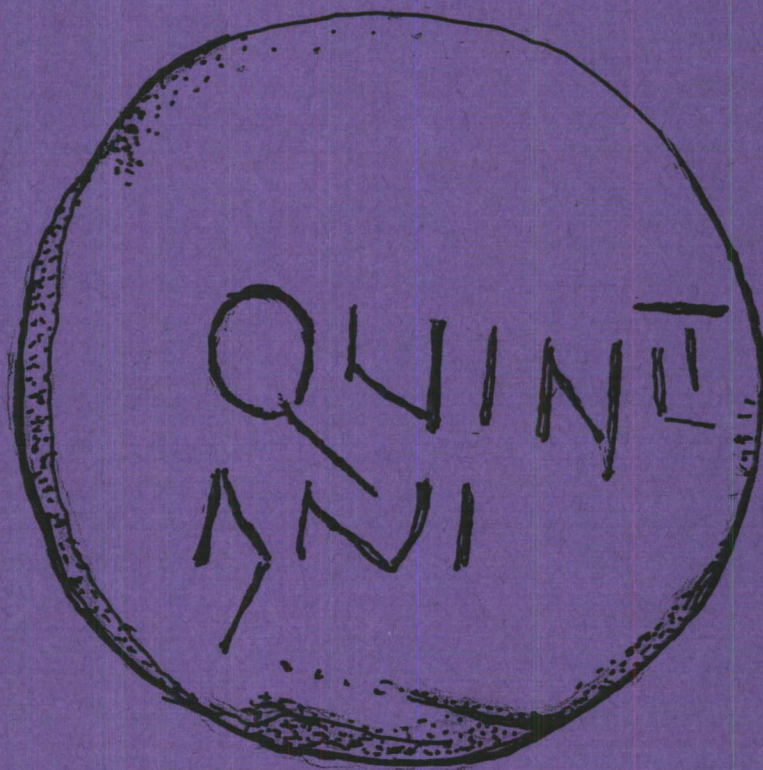


**SOUTH
MIDLANDS
ARCHAEOLOGY**

**33
2003**



**CBA
SOUTH MIDLANDS GROUP**

SOUTH MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY

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

NUMBER 33, 2003

CONTENTS

	Page
Editorial	ii
Bedfordshire	1
Buckinghamshire	21
Northamptonshire	37
Oxfordshire	57
Index	113
Notes for Contributors	125

It should be noted that the reports in this volume refer, in the main, to work carried out in 2002.

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to volume 33.

The cumulative index to volumes 1-33, is available on the website at
WWW.britarch.ac.uk/smaindex

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, in particular I know of one which has done work in it on a gas pipeline and a churchyard near where I live. I'm sure there are others. County archaeologists and peers must apply pressure to these defaulters.

Through this editorial could I 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* 34. Please send a note, however short, of any work carried out in the four counties.

Copy date for *SMA* 32 is **31st March 2004**; please refer to Notes for Contributors.

Barry Horne AIFA
Editor

BEDFORDSHIRE

ALBION ARCHAEOLOGY

Bedford, Castle Mound and Lime Kiln
(TL 0527 4968)
Jeremy Oetgen

Bedford's Castle Mound (a scheduled ancient monument, no. 20412) is perhaps the oldest visible element of the town's historic fabric. However, it is little known and poorly understood by the general public, being shrouded in trees and obscured by intrusive modern structures. The mound overlooks Bedford's prestigious riverside Embankment, but the top of the mound is currently unsafe and closed to the public. Bedford's museum and art gallery are both located within the curtilage of the monument, yet there is no on-site interpretation of the mound.

Bedford Borough Council is committed to improving the condition of the Castle Mound as part of the planned regeneration and revitalisation of the Castle Lane area and of the town centre as a whole. The Council recognised that a monument management strategy was required in order to ensure that the character and significance of the mound and its immediate environs were preserved into the future. Therefore, in 2002, Albion Archaeology was commissioned to prepare a scheme for the improvement and management of the Castle Mound, along with the nearby site of a Medieval lime kiln (also a scheduled ancient monument, no. 24259), which was originally within the castle's outer bailey.

The improvement scheme was underpinned by a full condition survey, an earthwork survey, and geophysical prospection on top of the mound. These studies were undertaken in collaboration with Cambridgeshire Archaeological Field Unit, Mouchel TSC, Archaeological Services WYAS, and other specialists who advised on masonry conservation and wildlife issues. A design scheme was produced by Albion Archaeology and JGP Associates. The proposals were formally approved by the Council's Executive Committee on 30th September 2002 and an application for Scheduled Monument Consent is now being submitted. It is hoped that the improvement works will begin during 2003.

In summary, the planned works comprise:

- removal of the present enclosed, formal gardens south of the mound, which will create a unified space suitable for out-door events and open up views of the mound to and from the Embankment;
- selective felling and active management of trees on the mound to retain its wooded character whilst ensuring the visibility and preservation of the earthwork;
- restoration of stone facings to the mound and repair of access paths and steps;
- creation of new features of interest, including decorative paving (inspired by Bedford's Medieval street plan),

green-oak structures and timber sculptures;
- re-routing of certain paths, to draw people into the site and link the Embankment with the Castle Lane area.

The implementation of the scheme has been written into a five-year management plan for the monument.

Bedford, Kempston, Grey's House (TL 0272 4761)
Gary Edmondson and Tracy Preece

An archaeological evaluation comprising trial excavation was undertaken on a small area of open ground adjacent to Grey's House. The immediate area contains evidence of human activity extending from the Mesolithic to the Post-Medieval period. Nearby is the site of Kempston Manor, which has revealed evidence of Saxo-Norman structures and boundaries. Previous investigations in the area have also exposed substantial dumps of modern material, which were used to raise the level of the ground.

A single trench was opened revealing between 0.4 and 0.55m of compact dumps of modern building debris immediately below a shallow topsoil and turf horizon. Directly below these dumps were undisturbed natural strata. This would indicate that as part of a construction programme, probably associated with the building of the school, the ground level was reduced to the undisturbed natural strata.

Bedford, Ray's Close (TL 0525 4926)
Matt Edgeworth

An archaeological evaluation was conducted in advance of proposed development within the residential area for elderly people off Ray's Close, Bedford. The study area is located close to the Medieval hospital of St John, and within the late Saxon burh of southern Bedford as defined by the King's Ditch.

Two trenches, about 20m in length, were sited within the footprints of the intended building plots. Although only 25m apart, the trenches produced very different evidence in terms of character and quality. Excavation of Trench 1 revealed a series of ditches and other features, mostly of Saxo-Norman and early Medieval date, cut into natural gravels. The depth at which the tops of archaeological features were encountered (0.2m-0.6m below modern ground surface) was surprisingly shallow. In Trench 2, on the other hand, a considerable build-up of Post-Medieval layers (1m-1.5m) had to be removed before archaeological levels were reached. The principal features were a metal surface laid down directly on top of natural clays, a silt-filled hollow and the edge of a large water-feature which may be a fishpond - all thought to be of late Medieval date.

The northern area evaluated by Trench 1 is thought to be of particular significance with regard to the study of the development of early Medieval Bedford. It was

Bedfordshire

subsequently investigated further in a full excavation by Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd.

Bedford, St Mary's Church (TL 051 495)

Cecily Marshall, Anna Slowikowski and Matt Edgeworth

A small book on the history of St Mary's Church, Bedford, was researched, written and produced by members of Albion Archaeology. Albion, formerly the Bedfordshire County Archaeology Service, has been based in the church since 1990. As the book shows, this may be the oldest headquarters of any archaeological unit - certainly older than many of the sites and structures that the excavation team get called out to investigate. The tower and the south transept date back to the 10th - 11th centuries, possibly to the visit of King Edward the Elder in AD 915. Entitled 'A Pattern of Stones', the book studies the clues to the origin and development of the church that can be discerned in the structure of the building itself. It also looks at the church in the context of the surrounding area of Bedford known as St Mary's. Written in an easy-to-read style and extensively illustrated, this book is for anyone who is curious about the history of Bedford and its churches.

Available from Albion Archaeology, St Mary's Church, St Mary's Street, Bedford, MK42 0AS. Cost £2.50 (incl. p&p). Please make cheques out to 'Bedfordshire County Council'

Biggleswade, Dunton Lane (TL 2060 4371)

Jeremy Oetgen and Mark Phillips

A programme of archaeological observation and recording was undertaken during groundworks for the construction of an extension to the rear of The Lodge, Dunton Lane, Biggleswade.

Natural geological deposits, comprising clays and gravels, were encountered at a depth of 600mm to 700mm below the ground surface. Above this was a series of deliberately deposited layers, some of which contained 19th century occupation debris. It is suggested that an area of low-lying ground was infilled prior to the construction of a building on the site.

An area of low lying ground at this point could have been the remains of a hollow way at the southern end of the main access to the former village of Stratton. Comparison of the current observations and earlier excavations on the deserted Medieval settlement show that the main route through the village continues at its southern end towards The Lodge. Such a hollow would have been formed by continued erosion of the track and it is possible that a hollow way, at the junction with Dunton Lane, could have been quite wide.

Harrold, St Peter's Church (SP 9537 5665)

Drew Shotliff and Julian Watters

Three test pits were excavated along the proposed route of a series of new drains immediately to the south of the church

tower. The test pits revealed that the ground in this part of the churchyard had been significantly disturbed during the late Medieval or Post-Medieval periods. To a depth of around 0.9m below the present ground surface, there was an extensive spread of mixed deposits, comprising soil, demolition rubble and domestic debris, including pottery, bone and glass. The majority of this material was Post-Medieval in date. However, two sherds of late Medieval reduced ware, dating from the 15th-16th century, were also present.

No trace of the underlying river gravel terrace was encountered in any of the three pits. It can only be assumed that this part of the present graveyard was subject to some form of quarrying. No structures or burials were located.

Henlow, Arlesey Meadows (TL 1892 3813)

Jeremy Oetgen and Julian Watters

An archaeological field evaluation was undertaken at Arlesey Meadows in advance of a planning application for mineral extraction associated with the construction of the new A507 Arlesey Bridge.

The site lies in the parish of Henlow, approximately 400m north-west of St. Peter's Church, Arlesey, and is situated on low-lying land next to the River Hiz (a tributary of the River Ivel).

Although no previous archaeological survey had been undertaken on the site, borehole surveys had identified deposits of peaty sediment underlying layers of alluvium. In the Ivel Valley the formation of peat is known to have begun around the later Roman period, and Arlesey Meadows, therefore, had potential for the preservation of remains of early Roman or prehistoric date beneath the peat.

In January 2002, twelve trenches were excavated by machine under the supervision of Albion Archaeology staff. Nine of the trenches contained no archaeological deposits. One contained a Post-Medieval drainage ditch. However, at the southern end of the site, a total of three small post-holes were found in two trenches. No artefactual dating evidence was recovered, but each of these post-holes was sealed by peaty alluvium and was, therefore, considered to pre-date the late Roman period. An appraisal of the potential of the sedimentary sequence was provided by English Heritage's Regional Advisor. As elsewhere, the sediments seemed to reflect changes in human activities on adjacent land within the river catchment. However, the lack of dating evidence meant that the archaeological significance of the deposits was uncertain.

Permission was granted for extraction on the northern part of the site, but the most archaeologically sensitive deposits in the southern part were preserved in situ.

Ivel Farm/ Ecks Land South (TL 182 467)
Reuben Thorpe

Archaeological fieldwork at Becks Land South, Bedfordshire first commenced in 1998 when a field evaluation was undertaken prior to the granting of mineral extraction rights. The evaluation established that archaeological deposits survived on site and highlighted the need for further archaeological work prior to the commencement of extraction. Albion Archaeology, the successor of BCAS undertook the excavation of the most northerly of the evaluated areas between 23rd September and 2nd October 2002.

Excavation in 2001 yielded finds and structures dating from the Iron Age to the Post-Medieval period and included a Gallo-Belgic cremation accompanied by two complete pedestal urns. There were also two isolated groups of buildings dating to the Anglo Saxon period.

Features dating to the Iron Age included a number of pits, postholes and a single cremation burial, all of which were concentrated in the north-east corner of the investigation area. The pits were arranged in two broad east-west alignments the more northern some 35m long, the more southern 40m long. Two pits, infilled with refuse lay to the south of the southern pit alignment and contained an abundance of animal bone.

Fourteen metres to the east of the refuse-filled pit lay a possible cremation burial, containing two complete Belgic urns with pedestal bases. The urns themselves had been sealed with the cremation deposit and the whole pit then covered with a wooden lid before final backfilling.

At least four and possibly five sunken featured buildings (SFB) were identified and excavated. These fell into two groups: one group of two buildings in close proximity to the east and two or three to the west.

The buildings of the more easterly group were characterised by pairs of axial posts, one to the east and one to the west, which would have supported the superstructure and imply an east-west aligned roof ridge. The more northerly of these SFBs was 3m long and 2.21m wide. Its construction pit, which was 0.3m deep, contained trample deposits characteristic of construction. To the south, [290] was 2.85m long and 1.71m wide and also contained deposits denoting construction trample.

The second group of SFBs lay to the west, on the edge of the excavation area and consisted of a single structure to the north and one or possibly two 40m to the south. The northernmost SFB was aligned on a north-south axis, was 2.62m long and 2.09m wide. Only one posthole remained of its superstructure and this was on the western side of the construction pit. To the south the largest of the Saxon buildings comprised an east-west aligned construction pit, 3.69m long and 2.61m wide with structural postholes at its axial ends. Immediately to the west of this [265] formed a

possible east-west aligned SFB, 3.2m long and 2.68m wide. No structural postholes were encountered.

Two Post-Medieval landscape features, or boundaries, were excavated to the north of the site. They comprised a ditch and fence alignment, the former defining the edge of a gravel terrace as it sloped towards a stream channel, the latter forming a double post field boundary.

To the west of [414] a fence alignment [272], of double posts of varying size represented by square postholes, was excavated. The fence alignment respected the terrace ditch supporting the assertion that the ditch, in effect, marked the division between cultivable fields and the edge of more marshy ground.

Two machine sections were excavated through a large palaeochannel to the east of the site and confirmed the watching brief observations made to the south of the site in 2001. A sequence of deposition was recognised and photographically recorded which, broadly speaking, consisted of gleyed blue, anaerobic clays, sealed by deposits of organic matter. Archaeological features did not overlie these organic deposits, nor were these organic deposits seen to overlie any archaeological deposits or structures.

Luton Hoo Park (TL 1030 1900)

Gary Edmondson and Julian Watters

Two phases of watching brief were undertaken to monitor the excavation of trenches for water mains. In total approximately 4km of pipe trench were observed, generally being 0.4m wide and between 0.5 and 1.2m deep. The trenches crossed a variety of terrain in the northern and western areas of the park. Although previous investigations in this area have been very limited, they indicate that the site has considerable archaeological potential, including possible Palaeolithic deposits.

The park is located in the northern part of the estate, on the west bank of the River Lea, immediately to the south of the town of Luton. Luton Hoo Park was originally enclosed as a deer park in 1622. The focus of the estate is 'The Mansion', a Grade 1 listed building dating from the 18th century. This building replaced the 17th century 'Napier House'. The landscape setting for 'The Mansion' was originally the work of 'Capability' Brown, though this has undergone later modifications.

Several features were identified in the area to the west of 'The Mansion', indicating activity prior to the creation of the deer park in 1622. A series of linear features are interpreted as Medieval cultivation furrows, which had been masked by later landscaping. Two features were interpreted as ditches on the basis of their profiles. One of these was truncated by a furrow, indicating an earlier phase of land division. At the bottom of the western slope close to London Road, a yellowish to white deposit interpreted as a colluvium or hillwash deposit was identified. This was

Bedfordshire

probably unstable material eroded from the upper slope of the exposed chalk. Although no artefactual dating evidence was recovered, it was earlier than the cultivation furrows, which truncated it.

The second phase of watching brief monitored a pipe trench in the northern area of the park. This route mainly followed the higher ground towards the top of the ridge, though it crossed the upper reaches of two possible dry valleys.

'Capability' Brown undertook a 10-year programme of work to provide a setting for 'The Mansion'. The watching brief identified several features possibly associated with the landscaping works. At the northern edge of the park, the area beneath Bull Wood had been raised by extensive dumps of material, prior to the planting of the trees. This area appears to have been defined by a substantial ditch, which may have also served to protect the young trees, whilst they became established. Other landscaping features consisted of a discrete area of deliberately raised ground within the park. Several tree throws, identifying the locations of uprooted trees, were identified in the vicinity of trackways. These may have been elements of former tree-lined avenues as depicted on early maps of the park area.

Marston Vale Cycle Path

(TL 0720 4945 to TL 1178 5034 and SP 9960 4115)

Gary Edmondson

Two archeologically sensitive segments of the route of the cycle path were the subject of archaeological watching briefs.

The first segment was on the Bedford to Sandy cycle path, between Priory Country Park and Willington Lock. The route of the cycle path is through an archaeologically sensitive landscape within the middle reaches of the valley of the River Great Ouse, east of Bedford. Construction work consisted of resurfacing and widening of the cycle path together with improvement in the associated drainage. For the major part of the route, the path followed the course of the disused Bedford to Sandy railway line. On average, in this area 0.2m of the existing path was removed to expose either the compacted substrata for the path or underlying deposits associated with the former railway. No archaeological features were identified on the line of the cycle path.

The focus of the second watching brief was the archaeologically sensitive area in the vicinity of the church of St Mary the Virgin, Marston Moretaine. Known sites in the vicinity comprise an irregular moat and the Medieval village. The foundation trench for the path was approximately 3.2m wide, up to 0.2m deep and 300m long, extending from Station Road in the east, along the north bank of the Elstow Brook, to skirt the western side of the graveyard of the church of St Mary the Virgin. Adjacent to the brook, raised areas of ground appear to be due to the dumping of redeposited material associated with scouring

of the brook. The area to the west of the graveyard is significantly higher than the area to the east. The watching brief confirmed this was due to extensive dumps of modern material immediately below the turf. No archaeological features or artefacts were observed during the course of the watching brief.

Renhold, All Saints' Church (TL 0888 5285)

Mark Phillips

A watching brief was maintained during building work to improve drainage and alleviate damp inside the church. The work included the excavation of trenches for the installation of French drains. These were up to 850mm deep and extended along the north side and across the east end of the church.

Observations along the north side of the church suggested that the wall of the north aisle was the product of more than one phase of construction and that the buttresses were a later addition. The style of the windows suggests that the north aisle probably assumed its present form in the 14th century.

At the west end of the north aisle, foundations of a double buttress beneath the present diagonal corner buttress demonstrate that the present wall is a replacement for an earlier one on the same line. The rebuilding of the west end of the aisle appears to have been carried out after the construction of the tower. Similarities in the construction of the two suggest that this work formed part of the same general phase of construction. Perpendicular windows in both the tower and the west end of the aisle suggest a 15th century date for this work.

At the east end of the church, foundations indicate the presence of a structure on the north side of the chancel predating the vestry that was built in the 18th century as the village schoolroom. It is suggested that the current structure may have been a rebuild of an existing structure that was extended northwards to create a larger space.

Work inside the church to relay the wooden floors exposed a stone arch situated in the north aisle, beneath the first window to the east of the north doorway. This is interpreted as the remains of a former burial vault that has been partly dismantled and in-filled, possibly during the installation of new seating as part of the 1862-63 building programme.

Salford, Whitsundoles Farm (SP 9197 4042)

Mike Luke, Mark Phillips and Tracy Preece

The watching brief undertaken in advance of gravel extraction continued in 2002, adjacent to the areas previously reported (Luke and Phillips, 2002). A large water pit, dated to the early-middle Iron Age on the basis of a small quantity of pottery, was investigated. Its lower fills contained a number of pieces of timber, which included the remains of a split plank and several posts or stakes. It is

uncertain if the water pit was associated with the undated small pits in the vicinity.

The continuation of the late Iron Age/Roman enclosure system that was observed during the 2001 investigation (Luke and Phillips, 2002) was located. Integral parts of this were two parallel ditches presumably defining a track or droveway. Additional ditches, defining enclosures or fields, were orientated perpendicular to the trackway and respected it. The entire field system, including that investigated by (Petchey, 1978), is now known to extend over 50ha.

References

Luke M and Phillips M 2002; 'Salford, Whisundoles Farm' *SMA* 32, p3-4
 Petchey M R 1978; 'A Roman field system at Broughton, Buckinghamshire' in *Records of Bucks XX*, 637-645

Shefford, Land to the rear of 77-81 Ampthill Road (TL 374 388)

Mike Luke, Mark Phillips and Tracy Preece

Following evaluation by trial trenching (Luke and Phillips, 2002) an open area excavation was undertaken within an area of known Roman settlement (Steadman, Phillips and Edwards, 2001; Luke, 2000). This revealed an enclosure defined by a substantial ditch (2m wide and 0.55m deep) which may have originated before the Conquest. Hearths, pits and postholes appear to be contemporary with the earliest phase of activity.

Sometime during the early 2nd century AD an aisled building and adjacent cobbled surface were constructed within the enclosure. There was very little evidence for activity away from the building.

The aisled building continued beyond the limit of excavation but was 11m wide and at least 18m long (Fig 1). The foundations of the outer walls comprised unmortared flint pebbles and sandstone fragments, with evidence of coursing in places. Two parallel rows of postpits, which would have held the arcade posts, provided for a nave 5m wide. The pits were not consistent in shape or diameter, although they were usually 0.8m deep. Postpipes (not shown on the plan) were 0.3m to 0.75m in diameter. It appears that some of the posts may have been subject to minor alterations. A new series of postpits, dug in between the originals, presumably indicates a major rebuild. It is at this time that an internal corridor may have been constructed. No floor surfaces were present but several discrete spreads of building material were identified. Derived from these and other deposits were nails, roof and flue tile, fragments of tufa, brick, mortar, wall plaster (some painted), fragments of opus signinum and four possible tesserae. It seems likely that these are associated with the aisled building and that they suggest part of it was of some sophistication. It is, therefore, possible that the hypocaust, found in 1940 underlying the adjacent school playing field, was actually part of the aisled building.

Other finds from the site included copper alloy brooches, a finger ring, coins, fragments of vessel and window glass, and a pottery assemblage weighing 26kg.

A number of Post-Medieval intrusions truncated the aisled building and may relate to excavations undertaken during the 1830s by Inskip (Inskip, 1850) and more likely in 1940 by Gray (VCH). Their discoveries have been variously reported and include a temple, hypocaust and cemetery.

References

Inskip T 1850; 'On ancient relics collected in Bedfordshire' Associated architectural societies reports and papers 1, pt. 1, 165-172
 Luke M 2000; 'Shefford, Ampthill Road', *SMA* 30, p3
 Phillips M and Luke M 2002; 'Shefford, Land to the rear of 77-81 Ampthill Road', *SMA* 32, p4
 Steadman s, Phillips M and Edwards R 2002; 'Shefford, Shefford Lower School', *SMA* 31 (2001) 2-3;

Willington Quarry North (TL 090 502)

Jeremy Oetgen and James Pixley

Background

Albion Archaeology is undertaking an extensive programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during permitted extraction of sand and gravel by Lafarge Aggregates Ltd. The permitted extraction area extends into three parishes (Cardington, Cople and Goldington) and lies on the relatively flat land of the river gravel terraces on the south bank of the River Great Ouse immediately to the east of Bedford.

Albion is responsible for recording the 'Holocene' archaeology, but is also collaborating with Phoenix Consulting Ltd and their appointed specialists, who are providing Palaeolithic and palaeoenvironmental programmes. Co-operation between the quarry company and archaeologists has enabled successful integration of their respective operations.

A number of scheduled ancient monuments lie within the quarry, and these are all elements of an extensive prehistoric ritual landscape. The monuments do not survive as visible earthworks, presumably having been levelled as a result of centuries of slope-wash, alluviation, flooding and cultivation. The scheduled monuments are to remain in situ, but quarrying is permitted in the adjacent areas, subject to an archaeological mitigation condition.

Following on from excavations at Octagon Farm North, undertaken in 2000 (Site 1) (see *SMA* 31, 4-5), a watching brief has been maintained during soil stripping. Three areas of significant archaeological features have been revealed during the watching brief, and these were investigated and recorded during 2002. A set-piece excavation was also undertaken as a condition of a separate planning permission granted for construction of a new access road. This fieldwork has added significantly to our knowledge and understanding of an extensive archaeological landscape.

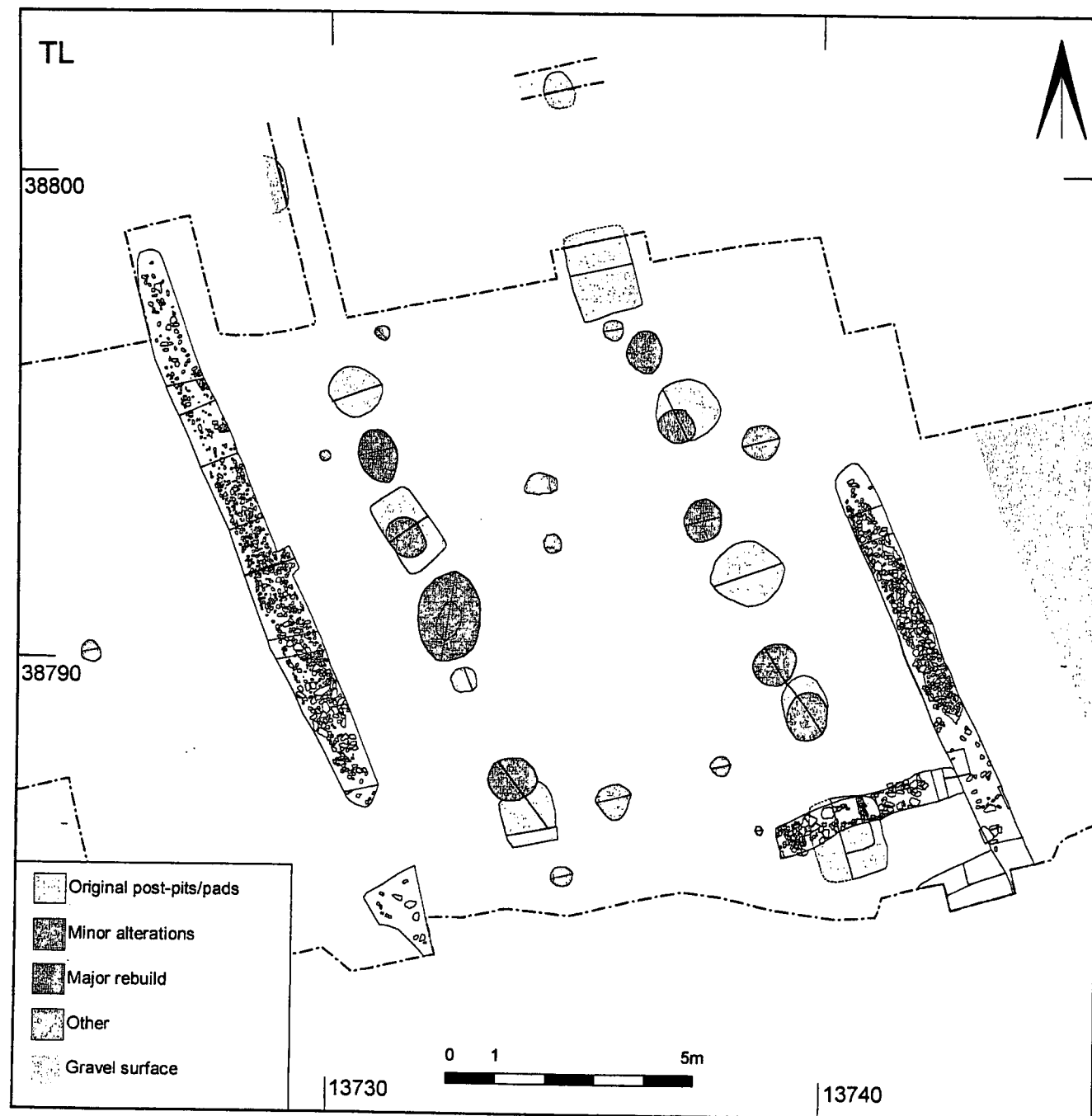


Fig 1. Land to the rear of 77-81 Amphill Road, Shefford: Remains of 2nd century AD aisled building.

The results are providing a detailed map of past human activity that will have tremendous potential for study of complex patterns of settlement, land use and ritual activity from the Neolithic to Medieval period.

Extraction Phase 2 (Goldington C.P.)

In 2001, the edges of a complex of rectangular enclosures were encountered on the north-western edge of the area. Quarrying was halted and a geophysical survey was undertaken by Archaeological Services WYAS to help determine the extent of the enclosures. The results confirmed suspicions that these features represented the eastern limits of a dense complex of enclosures, thought to date from the later Iron Age/Roman period, that had been identified by geophysical survey undertaken in 1994 on land further to the west (the Norse Road Link evaluation). It was

agreed that, for the time being, the undisturbed archaeological deposits were to be left in situ, with measures taken to ensure their support and preservation, while quarrying continued in less archaeologically sensitive areas to the south and east. The exposed features were excavated and recorded during February 2002 and were found to comprise undiagnostic occupation of the later Iron Age/Roman period.

Extraction Phase 3: north (Cardington C.P.)

Approximately 100m to the south, right on the parish boundary, the eastern end of a small (c 15m wide) rectangular ditched enclosure was excavated and recorded. The enclosure extended westwards beyond the limit of excavation. Part of a second enclosure was also encountered, cutting through the first. The enclosure ditches

produced Roman pottery, and this site is provisionally interpreted as an outlier to the complex to the north-west.

To the south of the enclosures a very plausible group of post-hole-like features were observed, 'cut' into a sand lens. These were found on excavation to have been periglacial in origin and similar to features that had been noted during excavation of Site 1.

Extraction Phase 3: south (Cardington C.P)

Perhaps the most exciting discoveries were made in June 2002, during subsoil stripping in the area west of the scheduled ring ditch complex (SAM 20745). Two unenclosed, multiple crouched burials were located c 100m east of the scheduled monument. The first burial was partially visible upon removal of upper subsoil and contained one adult and two juveniles. An undiagnostic flint flake was found with the adult. Several metres away, the second burial was only visible upon removal of the interface gravel and contained one adult and one juvenile. This burial contained a beaker. A pit nearby may be related to these burials. This pit did not contain any human remains and showed evidence of gradual infilling (as if left open to the elements for some time). However, the pit may have been dug as part of the funerary ritual or for a prospective inhumation that did not actually take place.

Two previously unidentified round barrows were encountered on the western limit of the quarry, one immediately east of a scheduled ring-ditch/enclosure group (SAM 20702). In addition to the nearby unenclosed burials, the evidence suggested that this was part of a more extensive barrow cemetery. It is estimated that approximately one third to one half of the circumference of each barrow was uncovered, revealing a significant sample of the internal area, although no burials were recovered. The primary fills of the barrow ditches were similar in composition to the interface gravel and further evidence visible in section suggested that they may have been derived from barrow mound material.

Two narrow, linear gullies were located along the eastern edge of the stripped area and were orientated approximately north-west to south-east. They respected the presence of a larger, perpendicular ditch, with all three ditches terminating to form a T-shape that was suggestive of a rectilinear field system. Unfortunately, no dating evidence was recovered, with only a single flint flake found in the backfill of one of the ditches. The alignment is, however, markedly different from that of the modern field system.

Furrows, running approximately north-south and terminating in a headland to the north, confirmed crop mark evidence for Medieval cultivation in the area. To the south, the furrows respected the presence of a ditch that had been later utilised as a trench for a ceramic land drain. To the north, there was no archaeological evidence to suggest the presence of a field boundary along the headland.

Quarry Access Road in Castle Mill Airfield (Cople C.P)

On the extreme north-eastern corner of the quarry, Lafarge Aggregates Ltd obtained planning permission to create a new access road under the A421 Bedford Bypass, which bisects the quarry. The route of the access road cut across a known area of crop marks that represented the northern continuation of the Iron Age/Roman farmstead site (Site 1). Geophysical survey and trial trenching confirmed this, and an excavation was subsequently undertaken to record features on the line of the road.

Further remains of the late Iron Age/early Roman settlement were found, with evidence of the continuation of substantial boundary ditches observed in Site 1. The ditches respected the edge of the gravel terrace overlooking a broad area of palaeochannel deposits on the River Great Ouse floodplain to the north and north-east. A substantial layer of colluvium had formed across the site as a result of movement of material from the gravel terrace, probably a consequence of ploughing.

High ground water ensured excellent preservation of organic material. Wooden stakes and associated wicker linings were observed in two ditches, representing two phases of revetment construction, perhaps as a method of flood control.

Ditches cutting upper palaeochannel deposits were filled with alluvium, suggesting that rising water levels had contributed to the disuse of peripheral ditch systems.

A rough, stoned-lined well was excavated, which contained substantial amounts of Iron Age and Roman pottery. A fragment of human skull recovered from one of its fills indicated evidence of defleshing marks and probably represents residual material from the surrounding prehistoric ritual landscape.

Palaeoenvironmental specialist, James Rackham, undertook a test-pitting programme to investigate the palaeochannel deposits adjacent to the site. Sealed by alluvial clays, deep organic deposits were found in a series of ancient river channels. A wooden stake located in one test-pit was radiocarbon dated and found to be Bronze Age in origin.

Wrest Park (TL 093 351)

Drew Shotliff and James Pixley

A brief programme of archaeological survey and recording was undertaken within the gardens of Wrest Park. Its purpose was to gather information on five elements of the gardens to assist English Heritage in future management decisions and mitigation measures.

The work consisted of:

- recording damage to the Capability Brown column, which had been knocked over by a falling tree;
- recording the surviving foundations on the site of the

Bedfordshire

column's original location;

- plotting the former location of the Jemima Duchess of Kent statue in relation to its present location. (It had been moved approximately 11m to the north-north-west);

- surveying a possible earthwork, representing the remains of Diana's Temple;

- surveying tree holes along the road between the entrance lodges and Silsoe High Street to try to establish a possible correlation with trees shown on the 1st edition 25-inch Ordnance Survey map.

Wrestlingworth Lower School (TL 2586 4733)

Drew Shotliff and Julian Watters

A watching brief was maintained during construction of a classroom extension at Wrestlingworth Lower School, which lies within the historic core of the village next to St Peter's church. The groundworks revealed modern services, the brick footings of a relatively modern structure, and archaeological features. The latter included a number of well defined post holes, one of which produced a sherd of St Neots-type ware.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES & CONSULTANCY LTD

Bedford, Land off Rays Close (TL 0523 4926)

Nigel Wilson

An excavation was undertaken at the west end of Rays Close, Bedford in October 2002, in advance of housing development. Edward the Elder founded the southern burgh of Bedford in 915AD and the site was situated in the centre of the burgh, to the east of St Johns Street. The presence of archaeological features was identified during an evaluation of the site by Albion Archaeology and the excavation revealed a sequence of occupation during the 10th to 12th centuries.

Initial results indicate that the site was occupied during the Saxo-Norman to early Medieval periods. The earliest dateable feature comprised a single pit (66) which contained an assemblage of St Neots and Medieval shelly ware pottery.

The site was subsequently divided by a grid of ditches, probably forming enclosures (Fig 2). At least two phases of ditches have been recognised and have been provisionally dated to the early Medieval period. Two short lengths of clunch wall footings were identified, which are interpreted as the bases of the walls of timber framed buildings within the enclosures. A group of pits was also present. Settlement probably continued to the west of the site, towards the frontage of St Johns Street, but this area had been disturbed by modern activity. It is anticipated that further analysis of

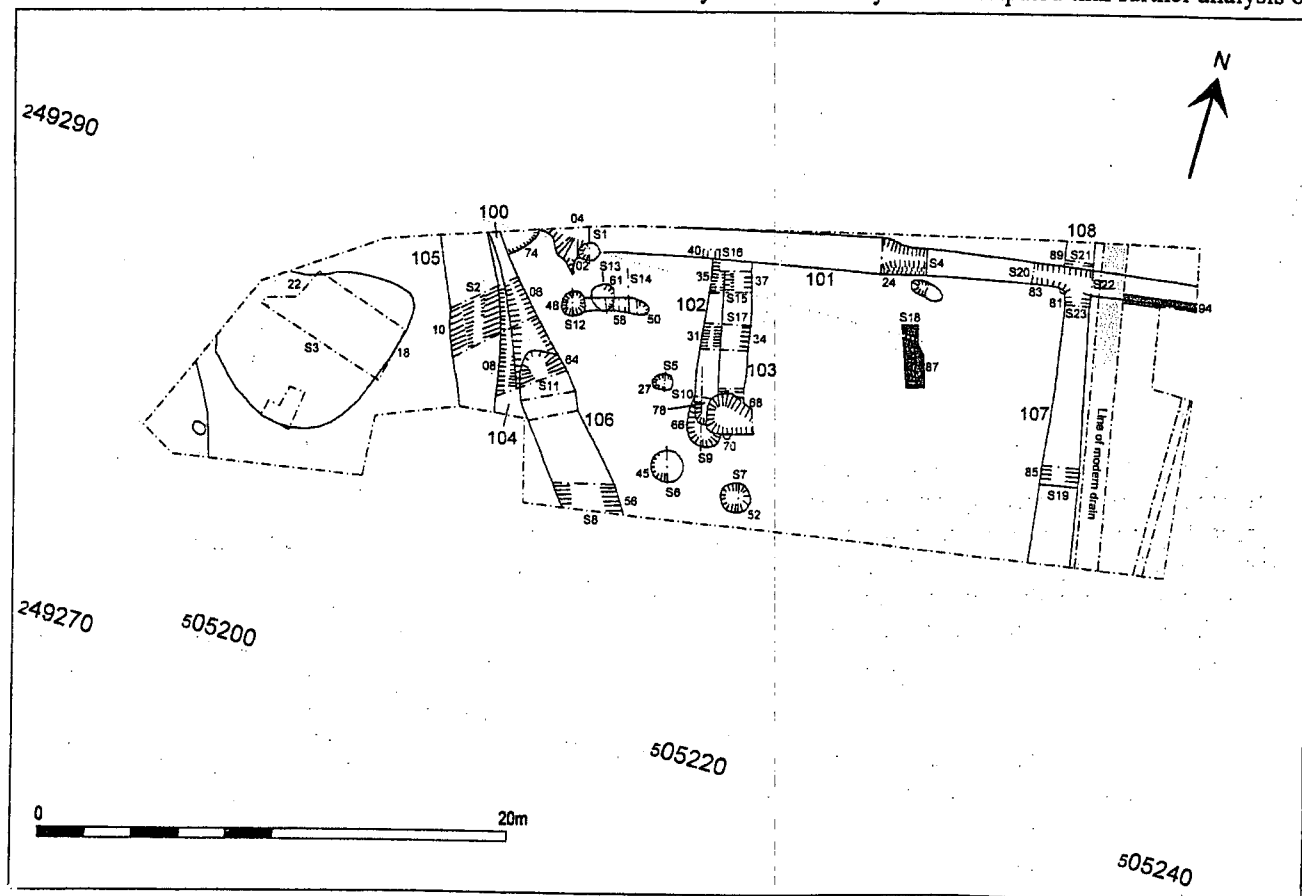


Fig 2. Land off Rays Close, Bedford.

the results will lead to a publication in *Bedfordshire Archaeology*.

Dunstable, Land Adjacent to Montpelier House (TL 0215 2171)

Jonathan Hunn

During September 2002 an evaluation was carried out on land adjacent to Montpelier House, High Street South. The site was situated on the southern edge of the scheduled area of Dunstable Priory and on the east side of the Roman settlement of *Durocbrivis*. Three trenches were excavated, which revealed that the area had been disturbed, notably by post-Medieval quarry pits. No significant archaeological remains or artefacts were found.

Kensworth, Bury Farm (TL 0317 1902)

Joe Abrams

During September 2002 a watching brief was undertaken during the groundworks phase of a construction programme to convert a range of disused farm buildings for residential use. A previous programme of test pitting revealed that the buildings had a complex history dating from the 17th century (SMA 32, 5) but no significant archaeological features were observed during the watching brief.

Meppershall, Land off the High Street (TL 138 364)

Nigel Wilson

Between December 2001 and February 2002 an excavation was carried out on a site at Meppershall, Bedfordshire in advance of a housing development (Fig 3). An evaluation in 2001 had identified the presence of Roman features (SMA 32, 5).

An area of c 6000m² was excavated and ten phases of activity were identified dating from the early Roman to Saxon periods. The evidence comprised parts of a series of enclosures, represented by boundary/drainage ditches, probably part of a farmstead, centred around a natural spring and a number of pits. The centre of the farmstead was probably situated on slightly higher ground to the east of the site. The enclosures were modified and redefined during the 2nd and 3rd centuries before the ditches silted up, probably during the 4th century. A Saxon pit was also identified.

The pottery assemblage comprised local wares, predominantly from Hadham and Harrold. A number of unfinished bone plaques, worked from horse rib have been tentatively identified in the bone assemblage and hammerscale, identified in the environmental samples, indicates that ironworking may have been taking place.

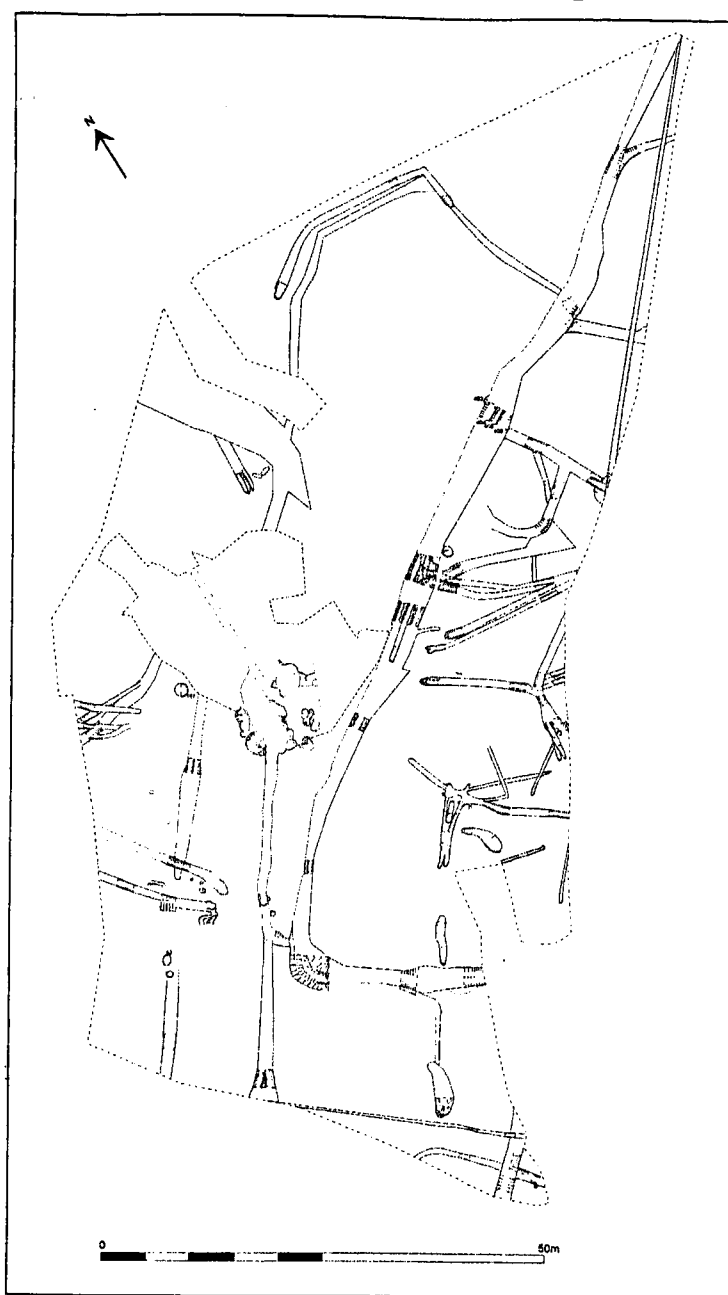


Fig 3. Plan of excavation of land off High Street, Meppershall.

It is anticipated that further analysis of the results will lead to a publication in *Bedfordshire Archaeology*.

Souldrop, Church Farm (SP 9845 6153)

Joe Abrams

During May 2002 a watching brief was undertaken during the groundworks for a detached dwelling in an area of Medieval settlement adjacent to Church Farm, Souldrop. One Post-Medieval land drain was located during the levelling of the house plot, but no other archaeological features were observed.

Bedfordshire

HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

24 Friary Field, Dunstable, Beds (TL 0183 2157)

Rhodri Gardner and Jon Murray (evaluation); Nick Crank (Excavation and watching brief); Rhodri Gardner with Ian Baxter, Nina Crummy, Andrew Fawcett, Berni Sudds, Tony Waldron, Donna Cameron and Amy Goldsmith (publication)

A number of archaeological interventions were commissioned by Moody Homes Ltd and undertaken between August 2001 and January 2002. The site lay in the southwestern part of the historic core of Dunstable. A series of excavations were carried out here between 1967 and 1981 (Matthews, 1981). These partially revealed a 3rd to 5th century Roman inhumation cemetery, with 55 inhumations within a ditched enclosure. These excavations also revealed parts of the boundary ditches of the cemetery, in which a further 50 human burials, four horses and a dog were recorded. They also produced evidence for metalworking and pottery production in this quarter of *Durocobrivis*. The fate of the town at the end of the Roman period is poorly understood, though abandonment seems likely as there is no direct evidence of settlement continuity into the Early Saxon period.

The present excavations revealed stratified Roman and Medieval deposits. The earliest archaeological evidence comprised 2nd century pits, and some of this ephemeral activity may have had late 1st century origins. Fifteen inhumation graves belonging to the previously known late Roman cemetery were recorded and three were dated to the later 4th century AD. Further evidence of the cemetery boundary ditch was recorded. Boundary features and eight of the previously-known cross-shaped pits associated with the Dominican Friary were recorded. The most likely interpretation of the pits is that they comprise part of formal gardens established in the late Medieval period. Herts Arch Trust reports 874, 931.

Reference

Matthews C L 1981; 'The Roman Cemetery at Dunstable', *BAJ* 15

Drill Hall Industrial Estate, Shortmead Street, Biggleswade (TL 1871 4506)

Dave Britchfield, Nick Crank

The archaeological evaluation was commissioned by Croudace Limited in advance of redevelopment of the site, which is adjacent to one of the major streets of Medieval and later Biggleswade and was likely to contain deposits relating to activity associated with both the street frontage and the banks of the River Ivel. However, no archaeological features or finds were encountered. Between 0.7-1.9m of recent overburden sealed the natural drift geology. All four trenches revealed evidence of large-scale ground disturbance associated with modern construction processes. The depth of modern disturbance suggests that any

archaeological features may have been truncated by recent development. Site Code: HAT 663; Herts Arch Trust report 1212.

Heath and Reach, 14 Leighton Road (SP 9250 2791) Dr Dan Hounsell

Although the site lay in an area thought to be the Medieval core of the village of Heath, the archaeological evaluation revealed no archaeological features or finds. The site was overlain with a variably thick layer of topsoil (typically 0.31m thick), which was generally disturbed as a result of the demolition of buildings that previously occupied the site. A mature subsoil was present, though heavily disturbed in places. The natural drift comprised mixed clay and sand deposits of Greensand Ridge. Site Code: HAT 682; Herts Arch Trust report 1247.

Kempston, Land at Mill Lane, Kempston Mill (TL 0234 4758)

Wesley Keir and Sarah Ralph (Evaluation) Dr Dan Hounsell and Leonora O'Brien (Excavation) Leonora O'Brien with Jane Cowgill, Andrew Peachey, Nina Crummy and Donna Cameron (Publication)

An archaeological excavation for Kempston Investments Ltd was carried out on land on the south bank of the Great Ouse at Kempston Mill. The excavations followed a trial trench evaluation that had revealed a late Iron Age ditch in addition to sparse early mediaeval ditch features, possibly associated with the Medieval mills on the site.

The excavation revealed evidence for Saxo-Norman and Medieval agricultural land use dating to the 9th to late 13th centuries. A number of parallel linear ditches were probably part of a system of field boundaries and drainage ditches. Several pits were recorded, including one that appeared to be a pottery dump or rubbish pit, as it contained over 13kg of ceramics dated to the mid 9th to 12th century. The limestone foundations of a small Medieval or post-Medieval structure were also found. Documentary research indicates that ditches were probably not linked to the water management system that powered the Medieval mill, but were probably used to drain a water meadow or allotment that would have been maintained by the miller. Herts Arch Trust reports 1014, 1220, 1259

Luton, Croda Site, New Bedford Road (TL 0864 2276) Dr Dan Hounsell, Jon Murray and Leonora O'Brien

Elements of prehistoric occupation of the area have been found on the low hills away from the River Lea, and evidence for Roman settlement and burial has been found east of the river, during the construction of housing estates during the early 20th century. Significant Saxon remains have been found west of the site, at Biscot. Extensive remedial works had taken place on this brownfield site

resulting in truncation of the former ground surface. The archaeological evaluation revealed evidence of this extensive truncation. However, a mature valley subsoil did survive across parts of the site, suggesting that features pre-dating this may have been expected to survive on the site, should they have originally been present. However, no archaeological features or finds were identified. Sparse, superficial and shallow alluvial deposits associated with the River Lea survived in part of the extreme eastern part of the site only. A periglacial clay deposit was recorded in the south eastern part of the site, associated with chalk bedrock and sealed by sands and gravels of the floodplain/edge of the terrace. Site code: HAT 613; Herts Arch Trust report 1090

Luton, Former Vauxhall Motors Site, Kimpton Road
(TL 1060 2100)
Melissa Wotherspoon

This desk-based assessment was of the site formerly part of the Vauxhall Motors car manufacturing plant, which moved to the area in 1905. The two major buildings on the site were relatively recent, and had been constructed in the footprint of previous buildings after the 1960s. There is no known archaeology in the area, but any remains are likely to have been truncated during the construction of the plant and associated landscaping and services. Herts Arch Trust report 1237

MANSHEAD ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Dunstable, Grove House Gardens (TL017222)
Dave Warren

Introduction

The Society undertook an excavation in Grove House Gardens as part of the 2002 Local History Week celebrations. Just under 60cm of soil was removed by machine to leave just a few centimetres of soil above the natural chalk. The excavation was then finished by hand over two weekends. Its precise location was picked to cut the line of a ditch leaving the Iron Age/Romano-British site discovered by the Northampton Unit on the nearby ASDA site when they dug there (Fig 4).

Summary

The excavation revealed eight postholes and a couple of smaller 'stake' holes in a curving line, which suggests a segment of a roundhouse, and others, whose position may indicate a porch. There were also postholes and a thin line cut into the chalk that may represent internal features. The ditches on the ASDA site formed three sides of an enclosure. Our excavation failed to locate the projected course of one of the ditches. However, a ditch was discovered cutting across the southeast corner of the dig which could be the fourth side of the enclosure. The pottery which ranged from late Iron Age to Post-Medieval was sieved from about five

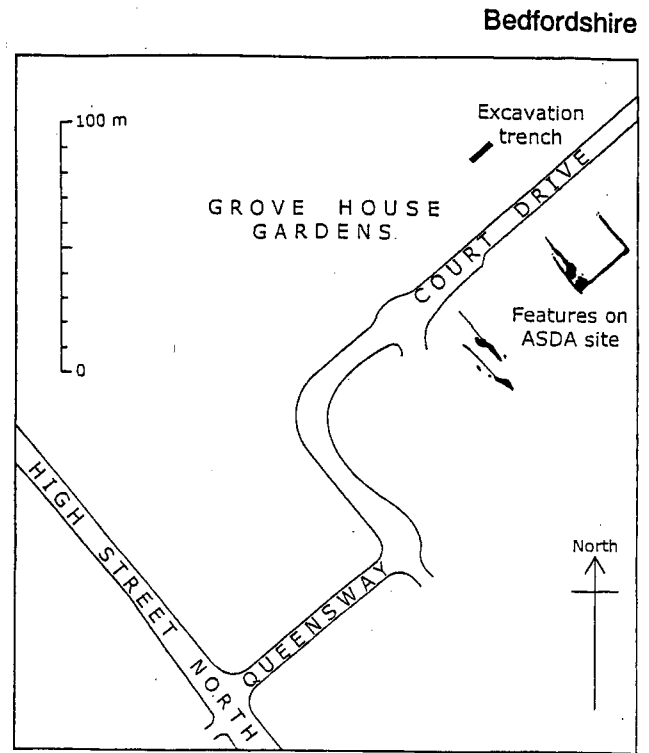


Fig 4. Grove House Gardens, Dunstable.

percent of the spoil heap and it was surprisingly abundant.

The postholes were all quite shallow ie 10-15cm (Fig 5) on average into solid chalk. This is not deep enough to support even quite short posts and indicates that the depth of soil has always been pretty much what it is now. There was no evidence of packing in any hole. Postholes one to eight (Fig 5) are in a curve with the centre to the north. Extrapolated to a full circle the diameter would be of the order of 12m. Those holes to the southeast cannot be shown absolutely to be associated, but their size, depth and location suggest they are. The slot to the north of post 4 was quite definite and sealed by a loose chalk layer which was exactly in line with the flat side of the post. There were two other postholes west of the slot but also inside of the curve of posts.

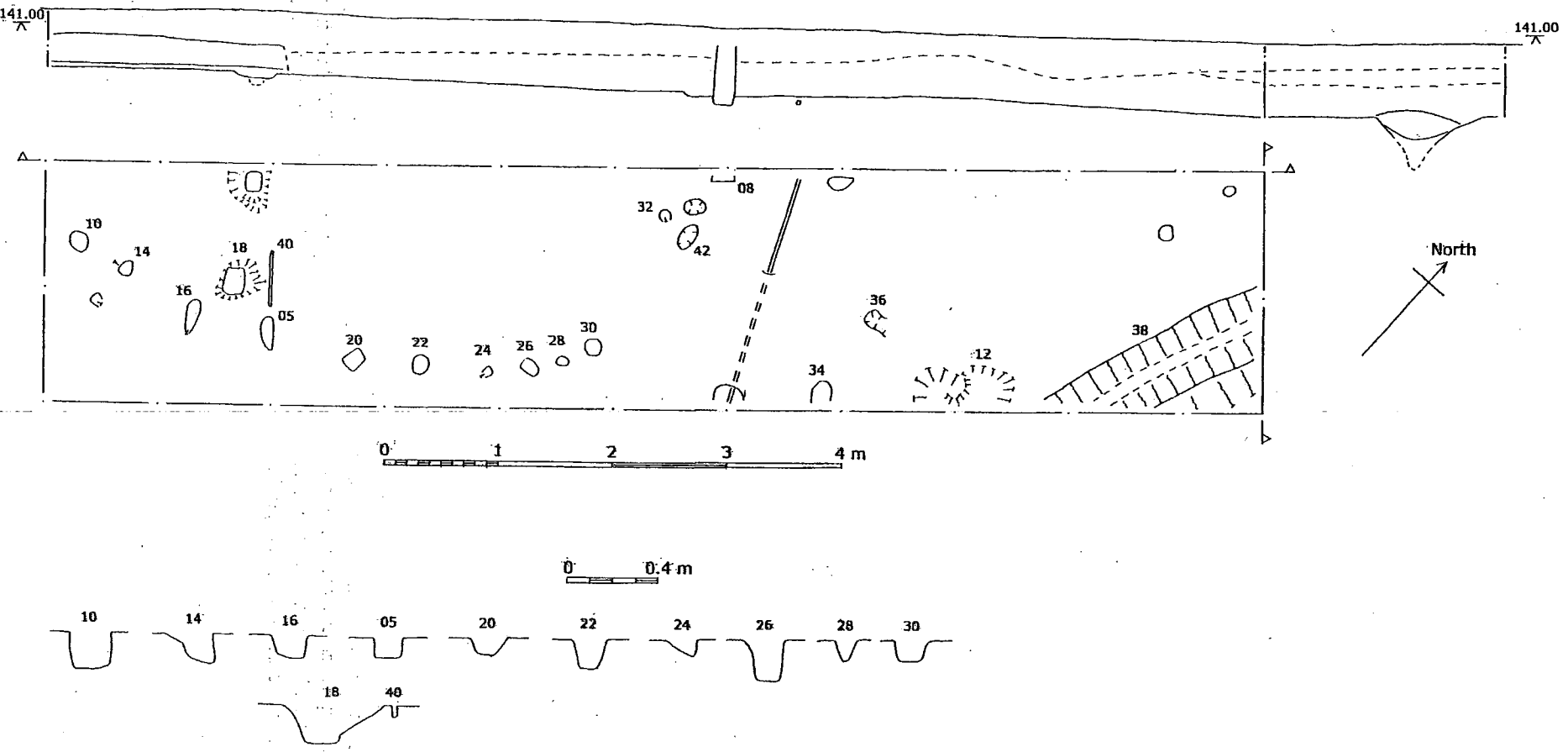
Across the southeast (ie running true south-north) corner of the excavation ran a ditch 50cm deep into chalk heading towards the low area to the northeast where there have been ponds to within living memory. The fill was fine and very compact orangey-tan coloured silt. There was no material which could be considered to date this feature.

Pottery: there were no large 'deposited sherds', only residual material, but it covers all periods, except early to mid Saxon, from the late Iron Age on. It corresponds with the known occupation of Dunstable and indicates that this area has always been utilised probably as farmland up until the original formation of the gardens in the 18th century.

Discussion

It is unsafe on the basis of a small segment of an apparent circle to claim an Iron Age house, but assuming it wasn't just an enclosure there is precedent for a house with such a close setting of posts (Parker-Pearson, 1993). The results of the Northampton Units dig on the ASDA site are yet to be

Fig 5. Grove House Gardens site plan, section and posthole profiles.



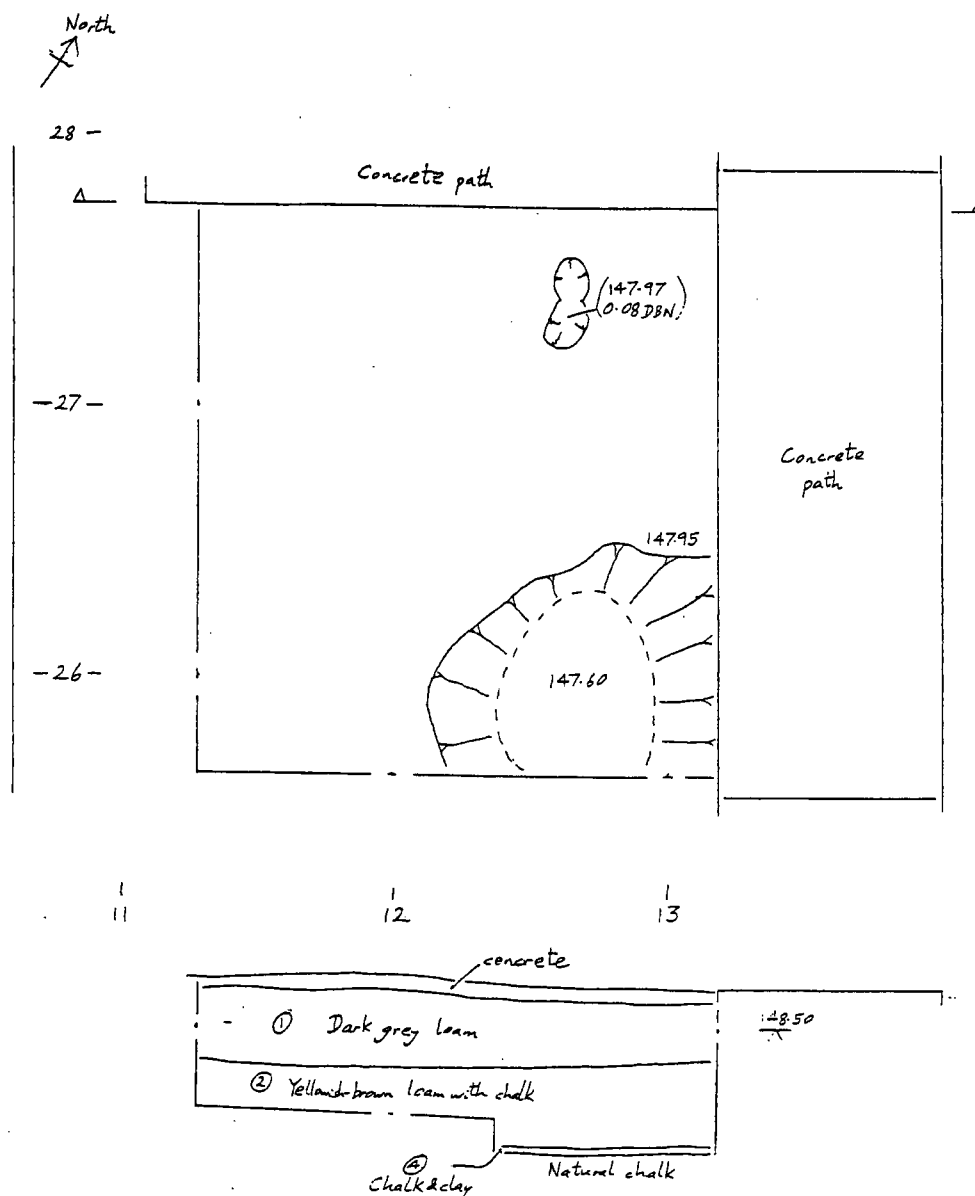


Fig 6. 18 Aldbanks. Trench A, plan and section.

published but is our understanding that the features they found cover the

Late Iron Age into the early Roman. Some of the ditches appear to represent three sides of an enclosure with the 'open' end facing our site. If the short section of ditch in our excavation represents the fourth side then a house just to one side could well be associated and would be similar to the house plus enclosure sites on Puddlehill.

References

- Matthews C L 1976; 'Occupation Sites on a Chiltern Ridge', *BAR* 29
 Parker-Pearson M, 1993; *Bronze Age Britain* pp 103 & 108.

Archaeological work in Dunstable 2001-2002 R Hudspith

Garden, Parkland and Allotment Surveys

During 2001, the Society initiated an archaeological surface

survey of available gardens, parkland and allotments in Dunstable. Initial results of the surveys have indicated the presence of small, distinct scatters of Romano-British potsherds and burnt flints in the southwest corner of the Victoria allotments (TL014213 - a proposed development site). Observations of cultivated areas within Grove House gardens (TL017222) have identified Romano-British sherds and burnt flints on the surface.

18 Aldbanks (TL006224)

Further trial trenching was carried out in the garden where trial trenching in 1995 had revealed finds of Neolithic worked flints as well as Romano-British and Medieval sherds (Warren, 1996).

In trench A (Fig 6) some evidence for a tree throw hollow, pit, or ditch terminus, was observed. No finds were associated with the fill of the feature.

Bedfordshire

Finds from trench A included several small fragments of Samian ware, a copper alloy pin, Romano-British and Medieval sherds and worked flints.

Trench B showed a high level of Post-Medieval-modern contamination immediately above natural. Finds from the trench included Romano-British, Medieval sherds, worked and burnt flints.

81 Edward Street (TL014220)

A small test pit revealed no archaeological features. Redeposited chalk from building work was noted at a depth of 0.4m.

5 Winfield Street (TL015221)

A small test pit was dug in the garden of the Society's Headquarters. Natural chalk was observed at a depth of 0.5m. Only Post-Medieval-modern material was discovered in the disturbed soil above natural.

6 Winfield Street (TL015221)

Observations of footing trenches for a house extension at 6 Winfield Street, revealed two possible features, observed in section. A posthole, at a depth of 0.4m below topsoil and a 1.2m wide ditch or pit between 0.4 - 1m. No datable finds were discovered in association with the features.

Trial Excavations at 'Moore's' 21-23 High Street South, Dunstable (TL019218)

Surface finds included Post-Medieval-modern building materials, Post-Medieval-modern sherds, Medieval and Romano-British sherds.

Seven trial trenches (A-G, Fig 7) were dug in the garden. Features were planned, photographed and trenches backfilled in one operation. Pegtile fragments were found down to natural chalk in all trenches.

In Trench A natural chalk was observed at 0.7m, with Post-Medieval-modern contamination above the chalk. Cut into the chalk was a possible beam slot orientated northwest-southeast, within the upper chalk loam fill of the feature was a well-preserved bronze coin of Constantine (317-337AD) and a rusted iron wall hook.

In Trench B, excavation was limited by the discovery of a modern flagstone, possibly acting as capping for a well. Within the area available for excavation, evidence was found for at least two 18-19th century rubbish pits, with one of the pits cutting a possible Romano-British redeposited chalk surface, containing an unabridged Romano-British 'poppy beaker' sherd, a corroded spring lock. It was bounded by large split flints, at 0.7m, with apparently natural chalk at 0.9m. Building materials and large sherd fragments were the principal finds from the Post-Medieval rubbish pits.

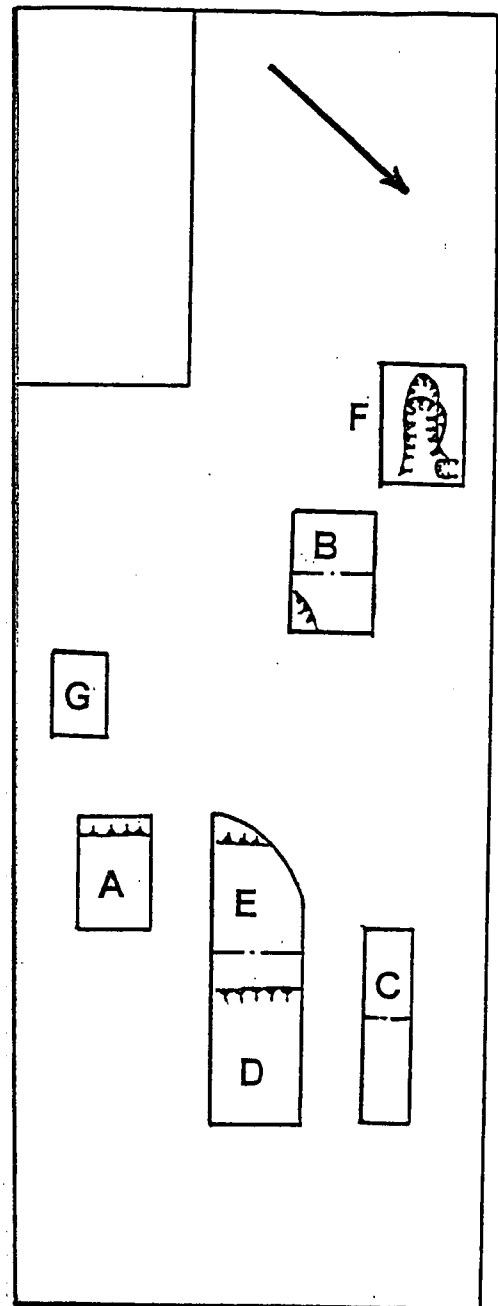


Fig 7. Moore's site plan.

In Trench C, a large amount of building material, tile and brick, was found along with 18-19th century sherds, china and animal bones. Below this material was a redeposited loose chalk loam fill containing animal bones and pegtiles, excavation of the Post-Medieval - modern deposit was abandoned at 1.1m.

Trench D, adjacent to Trench C, revealed natural chalk at 0.7m DBS, cut by an 18-19th century rubbish pit; probably the same feature identified in Trench C. Residual sherds of a Roman 'poppy beaker' and Medieval green glazed wares were found in the fill.

Trench E, revealed further deposits of 18-19th century material. At 0.7m an irregular slot was observed, perhaps a continuation of the feature noted in Trench A. Sherds of 1st century mica dusted imported Roman pottery were found in the subsoil above the natural chalk and a sherd of Samian

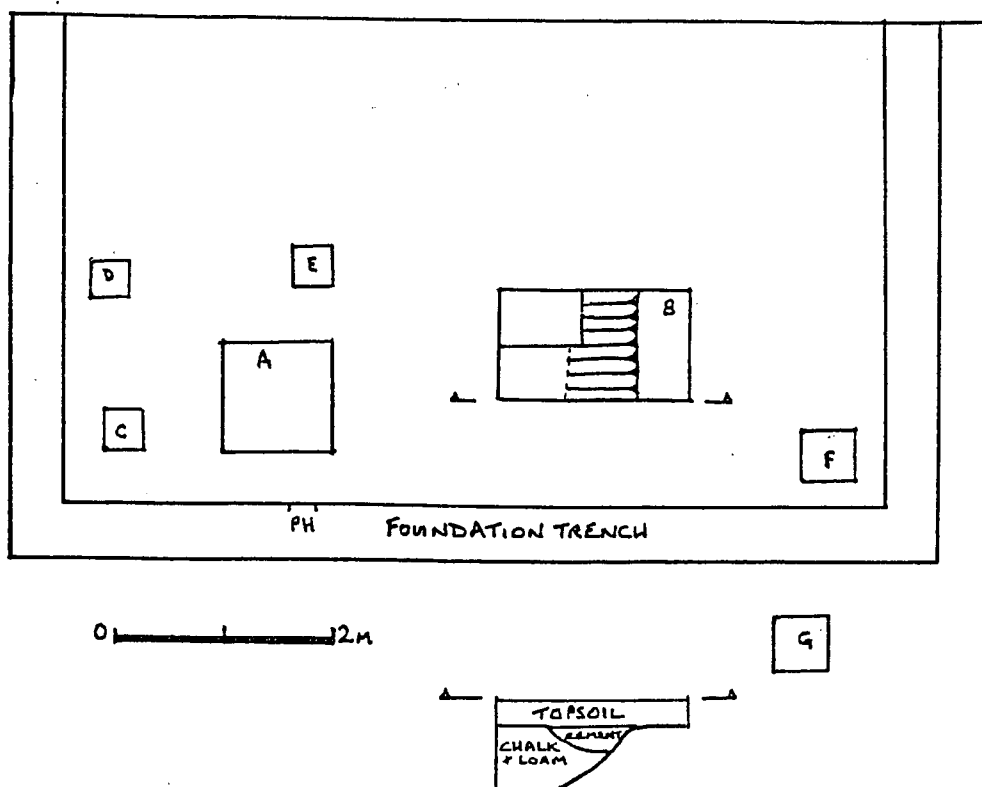


Fig 8. 31 Marina Drive. Trial trenches and test pits.

pottery (Drag 27) was found in the fill of the slot.

Trench F revealed a further 19th century rubbish pit, a possible Medieval feature and the end of a straight-sided beam slot aligned northwest-southeast. This feature, at 0.9m, was sealed by redeposited chalk and loam containing a few Romano-British sherds.

Trench G contained no identifiable features. Two sherds of Romano-British imported wares were found in the subsoil immediately above natural chalk.

The White Swan Public House, High Street South (TL022216)

A series of 'test pit' excavations in the Public House garden on successive Sunday mornings during January and February, 2002. A total of 9 pits (1.5m x 1m) were dug, labelled A-J.

In Pit A a shallow trench, containing a stone and pegtile deposit, was observed cut into the natural chalk at 0.87m.

Pits B and D contained no features other than tree root holes cutting the natural chalk at 0.5m and 0.6m respectively. Pit C revealed a post-hole containing chalk clunch within its fill at the western end of the pit. Cutting the undulating natural chalk (0.6m-0.8m) at the eastern end of the pit was a ditch with steeply sloping side and base at 1.2m. The ditch fill contained only peg tile and animal bones.

The U shaped ditch was again revealed in pits E and J, in pit E as 0.5m wide and in E and J with the ditch base at 1.3m

DBS (natural chalk at 0.75m). Finds from the ditch fill in Pit J included a thick base sherd from a Medieval vessel, other Medieval sherds, pegtile and bone fragments. Pit F cut the clayey fill of an undefined well or pit, containing 19-20th century material, brick and tile, unexcavated beyond 1.3m. Pit G cut a similar indefinable feature with 19-20th century finds within the clayey upper fill overlying a sterile lump chalk and clay loam fill probed to a depth (assumed natural) of 1.75m. Pit H cut another 19-20th century rubbish pit, with clay chalk lower fill, base 1.3m. The excavations became progressively more difficult to carry out in Pits F-H, due to an introduced clay deposit sealing 19-20th century rubbish pits, which may have cut earlier features on the site.

The ditch identified in Pits C, E and J was, apparently, of at least Medieval date, and ran at an angle to the modern boundary (Wellington Terrace) to the east of two possible structural features observed in Pits A and C.

The complete lack of Roman pottery and boundary features suggests this area of Dunstable was neither occupied nor subject to cultivation in the Roman period and may well have remained wooded.

31 Marina Drive (TL001212)

As a result of a planning condition a watching brief was carried out on groundworks for an extension close to the known site of a Bronze Age ring ditch and Anglo-Saxon cemetery (Matthews, 1962) A number of test pits were also dug. The only features observed were: a shallow truncated post hole observed in section in the eastern foundation trench, a possible tree throw hollow (with one flint flake

Bedfordshire

found in the upper fill) and a modern square pit cut into the natural chalk. No evidence for any Saxon burials was found during the present building work on this site.

References

- Dawson M 1998; *Roman Sandy*
Matthews C L, 1962; The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Marina Drive, Dunstable, *BAJ* 1 pp25 - 47
Matthews C L and Schneider J 1989; *Ancient Dunstable*, p68, 110.
Warren D, 1996; Excavation at 18 Aldbanks, Dunstable, *MAJ* 36, 5-6.

Fieldwork

R Hudspith

Chalton Manor Farm (TL0226)

An area at Chalton Manor Farm was gridwalked during October 2001. On this occasion the field had been ploughed and quantities of Romano-British material including sherds, tiles and building stones had been brought to the surface. The distribution of finds (Romano-British sherds and Romano-British tile fragments) is shown in Fig 1.

One significant find, the base of a Samian vessel, stamped O.VC (which should be read O.AC) the stamp of ACVTVS, who produced Samian ware at Montans, southern Gaul in the reign of Tiberius (pre-conquest) (Warren, 2001).

The known Mesolithic/Neolithic site along the ridge top at Chalton (Hudspith, 1991) was rewalked in October 2001. Representative finds of worked flints included: Mesolithic blade fragments and cores, Neolithic flaked axe fragments, scrapers and debitage.

Caddington (TL055207)

Ploughed land adjacent to the Griffin golf course in Chaul End Road, Caddington, was walked; the field was last surveyed in 1990 (Hudspith, 1991). Surface finds were principally of worked flints, probably Neolithic-Bronze Age in date, consisting mainly of large irregular flakes (derived from core reduction) with retouched flakes, piercers, scrapers, flaked axes/chopping tools and a few burnt flints, perhaps suggesting occupation.

One Romano-British sherd and one Medieval sherd were also found, as well as Post-Medieval material.

Stanbridge, The Old Millhouse (SP962245)

A surface survey of the garden of the Old Mill House, Stanbridge, identified finds of worked and burnt flints, Iron Age, Romano-British and Medieval sherds, Post-Medieval and modern material.

Caddington, Chaul End Farm (TL056217)

Colin Huller

A watching brief found the site sparsely scattered with pieces of modern glass, brick, tile etc. There were many

massive flints, but none had been worked and there was no sign of any archaeology, probably due to modern building activity.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

Bedford, Stephenson Lower School (TL 0619 4826)

Ed Taylor

An archaeological evaluation at Stephenson Lower School on behalf of Mouchel Property Services ahead of the construction of an arts and sports centre, showed that the ground at the southern end of the proposed development area was disturbed by a modern service trench, and a modern wall footing. No archaeological remains were found.

Elstow, Elstow Lower School (TL 0525 4714)

Peter Masters, Steve Morris, Alex Thorne

Archaeological evaluation, comprising air-photo rectification, geophysics and trial trenching was undertaken on the proposed site of Elstow Lower School.

A ring ditch, c 23.5m in diameter, previously identified as a cropmark and also located by the geophysical survey, was investigated by trial trench evaluation. Any former mound had been lost to ploughing and no internal features were located.

A series of pits to the north-west were dated to the 10th-12th centuries, and a substantial linear feature to the south, originally believed to be geological in origin, comprised two Post-Medieval ditches. Several severely truncated and undated ditches and pits not detected by the geophysical survey were also sampled.

Harrold, Harrold Priory Middle School (SP 9492 5674)

Ed Taylor

An archaeological evaluation at Harrold Priory Middle School on behalf of Mouchel Property Services, ahead of a car park and classroom construction revealed two ditches and a gully, dated to the 11th-12th centuries. They ran approximately north to south across the plot and are probably associated with the Medieval manorial complex of Harrold. A considerable amount of the pottery shows signs of being wasters, indicating that there may have been a Medieval pottery kiln in the immediate vicinity.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

Compiled and edited by Edward Biddulph

Stotfold, Fairfield Park (TL 2030 3470)
Martin Wilson

An excavation was undertaken along the proposed course of the Section 38 Loop Road on behalf of Mills Whipp Projects Ltd between October and November 2002. This revealed part of an early to middle Iron Age farming settlement, comprising houses, enclosures and storage facilities. Although there are clearly different phases present as demonstrated by inter-cutting features, in terms of dating construction and usage, these could well be quite close together and difficult to further differentiate. A probable field system has been identified, which may be either slightly earlier or later than the main occupation and which may be related to the boundary ditch seen in the south-west corner of the excavation. The area to the south of this corner also has the potential to add to the limited understanding of this feature. The archaeological field investigation at Fairfield Park is expected to continue intermittently over the course of two years.

THAMES VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES LTD

Luton, Former Bus Depot, Castle Street (TL 090 207)
Sarah Coles

An evaluation and subsequent excavation in advance of retail development explored a Medieval ditch of defensive proportions, believed to belong to Robert de Waudari's castle. The fieldwork extended observations made during the building of the Luton News printworks on the eastern side of the street in the 1960s (Fig 9), despite the severe truncation of the ground during construction of the bus depot.

Robert de Waudari came to Luton as a mercenary for King Stephen and was granted land. In AD 1139, he built a wooden castle for the war against Matilda but this was pulled down just fifteen years later in 1154 under the terms of a truce. A second castle was built by Fulk de Breauté in 1221 close to the modern centre of Luton, to the north of this site. Deeds for properties on Castle Street refer to the 'castle mound'. A mound was present in this vicinity prior to construction of the bus depot in the 20th century. The first castle can be assumed to have been a typical motte and bailey with wooden fortifications.

The earliest material from the site is prehistoric, six sherds of possible Bronze Age pottery and fifteen struck flints, all residual in later features. A single Roman sherd of pottery would also be dismissed as of minimal interest were it not the only datable find from gully 102. Although this gully respects the line of the main (Medieval) ditch and appears

to be associated, it is possible that it is of Roman date.

The main feature on the site is a V-shaped ditch, over 6m wide and nearly 3m deep, clearly of defensive proportions (Fig 10). The infills of both the original ditch and a subsequent recut are mostly derived from the north-eastern side and suggest slumping from a mound or rampart located there. The infill is not uniform and comprises thick alternating bands of silt followed by chalk (Fig 11). This could represent different origins of the mound/bank material with the silty deposits reflecting the slump of turves which formed a core, with the chalk reflecting slump from the upcast from the construction of the ditch. The convergence of various strands of evidence including the size of the ditch, its date, historic documentary references and the more recent references to the presence of a mound can be taken to confirm that this feature is indeed a part of an Anglo-Norman castle, most probably the ditch surrounding the bailey. That the line of the ditch observed in this excavation does not quite match the projection on Fig 9 (based on Dyer *et al*, 1964) need not cause undue concern given the conditions under which the previous observations were made, and uncertainties over projecting the precise line in any case. There can be little real doubt that the ditches recorded in 1963 and 2002 were parts of the same plan.

It is tempting to assign the infill of the original ditch to the documentary reference to the castle being pulled down in 1154. The meagre dating evidence (three sherds of Medieval pottery from the ditch, three from a pit cut into its upper fills, and four more from the ditch recut, all of which could be 12th to 13th century) is insufficient to provide firm support for this date, but certainly does not contradict it. The discrete nature of the banded fills suggests that this is a product of periods of natural slumping rather than deliberate slighting and backfilling in a single episode, when a more homogenous fill might be expected. Unfortunately no evidence was recovered for a retaining structure such as a revetment or palisade, as the relevant areas adjacent to the ditch had been disturbed by modern development.

The subsequent recut, ceramically indistinguishable from the original ditch, is puzzling. Despite a width almost as great as the original ditch it was much too shallow to be considered a replacement defensive structure. Its function therefore is unclear. It is possible that this feature was a property or field boundary and that by this time the remnants of the castle had become a convenient setting-out point in the landscape. As the motte certainly survived, perhaps the bailey had already become a conspicuous element in the local topography, worth redefining, even if it had lost the necessity for defence.

The typical form for early Norman defensive works is known as a 'motte and bailey'. This consisted of a steep, artificial mound (motte) surrounded by a ditch, and with an adjoining larger flat area (bailey), also usually ditched. Both would also be provided with a palisade and often a rampart would flank the ditch. The motte was a defensive strongpoint, usually more-or-less circular. The bailey was

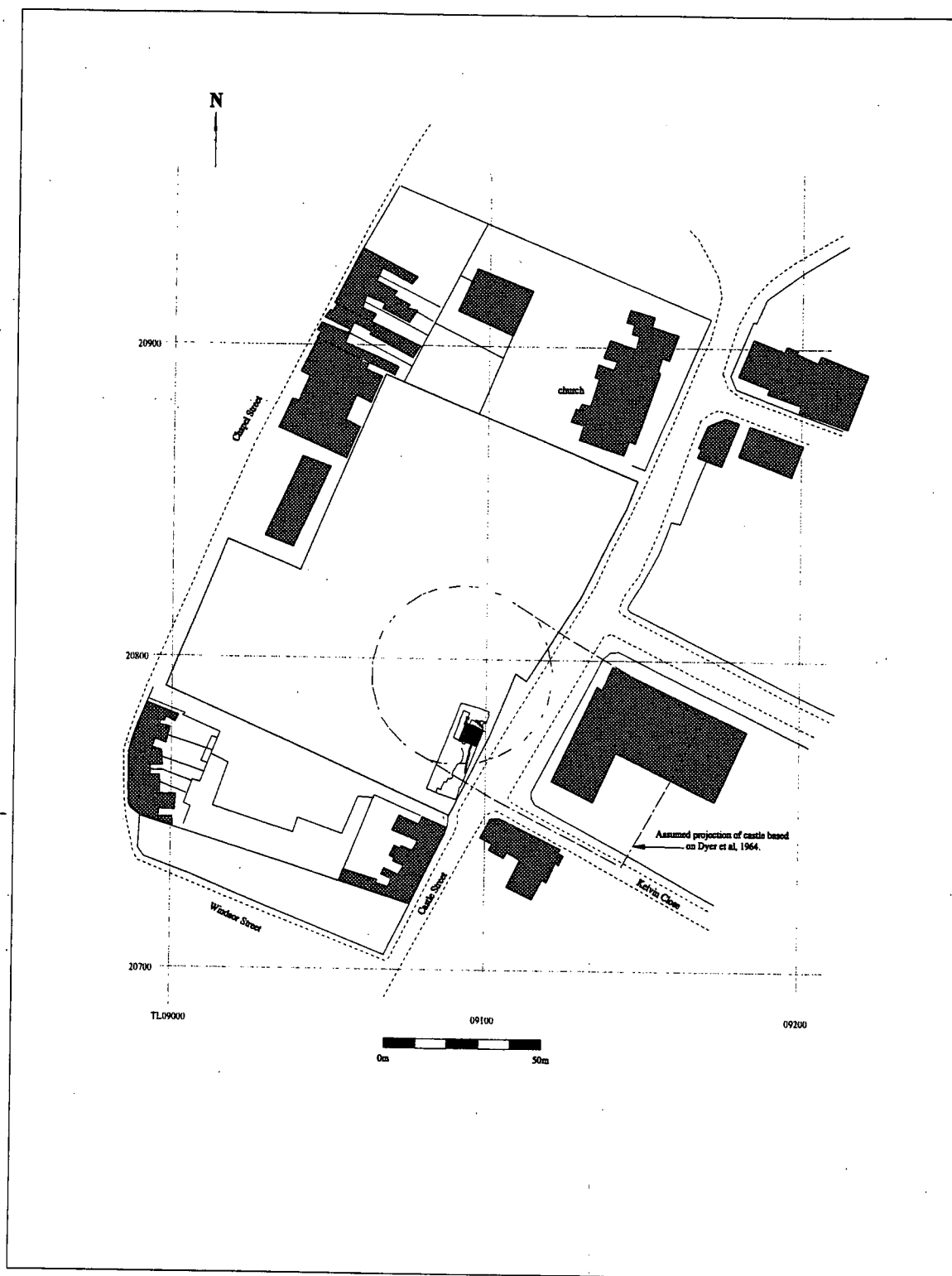
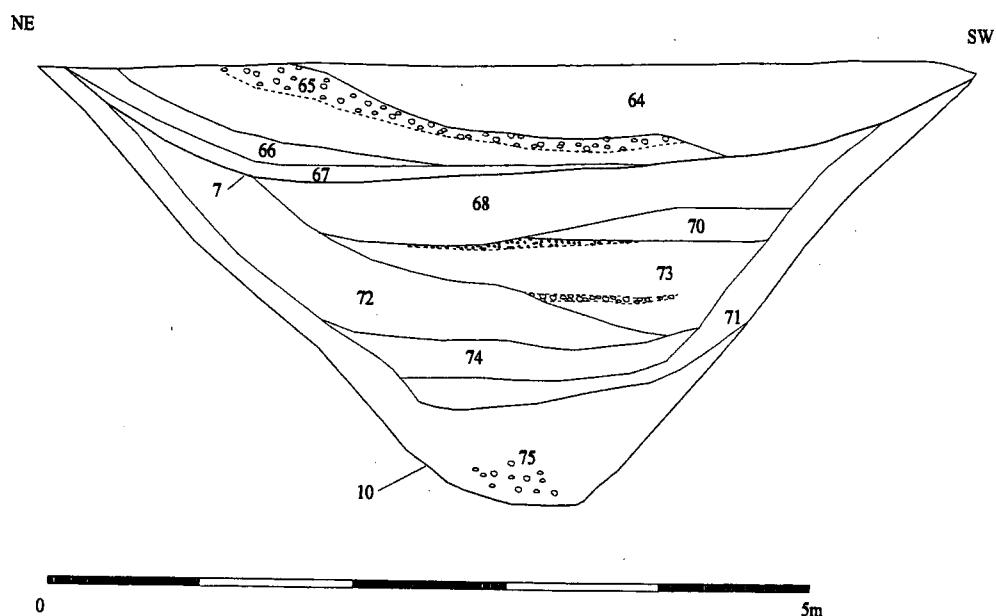


Fig 9. Castle Street, Luton. Location of site in relation to previous observations.

usually more rectangular, and housed stables, smithies, and stores. Many mottes were intended only as temporary fortifications but many also were originally, or were quickly replaced by, stone keeps. In these cases the bailey might become a focal point for the surrounding settlement, and a town's development could be profoundly influenced by the lines of the bailey. In other instances the castle was sited purely for defence and had little influence over the development of the settlement under its protection (Laing

and Laing 1996).

Despite the short life recorded for Robert de Waudari's castle, and the lack of evidence recovered here beyond the ditch, it should not be assumed that a timber castle (assuming this is what it was) was necessarily intended to be short-lived or was in any sense inferior to a stone one, at least originally (Higham and Barker 1992). In this instance, however, it may well have been intended primarily as a



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Fig 10. Castle Street, Luton. Section of ditch.

campaign fort rather than a lasting visual symbol of lordship, or the lord's residence; the location seems inconvenient (as tacitly attested by the relocation when a new castle was built) and the context of building suggests it was a stop-gap measure. Recent archaeological attention has been increasingly directed at the elements of castle-building and the functions of castles beyond defence, but it is worth recalling that defence was their primary purpose (Thompson, 1995). Sites such as this, abandoned very quickly after construction, emphasize this point.

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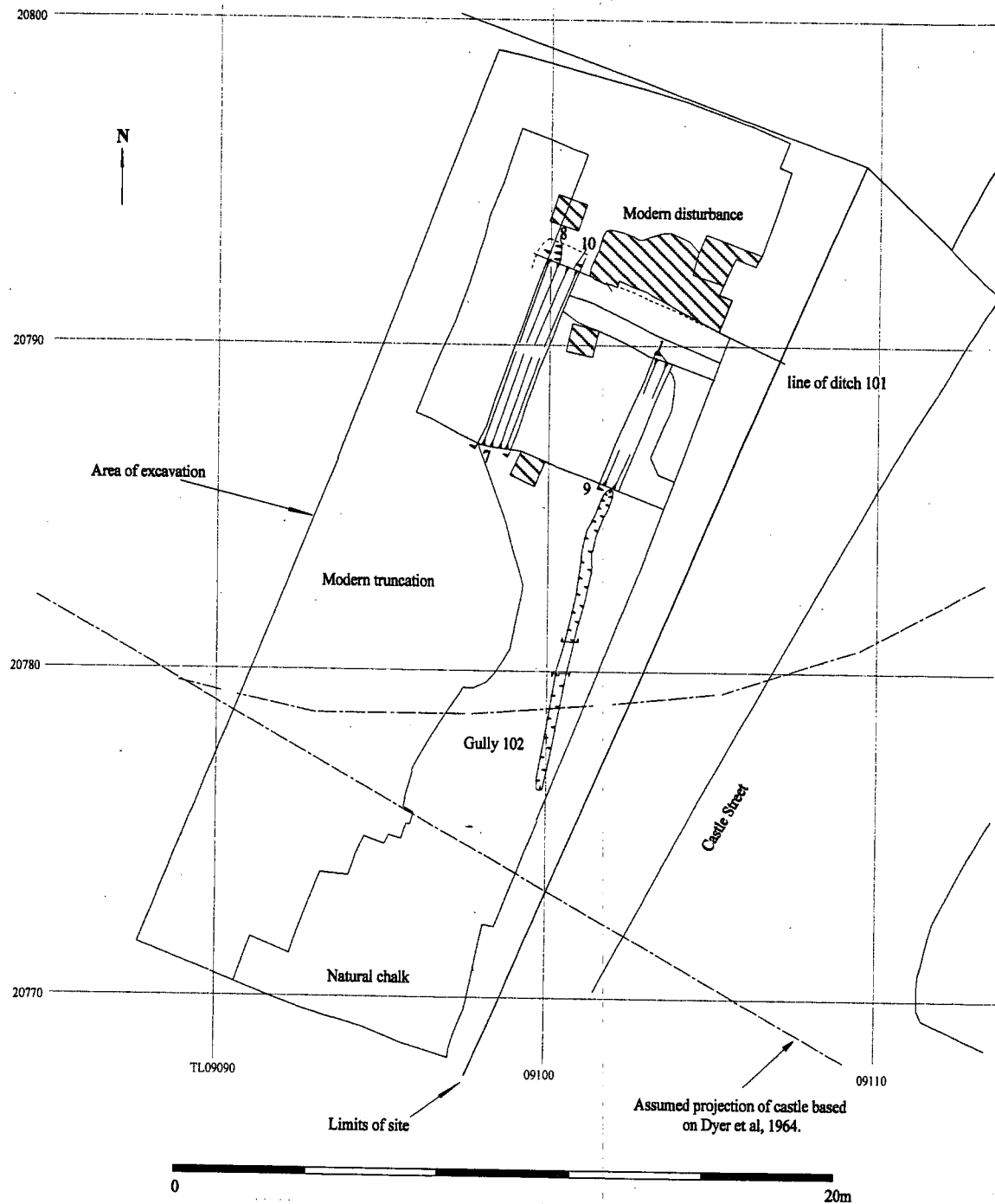


Fig 11. Castle Street, Luton. Plan of excavated features.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

ALBION ARCHAEOLOGY

Pitstone, Former Castle Cement Works (Phase 2)
(SP 9375 1515)

Mark Phillips and Drew Shotliff

An open area excavation of approximately 1.5ha was undertaken in advance of residential development within the former cement works. The earliest evidence for activity on the site took the form of two small inter-cutting pits, dated to the early-middle Iron Age. Evidence from the Roman period comprised a series of ditched boundaries containing few artefacts. These appear to represent field boundaries rather than enclosures directly associated with settlement.

The majority of the data recovered from the excavation relates to occupation in the early-middle Saxon period. It comprised the remains of four sunken-featured buildings (SFB) together with a widely spaced scatter of pits and postholes. The buildings were all aligned northeast-southwest. The disused buildings were infilled with typical deposits of occupation debris, producing a characteristic assemblage of animal bone, charcoal, fired clay, Roman tile, and pottery (mostly Saxon with lesser amounts of late Iron Age and Roman). The largest of the SFBs also produced a number of loom weights and bone pin beaters.

During the Medieval period the site appears to have been incorporated into Pitstone's open fields. Two sets of furrows on different orientations were recorded on either side of a track, which survived as a slight hollow way.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES

Olney, Bridge House and Tunns Cottage, Lime Street
(SP 8860 5100)

James Albone

A watching brief was carried out on behalf of Archaeology and Heritage Management Consultancy during development just north of South Bridge over the River Ouse. The Saxon bridging point is thought to be located in the area and the parish church of SS Peter and Paul, built in 1323 replacing a 12th century or earlier church, lies immediately east of the investigation site.

A limestone wall, probably the corner of a structure, was revealed. This was undated but was beneath the floors, and lay at an acute angle to the walls of 18th century Bridge House. The structure survived into the later post-Medieval period and had been patched with brick. A possible bedding trench was also revealed beneath Bridge House and although again undated contained a probable redeposited fragment of 11th century St Neots ware. Only a very limited amount of Medieval pottery was retrieved during the

investigation and most of the remains identified were from the 18th century and later and are probably directly associated with Bridge House and Tunns Cottage. A quantity of cattle horn cores, typical of tanning waste, was recovered and probably derived from an adjacent 19th century tannery.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES AND CONSULTANCY LTD

Aylesbury, 100-102 Walton Street (SP 823 132)
Martin Lightfoot

In May 2002 an excavation took place at 100-102 Walton Street, Aylesbury in advance of a new development. The site measured 8m by 10m and was adjacent to an area of Saxon settlement at Walton and was on the site of a 19th century building known as Waltoncourt Farm. The depth of the excavation was limited to that to be disturbed by the development and was not deep enough to reach Saxon archaeological deposits. A compacted stone surface, perhaps a 19th century farmyard surface was encountered below made up ground and topsoil.

Bletchley, Salvation Army Hall, Buckingham Road
(SP 8568 3322)
Joe Abrams

During November 2002 an evaluation was carried out at the former Salvation Army which is close to an area of known Medieval occupation. The evaluation trenches revealed clear evidence of large scale 20th century terracing within the development area. One undated ditch and two modern pits were recorded. A single sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from a modern layer.

Buckingham, The Maltings, Lenborough Road
(SP 694 333)
David Fell and Bob Zeepvat

In December 2002 an historic building survey was undertaken of The Maltings, at the junction of Lenborough Road and Station Terrace, prior to demolition and redevelopment of the site for housing. Parts of the earliest recorded building on the site, shown on a map of 1803, may have been incorporated into the subject building. This was constructed before 1883 by the Gough family, who had significant interests in brewing, hotels etc. in Buckingham. The building appears to have ceased to be used as a maltings in the mid 20th century, and was converted into a car repair shop, for which significant internal alterations were made. Apart from the fabric of the building, a three-storey brick structure, little evidence remains of its original function. The site was evidently heavily terraced when The Maltings was constructed.

Buckinghamshire

Calvert - Steeple Claydon Sewer Pipe
(SP 694 273 to SP 686 244)
Nigel Wilson

During April 2002 a watching brief was maintained during topsoil stripping along the route of a sewer pipeline between the former brickworks at Calvert and a pumping station to the north of Steeple Claydon. No archaeological features were observed.

Cholesbury, The Old Vicarage (SP 9290 0711)
Martin Lightfoot

In August 2002 an evaluation was carried out in the grounds of The Old Vicarage. The inner ditch of the hillfort known as Cholesbury Camp was identified and excavated to a depth of 1.2m. The upper fills contained an assemblage of pottery sherds dating between the Medieval period and the 19th century.

Hanslope, Grange Farm (SP 73786 44699)
Martin Lightfoot

In June and July 2002 a watching brief was carried out on a site at Grange Farm, in an area of known Medieval settlement. The groundworks for services and construction of soakaways were monitored, though no archaeological features were evident and no finds were recovered.

Hanslope, 2 The Green (SP 804 467)
David Fell

A watching brief was undertaken in December 2002. The site is within the Medieval village of Hanslope. The watching brief took place during the excavations of footings for a new conservatory. Archaeological remains were not observed and the area was seen to have been disturbed, probably during the construction of the existing house on the site.

Haversham, Hill Farm (SP 8331 43860)
Martin Lightfoot

In April 2002 an evaluation was carried out on land to the north of Hill Farm. The site was close to an area of known Roman settlement (Cockerill *et al* 1962; Green 1961) and seven trial trenches were excavated. Two furrows and one amorphous feature, likely to be a tree throw hole were revealed. Some pottery, roof tile and iron fragments were recovered from the furrows. One sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from the tree throw hole.

References

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Green C 1961; Romano-British Haversham *Wolverton and District Archaeological Society Newsletter* 6

Lillingstone Lovell, Glebe House (SP 712 403)
Martin Lightfoot

During October 2002 an archaeological watching brief was maintained at Glebe House, Lillingstone Lovell during construction of a cellared extension. Lillingstone Lovell lay within the royal forest of Whittlewood and the Glebe House is the former rectory. The site was in the centre of the Medieval village, close to the village church, and earthworks to the east of the site have been surveyed as part of the Whittlewood Project. These have been identified as the Medieval manorial site (Richard Jones pers. com). All the groundworks were monitored but no archaeological features were observed.

Milton Keynes, Caldecotte, 6 Caldecotte Lane
(SP 8925 3549)
Joe Abrams

During November 2002 an evaluation was carried out on land adjacent to 6 Caldecotte Lane. The site lies immediately north of the earthworks of the Medieval village of Caldecotte, excavated by the Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit in 1990-91 (Zeepvat *et al* 1994). The evaluation trenches revealed three parallel ditches, two of which contained post-Medieval pottery sherds. It is likely that these served a dual function as road side ditches to keep the lane drained during wet periods, and also to demarcate the southern boundary of the site upon which the site is located.

Reference

Zeepvat R J, Roberts J S & King N A 1994; Caldecotte Milton Keynes Excavation and Fieldwork 1966-91 *Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society Monograph Series* 9.

Milton Keynes, Loughton, Weldon Rise (SP 8380 3760)
Joe Abrams

During September 2002 a watching brief was undertaken during groundworks for a detached dwelling at 8 Weldon Rise, Loughton. The site was close to the historic core of Loughton village and immediately north of the Medieval village earthworks. No archaeological features were recorded during the watching brief.

Milton Keynes, Medbourne (SP 820 360)
Martin Lightfoot

In January 2002 an archaeological evaluation was undertaken at two adjacent sites at Medbourne in advance of a new housing development because local metal detectorists have found Roman artefacts in the area. Twenty two trial trenches were excavated but no archaeological features were present.

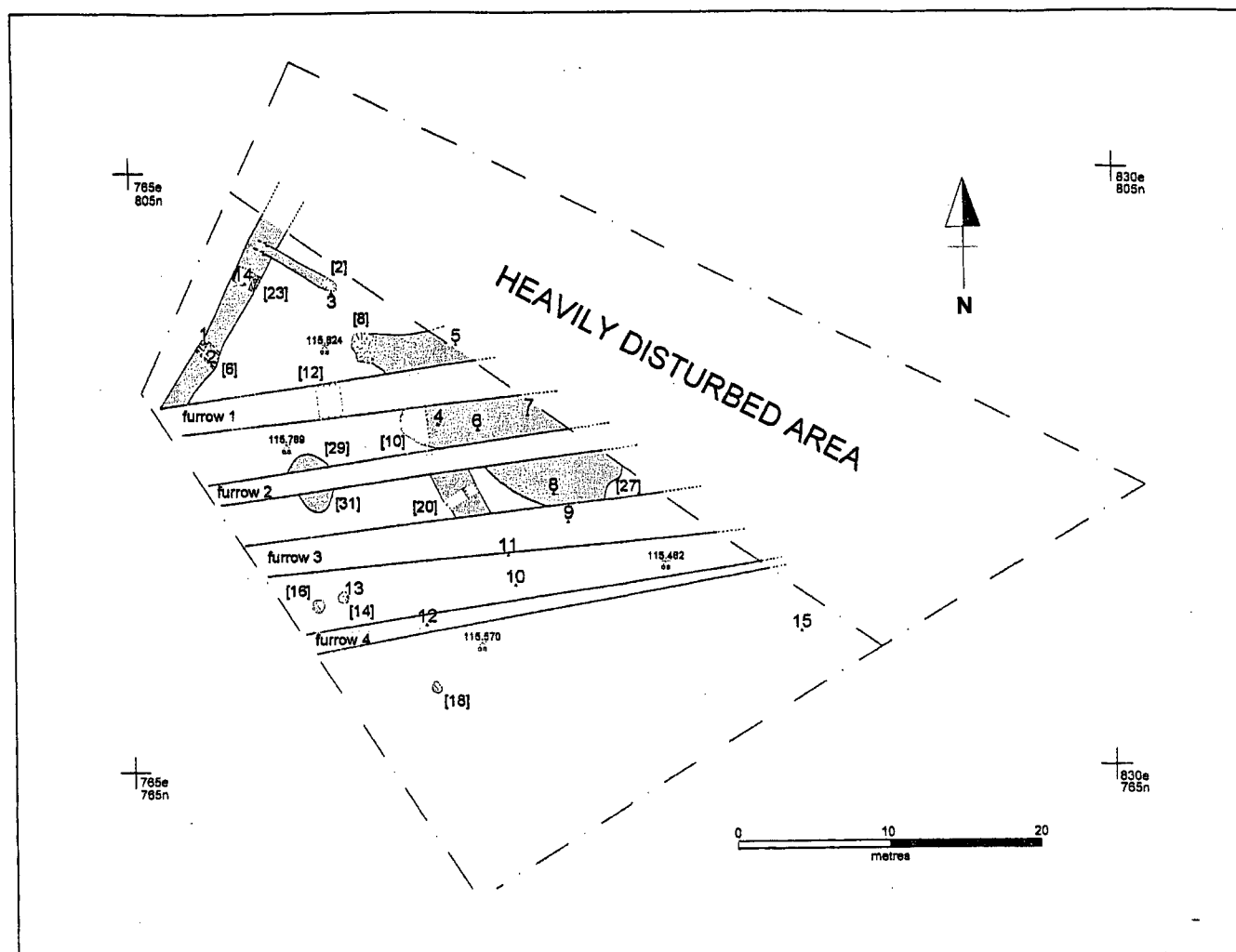


Fig 1. 34/35 Portishead Drive, Tattenhoe. Site plan.

Milton Keynes Village, Manor Farm Barns, The Manor Barn (SP 8875 3910)
David Fell

A watching brief was undertaken on land at The Paddocks, Manor Barns in Milton Keynes village during late July and early August 2002. The site is adjacent to a complex of Medieval earthworks, on the western periphery of the Medieval village. Archaeological remains were not observed during the watching brief, but the works provided the opportunity to record details of the footings and makeup of an 18th or 19th century timber framed barn that is present on the site.

Milton Keynes, Shenley Church End, Manor Haven (SP 83306 36514)
Joe Abrams

During May 2002 a watching brief was undertaken during the groundworks for a new house, on land adjacent to Manor Haven, in the Medieval settlement of Shenley Church End. One furrow, containing Post-Medieval material, was observed.

Milton Keynes, Tattenhoe, 34/35 Portishead Drive (SP 8276 3380)
Joe Abrams

During August 2002 a salvage excavation was carried out a site at Portishead Drive, Tattenhoe. Local metal detectorists collected a number of Roman coins, a silver plated spoon and nail fragments on the site during soil stripping operations. A salvage operation was subsequently undertaken and settlement activity dating between the late 2nd to mid/late 4th centuries AD was recorded.

Twelve archaeological features were identified (Fig 1) and recorded: two ditches, three possible postholes, two pits and one large depression; all bar one pit contained artefactual material dating to the Roman period. Sixteen metal objects were retrieved during the excavation. The remains probably formed part of a Romano-British settlement located immediately north of Portishead Drive.

Four Medieval furrows containing residual Roman material were also identified.

Buckinghamshire

Newport Pagnell, 77 High Street (SP 87540 43870)
Nigel Wilson

During May 2002 five evaluation trenches were opened on a site at the former Co-op store site, in the historic core of the town, in advance of the construction of a new supermarket. Archaeological deposits dating from the Medieval and Post-Medieval periods were found to survive on the street frontage, to the rear of the plot. A number of pits, postholes and the footings of a stone wall were exposed. One of the pits contained a number of leather offcuts, perhaps indicating that leatherworking was taking place on the site.

North Marston, Manor Farm, 26 High Street (SP 774 227)
Joe Abrams

During September 2002 a watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of groundworks for a new building, on land adjacent to Manor Farm. The foundations for a Post-Medieval barn, demolished to make room for the new house, were recorded during the groundworks.

Steeple Claydon, St Michael's Church (SP 705 267)
David Fell

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at St Michael's Church, Steeple Claydon in June 2002. A single trial trench was excavated on the north side of the parish church in advance of the construction of a new parish meeting room. Archaeological remains were not identified in the trench, but a number of Post-Medieval inhumation burials were identified across the trench.

Wavendon, Rose Cottage, 23/25 Walton Road (SP 9130 3721)
Bob Zeepvat

In March 2002 a programme of historic building recording was carried out at 'Rose Cottage', to the rear of 23/25 Walton Road, prior to its demolition. This small 'one up, one down' brick-built dwelling was constructed in the 19th century, probably as servants' quarters. It was later converted to an artist's studio, with the removal of the upper floor and insertion of large fixed windows in the south and east elevations. More recently, rendering of the exterior has effectively concealed any structural details. The building's most recent uses have been for general storage, and housing tanks for central heating oil.

Whaddon, 26 Vicarage Road (SP 8075 3380)
Martin Lightfoot

In December 2002 an evaluation was carried out on land at 26 Vicarage Road, prior to the construction of a new house.

Three trenches were excavated on the site, which lies within an area of Medieval settlement and was previously occupied by an 18th century wattle and daub built cottage. The site was adjacent to a field containing a Medieval house platform. A single drainage ditch, containing modern debris was identified on the western edge of the site, but no other archaeological remains were present.

Wing, Mill Motors, Church Street (SP 8812 2258)
Martin Lightfoot

In May 2002 an archaeological evaluation was undertaken in advance of housing development on the site of Mill Motors. The site lies in the centre of the Medieval village, close to the church. Two trenches were excavated, one of which contained two pits, probably of Post-Medieval date. No other archaeological features or artefacts were observed.

Winslow, St Lawrence Church (SP 768 276)
David Fell

In May 2002 a watching brief was undertaken at St Lawrence Parish Church. The observations took place during the excavation of a trench for a new drainage run, through the west side of the churchyard. No archaeological remains were present in the drainage run. The lower footings of the south wall of the church were observed, and were seen to comprise courses of ashlar blocks. No further remains were observed.

BABTIE

Stoke Hammond Bypass (northern Link) (SP 8800 3153)

Matt Edgeworth and Julian Watters

Buckinghamshire County Council commissioned Babtie Group to undertake archaeological investigations along the northern part of the route of the Stoke Hammond Bypass. An open area excavation was carried out by Albion Archaeology, acting as sub-consultants to Babtie. The 0.8ha excavation focused on the site of an early-middle Iron Age enclosure, identified by archaeological evaluation in 1994. It is situated on a low, boulder clay-capped ridge overlooking the River Ouzel.

Seven principal phases of activity were identified (Fig 2). Of these, four relate to the occupation and use of the site in the early-middle Iron Age. A curvilinear ditch running across the centre of the site appears to be the earliest landscape feature. Together with a roughly parallel but smaller ditch, this probably formed one element of a droveway. The enclosure was later constructed on one side of the possible droveway, involving a re-cutting and continued use of the droveway ditch. It may have been used for stock management rather than for occupation. After

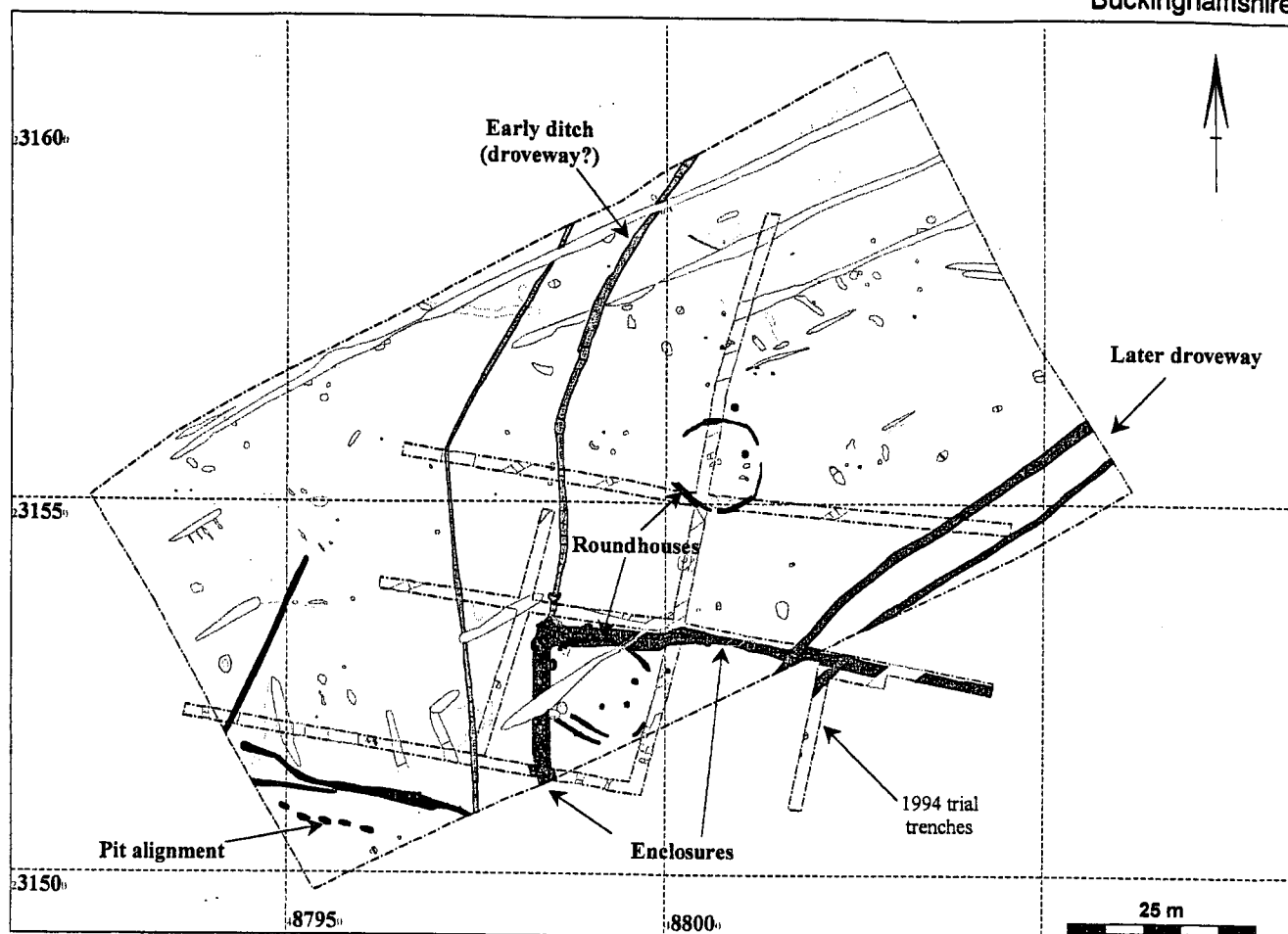


Fig 2. Stoke Hammond bypass (Northern link). Early-Middle Iron Age features.

several episodes of re-cutting, the enclosure ditch became redundant. The remains of two roundhouses, one of which cuts the silted up enclosure ditch, testify to a later period of unenclosed settlement. The roundhouses may have been related to another droveway, the ditches of which also cut the enclosure ditch.

Unphased features include a slightly curving alignment of five oval shallow pits - likely to belong to one of the early-middle Iron Age phases.

The use of the site did not continue into the late Iron Age and there is no evidence of Roman settlement. A random distribution of large tree-holes, cutting Iron Age features but cut by furrows, indicates that the site was wooded for a time, and may not have been re-cleared until the use of the site for agriculture in the Medieval period. There is evidence for a headland as well as a regular pattern of ridge and furrow. A large number of Post-Medieval land drains were uncovered roughly following the alignment of the furrows.

On completion of the open area excavation, groundworks in preparation for road construction commenced almost immediately. A watching brief continues to monitor works either side of the excavated site, along a strip of land about 1.3 km long.

COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL (TRAINING) SERVICES

Hanslope, Gordons Lodge Farm (SP 772 481)

Pat Lawrence, Jonathan Thomas and Jon Tanner.

During the summer of 2002 work continued on the Medieval site discussed on p15, Vol 32, *SMA*. Having determined and recorded the extent of two previous archaeological evaluations it was decided that in order to understand the function and status of the site it would be necessary to reveal the full footprint of the building and to section the enclosure ditch (previously identified by geophysical and aerial photographic survey) that surrounds it. To this end the original trench (Trench 1) was extended to cover an area 10m x 25m and a second trench (Trench 2) measuring 2m x 6m was opened up to reveal the enclosure ditch.

Trench 1

Excavation revealed that an extensive spread of limestone lay immediately below the topsoil. Much of this stone had been heated until it had turned a dark reddish colour and intermingled with it was charcoal, 12th-13th century pottery, broken floor tile and the occasional fragment of moulded stone. On the surface of this layer it was possible to identify a number of large clearly defined hearths, suggestive of those created by bonfires.

Once the above layer was removed the footprint of a large

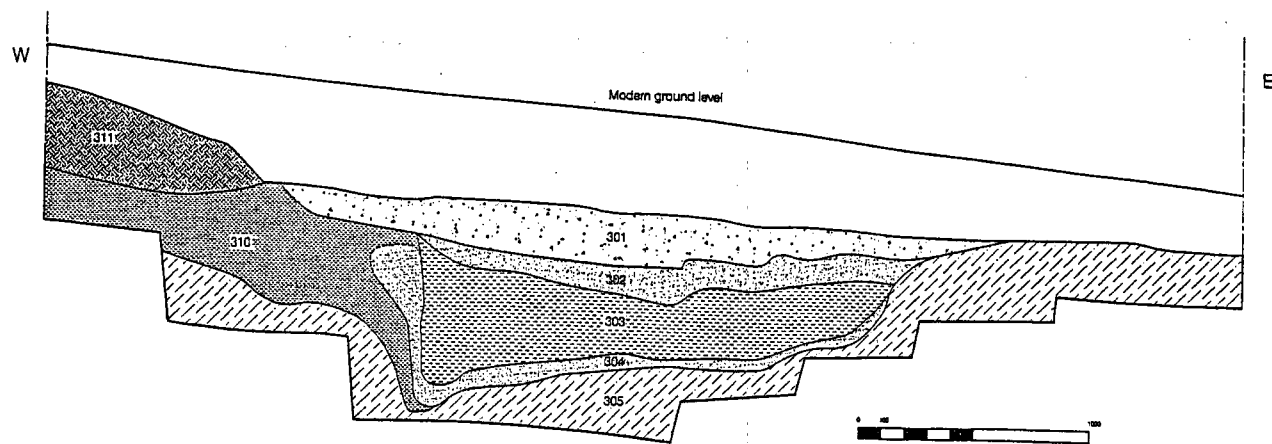


Fig 3. Gordons Lodge Farm, Hanslope. Trench 2.

stone building measuring 11.6m x 3.5m was revealed. The foundations of longest walls remained in situ (wall width approximately 750mm), however one gable wall had been robbed out in antiquity and the other appears to have been virtually entirely removed during a previous archaeological excavation. In several places small areas of flag stone flooring survived and miraculously so did a small keyhole oven built into the base of one of the long walls, the only structural feature to survive above the contemporary floor level.

Outside the building, a ditch ran parallel to the long axis of the structure. This ditch had a cesspit at its western end and appears to drain into the enclosure ditch some 25m away. When sectioned the sides and to some extent the bottom of the ditch cut had a thin soot and charcoal layer above which the ditch was full of the same material that made up the limestone layer discussed in paragraph one.

To the north of the ditch evidence for the existence of at least one, far more ephemeral structure survived in the form of fragmentary foundations with an obvious entrance way. The nature of the foundation was suggestive of those used to support sleeper beams.

Trench 2

By sectioning the enclosure ditch it was possible to show that the original ditch cut (Fig 3) had silted up sometime during or after the Roman occupation as a small number of 2nd century pottery sherds were found in Context 310. It then appears that the earthwork entered a period of stability, where it still remained visible but did not silt up any further. Then sometime between 1080-1225 it was re-cut with a vertical edge on its innermost side and the spoil was banked up to form a small rampart. This was shown by the fact that Context 311 contained Roman pottery but was void of any Medieval pot, whilst the bottom of Context 304 contained a substantial amount of Medieval ceramics dating from between 1080 and 1225. The ditch was re-cut again sometime between 1100 and 1225 as ceramics from that date range were found in Context 303 before it once again fell into disuse and completely silted up.

Discussion

Evidence in the form of architectural stonework, foundations and ceramics gathered from both this and previous seasons excavations suggest that a substantial building, probably two stories high with garderobe, an elaborate doorway, flag-stoned under-croft and at least a partly tiled floor at first floor level, was purposely built within an existing (prehistoric/Romano-British) enclosure at the beginning of the 12th century. At or around the same time the enclosure ditch was re-cut providing it with a vertical edge on its innermost side with the excavated material being banked up to form a small rampart. Within 125 years of it being built, the structure appears to have suffered the effects of a major fire. This is shown by both the soot/charcoal layer present at contemporary ground surface levels and the large amount of burnt limestone found on site. Having fallen out of use it is evident that any reusable building materials were soon reclaimed as the limestone layer described in paragraph one is indicative of a reclamation process rather than building collapse, and pottery evidence gathered from one of the bonfire hearths on top of this layer suggests a date range of for this action somewhere between 1100 and 1225.

Hanslope, Chantry Farm (SP 775 484)

Pat Lawrence and Jonathan Thomas

Staff and students conducted a desktop survey in order to try and identify earthworks visible on a series of private archaeological photographs taken in 1955. Using map regression it was possible to identify these earthworks as belonging to Hanslope Lodge, a not insignificant group of buildings last recorded on Bryants map of 1825 and absent from the first edition one-inch to the mile Ordnance Survey map published in 1835. It is speculated that the Lodge fell out of use with the building of the London main line railway as this would have passed within meters of the main building and may have necessitated several outbuildings being demolished. Moreover, it also cut across the hollow way running between the Lodge and Hartwell (the sections of which can still be seen in the current railway cutting) leaving the buildings somewhat isolated from the rest of the parish.

Further to the desktop survey a subsequent landscape study showed that the earthworks have been protected from modern farming practices by the planting of a small copse. As the trees are widely spaced and the copse has been well managed in so far as no undergrowth has been allowed to grow between the trees, it is still possible to make out a number of building platforms and garden features. It is therefore hoped that the landowner will give permission for students to conduct the necessary survey work needed to create a comprehensive digital terrain model in the near future. In the meantime efforts are being concentrated on recording the hollow way and field walking the adjacent fields as they become available. To date, the latter has produced an abundance of ceramics dating from the 14th - 19th centuries and the discovery of four further house/building bases centred on SP 774 484 (Lawrence and Thomas, forthcoming).

HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Aston Clinton, Chimneys, 42 Aylesbury Road
(SP 8722 1228)
Nick Crank and Matt Sutherland

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was commissioned by The Hall Partnership on behalf of James Weatherley Development Ltd. Three trenches revealed two modern features and an undated feature, which was probably of recent origin. No archaeological features or finds were revealed. Between 0.23 and 0.40 m of topsoil overlay the natural clay. The topsoil increased in depth towards the south-western part of the site. Site code: HAT 585; Herts Arch Trust report 1028.

Chalfont St Peter, Braillings Lane (TQ 0135 9310)
Nick Crank and Leonora OBrien

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was commissioned by Mr Martin Samworth in advance of proposed residential development of the site. Although late 18th and early 19th century maps of the site showed that it lay in the vicinity of the deserted Medieval settlement of Tatlers End, archaeological investigation did not reveal any evidence of this settlement or its hinterland. Between 0.23 and 0.4m of topsoil or topsoil/rubble hardcore mix overlay the natural clay, gravelly sand or clay silt brickearth. Site code: HAT 606; Herts Arch Trust report 1073

Chalfont St Peter, Rear of 59-63 Lower Road
(TQ 0025 9030)
Dr Dan Hounsell, Wesley Keir

The site lies in the valley of the river Misbourne, in an area that has revealed a number of early prehistoric sites. The archaeological evaluation, commissioned by Kingsway

Homes Ltd, revealed no archaeological features or finds. No alluvial deposits were present on the site and river terrace gravels were present at a relatively shallow depth of 0.62m below ground surface. Site code: HAT 584; Herts Arch Trust report 1027

Coleshill, Kitchen Extension, Potters Meadow
(SU 9485 9495)
Nick Crank

No archaeological finds were recovered or features revealed during this programme of archaeological monitoring and recording commissioned by Mr. Nigel Wolfendale. Located in the southern end of Coleshill village. The presence of pottery kilns in Coleshill is well documented and the adjacent Penn/Tylers Green area was particularly important for late Medieval pottery production encouraged by the clay geology of the area. No evidence of the post-mediaeval pottery industry was identified. The natural clay drift was present at shallow depth below the existing ground surface across the site. Site code: HAT 607; Herts Arch Trust report 1070

Ley Hill. Lilac Tree Lodge, The Common (SP 9885 0200)
Jonathan Grant

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Staines, to observe groundworks associated with the construction of a residential dwelling. The site lay within the hamlet of Ley Hill, where a number of finds of pottery kiln products point to the ceramic production in this area in the mediaeval and early Post-Mediaeval periods. However, no archaeological features or finds were recorded here. Recent overburden directly overlay the natural drift geology to an average depth of 0.65m below the existing ground surface. Site code: HAT 627; Herts Arch Trust report 1106

Milton Keynes, Site E, Land at Burners Lane South Kiln Farm
Dr Dan Hounsell

No significant archaeological features or finds were identified during the trial trench evaluation, commissioned by Leigh Cooper Associates on behalf of their client Northgate Vehicle Hire Limited. In particular, no continuation of the Romano-British site recorded at Kiln Farm in the early 1970s (MK82; SP 8072 394) was identified within the area of proposed development. No residual material of Iron Age/Roman date was recovered. Between 0.42m and 0.78m of topsoil and subsoil overlay the natural Boulder Clay deposits on the site, deepening slightly in the trenches downslope in the eastern part of the site. Site code: HAT 596; Herts Arch Trust report 1056.

Buckinghamshire

JOHN MOORE

Longwick-cum-Ilmer, Longwick Mill (SP 7922 0424)

John Moore

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the conversion of the mill buildings and the excavation for foundations for other new structures. Use of the site for a mill at the time of the Domesday Survey seems to be confirmed by the finding of 11th century Oxford Ware pottery.

Evidence for some of the arrangement of the mill house and paper mill prior to the 19th century alterations were found during the small-scale ground reduction. Traces of buildings on a different alignment to the present buildings were undated. While they may have been associated with the recent arrangement of the mill they may be earlier. A further mill pond was found to the north of the buildings.

Oxford Archaeology carried out building recording on the mill buildings. The building appears to have been originally built in the early 18th century as a paper mill but this closed in c 1830 and by 1862 it was operating as a corn mill. The location and general chronology of Longwick paper mill is typical of the paper-making industry and reflects national trends. Buckinghamshire was one of the main centres of the trade and many mills were established in the 18th century before closing in the early 19th due to introduction of new technology making older paper mills uneconomical.

The building divides into three distinct sections: the mill house at the north end, the mill itself to the centre and an adjoining barn at the southern end. Although the current form of the mill house largely dates to a substantial rebuilding probably in the mid 19th century this part of the building was found to incorporate the remains of two earlier buildings probably dating to the original establishment of the paper mill in the early 18th century. Almost all of the historic gearing, machinery and other features had been removed from the mill prior to the current works but some indication of the former layout of the mill could be established from some surviving physical evidence and from discussion with a former employer at the mill. The work confirmed the location and approximate size of the water wheel which powered the mill before being removed in the 1960s. The southern section of the building consists of a timber-framed barn (probably re-erecting the main frame from a previous building) at first floor which appears to have been added as a secondary addition on top of the primary ground floor brick walls contemporary with the main mill building.

The building is listed Grade II and is of considerable historical interest as a surviving relic from a once important local industry. It is also of some industrial archaeological interest but this has been significantly diminished due to the loss of the vast majority of its machinery and workings. It is also limited by the fact that its most significant period, while operating as a paper mill, ceased in the early 19th century

and that its conversion to a corn mill would have removed much evidence of its use as a paper mill.

Oving, Land Adjacent to Four Acres, Bowling Alley (SP 7875 2156)

Maggie Henderson

An evaluation was carried out on this proposed development area. A single ditch feature was uncovered, probably of Post-Medieval origin. A single sherd of Iron Age pottery indicates activity of this date in the general area, but not necessarily on this site.

Radnage, Bennett End Farm, Bennett End (SU 7855 9725)

Amy Gray Jones

A watching brief during ground reduction for a minage failed to find anything associated with the nearby possible prehistoric burial mound or the findspot of late Iron-Age and Romano-British coins.

Terrick, Land Adjacent to Moat View, Risborough Road (SP 8370 0822)

John Moore

An evaluation of an area proposed for development for residential purposes was undertaken to determine the presence/absence of significant archaeological remains adjacent to a Medieval moated site. The evaluation failed to find any significant archaeological remains. A former field boundary ditch was located adjacent to the current field boundary.

MICHAEL FARLEY ARCHAEOLOGY

Buckingham, St Rumbolds Well (SP 6896 3355)

St Rumbolds Well lies in the corner of a grassy field proposed for development in Aylesbury Vale District Councils Local Plan. In 2000 only the stone footings of the structure were visible and the Buckingham Society was keen that the remains, which had recently been scheduled as an ancient monument, should be better presented and conserved. Accordingly, Michael Farley Archaeology was commissioned to carry out background research, and liaise with the relevant authorities over the necessary permissions. Conservation work, including limited excavation, was subsequently carried out in 2002 and the site was fenced and better access provided, together with an information board.

The well is shown on Speeds map of 1611 Browne Willis (1755) describes the subsequent construction of a conduit house here in 1623, the pipes from the well supplying Castle House in the town. In 1913 the Royal Commission described

the conduit house as in fairly good condition but by 1968, when it was excavated by the local Buckingham Archaeological Society, it had been reduced to footings. In the course of the recent conservation work the rubble-filled (previously excavated) interior was again partially re-excavated. This unexpectedly revealed two roughly-built stone steps leading down into the building from its northern doorway. Set into the eastern door jamb was an iron spike which would have supported the ring-hinge of a door. A piece of stone window moulding, lying partly-buried adjacent to the well was retrieved, and during path laying part of the head of a door frame and one other dressed piece were also recovered. These three pieces were subsequently placed within the restored conduit house.

The stone walls of the house were of dressed rectangular blocks. The course of the walls was defined at the surface and some stones replaced with fallen material. With the agreement of English Heritage, the original steps were left exposed and one additional step for access added. Copies of the three-part report on the work have been deposited in the SMR.

Haddenham, St Marys Church (SP 7414 0800)

A watching brief was carried out at St Marys Church, Haddenham during: (a) construction of a kitchen and toilet within the west tower (b) digging of a pipe trench through the churchyard and the adjacent village green (c) excavation of a soakaway in the churchyard. A number of burials were recorded within the churchyard limits. The church is recorded to have been a minster church but no structural indication of the minster was recovered. Apart from skeletal material there were few finds, but a single early-mid-Saxon sherd was present: early Saxon pottery has previously been found in the vicinity. Some details of the basal construction of the 13th century tower were recorded. One fragment of decorated Medieval floor tile was found. The finds are being returned to the parish.

Hedgerley, Woodlands Rise, Hedgerley Lane (SU 9917 8750)

A watching brief carried out during construction of an extension to Woodlands Rise, did not encounter any finds or features of archaeological interest, despite the presence of a well-preserved Roman pottery kiln excavated only 50m distant (*Recs Bucks* 29 (1987), 160-69). Clay suitable for pottery making was present on the site.

Penn, Tylers Green, 1 & 2 Red Lion Cottages (SU 9074 9368)

A watching brief at Red Lion Cottages, Tylers Green, Penn, during the construction of an extension and excavation of a service pipe trench (adjacent to an earlier findspot of decorated Medieval tiles) produced no evidence for the

well-known Penn tile industry nor any finds dating pre-dating the 17th century.

MUSEUM OF LONDON ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Denham, Sanderson Site, Oxford Road (TQ 05425 85095)

MoLAS (Isca Howell, Jane Corcoran, Mike Morley) evaluation/geoarchaeological evaluation June-July, November 2002 Arlington Properties Ltd BM-SSU02

Six evaluation trenches were excavated and five auger holes were drilled on the site. A sequence of floodplain deposits (alluvium) was observed in all the trenches. At the base of the alluvium in the central and eastern parts of the area were gravels, which had been deposited towards the end of the last Ice Age. A small quantity of worked flints was recovered from a soil that developed on the surface of the gravel. The soil sloped down towards a watercourse that would have crossed the western part of the site.

The watercourse adopted a meandering course 8,000 years ago (or earlier) and a gravel bar developed at the edge of the channel along the western margins of the site. Eventually the gravel bar caused the flow of the watercourse to cease and thick peat deposits accumulated in the former channel, which was heavily wooded. In contrast, an open environment existed adjacent to the river channel along the western margins of the site, where the bar had formed.

From about 7,000 years ago, during the later Mesolithic, the woodland became waterlogged and a marsh developed across the entire site, with expanses of standing water. At this time the climate was warm and wetter than today and remained so during the Neolithic period, when tufa deposits, found to the south of the evaluated area, indicate that a clear, swift-flowing stream crossed the site.

Later in the prehistoric period, the site became wet grassland, subject to overbank flooding, and this environment was likely to have continued throughout the historic period. At the top of the alluvial sequence, the remains of the former hay meadow are represented by oxidised silty clay and in patches the remains of the Post-Medieval soil are preserved below the factory construction levels.

Milton Keynes, Monkston Park (SP 88500 38300)

MoLAS (Simon Davis and Raoul Bull) excavation November 2002-ongoing English Partnership BU-MOK02

Three open area excavations are taking place.

Area 1

The largest area on site has produced evidence of several phases of Roman enclosures dating from the 1st to 4th centuries. The northern-most enclosure appears to be

Buckinghamshire

associated with a few cremations, as several complete vessels have been recovered from here. A timber-framed building may also be associated with the cremations although it is still being excavated.

The Roman enclosures have been truncated in the centre of the area of Medieval - Post-Medieval ridge and furrow.

Area 2

This area has again produced Roman enclosures with the largest enclosed area used as a cremation cemetery. Several urned cremations have been excavated including a large beaker type vessel. An X-ray of this vessel indicates it contains at least two copper alloy brooches. A second cremation burial is associated with four copper alloy brooches in addition to six complete vessels. One of these, a very fine but shattered flagon had unusual copper alloy strapping around it. A similar feature has produced a further placed deposit of several vessels and a flagon. Excavation is still taking place on the cremations. These appear to be of early Roman date.

Area 3

This is a much smaller area containing Roman enclosures and postholes. One of the ditches contained an ox burial. Excavation has been completed on this area.

It is of interest that the Milton Keynes hoard - a small dish-type vessel containing several gold torques and Roman coins was found during a watching brief on the service road, which separates Area 2 and 3. It is likely that this was associated with the cremation cemetery.

Milton Keynes, The Oakhill Secure Training Centre, Chalgrove Field, Oakhill (SP 81790 36211)

MoLAS (Isca Howell) evaluation September 2002 M J Gleeson BU-OAK 02

Ten trenches were evaluated on the site. Nine undated small features of possible archaeological origin were found in three trenches to the north and centre of the site. Natural clay was recorded at heights between 112.19m OD to 119.44m OD.

Evidence of one of the ponds indicated on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1861 was found near the centre of the site. To the east of the site, a ditch and bank may relate to a field boundary on the same map. However there was no evidence to suggest that either of these features existed before the 19th century.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

Broughton Barn Quarry (SP 9076 4056)

Andy Chapman

The watching brief at Broughton Barn Quarry on behalf of

GFX Hartigan neared completion. Extraction has reached the northern end of the quarry, and located the northern corner of the 1st century Roman settlement enclosure, originally discovered during trial trenching and recorded during previous years of the watching brief (SMA 32 (2002), 19-20).

Buckingham, Grand Junction Hotel (SP 6983 3413)

Simon Carlyle

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on behalf of CgMs Consulting (Midlands) on land to the rear of the Grand Junction Public House, High Street. Archaeological remains dating to the Medieval period, comprising ditches, pits and a possible kiln or oven, were encountered in one area. Other features were Post-Medieval, mainly 19th and 20th century in origin.

Milton Keynes, Monkston Park (SP 885 381)

Rowena Lloyd

Following geophysical surveys and a previous phase of trial trenching at Monkston Park, a further evaluation comprising thirty-two trenches was commissioned by English Partnerships.

The area showed evidence of occupation in the Bronze Age and Iron Age, but with no clear settlement focus. There was a scatter of Iron Age pottery from the site in general, some coming from pits, suggesting that the Roman occupation was a direct continuation from earlier settlement.

Roman occupation spanned the 1st to 4th centuries, with two tightly defined areas of settlement. The northern area was of 1st century date and the other more substantial occupation in the southern half of the site, which included a sub-square ditched enclosure was dated to the 3rd and 4th centuries.

Milton Keynes, Newton Blossomville (SP 92381 51462)

Danny McAree

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on land at Talbot Cottage, Clifton Road, Newton Blossomville. Three foundation trenches, with a total length of 35m, were opened in advance of development for an extension to the residential property. No archaeological remains were recorded and no archaeological finds were recovered.

Olney, Cowper Tannery (SP 4887 2510)

Alex Thorne

An evaluation at the Cowper Tannery, on an area of pasture to the north of the tannery buildings, was carried out on behalf of Bloor Homes.

The twelve trenches revealed a series of archaeological

features. In the south-eastern part of the site there was a system of ditches and gullies dated to the 12th century. These lay on two perpendicular alignments and may have formed boundaries to tenements related to the establishment of the planned town in the 12th century. The alignments respect the general alignments of Lime Street and High Street, which is known to retain the line of the 12th century main street. A pit/well also dated to the 12th century was found.

Also recovered from the site were a number of redeposited early/middle Saxon pottery sherds, some of the first known from Olney.

Singleborough, Glebe Farm (SP 766 317)

Mark Holmes

An archaeological recording action comprising small scale excavation and an earthworks survey was undertaken prior to construction of a new residential dwelling at Glebe Farm. The footprint of the house and its associated garage were located within an area of earthworks believed to represent part of the shrunken Medieval settlement of Singleborough. Excavation revealed a single ditch and four pits, 11th to 12th century in date. However, quantities of Medieval pottery found in the topsoil suggested that soil had probably been moved from other nearby occupation deposits. Part of the area had been disturbed by a backfilled Victorian pond.

Stowe Landscape Gardens (SP 674 383)

Joe Prentice, Anthony Maull and Steve Hayward

On behalf of the National Trust as part of the ongoing restoration of the landscape and monuments, a watching brief has been kept during tree planting and investigations have also been conducted around various monuments including the statue of George I, the Temple of Modern Virtue and Wolfe's Obelisk.

Tree planting

In order to re-instate a number of historic planting schemes at Stowe Gardens, the National Trust is undertaking extensive tree planting. Previous tree planting and other work had found evidence of Roman activity close to two of the areas of new planting, the Conduit House and the Bourbon Tower, so a watching brief was maintained on all of the tree planting pits, with a percentage within each area being sampled.

One of these, close to the Conduit House, recovered Roman ceramic tile. To investigate the extent and nature of this deposit a geophysical survey was carried out and a larger trench was excavated by hand. This partially exposed the remains of a rectangular tile kiln, with walls built of ceramic tiles surviving up to seven courses deep.

The other tree planting areas revealed little evidence of former activity. The Bourbon Tower also lies close to

previously recorded Roman pottery kilns, but no archaeological features were found during this phase of tree planting.

George I

Archaeological investigation around the base of the statue of King George I during works to repair the paving, base and plinth revealed evidence of a wide gravel apron surrounding the plinth. The approximate limit of this gravel was located by probing but this could not be confirmed, as this would have necessitated excavation onto the school playing field. Excavation revealed that the plinth was constructed on a foundation of roughly dressed stone.

Temple of Modern Virtue

Excavation on the site of the former Temple of Modern Virtue revealed substantial stone and mortar footings of the structure, which had stood adjacent to the Temple of Ancient Virtue. The superstructure of the building was removed during the latter part of the 18th century and it remains unclear how the footings relate to the only known contemporary depiction of the monument. Nearby, traces of another, probably earlier, building were discovered.

Wolfe's Obelisk

Prior to the restoration of the upper section of Wolfe's Obelisk trenches were excavated for the erection of a large scaffold tower around the structure. During the removal of the upper part of the obelisk a quantity of re-used stonework was discovered. The stonework is likely to have come from former buildings located in the grounds, but it is unclear from which monuments they derive apart from two rusticated pieces which may have been part of the Guglio located in the former Octagon lake.

Milton Keynes, Weston Underwood (SP 8655 5061)

Rob Atkins

An archaeological watching brief on behalf of Mike Finn-Kelcey took place during conversion of a barn into a domestic dwelling at Limestone Barn, Cross Lane. The impact of the development was slight as most of the groundwork was contained in make up layers associated with changes to the barn carried out in the 1950s. The only discovery was the top of an undated limestone floor within the barn. This was preserved in situ under the new house footings. The limited excavation means that other archaeological features could survive beneath the make up layers.

NATIONAL TRUST

Gary Marshall

Cliveden (SU91038515)

Oxford Archaeology maintained a watching brief over excavations on the South Terrace at Cliveden, which were

Buckinghamshire

cut for the purpose of investigating subsidence and waterlogging of the terrace surface. Several trial trenches were cut through the upper surface of the terrace to investigate the make-up of the ground overlying the brick vaults forming the terrace. These revealed several brick drains, thought to be 19th century, plus layers of clay making up the ground construction. Trial trenches were also cut through the landings on the steps leading to the main parterre, and within the floor of the central ground floor chamber beneath the terrace.

Hughenden Manor (SU86109534)

Scaffolding erected on the south front of Hughenden Manor to allow for re-pointing and repairs to the brickwork provided the opportunity to closely examine the surface treatment of the brickwork. The present exposed appearance of the brickwork probably dates from the alterations carried out under the direction of the architect E B Lamb in 1862. However, examination of the north and east fronts in 2001 had suggested that the brickwork of the house had previously been covered with coats of yellow and white lime wash. Indeed, a watercolour of the house dating from 1852 shows the building apparently coated in white lime wash and this was still the case in 1881. The house was erected in the late 1730s after its acquisition by Charles Savage, though remnants of a farmhouse can still be detected in the basement. The lime washing of the building seems to represent a secondary phase of surface finish as evidence was also found of ruddling and penciling of the brickwork ie with the joints painted out with a red ochre and then struck and filled with a fine lime mortar.

Hughenden Park (SU86069500)

A watching brief maintained over a trench for burying an electric cable from Coates lane to Middle Lodge sectioned several ditches in the belt of woodland lying to the west of the Lodge. The largest of these ditches coincides closely with the boundary between the parishes of Hughenden and West Wycombe and it therefore appears to have been cut as a boundary ditch.

Stowe Gardens (SP675375)

The National Trust have recently been employing the services of contractors at Stowe to undertake various archaeological projects. These are summarized as follows.

Lake dredging and restoration - with the aid of a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund the Trust have undertaken an ambitious project to dredge and restore three of the historic ponds in the Deer Park north of the gardens. Oxford Archaeology have been employed to maintain an archaeological watching brief over these works. The three ponds lie on the course of small stream, referred to historically as the Rufus River. At the uppermost pond,

known as the Roothouse Pond, the excavations revealed an iron sluice gate set into a timber frame. This connected with a brick culvert forming an outlet at the base of the pond, allowing it to be occasionally drained. The middle pond or Haymanger Pond is referred to as a stew pond in the 17th century. Excavations at the base of the earthen dam revealed a complex of substantial timbers forming the base of a sluice opening and silt trap connected with a brick culvert. Samples taken for dendrochronology sampling suggest a date range between 1775 and 1807 for the construction of this feature, though partly re-using timbers dating from the 1720s/30s.

The third and lowest pond is the millpond for the sawmill at Home Farm. This almost certainly worked in tandem with the Haymanger Pond, providing water to the mill, which is thought to be contemporary with the construction of the farm ie c 1790. The removal of up to six feet of silt from the pond revealed the full extent of the brick and stone dam, plus an iron gate lined with leather forming a sluice similar to that at the Roothouse Pond. A length of iron chain was found to be connected to the iron gate and this was probably connected to a simple ratchet mechanism, although unfortunately all trace of this mechanism has disappeared.

Perhaps surprisingly very little in the way of artefact evidence was recovered from the dredging. However, several pit-sawn planks were recovered from the silts in the millpond. Immersing such timbers was once a common practice, promoting the decay of the sapwood. Samples taken for dendrochronology dating suggest a date range between 1892 and 1910 for the felling of these timbers.

King George I - the equestrian statue of King George I (1723) was relocated to its present position on the north front at Stowe in the 1790s, having originally been sited further to the north on the line of the main drive to Stowe. The lead statue has recently been taken away for repairs and strengthening, and the plinth has been consolidated. Northamptonshire Archaeology have maintained a watching brief over these repairs, and have also undertaken excavations at the base of the monument to determine the nature and depth of any surface layers surrounding it. These revealed a shallow spread of flint gravel at the level of the lowest course of ashlar on the plinth. A subsequent trench for a water pipe monitored by Oxford Archaeology revealed the full extent of this surface, confirming evidence from an 1806 drawing that the monument was surrounded by an oval of gravel, which in turn was connected with a central drive running parallel with the north front of the house.

Tree planting in the park - excavations for tree planting in the park to the north of the gardens have been monitored by Northamptonshire Archaeology. These led to the recovery of small amounts of Roman pottery and roof tile from the vicinity of the Conduit House, which is a small 18th century eye-catcher sited over a brick-lined reservoir. What was almost the last pit led to the discovery of several substantial pieces of Roman wall tile in situ. The excavations were therefore enlarged, revealing several courses of tile arranged in columns or pilae. Though not all of this structure was

revealed it is thought to be the remains of a Romano-British corn drying kiln since a large patch of charcoal containing burnt grain was found in close proximity. The site of this structure lies close to the Roman Road between Alchester and Towcester. It also lies close to the site of a Romano-British pottery kiln found in the early 1990s. Clearly there is evidence for significant Romano-British occupation in the Stowe landscape and it is hoped that further investigation involving geophysics may reveal more about this unknown aspect of Stowes past.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

Compiled and edited by Edward Biddulph

Aylesbury, Berryfields (SP 787 160)
Daniel Dodds

A field evaluation was carried out on behalf of CPM Environmental Planning and Design. In the south-west part of the site, evidence was recovered for a late prehistoric settlement. Geophysical survey had revealed circular dwelling or barrow-like structures and a possible enclosure ditch. Trial trenching indicated good preservation of features and artefacts. Environmental evidence indicated that domestic crops and wild varieties were being grown at this time. To the east of this area, the Geophysical Survey identified what appeared to be a Roman-period roadside settlement, comprising a row of ditched plots adjacent to a northeast/southwest aligned trackway. Pottery suggests occupation spanning the 1st-4th centuries, perhaps with a 2nd century emphasis. Trenching in the north part of the development area recovered ephemeral evidence from a complex series of linear features located by the geophysical survey. No firmly dated artefacts were recovered from these features though the sites limits were nonetheless confirmed. Evidence of Medieval activity across the site as a whole was limited to the recovery of a few sherds of pottery. A further area of the site was intensively trenched following the mapping of hitherto unrecorded earthworks identified during a walkover survey just south of Berryfields House. This area of earthworks, comprising ditched hollows and raised platforms, lay to the east of the development site, and proved to be of late Post-Medieval date, probably associated with a farm building in this period. Medieval and later ploughing had caused notable damage to underlying features.

Buckingham, St Peter and St Pauls Church
(SP 6946 3375)
James Mumford

An archaeological watching brief in January 2002, commissioned by Basil Wyatt & Son Ltd in advance of internal renovations in the west end of the church, revealed that the church was built onto the ground make up of the castle mound and that the site had been cleared and levelled

prior to its construction.

Buckingham, High Street, Stratford House
(SP 6985 3417)
Granville Laws

An evaluation of a proposed development site on behalf of MOH Properties Limited in March 2002 revealed Medieval occupation pits dated to the 11th-13th century, one of which contained over 40 sherds of pottery. The artefactual evidence suggests that from the 14th-17th century the site was little used, and was perhaps derelict, before the construction of a boundary ditch divided the site in the later post-Medieval period. Post-Medieval domestic rubbish pits containing clay pipe, animal bone and pottery were also encountered. Latterly the site was levelled up for the present yard surfaces.

Great Kimble, Glebe Paddock (SP 8270 0580)
James Mumford

A watching brief in advance of the construction of a drive way exposed no archaeological features pre-dating the construction of the vicarage in 1859. A ditch and pathway of 19th century date probably relate to the landscaping of the garden.

High Wycombe, The Rye Environment Centre
(SU 8740 9238)
Jonathan Hiller

A watching brief was carried out between February and September 2002 on behalf of Wycombe District Council. The swimming pool complex overlies the site of Rye Roman villa and the groundwork revealed sections of the villa walls with preserved wall plaster, and a possible make-up layer for the villa floor surface. Roman levels were sealed by modern deposits associated with the swimming pool built on the site in the 20th century.

High Wycombe, Temple End (SU 865 945)
James Mumford

A watching brief took place in April and May 2002 on behalf of PSS Construction. 19th century garden soils and three brick-lined wells from this time or later were recorded.

High Wycombe, junction of the M40/A404 (SU 853 911)
Timothy Haines

An archaeological watching brief was carried out on a geotechnical exercise. The work was commissioned by Parsons Brinkerhoff Infrastructure Ltd in advance of road improvements. The watching brief revealed no archaeological features. Test Pits revealed undisturbed

Buckinghamshire

buried topsoil below deposits used to construct the current road embankments.

Long Crendon, Notley Farm (SP 4713 2093) Jonathan Hiller

A watching brief was undertaken between September 2001 and September 2002 in advance of the construction of a property extension. This revealed made ground directly overlying limestone brash. No archaeological features or deposits were observed.

Milton Keynes, Olney (SP 8900 5155) James Mumford

A watching brief on behalf of Kempston Property Holdings was undertaken in May 2002. This revealed a large rubbish pit, possibly a cesspit, which had been cut by another pit. This in turn had been truncated by the construction of the barn. All were Medieval in date. The area had then been built up and levelled with material for a cobbled surface and a brick pathway to the barn.

Milton Keynes, Wolverton Mill (SP 8025 0750) Steven Weaver

An evaluation was carried out in June 2002 on land currently occupied by the Consignia Training Centre site at Wolverton Mill, Milton Keynes on behalf of Mason Austin Evans. The evaluation revealed a concentration of archaeological features in the north central area of the site that dated to the early Medieval period. Evidence for possible quarrying during the Roman period was observed. Several pits and ditches dating to the early Medieval period cut the deposits which had accumulated within the possible quarry pits.

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

A watching brief was undertaken and revealed made ground deposits, one of which contained concentrations of brick rubble, tile and masonry possibly associated with the 1863 renovation of the 14th century chancel.

Stowe, Stowe House (SP 6700 3750) James Mumford

An archaeological watching brief was commissioned by Purcell Miller Tritton architects in advance of re-laying of the north forecourt and the installation of new drainage. This revealed two stone structures, which pre-date the existing east colonnade at the front of the main house. The structures appear to be the foundations of aedicules (small rooms), which once formed part of a structure flanking the terrace in

front of Stowe House. The structures are depicted on Jacques Rigauds illustration of the building dated 1739. The structures are thus of 18th century date or earlier. Also revealed were 19th-century brick-built culverts, which had been inserted into the remains of an earlier 18th-century terrace gravel surface.

Taplow, Cliveden (SU 9103 8515) Andrew Norton

An archaeological watching brief was commissioned by the National Trust in advance of intrusive groundworks on the South Terrace to inform on the need for maintenance of the structure. This demonstrated that the vaulted terrace was in a generally sound state. A number of 19th century drains were revealed and a 19th century wall foundation was exposed at the base of the terrace.

Wendover, 4 South Street (SU 8677 0770) Jonathan Hiller

An evaluation was carried out in December 2002 on behalf of Sidleys Chartered Surveyors. 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.

Whiteleaf Hill (SP 82 04) Gill Hey

A field walk was undertaken at Whiteleaf Hill on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council in respect of the clearance of trees as part of the Nature Reserve Restoration Project. Four pieces of worked flint were found in total, together with four pieces of burnt unworked flint. The former was heavily corticated, showing that it had been exposed for a long time; it was probably worked with a hard hammer, and it was of Neolithic to Bronze Age date. The flakes may be associated with previously discovered Neolithic features.

THAMES VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES LTD

Buckingham, Church of St Peter and St Paul, Church Hill (SP 6947 3376) Erland Hindmarch

Six evaluation trenches revealed a great depth of Post-Medieval made ground, and two robber trenches from walls also probably Post-Medieval. Below these, Medieval

deposits of mortar and limestone could represent the remains of a substantial wall, possibly a curtain wall, or an embankment, for the Medieval castle which may have occupied the hill.

Chearsley, Parish Church of St Nicholas, Church Lane
(SP 7203 1032)

Stephen Hammond

A watching brief during the laying of a new drain revealed nothing of interest, but the taking up of part of the floor within the tower of the church permitted the observation of what appear to be the original construction cuts for the tower, much wider than the present walls, and an earlier construction with limestone foundations, and perhaps the location of an entrance predating the tower. As none of these would be disturbed by the work, examination was fairly superficial and the interpretation is based on the plan alone.

High Wycombe, Wycombe Marsh (SU 886 920)

Erlend Hindmarch

An area of 16ha was evaluated using 41 trenches. Only four trenches contained any archaeological evidence. A ditch, possibly Roman, crossed three trenches, and a fourth revealed late Post-Medieval brickwork and a deposit of 19th century cinders and ash, above a chalk layer, presumably a floor, which could possibly be earlier. The ditch is essentially undated, but it contained two fragments of Roman roof tile and a layer above it contained a single small shell-tempered base sherd which could possibly be Roman or Medieval.

Iver, Robinwood, Delaford Close (TQ 0396 8103)

Jo Pine

Two evaluation trenches (and observations in two other trenches) revealed nothing of archaeological interest.

Milton Keynes, Sites Q2 and Q3, Knowlhill

(SP 8465 3659)

Stephen Hammond

Ten evaluation trenches revealed no archaeological features; a single featureless fragment of burnt clay was recovered from the surface of the natural.

Milton Keynes, Oxley Park (SP8220 3518)

Erlend Hindmarch

An area of 21.6ha was evaluated by geophysical and metal detector survey, and 113 trenches. The non-invasive methods revealed nothing of interest, but the trenching uncovered numerous shallow ditches, including one area where they were close set and orthogonally aligned. Very

few of these could be dated, but several contained single sherds of Roman pottery, and one yielded 28 sherds from a single Roman vessel. A few sherds of probably Saxon pottery were also recovered. The ditches could all belong to a single system of field boundaries, or perhaps relate to an intensive agricultural practice such as viticulture, but the evidence is meagre.

Milton Keynes, Westcroft (SP 8260 3430)

A watching brief during infrastructure works revealed a late Iron Age farm, consisting of a ring gully (102) and enclosure (101), with a series of pits and field boundaries (Fig 4). The ceramic assemblage (475 sherds) suggests occupation through the 1st century BC and into the first half of the 1st century AD. The lack of internal structures points to a building tradition without the need for earthfast foundations, such as the turf construction suggested for the roundhouses at Pennyland (Williams 1993). The pottery shows the ring gully and the enclosure to be of similar date, although they are unlikely to have been in use together, as the infilled enclosure was overlain by the ring gully, but perhaps the original enclosure may have continued in use after its ditch had silted up.

Finally, another ditch (103) cut both the ring gully and the enclosure; its pottery appears to be later than the rest of the assemblage, although still in the same late Iron Age tradition. The apparently later dating may be as much to do with the greater quantity present, allowing more positive identification.

A combination of hut and enclosure is common to this period and this area. However, the lack of a surrounding settlement enclosure ditch is less usual (Knight 1984, 197). The site may be part of a larger complex, given the concentration of what were apparently Iron Age pits discovered only some 400m to the north-east (Ford, 2000), where again there was no real evidence for enclosure.

A more detailed report appears in *Recs of Bucks.*

References

- Ford, S 2000; 'An evaluation and rescue excavation at the Westcroft District Centre, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, 1993', *Recs of Bucks* 40 (for 1998-2000), 23-34
Knight, D, 1984; Late Bronze Age and Iron Age Settlement in the Nene and Great Ouse Basin, *BAR Brit Ser* 130 (ii)
Williams, R J, 1993, Pennyland and Hartigans. Two Iron Age and Saxon Sites in Milton Keynes *Buckinghamshire Archaeol Soc Monogr Ser* 4

Milton Keynes, Snelshall East (SP 8355 3333)

Andrew Muddin

A metal detector survey and watching brief during road infrastructure works revealed no archaeological finds or deposits.

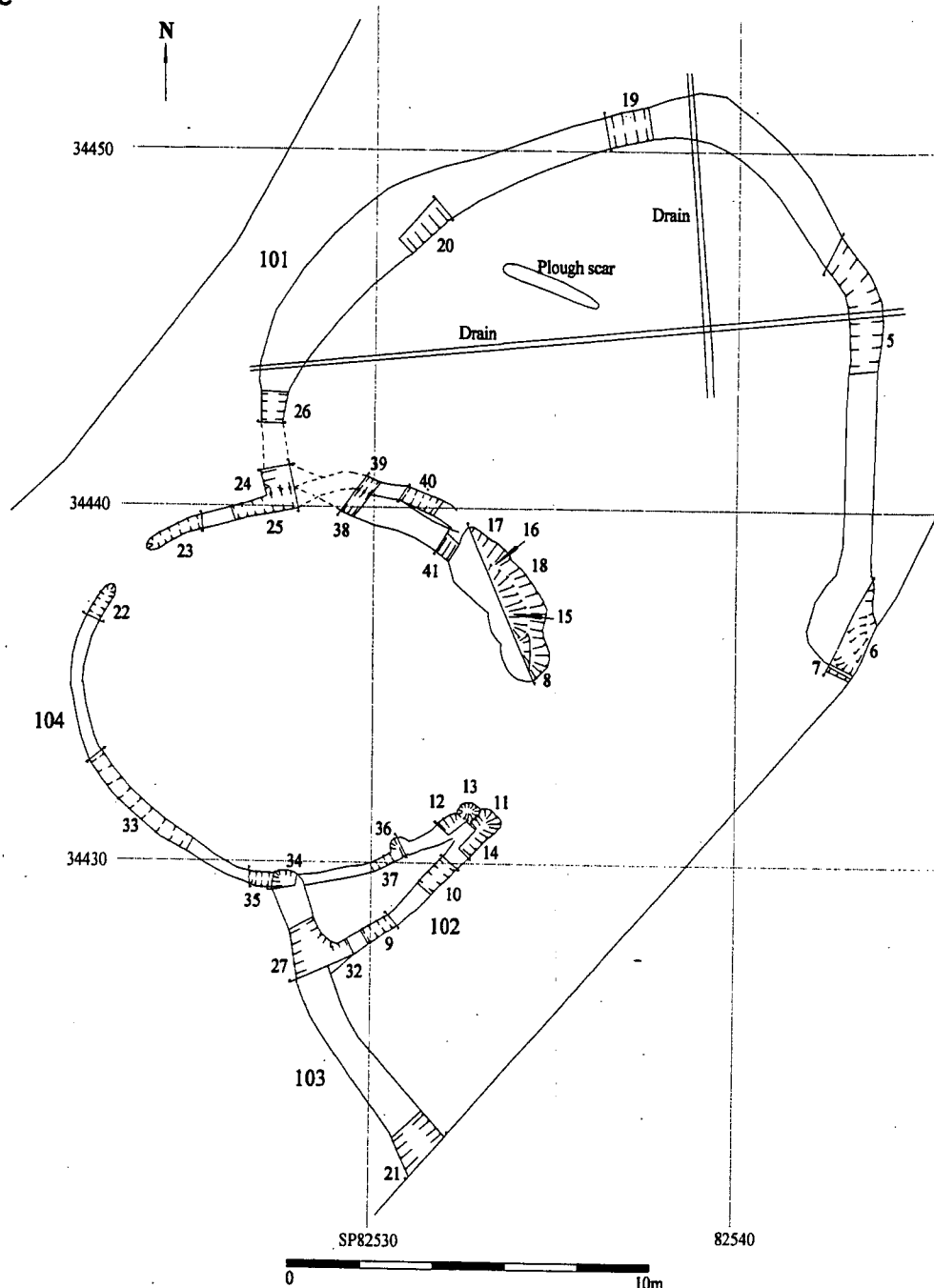


Fig 4. Westcroft, Milton Keynes. Site plan.

Monks Risborough, St Dunstan's Church (SP 8125 0440)

Two trenches were excavated in advance of construction of a new church hall. No archaeology was encountered.

Penn, Cotters Barn, Elm Road (SU9075 96364)

Sian Anthony

A watching brief during alterations to the barn and

outbuildings did not observe any archaeological features.

Prestwood, Honor End Lane (SP 8625 0170)

Sian Anthony

A watching brief during construction of a stable block revealed nothing of interest, although the line of the Grim's Ditch is thought to run through, or very close to, the site. Recent ploughing may account for the absence.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

ALBION ARCHAEOLOGY

Fotheringhay Castle (TL 0622 9297)

Jeremy Oetgen

Fotheringhay Castle is a scheduled ancient monument (National Monument Number 13641), which has considerable historical significance for both England and Scotland. The castle was the birthplace of Richard III and place of execution of Mary Queen of Scots. It was a possession of the royal house of Scotland and later the house of York. The monument is in private ownership, but is managed under a Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

In 2001/02, on behalf of English Heritage, a conservation statement and archaeological management survey were undertaken by Albion Archaeology, in conjunction with Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit. The study area also included earthworks in a field to the north of the castle and an area known as the Little Park. The overall objective of the study was to advance active conservation of the monument by identifying options for tackling threats, repairing damage and generally improving the site's management and setting.

The following were achieved as part of the study:

- key historical sources were consulted and an authoritative historical summary was produced
- a digitally captured survey of the earthworks and adjacent buildings was undertaken to provide a benchmark record of the form of the monument (Fig 1). This also enabled the creation of a computer-generated, three-dimensional terrain model of the site
- field observation shed light on our understanding of the monument and its setting, including the north field and Little Park
- a survey of the condition of the monument has included expert assessments of the site's wildlife potential, enabling informed choices to be made where there is potential conflict between the requirements of archaeological conservation and nature conservation, notably where badgers' setts were present on the motte.

On the basis of the above, a set of proposals was drafted for the future management of the monument and its setting, with reference to existing national and local heritage, planning and nature conservation policies. The proposals covered capital works and ongoing maintenance, aimed at improving the conservation of the monument as well as facilitating public access and enjoyment of the site. Requirements for developing the interpretation of the site were also considered.

Upper Boddington, Land off Townsend Lane
(SP 482 536)

Mike Luke, Mark Phillips, and Julian Watters

Archaeological evaluation comprising desk-based assessment, earthwork survey, geophysical survey and trial excavation was undertaken in an area of surviving earthworks within the 'shrunk' Medieval village of Upper Boddington.

The earliest firm evidence for human activity within the application area comprised a number of ditches, dated to the Saxo-Norman period on the basis of recovered pottery. Although the geophysical survey suggested the ditches were part of a more extensive enclosure system the small quantity of domestic debris and absence of settlement-type features suggests that these may be located on the periphery of the settlement.

The majority of the features (mainly ditches) and pottery assemblage discovered in the trial trenches are believed to date to the early Medieval period. It is presumed that many of the earthworks, which include a hollow-way that runs across the application area, are of this date. Together, the earthworks and ditches within the trial trenches indicate a series of enclosures respecting the hollow-way. Although the quantity of domestic debris, especially pottery, was considerably larger than from features of the Saxo-Norman period, only a small number of settlement-type features in the form of pits were identified. Therefore, it is unclear if the enclosures represent tofts fronting the hollow-way. The application area is situated within the northern part of the village, which may be a later, planned addition to the linear development in the south of the settlement. The relative absence of late Medieval material and features suggests that the village could have contracted leaving the application area once again on the periphery of the settlement, although a number of cobbled surfaces were laid down during the Post-Medieval period.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES

East Farndon, Main Street (SP 717 847)

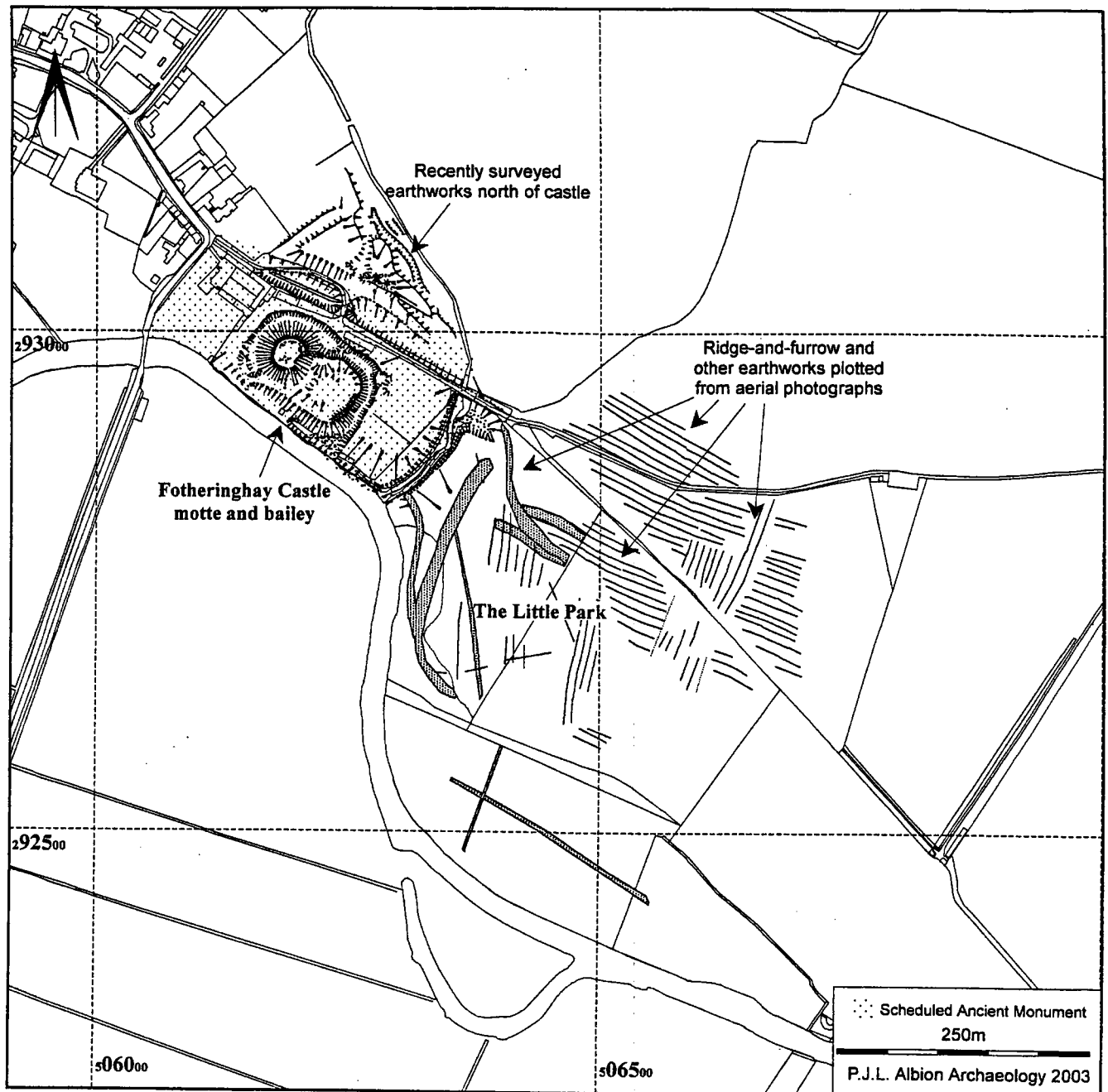
Gary Taylor

An evaluation was undertaken adjacent to the 12th century parish church and near to extensive Medieval settlement earthworks. However, only a pond of probable 19th century date was revealed.

Fotheringhay, Church Barn (TL 059 932)

Paul Cope-Faulkner

New sewerage works adjacent to the 15th century church and ecclesiastical college, and in an area where Medieval burials had previously been found, were monitored. Two features, possibly ditches, were observed but both were



Fotheringhay Castle and Adjacent Area

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Fig 1. Fotheringhay Castle.

undated. No evidence of burials, or other distinct Medieval remains, was encountered.

Oundle, Blackpot Lane-north Street
(TL 0414 8837 - TL 0425 8820)
Gary Taylor

On behalf of Oundle School the excavation of a cable trench through the school grounds was monitored. The trench route crosses a Scheduled Ancient Monument, the site of a Saxon settlement enclosure, and comes within 20m of the 13th

century parish church of St. Peter. The area is also the site of the Medieval Rectory manor. In the northern part of the route, toward Blackpot Lane, the investigation recorded two undated east-west ditches. Further south remains of several buildings of 18th-19th century date, identifiable with structures mapped in the 19th century, were recognised. Pottery of 18th century and later date was recovered and re-used masonry with graffiti inscriptions of dates between 1668-1881 was observed in standing buildings on the site. However, no clear evidence of Anglo-Saxon or Medieval remains, nor artefacts of those periods, was revealed during the investigation.

Oundle, Laundimer House, North Street
(TL 043 882)
Gary Taylor

An evaluation and subsequent watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Oundle School, near to the Saxon settlement enclosure at Oundle and outside the Medieval core of the town. The initial evaluation identified refuse deposits of the 13th to 15th century, though disturbance from demolished structural remains and services of 19th-20th century date was extensive. Later monitoring of development revealed several Medieval refuse and cess pits of the 13th to 15th century. One of the cess pits retained impressions of a probable timber lining. Possible property boundary ditches of Medieval date were also identified, though 19th-20th century disturbance was again shown to be extensive. The results would suggest that the investigation area lay to the rear of properties fronting North Street in the Medieval period, as today, and that the area is perhaps a 13th century expansion of the settlement at Oundle.

Oundle, The Co-Op, St. Osyth's Lane (TL 0429 8805)
Tobin Rayner

On behalf of Midland Co-operative Society an excavation was supervised prior to the construction of a rear extension to the existing store. Previous investigations toward the road frontage of the site had identified Medieval pits, ditches and gullies representing property or field boundaries. A single fragment of Samian pottery was recovered and probably relates to a cluster of Roman artefacts previously identified about 100m to the northwest. However, the excavation indicated the initial use of the site occurred c 975-1100 when ditches, gullies, pits and postholes were established across the area. One of these ditches was parallel to the highway and probably demarcated the rear of a street front property. Domestic debris was recovered but suggested that the site was peripheral to occupation of the period. Iron slag was found in the northern part of the investigation area and indicated smelting in the vicinity, though not at the site itself. A timber structure appears to have been erected in the area during the earlier Medieval period, though probably was not used for occupation. A large boundary ditch, parallel to the street but closer to it than the Saxo-Norman example, was created in the Medieval period. This ditch probably defined the rear boundary of a further street front property and most of the investigation site lay outside these limits, with environmental evidence suggesting the area was grassland or meadow. The site appears to have been largely abandoned in the late Medieval period and not re-utilized until the 18th century.

Wollaston, London Road (SP 9060 6250)
James Snee

A watching brief was undertaken during development in an area where Early Saxon to Saxo-Norman deposits had

previously been identified. Several ditches, gullies and pits were revealed but all were undated. A moderate quantity of 12th-16th century pottery was recovered as redeposited artefacts.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES AND CONSULTANCY

Silverstone, Land north of Silverstone Circuit
(SP 6706 4270)
Joe Abrams

During September 2002 a watching brief was undertaken during groundworks for the construction of three industrial units, on land north of Silverstone Circuit. The site was within the Medieval royal forest of Whittlewood and the Medieval Luffield Priory was situated c 500m to the southeast. No significant archaeological features were present.

Weedon, Flood Defences (SP 6059 5915)
Joe Abrams

A watching brief was maintained during the construction of a flood alleviation scheme upstream from Dodford Mill, Weedon between May and July 2002. Two Post-Medieval field boundaries were recorded. During the excavation of a culvert for a dam, several large pieces of unworked waterlogged timber were recorded within a layer of naturally derived material. These were from a layer sealed c.5m below the present ground level and are believed to be of considerable antiquity. No other significant features were observed.

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

In April 2002 a historic building survey was carried out on the Old Rectory, Wicken (Fig 2), in advance of major refurbishment works. The house, a Grade II* listed building, was until recently the Wicken Country House Hotel. It was built in 1703 as a three-pile, H-plan structure of three stories, with limestone walls and detailing in ironstone. The house was extended to the north in the 18th century, further extended to the north and the west in the 19th century, and continued in use as a rectory until it was sold and converted to a hotel some 40 years ago. Internally, little remains of the 18th century house except in the attics, and the back staircase. The main staircase is almost certainly a later insertion, derived from another building.

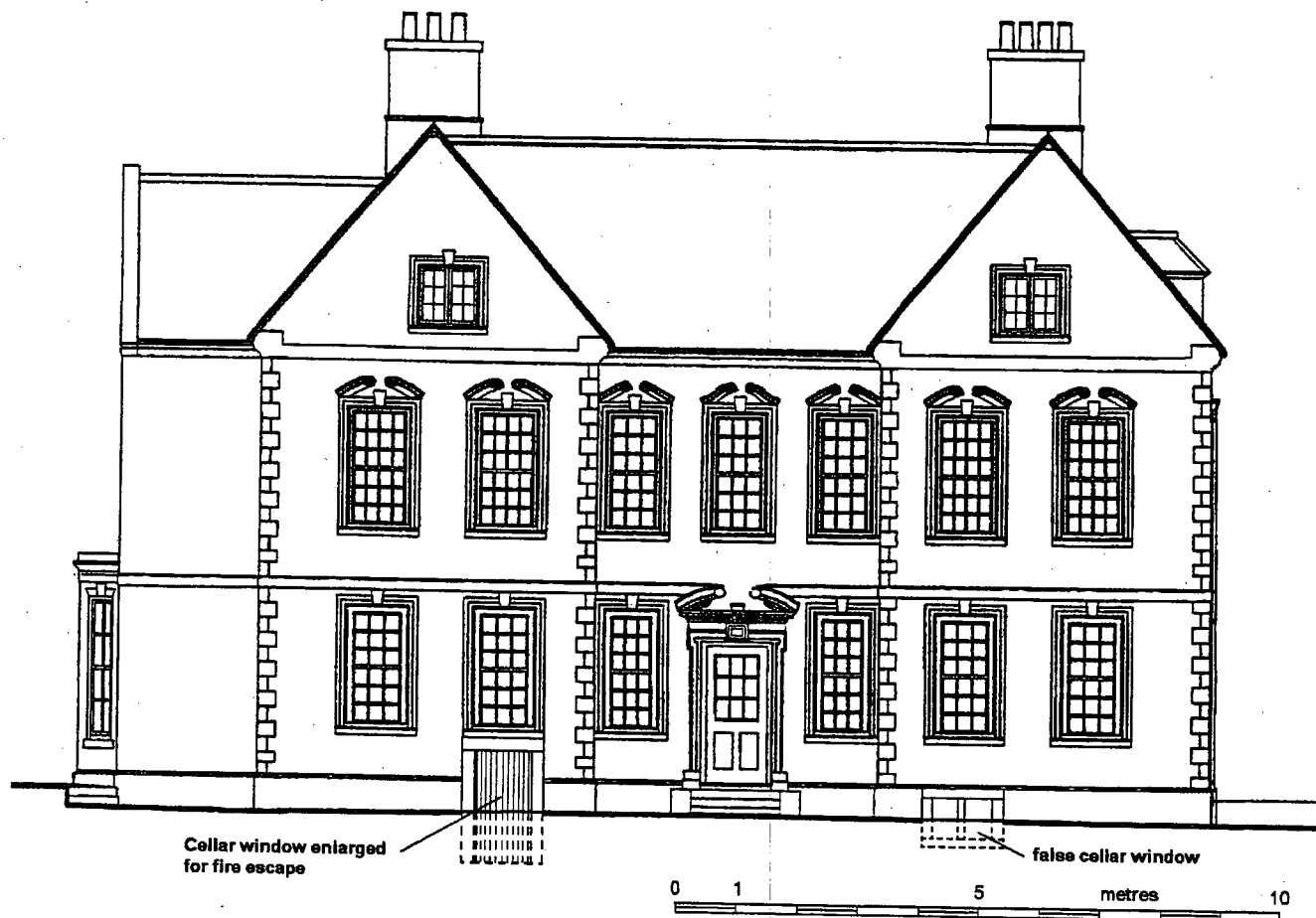


Fig 2. Wicken Old Rectory.

COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES (TRAINING) LTD

Ashton, Grange Farm (SP 767 497 and 766 493)
Pat Lawrence, Jonathan Thomas and Jon Tanner.

Staff and students conducted a field walking survey designed to help determine whether crop marks seen on aerial photographs (SMR Record number 5823/0/1) were caused by the local geology or prehistoric human activity. The recovery of a number of mid-Iron Age sherds including some diagnostic pieces of scored ware (500-175 BC) suggests that the latter hypothesis should not be dismissed.

The grid references given are for the southwest corners of the two 100m squares so far investigated. Conditions during field walking were dry but somewhat unfavourable due to the fact that the field was harvested, ploughed, harrowed and re-planted within three days, providing an extremely short period of time in which to investigate.

HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Land at Broad Street/St Andrew Street, Northampton
(SP 7522 6092)

Dr Rhodri Gardner

An archaeological desk based assessment for the Ian Derby

Partnership. Research indicates that there is little to suggest the preservation of prehistoric or Roman remains within the assessment site. The site lies outside the probable line of the northern Saxon defences but within the Medieval walled town. Cartographic evidence indicates that buildings have occupied parts of the site from the beginning of the 17th century, and that it was more rapidly and heavily developed from the middle of the 19th century. It is likely that any earlier remains surviving along the street frontages would be disturbed by this and modern activity. Some evidence of outlying Medieval occupation might be anticipated but the degree to which it is likely to have been truncated remains unclear. Post-Medieval building remains are likely to be abundant. Herts Arch Trust report 1133.

Proposed Agricultural Reservoir, Elton Estate, Warmington (TL 0770 9200)

Jonathan Grant

An archaeological desk-based assessment at the Elton Estate was commissioned by DK Symes Associates on behalf of their client. The site is located to the north of the village of Warmington, close to the small outlying hamlet of Eaglethorpe. The assessment site fronts the Warmington by-pass, in an area of the Nene valley known to contain traces of prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and Medieval activity. The area was used as a meadow from at least the early 17th century, before part of it became a plantation in the 20th

century. The western part of the site was used as a storage area during the construction of the Warmington bypass, and an area of ground disturbance is clearly visible in this area. Archaeological finds and cropmarks are known close to the site, confirming that the area has archaeological potential. No archaeological remains are known from the site itself. Ten sherds of Post-Medieval pottery (SMR 5810) were found on the site during fieldwalking in 1991. Herts Arch Trust report 1103.

MIDDLE NENE ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP & UNIVERSITY OF BRUNEI

**A Migration Period Site at Polebrook,
Northamptonshire: Surveys and Excavations up to 2002**
Prof. Stephen Upex

Introduction

The site lies within the parish of Polebrook, Northamptonshire (TL08 063971) at 35m above sea level and some 300m to the west of the present village (see Figs 3 and 4). To the south of the site is a small stream that runs into the River Nene and to the north the land rises up to 70m, where it borders the edge of the parish of Ashton. The site itself is on cornbrash which is a highly fossiliferous, loosely bedded limestone full of cracks and fissure.

There is little known about the parish in the prehistoric period but there are three Roman sits recorded. The Roman road from Durobrivae to Irchester runs to the west of the village and some 500m to the west of the site under investigation and the Roman town of Ashton is about 3km to the north.

Pre-excavation Surveys

Aerial Photography

The site was discovered from the air in June 1988 when a series of 6 potential buildings were photographed. These buildings were set within large regular ditch lines. Other features were seen as being pits, wells or sunken-floored buildings.

Geophysical Survey

In October 2002 a resistivity survey covering 16 20m x 20m squares was carried out over part of the site by Adrian and Norma Challands and Bob Randall. The plot of this survey is shown in Fig 5. The survey confirmed the positions of the potential buildings and it indicated that there were some additional features which did not show on the aerial photographs. The information taken from the aerial survey and the geophysical survey was formed into a composite plot of the site, which is shown in Fig 6. One building, with the suggestion of an annex at its eastern end, was seen to be central to a formally laid out enclosure.

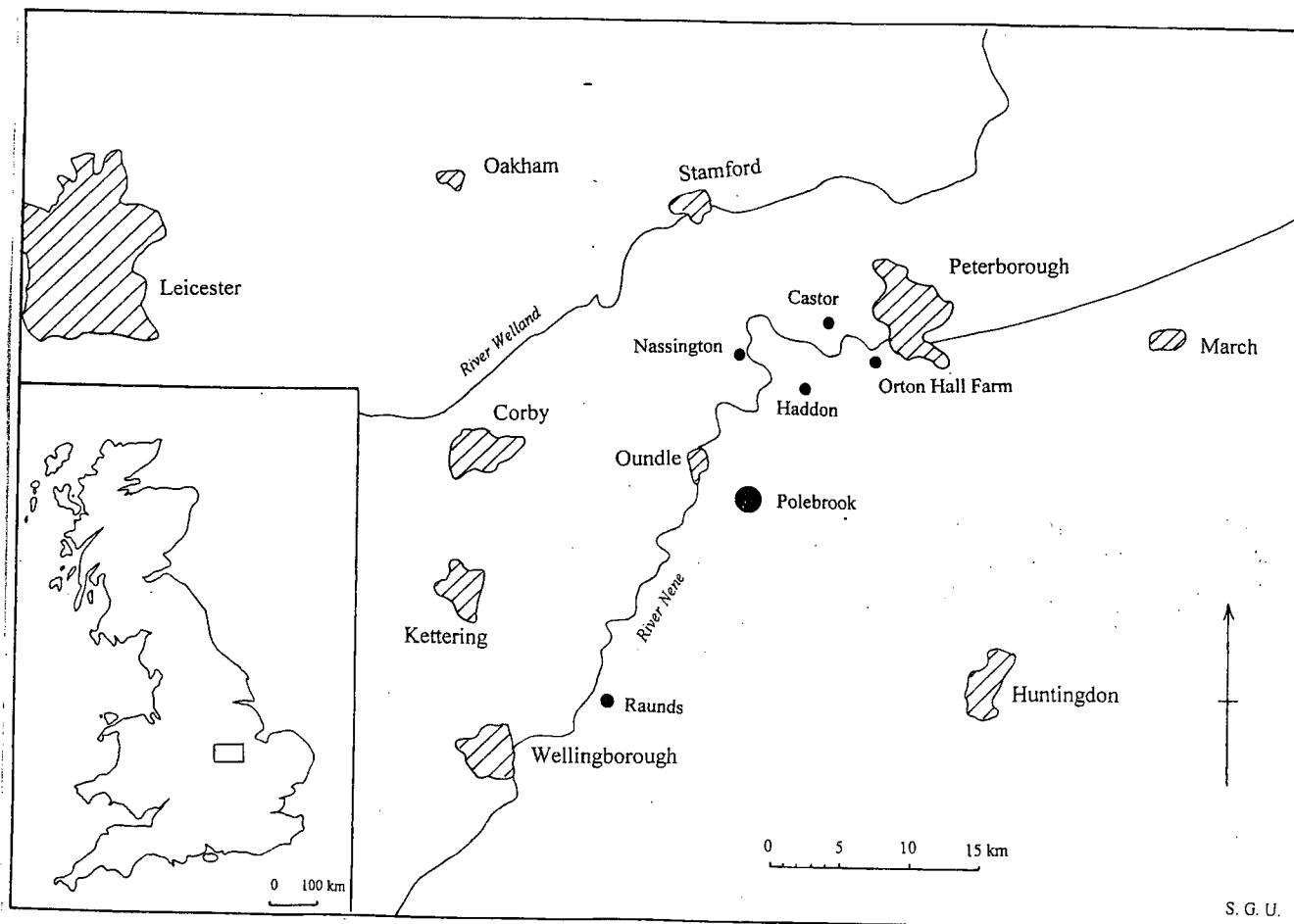


Fig 3. Location of the site in the east midlands.

Northamptonshire

Field-walking, survey

A field-walking survey was undertaken over the site during 1989. This survey, which covered 54 20m x 20m squares was aimed at collecting datable surface finds from the site. Quantities of migration period pottery were recovered which related to the areas of the buildings shown on the aerial photographs and the geophysical survey. In addition there were 29 Roman sherds recovered from the area.

Metal retrieval survey

This survey was carried out in July 2002 immediately prior to the excavation of part of the site. There was nothing of significance produced from the topsoil over the site of the excavated area.

Phosphate survey

This survey was carried out by Dr Paul Middleton over the area that was covered by the geophysical survey. Higher phosphate levels were recorded over the areas that were associated with the outlines of buildings.

The Excavation

Based on all of the preceding surveys it was decided to undertake limited excavation of part of the site to determine the form, function and date of the features which were indicated by the pre-excavation surveys. An area over the eastern end of what was called Building I (Fig 6) was selected with a trench extending down to catch the ditch-like

feature shown on aerial photographs to the south of this building.

Once all of the topsoil had been cleared by hand from the Medieval furrows the bedding trenches of Building I and other postholes clearly showed as dark filled features cut into the cornbrash, (Fig 7). Apart from the stratigraphy within the features cut into the cornbrash the Medieval and Post-Medieval plough had removed all other traces of any archaeological layers. A plan of the surviving features in the area of Building I is shown in Fig 8.

Period I. The Post Built Structure

The earliest features on the site were a series of postholes running in two parallel lines east-west, with two other postholes forming the eastern side of a post built structure. Other posts along each wall had been removed by having later features cut into them. The structure was 3.0m wide at its eastern end, slightly broader (3.2m) at its western end and had a long axis of 6m within the excavation trench. There was no indication of any entrance or flooring, but one post (F28) was cut at the same level as the northern wall posts and may have been an internal feature of some kind related perhaps to benching along the northern wall. Alternatively this post could have also acted as an internal roof support or have formed part of an internal division of the structure.

Period II The Hall

The post built structure of Period I was replaced by a large

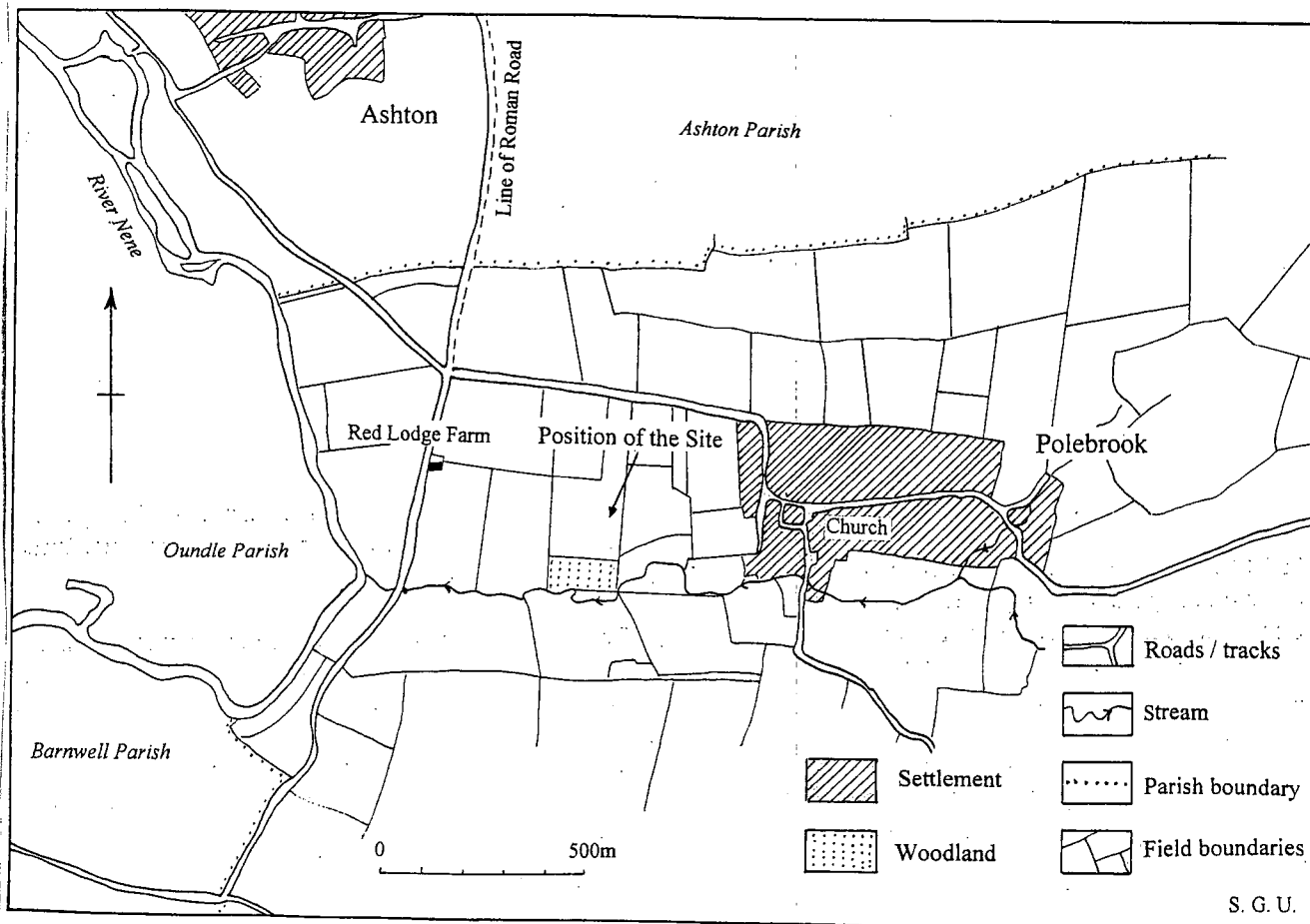


Fig 4. Location of the site in relation the village of Polebrook.

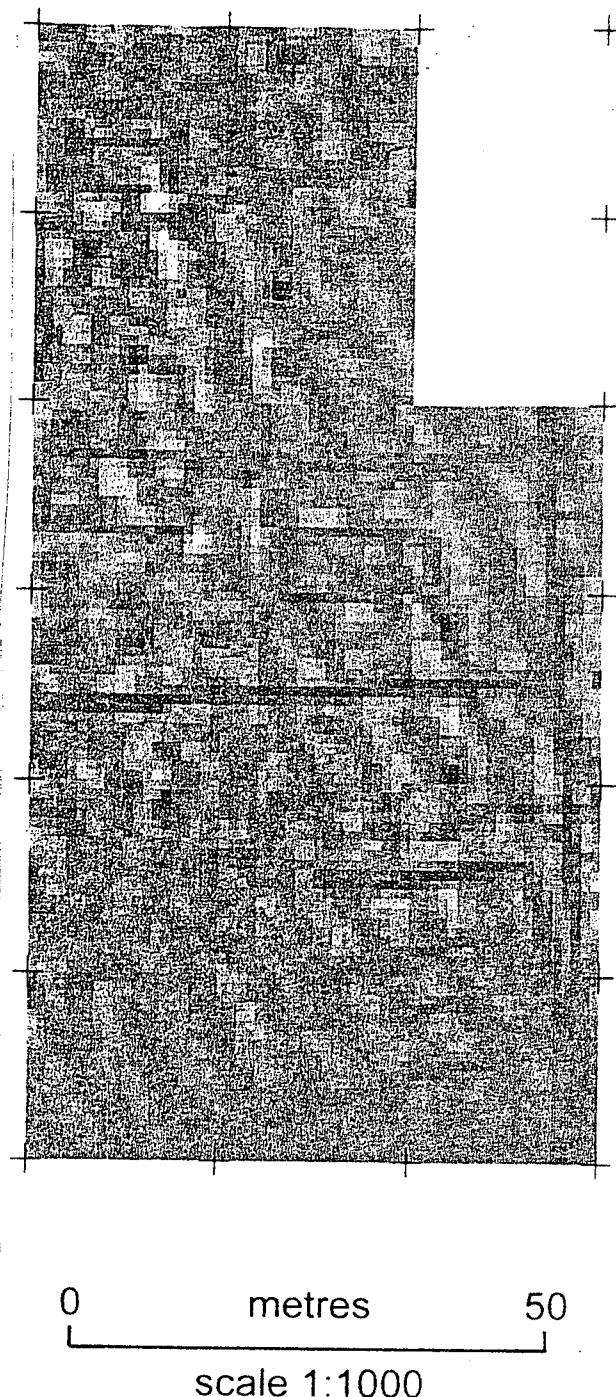


Fig 5. Geophysical survey of part of the site. (By Adrian Challands and Bob Randall)

hall-like structure that was 6.80m wide internally and approximately 11.50m long based on the calculations made from the air photographs, of which 4.0m was excavated. The walls were constructed of wooden posts set at 75cm centre intervals (approx) along the outside edge of a very wide bedding trench. At the north-east and south-east corners of the hall and 60cm outside of the outer edge of the bedding trench were two postholes (F17 and F37) that could well have been buttress supports for the gable end of the structure.

Within the hall there was no indication of any flooring arrangement or of how the roof was covered, but thatch

would perhaps have been likely. It is possible that the walls would have been of wattle and daub in-filling between the upright posts as fragments of burnt daub were found in several places on the site and related to period II.

Period III The Annex

At some later period, but while the hall was still standing, an annex (3.10m x 4.75m internally) was added to the east end of the hall. The walls of this structure were of a similar construction to that of the hall although the bedding trenches were narrower and had the posts set along the centre of the trench and not against the outside wall, as in the hall.

Where the annex joined onto the short axis wall of the hall two extra posts were set partly over the former period II bedding trench. These two posts could well have acted as roof supports for the annex roof as it butted up against the hall and could have taken purlins to support the rafters; the eastern end of the purlins resting on the east gable wall of the annex.

The north-eastern and south-eastern corners of the annex appear, like the main hall, to have had buttresses which are marked by surviving postholes (F8, 11, 12 & 13). The walls of this annex, like the hall, were probably of wattle and daub set within the framework of the upright post. The roof was presumable also of thatch and there was again, like the hall, no evidence of any floors

10m to the south and running parallel to the hall and annex was a substantial fence line, that could have formed the southern boundary to a compound in which the hall and annex or the earlier post built structure was set. The line of this fence is clearly seen on the air photographs and picked up on the geophysical survey (Figs 5 and 6). Although not linked to the main hall or the earlier post built structure, the orientation of the fence and the buildings suggests that they were laid out during either period I or II of the sites history.

Period IV

In the period after the use of the hall and annex had ceased and the buildings had been leveled there was some activity on the site for what appears to have been a limited industrial use. This was concentrated in the former north-east corner of the hall where shallow features were cut into the underlying cornbrash and earlier deposits. These features could have been covered by a rudimentary structure formed by four large posts.

To the south of these features were two curving ditch lines (see Figs. 7 and 8). One (F1/F23) showed on the aerial photographs and on the geophysical plot and was a shallow feature cut straight into the cornbrash. Another shallower curved feature (F31) cut at a different angle was found some 3 m to the south. The functions of both of these features is unclear but both ditches clearly cut through the hall and annex walls of Period II & III and were in turn cut by the still later ridge and furrow on the site.

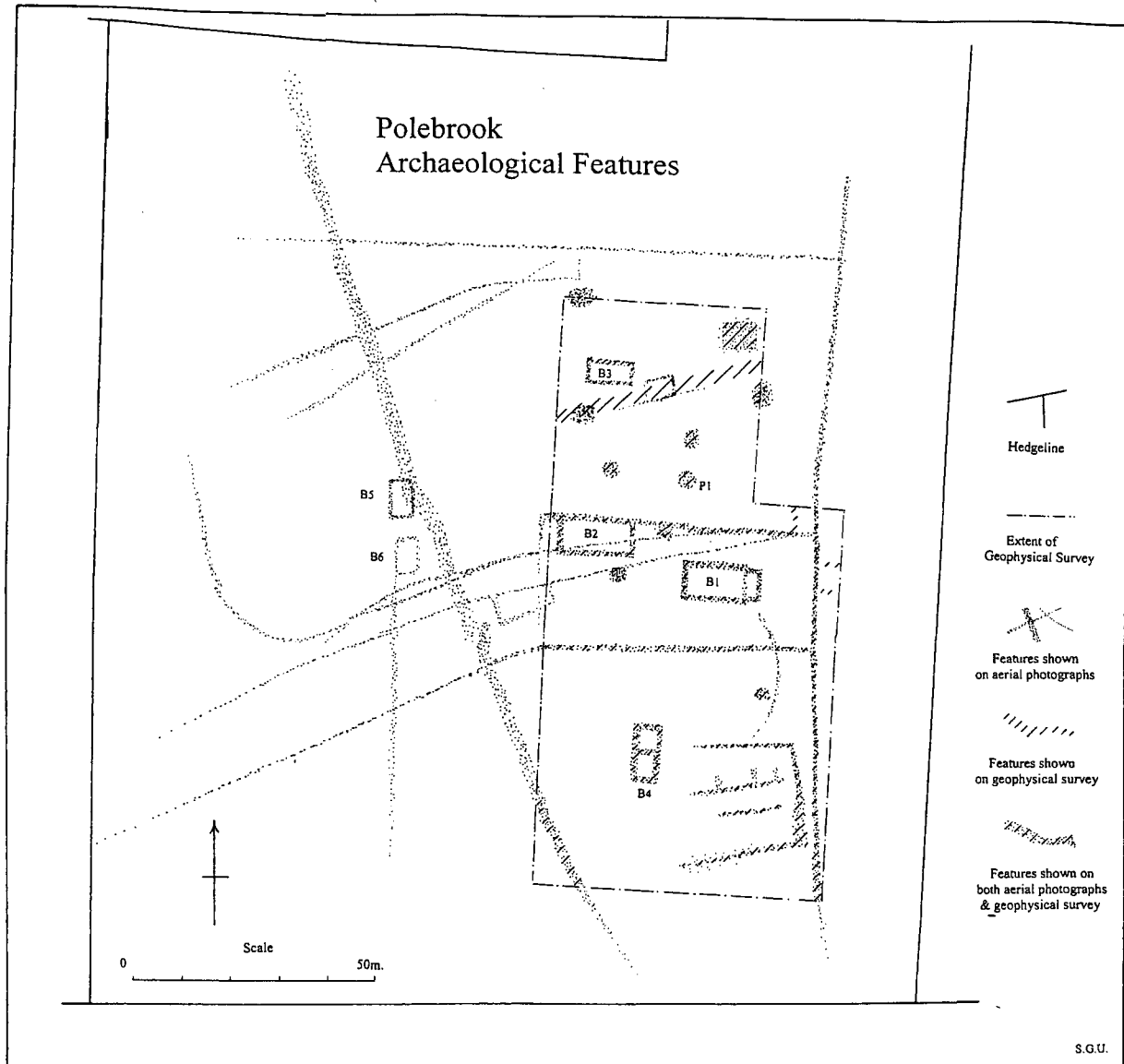


Fig 6. Detail of the cropmark features on the site showing buildings, compounds and pit groups.

Pits Or Wells

A series of nine features were shown on the air photographic and the geophysical surveys that all looked to be either pits, wells or sunken floored buildings. One of these features (Fig 6) was partially excavated during July 2002 and proved to be a pit. It is intended to resume work in future years with environmental backup and investigate this and other similar features.

Finds From the Site

The site produced remarkably little in the way of finds. A small quantity of migration period pottery was recovered during field-walking including two decorated sherds (Fig 11) and only nineteen stratified fragments came from the excavation (Fig 12). There were small quantities of bone from the site all of which seemed to indicate food remains. Most of the bone was very fragmented and of small size, with butchery and cut marks in evidence. A more detailed analysis is required to assess the presence of domestic and non-domesticated species, although deer is clearly represented.

Slag was fairly common on the site on the western side of the excavated box and this seemed to coincide with the activity of Period IV.

Conclusion

A detailed report of the structures found during the excavation has been prepared for full publication and space here limits discussion. However, a reconstruction of the annexed hall at Polebrook is shown in Fig 13. Here the heights of the structure are conjectured but the wall-plate of the main hall may well have been approaching 3.50m in height with the less substantial annex wall timbers ending with a wall-plate 2.50m high. Internally there appear to be no supports for the hall roof and this may well have dictated the use of trusses at intervals down the long axis of the building with the rafters resting on purlins set on the trusses and the end walls. A similar use of roof trusses may have been used for the annex, although the width (east-west) of this room may have not needed support part way along. Here the weight of the roof could have been supported on purlins set into the end (E) wall and supported on the two posts set



Fig 7. Photograph of the site from the north showing the unexcavated bedding trenches of the eastern end of the hall (on the right) with the annex on the left.

into the east wall of the hall

The arrangement of the known buildings seen on the pre-excavation surveys and the information from the excavation itself present a picture of substantial buildings set within fenced compounds with a regular and planned layout. It is possible that this planned element extends to track-ways and a field system partially seen on air photographs to the north of the site. The overall layout, the size and the architecture of the buildings all indicate a site of some status. Similar sites at Hatton Rock and Long Itchington (Warwicks), Atcham (Shropshire) and Drayton in the Thames valley all have centrally placed halls often with annexes attached, which are set in palisaded enclosures - often with the hall orientation being east west - which is the case at Polebrook. The functions of such sites, including Polebrook, are presumably as estate centres.

One major problem that remains is that of the date of the site. The pottery can be dated no more accurately than to the 5th-8th centuries and organic material from the excavation to produce C₁₄ dates has not been forthcoming. The post built structure of period I would fit well anywhere within this date range while the hall and annex could be dated by analogy at any time from the 6th to the 8th centuries. A terminal date for the site in the 8th would seem probable if the overlying ridge and furrow of the later Medieval field

system is taken into account.

MUSEUM OF LONDON ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICE

Northampton, Sol Central Car Park, Doddridge Street
(SP 74981 60486)

MoLAS (Chiz Harward, Tom Wilson) evaluation and watching brief February-April 2002 Great Portland Estates NT-DOD00

Subsequent to the MoLAS excavation of the adjacent Sol Central site in 2000, an archaeological evaluation and watching brief was carried out on an adjacent car park site in advance of redevelopment. The site was known to partially overlie the former burial ground of St Mary-by-the-Castle.

An initial watching brief on ground-reduction revealed human burials across the northern half of the site, subsequent evaluation by 5 test-pits indicated the approximate depth of burials, and the ground-reduction levels were altered to minimize impact on human remains. 27 burials were excavated during the watching brief, several within coffins. A single brick tomb base was exposed. All

Northamptonshire
Excavated Features

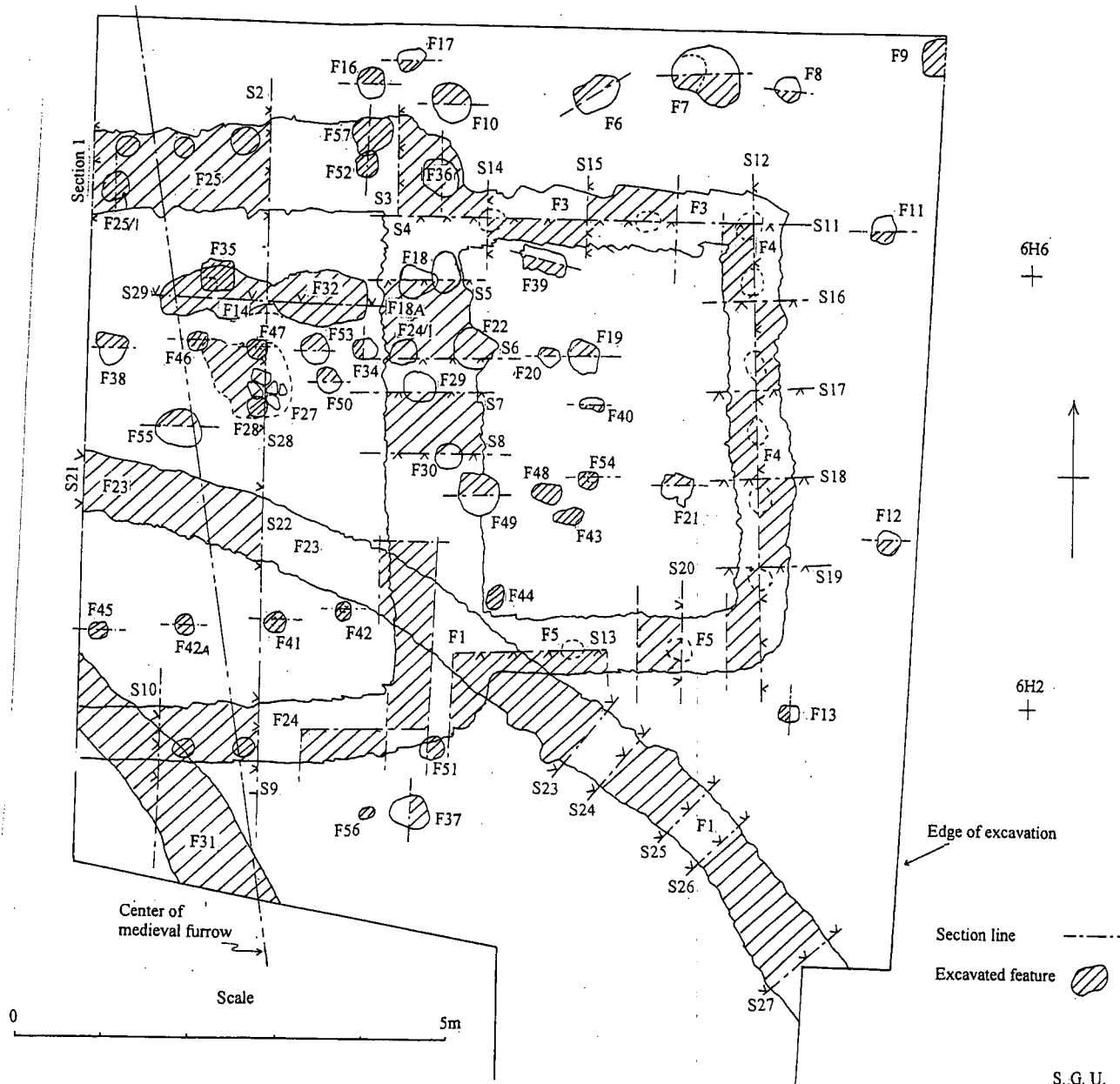


Fig 8. Polebrook. General site plan of the excavated features.

the burials appear to date to the 18th or 19th century, one grave contained a coin of 1826. The eastern boundary wall of the burial ground was excavated. It is estimated that some 1500 burials may remain on the site.

Within the southern part of the site, outside the burial ground, a watching brief was carried out on limited ground reduction, and a sewer connection. Natural weathered ironstone was recorded at the south-western corner of the site at 68.87m OD. The southern half of the site was covered by a thick homogenous soil. This was cut into by a sequence of three kiln structures. These appear to date to the 18th century. A series of masonry buildings and cobbled surfaces were constructed, and appear to be those shown on Hope and Laws map of 1847. The buildings were probably finally demolished in the 1950s.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

Alderton, The Mount (SP 7406 4698)
Simon Carlyle

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at The Mount, a motte or ringwork dating to the 11th or 12th centuries. The work was carried out during the excavation of postholes for the erection of a signboard and display lectern at the entrance to the site. With the exception of an undated stone feature, possibly a wall or foundation lying to the south of the surrounding ditch, no archaeological finds or features were encountered.

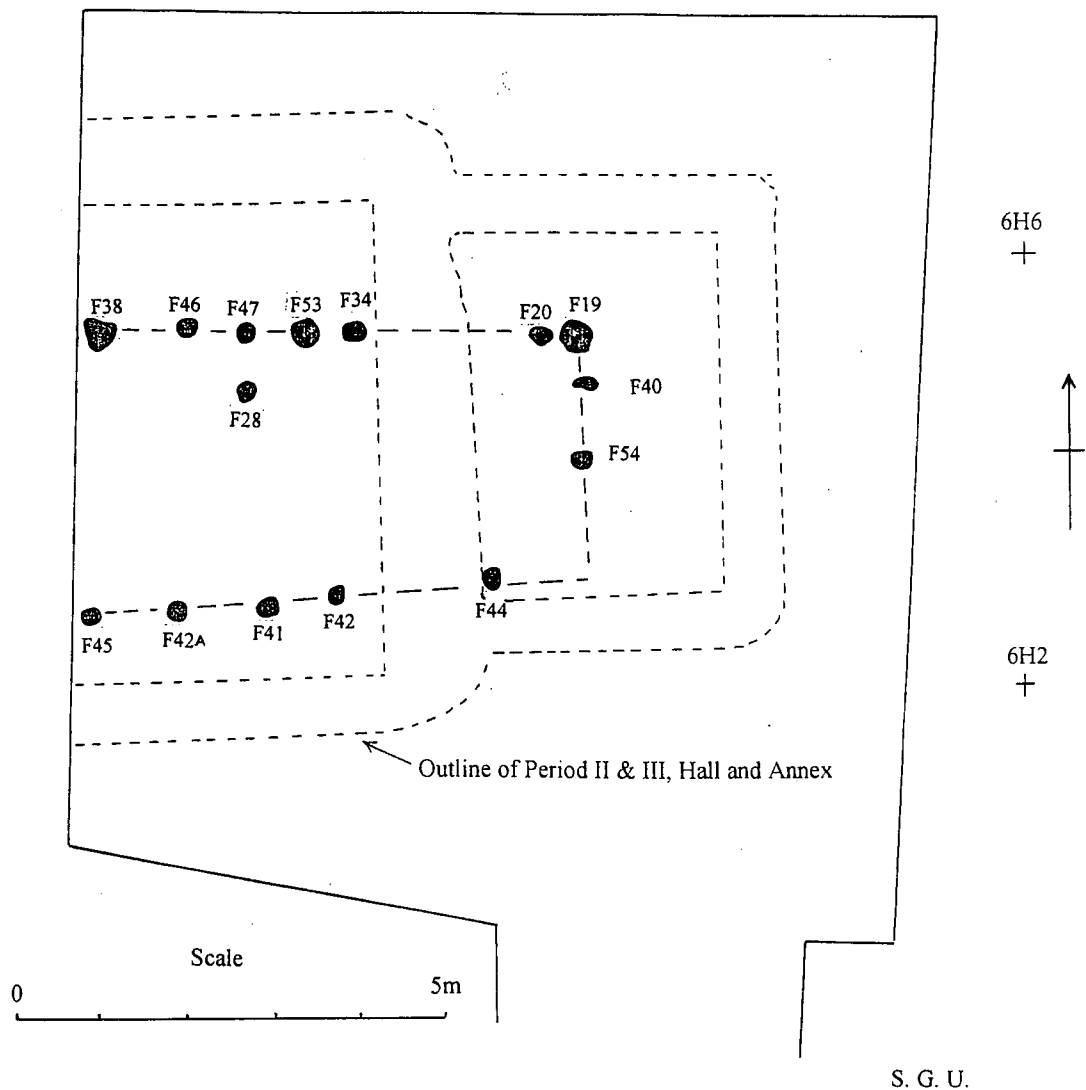


Fig 9. Polebrook. Excavated features of Period I. The post-built structure.

Barnwell, St Andrews Church (TL 0490 8497)
Tim Upson-Smith

An archaeological watching brief comprised the viewing of the excavation of a single drain trench ahead of construction of a toilet block to the north-west of St Andrews Church. No archaeological features were found.

Brackley, Evenley Hall (SP: 5878 3553)
Joe Prentice and Alex Thorne

A building recording survey was carried out on all the areas of the house that will be subject to alteration during the works to return Evenley Hall into a family home. This work was in addition to a survey carried out before the submission of detailed plans to the local planning authority. Due to the nature of the alterations needed to return the house to a habitable state the level of recording varied from RCHME Level One to Level Four, reflecting the level of intervention during alterations, from simple redecoration to total demolition.

Evenley Hall was constructed in the mid-18th century by Francis Bassett, probably around 1735. In 1897 the Hall suffered a devastating fire after which the interior was entirely reconstructed from the ground floor upwards. During the war the estate was requisitioned by the army until 1944, thereafter the Hall was used as a dwelling for evacuees. From its sale in 1947 until 1984 the Hall was a residential home for children, being owned by the National Childrens Home until 2001, when it was privately purchased.

Brigstock, Hall Hill (SP 946 853).
Tora Hylton and Joe Prentice

A desk-based assessment revealed no information as to the date or previous use of the stone and weatherboarded barn to the rear of 10 Hall Hill, Brigstock. A site survey identified the likely date of construction as 1773, as recorded on three date stones.

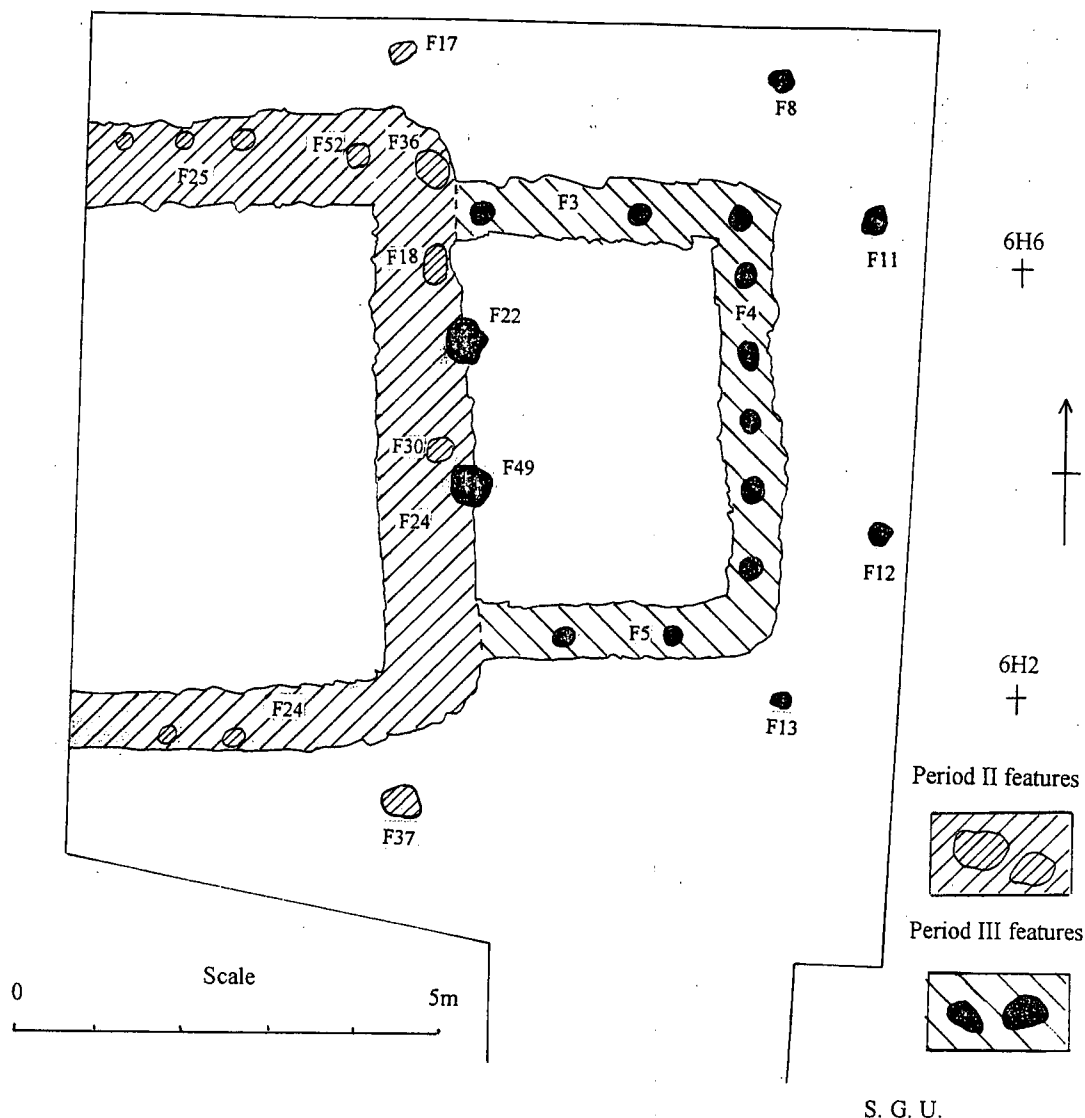


Fig 10. Polebrook. Excavated features of Periods II and III. The hall and annex.

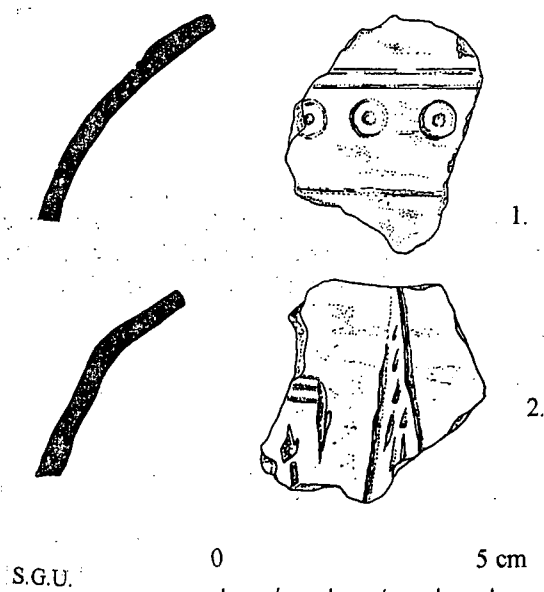


Fig 11. Polebrook. Decorated migration period sherds recovered during fieldwalking.

Brigstock, Brigstock Manor (SP 94 85)
Joe Prentice and Iain Soden

The current owners of Brigstock Manor, Mr and Mrs A Jones, have submitted draft proposals through Paul Bancroft Architects for alterations to parts of the building. An archaeological assessment of the manor, including desk-based and building surveys, established that the areas of proposed alterations have all been affected previously by late 19th or 20th century changes.

Broughton, St Andrew's Church (SP 836 758)

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at St Andrews Church, Broughton during the excavation of a service trench. No significant archaeological deposits were identified, except two 19th century burials close to the south porch. The trench ran along the existing path towards the church gates, which had been previously excavated for pipes.

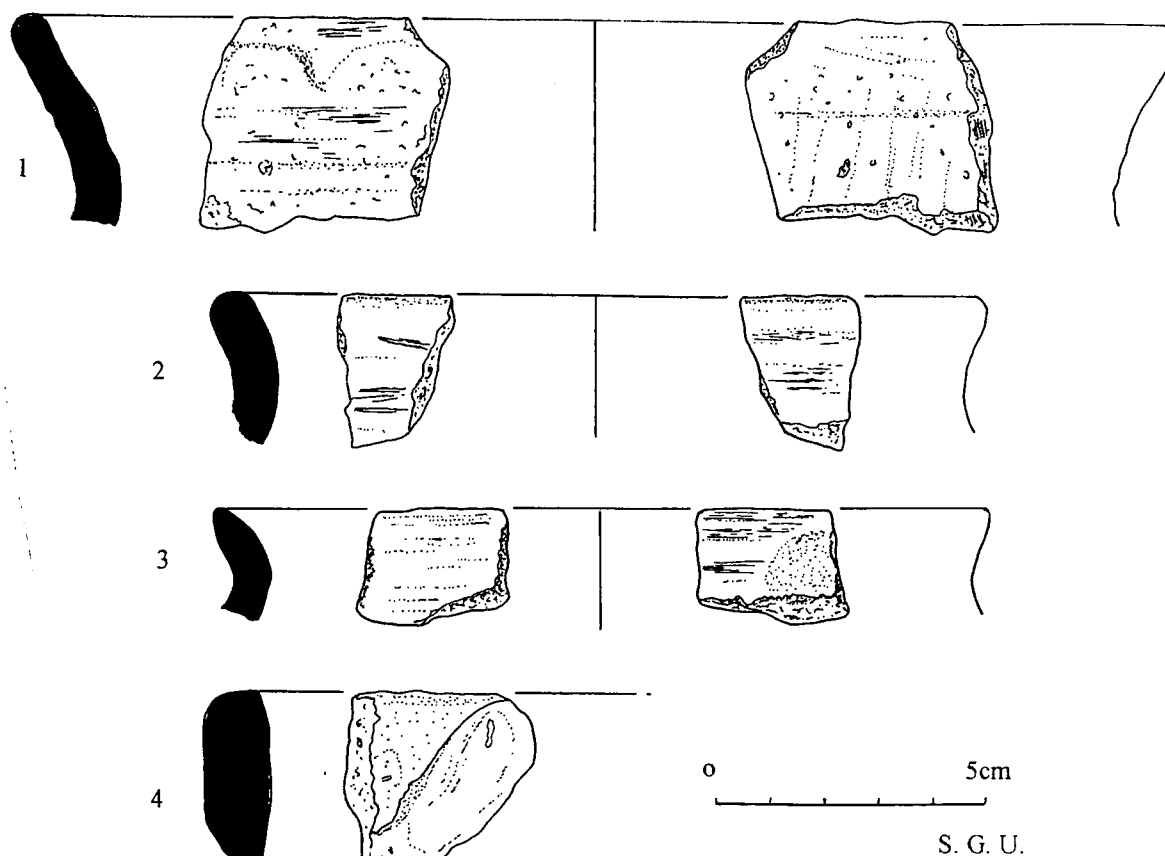


Fig 12. Polebrook. Pottery from excavated contexts.

Clay Coton, St Andrew's Church (SP 594 769)

Tim Hallam, Iain Soden and Charlotte Stevens

Recording of the fabric of St Andrews Church was carried out on behalf of Mr Derek Hartwell of Bilton Design and Build during its conversion to residential use. The church is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It was deconsecrated in 1966 and since that time has been in a poor state of repair.

The recording included the grave slabs in the floor, the windows and the door arches. The recording for the most part confirmed previous analyses of the building, indicating a largely 14th century construction with extensive rebuilding in the 19th century. It is suspected that the tower may be earlier but this could not be confirmed.

Croughton, Rowler Manor Estate (SP 5503 3544)

Simon Carlyle and Anthony Maull

Further excavation was undertaken at the Croughton Roman settlement on behalf of CgMs Consulting (Midlands) Ltd acting for the Rowler Manor Estate.

Daventry, Middlemore Farm (SP 565 651)

David Leigh

Following previous evaluation (SMA 30 (2000) 39) and building survey (SMA 31 (2001) 35), a watching brief was

undertaken during groundworks in advance of residential development. A number of features of Romano-British date were identified, including pits and a linear gully.

Finedon, Elm Grange (SP 916 717)

Jacqueline Harding and Joe Prentice

Desk-based assessment and building recording were carried out prior to development at Elm Grange, a former farmhouse and associated buildings converted into a public house in the early 20th century. The farmhouse has been extensively re-modelled both inside and out and contains no original features. The adjoining barns have similarly been changed though two contain remains of cattle troughs. Other farm buildings have been demolished. In the 19th century the farmhouse was re-fronted in a mock Elizabethan/Jacobean style, and all the buildings have been re-roofed.

Fotheringhay, Castle Farm (TL 062 929)

Steve Hayward

An archaeological evaluation was carried out pursuant upon proposals to convert existing barns at Castle Farm to domestic use. A trench in the area of a proposed sewage treatment tank within the courtyard located an undated pit and a shallow posthole. It was also noted that the ground level in the courtyard was c 0.76m below the floor level of the surrounding farm buildings.

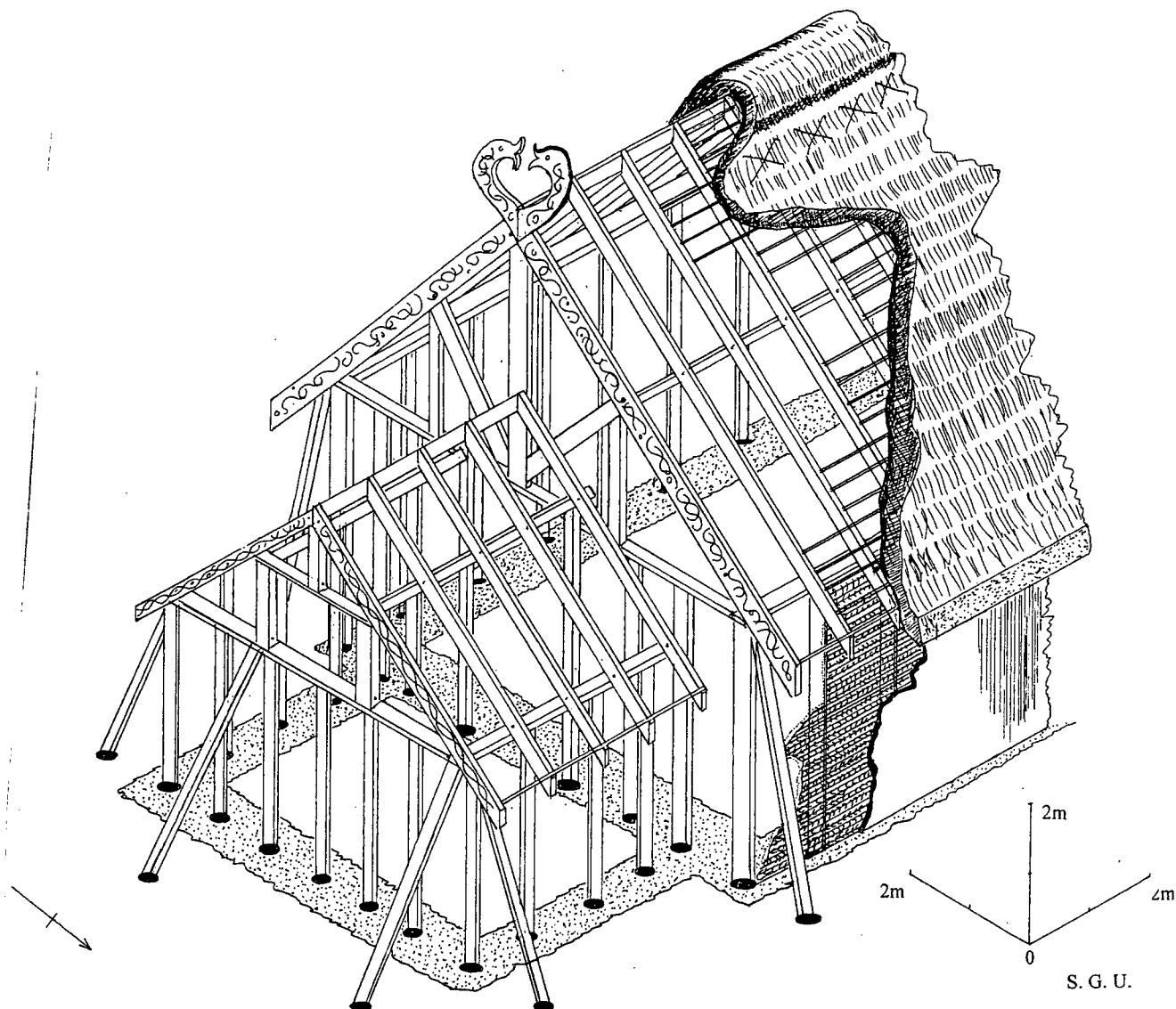


Fig 13. Polebrook. Reconstruction of hall and annex. Periods II and III.

Geddington, 15 Grafton Road (SP 8964 8288)
Ian Fisher

A desk-based assessment and detailed geophysical survey were carried out on approximately 0.4ha of land at 15 Grafton Road. Neither the desk-based assessment nor the geophysical survey revealed any features of archaeological interest. The site was probably established as an orchard in the 18th century, and has been an orchard/garden since then.

Harrington, High Street (SP 773 801)
Tim Upson-Smith

An archaeological watching brief was carried out immediately to the north-west of the High Street on the earthworks of a Medieval manor house, gardens and fishponds (Scheduled Ancient Monument No. 133). The work was carried out in response to Scheduled Monument Consent to route an electricity cable below ground. No archaeological features were located.

Higham Ferrers, Castle Fields (SP 9611 6878)
Simon Carlyle

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Castle Fields, Higham Ferrers, a Scheduled Ancient Monument (No. 13607) comprising a moat, a rabbit warren and fishponds, located in the outer ward of the former motte and bailey castle. The work was carried out during the excavation of postholes for the erection of a youth shelter on the site. No archaeological remains were encountered.

Higham Ferrers, College Street (SP 9596 6880)
Steve Morris

An archaeological evaluation comprising desk-based assessment and trial excavation was undertaken on behalf of F & L Group Ltd ahead of residential development on land off College Street. Although historical map evidence suggested that the site had been either open ground or orchard for much of the Post-Medieval period, the

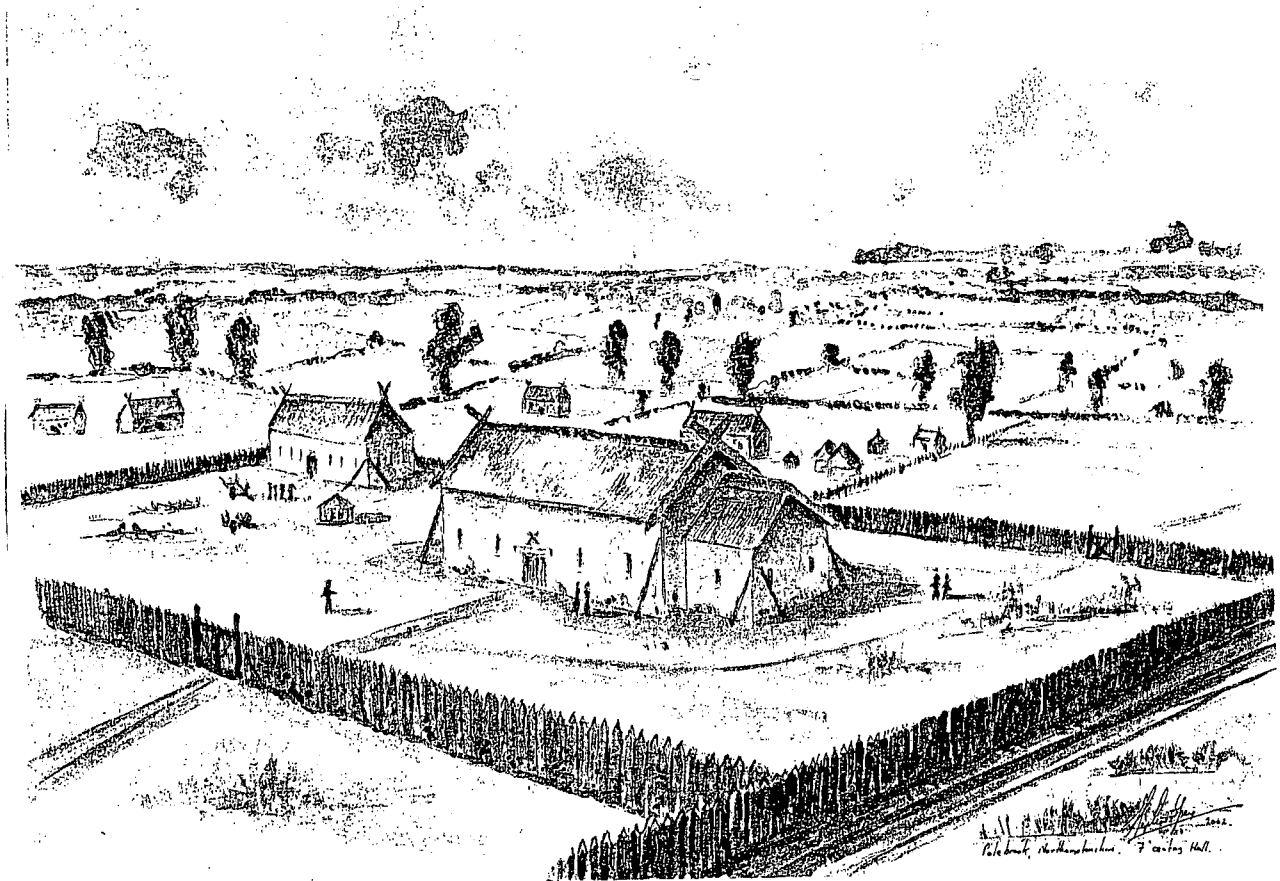


Fig 14. Reconstruction of the site from the south-east with the part-excavated building in the centre of the picture.

excavation located stone buildings and plot boundaries of 12th to 13th century date fronting onto College Street. Further undated ditches may belong to an earlier phase of activity. To the west there were Medieval and 18th century quarries.

Higham Ferrers, Wharf Road (SP 955 685)
Steve Morris

An archaeological evaluation prior to proposed residential development of land off Wharf Road was commissioned by Westbury Homes (Holdings) Ltd. The evaluation located a group of Iron Age pits, a large linear boundary ditch and other smaller ditches of Roman date, and a Saxon ditch. Early-middle Saxon sherds were also retrieved from the upper fill of the large Roman boundary ditch. Other features included three boundary ditches, a series of pitched limestone drains and a quarry, all of post-Medieval date.

Kettering, Barton Seagrave (SP 886 769)
Simon Carlyle and Anthony Maull

An archaeological watching brief was carried out within and immediately adjacent to the site of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (No. 13630) at Barton Seagrave Moats during remedial works on a water main. The site comprises two Medieval moated enclosures, fishponds and associated

earthworks. In total four small test pits were machine excavated. One of the test pits truncated the north-east corner of the southernmost moat, and exposed a metallated layer which comprised part of an external bank to the moat. Immediately to the south of this, a second test pit cut the eastern causeway of the same enclosure. This revealed a moat fill of black organic silts that contained animal bone, wood fragments and a single sherd of 14th century pottery. Above this there was a dumped deposit containing limestone masonry fragments, indicating that the causeway was a later addition. No archaeological remains were encountered in the other two test pits.

Long Buckby, Long Buckby Castle, 33 Grasscroft (SP 6246 6753)
Rob Atkins and Andy Chapman

A desk-based assessment, earthwork survey and trial excavation ahead of a proposed development behind 33 Grasscroft, Long Buckby was undertaken on behalf of Mr W Gautrey on 0.17ha of land adjacent to Long Buckby Castle (Scheduled Ancient Monument No. 13666), a Medieval ringwork and bailey fortification. The evaluation found a possible late Saxon or early Medieval road with a nearby ditch, a pit and a gully. There was a considerable depth of modern overburden over much of the site.

Northamptonshire

Middleton Cheney, All Saints Church (SP 499 421)

Chris Jones and Tam Webster

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during the excavation of two test holes and a trench for the addition of a drain at All Saints Church. The two test pits exposed an existing drain, which ran up against and parallel with the north wall, and the ironstone rubble and block footings of the west side of the tower. No other archaeological features were observed.

Northampton, Brackmills Link Road (SP 7723 5737)

Charlotte Stevens and Andy Chapman

An open area excavation and subsequent watching brief were undertaken on the route of the new Brackmills Link Road. The excavation was carried out as the road corridor affected the environs of an early Bronze Age round barrow, previously identified in an evaluation (SMA 30 (2000) 39). While the barrow itself lay beyond the road corridor, an unurned satellite cremation burial was located, and has been dated to the later part of the middle Bronze Age (1270-1020 cal BC). This date shows that respect for the barrow continued well into the middle Bronze Age, some 400-500 hundred years after its construction, as charcoal from the barrow ditch had been previously dated to the early Bronze Age (1685-1525 cal BC).

A watching brief was carried out during the initial removal of topsoil and subsoil along the entire length of the road corridor. No further archaeological features were located.

Northampton, Dallington (SP 7358 6107)

Rob Atkins

An archaeological trial excavation was undertaken ahead of proposed new housing development adjacent to Mulberry Close, Dallington. One shallow undated pit was the only archaeological feature uncovered, while two sherds of unstratified Roman pottery were also found.

Northampton, Harlestone Quarry (SP 708 635)

Ed Taylor

A watching brief was undertaken during topsoil stripping in advance of sand and gravel extraction at Harlestone Quarry, Northampton. No archaeological deposits were present.

Northampton, Kingsthorpe Hall (SP 7496 6284)

Tim Upson-Smith

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during the removal of fire debris from the upper floor of Kingsthorpe Hall in order to prevent the loss of salvageable material.

The evidence suggests that during the 20th century many

alterations had taken place both structurally and decoratively, including the subdivision of larger rooms. No original 18th century fixtures or fittings remained in any rooms on the second floor. It appeared that the roof had been extensively repaired, with some of the timbers and the roof covering having been replaced fairly recently. There were no indications of any timbers dating from before 1773 in other, less damaged, sections of the roof. The central dome, though damaged, remains in situ. A drawn record was made of the lower surface and a photographic record taken of the upper. It would appear to be part of the original design of the house, though the glazed section may have been replaced during the 19th century.

Northampton, Milton Ham (SP 730 573)

Simon Carlyle and Alex Thorne

An evaluation was carried out, ahead of improvements for Junction 15A on the M1, to examine geophysical anomalies revealed by a gradiometer survey. A Romano-British 'ladder' enclosure, approximately 150m long and 35m wide, was revealed in the north-east corner of the area, which produced evidence to suggest almost continuous occupation of the settlement throughout the Roman period. A single sherd of possible Saxon pottery recovered from one of the enclosure ditches offers inconclusive evidence for possible Saxon activity in the general area.

Northampton, Pineham West (SP 7100 5890)

Steve Morris

A fieldwalking survey was carried out in advance of development on land south-east of Kislingbury adjacent to the M1 Motorway. A previous geophysical survey had identified probable Iron Age/Romano-British settlement, and the fieldwalking results confirmed the location by producing a high concentration of Romano-British pottery. The artefacts recovered from the survey also included flint, pottery and tile, encompassing the prehistoric and Roman periods, through to middle Saxon and Medieval times. Slag was also located in two concentrations, suggesting that iron working may have taken place in the vicinity. One of these groups appears to relate to a single magnetic anomaly recorded in the geophysical survey, possibly identifying a furnace.

Northampton, River Nene (SP 7560 5980)

Tim Upson-Smith

An archaeological watching brief took place during the programme of flood alleviation measures for the river Nene in particular the widening of the river channel downstream of Southbridge. The removal and recutting of the south bank of the river gave a stratigraphic sequence of recent building activity, a 19th century demolition levelling layer, natural clay and silt deposits, associated with the river. The silts dredged from the bed of the river contained recent finds.

Northampton, St Andrew's Street (SP 7519 6097)
 Anthony Maul

Two stages of archaeological evaluation were undertaken ahead of redevelopment on a site at the corner of St Andrews Street and Regent Street. The first comprised a series of geo-technical test pits, which revealed extensive disturbance across the entire site including cellars. A watching brief followed the reduction of and build-up of the ground to form a level surface and the vibro-drilling of a series of piles. The results supported and enlarged the evidence recovered during the earlier phase of works, with the walls of the previous Post-Medieval structures located within the machine-cut excavations to hold the ground beams.

Northampton, St Crispin's Hospital (SP 7123 6109)
 Alex Thorne, Anne Foard, Nathan Flavell, Sarah Lean and Tam Webster

Proposals for extensive refurbishment and redevelopment of the St Crispin Hospital, formerly the Berrywood Asylum, required a scheme of buildings recording prior to commencement of the works. The hospital site comprises a group of 20 buildings, which are within a designated conservation area, situated to the south-west of Northampton. Two buildings, the Connolly Lodge (formerly the isolation hospital) and the Chapel are Grade II Listed. The hospital buildings were built in Galled form and date from between 1876-96 to designs of Mr Griffiths, then County Surveyor of Staffordshire. The core buildings are in the same style and mostly complete, but with later additions, including a Block for Idiot Children and alterations which chart the development of medical practice throughout the 20th century. A full range of ancillary buildings are also largely intact, including a farm complex, workshops, fire station and pond, laundry, stables, artisans cottages, later villa type accommodation for the patients, staff and nurses homes, and sporting provisions. Each building, including the pump house and the demolished isolation hospital, gasworks and the mortuary were vital to the running of the hospital at various stages of its life, enabling it to be largely self sufficient.

Northampton, St Giles Street (SP 7564 6048)
 Rowena Lloyd

An archaeological watching brief was maintained during the groundworks for an office building on land at 15 St Giles Street, adjacent to the Guildhall. Although two earlier walls were revealed, these appeared to be walls of a cellar, back-filled with material containing pottery dating to the late 17th to 18th century, including part of a Bellarmine jug. The level of Medieval activity was therefore either not reached by the groundworks or had been already destroyed by later cellar construction.

Northampton, Upton Way (SP 7274 5966)
 Chris Jones

An archaeological watching brief was carried out ahead of a new roundabout constructed on the A45 Upton Way. This is part of a proposed larger-scale development by English Partnerships of residential and related facilities on the south-west side of Northampton. No archaeological features were found.

Northampton, Wootton Fields Roman Villa (SP 766 563)
 Alex Thorne

A Roman villa partly investigated in 1999 (SMA 30 (2000) 39) is being preserved under a public open space within a new housing development by David Wilson Homes. An area immediately beyond the preserved site was investigated by open area excavation prior to development. A small, sub-rectangular enclosure dating to the mid-1st century AD added to previous evidence for pre-villa occupation. The north-eastern corner of the villa precinct was located as a series of shallow recut ditches, but these had fallen out of use when a kiln was constructed in the late 2nd or early 3rd century. The 3rd to 4th century activity comprised a shallow pond and associated pits and ditches, and extensive dumps of iron smelting debris filled a series of shallow hollows. A pit on the margin of the pond contained a small hoard of late Roman coins. In addition, there was a single Anglo-Saxon inhumation burial and a small quantity of contemporary pottery from one of the hollows containing the iron smelting debris.

A watching brief carried out following and during soil stripping on the surrounding house plots and access roads failed to locate any further archaeological features or stray finds.

Northampton, Wootton Fields (SP 771 561)
 Steve Morris and Simon Carlyle

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in advance of the building of schools, a library and community facilities at Wootton Fields. With the exception of a small number of undated pits and postholes in the northern part of the site and two small gullies in the centre, the main concentration of archaeological features was located in the south-west corner, as suggested by the results of a geophysical survey. In this area there was a complex of ditches and gullies and a number of pits, producing evidence for Romano-British rural activity, dating to the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD.

Oundle, Parson Lathams Hospital (TL 0432 8832)
 Simon Carlyle

A desk-based assessment and trial excavation was undertaken ahead of a proposed residential development at Parson Lathams Hospital. The site lies immediately outside

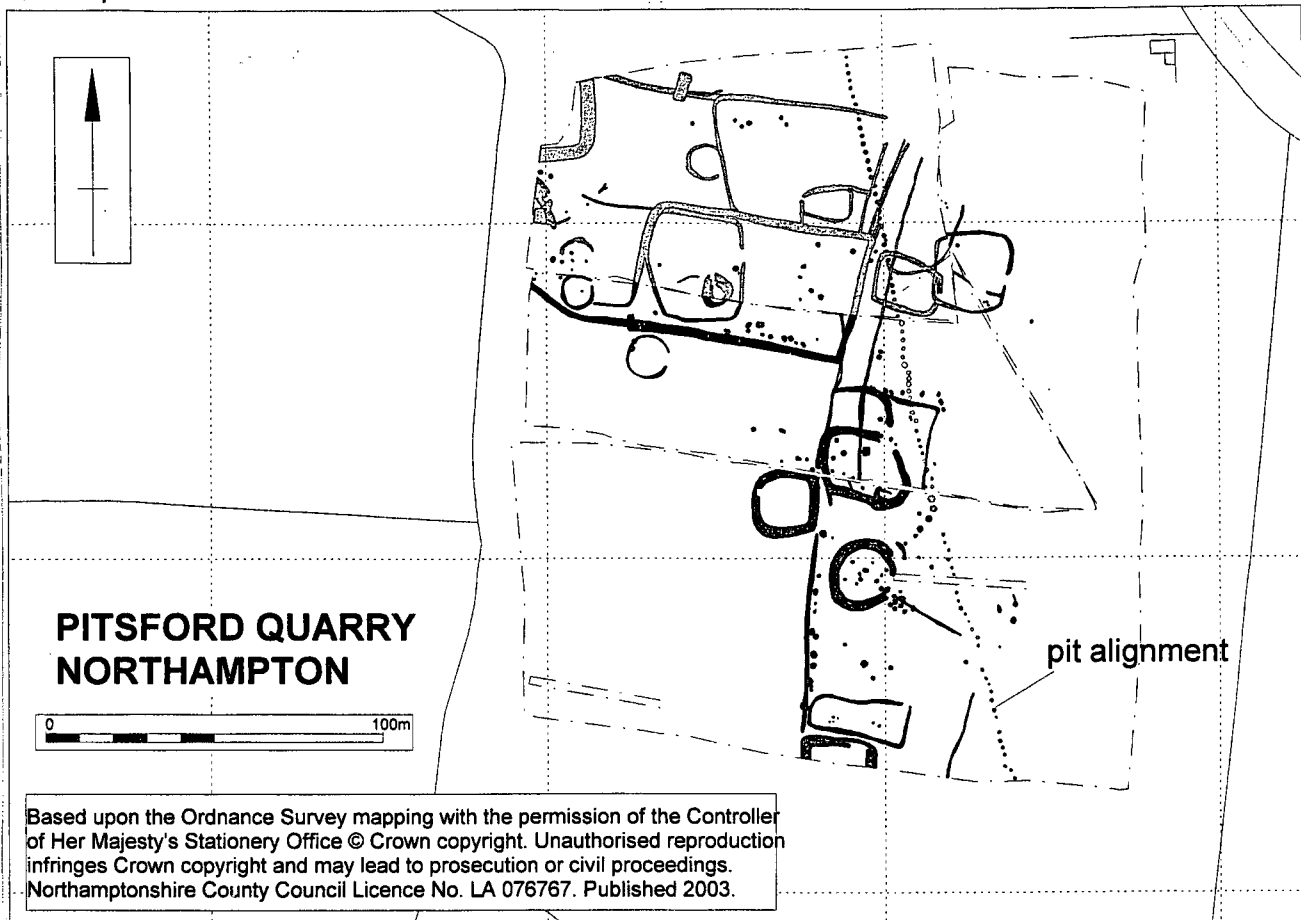


Fig 15. Middle and late Iron Age enclosures at Pitsford Quarry.

the Saxon core of Oundle and to the south-west of the Roman town of Ashton, and within the designated Conservation Area. The land was probably used as a backyard area to the rear of the late Medieval dwellings that fronted North Street, which were replaced by the existing buildings in the 17th century. Since then the land has been a garden attached to Parson Lathams Hospital. The trial excavation uncovered a range of features. A shallow pit and a burnt area, possibly a hearth, were Romano-British in date. Residual pottery suggests late Saxon/Saxo-Norman activity in the immediate area, while an undated gully, sealed by a layer into which the late Medieval features were cut, probably pre-dates the early 15th century. The late Medieval features comprised a number of pits, containing pottery and animal bone, and a ditch.

Pitsford Quarry (TL 4765 2666)
Tim Hallam and Rowena Lloyd

A watching brief followed by archaeological recording was carried out in advance of quarrying in Bottom Sheep Dale Field, Pitsford. The continuation of settlement remains previously identified in 2001 (SMA 32 (2002) 31) was recorded over an area of approximately 1ha (Fig 15). The pit alignment continued southward across the site and beyond the limit of excavation. The pits were shallow and no direct dating evidence has been recovered. The full extent of many of the Iron Age enclosures was established and

more settlement features were exposed. The pottery is middle to late Iron Age in date, including scored wares and at least one decorated, Hunsbury-type, globular bowl. An extensive rectangular enclosure to the north was associated with a number of roundhouses, including a small, much re-cut ring ditch with a north facing entrance causeway, set within an inner enclosure. All elements of the settlement relate to a north-south boundary ditch system, and to the south a series of small enclosures, a probably large roundhouse and pit groups all lie within 50m or less of this boundary system.

Raunds, 78 High Street (SP 9994 7315)
Alex Thorne

Archaeological evaluation at the former abattoir site at 78 High Street identified a single late Medieval pit close to the rear of houses fronting onto Rotton Row. A substantial ditch of unknown date was also examined in the same trench at the north of the site. In a second trench no archaeological features had survived due to grading of the yard area and truncation by a culverted drain that may equate with the brook shown on the Raunds Inclosure Map of 1798.

Raunds, 14 Rotton Row (SP 9984 7315)
Steve Morris

An archaeological excavation was undertaken on land at the rear of 14 Rotton Row, which lies within the historic core of late Saxon and Medieval Raunds, an area subject to extensive previous archaeological investigation as part of the Raunds Area Project. The excavation revealed part of an early-middle Saxon to late Medieval settlement, which included remains of buildings and plot boundaries. A large sub-rectangular pit could be part of an early-middle Saxon sunken-floored building. From the late Saxon through to the Post-Medieval period east-west aligned ditches formed boundaries defining plots. During the late Saxon period the plots showed little or no activity perhaps suggesting horticultural or agricultural use. From the early to late Medieval period the plots enclosed areas of occupation consisting of postholes and slot features, some of which probably formed parts of linear and sub-rectangular structures.

Sibbertoft, Church Street (SP 680 825)
Andy Chapman, Steve Morris and Steve Critchley

An earthwork and metal detector survey was undertaken ahead of residential development on pastureland adjacent to Spring Croft, Church Street. Prominent earthworks on the western part of the site comprised a former pond and a more recently constructed spring head. A similar hollow to the east may also have been a former pond and associated water channels. Raised platforms on the southern part of the site may possibly be former house platforms, but it is also possible that they too might be related to the springs. The metal detecting revealed a pattern of casual discard and loss of larger ferrous objects of Post-Medieval date.

Sibbertoft, Lowe Farm (SP 6912 8219)
Ian Fisher

A geophysical survey was undertaken ahead of development on land at Lowe Farm, immediately adjacent to the deserted Medieval village of Nobold. Reconnaissance magnetometer survey was carried out across the whole area but only two slight undistinguished anomalies were detected. A detailed magnetometer survey of 0.32ha of land immediately adjacent to the deserted Medieval village revealed no significant archaeological features.

Stanion, Brigstock Road (SP 9145 8701)
Martin Tingle and Rob Atkins

A watching brief during soil stripping for the construction of a composting facility adjacent to the A6116 Brigstock Road, Stanion, resulted in the discovery of the relatively well preserved remains of part of the main building range of a Roman villa, together with a 'corn drier' and other associated features. A programme of cleaning and recording

was carried out by a team from Northamptonshire Archaeology (funded by the NCC Historic Environment Team and English Heritage), Dr Martin Tingle (funded by the developer) and volunteers from the Northamptonshire Archaeological Society.

The villa remains appear to be a complete wing and corridor measuring approximately 8m x 12m with at least one internal sub-division. While there has been some plough damage, and only the wall footings appear to survive, there were also some areas of plain tessellated pavement.

Stanion, Corby Road (SP 9145 8701)
Simon Carlyle

Excavation was carried out ahead of the construction of a single residential development in an area of nationally important archaeological remains relating to the major Medieval pottery production centres in the villages of Lyveden and Stanion. Trial excavation in 1992 carried out on another part of the current site revealed the best-preserved example of a potter's tenement within the Rockingham Forest, while the best-preserved remains of pottery 'wasters' and kiln debris had been in the rear of plots fronting onto Little Lane, parallel to Corby Road.

The present excavation revealed several pits containing dumps of 'waster' pots, including primary dumps of near complete vessels while some pits were filled with more fragmented debris, presumably as secondary deposition from surface waster heaps. The total assemblage weighs in the region of 500kg. It is dominated by the production of glazed jugs, some evidently the work of a single potter, but also includes plain coarseware jars, as well as some kiln furniture and glazed roof ridge tiles.

Stanwick Quarry (SP 9669 7150)
Andy Chapman

An area to the south of the River Nene and extending eastward to the old railway line was subject to an archaeological watching brief during soil stripping prior to gravel extraction. The entire area comprised former river margins, with deep deposits of alluvial clay over truncated natural gravel. In a single area there were waterlogged silts containing wood debris, which appear to have comprised either a former swampy or pond-like area adjacent to the old river channel. A wood sample recovered from the final silting of this area has been radiocarbon dated to 3350-3100 cal BC.

Titchmarsh, St Mary's Church (TL 0220 7986)
Tim Upson-Smith

An archaeological watching brief comprised the viewing of a single pipe trench to lay a new gas supply pipe to the south-east of St Marys Church. No archaeological features

Northamptonshire

were found. A small excavation carried out in the north-east of the church revealed some disarticulated human remains and a few animal bones below the flagstone floor.

Towcester, Islington Road (SP 6949 4836)

David Leigh and Danny McAree

An archaeological watching brief, following a previous evaluation (SMA 32 (2002) 31), was undertaken during groundwork in advance of the construction of dwellings at Islington Road. A single undated oval pit was recovered, with two or more vertical timber stakes set within the fill.

Towcester, Watling Street (SP 0646 0567)

Tim Upson-Smith, David Leigh and Danny McAree

A watching brief was maintained during excavation for the erection of flood defences along the line of the A5 Watling Street, Towcester. No archaeological features were present.

Towcester, 163-165 Watling Street (SP 693 485)

Steve Morris

An excavation and watching brief was carried out on land to the rear of 163-165 Watling Street. The work exposed a section of the Roman town wall, several pits and gullies as well as part of the town ditch. Also located were an 18th century brick and tile kiln and a Post-Medieval well. This excavation was immediately to the west of work carried out in 2001 (SMA 32 (2002) 31) which had also identified part of the Roman wall and ditch.

Woodford, Rectory Lane (SP 9680 7671)

David Leigh

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks in advance of the construction of a single dwelling. No archaeological deposits were revealed.

Woodnewton, 19 Orchard Lane (TL 0349 9451)

Jacqueline Harding and Iain Soden

Two cottages adjacent to 19 Orchard Lane had been uninhabited since at least 1945. They were built separately, probably in the 19th century, but desk-based assessment and building recording has not established more exact construction dates. The cottages provided only the most basic accommodation, without any services, gas, electricity or water, and in their final use they were joined together. The roof, the majority of woodwork and the fittings derive from this last period. No demonstrably early fittings survived.

Yardley Gobion, St Leonard's Church (SP 7652 4475)

Tim Upson-Smith

An archaeological watching brief, consisting of the viewing of a footings trench, was carried out to the south of St Leonards Church. No archaeological features were present.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

Compiled and edited by Edward Biddulph

Brackley, St Peters Church (SP 5916 3730)

James Mumford

An archaeological watching brief, commissioned by the Building Committee for St Peters revealed only a homogenous graveyard soil. No archaeological features or deposits and no human remains were uncovered or disturbed by the groundwork.

Higham Ferrers, Kings Meadow Lane (SP 9592 6922)

Alan Hardy

Another phase in the long running archaeological programme on this development site took place in 2002, again funded by the Duchy of Lancaster, this time with additional support from English Heritage. This years site was part of a Roman roadside settlement overlooking the River Nene. More than 2ha of archaeology were revealed, including part of the road, at least twenty buildings with associated features, and a number of burials. The provisional dating indicates that the settlement began in the late 1st - early 2nd century, and principally consisted of circular houses (each with stone footings) set back from the roadside. On the opposite side of the road from the occupation was the site of a shrine. No structure has survived, but within a small enclosure hundreds of votive offerings have been found, including brooches, rings, coins, military regalia, and lead cures. In the 3rd and 4th centuries the settlement expanded, with rectangular buildings fronting directly onto the road. As a possible replacement to the roadside shrine, a 3rd/4th century enclosure was identified, slightly apart from the main settlement, which contained a small rectangular building that may have been a temple. The post-excavation assessment of the excavation results is due to start in April 2003.

Stowe, Stowe Park (SP 6768 3930)

Alan Hardy

In the summer and autumn of 2002 a series of archaeological investigations was carried out as part of a restoration project at the Cuttle Brook. The work has shed light on a rarely examined aspect of landscape garden history. The Cuttle Brook is on the western edge of Stowe Estate and forms the north-west boundary of the fallow deer park. Excavation,

recording, survey and watching brief works were carried out on behalf of the National Trust, who had initiated a programme of restoration and repairs to the brook and a number of silted ponds and their associated dams. Documentary sources indicate that the first major phase of development of the ponds took place in the late 18th century. Two of the three dams investigated by OA revealed early attempts to regulate the water flow with systems of timber sluices, channel, and silt traps built into earth dams. Evidence of rebuilding at intervals indicates that a constant problem from the start was the build-up of silt which would slowly clog the sluices. The third (and biggest dam) served the home farm mill, and was originally built of stone, later heightened in brickwork.

THAMES VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Towcester, Amen Corner, Moat Lane (SP 6938 4871)
Sarah Coles

A desk-based assessment suggested the strong possibility of Medieval and Roman occupation on the site. Two evaluation trenches revealed that this was indeed the case, with Medieval deposits (mainly pits) above Roman layers and not far below the present surface. Given the small area investigated, the Roman pottery assemblage of over 100 sherds is of surprising quality, with many finewares and several imports.

OXFORDSHIRE

COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

Ashbury, Ashdown House (SU 282 820)
Kevin Colls

A watching brief was undertaken in November and December 2002 for the National Trust during the reduction of the existing earth floor of the South Lodge, Ashdown House. Evidence for an early flagstone floor was encountered which could represent the original 17th-century floor to the Lodge. Several other structures were identified which appeared to be contemporary with the flagstones, including a foundation course for an early partition wall which effectively separated the northern part of the lodge.

Didcot, Didcot West (SU 5085 9015)
Laurent Coleman, Mark Brett, Clifford Bateman, and Martin Watts

Following an earlier programme of desk-based assessment, field walking, geophysical survey, and small-scale evaluation (RPS 2001) of land to the west of Didcot, a

large-scale evaluation was carried out on behalf of RPS between August and December 2002. Four main zones of activity were identified, comprising: Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age settlement and probable funerary activity; Late Bronze Age to Middle Iron Age settlement; Late Iron Age to Early Romano-British specialist production (probably tanning); and later Romano-British activity (including a possible bustum, or pyre site) associated with a small villa identified during the earlier evaluation (RPS 2001).

In addition, more sporadic activity dating to the Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, and Romano-British periods was identified. This activity comprised isolated pits and probable field system ditches scattered across the site. Evidence for Medieval and/or Post-Medieval ridge and furrow cultivation and field boundaries was also encountered across the site.

Reference

RPS 2001 Didcot West: An Initial Evaluation

Farmoor to Blunsdon (Wilts.) Thames Water Pipeline (Faringdon to Kingston Hill section)
Alistair Barber and Clifford Bateman

Excavation took place on the following sites in Oxfordshire:

Duxford Farm (SU 362 992)

Excavation between April and June 2002 revealed an Early Neolithic axe fragment, a possible Early-Middle Neolithic pot sherd, a concentration of Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age pits (one of which contained a cylindrical loomweight) and a probable Bronze Age ring ditch. A repeatedly recut ditch-flanked trackway and associated enclosures were also recorded, associated with pottery of Late Iron Age to 4th century AD date. Medieval or later ridge and furrow cultivation remains were also noted.

Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline (SP 2355 0338 to SP 2725 0635)

Laurent Coleman, Clifford Bateman, and Ed McSloy

A programme of archaeological recording was undertaken along the route of a new gas pipeline between Filkins and Carterton, Oxfordshire (a distance of 4.7km). Following desk-based assessment and geophysical survey, archaeological fieldwork was carried out on behalf of RSK Environment Ltd and Transco. The fieldwork took place between July and August 2002 and comprised the excavation of a known archaeological site where the pipeline route intersected an extensive area of cropmarks indicative of late prehistoric and/or Romano-British enclosures and trackways (centred on SP 2370 0345). A watching brief was maintained throughout the remainder of the pipeline route.

Oxfordshire

Iron Age

A discrete group of Middle to Late Iron Age features, largely comprising curvilinear ditches and pits, was identified. Later Iron Age features included an L-shaped enclosure ditch. Pottery recovered comprised hand-made coarse wares, the fabrics and forms of which were typical of the Middle to Late Iron Age (c 300BC - AD 50). A limited number of wheel-thrown, grog-tempered wares, suggestive of mid-1st century AD industries, were also recovered. The large, unabraded nature of the pottery is indicative of settlement activity in the immediate vicinity.

Romano-British

Following the prehistoric activity, a trackway was laid out which yielded late 1st to 2nd century AD pottery. A sequence of ditches indicative of contemporary enclosures was also identified. However, one ditch located between the trackway ditches contained pottery dating to the 3rd to 4th century AD, suggesting that the trackway was no longer in use at this time. The Roman pottery, largely comprising reduced sandy wares of local manufacture, was of a relatively small size suggesting that the excavation area was somewhat removed from the main focus of Romano-British settlement.

Eight inhumation and three cremation burials were identified in the vicinity of the trackway. The burials were recovered in variable states of preservation and had suffered later truncation by ridge and furrow cultivation and modern ploughing. Their date remains problematic as only one was buried with any grave goods (iron coffin nails and shoe fastenings). The cremations were unusual as the cremated remains had been placed in east to west orientated sub-rectangular pits that resembled small graves. There was no evidence for in situ burning in the pits themselves.

Watching brief

The watching brief recorded an oven at SP 2695 0620. The oven had a stone-lined flue and stokehole at one end, and the fragmentary remains of a T-shaped channel at the other. Only one course of stonework, which had been scorched in the vicinity of the stokehole, survived in situ. Pottery dated to the 1st to 2nd century AD was recovered from the backfill of the flue. The T-shaped form of the feature also supports a date early in the Romano-British period (Morris, 1979).

Discussion

Interpretation of the results is aided by the identification of clearly defined cropmarks and the results of an earlier watching brief along the Broughton Poggs to Highworth gas pipeline, which identified Middle to Late Iron Age storage pits and probable agricultural boundaries immediately to the south of the current excavation area (OAU 1993). The similarity of this activity to the current findings suggests the Middle to Late Iron Age activity comprised dispersed areas of occupation within an intensive agricultural landscape. By contrast, the Romano-British occupation appears more centralised and is largely defined to the north and west by the trackway ditches.

Despite the total number of inhumations and cremations exceeding ten in number (with probably more lost to ridge and furrow cultivation) the burials and cremations do not appear to have comprised a formal cemetery. The dispersed nature of the burials and their possible association with a trackway and ditches at the edge of the settlement may represent a more informal pattern of burial commonly identified at the fringes of Romano-British rural settlements (Pearce, 1998).

A full programme of post-excavation analysis is currently ongoing.

References

- OAU 1993; British Gas Plc. *South Western Pipeline, Highworth to Broughton Poggs*: Watching Brief Report
Pearce J 1998; The dispersed dead: preliminary observations on burial and settlement space in rural Roman Britain, in *Proceedings of the 7th Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference* (ed P Baker et al.)
Morris P 1979; *Buildings in Roman Britain*

Oxford, Churchill Hospital (SP 5445 0567)

Mark Brett

In June 2002 an evaluation was carried out on the site of the proposed Phase 2 extension of the DEM Centre. No archaeological deposits were identified, but a single sherd of residual Romano-British pottery was recovered from the subsoil.

Witney, 26 Church Green (SP 3553 0936)

Jo Williams

Evaluation in January 2002 identified two ditches, both aligned at right angles to the Medieval street, interpreted as tenement boundaries. Late 12th/13th century pottery retrieved from one of the ditches suggests that the boundary is broadly contemporary with the documented re-planning of the Medieval town.

Witney, 54 High Street (SP 3575 0993)

Richard Young

In December 2002 an archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of 54 High Street, Witney revealed a ditch and two gullies of Medieval date. These features contained pottery of 11th to 13th century date, and represent tenement boundaries or drainage features. Post-Medieval quarry pits and boundary walls were also encountered.

Witney to North Leigh Thames Water Pipeline (SP 3667 1094 to SP 3834 1209)

Franco Vartuca

Between June and August 2002 a watching brief during construction of a new water main produced no

archaeological features, deposits or artefacts predating the modern period.

DENCHWORTH LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Challow Hill Farm, East Challow
(Centered SU 3695 9065)
Patsy Jones

Margaret Gelling in *Place Names of Berkshire* (1972) recounted how, when she walked the parish boundary of Denchworth in 1963 following the path described in an Anglo-Saxon charter, there was no sign of the barrow mentioned in the charter on the southern boundary between Denchworth and East Challow. In a quest to find any traces of the missing barrow Denchworth local history group decided to walk the fields to the south of the parish boundary in 2001. The site is on clay and air photographs show only one possible ditch roughly northeast to southwest across the field and possibly continuing northward.

A few prehistoric sherds were found but the bulk of finds were Romano-British pot in the highest part of one field. The following spring that area of the field was divided into 20m squares and walked by members of the group and friends. A considerable amount of pot was found and the distribution appeared to have 2 nuclei.

A magnetometry survey of part of the area by Pam Gait in 2001 gave very promising results and was followed in March 2002 by a survey of an area 120m x 120m carried out by Tony Johnson of Oxford Archaeotechnics which revealed enclosures, trackways and ring ditches which seem to indicate a later prehistoric/Romano-British settlement. It is likely that the settlement extends beyond the area of survey. The weaker signals to the south, east and south east may be due to features being more deeply buried. This could also mean that there was less likelihood of ploughing bringing finds to the surface so the field walking results may have given a biased picture.

In 2002 one trench was excavated across a main enclosure ditch and a second smaller trench to investigate one exceptionally high magnetic anomaly. The pottery and a few iron items have yet to be fully evaluated but the anomaly was found to be due to a Roman plough coulter. Most of the pottery in the second trench was residual but there was some third century pottery close to the coulter which was not residual. The coulter is 0.75m long with a hexagonal end, very similar to that found at Dorchester-on-Thames currently exhibited in the Ashmolean Museum.

As far as the missing barrow goes, it is possible that it lay under the path of the railway which intersects the parish boundary where the boundary turns north and then west again.

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank the land owners, Mr and Mrs John Froud and Lin Blackwell for their support and encouragement, Tony Johnson for the survey work and friends who helped with the field walking and excavation.

HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Rivermead Rehabilitation Centre, Abingdon Road, Oxford (SP 5205 0395)
Dr Rhodri Gardner

A desk based assessment for Linden Homes Chiltern Ltd found that the site was developed in the 1880s as the Oxford Isolation Hospital. Tantalising evidence for a Roman ford nearby to the north may suggest that peripheral Roman roadside features extend into the site. Abingdon Road, which forms the western boundary of the site, may date to the early Medieval or Medieval period. Any preserved remains are likely to be sealed by Post-Medieval reclamation deposits associated with the construction of the hospital and its underground services in 1885. Herts Arch Trust report 1165

Former Pauls Malt Site, St Johns Road, Wallingford, Oxfordshire (SU 6004 8896)
Nick Crank

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out on behalf of Linden Homes. Despite Neolithic and Iron Age activity to the immediate east of the site, no archaeological features were identified and no artefacts recovered. Widespread truncation of the natural ground surface was present, associated with the construction, use and subsequent demolition of the large maltings complex formerly present on the site. Site code: HAT 599; Herts Arch Trust report: 1057

JOHN MOORE

Abingdon, Former Station Inn, Station Yard (SU 4981 9727)
John Moore

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation for footings and drainage for the construction of three new dwellings replacing the former Station Inn. Two burials and a small pit were found to pre-date the Iron Age Oppidum ditch that crossed the site. Sealing the defensive ditch were the remnants of Roman occupation dating from the late 1st century, or more likely from the first half of 2nd century, until the late 4th century.

The bottoms of Medieval and Post-Medieval pits were the

Oxfordshire

only remains of these periods to survive the basement of the former building.

Ascott-under-Wychwood, 2a Shipton Road (SP 3002 1876) Diccon Hart

An evaluation was carried out on this proposed residential development site. Activity at the northern end of the site included a potential boundary ditch, three postholes and a possible pit, all cut into the underlying gravel. To the south a large irregular linear feature was seen to cut into a potential buried soil horizon. No finds were recovered during the course of the work.

This is a little surprising given the proximity of the site both to the Medieval core of Ascott-under-Wychwood and the remains of Ascott D'Oyley Castle and probably indicates that the site lay on the edge of the Medieval village and was thus peripheral to activity related to the castle. Indeed, the delineation of much of the site by potential boundary ditches is not inconsistent with such a premise, as is the notable lack of finds. Of the structural features encountered only one posthole is likely to be of any great antiquity though on the basis of the available data it is impossible to characterise this feature and it is perhaps as likely to represent a substantial building as a small agrarian structure.

Bampton, right of Rosemary Cottage and Poachers Rest, Market Square (SP 3142 0318) John Moore

A watching brief carried out during excavation for footings for a new detached bungalow found evidence of the creation of a semi-formal garden dated to the 18th century.

Banbury, Hennef Way (SP 4600 4153) Maggie Henderson

Road widening enabled further remains seen during the original road construction (Allen. T G 1989, Archaeological Discoveries on the Banbury East - West Link road, *Oxoniensia* LIV, 25-44.) to be recorded. This site lies on the north side of the original road and immediately south of the development area at Manor Park (see below). While post-excavation work has still to be started it can be confirmed that further evidence of the deserted Medieval settlement of Old Grimsbury dating here from the 12th to 15th centuries was found. In addition a substantial ditch parallel to Hennef Way is dated from at least the mid Bronze Age period.

Banbury, Manor Park, Jugglers Close (SP 4653 4175) Charlotte Stevens

The access road and the entire footprints of three of the

proposed blocks of offices/warehouses and half of another were excavated. A palimpsest of archaeological features was revealed. The majority of the features were mid to late Iron Age in date and ditch systems defined a series of enclosures, field systems and structural evidence. The settlement did not continue into the Roman period, indicating a brief but intensive phase of occupation.

Limited evidence of late Saxon/early Medieval activity was also identified, comprising a series of ditches, probably related to field and enclosure boundaries and elements within. These relate to the north-east edge of the settlement of Grimberie first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086.

Banbury, Corner of Marlborough Road and Newland Road (SP 4562 4027) Amy Gray Jones

An archaeological watching brief took place during the excavation of foundation trenches for a new building at the junction of Marlborough Road and Newland Road, Banbury. Small amounts of Medieval and Post-Medieval pottery were found. It seems likely that previous Victorian buildings on the site have destroyed any earlier remains.

Beckley, Pound Cottage, High Road (SP 5631 1121) Amy Gray Jones

An archaeological watching brief took place during ground reduction and the excavation of foundations and service trenches for a two-storey rear extension and single storey side extension to Pound Cottage. A series of Medieval pits indicate that the site was occupied between the 11th and 13th centuries, contemporary with the occupation of Beckley Palace, 100m north-east of the site, and with pottery found on the north side of High Road. There was a break in activity on the site until the 16th century.

Black Bourton, Proposed Cemetery Extension, West of St. Marys Church (SP 2859 0421) Diccon Hart

An evaluation found a single large shallow cut feature of middle Saxon date cut into natural gravel. Several undated postholes were also found across the rest of the investigated area. The large shallow cut may be a Grubenhaus.

Whatever the precise form and nature of this feature, its significance is unquestionable for the pottery assemblage from one of the fills contains only the fourth group of Ipswich Ware pottery yet found in Oxfordshire. This is not in itself a reliable indicator of the status or type of site from which this group was retrieved as the other assemblages were recovered from a wide range of sites. However, given that this assemblage is comparable in size to those from major excavations, it is likely that the site lies in the vicinity

of a significant middle Saxon site. The conjectured minster at Bampton would be a likely contender for the immediate supply of such pottery, though the presence of butchered animal bone within the fill would imply the existence of a settlement a little closer to home.

Chesterton, F-Station (SP 5715 2085)
Maggie Henderson

A watching brief during demolition of a pumping station and the enlargement of existing facilities did not reveal anything further associated with the Roman town of Alchester.

Chilton, Rutherford Appleton Laboratory
(SU 4785 8640)
Amy Gray Jones

An evaluation and subsequent recording action found evidence for two areas of Bronze Age occupation and a probable farmstead provisionally dated to mid-late 1st century to the 4th century, with the late 2nd century onwards most strongly represented and perhaps the main period of occupation. This site will be further reported on next year following post-excavation work.

Chipping Norton, The White Hart Hotel, High Street
(SP 3144 2712)
Maggie Henderson

The evaluation carried out on the proposed area of development to the rear of the White Hart Hotel found the remains of two stone built buildings. One of the buildings included a possible basemented lean-to attached to its southern side. In addition to this, there was a large ditch and evidence of terracing. Artefacts recovered from the site dated the remains to a period between the 12th and 14th centuries.

Dorchester-on-Thames, The Priory, 12 High Street
(SU 5785 9423)
Maggie Henderson

An archaeological watching brief took place during ground reduction and the excavation of foundations for a rear extension to The Priory. From the results of the archaeological investigations it appears likely that the development area falls directly within a Roman ditch, almost certainly the eastern boundary of the town defences. The position of the Roman ditch at this location would dispense with the theory that the River Thame formed the eastern boundary to the town. In addition to this a sequence of Post-Medieval dumping, demolition, landscaping and disposal of domestic refuse was clearly visible cutting into the upper layers of the Roman ditch.

East Hendred, right of Penny Green, Cat Street
(SU 4591 8888)
John Moore

A watching brief was carried out during excavation for foundations and new services for a new dwelling. The results showed that the site primarily had been in horticultural use prior to its use as a builders yard. A rubbish pit of the late 18th to 19th century was located.

Gosford and Water Eaton, North Oxford Park and Ride Car Park (SP 1190 5020)
Mike Houghton

Further remains of a mid - to late 1st century AD ditch was found during a watching brief. A Roman settlement site further to the east is postulated. Little of the potential archaeological horizon across this site was exposed during the construction works.

Horley, Land East of Bramshill Manor, Wroxton Lane
(SU 4178 4377)
John Moore and Mercedes Planas

An archaeological watching brief undertaken during the course of ground reduction in preparation for the construction of two new dwellings found remains of two cottages one of which is dated to at least the 13th century and continued in use to the 16th century. The other cottage is probably part of a building shown on a map of 1766. An impressive length of the drive to Bramshill Manor was exposed. A sherd of Romano-British pottery indicates some activity of this period in the vicinity.

Kingston Lisle, Sewage Treatment Works Transfer From Kingston Lisle to Childrey
(SU 3265 8765 to SU 3583 8728).
Amy Gray Jones

A watching brief was maintained during the digging of new pipe trenches, manholes and pumping stations for sewage transfer from the east side of Kingston Lisle eastwards along the B4507 to Eastmanton Lane, then continuing north-eastwards across the fields east of Sparsholt to Childrey. No archaeological deposits or features were disturbed. Evidence for manuring of the fields east of Sparsholt during the Medieval period was found.

Littlemore, Speedwell First School, Sandford Road
(SP 5370 0255)
Amy Gray Jones

An evaluation of the playing field recovered Roman pottery, probably associated with manuring activities from a possible settlement at least 100m to the south. Medieval pottery indicates agricultural use of the area from at least the

Oxfordshire

14th century.

Long Wittenham, Lammas Eyot, High Street (SU 54720 93640)

Amy Gray Jones

A watching brief was carried out during ground reduction and the excavation of foundations and service trenches for a new dwelling. The archaeology consisted of a ditch dating from the late Saxon - Saxo-Norman period, and a single flint flake probably of Neolithic - Early Bronze Age date, which was recovered from alluvial deposits.

Oxford, Barton, Barton Village School, Fettiplace Road (SP 5522 0818)

Amy Gray Jones

The evaluation area lay on the north side of Fettiplace Road and south of the Bayswater Brook. Evidence for Medieval agricultural practices was discovered. This consisted of a buried Medieval ploughsoil, ridge and furrow earthworks preserved in the ploughsoil, and an earlier plough furrow, which date the cultivation of the site to the 11th - 13th centuries.

Oxford, 7 Canterbury Road (SP 5092 0761)

Amy Gray Jones

An archaeological watching brief took place during ground reduction for a basement level extension to the rear of the existing property. Two 19th century pits were the only archaeological features found.

Oxford, Headington, Manor Ground, London Road (SP 5423 0728)

Diccon Hart, John Moore and Ben Savine

An excavation was carried out over the majority of the northern half of this site prior to its development for a new hospital and flats. The nature of the geology (Beckley Sand Member) did not favour the positive identification of archaeological features. Nevertheless, a number of possible features were defined on the basis of variations in colour, consistency and texture of the natural sand. The features were all sealed by a layer of heavily turbated mid brown sand, which was almost certainly derived from the underlying natural sand, probably as a result of both cultural and natural processes such as ploughing and rooting.

Several probable and possible postholes were defined by excavation along with a possible pit complex. Geophysical survey found anomalies of possible archaeological significance in the magnetometer data in the form of cut features. These were mainly linear possibly representing ditches of enclosures. Other anomalies could represent pit

groups. However only one of these potential ditches could be found when the site was stripped.

Activity during several periods is shown from the finds retrieved from the work. The majority of the flint assemblage can probably be attributed to the later Neolithic or Bronze Age period, with a date within the earlier half of this range considered most likely on technological grounds and supported by the presence of diagnostic types. A limited number of possible Mesolithic or earlier Neolithic flints were also present. A total of four sherds of Bronze Age pottery and two of Bronze/Iron Age transitional wares were also recovered.

The advent of the Iron Age was signalled by a massive increase in the amount of pottery retrieved from the site, amounting to almost half the total pottery assemblage by weight. Much of the assemblage was in very poor condition and the lack of diagnostic forms necessitated the dating of the assemblage primarily with reference to the fabrics. This has shown relatively high proportions of grog, sand and shell tempered wares that may be seen to indicate a Middle-Late Iron Age date for the assemblage. It may be noted that there was a marked concentration of pottery in the northern half of the excavated site, probably indicating that the focus of activity lay towards the high ground to the north of the site.

A further point of particular interest is the pronounced density of Iron Age sherds along a roughly east-west line. This corresponds closely with the distribution of Bronze Age pottery, though the reasons for such a concentration are unclear. Given the slope from northeast to southwest across the site, there is a correlation between this linear density and the contours of the site. The possibility of a large linear feature along this line, however, should not be discounted. Sherds of Iron Age date were associated with some of the features found on the site.

As with the preceding Iron Age phase, the poor condition of the Roman assemblage again meant that dating the group was largely achieved through analysis of the fabrics. This suggests a predominantly Late Roman date (ie 3rd-4th century) though the presence of some fabrics may attest to limited activity from the late 1st century onwards.

The distribution of the Roman pottery is of particular interest as, in contrast to the preceding Iron Age, many of the sherds appear to be concentrated in the southern half of the site, though some appear to be focused in the southeast corner of the site. This is likely to indicate a significant change in the character of the site, with the focus of activity shifting to the south and east. However, in the absence of any clear correlation between finds spots and excavated features, little may be said regarding the nature of any such activity. Whilst it is probable that the occurrence of Roman pottery on the site resulted from agricultural practices such as manuring, the possibility that the finds have been displaced through ploughing should not be ignored.

Oxford, 1-7 Longwall Street (SP 5193 0634)
Maggie Henderson

The evaluation carried out on the area of development to the rear of numbers 1 to 7 Longwall Street, has revealed a considerable depth of deposits filling the city ditch. In addition to this, a rubble-built stone culvert was located adjacent to, and disturbed by, the current building extension. This culvert is believed to have contained the Crowel, a watercourse depicted on Agas 1578 map.

Ramsden, Brize Lodge, Leafield (SP 3395 1529)
Diccon Hart

A programme of evaluation, watching brief and excavation has been carried out on this site. The watching brief is ongoing. Iron Age, Roman and Post-Medieval remains have been revealed.

So far the only remains of probable early (or possibly early-mid) Iron Age date found are a substantial ditch and parallel gully likely to represent agricultural activity peripheral to a settlement. Initial Roman activity seems very much a continuation of that of the preceding Iron Age, and is marked by the deliberate backfilling of Iron Age ditch and its subsequent replacement on a slightly different orientation with associated plough furrows. The first definitive evidence for a Roman masonry building has been uncovered, unfortunately only in one small sondage. The building(s) will be buried under a greater depth of material. A villa has long been suspected on this site from the type of finds found in the past. What was located was part of a burnt cellar with intensive sooting on the walls and floor. It is tempting to view this as part of a hypocaust structure. However, diagnostic elements such as pilae stacks or even tiles from which they are built have not been positively identified and any interpretation must remain questionable until further evidence is forthcoming. Other boundaries for fields or enclosures on a similar alignment to the building have been located. A possible clay chest may allude to a potential pottery in the vicinity, though little evidence for production was found (part of a waster). The preliminary dating of part of the Roman pottery assemblage indicates activity from 2nd/3rd century through to the 4th century.

Post-Medieval remains on the site are dominated by those of a large rectangular building, initially constructed of timber but later replaced with masonry and extended at one end by a cellared extension. The building had been demolished and heavily robbed by the 19th century. When the building was originally constructed is unknown. However, Post-Medieval pottery recovered from the site suggests a late 16th century or 17th century date. No pottery that could be earlier than the late 15th century has been found. The initial building was c 6.90m by 5m constructed on six square timber foundation posts of 0.25m square set in 1m square post pits. The second phase increased the length to a full 10m with the extension to the east. The cellar was accessed from the outside. The western room of the building

was floored with beaten clay. The building does seem a likely contender for a postulated earlier hunting lodge on the site, and though the clay flooring is perhaps more reminiscent of a barn, it is hard to conceive of a purely agricultural building possessing a cellar.

Shilton, Burford Quarry (SP 2775 0970)
Amy Gray Jones

The evaluation of the proposed extension of 13.5ha to the quarry failed to find any significant unknown archaeological activity. Some evidence of Medieval ridge and furrow cultivation was found confirming earthworks, now completely ploughed out, seen on aerial photographs.

Steeple Aston, Manor Farm Barns, South Side (SP 4731 2578)
Maggie Henderson

Historic building recording was carried out on a series of farm buildings at Manor Farm. The survey results provide a picture of mixed farming activity associated with a 17th century farmhouse. Modifications and reorganisation of the buildings reflect agricultural development over time in response to changes in productivity and advances in farming technology.

Stoke Lyne, Lower Farm (SP 5675 2849)
Maggie Henderson

A watching brief carried out on the proposed area of development revealed activity associated with the deserted Medieval village dating from at least the 11th century continuing through to the 13th century. A number of ditches at the northern end of the site were of 11th century date. However, an area of industrial activity in the form of lead smelting is of an earlier date. Several rubble-constructed banks were also recorded, one of which, along with a hearth, produced a 13th century date. Large quantities of artefacts were recovered from the site.

Wallingford, Queens Croft, 16a Castle Street (SU 60675 89739)
Amy Gray Jones

An archaeological watching brief took place during ground reduction and the excavation of foundations and service trenches for a two-storey extension to the rear of the existing property, and a single storey connection to existing garages. Archaeological deposits dating from the mid-11th to the early 13th centuries indicate that there was domestic activity near the site during this period. There was also evidence of 16th century and later activity.

Oxfordshire

Wallingford, 10 St. Georges Road (SU60430 89708)
John Moore

An archaeological watching brief adjacent to the west edge of the defensive ditch of the Saxon burgh revealed nothing of archaeological interest.

Watlington, The Lilacs, Brook Street (SU 9481 9425)
Mike Houghton

A watching brief carried out during excavations for footings for a two-storey extension found no evidence to link this area with the Medieval Watcombe Manor some 100m to the south-west.

Witney, Former Woolhouse Buildings, Between Dark Lane and Puck Lane (SP 3541 1019)
Diccon Hart

An evaluation found that archaeological remains were sparse and largely indicative of an agricultural land usage, comprising plough scars in the eastern half of the site and a possible field boundary to the west. A large shallow cut revealed towards the southern end of the site has been tentatively identified as a terracing cut, though its exact purpose has not been established. All archaeological deposits proved to be Post-Medieval.

Witney, rear of 76 High Street (SP 3576 1002)
Mike Houghton

An archaeological watching brief undertaken during the course of excavation of footings for new dwellings showed that the site has been in use from at least the early 14th century. Evidence for divisions between the properties that front onto the High Street was found.

NORTH OXON FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

Edward Shawyer

Once again our efforts were mainly focussed on Swalcliffe Lea, our field operations having been steadily reduced over the last four years due to increasing commitments, less free time for our members and an increasing amount of post-excavation work to do. Accordingly, as before, an intensive two week excavation was planned, ostensibly to define the form and dimensions of the building discovered last year. However in true NOFAG tradition things didn't turn out as we expected and the structure was revealed to be far larger than anticipated. Last years estimation of the site was somewhat toned down from the original conception which, based on the results of the initial fieldwalk, predicted something grander; however it now transpires that the

original notions were indeed closer to the truth.

This time it was possible to complete a number of deep sections down to the natural which exposed a number of earlier levels and like the villa excavated in the field opposite it revealed a number of successive structures dating from the 1st-4th centuries AD.

Swalcliffe Lea, Blacklands site (SP 39253850)

The Late Roman Building

The rectangular structure excavated last year revealed two rooms and was at least 18m long x 9m wide. The main excavation area (Trenches 1-2) was in Room 1 and it was here that the late Roman floor was discovered, which when partially exposed this year provided us with firm dating evidence. A worn coin of either Constans (337-350) or Valens (364-378) was found in the soil layer between the stone slab floor above and the remains of the clay floor below. This agreed with the evidence of identical working floors of the same date being found in the villa. The first trench dug this year (Trench 1), extended southwards from the edge of the old Trench 1 and just 1m in, the remains of a broken up wall were found; beyond this we detected a clay floor which stretched for 6m before it terminated in a large external wall. We continued the trench for a further 12m southwards to see if the Roman road ran nearby but all we discovered was 12m of garden soil. The clay floor formed part of a new room (Room 3) and it became obvious that the floor was related to the clay floor in Room 1 since the levels were identical. It now transpired that a slight error in the levels last year supposed that the early wall and clay floor found in the section in Trench 2 were related to the clay floor found below the slab floor in Trench 1, this is because the ground surface was erroneously believed to have risen 10-15cm to the north, when it was proven this year to be almost dead level. It is now evident that the slight traces of clay found in the soil beneath the stone floor in Trench 2 were all that remained of the floor in that part of the room; indeed even the earlier clay floor below was barely visible due to a large admixture of soil, perhaps resulting from it being degraded and abraded by constant use.

It became clear from the evidence of the floors and their visible relation to the walls that the building was not a late 4th century structure but an earlier edifice that had undergone an alteration in use similar to the villa complex.

Another trench was started (Trench 2), to explore beyond the west wall of Room 1 and a crude stone slab floor or paved area made up of larger stones was uncovered. The stone floor within Room 1 was better laid and the stones were in general smaller. Also, when more of the wall was uncovered it became clear that the wall in this area didn't exist, the wall having been removed and paved over when the slab floor was inserted, the same as that which occurred in Rooms 1 and 6 of the villa.

The stone paving extended for 2m before terminating in a

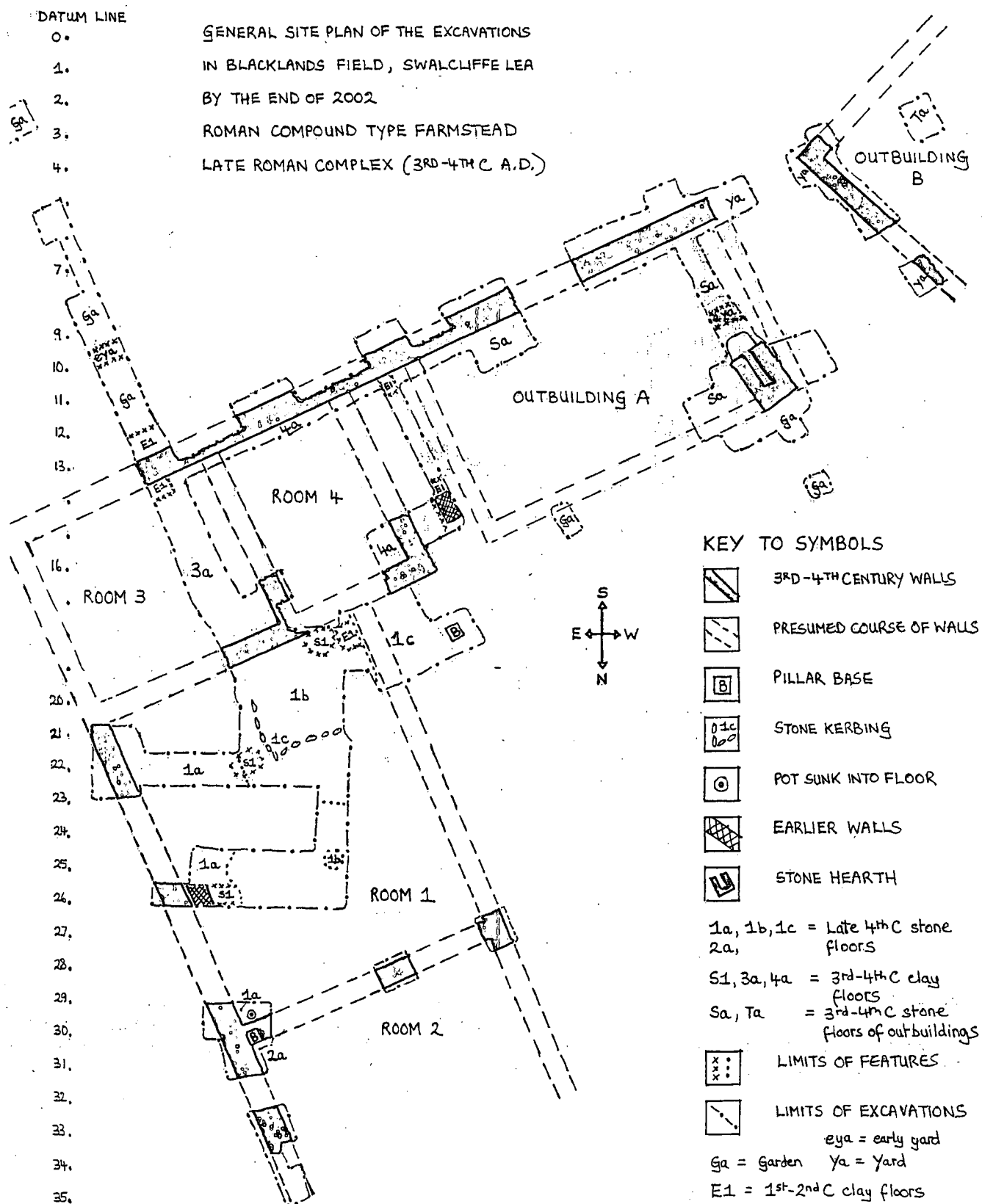
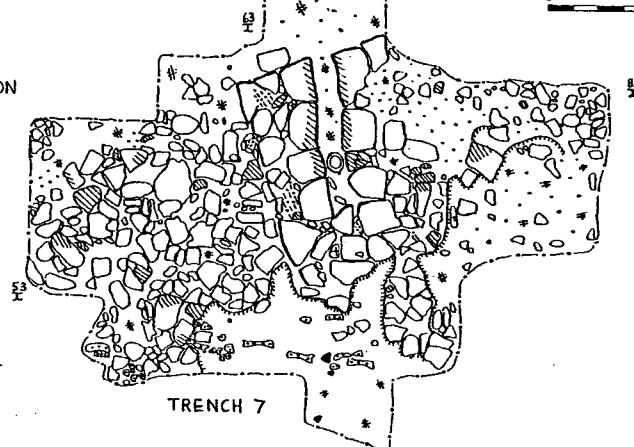
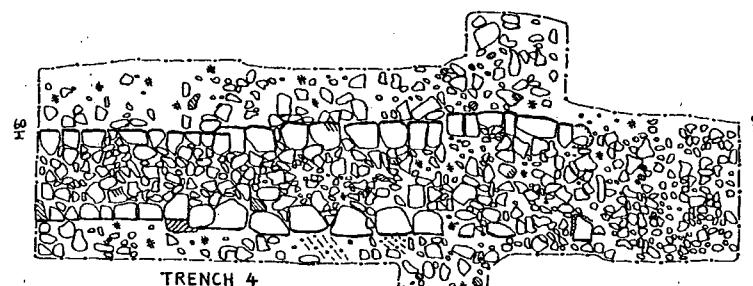
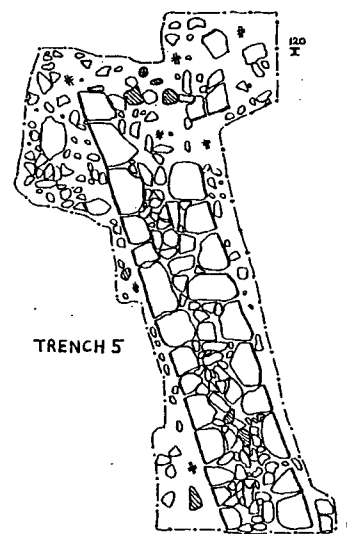


Fig 1. Blacklands Field, Swalcliffe Lea.



KEY TO SYMBOLS

- EDGE OF SMALL SLOPES/ MINOR CUTS
- COMPLETE POT
- WHITE LIMESTONE
- DARK BROWN HUMUS
- BURNT STONE
- WHITE CLAY
- ANIMAL BONE
- LIMIT OF EXCAVATION
- COIN FIND
- SURVEYING LEVEL

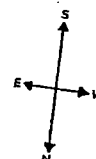
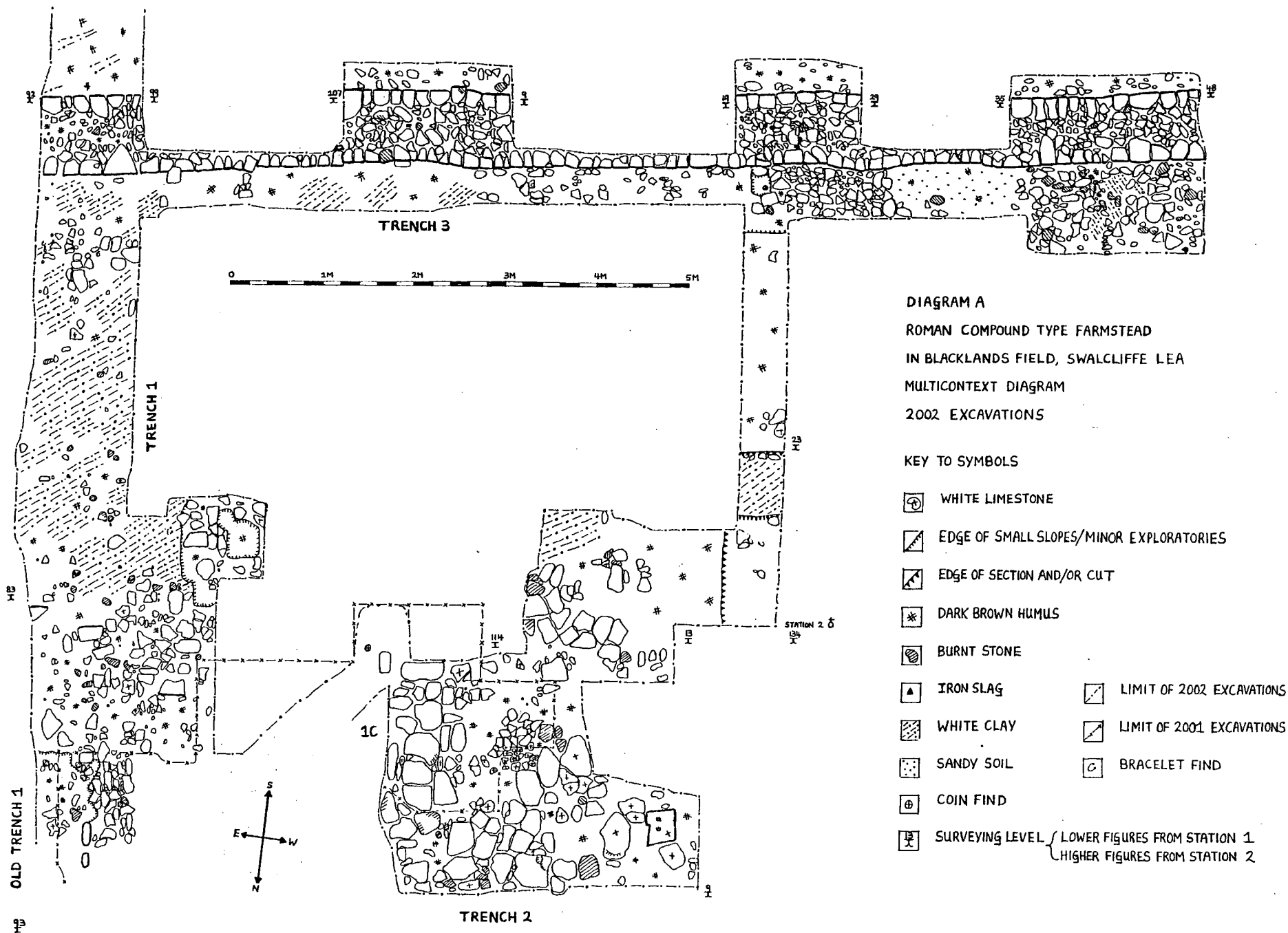


DIAGRAM B
MULTICONTEXT DIAGRAM OF 2002 EXCAVATIONS
OF A ROMAN COMPOUND TYPE FARMSTEAD IN
BLACKLANDS FIELD, SWALCLIFFE LEA

Fig. 2. Blacklands Field, Swalcliffe Lea.

Fig 3. Blacklands Field, Swalcliffe Lea.



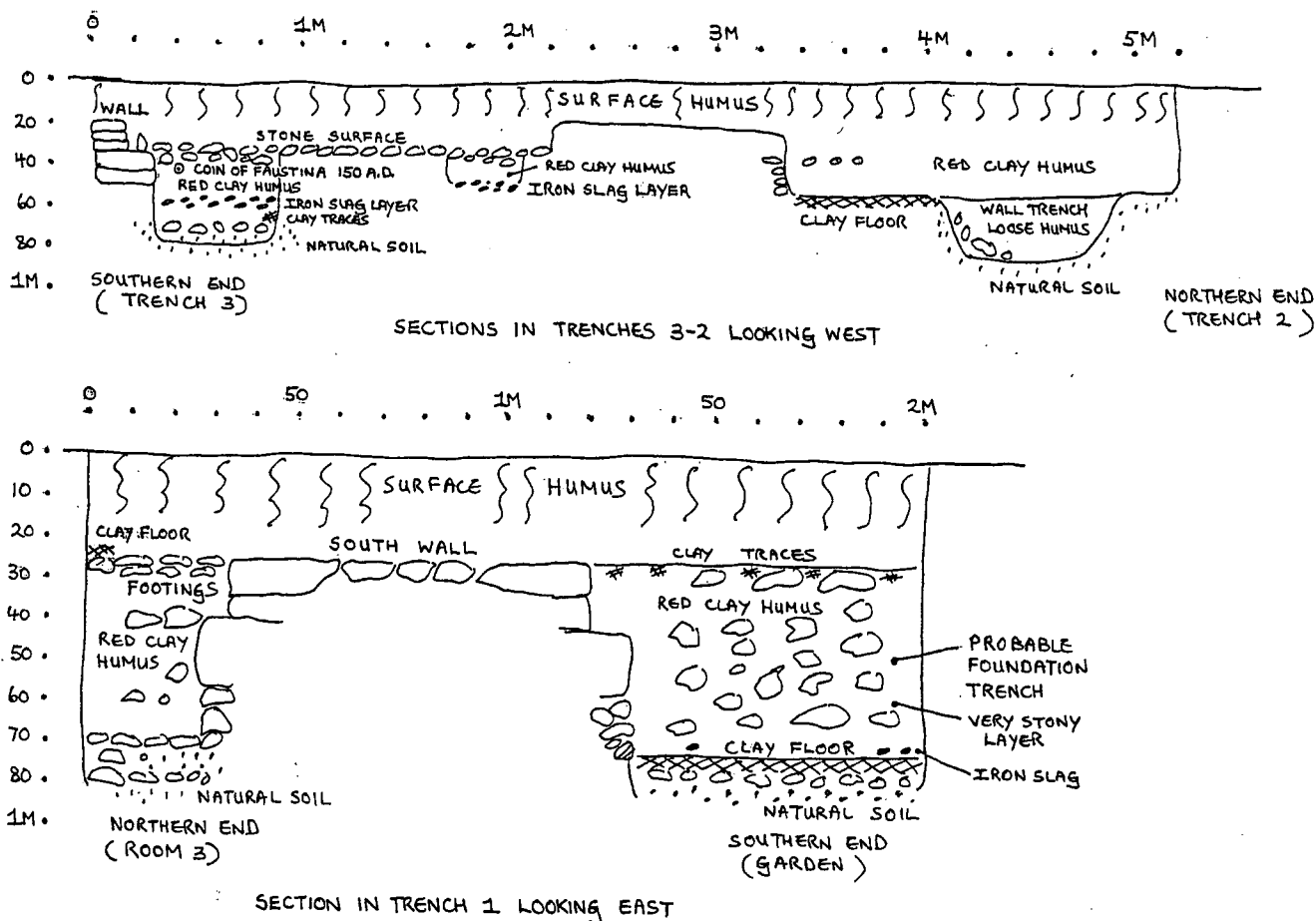


Fig 4. Blacklands Field, Swalcliffe Lea.

reddish-clay humus without any trace of either a wall or any robber trench. A large square stone was discovered on the edge of the paved area, which was identical to the pillar support found in the east wall of Room 1. The stone probably belonged in the west wall and was reused as a paving stone, indeed it seems likely that Room 1 was converted into an open sided animal shed during the late 4th century.

On the western side of the wall of Room 3 another clay floor was found and this ended in a shallow wall trench beyond which lay the same red clay humus, this area was designated Room 4 and was 3.5m wide x 6m long.

The overall evidence obtained from these new trenches now revealed that we had found a large rectangular house, which had at least four rooms, three of which originally had clay floors. The largest room (Room 1) had been converted for agricultural use in the late 4th century and the same was probably true for Room 2 as well, though considering that only a small section was exposed, this room awaits proper investigation.

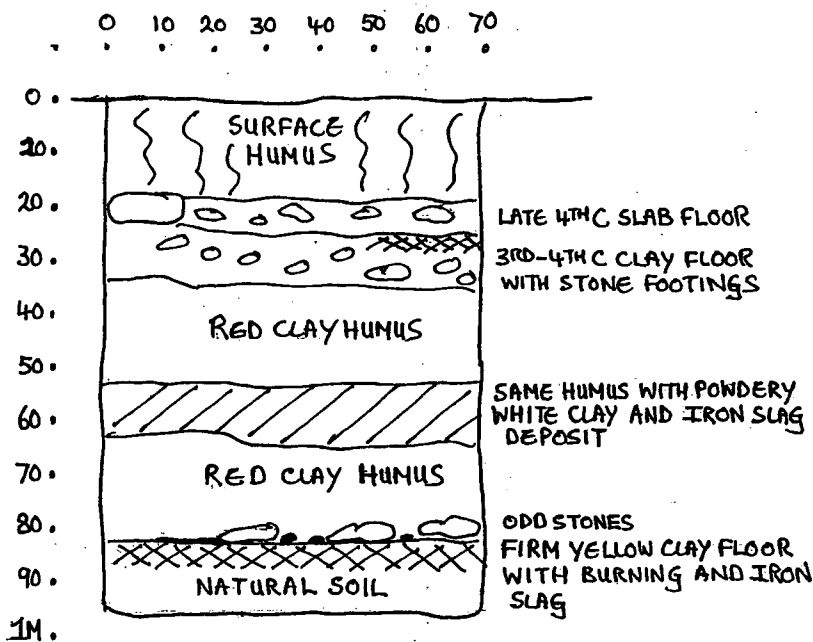
This years finds continued the trend of a high level of fine table wares such as decorated Samian, plain Samian, Oxford and Nene Valley colour-coated wares, Spanish amphorae and a silvery glazed Gallic ware. The buildings dimensions are now known to have been at least 22m long by 9m wide, the walls being probably sill walls supporting a timber structure, with internal timber posts set into the walls on

either side to help hold up the roof. A small amount of limestone slate was found but not enough to prove that the roof was slated; besides the house was too wide to safely support such a weight, being wider than the villas main house and more likely the roof was thatched. From the evidence of the deep sections the building can now be dated to the 3rd or early 4th century, a coin of the Empress Faustina (c 160 AD) being found in the soil layer beneath the southern wall of the house.

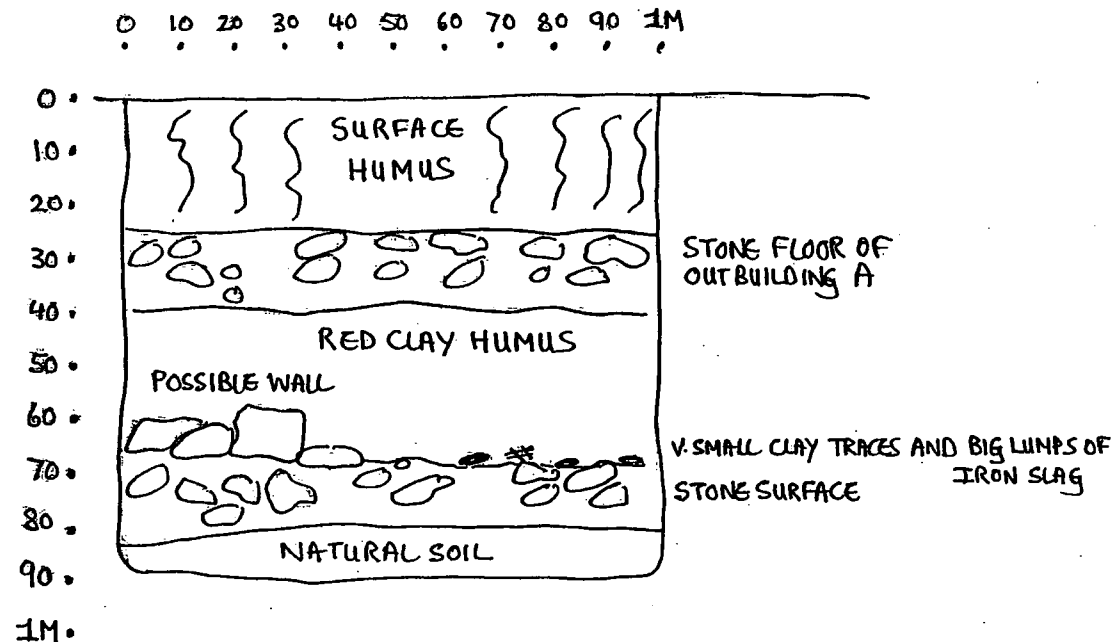
The southern wall was wider than the eastern, being nearly 1m wide (80cm) and was clearly part of a large compound wall, since to our surprise it carried on beyond the house for an extra 12m before it petered out to be replaced by a firm, tightly packed stone surface, which evidently formed a small area of yard. A small deep section was dug on the south side of the wall and revealed what was probably a wide foundation trench which had been back filled with stone, soil and white clay. The area north of the wall exposed a stone floor with a fair quantity of fire-reddened stones and in places patches of white clay, some on top of the stones, which may indicate the remains of a clay floor. This surface was clearly part of another structure (Outbuilding A) and a further trench (Trench 7) was dug north of the wall and the stone floor was found to extend for 5m before it ended in an area of large stones beyond which there was only the same type of garden soil found in Trenches 1 and 2.

The large stone area was interpreted as being another

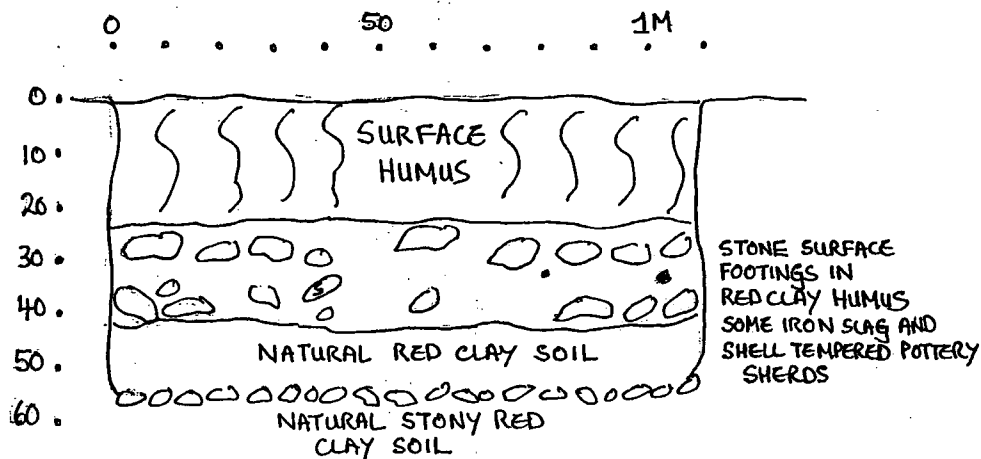
Fig. 5. Blacklands Field, Swalecliffe Lea.



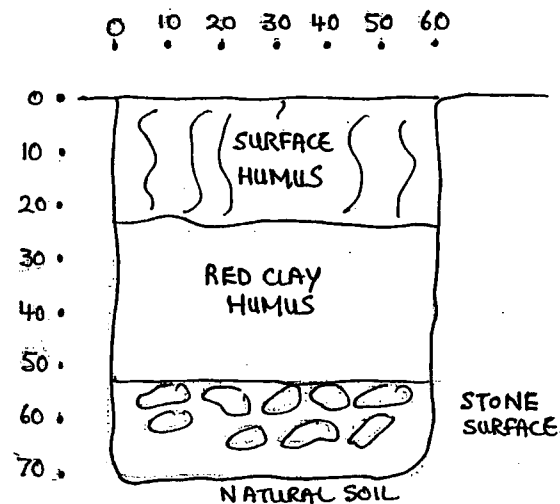
SECTION IN ROOM 1 LOOKING EAST
TRENCH 1



SECTION IN OUTBUILDING A LOOKING NORTH
TRENCH 7



SECTION IN OUTBUILDING B LOOKING WEST
TRENCH 6



SECTION IN GARDEN LOOKING WEST
TRENCH 1

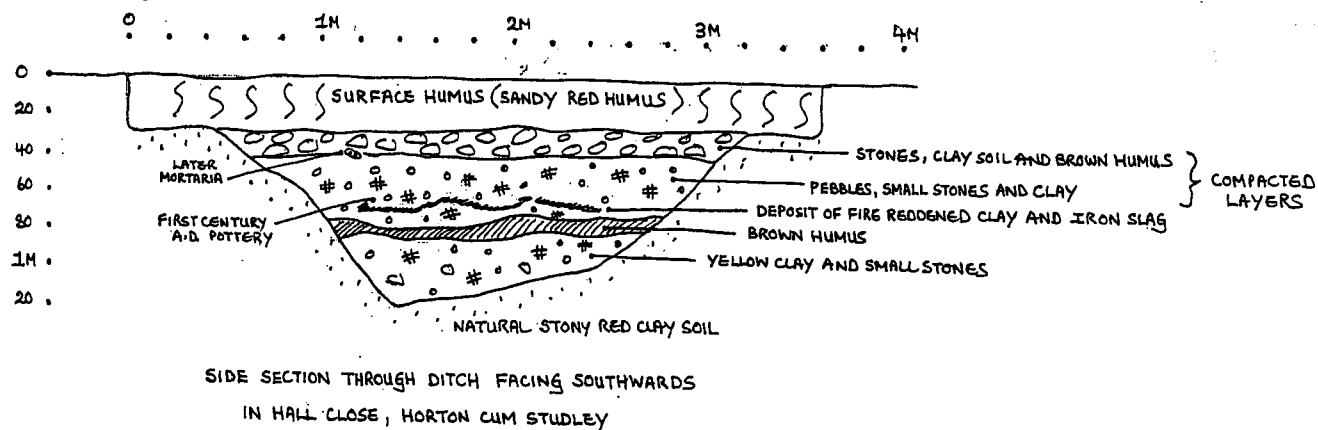


Fig 6. Horton-cum-Studley.

demolished wall, but time restrictions prevented us from sectioning it. Set into the large stone area we found a rectangular stone hearth (1.75m long x 1m wide) of exactly the same construction as the forges found in the villa. A near complete greyware vessel was found upside down in the flue of the hearth. When the stoke hole was excavated it was found to be far shallower than the stoke holes of the forges and there was a total absence of any iron slag, which points to it being used for domestic purposes. This notion was supported by the discovery of a quantity of animal bones behind the fire.

The large stones ended abruptly beyond the hearth to the west, in line with the end of the southern wall, which with the fire being orientated 76° to the same wall instead of at right angles, suggests that it may have been located in the corner of the room. The eastern wall was also missing except perhaps as a pile of stones about 1.7m away from the main house and once again time was lacking to section it. The apparent cruder floor surface and the hearth suggest some form of working building slightly detached from the main house.

The stone yard extended for 3m west of the southern wall before it ended in the corner of another structure (Outbuilding B) running off at a 60° angle, instead of 90°. The interior of this building was briefly investigated by a small trench (Trench 6). This revealed a stone, working floor, which with its footings was 15cm deep and lay directly upon the natural. In the footings was a small quantity of iron slag and one sherd of shell-tempered pottery. The great southern wall gave the impression of having been removed and the new outbuilding seemed to be a later development. The main house lay on top of a slight natural mound and Outbuilding B lies at the bottom of the slope. At the top of the mound four courses of the wall still exist, by the time one reaches the base of the slope the first course stands upon the tight packed stone layer. The absence of early strata and the presence late pottery in the footings definitely seem to show this outbuilding to have been a 4th century addition.

In conclusion the entire complex now seems to have been what is termed by Hingley (1989) a compound/family farm. This type of complex was quite common at local centres and

seems to have had Iron Age roots. The excavation has proved that there was a main house and at least two working buildings. The house is quite large and the finds show that it must have been a quite prosperous middle class residence. One certainly couldn't consider it a lower class house.

The Early Roman Buildings

This year we had more time to complete some deep sections down to the natural and though they were only small trenches or exploratories, they did reveal the sequence of occupation on the site and the chronology. Naturally because of the limited nature of the trenches little can be said about the dimensions and ground plan of the earlier buildings. In total two early phases were identified, the first being the one detected last year and the second being an earlier, deeper structure built directly upon the natural bedrock.

Phase 1

Last year a small section of clay floor was found, which lay upon stone footings and a small section of stone wall was revealed in Room 1 at a depth of 50cm from the ground surface. This year a small section was dug in the south-west corner of Room 1 and a 10cm deep layer of powdery white clay was found at the same depth, which contained some iron slag. This may have been the remains of a different floor surface or even a deposit of white clay used in metal working, though the former seems more likely. A section in Room 3 revealed only soil at this depth. Three layers of occupation existed on the top of the natural mound, thus giving it a greater height and a greater depth of soil. By contrast, Outbuilding A, halfway down the slope, had only two layers of occupation and the same was true of the sections dug in the garden area. A section dug between Outbuilding A and the main house yielded about 10cm of the red clay humus which lay under the late complex and on top of a clay floor of the earlier structure for which the pottery suggests a 1st-2nd century date. It was in this layer that a coin of Faustina (c 160) was found and this points to this phase as being somewhere in the 2nd-3rd centuries AD.

Phase 2

The section between the main house and Outbuilding A revealed a clay floor laid directly upon the natural at a depth

of 50cm from the surface, which was bounded by a wall trench 30cm deep and filled with loose soil and a few stones, clear signs of robbing. Interestingly a thin layer of iron slag was found on parts of the floor and in one spot imbedded into it. Clay floors were also found in the sections in Room 1 and the garden area along with the same layer of slag. These features were encountered 70-80cm deep in these sections, but the ground surface was 20-30cm higher here. Similar finds and a possible stone wall were found in the section in Outbuilding A, while a section further out in the garden area revealed a stone surface which may have been a courtyard just outside the early house. The pottery on this level consisted of limestone-tempered wares with some later grey wares.

The early house certainly existed in the area beneath Rooms 1, 3, 4 and Outbuilding A, while its successor has only been detected under Room 1 so far.

THE OTMOOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Horton-cum-Studley

Disappeared Medieval Village (SP 600135)

Edward Shawyer was invited by the Otmoor society to help them try to locate the Manor house of the disappeared village of Asham, which lay close to Norton and Studley. Asham existed from Saxon times, although not mentioned in the Domesday Book, it being included with Studley, it survived until the 17th century. The village has been well researched by Tim Hallchurch, who is writing a book on the subject. An old map of 1641 clearly shows all the closes and lanes of the village and gives their names. All the closes are traceable on the ground today and concentrations of pottery and debris clearly mark the position of the houses. A tiler existed in the village and there is a great profusion of Medieval tile fragments across the entire site, one of which had a nice depiction of a stag.

Tony Johnson of Oxford Archaeotechnics, a member of the Otmoor group, conducted a small resistivity survey of part of Hall Close where the Hall of Asham was suspected to exist and a small trench was dug across a feature, but this turned out to be Roman, which though disappointing from the Hall perspective added a new element of early history. Edward Shawyer and Tim Hallchurch conducted a careful survey of the close, along with a fieldwalk by all the group. No concentrations of pottery or debris showed up, save for an area at the very bottom of the hill, where there were very clear indications of a house along with pottery, Medieval tiles and coins of late Medieval to Commonwealth date (1483-1660). Although the building, located on a small terrace, couldn't have been very large it was concluded that this would not disqualify it from being the manor house or hall of a small settlement.

Horton (SP 592126)

In Horton there are earthworks of parts of the old village which have now disappeared, where the street plan is plainly to be seen. What is astounding is that two such excellent examples of shrunken and disappeared Medieval settlements so close to Oxford have gone completely unnoticed.

Hall Close (SP 602133)

The magnetometer survey by Tony Johnson revealed a linear feature running roughly north to south for 60m. A 4m trench was dug across it and a ditch was encountered, which had been cut directly into the natural. The natural soil was thin and below was bedrock in places. The top 40cm of the trench had been filled in with a clay humus and small pebble, which had set hard and made hard digging. In the top layer was a small fragment of mortarium. In the middle of the ditch fill there was a deposit of fire-reddened clay and iron slag, below which was a thin layer of brown humus. The lowest 40cm of the ditch fill was yellow clay and small stones. Upon analysis the layers of deposits seem to indicate that the first layer was formed by subsidence of natural soil, then followed a period when farm soil and rubbish ended up in the ditch and then finally the ditch was deliberately filled in, later in the Roman period. The pottery in the humus and iron slag layer was predominantly 1st century AD with some forms being based on Iron Age predecessors.

Roman pottery, coins and artefacts have been found elsewhere in Asham, close to the ditch. A lamp and dolphin brooches were found at the bottom of the hill, but it seems that the occupation was along the hillside.

Reference

Hingley R, 1989; *Rural Settlement in Roman Britain*, Seaby

NATIONAL TRUST

Gary Marshall

South Lodge, Ashdown (SU282820)

Recent dendrochronology dating of the roof timbers of Ashdown House suggests a date range of 1661-63 for the construction of the building. Ashdown House was the creation of Lord Craven, reputedly to house Charles I's sister Elizabeth, the Winter Queen. The house is flanked by two lodges, which are probably contemporary with the house, although dendrochronology dating of the floor and roof timbers of the South Lodge suggests it was rebuilt in c 1766. The ground floor is divided into two sections, each incorporating a fireplace and suggesting that the building was originally used as a brewhouse, bakehouse and kitchen.

The National Trust have employed Cotswold Archaeology to maintain a watching brief whilst work was carried out to lower the floor in the northern half of the building. This is to be used as a ticket office and exhibition room. The floor

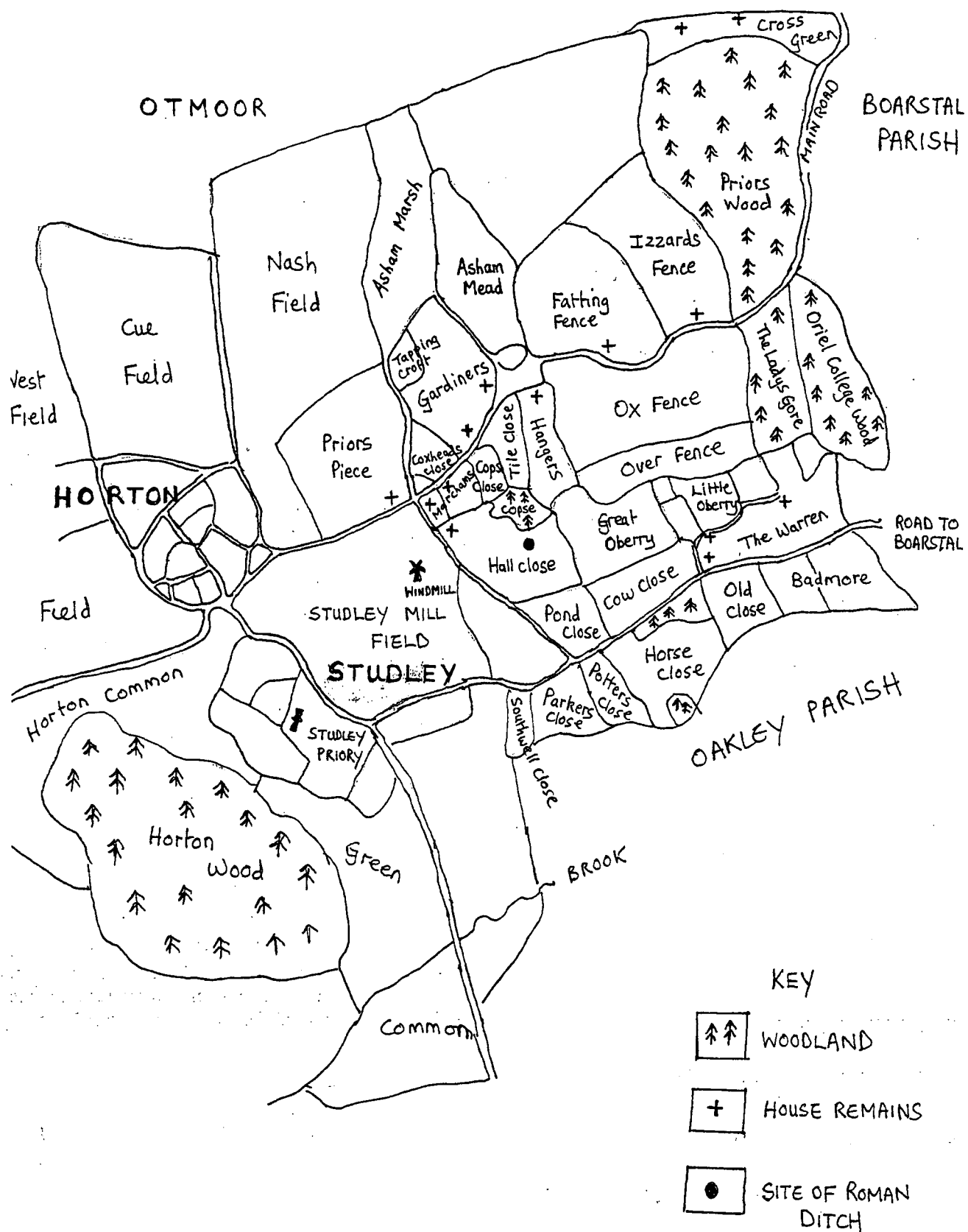


Fig 7. Horton-cum-Studley.

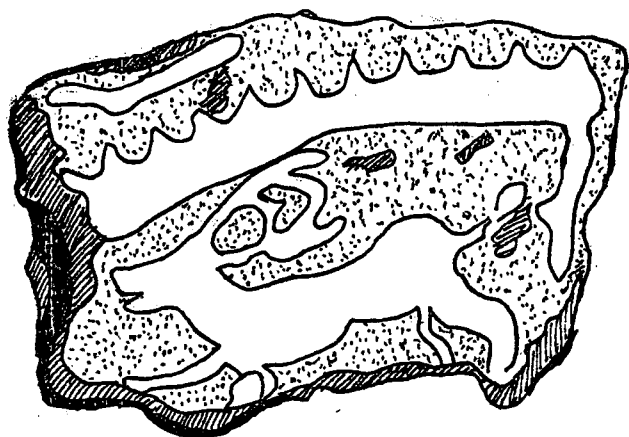


Fig 8. Fragment of a Medieval floor tile depicting a stag.
Found in Hall Close, Horton-cum-Studley.

surface consisted of compacted earth overlying a layer of rubble. This was removed to a depth of about 20-25cm, revealing a layer of lime mortar forming the bed for a missing flagstone floor. The impressions of the joints between the stones could still be traced as slight raised ribs in the mortar. The flagstone floor is thought to have been removed in the 1860s when it was replaced by a series of four low masonry walls carrying a suspended wooden floor. As part of the process of lowering the floor these low walls had to be removed. The excavations, in conjunction with an earlier programme of building recording, identified four main phases in the construction of the building, beginning with its construction in the 1660s. It was then rebuilt in the 1760s when the existing timber superstructure was added. Alterations were carried out in the 1860s when the bread oven in the north section was removed. In the 1950s the National Trust removed the plaster and the timber floor, after the building had become badly dilapidated, following its occupation by the Army in the 1940s.

Greys Court (SU724834)

English Heritage completed a second phase of investigation of the buildings at Greys Court during the winter of 2002. This is a three-year project, instigated and paid for by the National Trust. The results of this project will be summarized in *SMA* 34.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

Compiled and edited by Edward Biddulph

Abingdon, Barton Court Ruins (SU 5045 9750) James Mumford

From August to November 2002 an archaeological watching brief was carried out on behalf of Vale of White Horse District Council. The work was undertaken as part of repair and consolidation of the 16th century farmhouse monument and the extension of the compound that surrounds it. The watching brief revealed that building remains survive in situ

below ground, and that they extend beyond the present compound surrounding the monument. A drawn and photographic record was made of parts of the elevation that were subject to structural repairs. The standing remains comprise the core walls of the original building with a number of Tudor fireplaces still visible.

Abingdon, West Central Redevelopment Area (SU 4962 9702) Granville Laws and Steven Weaver

A programme of archaeological investigations is being undertaken on behalf of Lovells Homes as part of the redevelopment of an area of land situated between West St Helen Street and Winsmore Lane. Previous archaeological investigations revealed the presence of 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.

Current work began in November 2002, continuing into 2003. A total of 26 inhumations have now been uncovered 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 were uncovered immediately to the north east of the main cemetery.

Fieldwork progressed to the remains of Medieval structures associated with occupation along the frontage of West St Helen Street. It seems that the earliest Medieval phase of construction relates to the presence of probable 13th century tenements. These appear to have been combined into a single structure in the 14th/15th century. The remains of two stone built garderobes associated with these buildings were also uncovered. Earlier activity was also recorded on the site, and may date to the Roman period. Excavations were also undertaken within the area of the known Medieval vicarage identified by the earlier evaluations. They 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 has also been recorded from which glazed tiles have been recovered. Further archaeological work will follow the demolition of presently standing structures.

Bampton, St. Mary's Church (SP 312 033) James Mumford

A watching brief, carried out in April 2002, as commissioned by J Alan Bristow and Partners on behalf of St Marys Parochial Church Council. The work was in advance of the excavation of a foul water drainage pipe alongside the path leading to the south door of the church and through the churchyard entrance.

Oxfordshire

The watching brief revealed a number of grave cuts in the natural gravel. On analogy with previous excavations in the churchyard, it is possible that these graves date to the Saxon period, although no dating evidence was recovered. The graves were overlain by a general churchyard soil, which was cut by later burials. Several graves cut from just below the present topsoil are probably of relatively recent date, though none was dated. Of note was the presence of several inter-cutting ditches just outside the limit of the churchyard. These appear to be Medieval re-cuts on the line of the original Saxon Minster ditch. Portions of two demolished walls, separated by a small gap and situated in the area of the present churchyard entrance probably represent the remains of a former entrance to the churchyard. A further section of walling inside the churchyard could represent a landscaping feature, though no dating for the wall was established. A former path leading to the church was also identified.

Banbury, Cherwell Wharf (SP 4600 4037) James Mumford

An archaeological watching brief was carried out in May for Victor Brown Chartered Architect on behalf of A Dodd and Son Construction Ltd. This revealed no archaeological features or deposits pre-dating the construction of the nearby Oxford Canal in 1790. A single brick-built structure was identified in section and partly in plan and represents the demolished remains of one of the wharf-side buildings constructed in the Victorian period. Ephemeral traces of other buildings were noted across the site.

Bicester, Oxford Road (SP 5770 2210) David Score

A field evaluation was carried out in April 2002 at land to the west of Oxford Road on behalf of West Waddy ADP. Eighteen trenches were excavated. The evaluation revealed a concentration of archaeological features in the central area of the site. A number of possible structures dating to the Roman period were identified including one with substantial square shaped postholes. Two other concentrated clusters of smaller postholes were recorded which might represent additional buildings or possibly stock management features or fence lines. Some spreads of occupation material, pits and numerous enclosure or boundary ditches were also seen. The site is interpreted as a low status farmstead occupied during the late 1st and 2nd centuries. A few sherds of middle Iron Age and Anglo-Saxon pottery were also recovered indicating that the area had seen activity in these periods.

Bicester, land adjoining Middleton Stoney Road and Oxford Road (SP 5780 2220) David Score

Thirteen trenches were excavated during an evaluation undertaken in April 2002 on behalf of John Phillips Planning

Consultancy. A cobbled surface of Roman date was revealed in Trench 5. Two ditches also containing Roman pottery were revealed in Trench 3. A ditch and a gully of unknown date were observed in Trench 7. A heavily disturbed wall foundation, intercutting pits, and postholes and gullies were revealed in Trench 11. All of the archaeological features were cut into the natural Cornbrash and sealed by a silty clay subsoil. No archaeology was present in trenches that contained a shallow sequence of peat overlying alluvial clay deposits and natural Cornbrash.

Bicester, MOD Bicester (SP 630 175) Andrew Mayes

In July 2002 a field evaluation and subsequent watching brief were carried out at [DSDC Site A, MOD Bicester, on behalf of CgMs Consulting. The evaluation revealed no archaeological features, but a ploughsoil dating to the Medieval/Post-Medieval period was recorded in almost all of the trenches excavated. The evaluation revealed that regular waterlogging of the ground appeared to have restricted past use of the site to sporadic periods of ploughing. The agricultural activity on the site probably took place during the Medieval and early Post-Medieval periods.

Burford, Lawrence Lane, Church Cottage (SP 2525 1242) James Mumford

A watching brief undertaken at the request of the owner revealed an old garden soil which had been disturbed by the construction of outbuildings on site prior to the cottage construction in 1937.

Charlbury, Cornbury Estate Park (SP 3509 1816) James Mumford

A watching brief commissioned by the Estate revealed that prior to the construction of a sunken garden in the 19th century, the site was part of the driveway leading up to the front of the Cornbury Park House.

Chipping Norton, St Marys Church (SP 2735 3117) James Mumford

A watching brief for the Parochial Church Council in advance of a new raised floor in the east end of the Nave revealed that the floors and two earlier vaults had been lowered during late 19th century renovations.

Cholsey, land adjacent to 10 Amwell Place (SU 589 865) James Mumford

A watching brief commissioned by Domek & Co revealed no archaeological features other than 19th century garden

features relating to reed beds for basket weaving.

Cuddesdon, Cuddesdon House (SP 6010 0325)
James Mumford

A watching brief for Panter-Hudspith Architects revealed evidence of garden landscaping and a probable quarry pit and soakaway feature.

Elsfield, St Thomas Church (SP 5407 0998)
James Mumford

A watching brief was carried out on behalf of Carden & Godfrey Architects for the Church Parish Council. This revealed a minimum of ten burials, the earliest of which dated to the early Medieval period, with inhumations continuing on the north side of the church until the early 20th century. All human bones excavated have been set aside safely inside the church, to be re-interred by the church authorities. Evidence for the mid-Victorian restoration was found in the form of construction debris.

Eynsham, St Leonards Church (SP 4331 0922)
James Mumford

A watching brief commissioned by St Leonards Parish Church Council revealed two Medieval pits from the mid 11th century, which predated the construction of the church.

Faringdon, Little Coxwell, St Marys Church (SP 2265 0140)
James Mumford

An archaeological watching brief was carried out in November 2002 for Andrew Townsend Architects. No significant archaeological features or deposits and no human remains were uncovered, except for graveyard soil.

Faringdon, land off Swan Lane (SU 2903 9563)
Bryan Matthews

In November 2002, Oxford Archaeology carried out a 3-trench field evaluation on behalf of CgMs Consulting Ltd for McCarthy and Stone. The evaluation revealed a general lack of archaeological remains, but located a single very large feature, possibly a pit or ditch, at the east side of the site. This feature was dated by pottery to the mid 16th century and also contained a substantial quantity of animal bone. A small pit feature of 12th century date was also located.

Lechlade, Five Alls, Filkins (SP 2358 0405)
James Mumford

A watching brief commissioned by Brierley Homes Ltd revealed a number of Post-Medieval rubbish pits and two

stone-lined wells.

Oxford, 41 Davenant Road (SP 501 099)
James Mumford

A watching brief was carried out in July 2002 for Aubrey P King Chartered Architect. The watching brief revealed Medieval ridge and furrow across the site suggesting that the site had been in agricultural use until the construction of Rutland House.

Oxford, Marston Ferry Road, Oxford City Bowls Club (SP 5110 0882)
James Mumford

A watching brief in April and May commissioned by Oxford Architects revealed that the site had been a pasture field with a pond up to the construction of the bowling club. A further watching brief in November, this time for Feltham Construction, revealed a late 19th to early 20th century boundary ditch.

Oxford, Temple Cowley, Our Ladys School (SP 5453 0417)
James Mumford

A watching brief commissioned by Kingerlee Ltd in advance of alterations and extension at the school revealed no archaeological features or deposits.

Oxford, Christ Church Cathedral (SP 5145 0600)
Jonathan Hiller

An archaeological recording action was carried out during the re-positioning of St Frideswides Shrine to its original approximate Medieval location in the Latin Chapel. Howes Allen & Montgomery, Chartered Architects commissioned the work. The work revealed that the shrine had been rebuilt at least once, with replacement stones incorporated in the original structure. The shrine had previously been moved to the Lady Chapel in 1889, where it overlay a grave slab dated to 1632. Excavations through the cathedral floor for the new site for the shrine revealed layers of mortar and concrete.

Oxford, Jowett Walk (SP 5180 0660)
Robin Bashford

A field evaluation was carried out in September 2002 on land belonging to Balliol College. The evaluation was commissioned as part of an ongoing development for the construction of new College buildings and follows on from Phase I development in the mid-1990s. Three trenches were opened; a fourth trench location was abandoned owing to the density of local live services and the damage likely to be caused to an extant tennis court. The evaluation revealed in the westernmost trench an undated pit or posthole with a post pipe in the base. To the east, the next trench contained a small undated pit that was truncated by a north-south aligned ditch of Post-Medieval date. Also located in this trench were

Oxfordshire

a possible Medieval or Post-Medieval ditch on an east-west alignment and a north-northwest/south-southeast aligned ditch. Further east again was a second north-northwest/south-southeast aligned ditch with associated gully. Three postholes in the base of the ditch might have formed part of an associated structure. Both ditches were undated but their alignments could suggest part of a prehistoric ditch system or possibly an enclosure. A further Post-Medieval ditch was recorded at the east of the evaluation area.

Oxford, Horspath, Oxford Road (SP 5635 0435) **Annie Bingham**

In April 2002 a field evaluation was carried out on behalf of Brookes Sport. The evaluation revealed a 1st century east-west aligned ditch, possibly a boundary feature and possible associated features in the south-east area of the investigation of this disused allotment and fallow site. The features included two further undated linear features, probably gullies, an isolated posthole and a shallow pit both of which were likewise undated. The remainder of the trenches contained a series of soil layers, overlain by the present allotment/garden soil. Traces of an undated ?ploughsoil were observed across the site. A few modern services were also encountered.

Oxford, St Johns College (SP 5128 0668) **Andrew Simmonds**

A field evaluation undertaken ahead of an extension to the Senior Common Room revealed evidence for Medieval or Post-Medieval gravel quarrying at the north end of the site. Across the whole area 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 Presidents Garden. A wall was discovered next to the current carport, interpreted as the north wall of the kitchen building shown on Loggans print of 1675.

Oxford, Old Marston, White Hart Public House **(SP 5270 0872)** **Jonathan Hiller**

An evaluation on behalf of Banner Homes revealed part of a stone building of probable Post-Medieval date and a stone surface. The structures may represent an outbuilding associated with the White Hart building. Also revealed were ditches and potential posthole alignments delineating boundaries of former properties on the site. The arrangement appears to date to the 19th century on the basis of the finds evidence. Residual sherds of Medieval pottery from a 19th century feature suggest that Medieval remains exist nearby.

Oxford, Beaumont Street, The Randolph Hotel **(SP 5115 0644)** **Jonathan Hiller**

A watching brief was commissioned by The Bell Slater

Partnership on behalf of Forte Hotels Ltd ahead of a new service trench and 4 test pits excavated against the existing wall footings. A Post-Medieval garden soil was observed, together with a deposit of limestone rubble which may have originated from the demolition of an earlier building. However, given the limited impact of the works and the considerable truncation by modern development, interpretation of the deposits observed was problematic.

Oxford, 1 St Giles Street (SP 5130 0645) **Marc Storey**

Three geotechnical pits were dug in a small courtyard to ascertain depth and condition of soil for imminent construction and development work. These revealed that the whole of the courtyard comprised solely of built or made-up ground. No in situ archaeology was observed, although bone, modern pottery and tile fragments were recovered.

Oxford, Merton College Stables (SP 5172 0614) **Dan Poore**

Excavations were completed on a site to the rear of the building known as Merton College Stables, directly opposite the entrance to Merton College. Evidence provided by an 18th century sketch and finds of fragments of architectural stone appear to date the Stables building to c 1200, and makes it one of the oldest domestic buildings in Oxford. It is thought to have housed the College stable from c 1300 onwards.

Archaeological monitoring was carried out of geotechnical test pits excavated in advance of the proposed basemented building. These revealed evidence of well preserved stone structures and occupation horizons which were apparently contemporaneous with the Stables. As a result Oxfordshire County Council required the full excavation of the basement footprint, an area of approximately 250m². The edges of the site are defined on the west by the ?Medieval boundary wall of Corpus Christi, by the 18th century Real Tennis court to the east, by the former line of Kybald Street to the north and by the Stables to the south.

The sequence consists of 18th/19th century brick structures dating to the most recent stables phase; these post date a well preserved stone lined structure, possibly a cess pit, which may date from the time that the property was leased from the college by the family of the 17th century historian, Anthony Wood. This structure post-dates a series of domestic waste dumps and very large pits apparently dating from the later Medieval/early Post-Medieval period. These pits unfortunately occupy much of the area available for excavation. Where pit digging has not removed earlier evidence, a number of stone-lined structures (possible garderobe pits/oriel foundations) have been found relating to substantial walls that run parallel to or at 90° to the Stables building. These walls and an associated floor surface show that one or more Medieval buildings (relating to the cellar and solar now known as the Stables building) once stood on the site. Pits, ditches and a possible cellar pit pre-dating the

buildings, and therefore likely to be 12th century or earlier, have also been found.

Oxford, Oxford Castle (SP 5698 0613)
Andrew Norton

A field evaluation on behalf of Oxford Castle Ltd characterised the motte ditch on its eastern side and the internal castle deposits. The ditch was seen to be approximately 15m wide and over 6m deep. Medieval deposits were encountered c 4m below ground level (bgl) in the centre of the ditch and 2m bgl at the eastern edge of the ditch. At the base of the ditch a large oak beam was discovered which may possibly have been part of a bridge structure across the ditch. A number of burials were revealed within the ditch, which may have served as a burial ground for executed and other criminals from the county gaol. These may date as early as the late 15th century, but a later (16th century) date is also possible. The ditch was fully backfilled in the 18th century before most of the ditch edge was removed by quarrying. A Medieval foundation was seen, in the southeast of the area, which may have been part of Shire Hall. The foundation was truncated by pits dated late 11th century or later and by a possible 17th century robber trench. To the northeast of the area possible 10th century and 11th century pits were encountered which appeared to be sealed by deposits resulting from the levelling of the Castle ramparts, prior to the construction of New Road. Similarly dated pits were seen in the southeast of the area. A 19th century prison lodge and associated garden walls were built over the levelling material.

The south-western edge of the motte may have sealed Saxon deposits. To the south of the motte a sequence of 17th century trackway surfaces were seen with an associated wall, these formed the main thoroughfare through the Castle. The surfaces were truncated by 18th century buildings which were demolished during the construction of the prison. Walls associated with St. Georges Chapel were exposed below D Wing. Probable Castle structures and possibly part of the curtain wall were seen to the south and west of C Wing. In situ Castle defensive earthworks were exposed in the southeast of the site, sealing possible Saxon cultivation deposits. The foundations of a number of prison buildings were also recorded.

Oxford, Paradise Street (SP 5095 0608)
Robin Bashford

A field evaluation was carried out on behalf of Ambroseden Court Ltd. The evaluation revealed a layer of rubble within the Castle Ditch which may have acted as a ford or weir at the point at which the ditch meets the Mill Stream. A channel forming part of a ?16th century sluice house was seen, into which a later brick culvert had been constructed. A possible 18th century pitched stone surface was encountered which was cut by a large 19th century feature; both may be related to the sluice house, which is known from 16th and 17th century maps of the area.

Standlake, 128 Abingdon Road (SP 3923 0281)
Andrew Norton

A watching brief in advance property construction revealed no evidence of archaeological activity.

Sutton Courtenay, Drayton Road (SU 491 933)
Andrew Mayes

An English Heritage-funded research evaluation was carried out[location]. This formed part of an Oxford University/Oxford Archaeology research project to investigate Saxon settlement and society in the area. The evaluation revealed features and finds covering a spanning the Neolithic to Anglo-Saxon periods. Within the four trenches excavated, discoveries of particular significance included a gully and seven pits in the north-east of the site with an important assemblage of early Saxon pottery. In addition, a Saxon timber hall was investigated and an early to mid Saxon waterhole, a group of Neolithic pits and several Roman ditches were examined. Some of the Roman ditches contained Saxon pottery in their upper fills.

Sutton Courtenay, land adjacent to Bridge Farm (SU 521 941)
Andrew Mayes

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on behalf of Hanson Aggregates Ltd. Three trenches were excavated. In Trench 1, evidence for small scale quarrying of probable Roman date and a small pit filled with charcoal were observed. A narrow gully was revealed in Trench 2 and three, east-west orientated ditches in Trench 3. No evidence for the Penn Copse Roman villa, presumed to be located at the site, was noted.

Thame, Thame Park (SP 7166 0375)
Nick Shepherd

Today Thame Park comprises a fine, rather neglected, 18th century country house set within a Capability Brown landscape. Both are now undergoing substantial renovation and remodelling by the new owner. Oxford Archaeology (OA) has been involved as consultants to the project for some time, having produced a comprehensive Heritage Assessment of the estate and buildings and having undertaken extensive evaluation and building recording. While geophysical survey has located the main Abbey church and claustral buildings to the northwest of the house, the house itself sits over a separate monastic complex and includes standing elements of what were the Abbots lodgings, and probably the infirmary. This year, between February and April, a team from OA excavated to the east of this and uncovered further buildings of monastic date. These comprised a north-south range linking the infirmary and abbots lodgings by a covered walkway comprising a timber arcade and pitched limestone pavement. Behind this a number of rooms were identified including a probable kitchen. Floor levels within this contained large amounts of carbonised remains together with fish and other (probably

Oxfordshire

bird) bones and hold out good potential to reconstruct the monastic diet. A number of ovens, constructed of pitched floor and roof tiles, were excavated. Archaeomagnetic samples from the latest gave a date in the late 15th century. Pottery from the earliest layers dates to the 13th century. Although only a small amount of the Abbey has been investigated it still represents an important contribution to the study of Cistercian houses and the kitchen in particular will provide a valuable comparison with that excavated at Eynsham. Further work is planned to investigate the relationship of the range to the infirmary.

Uffington (SU 596 900)

Alan Hardy

A newly discovered prehistoric site on the outskirts of Uffington, Oxfordshire was investigated as part of the Uffington Museum Project, a local community project supported by Oxford Archaeology. The site was initially identified from aerial photography, and its detailed layout enhanced by a magnetometer survey. Six trenches were excavated across the site, and features revealed included the circular gullies of round houses, pits, and ditches. The recovered finds material supports a date range for the settlement of late Bronze Age to early/middle Iron Age, that is, around 1000 BC to 500 BC which is broadly contemporary with the construction of the White Horse and the adjacent hillfort, both of which overlook the site. However, a small number of probable Mesolithic or earlier Neolithic flints was recovered, which suggests a much earlier presence.

The settlement character seems to correspond with the impression given by the geophysics plot, namely, a self-contained settlement - agricultural in nature, comprising hut circles and associated paddocks and pit areas. The settlement was divided into two distinct occupied areas with an intervening gap that showed a marked absence of features. The entire settlement was surrounded by a shallow ditch, which supports the idea that the two hut groups existed at the same time, and none of the finds suggested otherwise.

Provisional examination of the finds indicates a fairly modest status. Significant items among the pottery assemblage include two sherds of All Cannings Cross, and one small fragment of briquetage, which indicates (salt) trade contacts with the Droitwich area. The fills of three pits were sieved, producing cereal grain, and a fragment of a quern stone provided evidence of crop processing on site. Although the excavation did not yield an enormous quantity of animal bone, evidence recovered indicates that all the main domestic species (cattle, sheep and pig) were being kept at the site. Three horse teeth were also recovered, providing evidence that horses were almost certainly kept in and around the site during the lifetime of the settlement.

Witney, St. Mary's Cottage (SP 3570 0928)

Tim Allen

A Watching Brief is being maintained on behalf of Mrs J Swindells upon groundworks for an extension to this property, which lies in the south-west corner of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of the Medieval Bishops' Palace at Mount House, Witney (SAM 21834). The existing cottage was built in the early 1950s, and no records of any archaeological discoveries were made, but walls of the Medieval manor house survive below ground only 2m from the boundary of the cottage. So far the work has comprised the excavation of a new driveway and the observation of foundation trenches on the west, north and south sides of the existing house, which have been up to 1m deep from existing ground level. Little evidence has been found; underneath the drive a dump of later 19th century bottles and ceramics was discovered, and the foundation trenches revealed deep homogeneous deposits of gravelly soil including roof tiles, possibly destruction material from the manor house. Undisturbed layers containing a little Medieval pottery were encountered at the very bottom of one trench, perhaps indicating that Medieval deposits survive intact at greater depth. Work continues.

OXFORDSHIRE BUILDINGS RECORD

David Clark

Hill Farm, Little Wittenham (SU 564925)

This complex of agricultural buildings belongs to the Northmoor Trust, and the Oxfordshire Buildings Record (OBR) were invited by them to carry out recording work in the summer of 2002 as part of a wider project to understand the development of the farming life of the parish over the years which will be part of an on-site exhibition after the buildings have been converted by the Trust to educational use in 2003/6.

The OBR are grateful to Awards for All, a vehicle for channelling National Lottery funding to local groups, for their support.

Location

Hill Farm stands just off the minor road to the south-west of Wittenham Clumps. A tithe award map of 1844 shows no building on the site of Hill Farm, a field known as Putt Furlong. The complex is, however, shown on the large scale Ordnance Survey map of 1872.

Owners and Occupiers

The manor of Little Wittenham, having been the fiefdom of the Dunch family since the Dissolution, was sold in 1788 to William Hallett, who took the surname of Holland in 1800, subsequently becoming a baronet. He died in 1811, and in 1837 the estate was bought by George Henry Cherry, grandfather of Apsley Cherry-Garrard of Antarctic fame,

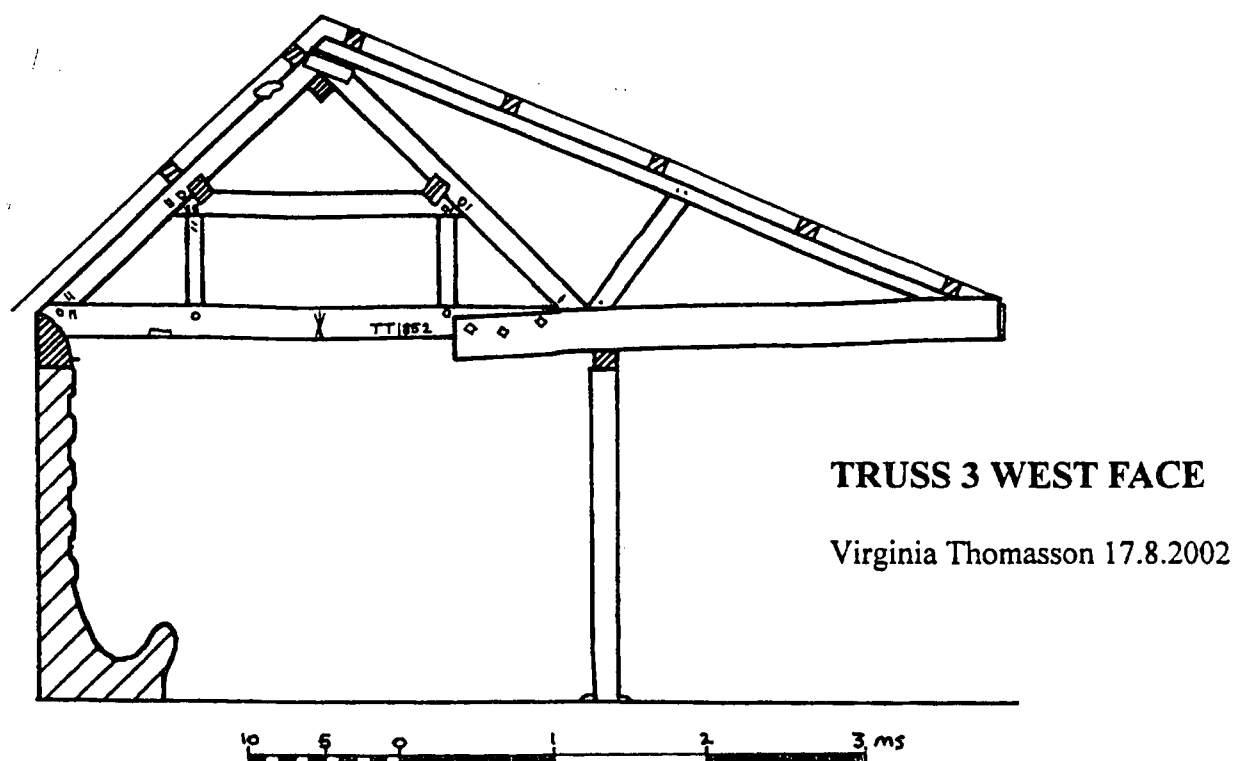


Fig 9. Hill Farm, Little Wittenham. Shelter shed.

who finally sold the farm in 1918. At the sale, it was bought by Henry Wilmot Cozens, and it was he who gave the farm account books from the last quarter of the 19th century to the Rural History Unit at the University of Reading. W J Bosley and Son, farmers, owned the farm until it was acquired by the Northmoor Trust.

The account books show the nature of the agriculture practiced here during the agricultural depression of the 1870s, the numbers and types of animals kept, and how the farm (then called Wittenham Clumps Farm) operated. This has guided the examination of the standing buildings. We concluded that the buildings at Hill Farm were built around 1850 when John Cozens was tenant farmer, in order to manage more efficiently a detached landholding following the tithe award.

Documentary evidence

The farm accounts show crops were a major product, which needed storage and a threshing place. The resultant products, grain, straw and chaff, would also need cover. Threshing employed most of the effort at peak times, and was probably done by hand, even at this late date. The quantities involved justified the two barns on the site. There is no reference to the purchase of machinery other than a mowing machine in 1877. There could have been a machine driven by horses, and although none are bought or sold, the quantity of oats consumed suggests they were the main non-manual power source at the farm, at least until the coal buying for the steam thresher starts in 1879.

The use of crops like turnips and swedes suggests the sheep were folded on these in the winter, so the only animal

quarters needed were stables and a byre. However, the severe winters may have been a factor, and some protection for the sheep may have been provided. The shepherd had a mobile hut for use during the lambing season. In 1880 a 'fat hog' is purchased, so a sty would have been needed.

The Farmstead

There are a number of structures on the site, including a shelter-shed, two barns, and a granary. The farmyard has been enclosed on the west by a later range of workshops, through which there is an entrance to the yard. On the east, a concrete ramp runs down from the main road behind a pair of workers cottages. The yard in 2002 was concrete, with some remaining evidence of structures, now demolished. Barn A, the shelter shed, and Barn B were recorded. Barn A was found to have been made of recycled timbers, from a number of different structures, some possibly domestic. Barn B also showed evidence of timber re-use, and had apparently been altered in the early 20th century by the addition of a stable at the western end. In this report only the shelter shed and stable will be described.

Shelter-shed

This structure comprises six bays of trusses supported on the road side by Bradstone blocks, one face of each of these factory products moulded to resemble shaped rubble-stone, and probably dating from the 1960s. On the yard side the roof is supported by five wooden posts showing considerable wear, particularly noticeable towards their bases; some of this may be due to animals.

The roof trusses have queenposts, the collars clasping the single pairs of purlins to the principal rafters. At the apex,

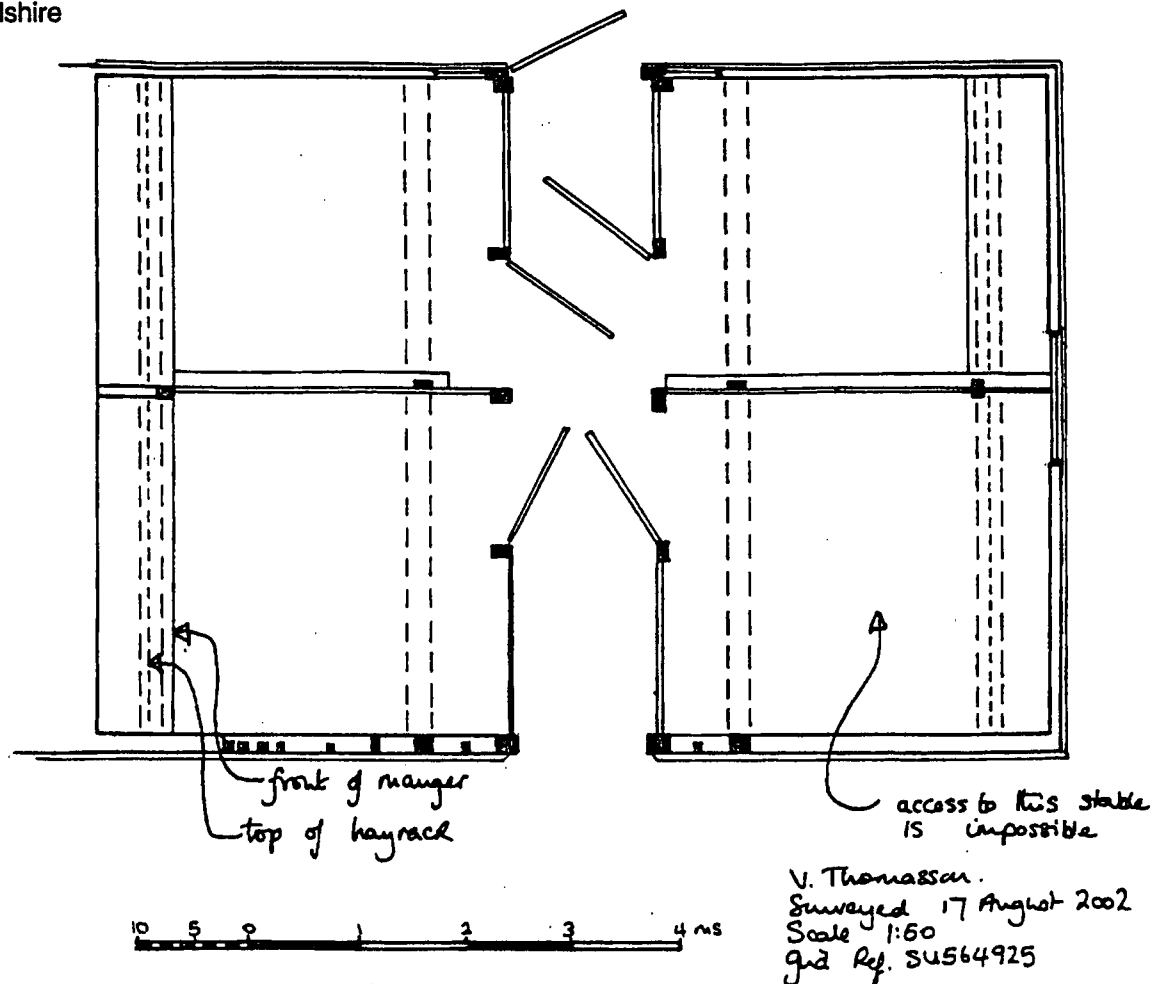


Fig 10. Hill Farm, Little Wittenham. Stables. Floor plan.

the principals are linked by means of a small shoulder piece, supporting the ridge. All joints are pegged, and the timber is clean and unweathered. Most saw cuts are straight, but slightly irregular, suggesting band-sawn or even possibly pit-sawn timbers. The central two trusses present a fair face to the area between. One of the tie-beams has the inscription T T 1852 and a carpenter's 'level mark' (Fig 9). The roof was formerly half-hipped. It has been extended towards the yard by means of cantilevered beams bolted to the original tie-beams. At this reconstruction, further purlins were added to raise the roof level at the northeast side slightly, and to replace the hip with a gable end.

The floor of the shed is concrete, and against the eastern wall is a low feeding-trough in concrete sections, with iron pipes inserted across at intervals, and pairs of small iron hooks in the wall above, for holding nets of hay above the troughs.

As the roof appears to be in good condition, the wall-plate shows evidence of an earlier walling and to the southwest has its original rafters intact, it seems clear that the shed was rebuilt in the 1960s in situ, the former wooden posts to the northeast being replaced by under-building with the concrete blocks. The extension of the roof seems contemporary with this rebuilding, probably for tractors and other farm equipment for which the cart shed would have been too small. If so, this would suggest that the concrete feeding trough was installed later, when the low roof of the

shed was inadequate for the larger, more modern equipment of the 1970s and the building may then have become a cattle shed. The clean condition of the trough even admits of the possibility that once built, it was never used.

The Stable

This end of Barn B appears to have been purpose-built as a stable, most likely replacing its two western bays. There is a brick plinth of about 3ft, in height around the stable, with drainage openings and channels into the farmyard. The stable is entered from the south through a wide doorway closed by a two-part stable door on large iron hinges. This leads to a passage, the other end of which leads through an open doorway into a later lean-to, and thence into the farmyard.

Ground floor

The floor plan of the stable is shown in Fig 10. Four loose boxes seem to have been inserted into the structure, on an intentional plan whereby the gates are designed to open into the central passage precisely, so they can be fixed across the passage as well as at each box, allowing animals to be moved outside, within the stable and between boxes without coming into contact with the other horses. In the loose-boxes are poured concrete mangers, which appear to have been made in situ. In each box, there are two iron pipes fixed into the concrete and around each of which sits an iron ring. A chain from the horse would have passed through this ring,

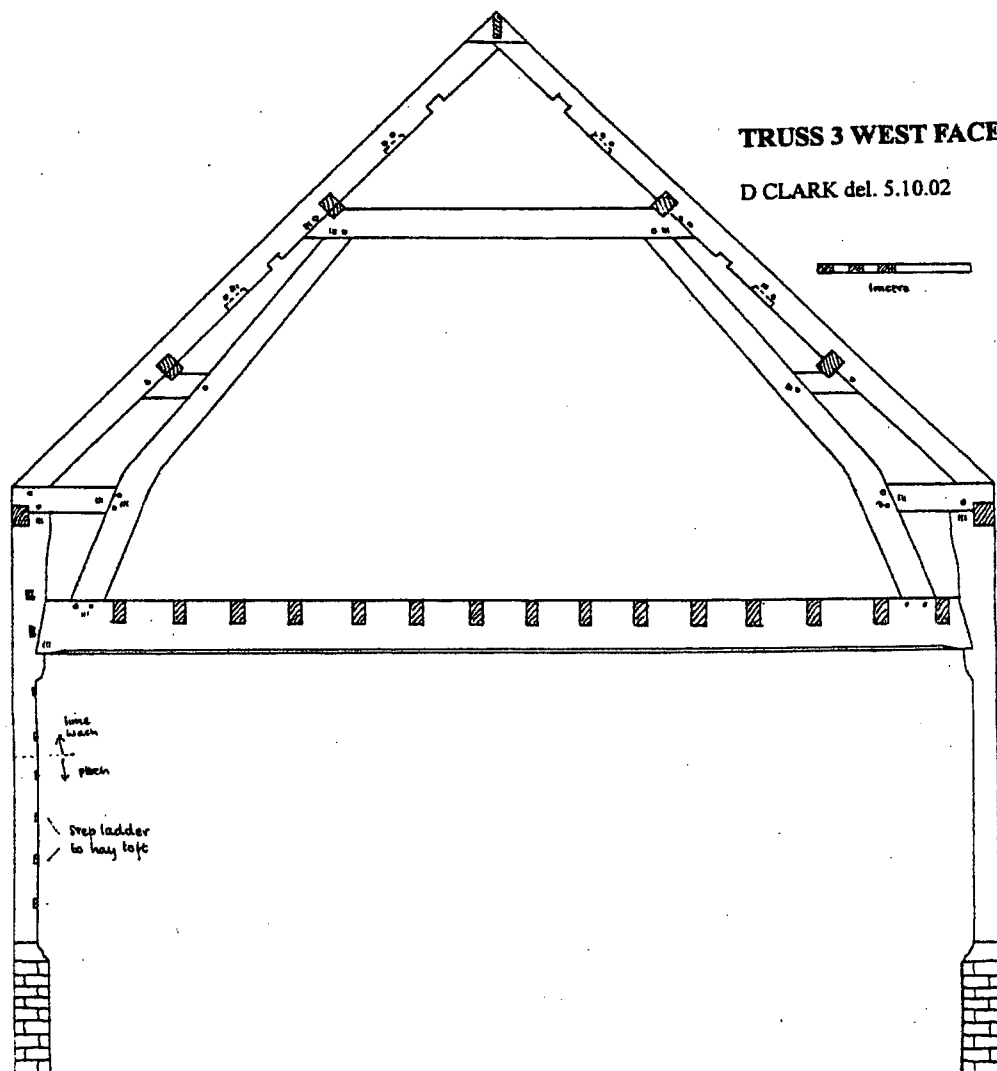


Fig 11. Hill Farm, Little Wittenham. Stables.

then through a hole bored into a rounded wooden block, and fixed at its end, thus allowing the animal a reasonable degree of freedom while in the box.

Upper Floor

Above the stable is a hayloft. A simple ladder of wooden spars nailed to the wall studs at one end and inserted into notches in the principal post at the other, allows access though an opening in the floor-boards. The ladder and the opening appear to be part of the primary structure of the stable.

Hay entered the loft through a doorway, much weathered, high in the gable wall. At both ends of the upper floor are gaps to allow the hay to fall into the wooden hay racks in the stable below. One of the central trusses and the upper part of the west gable wall have been recorded in detail. The truss is shown in Fig 11. The structure is of a dropped tiebeam, with angled timbers similar to inner principals, but in function more like struts or braces. All the timberwork is finely sawn softwood, suggesting a mid-late 19th century date. The two central trusses are framed with the 'fair face' inwards to the central passage between the loose boxes. The truss separating the stable bays from the rest of the barn has

been infilled with weatherboarding, but was recorded as far as possible from the barn side. At this end, the stable purlins have been jointed with bridled scarfs into those emerging from the main part of the barn.

The roof timbers of the stable and hayloft are mostly softwood cut by a circular saw. Assembly marks denote the components of the central trusses, numbered II and III. The principal rafters seem to have been cut with mortices for two collars and trenched purlins at a different place from that eventually used. These sections of carpentry do not appear ever to have been used: there are burrs within the peg-holes to the mortices, for example.

Features such as the door hinges suggest late 19th or early 20th century, although similar ones are still being made today. The carpentry is sawn softwood, but in a style very similar to 19th century examples shown in Barnwell and Giles (1997) where on p.31 a four-horse stable of 1840 at Tullock Farm, Welford, West Berkshire has a similar dropped tiebeam and cranked strut to the interrupted tiebeam above. This roof type is similar to the sling-brace found in Wiltshire stables of the 19th century.

Oxfordshire

It is a well-built and commodious element of the barn. It could accommodate eight horses, two per box, and the quality of its construction and organisation seems out of keeping with a typical farm stable of the time. The loose boxes are clearly for two horses, and with no internal partition, the obvious answer is for mare and foal. Neither is there evidence of any facility for storing equipment such as collars, harness, and other items. This is unusual, and suggests that this stable was not for working horses. It seems, therefore that the farmer in the early 20th century turned to breeding horses for a time.

Summary of results

The documentary and recording work at Hill Farm has shown that in the mid 19th century, before the depression, the landlord commissioned a number of buildings on the former Putt Furlong to allow the management of the farm to be carried out nearer the fields than on the land adjacent to the farmhouse in the village. They may indeed have moved derelict barns from the village to the hill farm, but Barn A in particular was built of assorted timbers. These structures doubtless supplied the cover for the activities documented in the late 1870s at the height of the depression, but thereafter, changes were partly in response to the use of machinery, and the need for storing this. The shelter shed roof was extended probably for this reason.

The most intriguing phase relates to the rebuilding of Barn B and the creation of the stable, with the related erection of the former granary perhaps as a fodder storage building. The evidence points to its purpose being for horse-breeding, but more work is needed to establish why and by whom. However, it produced a very fine interior, with interconnecting loose-boxes, and some excellent carpentry and metal door furniture.

All the structures show signs of modern materials (softwood, concrete, metalwork) but also the use of traditional methods (assembly marks, level marks, fair-faces) surviving until the start of the 20th century in what was then Berkshire.

References

- Barnwell P S and Giles Colum 1997; *English Farmsteads 1750-1914*, RCHME, Swindon
Slocombe Pamela 1989; *Wiltshire Farm Buildings, 1500-1900*, Devizes
Wheeler Sara 2001; *Cherry, A Life of Apsley Cherry-Garrard*, London

PHOENIX MM ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC RESEARCH

Wigginton Roman Site: interim Report
Mark Morris

Because much of the data and finds are still being analysed, our more detailed report has not yet been completed. However, we can give you a general overview of the work we have done.

The year 2002 saw our continued excavation (Morris, 2002) of what appeared, on an aerial photograph, to be a rectangular ditched enclosure in the vicinity of a known Roman villa. The enclosure contained the outline of a circular feature (possibly a building) in one corner, and maybe a pit in the opposite. So we targeted this pit corner in the hope we may be able to identify and date the enclosure without causing any damage to the possible building. Our initial pre-excavation thoughts were that this feature could be Iron Age and thus pre-date the nearby Roman villa.

We opened six trenches in total, with varying degrees of success but luckily we did manage to locate the ditch fairly quickly. It appears to have been re-cut after the original ditch silted up, with the later ditch containing finds associated with the Roman period. These consisted of pottery shards, animal bones, a coin of Constantius II, an iron oval split ring with overlapping ends, and somewhat surprisingly, an almost complete deer antler with the tines cut off. Alongside one area of the ditch was a spread of rubble containing more animal bone and pottery shards. The lower level of the ditch contained pottery of a completely different nature that was coarser and not wheel-made, being more Iron Age in appearance.

The pit continued to elude us until the very last few days that we had available but was found as the excavation was coming to a close, which appears to be a typical situation on archaeological sites. It was much deeper than we expected and contained a lot of charcoal flecks. As this was gradually excavated, quite large quantities of animal bone, boar tusks, deer antler and Romano-British pottery were found. The main item from this area was a deer antler tine, which had been cut from the main antler branch and then had a hole drilled or cut transversely through the wide end.

An item similar to this was found during excavations at Cirencester in the early 1970s. It can be seen in the book *Roman Cirencester*, which was written by the Cirencester Excavation Committee. Another example can also be seen in an Avebury guidebook.

It is anticipated that the excavation may continue this year, with a more comprehensive report hopefully completed later on.

Reference

- Morris M 2002; Wigginton interim Roman Site Report, *SMA* 32, p 65

THAMES VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES LTD.

Abingdon, 135-43 Ock Street (SU4907 9700)
Clare Challis

No archaeological finds or features were visible in the areas available for inspection during a watching brief on the

foundations of new housing.

Abingdon, Amey Hall Complex, Abingdon School
(SU 4945 9732)

Stephen Hammond

Nothing of interest was observed in a watching brief during extensions to the arts complex.

Benson, RAF Benson (SU 6247 9117)

Jo Pine

A watching brief during replacement of a radar installation and access road revealed nothing of archaeological significance.

Burcot, nr Abingdon, John Masefield Cheshire Home, Abingdon Road (SU 5665 9570)

Clare Challis

A watching brief was maintained during digging of foundation trenches for extension works. Nothing of interest was observed.

Caversham, Redgrave-Pinsent Rowing Lake, Caversham Lakes, Henley Road (SU 7400 7500)

Sarah Coles

A desk-based assessment suggested the possibility of prehistoric activity on the site of the new rowing facilities, marina and nature reserve. Two phases of evaluation involved some 40 trenches which revealed only alluvium overlying gravel. Although some of the topography suggested potential gravel islands, of a type typically favoured for prehistoric activity, no finds or features of any period were encountered.

Churchill, Churchill Farm, Kingham Road
(SP 2815 2420)

Erlend Hindmarch

Two of the four evaluation trenches revealed only modern disturbance; however, what appears to be a Saxon sunken-featured building extended across the other two trenches, and what could be the corner of another was also revealed. The building may have been used for weaving; numerous stakeholes in its floor suggest a movable structure such as a loom, and a bone pin beater would also suggest such a function. Alongside Saxon pottery, several sherds of Roman pottery may suggest an earlier phase on the site. Of particular note was the animal bone collection; 470 pieces from only 3 contexts, all in excellent condition, indicating high potential for economic analysis.

Crowmarsh, Howbery Park, Benson Lane (SU 617 899)

Jo Pine

Eleven evaluation trenches sampled an area of just over 2ha. Four of the trenches encountered archaeology, including a late Neolithic or early Bronze Age ditch, Roman ditches,

probably a Roman pit and posthole, and a Post-Medieval pit. A small assemblage of pottery was recovered in good condition, and waterlogged deposits in one trench promise good potential for survival of organic remains, although there was only a single charred weed seed from samples from the other trenches.

Drayton, East Paddock, Drayton Mill (SU 4909 9340)

Andy Taylor

Three evaluation trenches encountered only modern made ground over natural clay.

Finnere, Foxley Fields Farm (SP 6340 3255)

Clare Challis

A watching brief was maintained during stripping of the site and of foundation trenches for a house. No finds or features of interest were recorded.

Frilford, St Josca's Preparatory School (SU 4403 9723)

Stephen Hammond and Clare Challis

A watching brief during construction works for a new classroom block revealed no archaeological finds or deposits.

Long Wittenham, Elm Close House, High Street

(SU 5442 9377)

Nick Croxson

Nothing of interest was observed in a watching brief during stripping and digging foundations for a new house.

Oxford, Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre, Windmill Road, Headington (SP 546 065)

Stephen Hammond

An area of around 8ha was evaluated via a desk-based assessment, watching brief and monitored topsoil strip. The site lies in an area known for intensive Roman industrial activity, in particular the pottery industry. No finds of interest were observed. A second phase of evaluations is planned.

Oxford, Newsquest building, Osney Mead

(SP 5017 0558)

Stephen Hammond

An area of 0.4ha was sampled by three evaluation trenches. Two of the trenches revealed archaeology. One of two gullies contained three sherds from the base of an early or middle Bronze Age urn. The other gully is undated, but could be contemporary. A pit contained the almost intact remains of an inverted early Bronze Age collared urn. There was no bone within the urn, and only minute fragments of cremated bone were retrieved from the surrounding fill. All the features were sealed below a layer of alluvium which seems to have protected them. While the collared urn would usually indicate a cemetery, it is possible this could have

Oxfordshire

been an early/middle Bronze Age settlement site.

New Marston, Milham Ford Upper School, Marston Road (SP 5310 0728)

A photographic and building survey recorded the fabric of the school's air-raid shelter.

Spelsbury, Model Farm, Ditchley Park Estate (SP 3809 2075) Erlend Hindmarch

A watching brief was maintained during construction of footings for a barn and ancillary structures. No finds or features of interest were recorded.

Standlake, Pump Close, 45 Abingdon Road (SP 3864 0351) Stephen Hammond

Three test pits failed to reveal any archaeological deposits.

Publications:

Ford S 2002; Charnham Lane, Hungerford, Berkshire, archaeological investigations 1988-97, *TVAS monograph* 1, Reading

Anthony S (in press) 'An Iron Age settlement at Westcroft Phase IV, Milton Keynes', *Rec of Bucks*

Ford S and Preston S (in press), 'Excavation of Medieval features at The Orchard, Brighthampton, Oxfordshire', *Oxoniensia*

Hull G (in press), 'A collection of early Post-Medieval early scientific material from the rear of the Museum of History of Science, Oxford', *Post-Medieval Archaeol*

Pine J (in press), Excavations of a Medieval settlement, late Saxon features and a Bronze Age cremation cemetery at Loughton, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, *Rec of Bucks*

Preston S and Hull G (in press), 'Excavation of late Saxon and Medieval features at Proctor's Yard, Bicester, Oxfordshire', *Oxoniensia*

Taylor K and Hull G (in press), 'Excavation of Post-Medieval features and a dump of late 18th-century artefacts from 5/6-7 Market Street, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*

(all those 'in press' are in the 'current' volume of the journal in question and all should be out imminently)

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

The Ridgeway and Vale Project: Excavations at Marcham/Frilford 2002.

Gary Lock, Chris Gosden, David Griffiths, Patrick Daly.

The work at Marcham/Frilford fits in with the wider aims of the Hillforts of the Ridgeway Project in exploring the three sites of Uffington White Horse Hill, Segsbury Camp and Alfreds Castle, all on the downs south of the Ridgeway in southern Oxfordshire. This is the second season of excavation within the Vale of the White Horse aimed at providing comparative information to articulate with that

from the downs. The background to the excavations, including references, are given in last years interim report (Lock *et. al.* 2002, also at:

<http://athens.arch.ox.ac.uk/~glock/fieldwork/ridgeway/index.htm>).

As in previous years the excavation acts as a training excavation for Oxford University students and is committed to education in the widest sense. An Education Officer was 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.

Fig 12 shows the location of trenches over the two seasons of excavation. The geophysics was published in last years interim.

Brief report on the excavations in 2002.

Based on last years excavations, and those in the garden of the Noahs 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.

Trenches 10 and 11.

These two trenches continued the prehistoric focus of Trenches 3 and 12 in the 2001 season. Two large open area trenches (each 10m x 20m) were placed to explore the area to the east of the two enclosures that were excavated in 2001 and, in part, located to investigate crop marks seen during that season. Furthermore, these trenches were not based upon the presence of geophysical survey anomalies, but rather provided a test of an area that did not show anomalies. Both trenches were stripped down to the natural using a machine to remove the plough soil, and then the sub-soil was excavated by hand. The natural was an awkward mixture of sand and badly decayed limestone. In both trenches a number of features was visible cut into the natural, and all of these were excavated in section.

Trench 10 contained six pits, five of which were clearly archaeological in nature. All had a similar general sequence of deposition, with initial layers of sand, covered with a mixture of limestone rubble and soil. In fact, the composition of the upper fills made the features very difficult to distinguish from the surrounding limestone that they were cut into. All of the pits were well shaped, and regular in construction, and all were rather small. Pit 10025 is the largest and has the most complex stratigraphy. Interestingly, not a single element of material culture was recovered from any of the pits excavated, making further discussion of purpose or chronology impossible at this point. However, due to the obvious similarities between them, it seems reasonable to suggest that all the features were associated in some way.

All of the features in Trench 11 turned out to be, following excavation, natural, with most of them being tree throws. No positive archaeological evidence was recovered from this trench.

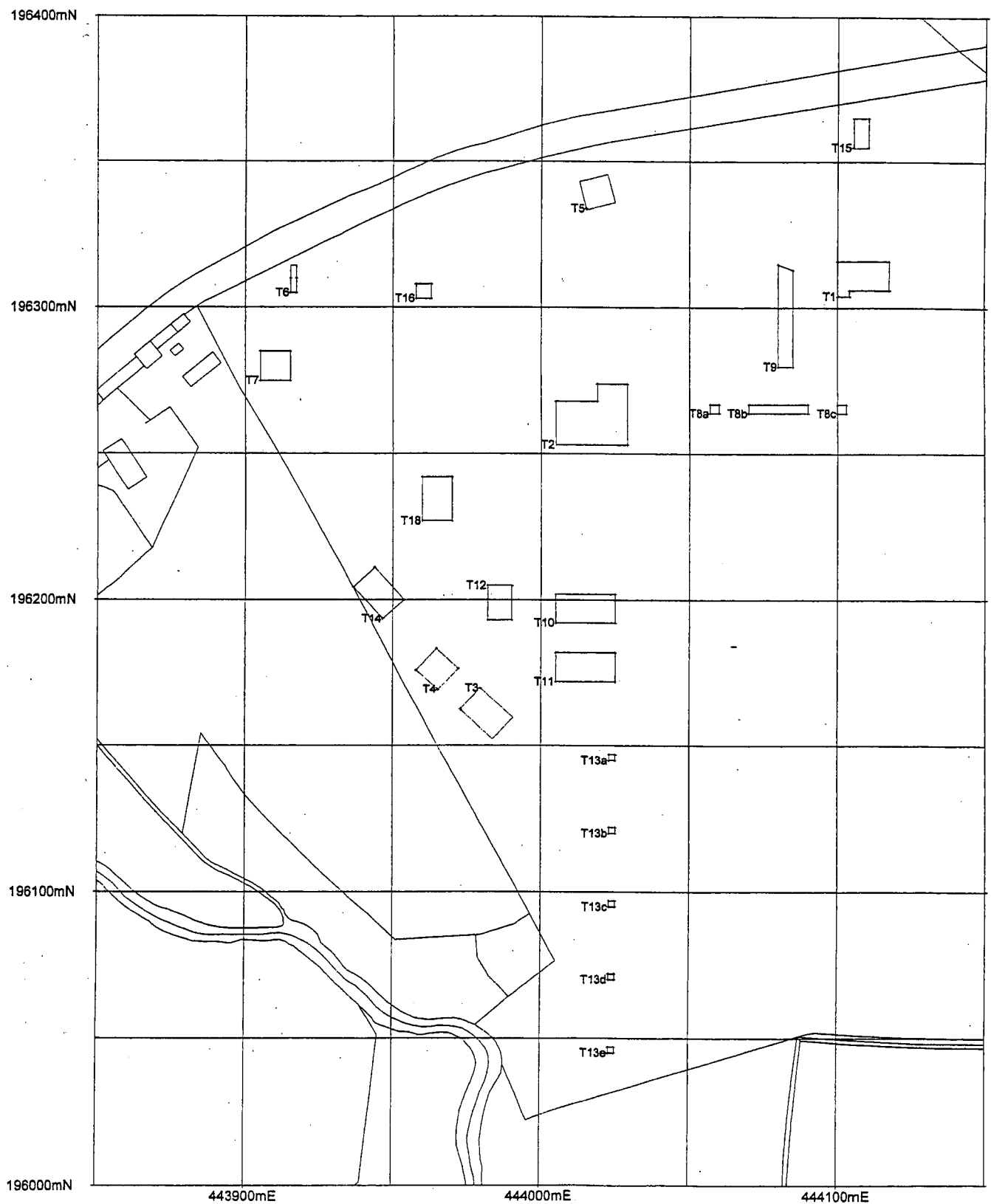


Fig 12. Frilford. Trench locations 2001 and 2002.

Oxfordshire

Trench 14.

This remains unfinished and will be continued during the 2003 season so only a brief description is provided here. Located on a group of very strong positive magnetic anomalies close to the area of the 1930s excavations, this trench measured 10m x 15m. Covering approximately one third of the trench area was a Romano-British deposit best described as being formed from midden-like material. The layer was a maximum of 0.3m thick and composed of much animal bone, pottery and some metal artefacts within a dark organic matrix. Where excavated at its eastern extent it was deposited onto bedrock, while its western edges remain to be excavated and here a stone structure appears to underlie it. It thins and disappears towards the north.

Underlying this deposit, and extending over the eastern half of the trench that has so far been excavated, is a series of inter-cutting Iron Age pits cut into the bedrock. The small number that have been half-sectioned have revealed poorly formed pits, although substantial in size, filled with a variety of deposits containing a range of Iron Age material including probable Early to Middle Iron Age pottery and bone. Many more pits have been identifying and await excavation in 2003.

It seems that the combination of the midden deposit overlying a high concentration of Iron Age pits was sufficient to create the series of large positive magnetic anomalies which are so clear in the geophysical survey.

The remaining trenches are focussed on the Romano-British activity at the site which is located to the north of the Iron Age features described above, along the east to west axis created by the temple and amphitheatre. Excavations continued from 2001 on the large public building (Trench 2) situated between these two major structures and on the amphitheatre itself. New trenches were opened to investigate the character of the temenos wall and its interior area (Trenches 6, 7 and 16), and on another area of major public buildings to the west of Trench 2 (Trench 18).

Trench 2.

This trench, begun in 2001, covers part of a large stone structure (or 'building'), circa 30m by 15m, with its long axis lying east-west, which was identified by geophysical survey in 2001. On the west, north and east sides there are smaller rectilinear extensions or side-chambers, with pits and areas of rubble within the walled area. The 2001 season examined the central area of the building, parts of this area were re-opened and extended westwards in 2002 to cover its entire western extent (Fig 13).

The deposits in Trench 2, including the linear limestone rubble features which comprised the building, are extremely fragile and extensively robbed and plough-damaged. These stone features can be best interpreted as wall-foundations rather than the lower courses of true upstanding walls, built against the sides of shallow linear cuts into the underlying Iron Age soil. Evidence of plough striations and some damage on top of the stone features show that their upper

surface defines the base of the ploughsoil, although in the softer deposits in the centre of the building the plough has cut slightly deeper.

The main stone wall features comprising the western area of the building were numbered sequentially by segment running anticlockwise around the trench [2025, 2159, 2178, 2174, 2181, 2165, 2150, 2187]. Within these there was little significant variation in dimension or depth, but the density and quality of the remaining stonework was variable with e.g. [2150] being a lot more solid and void-free than e.g. [2174]. This may possibly imply differential plough damage.

Discontinuous yellow crumbly mortar spreads were observed across much of the western area, in some places lapping over the top of the walls, eg [2197], [2198]. This accords with the observations made in 2001, especially over wall [2025]. Some mortar patches, such as the rectangular block at the internal northwest corner, are apparently degraded architectural features, and may represent parts of a floor surface screed. Beneath and beyond the surviving traces of the yellow mortar was a spread of Roman tile rubble, distinguished by large numbers of disarticulated animal bones (particularly sheep and goat mandibles), Late Roman pottery sherds and very numerous finds of 4th century copper coins and iron hob nails. It is now clear that the layer observed in 2001 with all these characteristics [2070] was merely part of a much more extensive spread which covers most of the western area of the building. So consistent in character was this deposit, that despite being given a series of separate context numbers for sampling purposes, it provides a good unified stratigraphic benchmark with which to build a phasing framework for the central/western area of the trench.

New information on the extent of the tile rubble spread was obtained: it appeared to be bounded by a dark linear mark running southwest-northeast from just within the southwest internal corner; during excavation it became clear that this was a beam-slot [2173], on a slightly different alignment to the walls. The discovery of the beam slot led to a re-investigation of the boundaries of the tile rubble in the 2001 trench [2070], which was further investigated in 2002 and was shown also to be bounded by [2173], although this eastern part of the beam slot had not so easily been detectable in 2001. From above, it was just perceptible that the oblique line of the beam slot may possibly have had a parallel counterpart boundary crossing the northern walls and excluding a small corner of the interior just within the northwest corner of the interior at the junction of walls [2025]-[2159], where the tile rubble was less evident.

The tile rubble in the area of the 2001 trench was wholly removed in 2002, revealing a thin spread of crushed limestone [2217] above a clean surface of reddish orange soil [2068], which was consistent with the 'Iron Age soil' surface observed beneath the plough horizon across the rest of the 2001 trench. In 2003, the rest of the tile rubble exposed in 2002 will also be removed. A crushed limestone and

MF 01/MF 02 Trench 2

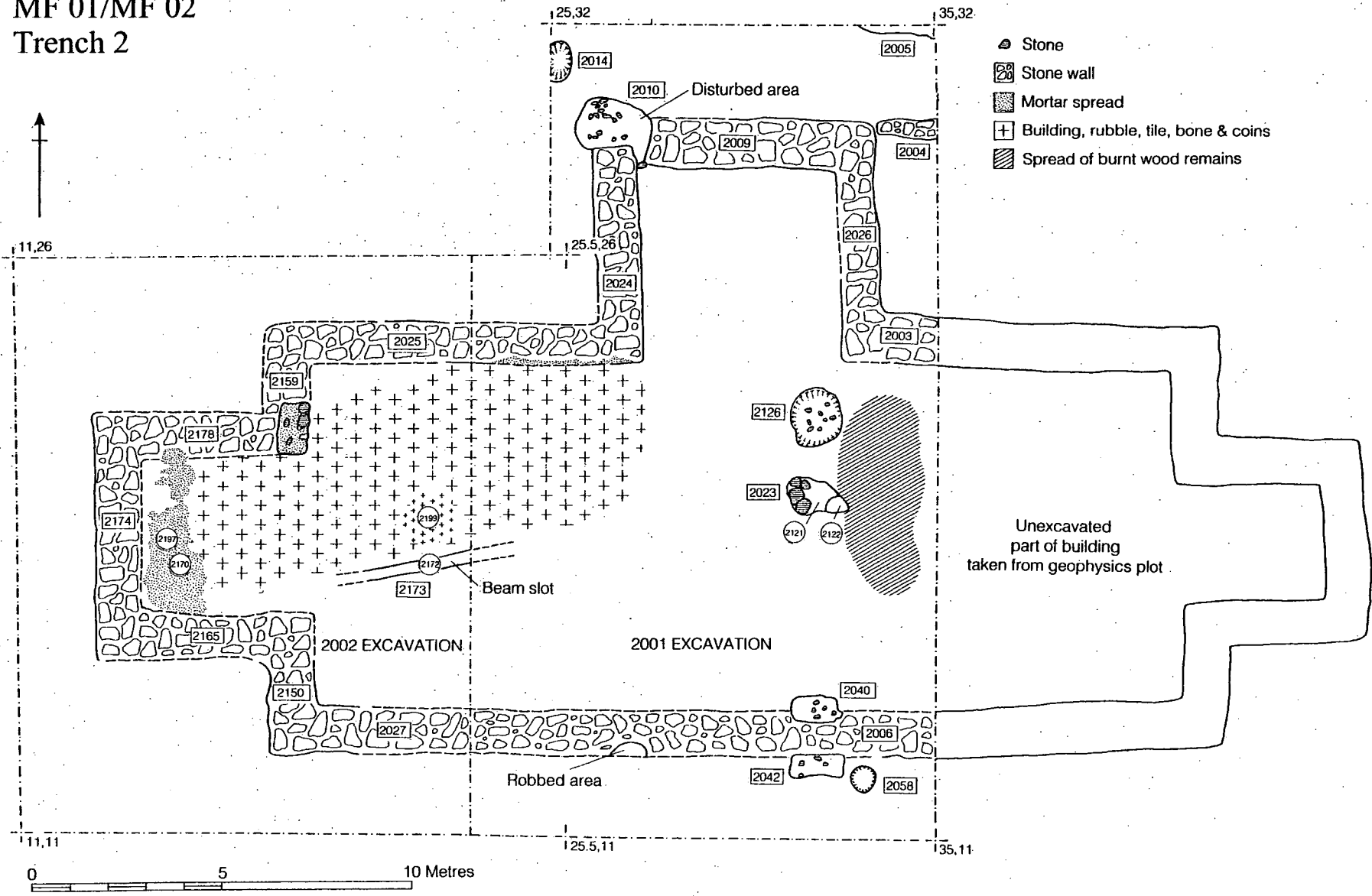


Fig 13. Fritford. Trench 2 plan.

Oxfordshire

mortar feature with large pieces of limestone rubble [2199], stratigraphically beneath, but showing through the tile rubble as a low dome (and interestingly located on the central east-west axis of the building), began to be exposed in 2002. The traces of related mortar and stones underneath the tile rubble in the 2001 trench area [2217] confirmed that these features belong to a phase earlier than the tile rubble, and may represent primary aspects of the use of the building, and given their position may be part of the building's structure (a major internal post support is one possibility). Further excavation of these deposits will take place in 2003.

Magnetic susceptibility mapping within the 2001-2002 areas of the building interior, showed a dense area of burning along the inside of the main north wall [2025], which is also marked by pink limestone on the inner wall edge: magnetic readings suggest that this episode seems to have primarily affected the wall and the clean soil beneath the tile rubble. The rubble did not show the same consistent burning, so was in all likelihood deposited after the burning took place.

In the east/centre of the 2001 trench was a slightly-raised platform of burnt clay and mortar [2023] which may represent a hearth, or alternatively a burnt architectural feature such as a large post-pad. Around this raised area (which survived plough destruction, perhaps due to the harder texture of the burnt clay deposits) was preserved a slight trace of possible surviving floor surface. This was subjected to excavation and sampling for archaeo-magnetic dating in 2002. Unfortunately the burnt layers had not been fired to a sufficiently high temperature for this technique to yield any useful results. Work on the charred timbers found in this part of the 2001 trench (which may have resulted from the same episode as the severe burning elsewhere) is still ongoing at the Research Laboratory for Archaeology, University of Oxford, where dendrochronological and radiocarbon dating is being carried out. A substantial circular rock-cut pit nearby [2126], begun in 2001, was fully excavated in 2002 revealing Roman pottery in its lower fill.

The continuing preliminary interpretation is that the area of Trench 2 saw considerable Iron Age activity, characterised by numerous small pits discovered largely in the 2001 season. At some stage in the Later Roman period, stone foundations (perhaps designed to support the sill-beams of a large timber building) were cut into this Iron Age soil. The building may not have lasted long before it was destroyed by fire. Another, more ephemeral timber structure seems to have been built within the area of the stone building, most probably of rectangular plan laid out at an angle across the northwest sector, and was floored with Roman tile rubble with a screed of loose mortar on top to even out the surface. Some similarities between the dates of the coins found in this tile rubble and in the Late Roman cemetery excavated in the late 19th and early 20th centuries across the main road from the Noah's Ark (Akerman 1865; Calkins 1978; Dudley-Buxton 1920; Rolleston 1869; 1880), have given rise to suggestions that this phase may have been closely linked to the creation of the burials. On present indications, activity seems to have extended to the very late Roman

period but there is little evidence for any subsequent presence. These will be reviewed during further excavation in 2003.

Trench 18

This was opened over an area on the geophysical survey that showed a collection of possible structural remains although it shed little light on the extent and definition of any such structures. It should be noted that as Trench 18 was opened late in the season, only a minimal level of progress was made during 2002. However, this was enough to show that there were at least three different types of standing walls within the trench (of a yet unknown relationship to each other). The very limited work conducted so far, which consisted of removing the top soil and subsoil, as well as three small exploratory slots excavated down to the natural to confirm and identify the nature of structural remains, has produced a very rich assemblage of finds, including painted wall plaster, a range of ceramics, coins, and a number of significant well crafted metal artefacts. Trench 18 will be re-opened and excavation will continue in 2003 field season.

Trenches 6, 7 and 16

Trenches 6 and 16 were located to investigate the temenos wall of the temple precinct which showed in places on the geophysics. The wall ran east-west through Trench 6 and turned through a right angle in Trench 16 heading south (Fig 14). The foundation trench of the wall was all that survived, being about 0.7m wide and cut into subsoil to a depth of approximately 0.3m. It was packed with mortared limestone rubble and was capable of supporting a substantial stone wall.

There was evidence for structures outside the temenos wall in both trenches. In Trench 6 a cobbled surface had Romano-British pottery and artefacts upon and within it together with areas of mortar and seems to have been a building backing onto the temenos wall. The evidence within Trench 16 was more ephemeral and could have represented a wall and hearth.

Trench 7 was located within the temenos area on a geophysical anomaly and measured 10m by 10m. It contained nothing other than two possible small tree-throws in an east-west line on the long axis of the temple. These could have been planting hollows for small trees or shrubs within the temple precinct and garden perhaps associated with the pathway into the eastern side of the temple discovered in the 1930s excavations (Bradford and Goodchild 1939).

Trench 1.

At the east end of the site was a round structure some 60m in diameter, which we have thought of as an amphitheatre. As the 2002 season progressed we became less certain about the nature of this structure, for reasons we will explain below. Trench 1 was begun in 2002 and located over what might be an entrance-way to the circular structure. Initial efforts concentrated on exposing the wall and the area inside the structure. To this end a number of layers of sandy clay

MF 02
Trench 16
Plan 1601

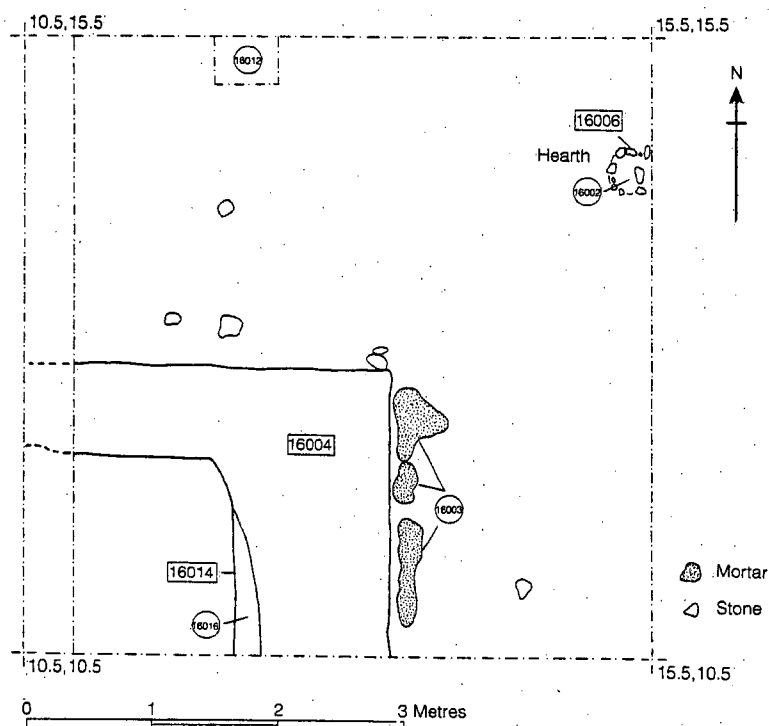


Fig 14. Frilford. Trench 16 plan.

were removed from within the wall. These were presumably part of the collapsed bank and also included mortar spreads which had eroded from the wall. The bottom of the deposits was not reached. The wall was made from dressed chalk blocks held in place by mortar. A break in the wall was also revealed with a broad step set into the wall some courses lower than the top of the wall. This step was partly covered in tumble (Fig 15). The surface of the wall was still covered in its upper sections with mortar or coarse plaster which still retained traces of red paint to pick out the brickwork (Fig 16).

Much work is still needed in the 2003 season to uncover the full nature of the possible entrance-way and its relationship with the surrounding bank. An understanding of this area will help greatly in our interpretation of the structure as a whole.

Trench 9.

Three areas were targeted in Trench 9 following excavations last season: we aimed at a full cross-section of the bank of the structure; investigations continued within the stone-walled structure on the south side of the structure and a limited probe was made within the arena to look at the deposits there. A long section was cut through the bank (Fig 17) from the arena wall in the north to the back end of the bank at the south. A series of clay and sand layers was found to be sitting on top of a probable buried soil [9142] containing small pieces of (probably) Iron Age pottery. This sits in turn on a subsoil [9152] which also contains prehistoric pot. These are thought to be the surfaces on which the structure was constructed. At the northern end and

centre of the bank is a number of thick clay layers with a possible posthole [9139] cut through them, which may have contained timbers to support the bank. At the southern end of our trench the bank slopes down and overlying it is a series of waterlogged deposits with mineral staining which might possibly be part of a ditch fill at the south end of the bank. We will extend the trench further to the south next season to test this possibility. In its centre the bank is missing its original apex, presumably removed by ploughing. However, it looks as though the bank was gently rounded at the top and not especially high, a fact which is important for our overall interpretation.

Abutted onto the southern side of the wall of the main structure is a walled enclosure which was partially excavated in 2001. In 2002 we removed more fills of sand and clay with variable amounts of finds. Towards the end of the excavations we started to uncover the foundation deposits for the walls, especially on the southern side. In these lowest layers there are hints of channels cut into the lowest deposits and a void under the southern wall. More excavation is needed to reveal whether these have any pattern, with the possibility that they may have been to do with water regulation

(see below).

To the north of the arena wall we excavated a small sondage (roughly 2 x 1m) to see if we could find the base of the arena. We removed a series of sand and mortar layers, which are probably due to the erosion of the bank and some of the structure of the wall. Under these was a red plaster layer which may have fallen from the wall or may have been laid where it was found. This was within sediments thought to be waterlaid and underlying this was a series of muds of varying colours overlying rock, both muds and rock being below the present water table. The basal rocks did not look natural, but neither did they form any obvious pattern. Further excavation on a larger scale next season is needed to ascertain the nature of the deposits in this area.

Trench 8b

This was a small trench (c 2m x 2m) excavated to the south of Trench 9 to investigate the nature of the coomb deposit in this area. The layer beneath the topsoil here contained very large numbers of bronze, glass and iron objects of Romano-British date which were probably deliberately deposited, but not connected with any convincing evidence of structures. They are apparently evidence of a previously unsuspected set of activities being carried out just outside the bank of the circular structure.

Sequence and significance

The major puzzle is the circular structure at the eastern end of the site. We started excavating the amphitheatre reasonably happy with this interpretation, but as we

MF 02
Trench 1

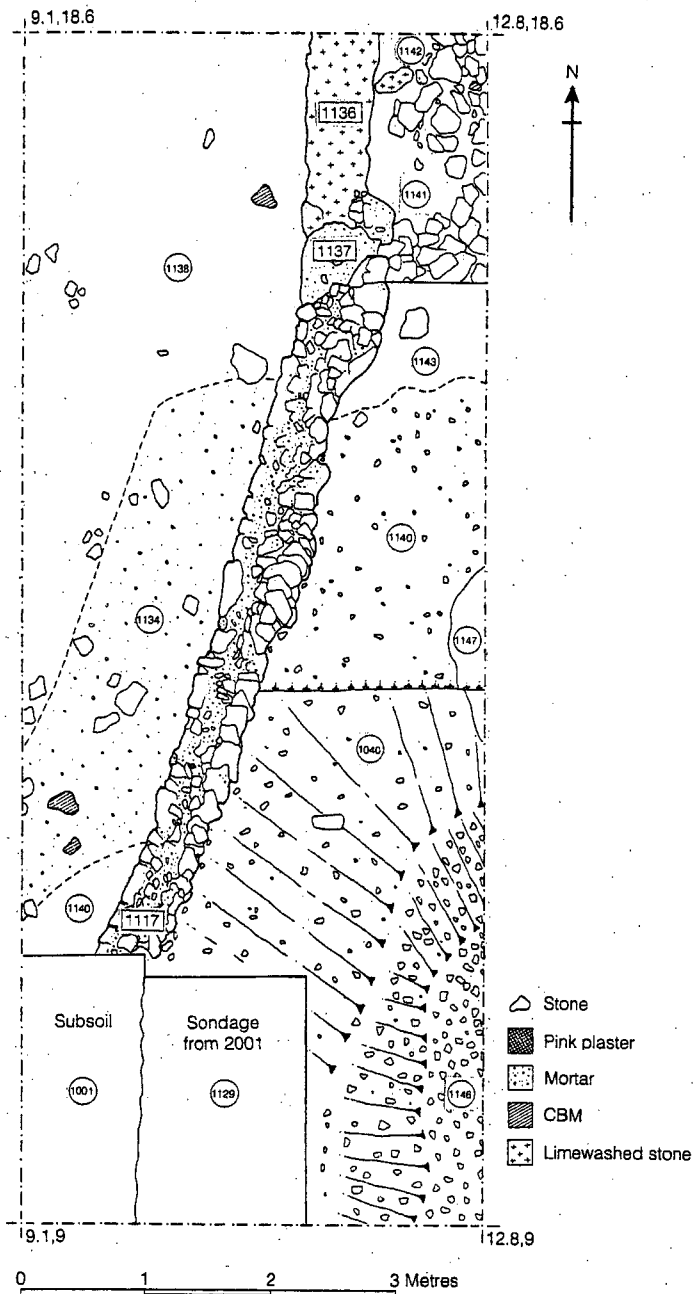


Fig 15. Frilford. Trench 1 plan.

proceeded doubts have accumulated. Before excavation we were aware that the overall shape of the structure is round not elliptical, differing from most amphitheatres. Two seasons of excavations revealed a 1.5m depth of wall in front of the bank, but the bank itself never appeared to be massive enough to hold a substantial audience. At the back on the bank to the south an extra trench revealed a large number of bronze, glass and bone finds which looked as if they had been deliberately deposited, which we could not quite equate with amphitheatre activity. The front retaining wall may be of two phases of use. The upper part of the wall is plastered and this has been painted in red to give a false masonry effect, but no plaster is found below the first 50cm or so and this may not be due to differences in preservation.

MF 02

Trench 1

Section 1.12

11.48, 18.00

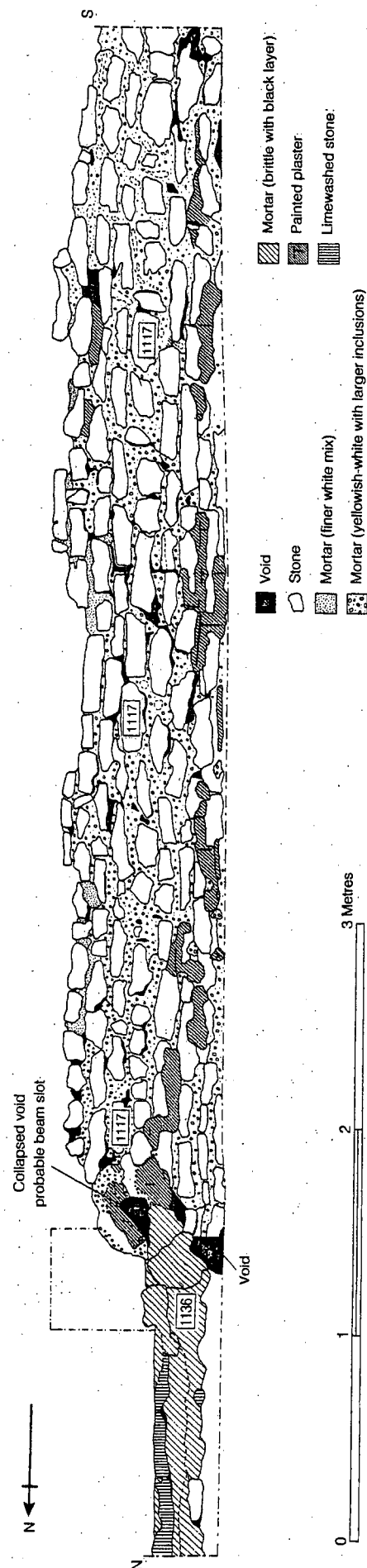


Fig 16. Frilford. Trench 1 section.

Once the base of the wall was reached we started to hit water and it was here that doubts really set in. The rectangular structure is still in the process of excavation and we are not sure of its purpose, an uncertainty linked to our doubts about the structure as a whole.

The structure is situated at the northern end of a natural coomb, which shows up as green linear feature on aerial photographs, so obviously retains water to some degree. It is possible that there is a natural spring or runoff deeper than we have dug so far and that the Romano-British population enclosed the upper end of the coomb to create a pool. The rectangular structure, which might be a special viewing area if it were an amphitheatre, or some means of regulating the water, if it turns out to be a pool. At present we tend towards the idea that this might be a pool, enclosed by a shallow bank and with votive deposits round the outside of the bank. What exists in the middle we hope to discover next season. A compromise solution is possible, with an early pool feature silting up, the upper part of the walls being plastered and the whole used for meeting, theatre or ritual. One advantage of the pool interpretation is that it gives unity to the site as a whole, with a temple at one end, a pool at the other and a number of large buildings in between and it may be that the temple was built because the pool was there. The other Romano-British structures on the site all appear to date to the 3rd and 4th centuries AD, as did the burials excavated in the 19th century. There are indications that the circular structure may have had a longer span of use, with finds from the first and second centuries. Whether there was any Iron Age use of this end of the site still remains to be discovered, as do any possible continuities between the Iron Age and Romano-British phases.

Acknowledgements

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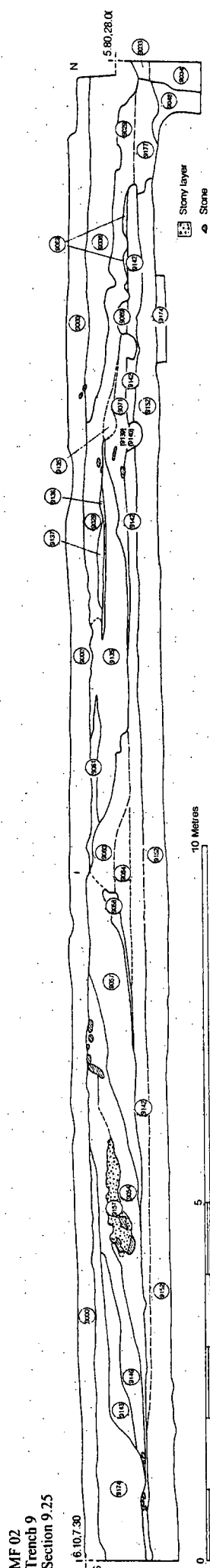


Fig 17. Western section through the bank in Trench 9.

**UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, INSTITUTE OF
ARCHAEOLOGY AND UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER, SCHOOL OF ARCHAEOLOGY
AND ANCIENT HISTORY**

**Wendlebury (Alchester Fortress): Headquarters,
Granary and Timber Bridge (SP 570 203)**

Eberhard Sauer

The Annexe Headquarters (Trenches 36-40)

New evidence has emerged to suggest that the large military timber building, before the 2002 season tentatively considered to be a military workshop (*fabrica*), is more likely to be a headquarters building (*principia*). First, the shape of the courtyard, already explored in the previous season, supports this re-interpretation; it extended both, to the west and the east beyond the limits predicted prior to the season. While we cannot as yet be certain whether or not it encompassed the entire width of the building, its apparently longitudinal shape would be less unusual for a headquarters building than for a workshop. South of the courtyard there was a range of rooms along the road, the southernmost part of which was destroyed by civilian-period roadside ditches. The rooms on the north side of the courtyard could be shown to be more regularly spaced than we had assumed previously. The question arises whether the rectangular pit might even have been the strong-room below the regimental shrine. It would be interesting to know whether it is in the axis of symmetry of the building as is mostly the case in Roman military headquarters (Fellmann 1983), but in order to decide this question we will first have to establish the western and eastern extent of the complex. It thus seems possible that the range of rooms north of the courtyard formed the administrative range of the headquarters building. Interestingly, this range of rooms was separated from another range by a regular aisle (later subdivided and reduced in width). This feature has a parallel in the contemporary *principia* of Valkenburg (Van Giffen 1948, plan 8; Johnson 1983, 129 fig. 98), thus offering support for the identification of the building as an early form of a headquarters building. It is disputed whether or not the back range of rooms at Valkenburg (and Alchester?) may have served as living quarters for the officer(s) in charge of the garrison of the compound (Johnson 1983, 127; Schoenberger 1978, 45 with references).

It should be pointed out that there is no ultimate certainty as yet about the interpretation of the building as a *principia*. It would seem odd that a water-basin was transformed into a strong room. Yet, apart from this short-lived water basin (which was quite possibly solely used for mixing the daub for timber frame buildings in the annexe during the initial stages of construction) abandoned before completion of the building in its earliest phase, there is as yet no clear evidence for industrial activity in the building as one would expect in the case of a workshop. An interpretation as an officers house (*praetorium*) is not likely either. The building now measures 45-48m north-south, we do not know how much was destroyed by the civilian roadside ditches. Its west-east

extent exceeds 55m, and we have not yet found its limits, neither in the west nor in the east. If it was indeed symmetrical with the rectangular pit being in its central axis (as suggested above), its west-east extent must even have exceeded 65m. Even 55 x 45m, however, seems too large for an officers house in the annexe and the architecture anyway points rather towards a headquarters.

Fig 18: [Alchester, Prehistoric and early Roman military structures ...]

- 1: Trench 24 with middle ditch as additional obstacle near the corner
- 2: Traces of the rampart
- 3: Possible earlier stream bed of the Gagle Brook of unknown date
- 4: Trenches 20 northern extension, 25, 26, 29, 30 and 36-40: large timber building with courtyard and probable strong room: a separate annexe headquarters?
- 5: Mid-1st century drainage ditch
- 6: Courtyard
- 7: Aisle
- 8: Trench 23: gate of AD 44
- 9: Water supply gully
- 10: Water supply ditch of c AD 44/45 filled in before construction of the timber building
- 11: Drainage gullies
- 12: Trench 20: long timber ground sill, post holes and hearths (late Roman/ post-Roman plough damage in this area)
- 13: Trench 31
- 14: Trench 22
- 15: Mid-1st century drainage ditch
- 16: Extent of geophysical survey
- 17: Trench 28 with traces of dense military occupation
- 18: Magnetic anomalies: ovens?
- 19: Trench 21
- 20: Extent of geophysical survey
- 21: Drainage ditches (for round houses?)
- 22: Mid 1st century ditches excavated in the 1920s and 1974 (the eastern defences?) c 320m east of postulated western ditches
- 23: Probable location of west gate (of AD 43?) in the area of the later civilian town wall gate; excavations in Trench 32 indicate that its remains would almost certainly reach beneath the water table
- 24: Trench 32 (only the area where military-period levels were reached is plotted here): two mid-1st century drainage ditches with waterlogged material, one with oak posts, probably belonging to a small bridge
- 25: Possible traces of bottom of inner fortress ditch, largely destroyed by 14.40m wide late 2nd century town wall ditch
- 26: Trenches E4 and 33-35: granary: parallel timber ground sills (with gaps where destroyed by later features)
- 27: 19th century farm yard
- 28: Extent of geophysical survey
- 29: Double ditch: the southern defences of the main fortress?
- 30: Extent of geophysical survey
- 31: Trench 27

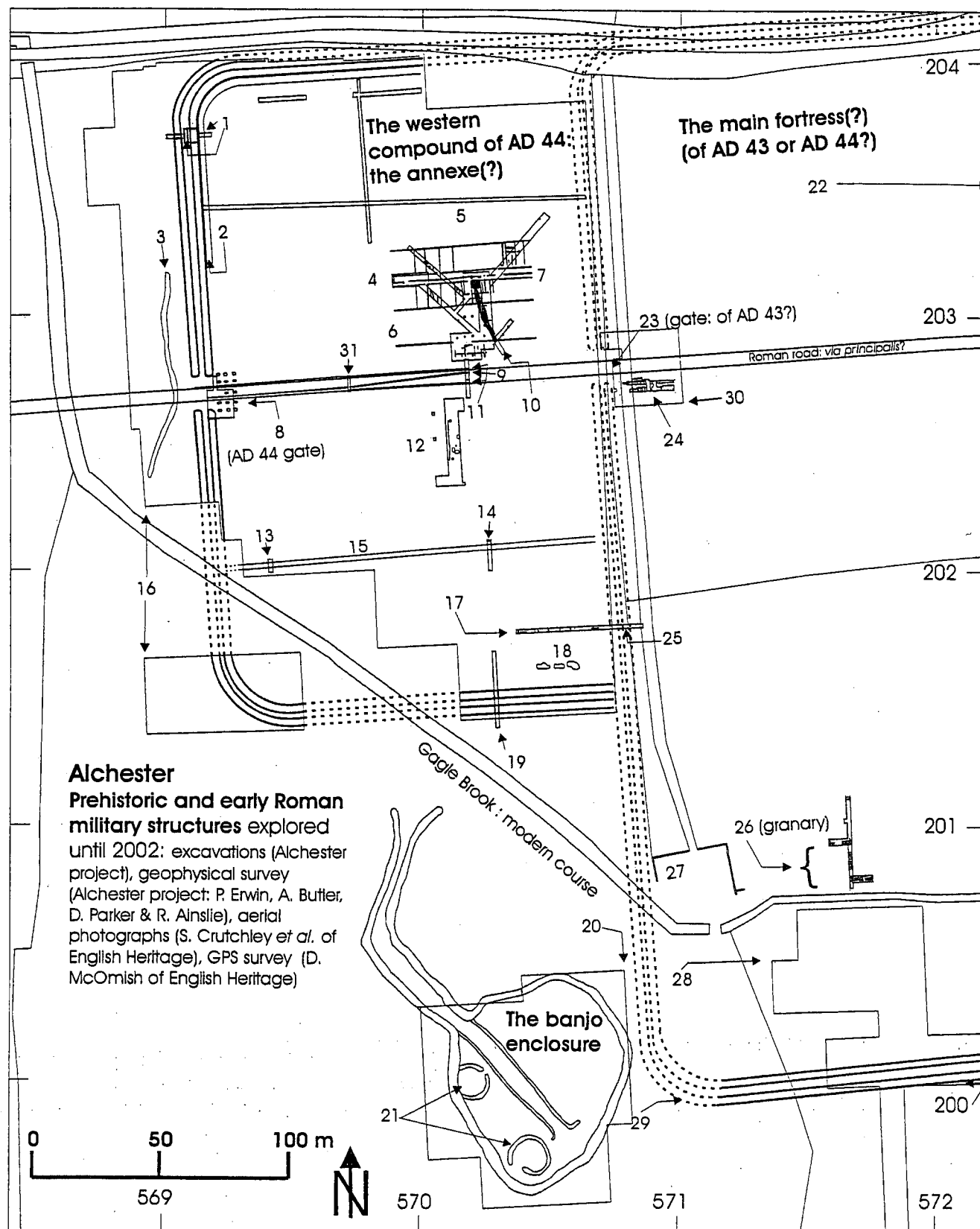
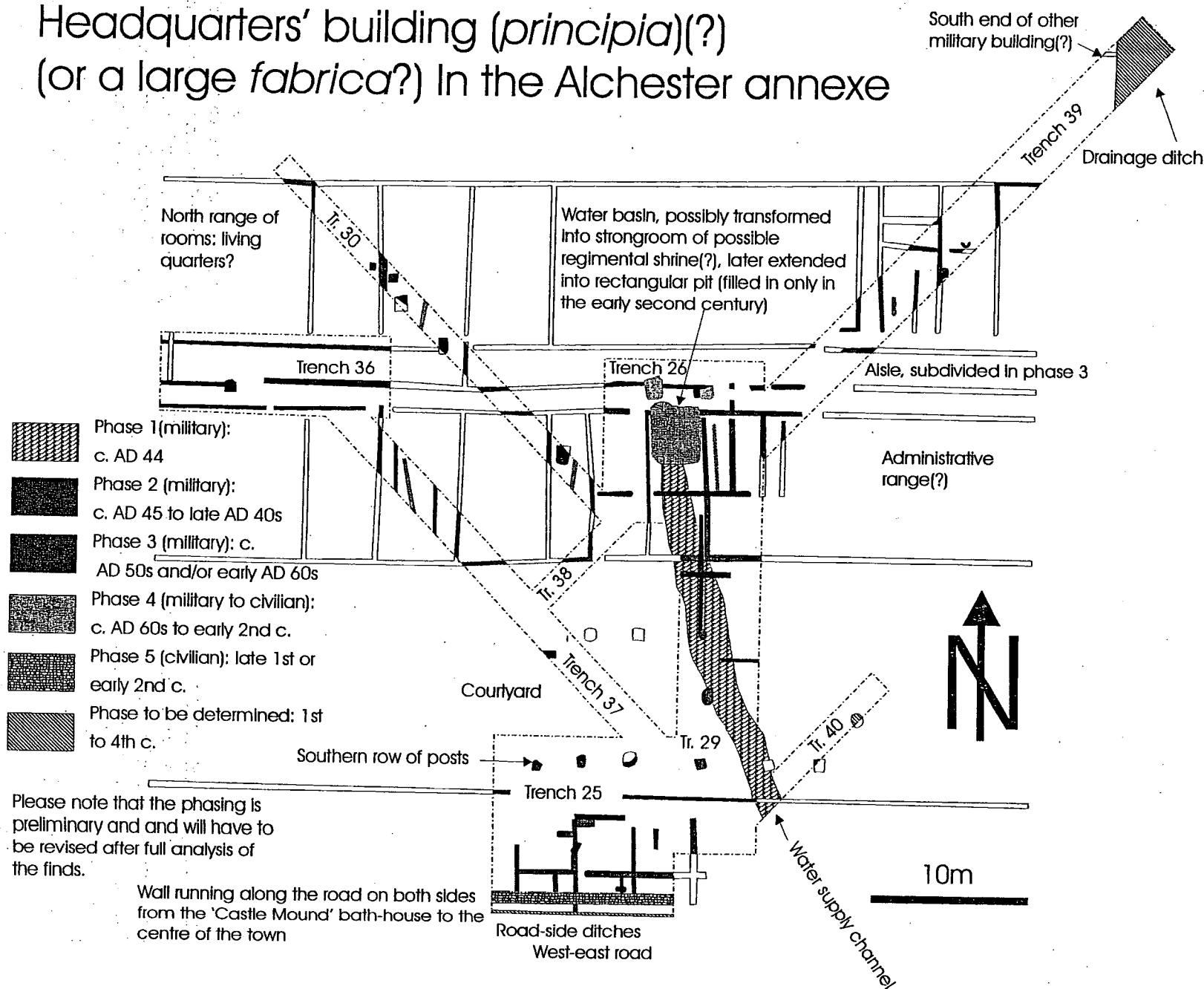


Fig 18. See legend opposite.

Headquarters' building (*principia*)(?) (or a large *fabrica*?) In the Alchester annexe



The building cannot be the original headquarters for the whole compound as this is, in Roman forts and fortresses, always at the T-junction of the main roads. However, its location makes perfect sense for the separate headquarters of an annexe where there was only one road and thus no T-junction. That the annexe had its separate headquarters is of major interest. The density of finds and beamslots also elsewhere in the annexe suggests dense occupation and the size of c 4ha suggests a garrison of c. 1,000 men. Is it possible that two quingenary units (ie units of c 500 men each) were transferred to Alchester in AD 44 while the main fortress (for c 3,000 to 4,000 men to judge by its size) had already been in existence since AD 43?

With over 55m west-east extent the Alchester complex exceeds, as far as I am aware, all contemporary headquarters in auxiliary forts in size. I am only aware of one *principia* of the first or early 2nd century outside a legionary fortress of similar size, namely in the fort for c 1,000 horsemen at Heidenheim which was the largest base between the Rhine, the Danube and the Limes from the AD 90s to the AD 150s. This makes one wonder, if the interpretation of the building at Alchester as a headquarters is accepted, whether a separate command structure for the units in the annexe to those in the main fortress (even if dependent and subordinate) is a sufficient explanation for a building of such extraordinary dimensions.

Alternatively, Alchester may have assumed a key function in the conquest and administration of the south-east of Britain, and the construction of the annexe to an existing base may mark that by AD 44 the focus of military policy had shifted to central Britain. It is interesting to note that John Peddie (1987, 132) had argued that Alchester or Dorchester-on-Thames were the most suitable sites for the headquarter base of the governor, Aulus Plautius, once much of the south-east of Britain was under Roman control. Peddie, a retired soldier himself, will have based this hypothesis on strategic considerations and he proposed it before there had been any firm evidence for a military base at Alchester at all. Indeed, Alchester's location at one of the most central road junctions in south-east Britain predestined it for a wider administrative role, even if it is impossible as yet to tell whether it was quite as important as Peddie had suggested.

The Granary (Trenches 33-35)

Two further trenches were excavated to explore the granary, discovered in 2001, and a third (Trench 35) in its vicinity. The interpretation of the parallel beamslots (ie wooden foundations) as supporting the raised floor of a granary is based on numerous parallels, even though the spacing of the beamslots is more narrow than one would normally expect; nobody has, in any case, as yet been able to advance an alternative interpretation for the remarkably parallel and regularly aligned beamslots in this particular location. Little pottery was recovered from the fills, but a sherd of a Claudian or Neronian butt beaker from the fill of one of the slots supports an early date. The relative stratigraphy equally points to a very early date: in the second phase the slots are

cut by military-type post-holes and a beamslot (the latter at a right angle to them). They are sealed later by a cultivation layer which itself underlies the late second-century town wall rampart. That there are at least two phases of military occupation suggests that not only in the annexe, but also in the main fortress the army remained for some time, though not enough material has as yet been recovered from the main fortress to be sure about the precise date of its withdrawal. It is impossible to establish on the basis of our present evidence whether the main fortress was abandoned at or before the mid AD 60s (the latest possible date for the abandonment of the annexe) or whether it remained occupied into the late AD 60s and AD 70s.

The granary proved to be larger than we had expected. It measured at least 16.9m north-south and at least 15.7m west-east, and it extends at least in the west and east beyond the limits of our trenches. Unless we are dealing with two parallel buildings, the border being precisely where the later civilian drainage ditch in Trench 33 cuts the beamslots, it is wider than any other timber granary in Britain with the possible exception of one 18m wide granary at Corbridge (Manning 1975). Much larger timber granaries, however, are known from the Augustan supply base of Roedgen in Germany (Schoenberger 1976, 24-7). Despite the fact that Alchester is located at one of the major crossroads in southern Britain, one is tempted to think that the large granary served the garrison rather than having a wider supply function, especially in consideration of the fact that Alchester had no access to a sea or river port.

The civilian period features include two minor gullies, presumably on either side of a road, a major drainage ditch, several late post holes, the town wall and its rampart. Most interestingly, two wells were discovered in Trench 35. The high water table in the vicinity of the Gagle Brook made it easy to dig wells in this area. Unfortunately they had no timber (or stone) lining. It will, undoubtedly, be possible to establish a fairly precise chronology for the wells, once the pottery has been fully analysed. Trench 35 also demonstrated that post-Roman ploughing appears to have destroyed all except the deep features in this particular area. One possible shadow of a beamslot was discovered towards its northern end. Only the bottom 4cm survived, yet in absolute terms its bottom is at the same level as that of the beamslots in Trench 33. On the whole it is fair to conclude that we cannot be certain whether there were few features of Roman military and civilian date in Trench 35 or whether they have merely been destroyed. The significantly lower density of finds of Roman civilian and military date from Trenches 33, 34 and 35 (which included, however, one fragment of scale armour, one part of a shield binding and one spear head), suggests that, unsurprisingly, there was never as much activity in the area of the granary as in the area of Trench 32.

The early Roman structures near the west gate (Trench 32)

This trench had been excavated with the intention of confirming or refuting the hypothesis that the main fortress

Trenches E.4, 33, 34 & 35

Please note that more precise dating of the features will be possible after full analysis of the pottery

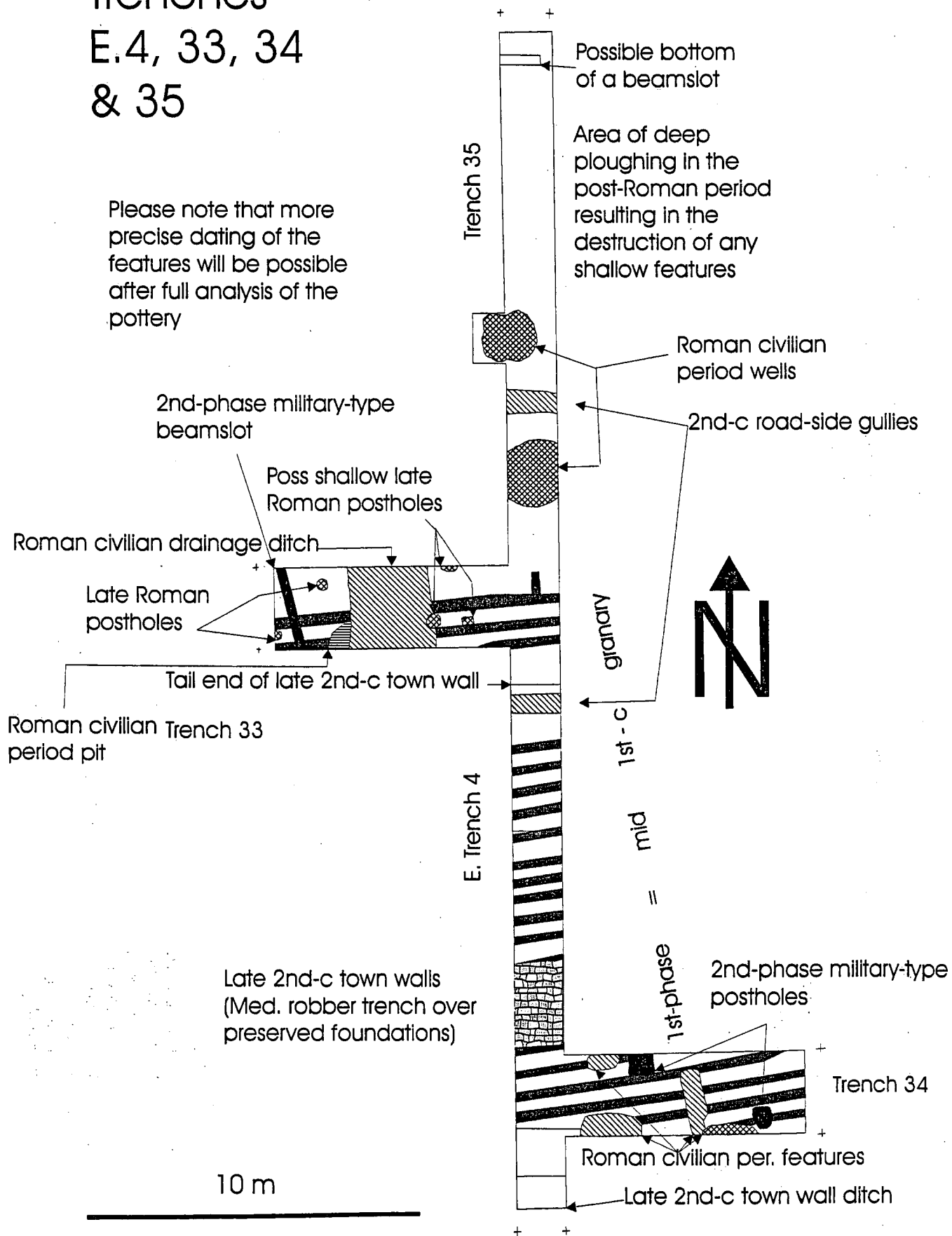


Fig 20.

Trench 32 in the military period (AD 40s to c. AD 60?)

Likely

Low resistance feature (gap between town wall and tail end of the late 2nd c.-rampart) before the excavation erroneously interpreted as the Inner fortress ditch

location of

west gate of

Road

the main



H = hearth
P = post hole

Approximate position of eastern edge of the 14.40 m wide late 2nd c.-town wall ditch (based on its relative position to the town wall as in trench 28), probably incorporating both fortress ditches (not just one as thought before the 2002 season)

fortress

Extent of the area where military layers or the natural were reached

Findspot of wine strainer

Bottom of drainage gully flowing E

Beamslots respecting W-E Gully

Bottom of main drainage gully

Beamslot

Beamslots

Preserved oak posts, prob. of bridge over gully - military or early civilian (not yet dendro-dated)

10 m

Oxfordshire

was underneath the town, and that the compound in the west formed its annexe. Furthermore, it was meant to establish whether significant waterlogged deposits at risk from desiccation survived underneath the town.

Because of the well preserved wall running right through the middle of our trench, the area where we could excavate down to military levels was significantly reduced. It is beyond doubt that there was intensive activity in the mid-1st century in Trench 32 as is indicated not only by a high concentration of military equipment, but also by the density of military structures. The beamslots and postholes allow several different interpretations. The substantial north-south-running drainage ditch argues against their attribution to a single building. The size of the area excavated down to this level is too small for a reliable identification of the precise function of the structures. *Tabernae* (rows of rooms of diverse function), a regular feature along the roads of legionary fortresses, might be one possible interpretation of the small compartments. An association of the westernmost beamslots with the rear revetment of a rampart another, though the fact that the two postholes on either side of the north-south-running drainage ditch have an identical sterile fill and are similar in shape and in a neat west-east alignment suggests that they belong to the same feature. Whether this was a bridge over the drainage channel or a wooden colonnade along the *via principalis* as frequently observed in legionary fortresses cannot be decided. Furthermore, while three beamslots could be observed south of the wall and three beamslot terminals on its north side, the two eastern ones are clearly in a different alignment, adding further difficulties in their interpretation. All three of the beamslot terminals, incidentally, come to a butt end before reaching the edge of the west-east running drainage gully. This observation and the early fill of the drainage gully suggest that they are contemporary; the gully may even have served the drainage of the construction resting on the beamslots. The most plausible, but by no means certain, interpretation may be that the beamslots west of the north-south drainage ditch formed parts of a wooden ramp (*ascensus*) providing access to the military rampart near the fortress west gate.

The trench failed to locate any posts of the west gate. In hindsight this is most likely to be due to a misinterpretation resulting in our missing the gate by a few metres only. A linear low resistance feature traced by geophysical survey had been mistaken to be the inner fortress ditch. This interpretation seemed to be supported by the fact that in 1974 a mid-first century ditch was found within the town walls (Young 1975, 138-41), and we expected to find the mirror image of this in the west. This, however, was probably indeed a drainage ditch, similar to the north-south-running one we found in Trench 32. It seems increasingly likely now that the 14.4m wide town wall ditch, explored in Trench 28 in 2001, incorporated (and destroyed) not just the outer ditch, but both the inner and outer fortress ditches. If so, the gate is most likely to be underneath its civilian successor or in its immediate vicinity. Both at the east gate of Gloucester (Heighway 1980 and 1983) and the east gate of Lincoln

(Thompson and Whitwell 1973), the stone towers of the civilian gate overlie their timber predecessors of the military period. Even if the rampart at Alchester may have been demolished after the withdrawal of the army, since it did not enjoy the same status as Gloucester or Lincoln, the ditches and the road still would, presumably, have led to a similar location of the military and the civilian gate. It seems increasingly likely that, in parallel to other Roman towns with comparably rectangular plan, the Roman military timber gate is underneath the gate of the civilian period.

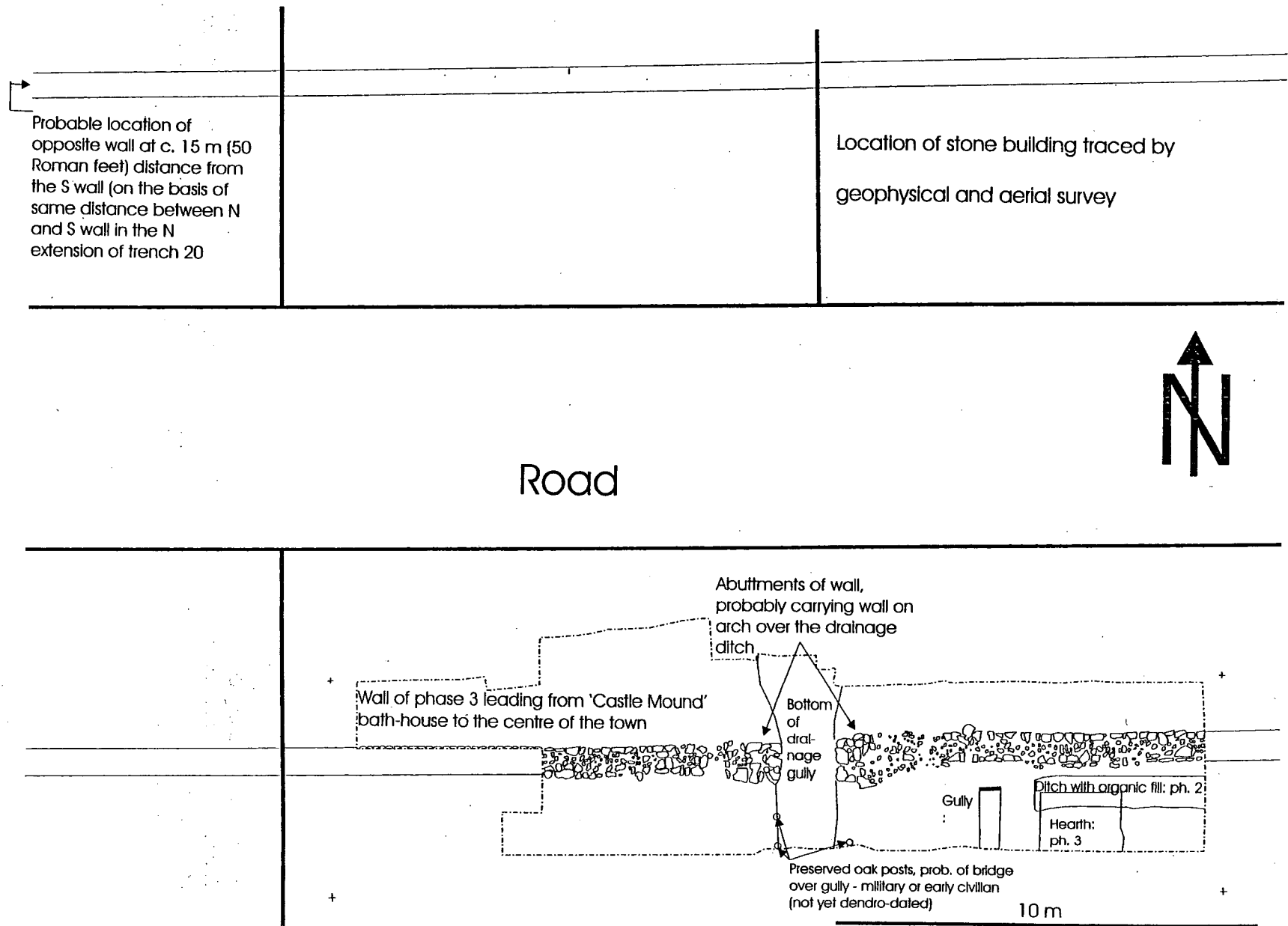
Trench 32 has certainly succeeded in establishing that there are important waterlogged remains in the area. The military layers are at a similar depth in relation to the water table as on the meadow in the west. If we indeed missed the gate by only a few metres, the gate posts (unless pulled out in antiquity) are likely to survive. Three well preserved oak posts were recovered from the north-south running drainage ditch. They, presumably, supported a small timber bridge and may just be large enough for tree-ring dates, though probably not precise ones, since they have been squared. They have already been submitted to Ian Tyers at Sheffield, but the results are not yet known. Other waterlogged finds include a stake with rope tied around the bent end, and archaeobotanic remains. A late Iron Age or early Roman provincial wine strainer with fish head spout, almost identical to the specimen from Felmersham (Kennett 1976), was discovered in a drainage gully of the military phase. Most remarkably, Dr Mark Robinson was still able to identify celery seeds in the fill of the wine strainer. Passages in Pliny's natural history (14, 104; 19, 188; 20, 111; 20, 115; 20, 264; 22, 62) and the *Geoponica* (7, 26, 4; 8, 16) confirm that celery-flavoured wine was widely drunk and used for medicinal purposes. It seems thus highly likely that we found the remains of a Mediterranean recipe, prepared in this vessel, a fascinating glimpse into the introduction of foreign lifestyle to Britain.

Evidence for a recent lowering of the water table and the threat of gradual destruction of parts of Alchesters waterlogged archive

Worryingly, the preservation of the seeds was no longer good. The west-east running ditch was in its entirety above the summer water table, and the strainer was not found at its deepest point, but 155-215mm above the water table. In the assessment of Dr Graham Morgan, Dr Mark Robinson and myself the preservation of organic material within the strainer is due to recent waterlogged conditions and not due to bronze corrosion, even if, as Mark Robinson pointed out, the vessel could have slowed down disintegration of organic material in its interior. Mark Robinson noticed that in some waterlogged deposits recent roots could be observed pointing to a recent and not an ancient decline. Wood survived in Trench 32 up to 135mm above the present water table (three days after the water had last been pumped out and when the water-table should have reached equilibrium again). Already in January 2001 Ian Tyers (unpubl. report) had pointed out that the gate timbers of AD 44 from Trench 23 had been about to lose their bark, thus making precise dating impossible. Sadly, such unique evidence as

Trench 32 in phase 2 (later 1st c.) and phase 3 (late 1st to mid 2nd c.)

(It is virtually certain that it will be possible to refine the chronology substantially once the finds have been fully analysed.)



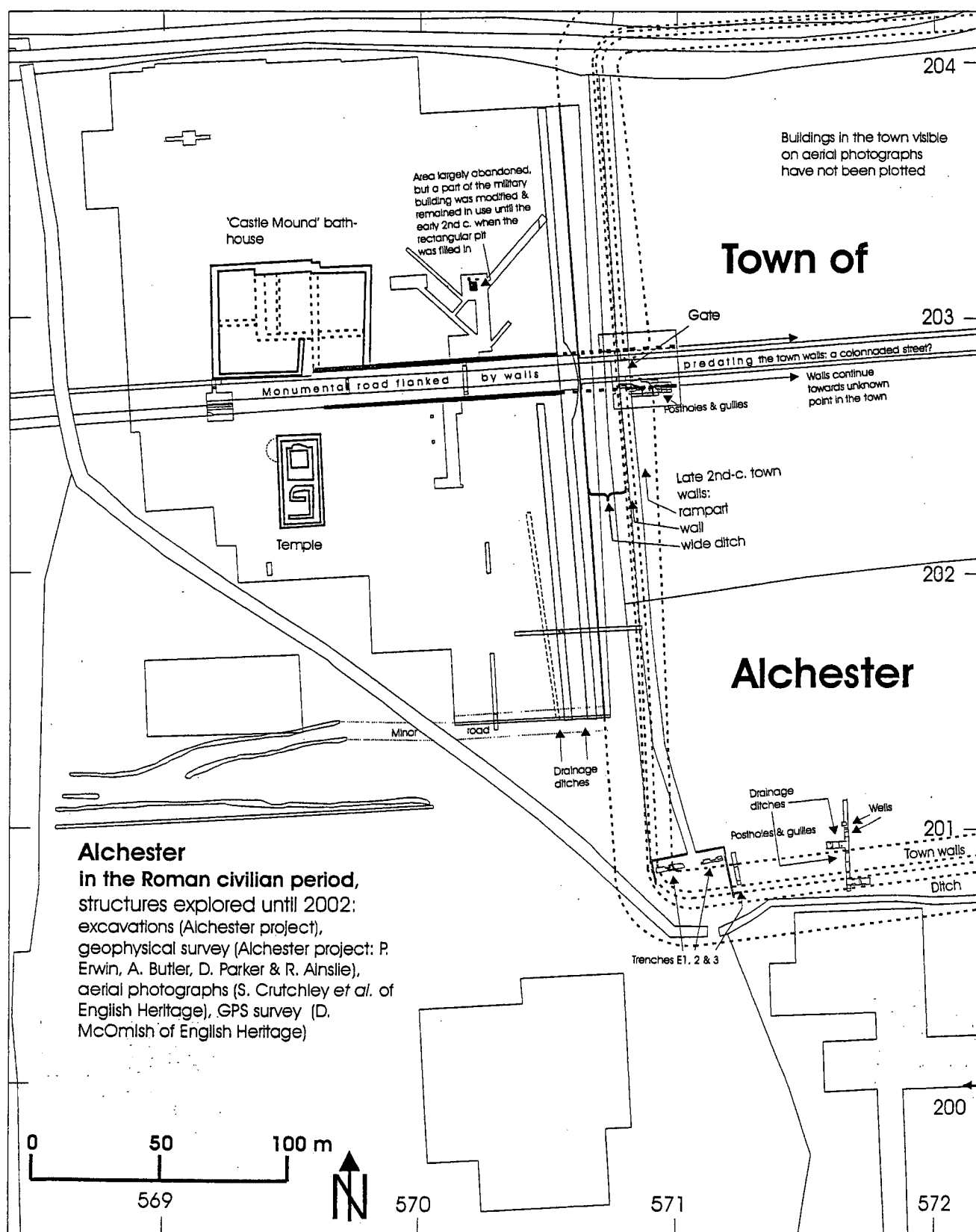


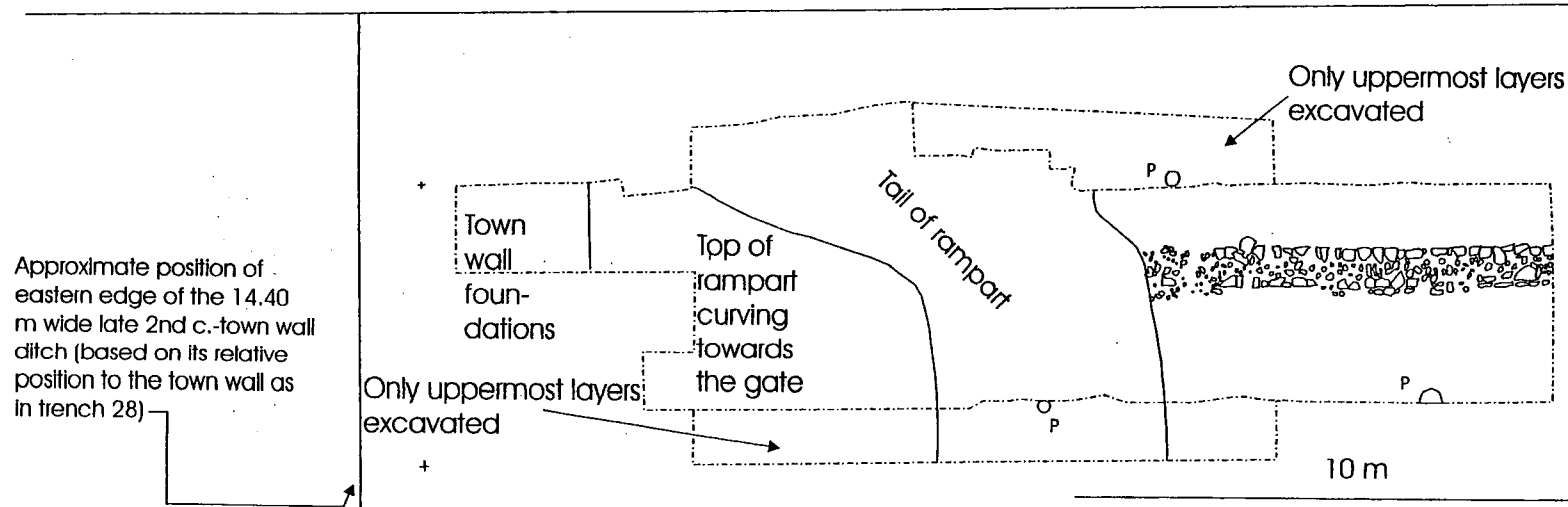
Fig 23.

Trench 32: phase 4: town wall of the late 2nd c. and post holes of the 2nd or subsequent centuries

(No late floor surfaces or complex structures survived in this area)

Location of stone building traced by geophysical and aerial survey

Road



Oxfordshire

dendro-datable wood, plant remains pointing to the otherwise unrecorded early import of new species and artefacts made of organic matter (such as, quite possibly, writing tablets) may no longer be available for future generations unless recovered now.

A colonnaded street(?) and other civilian-period structures (Trench 32)

Evidence for early civilian activity came from the south-east of Trench 32 where a gully and a ditch with organic fill which attests probably that beer had been brewed nearby (Mark Robinson, pers comm.). Later a hearth was built on top of the filled-in ditch and the road from the Castle Mound (a large public stone building, probably a bath-house, west of the town) to the centre of Alchester, was lined on either side by 0.6m wide, well-built walls, 15m (50 Roman feet) apart. We now know that they run for at least 140m, but quite possibly over twice this distance or more if they lead indeed into the centre of the town. Already geophysical survey by Patrick Erwin in 1998 had traced these walls as continuous linear features on either side of the road, and in 1999, 2000 and 2001 we had unearthed sections of these walls in the northern extension of Trench 20 and in Trench 25. Trench 32 has proven that at least the southern wall (and almost certainly its northern counterpart as well) extends into the area later surrounded by town walls and that it predates the construction of the town walls. It is expected that the full analysis of the finds recovered from earlier layers on either side of the walls will yield a fairly precise date for its construction; so far it is safe to date it to the period between the later 1st and the 2nd century. The walls are unlikely to be mere property boundary markers,

- since geophysical survey and excavation have failed to trace any other walls which join up with them,
- since the walls continue towards the centre of the town (though we do not yet know to which point within the town) and
- since they seem to commence in the west precisely in front of a monumental stone building.

The Castle Mound is in the same axis as a temple opposite, and one would like to think that the walls enclose some sort of monumental way connecting this complex with the centre of the town or a specific building within the town. Since there is no obvious practical explanation for the walls, it is tempting to assume that they might have formed part of a colonnaded street, even though this would be highly exceptional for a Romano-British town, let alone a small town like Alchester. Later road-side ditches might easily have destroyed the evidence for stone or timber colonnades, should there ever have been any. Strangely, there is virtually no evidence from our excavation and surveys for civilian stone or even timber buildings in the wet meadow west of Alchester. The temple and Castle Mound seem to have stood in isolation or amidst decaying military timber buildings; parts of the former timber headquarters at least (if this interpretation is correct) were maintained until the early second century. The absence of shops (*tabernae*) or other buildings in Trenches 25 and 29 suggests that the main

function of this potential colonnaded street was to provide a dry passage from the town to the bath-house. Such an architectural feature is, to my knowledge, unique in a British context, and it seems likely that this monument was built with the main purpose to impress. Should this tentative interpretation be correct, then it appears that Alchester enjoyed in the late 1st or early 2nd century sponsorship for an exceptional building programme, followed by a decline to an ordinary small town. We cannot tell whether this unusual architectural feature may have evolved out of a timber colonnade in the main fortress; while colonnades were frequent in Roman fortresses (Pitts and St. Joseph 1985, Petrikovits 1975), there is insufficient evidence to tell whether or not the two large post holes in Trench 32 might have formed part of such a colonnade. Alternatively, veterans of foreign origin in civilian Alchester could have played a part in the introduction of an eastern architectural form.

When the town walls were built in the late 2nd century parts of the earlier wall as well as the early military north-south running drainage ditch were buried beneath the rampart. The rampart and its tail could be shown to curve towards the west gate in the town wall. Military-period objects from the rampart indicate that it consists in part of re-deposited military material.

With the possible exception of three post-holes no significant late Roman features were encountered in this trench. There were no surviving late Roman surfaces, pits or masonry structures. Repeated cleaning of the planum failed to yield post or stake holes with a few exceptions (see plan). While it is not beyond possibility that some small stake holes could have left no traces in the mid-brown matrix, there were no obvious stone concentrations, suggestive of post-packings nor any geometric patterns in the rubble spread to indicate the position of buildings. The town wall itself has been robbed out except for its substantial foundations.

Quintianus - Alchesters first Roman inhabitant or visitor known by name

Roger Ainslie and Lucy Jewitt discovered a bone roundel of 20.5mm diameter with concentric ring design on the obverse in Trench 32. On its reverse the following inscription was incised in two lines:

QVINTI
ANI

The Latin genitive indicates ownership: 'belonging to Quintianus'. We cannot know whether Quintianus was concerned about losing his own game counter(s) or whether marking counters with the names of players was part of a game. A set of twelve such bone counters from London south of the Thames contained besides ten pieces belonging to a certain Sextius, the son of Junius (including one where the name Rufinus was added in the nominative), also two unmarked pieces (RIB 2440.123-32; Sheldon 1974, 100-2; cf. 16). Such inconsistency (also in the ways Sextius wrote

his name) may point to the latter interpretation while the dominance of one name may point to the former. Bone counters were also occasionally used on counting-boards, but this is unlikely to account for a piece with incised name. While this is the first inscribed bone counter, Alchester has yielded several uninscribed counters made of bone and stone. They attest to the popularity of board games. Such games were undoubtedly introduced by the Roman newcomers or through contact with the Empire. Besides Alchester, counters inscribed with names are known from early military sites (where civilians as well as soldiers were present), such as Hod Hill (RIB 2440.98), Chichester (RIB 2440.68) or Vindolanda (*Britannia* 20, 1989, 341 no. 52), but civilians were equally amongst the players. The Alchester counter was found in a context (32.9) above the late 2nd century rampart, but there is much early re-deposited material from civilian levels in Trench 32 and thus we cannot be sure whether Quintianus lived at or visited Alchester in the civilian or military period. The name Quintianus was very common (Kajanto 1965, 35) and widespread in the Latin European and north-African provinces of the Roman Empire (Mocsy *et al* 1983, 239; CIL and RIB indices). We thus do not know whether he was a native Britain who adopted a Roman name or whether he had come from somewhere else in the Latin West of the Empire.

Size and date of the Alchester military base

One of the historically most crucial questions is as yet unresolved: is there merely one compound, dendro-dated to AD 44 or is this merely the annexe to a larger and earlier compound (of AD 43?). In the former case we are probably dealing with a fortress of roughly 8ha size, in the latter with a main fortress of 12-13ha plus an annexe of c 4ha. While it seems most likely that the latter theory is correct, there is still no definite evidence for a certain decision one way or the other. The arguments for and against this hypothesis are summarised below, but further excavation is needed for ultimate clarification and, if the latter theory is correct, for dating the foundation of the main fortress.

Arguments in favour of the theory that there was merely one fortress at Alchester established in AD 44

The west-east road in the western compound forms an axis of symmetry, thus suggesting that it is the *via praetoria*, the road to the main gate. (Though it would have made perfect sense to build an annexe symmetrically along an extension of the *via principalis*, for two units of 500 men each, for example.)

If there are no traces of a gate, one would have expected an empty space (*intervallum*) in Trench 32. (Though most, but not all Roman forts and fortresses have an *intervallum* [ie a cordon around the perimeter] without buildings to facilitate movement in case of an enemy attack and to make the effective use of missiles or fire more difficult. The contemporary fort at Oberstimm, for example, has a densely built-up *intervallum* [Schoenberger 1978, 19 fig. 5]. If there was indeed a fortress with annexe at Alchester, there would no longer have been the necessity to keep the *intervallum* at the side of the annexe free from buildings. Furthermore, if the tentative interpretation of the western beamslots in Trench 32 as part of a wooden ramp onto the rampart, should be correct, then this would not exclude the possibility that there was an *intervallum* by-and-large free from buildings.)

There is a road within the town in the same alignment as the southern ditches of the western compound. It may re-use its ditches, thus indicating that there was only one compound, parts of which underlie the area later enclosed with a town wall. (However, this road has been excavated in Trench 21 where it is just south of the outer ditch, probably for sheer convenience: the existing ditch would have provided drainage, and roads often follow boundaries to cause minimum inconvenience for agriculture. The same alignment could have been maintained within the town.)

The two parallel walls from the Castle Mound to the

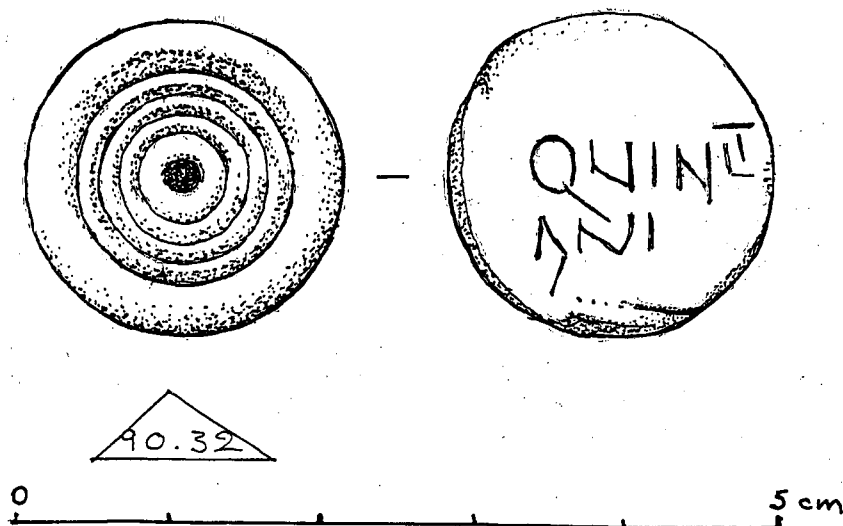


Fig 25. The inscribed bone roundel drawn by Vanda Morton; scale: 1:2

Oxfordshire

centre of the town might suggest that in the civilian period areas west and east of the line of the later town wall were considered a unity (though this would not be incompatible with the annexe theory - as main fortress and annexe must have formed a unity as well).

Arguments in favour of the theory that there was a main fortress (of AD 43?) and an annexe of AD 44

The location of the parade ground to the south-east of the later town is easier to explain if the centre of the complex was underneath the town rather than at its western margins.

The west-east running drainage channel in Trench 32 has a clear gradient from west to east while the contemporary drainage ditch, sectioned in Trenches 22 and 31 flows in the opposite direction. As there is no natural ridge in this area, there must have been an artificial obstacle between them, probably the rampart of the main fortress.

The *principia* in the western compound (if this interpretation is accepted) with its front facing south, (i.e. away from the side of the enemy) is hard to reconcile with the assumption that this was the only military compound. If so, one would have expected the *principia* to be at the T-junction of the two main roads as in most other forts and fortresses of the time. In an annexe, by contrast, there would have been just one road, thus explaining the unusual position.

It seems unlikely (though it would not be without parallels) that the remarkably rectangular groundplan of Alchester derives from a civilian foundation built from scratch (re-using at most one eighth of the ditches of a pre-existing compound of similar size). It makes more sense to assume that Alchester inherited its rectangular groundplan from a fortress underneath its walls and that as much as possible of the military ditches was re-used to save labour.

Excavations in 1920s and 1974 yielded ditches with mid-1st century fill near the north-east corner and the east side of the town walls.

At the central crossroads in Alchester the road from Dorchester does not line up with the T-junction of the other three roads, suggesting that it was a later addition and that Alchester inherited the typical T-junction from its military predecessor. The *via praetoria* thus faced north (ie towards the enemy).

Akeman Street and not the road leading through the west gate of Alchester westwards became the main traffic axis, suggesting that perhaps already in the military period the main road (*via praetoria*) led to Akeman Street rather than to the west, which would be true for a fortress under the later town, but not for the western compound.

The gully supplying the water basin in Trench 26 is curving slightly from east to west suggesting that it was supplied by a pre-existing system from the main fortress in the east.

Mid-1st century finds have been found from numerous trenches within the town in the excavations in the 1920s as well in our excavations. This is probably re-deposited material from an earlier military occupation (covering all of the later town).

The location of the granary outside the southern defences of the western compound forms still the strongest argument against its interpretation as the sole fortress.

Geophysical survey of the Banjo enclosure

David Parker carried out a resistivity survey of the Banjo enclosure, clearly showing the access route, the enclosure ditch and the two circular ditches (thought to surround Iron Age round houses). This survey will hopefully form the basis for future excavations.

Possible discovery of the southern defences of the main fortress

A resistivity survey south of the Gagle Brook may have traced the southern fortress ditches some 64.5m and 70m south of the stream. However, further survey or excavation will be needed to exclude the possibility that we are dealing with the ditches of a minor road. If these are indeed the southern fortress ditches, they would explain the location of granary which extends beyond the limits of the later town walls. The Gagle Brook appears to have been diverted, presumably in the Roman civilian period; it is now certainly cutting off the south-west corner of the former annexe and, presumably, also the southernmost part of the main fortress. Its water appears to have been channelled into the town wall ditch thus giving the town a moat-like appearance. If the double ditch represents indeed the southern defences of main fortress then this would be about 12 to 13ha large (or 16 to 17ha with the annexe - ie as large as the small legionary fortress at Exeter).

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Mr and Mrs Miller, Paul and Katie for allowing us to excavate on their land and for all their interest and kind support. I am indebted to our funding bodies in the 2002 season: the British Academy for the grant as well as for the Postdoctoral Fellowship during which this article was written, the Roman Research Trust, the Haverfield Bequest and the Society of Antiquaries of London. The team (95 participants in total) has once again been exceptionally dedicated, but space allows me only to mention the main supervisors and a few key contributors to the 2002 season: Roger Ainslie, Jonathan Boon, Steve Boscott, Gill Cox, Elinor Croxall, Jenny De Bono, Chris Green, Ann Griffin, Dr Andrew Hann, Bernard Jones, Guy Knight, Vanda Morton, David Parker, Becky Peacock, Jackie Potts, James Ratcliffe, Judith Rosten, Stephen Usher-Wilson, Francisco Valle Montero and Dr John Watterson. For key involvement in the post-excavation, I am most grateful to Professor

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WALLINGFORD BURH TO BOROUGH RESEARCH PROJECT: FIRST INTERIM REPORT, 2002

N Christie, D O'Sullivan (Leicester University), O Creighton (Exeter University) & H Hamerow (Oxford University)

Introduction

In August 2002 the pilot field season of a new archaeological project was undertaken at the town of Wallingford, located alongside the Thames in south Oxfordshire. Titled The Wallingford Burh to Borough Research Project, this proposed five-year programme will combine a variety of approaches in order to illuminate more of this highly significant historic townscape and its setting. The project team combines expertise drawn from a number of academic institutions with interests spanning early Medieval and

Medieval urban and rural settlement; it includes professional field staff, and is working closely with local historical, archaeological and conservation bodies (notably The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society, Wallingford Museum, The Northmoor Trust); the project is supported by the South Oxfordshire District Council and Wallingford Town Council and liaises with the County Archaeologist. Funding for the 2002 season came from the British Academy and the Medieval Settlement Research Group. English Heritage kindly granted the licence for the geophysical survey work across the selected Scheduled Areas of the site.

Wallingford: Site and Previous Archaeology

The town of Wallingford is justly renowned for its surviving late Saxon burh and Medieval rampart-ditch defences and for the complex and extensive earthworks of a Norman castle imposed into the north-east quarter of the urban space (both are Scheduled Ancient Monuments). Its riverside position, overseeing a ford across the Thames, gave Wallingford a highly strategic role at the Wessex-Mercia border; the river and local communications routes also allowed Wallingford to prosper as a royal centre after the late 11th century (see Historical Context below). Its eventual decline in importance was the result of the growth of Reading abbey and town to the south and of Oxford to the north and due also to changes in the role and navigability of the river (Britnell 2000: 123; Keene 2000: 555).

The preservation of town rampart (on both west and north-west flanks) and castle earthworks makes Wallingford of central importance for examining the nature of late Saxon town planning and Norman urban castle building. It is frequently cited as a key early Medieval centre (Astill 2000: 36, 41) and was highlighted thus in the 1975 Historic Towns in Oxfordshire survey: The importance of Wallingford's archaeology is only heightened by comparison with the other towns, for (apart from Oxford) it is the only late Saxon walled town in the region. Late Saxon and early Medieval layers are unlikely to be stratified deep beneath or destroyed by later archaeological deposits as they frequently are in Oxford. Some [unpublished] archaeological work has already taken place on the castle and the defences, but many components of the early town, like the domestic and industrial buildings, the churches, the street plan and the waterfront remain unstudied. Because there is still so much to be learnt about this period, large scale work on any of these aspects is likely to produce results of national importance (Airs *et al* 1975: 157).

This quote identifies various problems: a high importance and potential, and little actual study. Indeed, the archaeological interventions noted as unpublished in 1975 remain unpublished, meaning that the data available float. The excavations did certainly identify something of the archaeological potential: work in the 1960s on the former north gate (later buried by extensions to the castle earthworks), and within the castle inner bailey both identified excellent preservation of archaeological deposits, revealing (respectively) 10th century and later buildings and

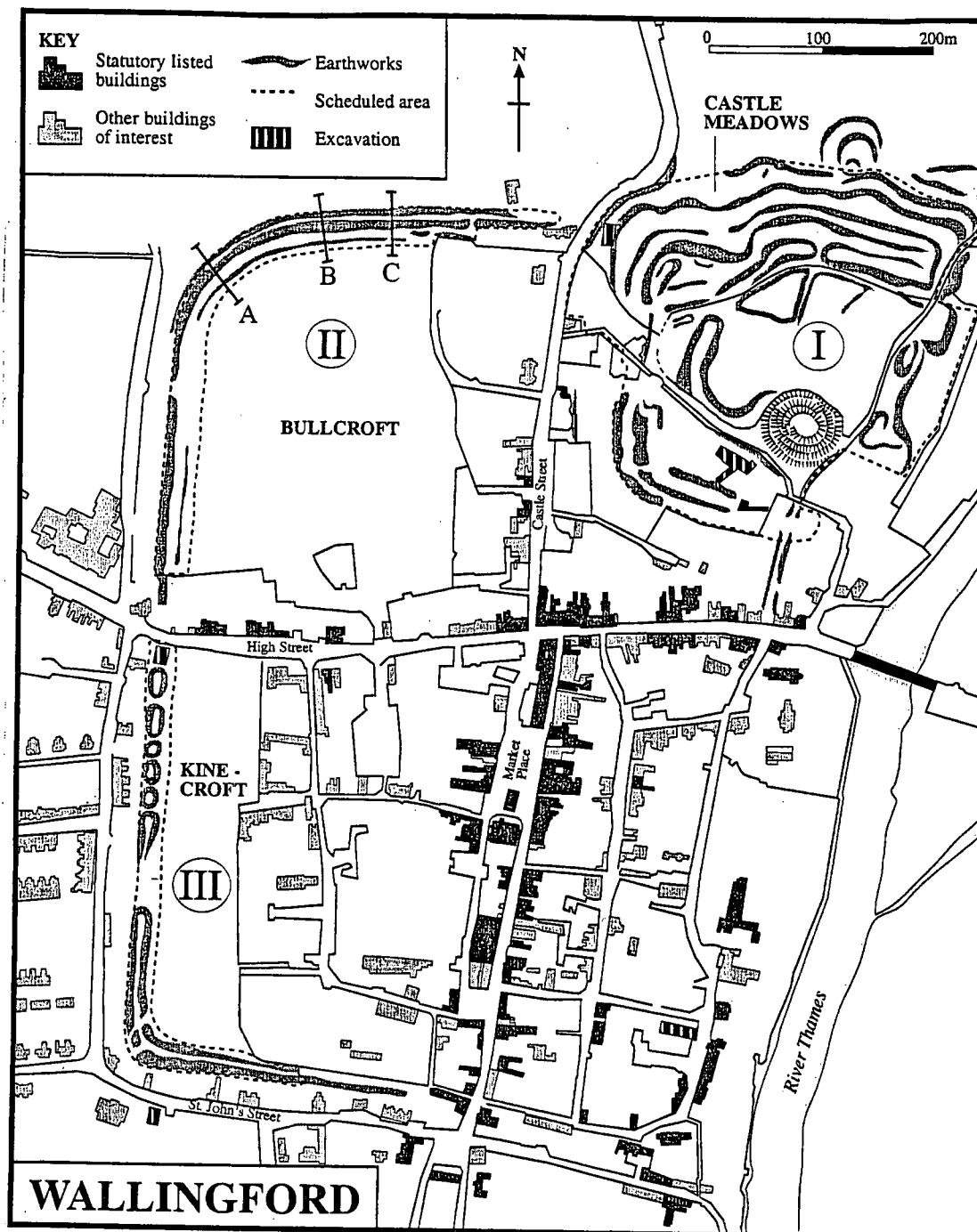


Fig 26. Plan of Wallingford.

deposits, and cob-built structures (Brooks 1965-68). And yet no detailed archaeological assessment or mapping of the castle site and its defences has previously been made; interpretations are drawn solely from Ordnance Survey plots which are schematic and ignore crucial data (see below). Whilst a cutting across the rampart at the town's western gate has been published (Durham *et al* 1973), again, surprisingly, no topographic survey has ever been made of these near-unique defences. To these previous excavations can be added a series of watching briefs and other evaluations which provide tantalising glimpses of the town's development and material culture. However, no attempt has so far been made to synthesise and contextualise this work.

The available archaeological data are also tantalisingly

vague in regard to Wallingford's origins and context: the presence of early Anglo-Saxon inhumation and cremation burials immediately outside the south-west defences of the town (discovered in the 1930s: short publication in Leeds 1938-39) raises the question of the site's status prior to the burh; the nature of the scattered Roman finds in and around the town remains to be addressed; and the landscape context of Wallingford before and after the burh foundation remains largely obscure.

Questions and Directions

Wallingford accordingly offers much scope for understanding an evolving townscape in a crucial period of European historical transition. Late and Post-Medieval shrinkage of the urban area has resulted in the outstanding

preservation of the burh/borough defences and castle earthworks; in addition, substantial areas of open intramural urban space (c 0.8km²) survive (Bullcroft/Kinecroft), including the area of the lost Norman priory of Holy Trinity. As a result there is an opportunity here to tackle questions of key importance regarding later Saxon and earlier Norman town planning - streets, house plots and remodelling. Furthermore, the survival of the castleworks enables fresh questions to be raised on the impact of Norman castle building on the urban space, economy and population. The unsurveyed town ramparts offer a near unique opportunity to observe the format, role and evolution of urban defence. Finally, the surrounding landscape has much potential for analysis through detailed field walking combined with air photo study and re-examination of known findspots (notably Anglo-Saxon and Roman, farms and cemeteries).

The Wallingford Burh to Borough Research Project will comprise an integrated research programme, combining academic and professional expertise with community archaeology, and drawing upon a wide variety of archaeological, topographical and documentary sources. As noted, the project has been designed in conjunction with several local partners. It also is fully supported by previous excavators at Wallingford, Prof N Brooks, R Carr and T Rowley - who have generously provided access to their archives. Collation of archival data (NMR, SMR, watching brief data, etc.) and liaison with local groups and preliminary analysis of the castle zone were undertaken in 2001.

Plan of the castle zone of Wallingford, based on Ordnance Survey plans; the earthworks are far more complex than those presented here, and detailed archaeological re-survey is allowing far more meaningful analysis of landscape evolution in this quarter of the townscape.

Wallingford: A Brief Historical Context

Before commenting on the 2002-2003 field results, it is valuable firstly to summarise briefly Wallingford's principal historical role and significance. The data here give merely an indication of the good quality documentation for elucidating the Medieval townscape and population.

While the foundation of Wallingford castle is not documented specifically, it can be assumed with a reasonable level of certainty that the first castle was constructed in the immediate wake of the Norman Conquest, possibly as early as 1067. The likely context for this building operation was William the Conqueror's systematic programme of castle-building within the major pre-Conquest urban centres of southern England, designed to suppress populations and seize control of the apparatus of royal government across the shires (Creighton 2002). The existence of a castle at Wallingford is first documented positively in 1071 when Abbot Aldred of Abingdon was imprisoned there as the result of probable complicity in the rebellion of Edwin and Morcar (King 1983: 12-13). The castle was subjected to a series of sieges from 1139-53, when it acted as one of the main power bases of forces loyal to the Empress Matilda. This succession of military actions

led to the construction of a number of siege castles (or counter castles) designed to blockade Wallingford and its garrison, although the precise numbers and locations of these short-term fortifications have been the subject of debate (see Slade 1960; Spurrell 1995). Following the disturbances of the Anarchy, the castle passed to Henry II; it was repaired and strengthened in the last quarter of the 12th century, and extensive construction work, including renovations to the ditches of both castle and town is recorded in the reign of John. The castle, honour and town were bestowed on Richard, Earl of Cornwall in 1231, and subsequently passed to his son, Edmund, before reverting to the Crown in 1300; the castle was again the subject of occasional royal investment before its general dilapidation in the late Tudor period, and was systematically demolished in 1652 following a Civil War siege (Allen Brown 1963: 850-853; Rickard 2002: 90-93).

Given the enormous potential of Wallingford's topography and archaeology to illuminate the Saxo-Norman transition, the evidence of Domesday Book is especially relevant. The separate Domesday entry for Wallingford heads the entries for the rest of the shire, indicating a flourishing town with a Saturday market and mint, and also affords a tantalising glimpse of how the new Norman presence represented by the castle impacted on the town (Astill 1984: 61). In 1066 the royal borough contained 276 houses (*hagae*) on eight virgates of land; by 1086 eight of these properties had been destroyed to make way for the castle. This figure seems minimal in comparison to other urban centres into which castles had been inserted, such as Cambridge (where 27 dwellings were destroyed because of the castle) or Lincoln (166), and the reasons why less than 3% of properties were displaced at Wallingford remain open to speculation. Possible explanations include the likelihood that the original castle took up a far smaller area than the earthworks of the motte and inner bailey suggest, or perhaps more likely, that it was imposed upon a zone where settlement was undeveloped or had contracted. A further possibility, however, is that part of the early castle occupied an area lying beyond the custom-paying boundaries of the borough, as at Stamford, where the Norman castle lay within a royal estate, and the number of properties displaced at Domesday (five) was similarly low (Roffe & Mahany 1986: 6). Possible evidence of high-status antecedent occupation on the site of Wallingford castle is provided by the reference in Domesday that Miles Crispin, the Norman lord of Wallingford and probable castellan of the castle, held the land, previously in the hands of Edward the Confessor, where the housecarls lived (Keats-Rohan 1986: 312).

The impact of Norman lordship on the Saxon townscape was particularly conspicuous given the twinned establishment of the Holy Trinity Benedictine Priory (founded 1077-97), the precincts of two sites, at least in their later Medieval forms, taking up the entire northern part of the burh. Yet Norman disruption of the late Saxon townscape is balanced by evidence of renewed growth: the 22 Frenchmen's dwellings recorded in 1086 seem to indicate an immigrant presence, as at Shrewsbury and Southampton. This perhaps suggests

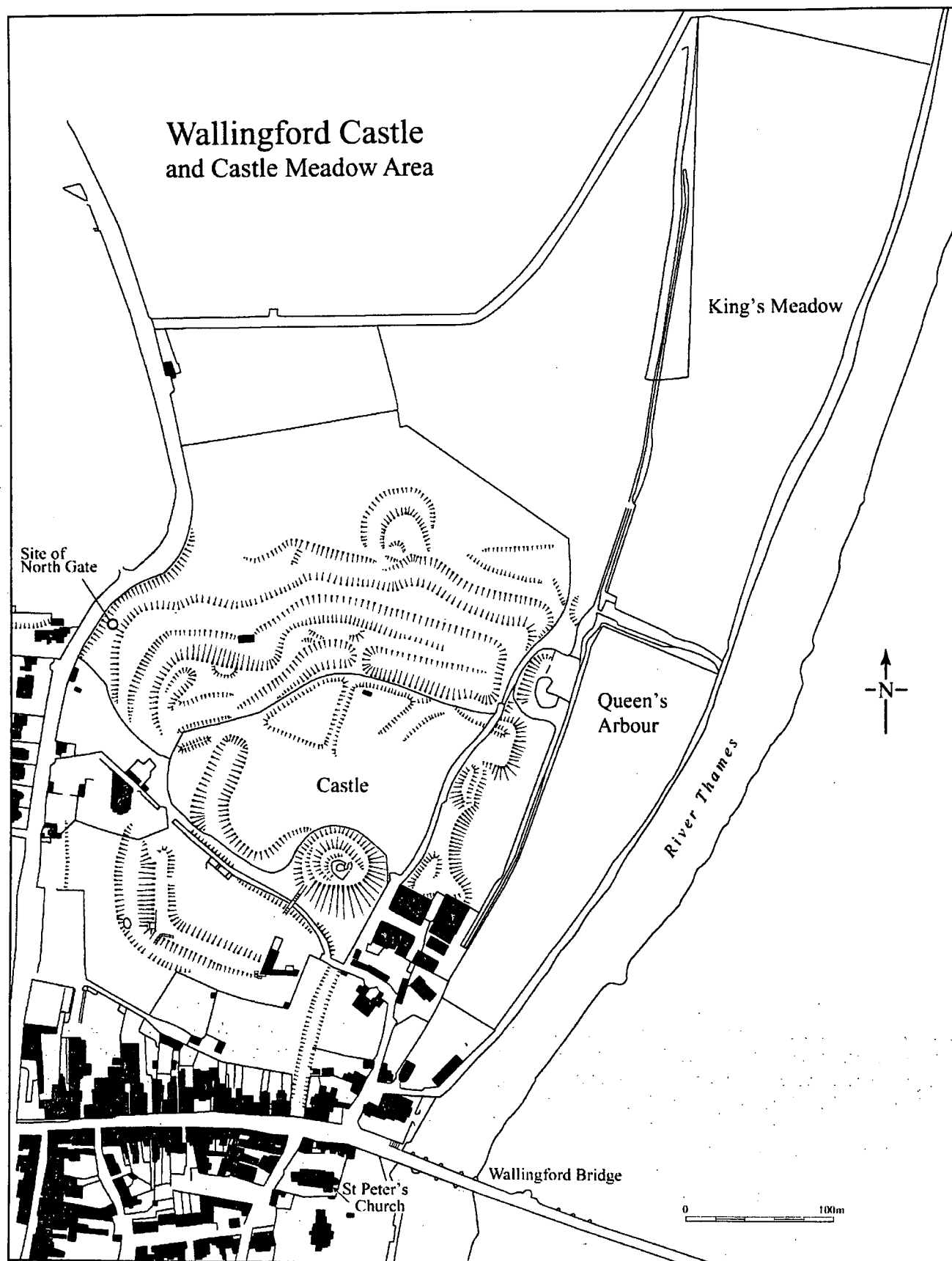


Fig 27. Wallingford Castle.

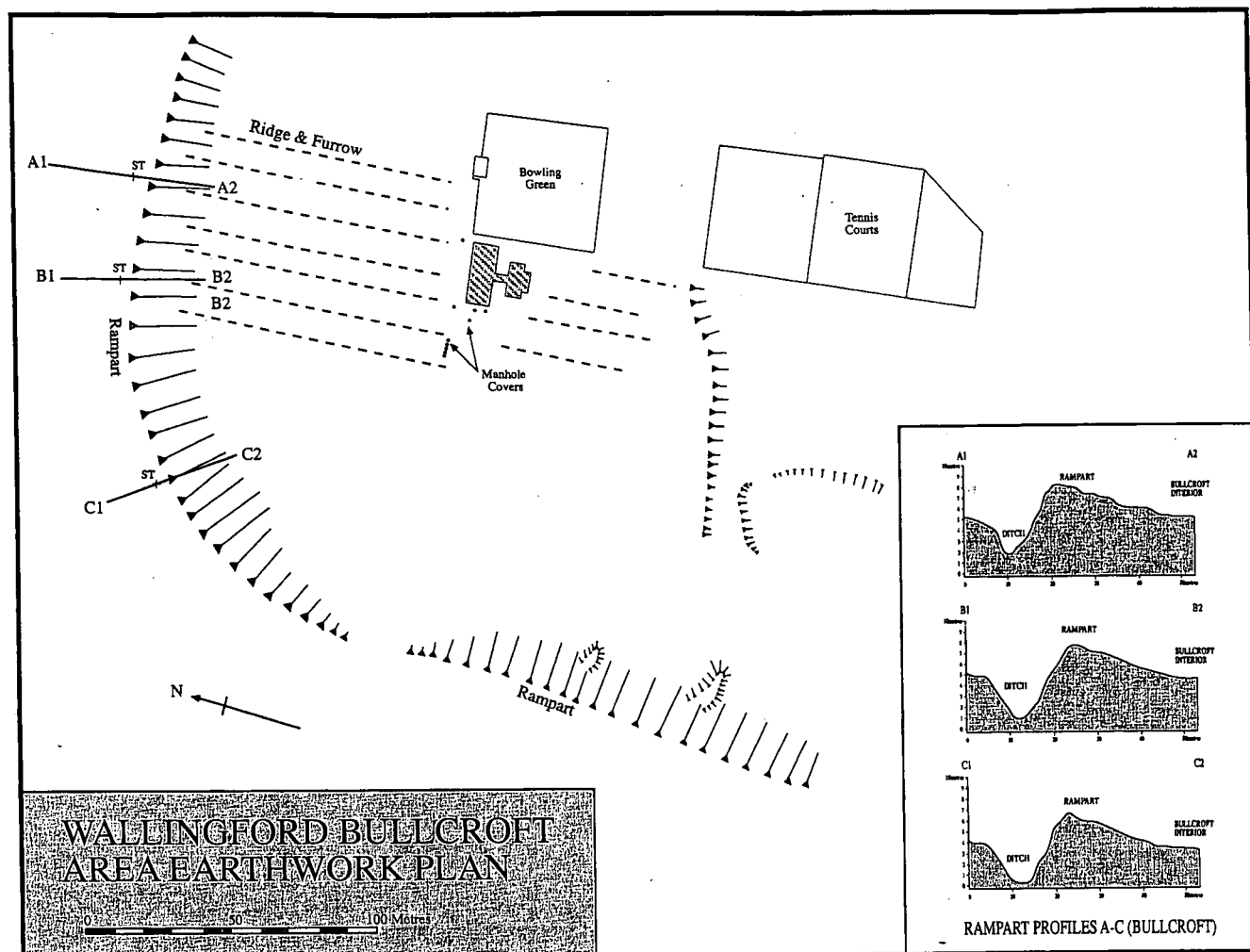


Fig 28. Wallingford Bullcroft earthwork plan.

the attraction of new colonists to a commercial focus boosted by the castle, on the model of Northampton, Norwich and Nottingham, where new French boroughs had developed by Domésgay.

2002 Field Season: Scope and Results

A pilot field season of geophysical and topographic survey of the Anglo-Saxon burh fortifications and Norman castle at Wallingford was undertaken in August 2002. As noted, systematic study of these well-preserved and well-known monuments has hitherto been lacking. In the public park known as the Bullcroft, which occupies most of the north-western sector of the Anglo-Saxon burh, resistivity and gradiometer survey were carried out to locate primarily the lost site of the Norman priory of Holy Trinity - this significantly twinned with the castle in the northern half of Wallingford and these two units suggesting the relative availability of open or less built-up urban space there. Systematically demolished in 1522, no above-ground features exist of the priory, and 20th century recreational landscaping (for tennis courts, play zones, bowling green, football pitches) has further modified the zone. Nonetheless, resistivity coverage has produced valuable indications of the likely priory site; more intensive survey through ground penetrating radar will be required in 2003 to determine both form and extent more precisely. Interestingly, topographic

survey suggested residual traces of ridge and furrow across the same area, oriented north-south and extending to the rampart back; whilst these might conceivably be connected to works of modern landscaping, it is tempting to see them as relating to agriculture imposed over the destroyed priory in the latest Middle Ages.

The open area of the Bullcroft extends fully to the ramparts of the burh and Medieval town (these in part terraced and modified internally and on the summit, but with ditch and bank exceptionally well preserved otherwise (if with tree, scrub and weed cover), particularly on the town's north flank; cross-sections were made using a Total Station demonstrating an extant depth of fully 7m from bank top to visible ditch bottom. Resistivity survey was thus directed also at seeking traces of possible later Saxon town planning previous to the imposition of the priory. Here too valuable results were achieved, with potential traces of north-south and west-east intramural lanes; house plots can be suggested, although these zones likewise require more detailed scrutiny in 2003. Interpretations are of course tentative, since the extent and nature of works and buildings associated with the priory are unknown. Most importantly, however, the surveys indicate the Bullcroft to be a zone of much fruitful archaeological potential.

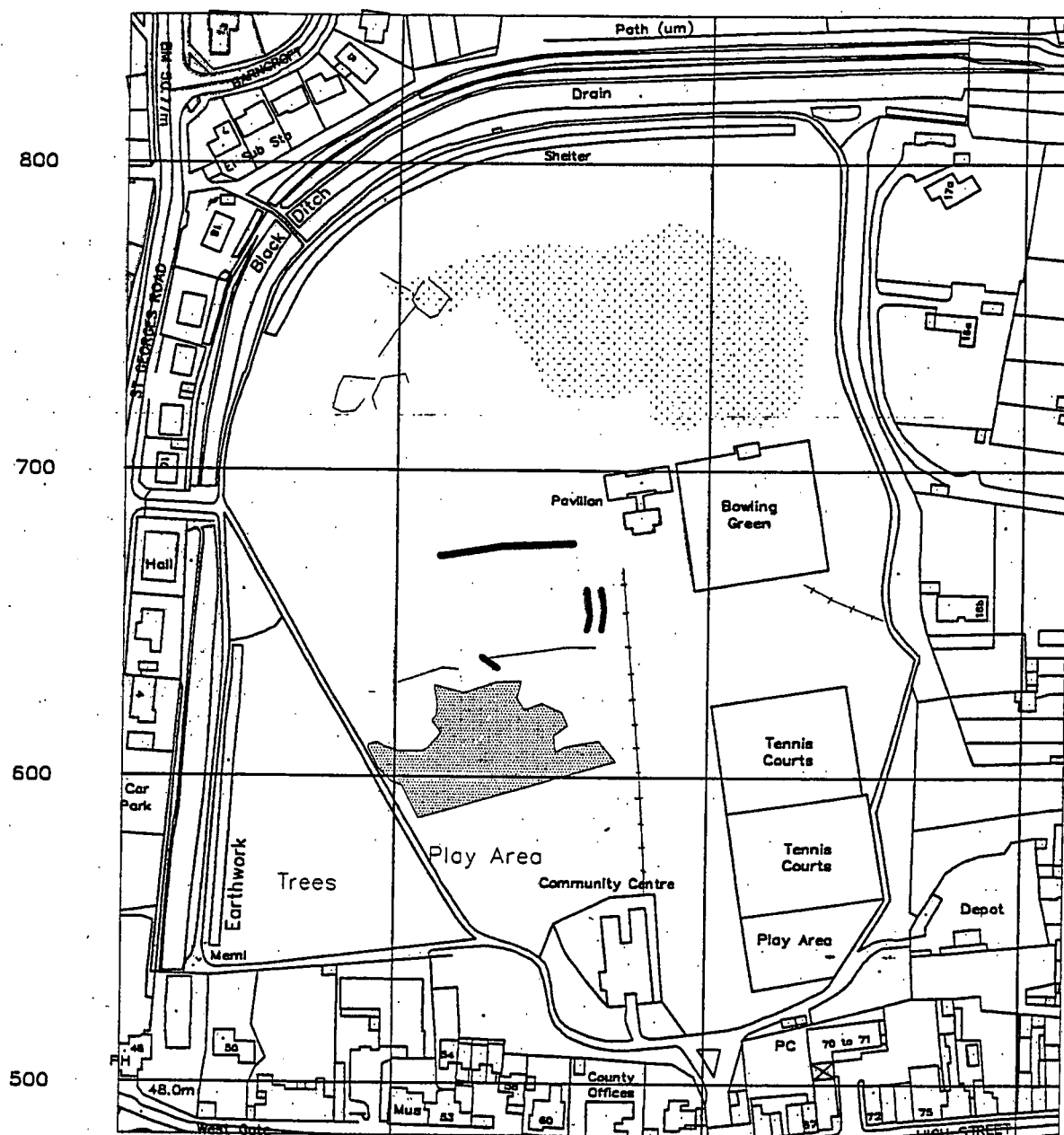
460400
190900

Bull Croft Park

500

600

700



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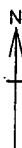
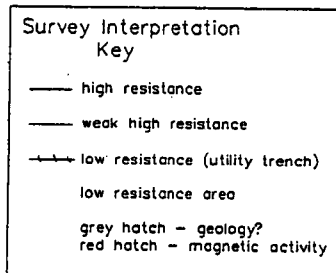


Fig 29. Wallingford Bullcroft Park.

WALLINGFORD CASTLE MEADOWS

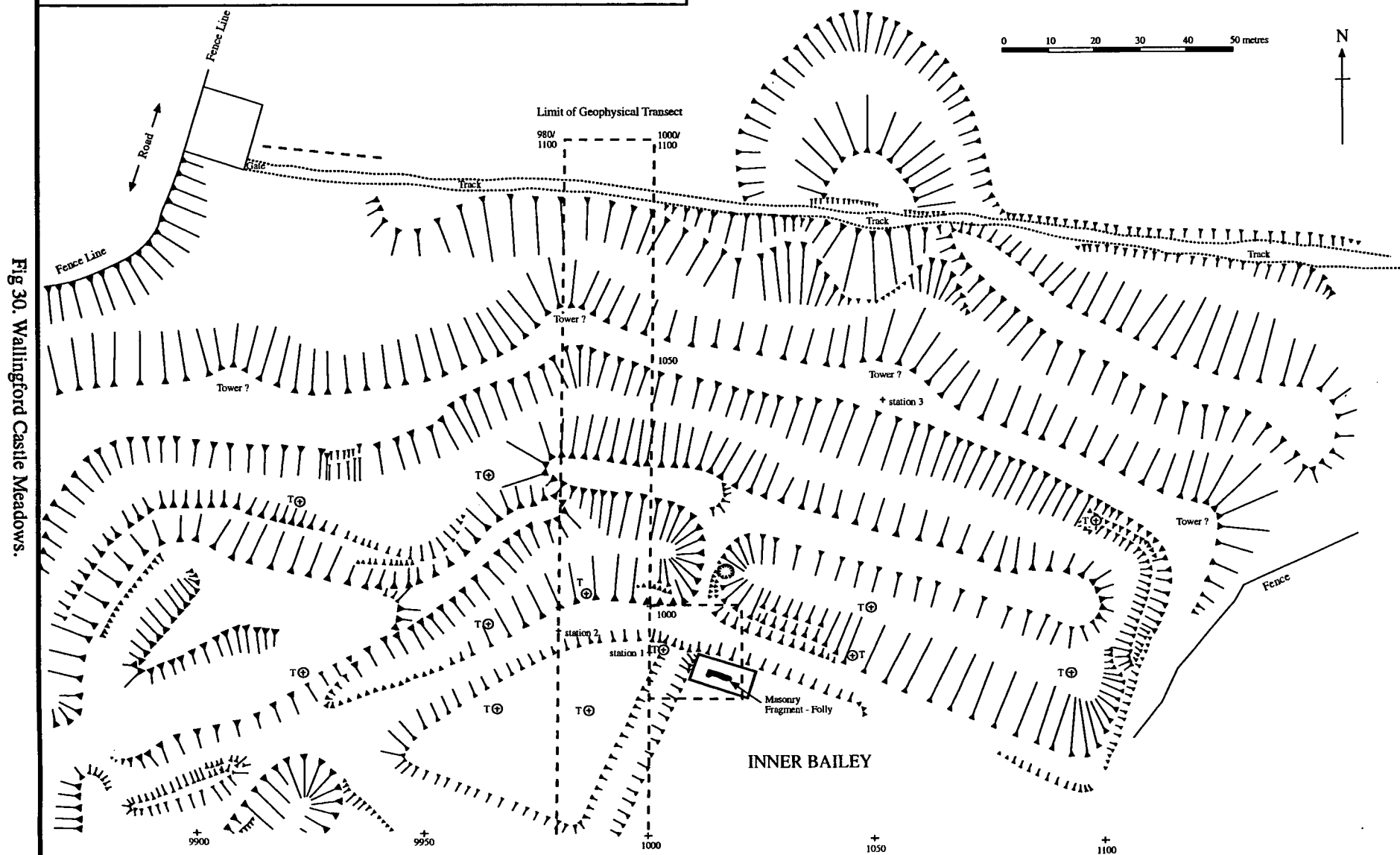


Fig 30. Wallingford Castle Meadows.

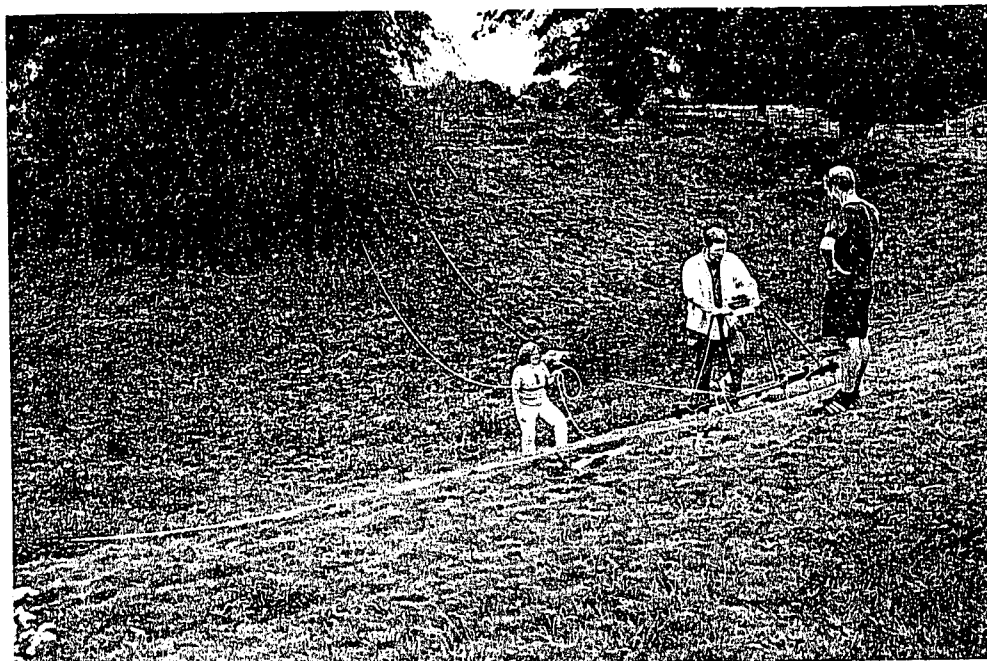


Fig 31. Wallingford earthwork survey.

The second principal area of study in 2002 comprised the Castle Meadows - the complex and extensive earthworks preserved north of the damaged and truncated motte (the areas south-west are heavily damaged through landscaping and to the south-east by the intrusion of buildings). Detailed Total Station topographic survey of the earthworks in Castle Meadows was designed to clarify the structure and configuration of the Norman and later castle, and to re-assess the traditional view of a triple rampart/wall defensive organisation with Civil War reinforcement. In brief, the complexity of landscaping can be seen to reflect an extended history of site usage running from late Saxon (burh rampart) to castle imposition and castle growth to Victorian ornamental landscaping. Re-use, manipulation and redesigning have in places confused the Medieval earthworks through imposing new foci (for example, the planting of trees and the construction of what appears to be a small folly remnant of bailey wall). One key aspect considered was potential Medieval landscaping for ornamental purposes such as explicitly displayed at sites such as Leeds Castle and Kenilworth and involving the use of water and managed access lines.

The topographical analysis was complemented by resistivity and magnetometry survey of a 200m x 20m north-south oriented transect through the inner bailey and castle defences, to test the visibility and clarity of sub-surface features and to check on the disposition of the possible triple defensive works. This work recognised the largely robbed line of the first bailey wall, and offered hints of a second wall line and of a tower; the oft-postulated outer or third defensive wall was not verified, however, in the transect. Within the inner bailey ornamental spaces were also part recognised.

2003 Season

Work planned for the 2003 season includes further

geophysical and topographical survey of the castle complex, the open space and ditch-and-rampart defences of the Kinecroft in the towns south-west zone, and the site of a possible Anarchy-period siege-work on the east bank of the Thames. More detailed investigation will be made of key zones of the Bullcroft to clarify the presumed priory zone and Saxon units. In addition, a first phase of landscape study will commence, linked to the re-analysis of Anglo-Saxon findspots (eg cemeteries at Long Wittenham and Abingdon, and including the Wallingford burials) and of placename data.

As noted, most of the larger excavations that have occurred at Wallingford remain unpublished. A key aim of the Project is to collate the primary data relating to these investigations and to publish these in the volume(s) resulting from our new studies. Combined, there is ample scope to bring to the fore Wallingford's national importance for helping to understand and visualise the evolution of early Medieval and Medieval urbanism in Britain.

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Index

NOTE: references in italics denote illustrations.

- Abingdon, Oxon
- Amey Hall Complex, Abingdon School 83
 - Barton Court ruins; C16 farmhouse monument 73
 - Civil War cemetery 73
 - Ock Street 82-3
 - Saxon cemetery 112
 - Station Yard, former Station Inn; pre-Oppidum, Roman, medieval and post-medieval occupation 59-60
 - West Central Redevelopment Area; Roman activity, medieval structures, Civil War cemetery 73
 - West St Helen Street; Roman and medieval 73
- Acutus of Montans, potter's stamp of; Chalton Manor Farm, Beds 16
- aedicules; Stowe House, Bucks 34
- air-raid shelter; New Marston, Oxon 84
- Akeman Street, and Alchester fort 104
- Alchester, Oxon
- Akeman Street 104
 - banjo enclosure 93, 104
 - geophysical survey 104
 - prehistoric structures 93, 104
 - Roman military base 92-105; annexe, (annexe headquarters, formerly identified as *fabrica*) 92, 93-4, 95, 100, 104, (gate timbers) 98, (interpretation as annexe) 103-4, (size, date and organization) 95, 103-4, (water supply and basin) 92, 94, 104; bone gaming counters 102-3, 103; 'Castle Mound' bath-house 100, 102; civilian period 95, 100-1, 102, (colonnaded street, possible) 100, 102, (roadside ditches) 92, 94, (temple) 100, 102, (town wall, ditch and rampart) 95, 98, 100-1, 102; date of abandonment 95; early Roman structures near west gate 95, 97, 98, 99; Gagle Brook 93, 104; granary 93, 104; plan 93; southern defences 104; west gate 93, 95, 96, 98
 - Roman town wall 95, 98, 100-1, 102
 - waterlogged remains 98, 102
- Alderton, Nhants; The Mount, undated stone feature 46
- Aldred, Abbot of Abingdon 107
- Anarchy period, Wallingford in 107, 112
- antler, Roman worked; pierced tine, and antler with tines removed, Wigginton, Oxon 82
- archaeomagnetic dating: Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 88; Thame Park, Oxon 78
- architectural fragments, medieval; Hanslope, Bucks 25, 26
- armour, Roman scale; Alchester, Oxon 95
- Ascott-under-Wychwood, Oxon; Shipton Road 60
- Asham DMV, Horton-cum-Studley, Oxon 70, 71, 72, 73
- Ashbury, Oxon; Ashdown House, South Lodge 57, 71, 73
- Ashton, Nhants; Grange Farm, middle Iron Age pottery 40
- Aston Clinton, Bucks; Chimneys, Aylesbury Road 27
- asylum, C19/20, Northampton 53
- Atcham, Shropshire; early Saxon estate centre 45
- Avebury, Wilts; pierced deer antler tine 82
- axes, flint and stone
- early Neolithic; Duxford Farm, Oxon 57

Index

- Neolithic flaked; Chalton Manor Farm, Beds 16
- Neolithic/Bronze Age flaked; Caddington, Beds 16
- Aylesbury, Bucks
 - Berryfields; late prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval 33
 - Walton Street; C19 surface 21
- bakehouse, C17; Ashdown House, Oxon 71, 73
- Bampton, Oxon
 - Market Square; C18 garden 60
 - St Mary's churchyard; Saxon and medieval, Minster ditch 73-4
- Banbury, Oxon
 - Cherwell Wharf, C19 74
 - Hennef Way; middle Bronze Age ditch, Old Grimsbury DMV 60
 - Manor Park; Iron Age and Saxon/medieval 60
 - Marlborough Road/Newland Road corner; medieval and later pottery 60
- barns
 - early medieval; Olney, Bucks 34
 - post-medieval: Longwick-cum-Ilmer, Bucks 28; Milton Keynes Village, Bucks 23; North Marston, Bucks 24; Steeple Aston, Oxon 63
 - undated; Brigstock, Nhants 47
- Barnwell, Nhants; St Andrews Church 47
- barrows (*see also* ring ditches)
 - East Challow, Oxon, failure to find 59
 - round: Northampton (with later satellite burial) 52; Willington Quarry, Beds 7
- Barton Seagrave Moats, Nhants; medieval moat 51
- basket weaving, C19; Cholsey, Oxon 74-5
- Bassett, Francis, of Evenley Hall (*fl.* 1735) 47
- Beckley, Oxon; Pound Cottage, High Road, medieval pits 60
- Becks Land South, Beds; Gallo-Belgic, Saxon and post-medieval 3
- Bedford
 - late Saxon and Saxo-Norman: Ray's Close 1-2, 8-9, 8; St Mary's Church 2
 - medieval: Castle Mound and lime kiln 1; Ray's Close 1-2, 8-9, 8
 - Kempston; Grey's House 1
 - Stephenson Lower School 16
- Benson, Oxon; RAF Benson 83
- Bicester, Oxon
 - MOD Bicester; medieval/post-medieval 74
 - Middleton Stoney Road and Oxford Road, Roman 74
 - Oxford Road; Iron Age, Roman and Saxon 74
- Biggleswade, Beds
 - Drill Hall Industrial Estate, Shortmead Street 10
 - Dunton Lane; hollow way 2
- bird bones; Thame Park, Oxon, and monastic diet 77-8
- Black Bourton, Oxon; west of St Mary's Church, Saxon 60-1
- Bletchley, Bucks; Buckingham Road, Salvation Army Hall 21
- blades, Mesolithic flint; Chalton Manor Farm, Beds 16
- Blunsdon, Wilts; Farmoor to Blunsdon Thames Water pipeline 57
- boar tusks, Roman; Wigginton, Oxon 82
- bone, animal
 - Bronze/Iron Age; Uffington, Oxon 78
 - Iron Age; Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 86
 - Roman: Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 86; Wigginton, Oxon 82
 - Saxon: Black Bourton, Oxon 61; Churchill, Oxon 83; Polebrook, Nhants 44
 - medieval; Oundle, Nhants 54; Thame Park, Oxon 77-8
 - post-medieval; Faringdon, Oxon 75
- bone objects *see* gaming counters; pin beaters; plaques
- Bosley, W J and Son, of Hill Farm, Little Wittenham 79
- boundaries and boundary features (*see also* enclosures; field systems; *and under* ditches)
 - late Iron Age field; Westcroft, Bucks 35, 36
 - late Saxon property; Raunds, Nhants 55
 - Saxon/early medieval field; Banbury, Oxon 60
 - medieval property: Higham Ferrers, Nhants 50-1; Olney, Bucks 30-1; Raunds, Nhants 55; Witney, Oxon 64
 - post-medieval field: Didcot West, Oxon 57; Witney, Oxon 64
 - parish; Hughenden Park, Bucks 32
- Brackley, Nhants
 - Evenley Hall, C18/20 house 47
 - St Peter's Church 56
- Breauté Fulk de; castle at Luton, Beds 17
- brewing
 - Roman; Alchester, Oxon 102
 - C17; Ashdown House, Oxon 71, 73
- brickwork, surface treatment of
 - Roman, plastering and picking out with red paint; Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 89, 90, 90
 - C18-19 ruddling and pencilling; Hughenden Manor, Bucks 32
- Brigstock, Nhants
 - Brigstock Manor 48
 - Hall Hill, C18 barn 47
- briquetage, Iron Age; Uffington, Oxon 78
- bronze objects, deliberately deposited Roman; Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 89, 90, 91
- brooches, Roman
 - copper alloy: Milton Keynes, Bucks (early) 30; Shefford, Beds 5
 - dolphin; Horton-cum-Studley, Oxon 71
 - unspecified; Higham Ferrers, Nhants 56
- Broughton, Nhants; St Andrew's church, C19 burials 48
- Broughton Barn Quarry, Bucks; Roman settlement 30
- Brown, Lancelot 'Capability' 3-4, 7-8, 77
- Buckingham
 - castle mound 33, 34-5
 - Grand Junction Hotel, medieval features 30
 - High Street, Stratford House, medieval and post-medieval pits 33
 - Lenborough Road, The Maltings, C19 and earlier 21
 - St Peter and St Pauls Church, Church Hill 33, 34-5
 - St Rumbolds Well, post-medieval conduit house 28-9
- buildings, stone
 - Roman; Ramsden, Oxon 63; Shefford, Beds (aisled) 5, 6
 - medieval: Hanslope, Bucks 25-6, 26; Higham Ferrers, Nhants 50-1
 - post-medieval: Northampton 46; Oxford 76; Ramsden, Oxon 63

- Burcot, near Abingdon, Oxon; Abingdon Road 83
 Burford, Oxon; Church Cottage, Lawrence Lane 74
 burial vault, undated; Renhold, Beds 4
 burials (*see also* barrows; cemeteries; cremations; inhumations)
 late Bronze/early Iron Age; Didcot West, Oxon 57
 Roman; informal pattern at edges of settlements 58
 bustum (pyre site), Roman; Didcot West, Oxon 57
- Caddington, Beds
 Chaul End Farm 16
 Chaul End Road; Neolithic-Bronze Age flints, Roman, medieval and post-medieval pottery 16
 Caldecotte, Bucks; Caldecotte Lane, post-medieval 22
 Calvert-Steeple Claydon sewer pipe, Bucks 22
 Cambridge; Castle 107
 Cardington, Beds; round barrows, unenclosed burials, Roman enclosures 6-7
 Carterton, Oxon, *see* Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline
 castles (*see also* mottes)
 post-conquest building 107
 siege or counter-, Anarchy period 107, 112
 see also Buckingham; Fotheringhay, Nhants; Luton, Beds; Oxford; Wallingford, Oxon
 cattle horn cores; C19, Olney, Bucks 21
 Caversham, Oxon; Caversham Lakes, Henley Road 83
 celery seeds, Roman; Alchester, Oxon 98
 cellars
 Roman; Ramsden, Oxon 63
 medieval; Oxford 76-7
 post-medieval; Ramsden, Oxon 63
 cemeteries (*see also* barrows; churchyards; cremations; inhumations)
 Bronze Age; Oxford 83
 Roman; Noah's Ark, Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 88
 Saxon; Abingdon, Oxon 112; Long Wittenham, Oxon 112
 Civil War; Abingdon, Oxon 73
 cereal grain, Bronze/Iron Age; Uffington, Oxon 78
 cesspits
 medieval: Hanslope, Bucks 26; Olney, Bucks 34; Oundle, Nhants 39
 C17; Oxford 76
 Chalfont St Peter, Bucks
 Brailings Lane 27
 Lower Road 27
 Chalton Manor Farm, Beds; Mesolithic, Neolithic and Roman 16
 Charlbury, Oxon; Cornbury Estate Park 74
 charter, Anglo-Saxon; East Challow, Oxon 59
 Chearsley, Bucks; St Nicholas Church 35
 Cherry, George Henry, of Little Wittenham 78-9
 chest, Roman clay; Ramsden, Oxon 63
 Chesterton, Oxon; F-Station 61
 Chichester, W Sussex; Roman gaming counters 103
 Chilton, Oxon; Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Bronze Age and Roman 61
 Chipping Norton, Oxon
 St Marys Church, C19 renovations 74
 White Hart Hotel, High Street, medieval 61
 Cholesbury, Bucks; Old Vicarage, ditch of Cholesbury Camp hillfort 22
 Cholsey, Oxon; Amwell Place, C19 reed beds 74-5
 churches
 Saxon; St Mary's, Bedford 2
 medieval: Clay Coton, Nhants 49; Elsfield, Oxon 75; Eynsham, Oxon 75; Haddenham, Bucks 29; Renhold, Beds 4; Soulbury, Bucks 34
 post-medieval work: Chipping Norton, Oxon 74; Soulbury, Bucks 34
 undated: Barnwell, Nhants 47; Broughton, Nhants 48; Buckingham 33; Chearsley, Bucks 35; Middleton Cheney, Bucks 52
 Churchill, Oxon; Churchill Farm, Kingham Road, Roman and Saxon 83
 churchyards
 Saxon and later; Bampton, Oxon 73-4
 C18/19 burials, Northampton 45-6
 Cirencester, Glos; Roman pierced antler tine 82
 Civil War period *see under* Abingdon, Oxon; Wallingford, Oxon
 Clay Coton, Nhants; St Andrew's church 49
 Cliveden, Bucks; South Terrace 31-2, 34
 cobbled surface, Roman; Bicester, Oxon 74
 coin hoard, Roman; Wootton Fields, Northampton 53
 coins
 Roman: Dunstable, Beds (Constantine, bronze) 14; Higham Ferrers, Nhants 56; Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 88, (C4 copper) 86; Northampton (hoard) 53, (late) 53; Shefford, Beds 5; Swalcliffe Lea, Oxon 64, 66, 67, (Constans) 64, (Faustina) 68, 70, (Valens) 64; Tattenhoe, Bucks 23; Wigginton, Oxon (Constantius II) 82
 late medieval/post-medieval; Horton-cum-Studley, Oxon 71
 of 1826; Northampton 46
 Coleshill, Bucks; Potters Meadow 27
 conduit house, C17; Buckingham, St Rumbolds Well 28-9
 Cople, Beds; Iron Age/Roman enclosures and well 7
 Corbridge, Northumbria; Roman granary 95
 cores, Mesolithic flint; Chalton Manor Farm, Beds 16
 corn drier, Roman; Stanion, Nhants 55
 Cornbury Estate Park, Charlbury, Oxon 74
 Cornwall, earls of, and Wallingford 107
 cottages
 medieval; Horley, Oxon 61
 C19/20; Woodnewton, Nhants 56
 country houses *see* Cliveden, Bucks; Evenley Hall, Brackley, Nhants; Stowe, Bucks
 Cozens, Henry Wilmot, of Little Wittenham 79
 Craven, William, Earl of Craven 71
 cremations
 middle Bronze Age; Northampton 52
 Gallo-Belgic; Ivel Farm/Becks Land South, Beds 3
 Roman: Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline, Oxon (in sub-rectangular pits) 58; Milton Keynes, Bucks (early, urned) 30
 early Saxon; Wallingford, Oxon 106
 Croughton, Nhants; Rowler Manor Estate 49
 Crowmarsh, Oxon; Howbery Park, Benson Lane, Neolithic/early Bronze Age, Roman and post-medieval 83
 Cuddesdon, Oxon; Cuddesdon House, garden 75

Index

- culverts, post-medieval: Oxford 63, 77; Stowe, Bucks 32, 34
- curses, Roman lead; Higham Ferrers, Nhants 56
- Cuttle Brook, Stowe Park, Bucks 56-7
- Dallington, Nhants; undated pit 52
- dams, C18; Stowe Park, Bucks 32, 56-7
- Daventry, Nhants; Middlemore Farm, Roman features 49
- defences (*see also* castles; mottes; *and under* Alchester; ditches; Towcester; Wallingford)
- Oxford 63, 77
- dendrochronology
- Roman: Alchester, Oxon 98; Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 88
- C17/18; South Lodge, Ashdown House, Oxon 71
- C18/19; Stowe, Bucks 32
- Denham, Bucks; Sanderson site, Oxford Road, environment since Ice Age 29
- Didcot, Oxon; Didcot West (SU 5085 9015), Neolithic to Roman, medieval and post-medieval 57
- digitally captured survey; Fotheringhay Castle, Nhants 37, 38
- ditches
- prehistoric; Oxford 62, 76
- Neolithic, late; Crowmarsh, Oxon 83
- Bronze Age: Banbury, Oxon (middle) 60; Crowmarsh, Oxon (early) 83
- Iron Age: Didcot West, Oxon 57; Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline, Oxon 58; Ramsden, Oxon 63
- late Iron Age: Abingdon, Oxon (oppidum) 59; Kempston, Beds 10; Willington Quarry, Beds (boundary) 7
- Roman: Bicester, Oxon 74; Crowmarsh, Oxon 83; Didcot West, Oxon 57; Dorchester-on-Thames (defensive) 61; Gosford and Water Eaton, Oxon 61; High Wycombe, Bucks 35; Higham Ferrers, Nhants (boundary) 51; Horton-cum-Studley, Oxon 70, 71, 72; Northampton 53; Oxford 76; Oxley Park, Bucks (possible viticulture) 35; Pitstone, Bucks (field boundary) 21; Sutton Courtenay, Oxon 77; Tattenhoe, Bucks 23, 23; Towcester, Nhants (defensive) 56; Willington Quarry, Beds (boundary) 7
- Saxon: Bampton, Oxon (Minster) 74; Higham Ferrers, Nhants 51; Polebrook, Nhants 43, 45, 46
- late Saxon/early medieval, Saxo-Norman: Banbury, Oxon 60; Bedford 1-2; Kempston, Beds 10; Long Buckby, Nhants 51; Long Wittenham, Oxon 62; Oundle, Nhants (boundary) 39; Upper Boddington, Nhants 37
- medieval: Bedford 1-2, (enclosure) 8; Buckingham 30; Harrold, Beds 16; Luton Hoo Park, Beds 3; Olney, Bucks 30-1; Oundle, Nhants 39, 54, (boundary) 39; Oxford 63, 76-7, 76; Singleborough, Bucks 31; Upper Boddington, Nhants (early) 37; Witney, Oxon (tenement boundary) 58; Wolverton Mill, Bucks (early) 34
- post-medieval: Elstow, Beds 16; Ivel Farm/Becks Land South, Beds (boundary) 3; Oving, Bucks 28; Oxford 76; Wendover, Bucks (boundary) 34
- C19/20; Oxford (boundary) 75
- undated: Dunstable, Beds 14; Hughenden Park, Bucks (parish boundary) 32
- Domesday Book, on Wallingford, Oxon 107
- Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxon
- High Street, The Priory; Roman defensive ditch 61
- Roman base 95
- drains, post-medieval
- land: Souldrop, Beds 9; Stoke Hammond Bypass, Bucks 25
- limestone; Higham Ferrers, Nhants 51
- Drayton, Oxon
- early Saxon estate centre 45
- East Paddock, Drayton Mill 83
- droveways, Iron Age; Stoke Hammond Bypass, Bucks 24-5, 25
- Dunstable, Beds
- Iron Age: Grove House Gardens 11-13, 11, 12
- Roman: Aldbanks 13-14, 13; extent of occupation 15; Friary Field 10; Grove House gardens 13; High Street South, 'Moore's' 14-15, 14; Victoria allotments 13
- medieval: Aldbanks 13-14, 13; Friary Field 10; High Street South, 'Moore's' 14-15, 14; High Street South, White Swan public house 15
- post-medieval: High Street South, 'Moore's' 14-15, 14; Montpelier House 9; Winfield Street 14
- other sites and watching briefs: Edward Street 14; garden, parkland and allotment surveys 13; Marina Drive 15-16, 15
- Duxford Farm, Oxon; Neolithic to Roman features, ridge and furrow 57
- earthworks
- medieval: Fotheringhay, Nhants (building) 37, 38; Upper Boddington, Nhants 37
- post-medieval; Aylesbury, Bucks 33
- East Challow, Oxon; Challow Hill Farm, later prehistoric/Roman settlement 59
- failure to find barrow mentioned in Anglo-Saxon charter 59
- East Farndon, Nhants; Main Street, C19 pond 37
- East Hendred, Oxon; Cat Street, C18-19 pit 61
- Edmund, Earl of Cornwall 107
- Edward the Confessor, and Wallingford 107
- Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia (the Winter Queen) 71
- Elsfield, Oxon; St Thomas Church, medieval burials 75
- Elstow, Beds; Elstow Lower School, prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval 16
- enclosures (*see also under* ditches)
- Iron Age: Banbury, Oxon 60; Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline, Oxon 58; Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 84; Pitsford Quarry, Nhants 54, 54; Stoke Hammond Bypass, Bucks 24-5, 25; Westcroft, Bucks 35, 36
- Iron Age/Roman: Duxford Farm, Oxon 57; East Challow, Oxon 59; Salford, Beds 5; Shefford, Beds 5; Willington Quarry, Beds 6-7
- Roman: Broughton Barn Quarry, Bucks (settlement) 30; Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline, Oxon 58; Hanslope, Bucks (medieval re-cut) 25-6, 26; Meppershall, Beds (ditched) 9, 9; Milton Keynes, Bucks 29-30; Northampton 53, ('ladder') 52; Wigginton, Oxon 82

- Saxon; Meppershall, Beds (ditched) 9, 9
 early medieval; Upper Boddington, Nhants 37
 environment since Ice Age; Denham, Bucks 29
 Eynsham, Oxon; St Leonards Church, medieval pits 75
- Faringdon, Oxon
 Kingston Hill 57
 Little Coxwell, St Mary's church 75
 Swan Lane; C12 and C16 pits 75
 Farmoor, Oxon to Blunsdon, Wilts Thames Water pipeline 57
 farms and farmsteads
 Iron Age: Stotfold, Beds (early/mid) 17; Westcroft, Bucks (late, unenclosed) 35, 36
 Iron Age/Roman; Willington Quarry, Beds 7
 Roman: Bicester, Oxon 74; Chilton, Oxon 61
 early Roman to Saxon; Meppershall, Beds 9, 9
 C17th and later; Steeple Aston, Oxon 63
 Felmersham, Beds; Roman wine strainer 98
 fence alignments
 Saxon; Polebrook, Nhants 43, 43, 44
 post-medieval; Ivel Farm/Becks Land South, Beds 3
 field systems
 Iron Age; Stotfold, Beds 17
 Saxon; Polebrook, Nhants 45
 undated; Willington Quarry, Beds 7
 Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline, Oxon; SP 2370 0345, Iron Age and Roman 57-8
 Finedon, Nhants; Elm Grange, building recording 49
 Finmere, Oxon; Foxley Fields Farm 83
 fish bones, medieval; Thame Park, Oxon 77-8
 fishpond, late medieval; Bedford 1
 flake, flint, Neolithic/early Bronze Age; Long Wittenham, Oxon 62
 flint, burnt; Roman, Dunstable, Beds 13
 flint implements
 Mesolithic/Neolithic: Chalton Manor Farm, Beds 16; Oxford 62; Uffington, Oxon 78
 Neolithic/Bronze Age: Caddington, Beds 16; Oxford 62; Whiteleaf Hill, Bucks 34
 undated: Dunstable, Beds 14; Luton, Beds 17; Northampton 52
 folly remnant of bailey wall, Wallingford, Oxon 111, 112
 Fotheringhay, Nhants
 Castle 37, 38
 Castle Farm; undated features 49
 Church Barn; undated ditches 37-8
 Little Park area 37, 38
 Frilford, Oxon; St Josca's Preparatory School 83
 Fulk de Breauté; castle at Luton, Beds 17
 furnace, undated, Northampton 52
 furrows, plough (*see also* ridge and furrow)
 Roman; Ramsden, Oxon 63
 medieval: Luton Hoo Park, Beds 3; Oxford 62; Pitstone, Bucks 21; Shenley Church End, Bucks 23; Tattenhoe, Bucks 23, 23; Willington Quarry, Beds 7
 post-medieval; Shenley Church End, Bucks 23
- gaming counters, Roman bone; Alchester, Oxon 102-3, 103
 gardens and garden features
 late medieval; Dunstable, Beds 10
 C18: Bampton, Oxon (semi-formal) 60; Luton Hoo Park, Beds 3-4; Stowe, Bucks 31, 32-3, 56-7; Wrest Park, Beds 7-8
 C19: Cholsey, Oxon 74-5; Great Kimble, Bucks 33 undated; Cuddesdon, Oxon 75
 garderobes, medieval: Abingdon, Oxon 73; Oxford 76
 Geddington, Nhants; Grafton Road 50
 geophysical survey: Alchester, Oxon 104; Polebrook, Nhants 41, 43, 44; Wallingford, Oxon 109
 geotechnical pits, Oxford 76
 glass, Roman
 vessel: Marcham/Frilford, Oxon (deliberate deposits) 89, 90, 91; Shefford, Beds 5
 window; Shefford, Beds 5
 Goldington, Beds; Willington Quarry North, late Iron Age/Roman enclosures 6
 Gosford and Water Eaton, Oxon; North Oxford Park and Ride Car Park, Roman ditch 61
 Gloucester; east gate 98
 Great Kimble, Bucks; Glebe Paddock, C19 garden features 33
 Greys Court, Oxon; investigation of buildings 73
 Griffiths, Mr (County Surveyor of Staffordshire, *fl.* 1876) 53
 Grimberie, settlement of 60
 ground penetrating radar; Wallingford, Oxon 109
 Grove House Gardens, Dunstable, Beds; Iron Age roundhouse 11-13, 11, 12
 gullies
 Roman: Daventry, Nhants 49; Luton, Beds 17; Northampton 53; Towcester, Nhants 56
 late Saxon/early medieval: Long Buckby, Nhants 51; Oundle, Nhants 39
 medieval: Harrold, Beds 16; Olney, Bucks 30-1; Oundle, Nhants 54
- Haddenham, Bucks; St Mary's Church, burials and medieval building 29
 halls, Saxon: Polebrook, Nhants (with annexe) 41, 42-3, 44-5, 44-6, 48, 50-1; Sutton Courtenay, Oxon 77
 Hallett, William (*later* Sir William Holland, Bt), of Little Wittenham 78
 hammerscale, Roman/Saxon ironworking; Meppershall, Beds 9
 Hanslope, Bucks
 Chantry Farm 26-7
 Gordon Lodge Farm; medieval building in recut Roman enclosure 25-6, 26
 Grange Farm 22
 The Green 22
 Hanslope Lodge 26-7
 Harrington, Nhants; High Street 50
 Harrold, Beds
 Harrold Priory Middle School, medieval features and pottery wasters 16
 St Peter's Church, post-medieval 2
 Hatton Rock, Warwicks; early Saxon estate centre 45
 Haversham, Bucks; Hill Farm, furrows and Roman sherd 22
 hayloft, C19; Little Wittenham, Oxon 81
 headland, medieval; Stoke Hammond Bypass, Bucks 25
 hearths

- Iron Age/Roman; Shefford, Beds 5
 Roman: Oundle, Nhants 54; Swalcliffe Lea, Oxon 65, 66, 70
 Heath and Reach, Beds; Leighton Road 10
 Hedgerley, Bucks; Woodlands Rise, Hedgerley Lane 29
 Heidenheim Roman military base, Germany 95
 Henlow, Beds; Arlesey Meadows, late Roman or earlier 2
 Henry II, king of England, and Wallingford 107
 High Wycombe, Bucks
 M40/A404 junction 33-4
 Rye Environment Centre; Rye Roman villa 33
 Wycombe Marsh; Roman and post-medieval 35
 Higham Ferrers, Nhants
 Castle Fields 50
 College Street, medieval and C18 50-1
 Kings Meadow Lane, Roman roadside settlement 56
 Wharf Road; Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and post-medieval 51
 hillfort *see* Cholesbury, Bucks
 hoards, Roman: Milton Keynes, Bucks 30; Wootton Fields, Northampton 53
 Hod Hill, Dorset; Roman gaming counters 103
 hollow ways: Biggleswade, Beds 2; Hanslope, Bucks 26-7; Pitstone, Bucks 21; Upper Boddington, Nhants 37
 Horley, Oxon; Bramshill Manor, Wroxton Lane, medieval cottages 61
 horse teeth, Bronze/Iron Age; Uffington, Oxon 78
 Horton shrunken medieval village, Oxon 71
 Horton-cum-Studley, Oxon
 Hall Close; Roman ditch, and Asham DMV 70, 71, 72, 73
 hospitals, C19/20
 asylum; Northampton 53
 isolation: Northampton 53; Oxford 59
 houses (*see also* cottages; country houses; roundhouses)
 Roman circular stone-footed; Higham Ferrers, Nhants 56
 C18; Kingsthorpe Hall, Northampton 52
 C18/19; Wicken, Nhants 39, 40
 C19 brick 'one up, one down'; Wavendon, Bucks 24
 C19/20; Woodnewton, Nhants 56
 Hughenden Manor, Bucks 32
 hypocausts: Ramsden, Oxon 63; Shefford, Beds 5
 industry (*see also individual types*)
 late Iron Age/early Roman; Didcot West, Oxon 57
 Saxon; Polebrook, Nhants 43, 44
 inhumations
 prehistoric; Abingdon, Oxon 59
 Beaker, unenclosed; Willington Quarry, Beds 7
 Roman: Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline, Oxon 58
 Higham Ferrers, Nhants 56
 Saxon: Northampton 53; Wallingford, Oxon 106
 C15-16; Oxford 77
 iron objects, Roman, deliberate deposit;
 Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 89, 90, 91
 iron working, Roman; Northampton 53 MORE?# OR S/A SLAG?#
 Ivel Farm/Becks Land South, Beds; Gallo-Belgic cremation, Saxon and post-medieval 3
 Ivel Valley, Beds; peat deposits 2
 Iver, Bucks; Robinwood, Delaford Close 35
 Kempston, Beds
 Grey's House 1
 Kempston Mill, Mill Lane; Iron Age, Saxo-Norman and medieval 10
 Kenilworth Castle, Warwicks 112
 Kensworth, Beds; Bury Farm 9
 Kettering, Nhants; Barton Seagrave Moats, medieval 51
 Kiln Farm, Milton Keynes, Bucks; Roman site 27
 kiln furniture, medieval; Stanion, Nhants 55
 kilns
 Roman: Northampton 53; Stowe, Bucks 31, 32-3
 medieval: Bedford (lime) 1; Buckingham 30
 C18: Northampton 46; Towcester, Nhants 56
 Kingston Hill, Oxon 57
 Kingston Lisle, Oxon; Sewage Treatment Works transfer from Kingston Lisle to Childrey 61
 kitchens
 medieval monastic; Thame Park, Oxon 77-8
 C16/17; St John's College, Oxford 76
 C17; Ashdown House, Oxon 71, 73
 Lamb, E B (architect, *fl.* 1862) 32
 lamp, Roman; Horton-cum-Studley, Oxon 71
 landscape study; Wallingford, Oxon 112
 lead smelting, Saxon/early medieval; Stoke Lyne, Oxon 63
 Leafield, Oxon; Brize Lodge, Iron Age, Roman and post-medieval 63
 Lechlade, Oxon; Five Aills, Filkins, post-medieval 75
 Leeds Castle, Kent 112
 Ley Hill, Bucks; The Common 27
 Lillingstone Lovell, Bucks; Glebe House 22
 lime washing of brickwork 32
 Lincoln 98, 107
 Little Coxwell, Oxon; St Mary's church 75
 Little Wittenham, Oxon; Hill Farm, C19/20 78-82
 Littlemore, Oxon; Speedwell First School, Sandford Road, Roman and medieval 61-2
 lock, Roman spring; Dunstable, Beds 14
 lodges: Ashdown House, Oxon, South Lodge 57, 71, 73; Ramsden, Oxon, hunting 63
 London; Roman bone gaming counters 102-3
 Long Buckby, Nhants; Long Buckby Castle, Grasscroft, late Saxon/early medieval 51
 Long Crendon, Bucks; Notley Farm 34
 Long Itchington, Warwicks; early Saxon estate centre 45
 Long Wittenham, Oxon
 Elm Close House, High Street 83
 Lammas Eyot, High Street; Neolithic/early Bronze Age and Saxo-Norman 62
 Saxon cemetery 112
 Longwick-cum-Ilmer, Bucks; C18 mill 28
 loom, possible Saxon; Churchill, Oxon 83
 loom weights
 late Neolithic/early Bronze Age cylindrical; Duxford Farm, Oxon 57
 Saxon; Pitstone, Bucks 21
 Loughton, Bucks; Weldon Rise 22
 Luton, Beds
 Castle Street, former bus depot; Bronze Age, Roman and medieval 17-19, 18, 19, 20

- Croda Site, New Bedford Road 10-11
 Kimpton Road, former Vauxhall Motors site 11
 motte and bailey castle of Robert de Waudari 17-19, 18, 19, 20
 Luton Hoo Park, Beds; Palaeolithic, medieval and C18 3-4
- M1, Junction 15A; Roman and Saxon 52
 M40/A404 junction, High Wycombe, Bucks 33-4
 magnetic susceptibility mapping; Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 88
 magnetometer surveys: Sibbertoft, Nhants 55; Wallingford, Oxon 112
 Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 84-91, 85, 87, 89-91
 Iron Age activity 84-6, 88
 Noah's Ark area 84, 88
 Roman religious centre 86-91; large late Roman public building 86, 87, 88; midden deposit 86; public buildings, Trench 18 86, 88; round structure, possible amphitheatre or pool 86, 88-91, 90-1; temenos wall of temple precinct 86, 88, 89
 Marston Moretaine, Beds; churchyard of St Mary the Virgin 4
 Marston Vale Cycle Path, Beds 4
 Matilda, Empress, and Wallingford 107
 Medbourne, Bucks 22
 medicine *see* hospitals
 Meppershall, Beds; High Street, early Roman to Saxon farmstead 9, 9
 metal artefacts, Roman deliberate deposit; Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 88
 metal detector surveys: Polebrook, Nhants 42; Snelshall East, Bucks 35; Tattenhoe, Bucks 23
 midden deposit, Roman; Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 86
 Middleton Cheney, Nhants; All Saints Church 52
 Miles Crispin, lord of Wallingford 107
 military equipment, Roman: Alchester, Oxon 98; Higham Ferrers, Nhants 56
 mill, C18 paper, later corn mill; Longwick-cum-Ilmer, Bucks 28
 Milton Keynes area, Bucks
 Burners Lane 27
 Kiln Farm 27
 Knowlhill 35
 Medbourne 22
 Milton Keynes Roman hoard 30
 Monkston Park; Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman, medieval and post-medieval 29-30
 Oakhill Secure Training Centre, Chalgrove Field, Oakhill 30
 Oxley Park, Roman or Saxon 35
 Snelshall East 35
 Westcroft, late Iron Age farm 35, 36
see also Caldecotte; Loughton; Milton Keynes Village; Newton Blossomville; Olney; Shenley Church End; Tattenhoe; Weston Underwood; Wolverton Mill
 Milton Keynes Village, Bucks; Manor Farm Barns, The Manor Barn, C18/19 23
 mint, medieval; Wallingford, Oxon 107
 moat, medieval; Kettering, Nhants 51
 monastic buildings, medieval; Thame Park, Oxon 77-8
- Monks Risborough, Bucks; St Dunstan's Church 36
 Monkston Park *see under* Milton Keynes area, Bucks
 mottes: Luton, Beds 17-19, 18, 19, 20; Oxford Castle 77
- nails, Roman iron: Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline, Oxon (coffin) 58; Marcham/Frilford, Oxon (hobnails) 86; Tattenhoe, Bucks 23
 Nene, River, in Northampton 52
 New Marston, Oxon; Milham Ford Upper School, Marston Road, air-raid shelter 84
 Newport Pagnell, Bucks; High Street, medieval and post-medieval 24
 Newton Blossomville, Milton Keynes, Bucks; Talbot Cottage, Clifton Road 30
 Noah's Ark area, Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 84, 88
 Nobold DMV, Sibbertoft, Nhants 55
 North Leigh, Oxon; Thames Water pipeline 58-9
 North Marston, Bucks; Manor Farm, High Street, post-medieval barn 24
- Northampton
 Bronze Age; Brackmills Road 52
 Iron Age; Pineham West 52
 Roman and Saxon: Milton Ham 52; Pineham West 52; Wootton Fields 53
 medieval: C11 French borough 109; Pineham West 52
 post-medieval: St Andrew's Street/Regent Street 53; St Giles Street 53
 C18; Kingsthorpe Hall 52
 C18/19: Sol Central Car Park, Doddridge Street 45-6; St Mary-by-the-Castle 45-6
 C19-20; St Crispin's Hospital, formerly Berrywood Asylum 53
 other sites and watching briefs: Broad Street/St Andrew Street 40; Dallington 52; Harlestone Quarry 52; Upton Way 53
 Norwich; French borough, C11 109
 Nottingham; French borough, C11 109
- Oberstimm, Raetia; Roman fort 103
 Old Grimsbury DMV, Banbury, Oxon 60
 Olney, Bucks
 Cowper Tannery, medieval features 30-1
 Lime Street; Bridge House and Tunns Cottage 21
 SP 8900 5155; early medieval 34
 oppidum; Abingdon, Oxon 59
 opus signinum; Shefford, Beds 5
 organic material (*see also* timber, waterlogged; waterlogged remains)
 Bronze/Iron Age; Uffington, Oxon 78
 Roman, Alchester, Oxon 98, 102
 oriel foundations, medieval; Oxford 76
 Oundle, Nhants
 Blackpot Lane-North Street; C18-19 buildings 38
 Laundimer House, North Street; medieval features 39
 Parson Lathams Hospital; Roman, Saxo-Norman and late medieval 53-4
 St Osyths Lane, the Co-op; Saxo-Norman and medieval features 39
- ovens
 early Roman, T-shaped; Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline, Oxon 58

- medieval: Buckingham 30; Hanslope, Bucks (keyhole) 26; Thame Park, Oxon (tile-built) 78
 Oving, Bucks; Four Acres, Iron Age and post-medieval 28
 ox burial, Roman; Milton Keynes, Bucks 30
 Oxford
 prehistoric; Jowett Walk 75-6
 Mesolithic, Neolithic; Headington, Manor Ground, London Road 62
 Bronze Age: Headington, Manor Ground, London Road 62; Osney Mead, Newsquest building 83-4
 mid/late Iron Age and Roman; Headington, Manor Ground, London Road 62
 Roman; Horspath, Oxford Road 76
 Saxon; Castle 77
 medieval: Barton Village School, Fettiplace Road 62; Castle 77; Christ Church Cathedral, St Frideswide's Shrine 75; city ditch 63; Davenant Road 75; Merton College Stables (C12) 76-7; Old Marston, White Hart Public House 76; St John's College 76; Shire Hall 77
 post-medieval: Beaumont Street, Randolph Hotel 76; Castle 77; city ditch 63; Crowel (watercourse) 63; Jowett Walk 75-6; Longwall Street 63; Merton College Stables 76-7; Old Marston, White Hart Public House 76; Paradise Street 77; St John's College 76
 C19: Abingdon Road, Rivermead Rehabilitation Centre 59; Canterbury Road 62; Isolation Hospital site 59; Prison 77
 C19/20; Marston Ferry Road, Oxford City Bowls Club 75
 other sites and watching briefs: Churchill Hospital 58; Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre, Windmill Road, Headington 83; St Giles Street 76; Temple Cowley, Our Ladys School 75
 Oxley Park, Milton Keynes, Bucks; Roman or Saxon 35

 Palaeolithic deposits; Luton Hoo Park, Beds 3
 paper mill; Longwick-cum-Ilmer, Bucks 28
 parish boundary; Hughenden Park, Bucks 32
 park (*see also* gardens and garden features)
 Luton Hoo Park, Beds, C18 3-4
 pavement, Roman tessellated; Stanion, Nhants 55
 peat deposits: Denham, Bucks 29; Ivel Valley, Beds 2
 Peddie, John 95
 Penn, Bucks
 Cotters Barn, Elm Road 36
 Red Lion Cottages, Tylers Green 29
 phosphate survey; Polebrook, Nhants 42
 piercers, flint; Neolithic/Bronze Age, Caddington, Beds 16
 pin, Roman copper alloy; Dunstable, Beds 14
 pin beaters, Saxon bone: Churchill, Oxon 83; Pitstone, Bucks 21
 pit alignments
 early/middle Iron Age; Stoke Hammond Bypass, Bucks 25, 25
 prehistoric; Pitsford Quarry, Nhants 54, 54
 pits
 prehistoric: Abingdon, Oxon 59; Oxford 62
 Neolithic: Didcot West, Oxon 57; Duxford Farm, Oxon 57; Sutton Courtenay, Oxon 77
 Bronze Age: Didcot West, Oxon 57; Duxford Farm, Oxon 57
 Iron Age: Didcot West, Oxon 57; Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline, Oxon 58; Higham Ferrers, Nhants 51; Ivel Farm/Becks Land South, Beds 3; Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 84-6; Pitstone, Bucks 21; Shefford, Beds 5; Westcroft, Bucks 35, 36
 Roman: Crowmarsh, Oxon 83; Daventry, Nhants 49; Didcot West, Oxon 57; Dunstable, Beds 10; Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline, Oxon (holding cremations) 58; Meppershall, Beds 9, 9; Northampton 53; Oundle, Nhants 54; Shefford, Beds 5; Tattenhoe, Bucks 23, 23; Towcester, Nhants 56; Wigginton, Oxon 82
 Saxon: Meppershall, Beds 9, 9; Oxford 77; Polebrook, Nhants 44
 Saxo-Norman: Elstow, Beds 16; Kempston, Beds 10; Long Buckby, Nhants 51; Oundle, Nhants 39
 medieval: Abingdon, Oxon 59-60; Beckley, Oxon 60; Bedford 8; Buckingham 30, 33; Dunstable, Beds (cross-shaped) 10; Eynsham, Oxon 75; Faringdon, Oxon 75; Kempston, Beds 10; Long Buckby, Nhants 51; Newport Pagnell, Bucks 24; Olney, Bucks 30-1, 34; Oundle, Nhants 39, 54; Oxford 76-7, 77; Raunds, Nhants 54; Singleborough, Bucks 31; Towcester, Nhants 57; Upper Boddington, Nhants 37; Wendover, Bucks 34; Wolverton Mill, MK, Bucks 34
 post-medieval: Abingdon, Oxon 59-60; Buckingham 33; Crowmarsh, Oxon 83; Dunstable, Beds 14; East Hendred, Oxon 61; Faringdon, Oxon 75; Lechlade, Oxon 75; Newport Pagnell, Bucks 24; Oxford 62, 75; Wendover, Bucks 34; Wing, Bucks 24
 undated: Bicester, Oxon 74; Oxford 75; Towcester, Nhants (oval) 56
 Pitsford Quarry, Nhants; Bottom Sheep Dale Field, Iron Age settlement 54, 54
 Pitstone, Bucks; former Castle Cement Works, Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and medieval 21
 placename data; Wallingford, Oxon 112
 plaques, Roman/Saxon bone; Meppershall, Beds 9
 plaster, Roman painted wall-: Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 88, (false masonry effect) 89, 90; Shefford, Beds 5, 6
 Plautius, Aulus, Roman governor of Britain 95
 plough coulter, Roman; East Challow, Oxon 59
 plough scars, post-medieval; Witney, Oxon 64
 ploughsoils
 medieval; Oxford 62
 medieval/post-medieval; Bicester, Oxon 74
 Polebrook, Nhants; Saxon estate centre with hall, migration period 41-5, 41-51
 early post-built structure 42, 46, 47
 hall with annexe 41, 42-3, 44-5, 44-6, 48, 50-1
 industrial activity 43, 44
 ridge and furrow 43
 ponds
 Roman, Northampton 53
 C18; Stowe Park, Bucks 56-7
 C19; East Farndon, Nhants 37
 undated; Sibbertoft, Nhants 55
 post built structures

- late Iron Age; Dunstable, Beds 11-13, 12
 Roman; Bicester, Oxon 74
 early Saxon; Polebrook, Nhants 42, 46, 47
- postholes
 prehistoric; Oxford 62
 Iron Age: Ivel Farm/Becks Land South, Beds 3; Shefford, Beds 5
 Roman: Bicester, Oxon 74; Crowmarsh, Oxon 83; Tattenhoe, Bucks 23, 23
 Saxo-Norman; Oundle, Nhants 39
 medieval and post-medieval; Newport Pagnell, Bucks 24
 undated: Dunstable, Beds 14; Henlow, Beds 2
- potter's stamp, of Acutus of Montans; Chalton Manor Farm, Beds 16
- pottery
 prehistoric: East Challow, Oxon 59; Northampton 52
 Neolithic, early-middle; Duxford Farm, Oxon 57
 Beaker period; Willington Quarry, Beds 7
 Bronze Age
 urns; Oxford 83; collared; Oxford 83
 other and unspecified: Luton, Beds 17; Milton Keynes, Bucks 30; Oxford 62
 Iron Age
 All Cannings Cross; Uffington, Oxon 78
 Hunsbury-type globular bowl; Pitsford Quarry, Nhants 54
 scored wares: Ashton, Nhants 40; Pitsford Quarry, Nhants 54
 early; Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 86
 middle: Ashton, Nhants 40; Bicester, Oxon 74; Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline, Oxon 58;
 Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 86; Oxford 62; Pitsford Quarry, Nhants 54
 late: Dunstable, Beds 11; Duxford Farm, Oxon 57; Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline, Oxon 58; Oxford
 62; Pitsford Quarry, Nhants 54; Pitstone, Bucks 21
 other and unspecified: Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 89; Milton Keynes, Bucks 30; Oving, Bucks 28; Stanbridge, Beds 16
 Gallo-Belgic pedestal urns; Ivel Farm/Becks Land South, Beds 3
 Roman
 amphorae, Spanish; Swalcliffe Lea, Oxon 68
 beaker, cremation; Milton Keynes, Bucks 30
 butt beaker; Alchester, Oxon 95
 flagon with copper strapping; Milton Keynes, Bucks 30
 Gallic ware, silvery glazed; Swalcliffe Lea, Oxon 68
 Hadham wares; Meppershall, Beds 9
 mortaria; Horton-cum-Studley, Oxon 71
 Nene Valley colour-coated; Swalcliffe Lea, Oxon 68
 Oxford colour-coated; Swalcliffe Lea, Oxon 68
 'poppy beaker'; Dunstable, Beds 14
 shell-tempered; Swalcliffe Lea, Oxon 70
 Samian; Chalton Manor Farm, Beds (Acutus of Montans) 16; Dunstable, Beds 14, (Drag 27) 14-15; Oundle, Nhants 39; Swalcliffe Lea, Oxon 68
 urns, cremation; Milton Keynes, Bucks 30
 other and unspecified: Aylesbury, Bucks 33; Bicester, Oxon 74; Bletchley, Bucks 21; Caddington, Beds 16;
 Churchill, Oxon 83; Dunstable, Beds 11, 13, 14-15; Duxford Farm, Oxon 57; East Challow, Oxon 59;
 Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline, Oxon 58; Hanslope, Bucks 26; Haversham, Bucks 22; High Wycombe, Bucks 35; Horley, Oxon 61; Horton-cum-Studley, Oxon 71; Littlemore, Oxon 61; Luton, Beds 17; Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 86, 88; Northampton 52; Oxford 58, 62; Oxley Park, Bucks 35; Pitstone, Bucks 21; Polebrook, Nhants 42; Ramsden, Oxon 63; Shefford, Beds 5; Stanbridge, Beds 16; Stowe, Bucks 32;
 Swalcliffe Lea, Oxon 66, 68, 70, 71; Towcester, Nhants 57; Wigginton, Oxon 82
- Saxon
 Ipswich ware; Black Bourton, Oxon 60-1
 St Neots ware; Bedford 8; Olney, Bucks 21; Wrestlingworth, Beds 8
 early: Polebrook, Nhants 42, 44, 45, 48, 49; Sutton Courtenay, Oxon 77
 early/middle: Haddenham, Bucks 29; Higham Ferrers, Nhants 51; Olney, Bucks 31
 late: Dunstable, Beds 11; Kempston, Beds 10; Oundle, Nhants 54
 other and unspecified: Bicester, Oxon 74; Churchill, Oxon 83; Kempston, Beds 10; Meppershall, Beds 9;
 Northampton 52, 53, Oxley Park, Bucks 35; Pitstone, Bucks 21
- medieval
 green glazed; Dunstable, Beds 14
 Oxford ware; Longwick-cum-Ilmer, Bucks 28
 shelly ware; Bedford 8
 Stanion ware; Stanion, Nhants 55
 other and unspecified: Aylesbury, Bucks 33; Banbury, Oxon 60; Buckingham 33; Caddington, Beds 16;
 Cholesbury, Bucks 22; Dunstable, Beds 11, 14, 15; Hanslope, Bucks 26, 27; Harrold, Beds 2, 16; High Wycombe, Bucks 35; Horton-cum-Studley, Oxon 71; Kempston, Beds 10; Littlemore, Oxon 61-2; Luton, Beds 17; Northampton 52; Olney, Bucks 21; Oundle, Nhants 54; Oxford 76; Singleborough, Bucks 31;
 Sparsholt, Oxon 61; Stanbridge, Beds 16; Witney, Oxon 58; Wollaston, Nhants 39
- post-medieval
 Bellarmine jug; Northampton 53

- other and unspecified: Banbury, Oxon 60;
Buckingham 33; Caddington, Beds 16;
Caldecotte, Bucks 22;
Cholesbury, Bucks 22; Dunstable, Beds 11,
14; Hanslope, Bucks 27; Harrold, Beds 2;
Northampton 53;
Oundle, Nhants 38
pottery production, medieval: Harrold, Beds 16; Stanion,
Nhants 55
Prestwood, Bucks; Honor End Lane 36
priory, Norman Benedictine; Wallingford, Oxon 107,
109, 112
prison, C19; Oxford 77
pyre site, Roman; Didcot West, Oxon 57
- quarries and quarry pits
Roman: Sutton Courtenay, Oxon 77; Wolverton Mill,
MK, Bucks 34
medieval: Higham Ferrers, Nhants 50-1; Oxford 76
post-medieval: Dunstable, Beds 9; Higham Ferrers,
Nhants 50-1; Oxford 76; Witney, Oxon 58
undated; Cuddesdon, Oxon 75
quern fragment, Bronze/Iron Age; Uffington, Oxon 78
Quintianus, owner of gaming counter from Alchester
102-3, 103
- radiocarbon dating
3350-3100 cal BC, Stanwick Quarry, Nhants 55
Bronze Age; Northampton 52
Roman; Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 88
Radnage, Bucks; Bennett End farm, Bennett End 28
Ramsden, Oxon; Brize Lodge, Leafield, Iron Age,
Roman and post-medieval 63
Raunds, Nhants
High Street; late medieval pit 54
Rotton Row; Saxon and medieval settlement 55
reed beds, C19; Cholsey, Oxon 74-5
Renhold, Beds; All Saints' church, medieval 4
resistivity surveys: Alchester, Oxon 104; Polebrook,
Nhants 41, 43, 44; Wallingford, Oxon 109, 112
Richard, Earl of Cornwall, and Wallingford 107
ridge and furrow ploughing: Didcot West, Oxon 57;
Duxford Farm, Oxon 57; Milton Keynes, Bucks
30; Oxford 62, 75; Polebrook, Nhants 43; Stoke
Hammond Bypass, Bucks 25; Wallingford, Oxon
109
ring ditches (*see also* barrows (round); roundhouses)
Bronze Age; Duxford Farm, Oxon 57
Iron Age; Pitsford Quarry, Nhants (small, in
enclosure) 54, 54; Westcroft, Bucks 35, 36
later prehistoric/Roman; East Challow, Oxon 59
undated; Elstow, Beds 16
rings, Roman
copper alloy finger; Shefford, Beds 5
iron oval split; Wigginton, Oxon 82
unspecified; Higham Ferrers, Nhants 56
roads
Roman; Higham Ferrers, Nhants 56; *see also*
Akeman Street
late Saxon/early medieval; Long Buckby, Nhants 51
Robert de Waudari 17-19, 18, 19, 20
Roedgen, Germany; Roman granary 95
roof timbers, C17/18; Ashdown House, Oxon 71
roundhouses (*see also* ring ditches)
late Bronze Age; Uffington, Oxon 78
Iron Age: Alchester, Oxon 104; Dunstable, Beds 11-
13, 11, 12; Pitsford Quarry, Nhants 54, 54; Stoke
Hammond Bypass, Bucks 25, 25; Stotfold, Beds
17; Uffington, Oxon 78
royal centre, medieval; Wallingford, Oxon 105
ruddling and pencilling 32
- Salford, Beds; Whitsundoles Farm, Iron Age and Roman
4-5
Savage, Charles, of Hughenden Manor (*fl.* 1730) 32
scrapers, flint
Neolithic; Chalton Manor Farm, Beds 16
Neolithic/Bronze Age; Caddington, Beds 16
settlements
early/middle Bronze Age; Oxford 83-4
late Bronze Age to early/middle Iron Age: Didcot
West, Oxon 57; Uffington, Oxon 78
mid/late Iron Age: Banbury, Oxon 60; Filkins to
Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline, Oxon 58;
Pitsford Quarry, Nhants 54, 54
late prehistoric: Aylesbury, Bucks 33; East Challow,
Oxon 59
Roman: Aylesbury, Bucks (roadside) 33; Broughton
Barn Quarry, Bucks 30; East Challow, Oxon 59;
Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline, Oxon
58; Higham Ferrers, Nhants (roadside) 56;
Tattenhoe, Bucks 23, 23
Saxon and medieval; Raunds, Nhants 55
Sextius, owner of gaming counters from London 102-3
Shefford, Beds; Amptill Road, Iron Age and Roman 5,
6
shelter-shed, C19/20; Little Wittenham, Oxon 79-80, 79,
82
Shenley Church End, Bucks; medieval or later furrow 23
shield binding, Roman; Alchester, Oxon 95
Shilton, Oxon; Burford Quarry 63
shoe fastenings, Roman; Filkins to Carterton Transco
Gas Pipeline, Oxon 58
Shrewsbury, C11 presence of Frenchmen in 107
shrines
Roman: Alchester 92, 94; Higham Ferrers, Nhants 56
medieval; St Frideswide's, Oxford 75
Sibbertoft, Nhants
Church Street; ponds and spring head 55
Lowe Farm 55
Nobold DMV 55
Silverstone, Nhants; land north of Silverstone circuit 39
Singleborough, Bucks; Glebe Farm, medieval features
31
skull fragment, prehistoric; Willington Quarry, Beds 7
slag
Roman: Horton-cum-Studley, Oxon 71; Swalcliffe
Lea, Oxon 70, 71
early Saxon; Polebrook, Nhants 44
Saxo-Norman; Oundle, Nhants 39
undated; Northampton 52
slates, Roman limestone; Swalcliffe Lea, Oxon 68
sluice house, C16; Oxford 77
sluices, C18-19; Stowe Park, Bucks 32, 56-7
Snelshall East, Milton Keynes, Bucks 35
Soulbury, Bucks; All Saints Church, C19 renovation 34

- Souldrop, Beds; Church Farm 9
 Southampton, C11 presence of Frenchmen in 107
 Sparsholt, Oxon; medieval manuring scatters 61
 spear head, Roman; Alchester, Oxon 95
 Spelsbury, Oxon; Model Farm, Ditchley Park Estate 84
 spoon, undated silver plated; Tattenhoe, Bucks 23
 spring head, undated; Sibbertoft, Nhants 55
 stable, C19; Little Wittenham, Oxon 80-2, 80-1
 stakeholes, Saxon; Churchill, Oxon 83
 stakes, Bronze Age and Iron Age/Roman; Willington Quarry, Beds 7
 Stamford, Lincs; castle 107
 Stanbridge, Beds; Old Mill House, Iron Age, Roman and medieval 16
 Standlake, Oxon; Abingdon Road 77, 84
 Stanion, Nhants
 Brigstock Road; Roman villa and 'corn drier' 55
 Corby Road; medieval pottery waster dumps 55
 Stanwick Quarry, Nhants; waterlogged timbers, 3350-3100 cal BC 55
 Steeple Aston, Oxon; Manor Farm Barns, C17 and later 63
 Steeple Claydon, Bucks
 Calvert-Steeple Claydon sewer pipe 22
 St Michael's Church 24
 Stoke Hammond, Bucks; Bypass (northern link), Iron Age, medieval and later 24-5, 25
 Stoke Lyne, Oxon; Lower Farm, DMV 63
 Stotfold, Beds; Fairfield Park, Iron Age settlement 17
 Stowe, Bucks
 Stowe House, aedicules and culverts 34
 Stowe landscape gardens: garden structures 31, 32-3; water system 32, 56-7
 sunken featured buildings, Saxon: Black Bourton, Oxon 60-1; Churchill, Oxon 83; Ivel Farm/Becks Land South, Beds 3; Pitstone, Bucks 21; Raunds, Nhants 55

 Sutton Courtenay, Oxon
 Bridge Farm, Roman 77
 Drayton Road; Neolithic, Roman and Saxon 77
 Penn Copse villa not found 77
 Swalcliffe Lea, Oxon, Blacklands site; Roman compound type farmstead 64-71
 early Roman buildings 65, 67, 70-1
 late Roman building 64-70, 65-9

 tanning
 late Iron Age/early Roman; Didcot West, Oxon 57
 C19, Olney, Bucks 21
 Taplow, Bucks *see* Cliveden
 Tattenhoe, Bucks; Portishead Drive, Roman settlement 23, 23
 temples, Roman: Alchester, Oxon 100, 102; Higham Ferrers, Nhants 56
 tenements, medieval; Abingdon, Oxon 73
 Terrick, Bucks; Moat View, Risborough Road 28
 Thame, Oxon; Thame Park, medieval monastic buildings 77-8
 tiles
 Roman
 roof: High Wycombe, Bucks 35; Stowe, Bucks 32
 unspecified; Pitstone, Bucks 21
 medieval
 floor: Haddenham, Bucks (decorated) 29;
 Hanslope, Bucks 25, 26
 peg-; Dunstable, Beds 14, 15
 roof ridge, glazed; Stanion, Nhants 55
 unspecified: Abingdon, Oxon (glazed) 73;
 Horton-cum-Studley, Oxon (depicting stag) 71, 73
 post-medieval roof; Wendover, Bucks 34
 undated roof; Haversham, Bucks 22
 timber and timber-framed buildings
 Roman: Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 88; Milton Keynes, Bucks 30
 medieval; Oundle, Nhants 39
 post-medieval; Longwick-cum-Ilmer, Bucks 28
 C18/19 barn, Milton Keynes Village, Bucks 23
 C19/20; Little Wittenham, Oxon 78-82
 timber and timber structures, waterlogged
 3350-3100 cal BC; Stanwick Quarry, Nhants 55
 Bronze Age; Willington Quarry, Beds 7
 Iron Age; Salford, Beds 4-5
 Iron Age/Roman; Willington Quarry, Beds 7
 Roman; Alchester, Oxon 98
 C18-20; Stowe, Bucks 32
 undated; Weedon, Nhants 39
 Titchmarsh, Nhants; St Mary's church 55-6
 Total Station topographic survey; Wallingford, Oxon 109, 109, 112
 Towcester, Nhants
 Amen Corner, Moat Lane; medieval and Roman 57
 Islington Road 56
 Watling Street: (SP 0646 0567) 56; (SP 0693 0485), Roman town wall and ditch, post-medieval kiln and well 56
 town planning, later Saxon; Wallingford, Oxon 105, 107, 109
 trackways
 later prehistoric/Roman; East Challow, Oxon 59
 late Iron Age/Roman; Duxford Farm, Oxon 57
 Roman; Filkins to Carterton Transco Gas Pipeline, Oxon 58
 Saxon; Polebrook, Nhants 45
 C17; Oxford 77
 Tullock Farm, Welford, West Berks 81
 Tylers Green, Penn, Bucks; Red Lion Cottages 29

 Uffington, Oxon; Mesolithic/EN flints, Bronze to Iron Age settlement 78
 Upper Boddington, Nhants; Townsend Lane, Saxo-Norman ditches, shrunken medieval village 37

 Valkenburg Roman fortress 92
 vicarage, medieval; Abingdon, Oxon 73
 villages, deserted and shrunken medieval *see* Asham, Oxon; Horton, Oxon; Old Grimsbury, Oxon; Stoke Lyne, Oxon; Upper Boddington, Nhants
 villas: Didcot West, Oxon 57; Penn Copse, Sutton Courtenay, Oxon (not located) 77; Rye, High Wycombe, Bucks 33; Stanion, Nhants 55; Wootton Fields, Northampton 53
 Vindolanda, Northumbria; Roman gaming counters 103
 viticulture, possible Roman; Oxley Park, Bucks 35

Index

- votive offerings, Roman: Higham Ferrers, Nhants 56;
Marcham/Frilford, Oxon 89, 90, 91
- Wallingford, Oxon
 - Queens Croft, Castle Street; medieval and later 63
 - St Georges Road 64
 - St Johns Road, former Pauls Malt site 59
 - Wallingford Burh to Borough Research Project 105-13; 2002 field season 109-12; 2003 field season, plans for 112; Bullcroft 106, 107, 109, 109-10, 112; castle 105-6, 107, 109, 111, 112; Castle Meadows 106, 108, 111, 112; Civil War period 107, 112; defences, rampart and ditch 105, 106, 107, 109, 109-10, 112; Domesday Book record 107; Frenchmen's dwellings (1086) 107, 109; historical context 107-9; Kinecroft 106, 107, 112; north gate 105-6, 108; priory of Holy Trinity 107, 109, 112; questions and directions for project 106-7; site and previous archaeology 105-6; town planning, Saxon/Norman 105, 107, 109
- walls
 - Roman; Swalcliffe Lea, Oxon 68
 - medieval; Newport Pagnell, Bucks 24
 - post-medieval: Newport Pagnell, Bucks 24; Witney, Oxon 58
 - undated; Bicester, Oxon 74
- Warmington, Nhants; Elton Estate, proposed agricultural reservoir 40
- water pit, Iron Age; Salford, Beds 4-5
- waterhole, Saxon; Sutton Courtenay, Oxon 77
- waterlogged remains (*see also* timber and timber structures, waterlogged)
 - Roman; Alchester, Oxon 98, 102
 - undated; Crowmarsh, Oxon 83
- Watlington, Oxon; The Lilacs, Brook Street 64
- Wavendon, Bucks; Rose Cottage, Walton Road 24
- Weedon, Nhants; flood defences 39
- Welford, West Berks; Tullock Farm 81
- wells
 - Iron Age/Roman; Willington Quarry, Beds 7
 - Roman; Alchester, Oxon 95
 - Saxon; Polebrook, Nhants 44
 - medieval; Olney, Bucks 30-1
 - post-medieval: Lechlade, Oxon 75; Towcester, Nhants 56
- Wendlebury, Oxon *see* Alchester, Oxon
- Wendover, Bucks; South Street, medieval and post-medieval 34
- Westcroft, Milton Keynes, Bucks; Iron Age farm 35, 36
- Weston Underwood, Milton Keynes, Bucks; Limestone Barn, Cross Lane 31
- Whaddon, Bucks; Vicarage Road 24
- Whiteleaf Hill, Bucks; Neolithic/Bronze Age flints 34
- Whitsundoles Farm, Salford, Beds; Iron Age and Roman 4-5
- Wicken, Nhants; Old Rectory 39, 40
- wicker ditch linings, Iron Age/Roman; Willington Quarry, Beds 7
- Wigginton, Oxon; Roman enclosure and pit 82
- William I, king of England, the Conqueror 107
- Willington Quarry North, Beds; late Iron Age/Roman farmstead and burials 5-7
- wine, Roman flavouring with celery 98
- wine strainer, late Iron Age/Roman provincial; Alchester, Oxon 98
- Wing, Bucks; Mill Motors, Church Street, post-medieval 24
- Winslow, Bucks; St Lawrence church 24
- Witney, Oxon
 - Church Green, medieval tenement boundaries 58
 - former woolhouse between Dark Lane and Puck Lane 64
 - High Street; medieval and post-medieval 58, 64
 - St Mary's Cottage; medieval pottery and tiles 78
 - Witney to North Leigh Thames Water pipeline 58-9
- Wittenham Clumps Farm *see* Little Wittenham (Hill Farm)
- Wollaston, Nhants; London Road 39
- Wolverton Mill, Milton Keynes, Bucks; Roman and medieval 34
- Wood, Anthony (1632-95, antiquary) 76
- Woodford, Nhants; Rectory Lane 56
- Woodnewton, Nhants; Orchard Lane, C19/20 cottages 56
- World War II air-raid shelter; New Marston, Oxon 84
- Wrestlingworth, Beds; Wrestlingworth Lower School, Saxon 8
- Wrest Park, Beds; gardens 7-8
- yard, Roman; Swalcliffe Lea, Oxon 68, 70
- Yardley Gobion, Nhants; St Leonard's Church 56

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