mortar floor after the burning episode. This would accord with the heterogeneous character of much of the tile – indicating it did not come from a single *in situ* collapsed roof. There is also evidence in the form of repositioned stonework and mortar additions that the limestone walls were repaired at some stage after the original construction. It was around this point in the building's life that most of the coins were apparently lost – their profile suggests individual loss through trading activity, and/or possibly votive deposition, rather than as a single dispersed hoard.

Further examination of the wall structures in section showed that they were securely founded on the limestone bedrock, which had been levelled in places with rough masonry to provide a flat building platform. A group of stake-holes in the northwest corner, which were sealed by the burning layer, may suggest the presence of wooden supporting structures during construction. All evidence

points to the fact that the wall bases were originally intended to support very substantial upper works of stone or timber.

At the western end, at a point where all but the lowest courses of the wall do not survive as well as elsewhere, the bottom of the foundations was examined. In the lowest level of the wall foundations was found an abraded body sherd of shelly ware pottery. Although lacking a diagnostic rim form, the results of an examination by Paul Booth of Oxford Archaeology suggested an 80% probability that this stratified sherd represents a 4th century AD type. This, in conjunction with the coin finds, strongly suggests that the walls were constructed from new in the very late Romano-British period and the building's subsequent secondary use and abandonment may have taken place into the early post-Roman period.

The 2003 extension trench investigated the eastern end of the building, which was, according to the geophysical plot, apparently a symmetrical counterpart to the western end with a square protruding extension from the main rectilinear building plan. Upper topsoil stripping was done by machine, and the lower topsoil layer (2220) was excavated by hand. An early discovery in the lower topsoil, at the centre of the eastern square extension, was a large Roman bronze coin of the Emperor Constantius II (who reigned in the western Empire AD 353-61) bearing a *chi-rho* on the reverse.

The line of the walls in the eastern end, which were identical in form to the western end of the building, due to robbing and plough-damage were confined to their lowest foundation courses and therefore were less well-preserved than elsewhere. There was evidence, as in the western end, of mortar spreads partially overlying the inner edge of the walls. In the exact centre of the eastern square extension (although not necessarily contemporary with the walls) was a spread of burnt limestone (2241) which appears to represent a hearth. Another, more ephemeral, burnt area (2223) was encountered in the northwest corner of the extension trench just inside the building. Internal deposits in the eastern end of the building superficially resembled some characteristics in the western end, with occasional tile fragments, late Roman coins and animal bone fragments, but on the whole they were less well-preserved and more discontinuous, possibly indicating greater plough damage in the eastern end.

Immediately outside the main walls of the eastern extension, although largely separated from it by a shallow gully, there was an area of cobbling [2222], in the form of large worn limestone fragments which clearly continue into the unexcavated area to the east. These were associated with another, smaller, wall [2232] in the southeast corner of the extension trench, which lay north-south, abutting the southeast corner of the eastern extension to the main building, and apparently indicating an ancillary structure of some kind. The question of activity outside the main building to the east, towards the site of the 'amphitheatre' and 'palaeochannel', is an important one and will form the subject of further investigations in 2004. The possibility that the eastern end of the building had an entrance facing eastwards is suggested by the extra-mural cobbling; the very low remnant of wall foundations in the east wall of the eastern extension may have underlain a door portal, which on the basis of the character of the building elsewhere, may have been a wooden structure leading onto a wooden floor.

Evidence of the burning episode, however, which is so strong on the western end of the building, is much less pronounced in the east.

Further post-excavation work remains to be done on the finds, the detailed pattern of coin loss, and structural relationships within the building, but current indications point to the building being a very late Romano-British monumental structure, very probably with (originally) a high-status ceremonial function, which after a fire was subsequently partially rebuilt and then down-graded to a more utilitarian purpose. It seems to be the latest of the large structures at Marcham/Frilford, a fact borne out by the generally late date of the coins and some other artefacts such as bone pins found in it. A ritual or religious purpose would appear to be a strong hypothesis – but was it a late temple or a church? The pattern of coin deposition may indicate a Christian use (A Marsden, *pers comm*), as there are coins of post 391-2 (ie, after Theodosius's edicts closing pagan temples) and there are Christian symbols in the form of the *chi-rho* on coins, but these are essentially portable objects which circulated both within and outside explicitly Christian contexts. The building has a pseudo-basilican style plan, but the simple fact is that we have no clear idea what a late Romano-British church may have looked like. Most of the best structural evidence in the form of Christian mosaics comes from rooms in villas which have no explicitly Christian plan or form. The few 'churches' which are documented in Roman Britain such as that excavated at Silchester, Hants, in the early 1960s, (Frere 1975) were designated as such on the basis of architectural features such as apsidal extensions, which compare to continental and Medieval churches, but otherwise lack diagnostic structural evidence of early Christianity (King 1983). This line of reasoning may apply to Marcham/Frilford, where we also have a possible contemporary association through coin finds with the late Romano-British burials in the nearby cemetery (Akerman, 1865; Rolleston 1869; 1880; Calkins, 1978).

Trenches 1, 9 and 8b are focussed on the 'amphitheatre' first excavated by Hingley (1985):

Trench 1

Excavations here continue to reveal the nature of the entranceway on the eastern side of the circular structure and helped greatly clarify the situation. The arena wall was found to rest on bedrock and in places the bedrock behind the wall had been cut away to accommodate it, reinforcing the idea that this was a natural hollow, formalised by the building of the wall. At its base the wall was below the water table as it stands today and the bedrock slopes down towards the centre of the arena, so that it is covered by an ever greater depth of water. The bank behind the wall was built on an Iron Age soil, presumably the same as that found in Trench 9. Running into the arena through the entrance was a layer of rubble to be found both inside and outside the arena wall. The step discovered last year had been constructed on top of this layer. Within the arena, directly below the step was a layer of thick, black water lain clay, which looks like a ponding deposit laid down in still water. Under this was a layer of stones laid on bedrock.

No formal structures have been encountered in this area, but a complex sequence has been revealed in which the

originally continuous wall may have been broken through and then a ramp of stone laid down into the arena, resting partly on existing waterlaid clays. The step was constructed on top of this ramp. We hope to extend Trench 1 into the centre of the arena next season, but also to extend the trench to the east to pick up the full width of the bank.

Trench 8b

Trench 8b was extended initially to determine the southern extent of the bank constructions of the circular structure, as well as to better explore the area surrounding the vicinity where a large number of small finds were recovered towards the end of the previous excavation season. The extension south from the end of Trench 9 quickly revealed a linear stone structure cross cutting the trench. The structure consisted of a single course of angular stones lying on a course of rubble on its south side. The position of the structure is significant, however, as it rests at the end of the turf additions to the bank, overlying only a long thin layer of clay from the last clay deposit of the bank. A diffuse layer of fine rubble extended south of the structure, and as this layer was reached significant quantities of first animal bone and then small finds were recovered. These finds extended south for some metres from this point, and it is possible that the stone courses may have delineated the back of the bank of the circular structure. Small finds throughout the southern extent of Trench 8b consisted almost exclusively of bronze brooches, bone and bronze pins, Roman coins, glass beads and trinket rings. Preservation of small finds was exceptional, and some showed signs of deliberate defacement. Further structures were uncovered in the south western corner of the trench, and all appear to be associated with a layer of fine rubble resting on a pre-Roman surface evident across both Trenches 8b and 9. At least six structures were also found, consisting of small collections of angular limestone arranged in triangular or circular patterns around a small void. A cut was apparent in the excavation of only one of these structures, and they therefore may represent post platforms for small wooden structures resting atop of a deliberately laid cobble surface. Small finds stopped almost immediately underneath the laid rubble surface, and these structures (and the associated cobble surface) represent the only Romano-British activity at the south end of the circular structure.

Given the sheer number of fine items from this area it may represent a deliberately delineated area where votive offerings were made, which may have been placed within some form of structure, the nature of which is now hard to determine. Coins recovered from Trench 8b extend into the 4th century and it is possible that later votive deposits in this area may also be related to the building uncovered in Trench 2, which appears to have existed into the later 4th century AD. Further work in the intervening unexcavated region between these trenches may help establish some relationship between activities within both trenches.

Two significant features were also uncovered towards the southernmost extent of Trench 8b towards the final days of excavation. One contained a concentration of Roman tile within a matrix of dark greasy sandy loam. This corresponds with a large anomaly visible from magnetometer survey of the area. This cut may be part of a silt trap on the line of the drain from the circular feature. A hint of a second feature

Oxfordshire

into which yellow clay material was deposited was also found just to the north of the feature just mentioned. Both of these await further excavation next season.

Trench 9

At the southern side of the circular structure, excavation continued within Trench 9 explored the stone structure first discovered by Hingley (1985) in order to understand more about the construction of the bank, the rectangular stone structure built on the southern side of the 'arena' wall and area just inside the wall.

Excavations inside the rectangular stone structure revealed that approximately 20cm below the base of the 2002 excavations, a north-south linear alignment of large flat-lying flagstones was uncovered resting on a course of smaller rubble. The downward slope of the feature, as well as the presence of water at the same level as the feature, would suggest that its primary function was to transport water away from the arena area. A flagstone was lifted to explore the interior of the drain and this revealed a substantial structure consisting of two built walls of angular limestone descending in 6 courses to a depth of 0.6m, and resting on what is believed to be the limestone bedrock. The drain clearly runs under both the arena wall, where one of the flag stones forms a lintel, and the southern wall of the rectangular structure where the lowest courses of the wall rest on the flagstones of the drain. Both walls were either constructed after the drain or are contemporary with it.

A trench approximately 2m by 3m was also opened directly to the south of the rectangular 'room' structure, with the hopes of uncovering the continuation of the drain southwards from the arena. Excavation revealed the western half of a deep cut, which extends through underlying pre-Roman and sterile surfaces and this represents the continuation of the same drain feature. The fill of the cut consists of at least two phases, the uppermost of which consists of a 0.5m deep layer of yellow clay resting on alternating thin layers of clay and grey sand. The deep clay layer is of similar composition to clay within the bank extending to the south of the arena wall and appears to have been partially laid into the ditch and partially slumped into the ditch cut. The ditch cut into which the drain was laid does not appear to cut through any part of the bank and therefore predates at least one phase of bank construction (see below). This clay layer is then covered by alternating tips of re-deposited turf or iron oxide rich soils, orange sandy loams and brown subsoil. These appear to represent a much later filling in of the ditch.

We also excavated in the interior of the circular structure, on the northern side of the main wall from the rectangular structure. Excavations successfully revealed a similar arrangement of flagstones and rubble along with a void heading beneath the arena wall and matching up with the drain within the rectangular structure. A large lintel was also placed at the base of the arena wall above the void, and this suggests that the wall may have been deliberately built as part of the drain construction.

An exploratory trench 15m long was opened into the centre of the area defined by the circular structure and which reached the northern side of the arena wall. The upper 1.5m was stripped by machine and some preliminary hand excavation was carried out. The main purpose of the trench

was to provide some idea of the nature of the central deposits and to allow us to plan for next season. A possible linear collection of stones was found near the centre of the arena at a depth of approximately 2m, in association with a human bone and oyster shells. Near this was found an intact waterlogged piece of timber. Only a small portion of the timber was exposed, and it was decided to leave it in position for further excavation next season. However, a small piece was removed for radiocarbon dating. A date of 1910 ± 60 BP (Beta - 182615) was obtained, which calibrates to 30 BC - AD 245 (at two standard deviations), which probably puts the date within the early Romano-British period. The existence of a piece of wood in the centre of the structure is very significant in judging the purpose of the structure as a whole. The central area must have been continuously wet since the post was placed.

There is no evidence of laid surfaces or floors in this area, and we feel that the waterlogged nature of the central area increases the chance that this was a water feature in its earliest phase, with a possible drier use later (Gosden and Lock 2003). It also raises the possibility that there was some sort of wooden construction pre-dating the stone one.

Preliminary investigations on the northern side of the arena wall at the northern end of the trench also uncovered a possible structure to the north of the wall and set within the bank. The centre of the feature and its northern wall will be major foci for the coming 2004 season.

The circular structure - discussion

Through the 2003 excavations we have a better understanding of the phasing of the circular feature.

Examination of the arena wall over the drain indicates the distinct possibility of the removal of an initial arena wall to lay down the drain. Several features suggest a removal and reconstruction of the wall in this area. Firstly, the arena wall above the drain does not follow the same curve as the rest of the visible wall in Trench 9. The condition of mortar in the arena wall above the drain is also considerably better than that of the rest of the wall in Trench 9, and suggests a later construction. Tracing the extent of possible new construction also reveals several gaps in the construction of the wall, appearing in steps along the western end of the arena wall. Finally, as mentioned, the topmost stone of the drain feature as it extends beneath the arena wall appears to be an integral part of the wall reconstruction. Therefore, it is quite likely that the addition of a drain into the arena area of the circular structure occurred at some point after the construction of the arena wall itself, which necessitated the reconstruction of the wall.

Examination of the stratigraphy of the bank deposits may also suggest at least two phases of construction. Clay deposits nearest the arena wall appear to be capped by soil prior to the addition of alternating clay and turf banks along the southern half of the bank. This suggests an initial smaller bank construction followed at some point by a larger bank which was extended southwards. Deposits of oxidized sand on the arena side of the arena wall also suggest the presence of at least the initial bank construction prior to the presence of the wall itself, and previous work suggests that construction of the wall included cutting into the bank to lay the wall. The capping of the drain behind the rectangular

structure with bank material may also be part of a second phase of construction.

Despite the difficulties in the evidence available at this stage, a relative sequence of construction for the circular structure can still be postulated using the interpretation outlined above. New geophysical evidence suggests a natural circular hollow existed on the site, probably filled with water. An initial bank was then constructed and the arena wall was cut into this banking. A long ditch was then dug through the pre-Roman layers below the bank, at the bottom of which was laid the drain. This necessitated the partial destruction of the arena wall at the point where the drain was needed, and a new phase of wall construction was made to cover this break in the wall. At some point after the digging of the ditch to lay the drain the southern bank was constructed, some of which slumped into the drain ditch.

Finally, the last phases of construction were the construction of the walls of the rectangular structure and the capping of the arena with gravelly sand. It is possible that the addition of the drain represented the end of its use as a watery feature, although it is still possible at this point that the arena area remained water-filled until the capping of the arena with gravel. The sequence of deposits within the drain may provide some clues towards the sequence of events within the circular structure, and may also point to the use of the drain within the context of an initial watery feature. The last deposits within the drain consist of the same iron oxide-rich arena capping material as well as some deposits of sandy clay, which is very similar to the sequence of deposits within the arena. The arena deposits rest significantly above the water level within the arena, and the capping of the arena surface may have removed the need to deliberately drain the circular structure. Some of this capping material was transported through the drain until the drain became clogged, with the upper deposits within the drain representing the last infilling of the drain.

Our preferred sequence at present is that a natural wet feature was formalised through the construction of a bank and then wall, with possible other features in the waterlogged centre of the feature. This was then deliberately or naturally infilled, which led to a dry feature and it may have been contemporary with this that the bank was extended. Large numbers of objects were deposited at the southern end of this bank, at least into the 4th century AD. Such a sequence requires further test through future excavation and post-excavation analysis of datable finds.

Lake Marcham

At the end of the 2003 season we started to investigate sediments in the bank of the River Ock on the southern margin of the site. These investigations revealed water-logged deposits, cut through by the present river channel, but laid down in an open lake or swamp, as indicated by the existence of still water snail species. These could be oxbow lakes related to the complex meandering history of the Ock. Worked wood, a human vertebra, animal bones and the sole of a leather shoe were removed from the upper parts of these deposits. Radio-carbon dating of a piece of worked wood produced a date of 950 ± 70 BP (Beta-182616) which is calibrated to AD 980 – 1235 at two standard deviations. A second date was obtained from an animal bone produced dates of 850 ± 60 BP (Beta-182617),

which calibrates to AD 1030 to 1280 at two standard deviations. These two dates show substantial Medieval deposits. On the basis of finds of flint we believe that much older, prehistoric water-logged deposits lie beneath, which also offer the possibility of excellent organic preservation due to water-logging. An initial auger survey (carried out by S Hesselbo and M Langford) has shown that water-logged deposits may be up to 2m thick. Initial survey leads us to believe that such deposits are found over a wide area, with a complex history that can only be revealed through a combination of mapping, augering, coring and excavation. Further work will be carried out here in 2004.

Conclusions

It is apparent from early excavations and our three seasons of work that Marcham/Frilford is a site of considerable importance. In terms of sequence, the excavations of 2001 established a middle Bronze Age presence including a substantial ditch, pottery, small cut features and human cremations. In an early layer within Trench 18, last year several well-preserved sherds of decorated Neolithic pottery were found, although no features, which suggests an even longer sequence. The Iron Age activity has been well attested since the excavations of the 1930s and our work has consolidated and extended that understanding. It appears that the Iron Age activity, although concentrated towards the west of the site, extends across the area of Trench 2 based on the radio-carbon date and pits there. This seems to be unenclosed activity rather than a settlement defined by a banked and ditched enclosure of any kind.

Both the structured deposition within the pits of Trench 14, and the radio-carbon date of the wooden post within the centre of the circular structure hint at continuity between Iron Age and Romano-British interests at the site. This extends from the early and middle Iron Age through structured deposition and from the late Iron Age through the focus on the wet area which was later enclosed by the circular structure.

Within the Romano-British activities at the site we are also beginning to identify possible phasing, broadly into two. The buildings within Trench 18 appear to be contemporary with the temple and associated with it which is not surprising considering their location just outside the temenos eastern wall and, presumably, close to the temple's main entrance. This dates to approximately late 1st/early 2nd century to late 3rd/early 4th. There then appears to be a shift of focus from the temple to the large basilica-type building in Trench 2 in the late 4th century, accompanied by the temple and associated buildings being abandoned and falling into disrepair. Uniting the two phases, and indeed them with the preceding prehistoric activity, is the wet area at the head of the palaeo-channel which was eventually delineated by a bank and wall. This spans the two Romano-British phases and practices that were played out within and around the watery place must have related to those taking place within the temple initially and then within the basilica building. The whole site appears to have been a rural religious complex based both on its links with the past and on the continuing presence of the watery feature. It is early days yet to reach any final conclusions but it is tempting to see a sequence of religious 'conversions' from prehistoric paganism to some as yet unknown

Oxfordshire

Romano-British deity or deities which were eventually Christianised. None of these appear to have involved a total rejection of previous beliefs and customs but, rather, a re-working of those beliefs and practices to fit the new social conditions.

Acknowledgements

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THE WALLINGFORD BURH TO BOROUGH RESEARCH PROJECT

2003 Interim Report

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Introduction

The historic town of Wallingford has an accepted status as a 'classic' site in British archaeology, well-known for its

substantially surviving late Saxon burh defences and remarkable medieval town-plan (see *Airs et al.* 1975; *Astill* 1984; *Christie et al.* 2003: 105-106). Given that approximately one-third of the intra-mural zone is open space and given the excellent preservation of the earthworks of the royal castle superimposed into the north-east corner of the town (see Fig 21), integrated analysis of the townscape has enormous potential to illuminate urban development from the later Saxon through to the later medieval periods.

Directed through the Universities of Exeter and Leicester in harness with local partner organisations, the Wallingford Burh to Borough Research Project seeks to develop Wallingford as a major case-study of early and later medieval urban development. The fieldwork component of the project is currently deploying a wide range of archaeological techniques – principally geophysical and topographical survey, and with small-scale targeted excavation – as a means of unravelling the development of this historic town and its environs. The Project also aims to bring to bear buildings survey on the town's churches and field survey on the hinterland, all data to be combined with ongoing local documentary and cartographic research; further, the project will collate and bring to full publication the archives of a number of important excavations conducted in the town in the 1930s, 1960s and 1970s (eg *Leeds* 1938-39; *Brooks* 1965-68).

To date, the project has carried out a series of large-scale, non-intrusive geophysical and topographical surveys within and immediately outside the town. As reported in *SMA* 33 (*Christie et al.* 2003), the 2002 season provided a first archaeological mapping and analysis of the northern half of the town, focussed on (i) the large open park zone in the north-west of the town known as the Bullcroft, and (ii) the extensive earthworks of the castle bailey and its defences. In the former, resistivity and gradiometer work recognised potential traces of intramural lanes and possible enclosures; although indistinct, the probable traces of the lost Benedictine Priory of the Holy Trinity, the precinct of which seems to have been formed by the corner of the burh defences, may occupy a northern space, in the vicinity of the original north gate. In each case, however, resurvey is required to clarify the data. Topographic survey, meanwhile, provided a first cross-section of the impressive urban ramparts and ditches – these in places preserved to a full 7m from ditch bottom to rampart top (with erosion and infill undoubtedly distorting the true dimensions of these poorly known defences: see Fig 22). In the Castle Meadows area, detailed earthwork survey identified a likely late-medieval ornamental 'water garden' in which the castle was embedded and clarified early modern re-landscaping of the site. In addition, a first geophysical transect was undertaken, running north-south from the reduced castle motte to the outermost defensive ditch to assess sub-surface features and potential. Key here is clarification of the defensive articulation of this high status medieval castle, which played a pivotal role in the Anarchy or civil war between Matilda and Stephen in the years 1139-53, with Wallingford a major base for the pro-Matilda forces (see *Slade* 1960; *Spurrell* 1995. The *Gesta Stephani* ch.41 for AD 1139 calls it a castle "most securely fortified by impregnable walls"). Previous reconstructions of the castle

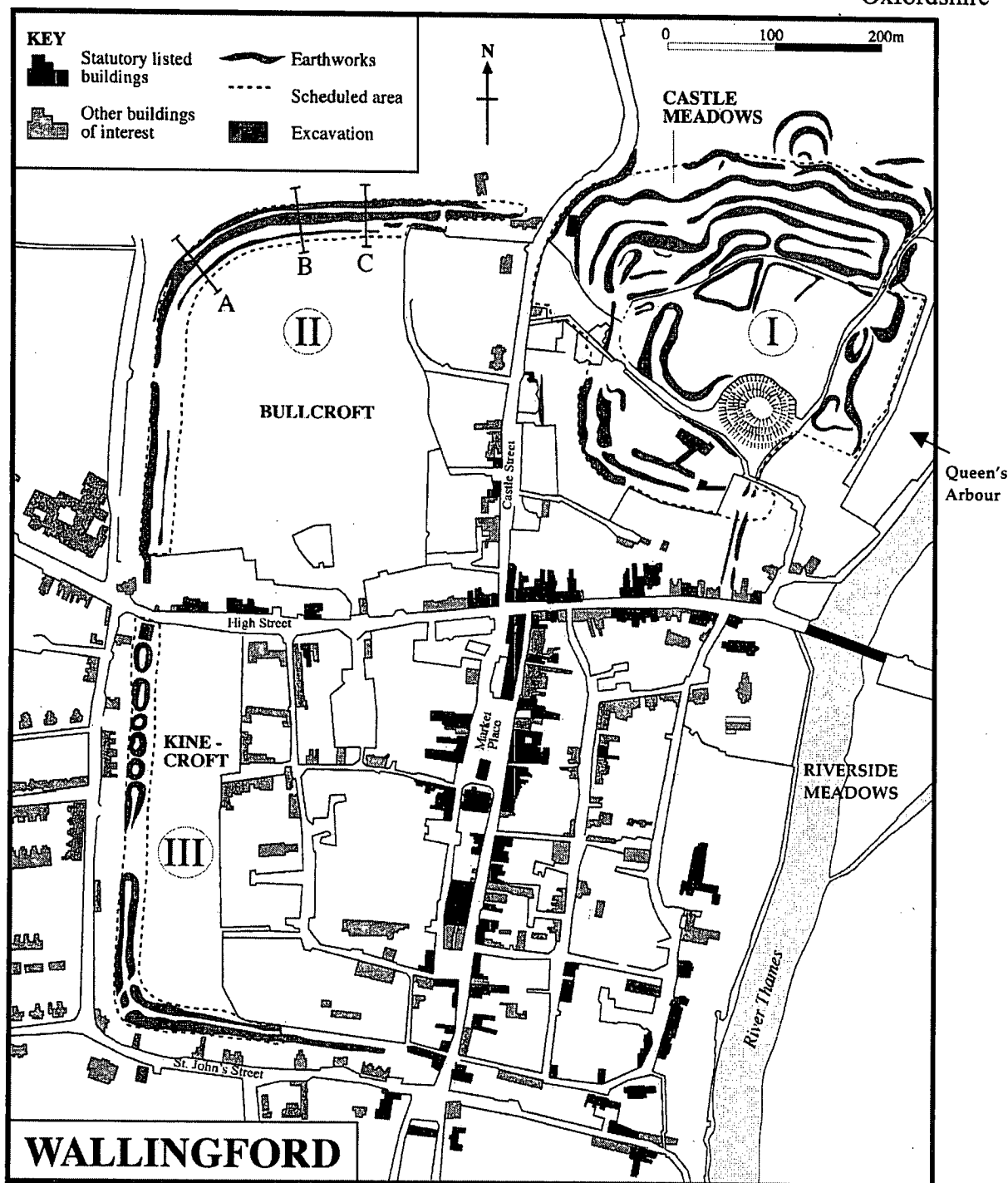


Fig 21. The townscape of Wallingford, showing the principal zones of study. The 2003 seasons investigated the Kinecroft (zone III), the Riverside Meadows and the Queen's Arbour and King's Meadow (latter not shown, but set north-north-east of Queen's Arbour). Image based on Ordnance Survey plans, although our project seeks a more accurate

plan depict a triple-rampart arrangement, but it is uncertain whether these all featured stone circuit walls or if all are contemporary (an outer bulwark is often presumed to be of the seventeenth-century Civil War, purely on the basis of form. The castle's final demolition occurred in 1652 after a siege – Allen Brown 1963: 850-853). The earth resistance readings confirm so far only a first stone wall; the extension of geophysical survey across the full castle landscape will be required to provide fuller details of such walls, although excavation may be required to confirm sequences.

The 2003 Seasons: Aims and Scope

For 2003 the Project comprised three short campaigns in May, August and November, with the primary aim of extending the geophysical survey of the available open spaces within and immediately adjoining the townscape. In May 2003 survey was undertaken in the Castle Meadows area, specifically in Queen's Arbour, immediately east of the castle and set between the slopes of the bailey and the river Thames (see Fig 21 and below). In response to results in this unscheduled area, a targeted gradiometer survey and a small excavation were made in August. In this same period resistance survey was also carried out in zones (c 0.2ha in



Fig 22. Bullcroft, Wallingford: view of the extant rampart and ditch on the northern flank of the town – much overgrown and with established trees, the ditch continues in its medieval role as a point for rubbish dumping

total) of the King's Meadow to the north, in response to a request by the Northmoor Trust, the relevant conservation body for the Castle Meadows, who were seeking to locate mechanically excavated 'scrapes' to assist the local ecology but without damaging potential archaeological deposits. Grids were made in both the south and north-west portions of the King's Meadow. One key research aim was to seek clarification of the north-eastern defensive configuration of the town: did the rampart and ditch continue to the riverside?

The August season further marked full geophysical and topographical (Total Station) coverage of the second major intramural open space of Wallingford, namely the Kinecroft, occupying the town's south-west flank and bounded by the extant rampart and ditch (Figs 21 and 26).

Immediately south of the Kinecroft is the location of the 6th century Anglo-Saxon cemetery identified and partially excavated in the 1930s (Leeds 1938-39). As with the 2002 survey of the Bullcroft, the hope was that sub-surface indications would be obtained of possible medieval and Saxon urban activities (notably intramural lanes, housing, but also the 'lost' church of St Peter's, probably sited near the High Street frontage. Local information meanwhile indicated that World War One 'test' or 'training' trenches were also located in the Kinecroft).

Full electrical resistance coverage (c 1.7ha) was supplemented by central gradiometer survey (0.9ha). Sections of the town rampart – less well preserved than the Bullcroft defences – were also to be surveyed. It should be noted that August was particularly hot and dry and the parched conditions in the Kinecroft at times made the survey difficult due to high contact resistance problems with the ground; this may have had some impact on the final readings and associated results.

In November, non-intrusive survey was extended to the Riverside Meadows, eastwards across the river and flanking the long, late medieval bridge (Figs 21 and 23). A distinctive triangular wedge of land here, bordered to north-east and south-east by a broad ditch, forms part of a parish 'bridgehead' extending towards Crowmarsh Gifford village, and this may respond to a trans-riverine component of the town defences of Wallingford, aiding control of the ford and bridge. Resistivity work aimed to survey this zone and the immediately surrounding fields – bordered by hedges, trees or fences – to gauge the presence of any archaeological features.

The 2003 Seasons: Results and Questions

Below we summarise the main project findings of the 2003 season in the three study areas.

(i) *Queen's Arbour, Castle Meadows*

First, resistivity survey was undertaken in the area of the King's Meadows and Queen's Arbour on the river terrace immediately to the east of the main castle earthworks in both May and August 2003. An initial reconnaissance survey of Queen's Arbour was made in May, when a 40m wide strip of resistance survey in the western half of the field located slight evidence of the subsurface topography and a 'U-shaped' high resistance anomaly, reflecting a buried masonry structure of approximate dimensions 25m east-west and 20m north-south, and with walls up to 2m thick (Fig 24). Further survey work was carried out in August 2003, with the aim of redefining the limits of the structure and estimating the depth to which it was buried; this was followed by sample excavation to determine form and function of this masonry feature. Resistivity depth prospecting was applied to a 30m x 40m area centred on the



Fig 23. View of Wallingford bridge – its main piers – crossing the Thames; viewed from north-east

anomaly to gain successive plans of the area at approximate depths centred on 0.75m, 1m and 1.25m below the surface.

The excavation revealed – at fairly shallow depth beneath the field surface – the south-eastern end of an apsidal masonry structure with chalk-built walls c1.8m thick, faced carefully on the exterior, but internally angled into natural river clay deposits (Fig 25). The logistics of construction must have been substantial, requiring much effort to cut and remove the clay to accommodate the walls. The lack of internal stratigraphy, surfaces or non-ceramic finds would argue against an elevated or covered edifice (implied also by the overall scale of the revealed feature), but instead points to a likely waterfront installation; on the basis of the pottery, we may assign a 12th or 13th century date. Given its location immediately east of a prominent rectangular earthwork projection from the bailey bank (perhaps the abutment for a bridge or barbican-type structure), we can assume a direct relationship to the castle, perhaps a quay, offering immediate access to the Thames, presumably via a small cut channel. A zone of high resistance was in fact detected below 1m in the south of the surveyed area, which is possibly a deposit of river gravel from a palaeochannel of the nearby Thames. Indeed, magnetometer survey appears to define a shallow geological change such as classically found at the margins of channels. The ‘U-shaped’ bend suggests a promontory into the river, which may help explain the position of the structure. Noticeably, the excavation yielded few finds after the 13th century and one possibility is that the potential quay went out of use fairly quickly, or else the finds are associated with a construction horizon. The area has long been a riverside meadow but with ploughing active into the 20th century. Clearly, further

excavation is required to clarify form, function and longevity of the features thus interpreted.

No trace was recognised of any eastward extension towards the river of the town’s northern earthwork defences beyond the visible castle earthworks which prominently turn southwards before the Queen’s Arbour or King’s Meadow. Geophysics otherwise identified no other clear archaeological features north of the discussed ‘quay’. When the scrapes were made for the Northmoor Trust in the Arbour in November, observation of the cuts and of the related spoil heaps revealed occasional ceramic sherds, a few medieval, plus modern materials and a few clay pipe fragments.

(ii) *Kinecroft*

Alongside a full earthwork survey and cross-sectioning of the town rampart, which combined to offer the first accurate archaeological planning of the Kinecroft surface archaeology (Fig 26), this public space was examined in depth by electrical and magnetic survey (with the latter focussed on the northern two thirds). The northern half of the Kinecroft has seen heavier modern intrusions, indicated on the surface by three crossing and joining concreted pathways (as well as the roadside path), plus hard packed areas, tree planting, and by a west-east low bank, shown to be a modern sewer pipeline. Furthermore, the gradiometer survey recognised, west of Feature D (Fig 27), a tight cluster of positive anomalies which can probably be related to the site of the annual Guy Fawkes bonfire!

In the southern half of the Kinecroft, results were in general minimal and even the claimed World War 1 test/training trenches recalled in the south-east area were not recognised (these may, however, have been open for only a short while

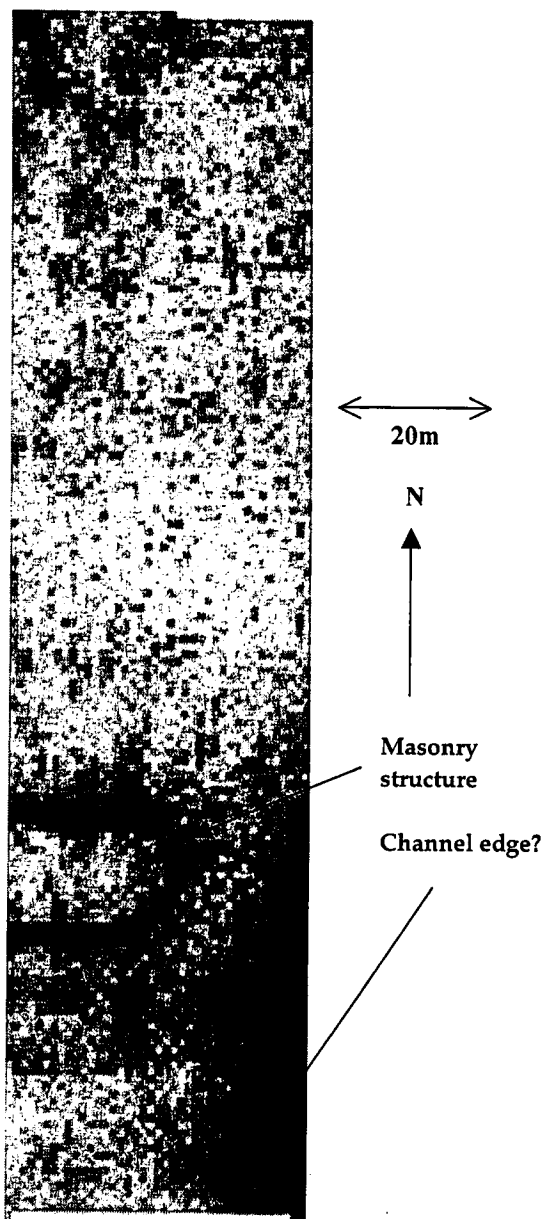


Fig 24. Initial resistance survey through Queen's Arbour - May 2003; note the large built feature is a seemingly isolated projecting structure.

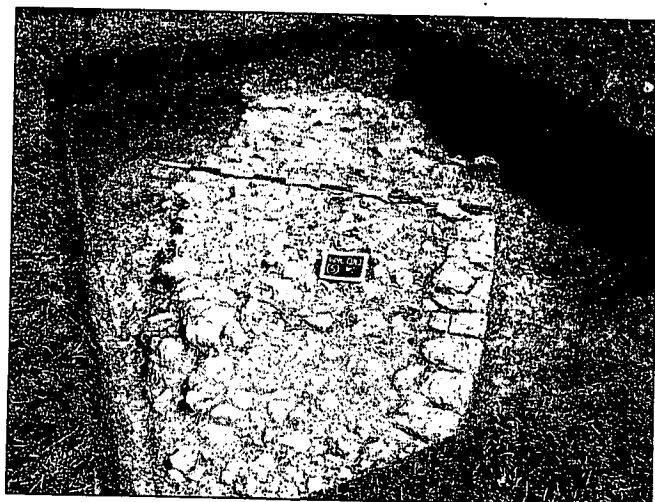


Fig 25. The excavated section of chalk wall(south-east angle of feature) viewed from the south-west. Note the good quality external wall facing.

or else, as another local informant claimed, they lay in the northern area, closer to the High Street). But a series of faint lower resistance readings at the mid-point of the park offer some intriguing possibilities: Feature F on Fig 27 noticeably aligns with the line of Kinecroft road to the east, and Features G potentially reflect the house plots fronting onto this. What may be recognisable here, therefore, is an earlier, unknown extension of the Kinecroft road which does, noticeably, terminate abruptly at the park edge. It suggests a routeway to the defences, either to a postern or to an intramural lane; Features G may indicate gravel yards or beaten floors to houses that originally lay on this lost lane.

(iii) Riverside Meadows

A large-scale earthwork and geophysical survey was carried out in the grassland plots of the Riverside Meadows area in Crowmarsh, on the opposite bank of the Thames from Wallingford in November (Figs 21, 28 and 29). Reached by the impressive late medieval bridge (Fig 23), whose built structure of piers extends *c* 100m beyond the actual river edge, this zone has enormous archaeological potential, given that the large curving ditch which cuts across the meadows, along the exact line of the historic parish boundary, has been suggested, on historical and topographical grounds, to represent the vestiges of a 'bridgehead' to the burh. Limited scope exists north of the bridge, however, to study this 'bridgehead' since much of the area is occupied by a swimming and paddling pool and by roadways.

On the northern side of the surveyed area, the presence of the bridge and presumed related construction workings are indicated by a high resistance zone parallel to the piers structure. Away from this zone, the 'bridgehead' space, framed by bridge, ditch and river, lacks any apparent or visible features (bar beaten paths): undoubtedly this reflects the fact that this lies on the floodplain of the Thames (indeed, flooding had occurred in early 2003, submerging much of the meadows) and has been subject to silting and dumping activities. Any archaeology here may thus be heavily obscured, although one might doubt any permanent structures having occupied this flood-prone space.

More tangible data were, however, recovered beyond the 'bridgehead' to the east and south of the main ditch (Figs 29 & 30). In the east, traces of a likely river palaeochannel were recognised through a broad low resistance running roughly parallel to the Thames. Framed between this channel and the 'bridgehead' ditch, however, the south-eastern survey zone features a number of significant features. In the proximity of a hexagonal World War II pillbox (set near a fence and deep drain running eastwards from the main ditch), a low mound is evident around which can be traced regular lines of ditches providing an enclosure of approximately 20m x 50m. Potentially significant is the location of this feature immediately external to, and perhaps built abutting and secondary to the putative ditch of the 'bridgehead burh'. The dimensions of the enclosure and ditch conceivably offer a defensive role to the site and it is tempting – but clearly unproven without any surface finds and without any excavation – to link this to a small motte and thus to one of the noted siege castles erected by King Stephen during the Anarchy. Whilst it might not easily equate with what the *Gesta Stephani* describes as "a castle rising on a very high

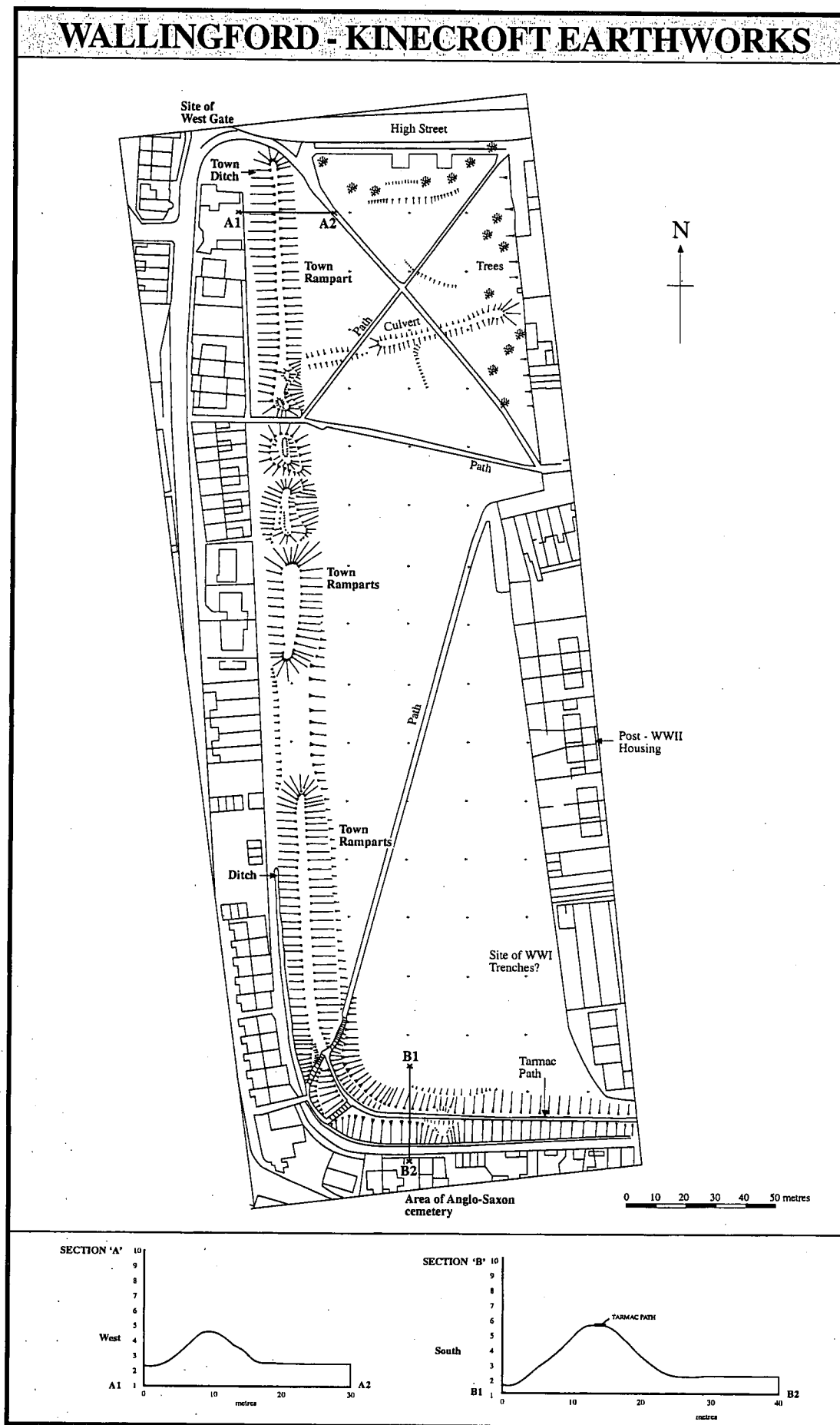


Fig 26.

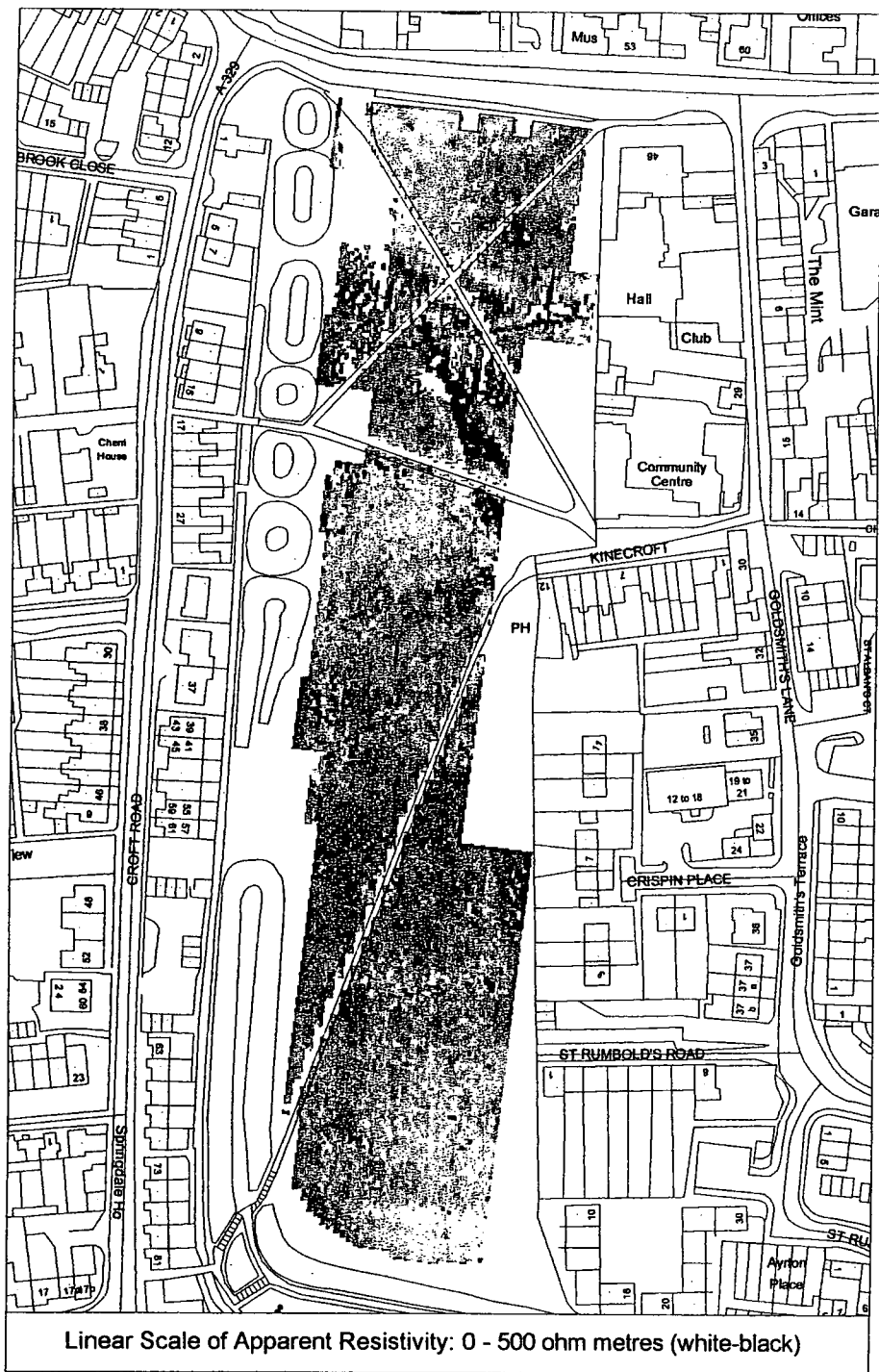
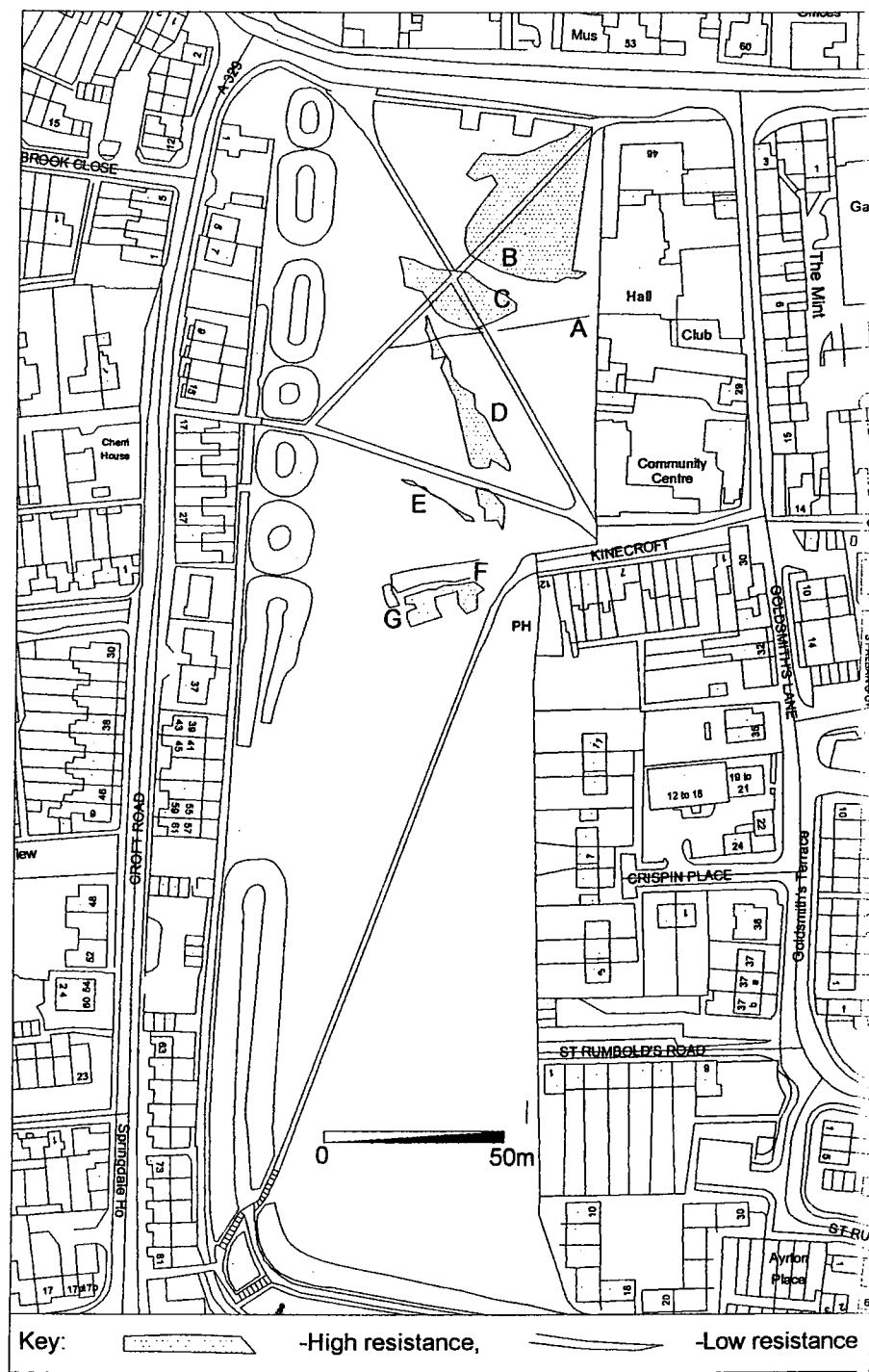


Fig 27. Kinecroft earth resistance survey results and interpretation.



Fig 28. Riverside Meadows, Wallingford – Crowmarsh, viewed from north-east. The southern half of the ‘bridgehead’ lies on the right of the image, the ditch marked by the rushes and low bushes. Note the WWII pillbox in the centre top of

mound in front of Wallingford with only the river in between” (ch 120 for AD 1153), one might note how earlier on, for AD 1139, the same source records how Stephen had “hastily put up two castles there” (ch 43), suggesting smaller siege units. Similar but grander is the description for 1152 which recounts how the king “hastily built two castles, a work of wondrous art and vast labour; also he seized by force of arms the bridge that ran up to the entrance of the town, and was the master-key not only of the town but of the castle on that side” (ch 117. Were these the same as those of 1139?). The especially poor survival rate of siege castles in general, and the tiny amount of excavation carried out on such sites (cf Creighton 2002: 55-63), highlights the potentially massive importance of this new field evidence. If we can, therefore, through future work, equate the site with a siege castle, it will provide a significant link to Wallingford’s early historical importance; we would still need, however, to seek the second siege castle (A location in the area of the caravan park further east has previously been postulated).

Next Steps – 2004-5

The 2003 season thus, overall, proved extremely fruitful yet with some gaps remaining. At the same time, our work and results have raised further questions regarding the layout and archaeology of medieval Wallingford. Are the relatively minimal results in the Kinecroft an indication that this part of the late medieval, Norman and Saxon town was always an open one, active for fairs, markets, animal grazing and corralling, or for cultivation, but not active in terms of living spaces? Arguably the Bullcroft to the north is comparable, although here we know of the presence of Holy Trinity Priory which required its own precinct and thus associated internal features (presumably fishponds, storage and productive structures); the Priory’s imposition

may not have been disruptive to the late Saxon town if the Bullcroft was already a largely open space. For the Kinecroft it is useful to note that its open confines accommodate still today annual fairs, the recently-instigated annual Wallingford ‘Bunkfest’, as well as the traditional November bonfire and firework display.

The Queen’s Arbour work suggests that the town defences did not extend to the river itself, but followed the line pursued by the castle defences, flanking the river, but away from the main floodplain. What is essential therefore is to assess the possible line of this eastern rampart to the south of the bridge and the open gardens of ‘Castle Priory’ and adjoining riverside properties, with their noticeable slope down to the river, offer scope to address this problem. The ‘bridgehead’ question remains to be further tackled, ideally through trenching across the ditch line. What would also be valuable is to sample the postulated ‘siege motte’ which appears to respect and face this ditch; if a 12th century date could be confirmed this would provide an exciting physical correlation with the events of the Anarchy.

In addition to the further investigation of these sites, objectives for the project in future years include a structural survey of the standing remains of medieval churches in the town, selected ‘test pitting’ and trial excavation within the enclosed areas, further geophysical survey in the Castle Meadows zone, and a programme of landscape archaeology in the urban environs. Through all these and through incorporation of data from the unpublished older excavations, a far fuller and more tangible image of medieval Wallingford will be revealed.

WALLINGFORD RIVERSIDE MEADOWS

Resistivity plot

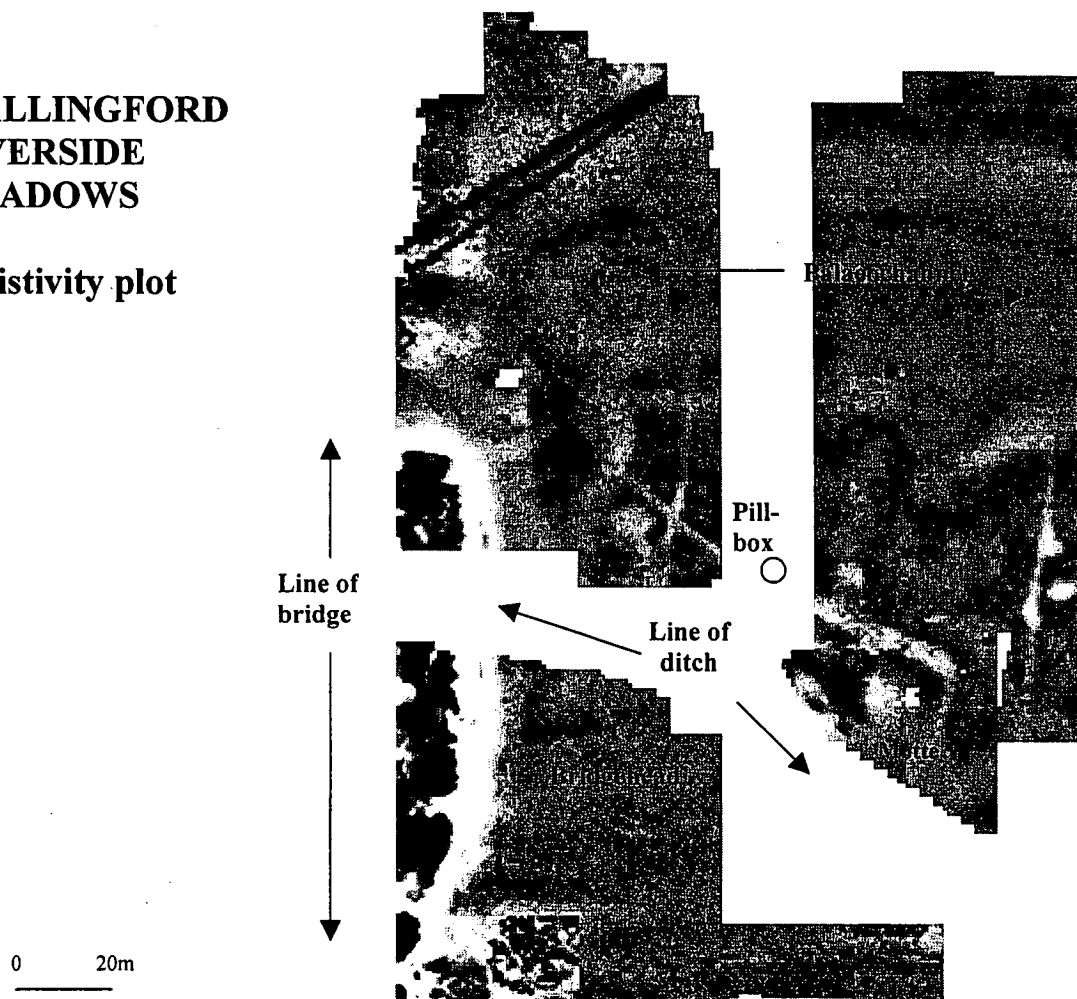


Fig 29. Resistivity plot for Riverside Meadows. The key ditched area lies in the lower zone of the right block; its upper zone appears to reveal an earlier channel of the Thames

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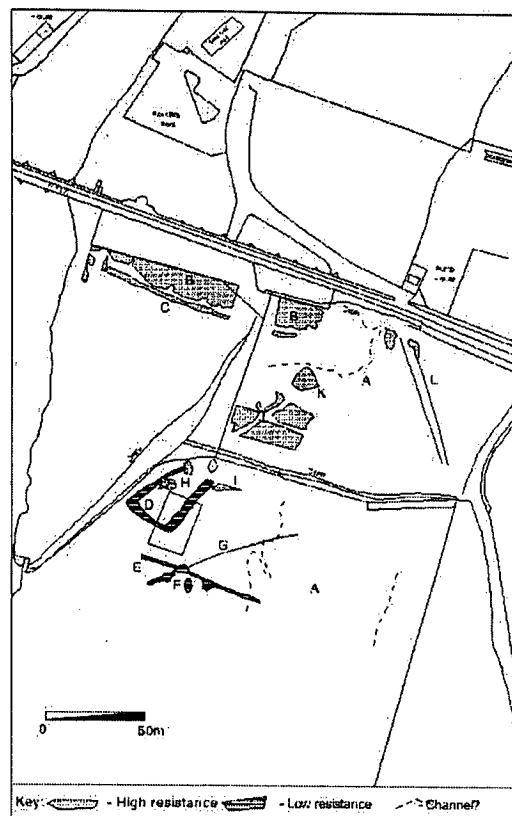
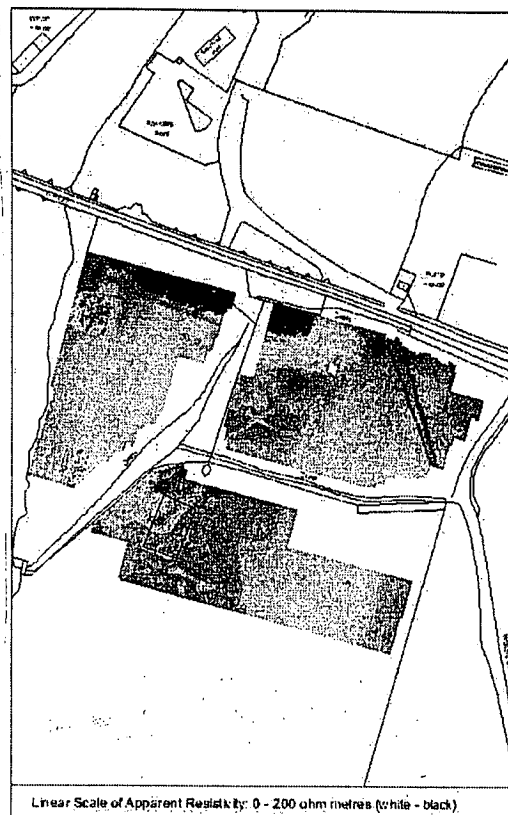


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